

Facilitating Complex Multi-Stakeholder Processes

A Social Learning Perspective

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1 Introduction

This working document provides an introduction to the facilitation of multi-stakeholder processes (MSP) and social learning. The framework and approach presented here underpins the MSP related training, facilitation and consultancy work of the International Agriculture Centre (IAC). Further details and a comprehensive data-base of methodologies and tools can be found on the MSP Resource Portal (www.iac.wur.nl/msp).

The challenges of sustainable development, whether related to overcoming endemic poverty, managing conflicts over water resources, reducing pollution levels or protecting biodiversity present modern society with complex, high risk and often paradoxical problems. We are well past the idea that science and technology alone can solve these problems. We know that any progress will require a complex of social, political and economic changes. The challenge ahead is to marry scientific and technological innovation with a much greater capacity for institutional innovation. Such innovation and change relies to a large extent on the effectiveness with which a diversity of stakeholders with different interests and from different sectors and scales can interact.

Take for example the story of Lake Victoria which Borders Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda and is the source of Nile River. The edge of lake is populated by some of the world's poorest people. The lake itself has become an important fishery as a result of the introduction of the Nile Perch. The export of Nile Perch to Europe has created a significant local industry, with a significant impact on the local and national economies. Over fishing and hence dwindling stocks made it so difficult for fisherman that some resorted to using poison. Immediately Nile Perch was banned from the European Union because of food safety concerns and the whole local fishing industry collapsed. Overcoming this situation has required a complex multi-stakeholder process. Scientists, local communities, policy makers from three countries, fish exporting companies and European regulators have all had to cooperate to find solutions.

Any sort of integrated river basin management effort is almost by definition requires a multi-stakeholder process. In Eastern Europe the restructuring of rural economies, in response to joining the European Union, requires innovation between policy makers, farmers, local communities and entrepreneurs. The US city of Seattle created an initiative called "Sustainable Seattle" that brought different groups together to think more innovatively about how to create a more sustainable city. From local to global scales there are numerous examples of MSPs in progress and even more examples of where effective MSPs are needed.

Work by the United Nations Environment and Development Committee (Hemmati 2002) which catalogued a series of international MSPs, put the MSP concept clearly on the agenda at the 2002 Earth Summit in Johannesburg. Michael Edwards (2004), Director of the Governance and Civil Society Unit of the Ford Foundation, clearly articulates the case for coalitions for development. From many directions, as the world struggles to realise sustainability and the Millennium Development Goals, the calls come for greater participation in democratic processes as a necessary precondition.

In today's world, certainly in the west and increasingly elsewhere, there is a dynamic of power between the state (government), the economic sphere and civil society that has enormous consequences for the types of changes that are possible and the manner in which social, political and economic change can be brought about. No sphere is all powerful, yet each has the power to at least partially subvert actions of the other spheres to which they are opposed. Progress, particularly in relation to sustainable development, hinges on a social capacity for different sectors and interests to be able to constructively engage with each other. Mostly the issues with which we are confronted require much more than just a 'negotiated settlement'. Instead they require understanding from totally new perspectives and the

questioning, challenging and changing of old assumptions, paradigms and values. Solutions are often not immediately apparent and uncertainty abounds, moving forward requires a creative, responsive and adaptive outlook. The capacity for learning and innovation becomes paramount.

The MSP approach recognises that most complex problems will never be solved by one group alone. As difficult as it may be the only option is to bring scientific, community, farmer, environmentalist, economic, policy and political perspectives together. Multi-stakeholder processes enable different perspectives to be presented and debated, scenarios and options to be evaluated, decisions taken and action implemented. Such processes involve working with all the complexities of how humans interact - culturally, socially, politically and economically. While there can never be any guarantees, much is now known about how to design and facilitate these processes in a way that will enable them to be more rather than less effective.

The focus of this document is on how to facilitate multi-stakeholder processes and social learning. There is a particular emphasis on the processes and methodologies which can be employed to improve the quality of reflection and learning by individuals, organisations, communities and societies.

Unfortunately, for many people the notion of facilitation is simplistically associated with 'workshop facilitation'. These days nearly everyone has experienced a participatory workshop with small group sessions, flip chart paper and the walls covered in the coloured cards used for gathering and organising everyone's ideas. The objective of this paper is to expand this important but limited notion of facilitation into the broader realm of designing and facilitating complex multi-stakeholder processes that may run over a number of years. Being able to design and implement a long term MSP requires a sophisticated understanding of human social and political behaviour and a special set of skills. Good process design and facilitation must take account of power relations and conflicts, integrate scientific and community perspectives, build the capacity of stakeholders to effectively participate and create a supportive institutional environment. This requires, just like any other profession, a solid conceptual understanding, skill in using the 'tools of the trade' and experience.

Features of sustainable development dilemmas that demand an interactive approach

- complexity of interconnected biophysical, social, economic and political factors;
- uncertainty of future consequences;
- multiple stakeholder interests at multiple scales;
- causes and effects and costs and benefits are often separated across time and space with significant implications for human motivation;
- the value-laden nature of water dilemmas;
- strong vested interests;
- need for coordinated action across political boundaries;
- issues are often an externality in the economic system

The perspective presented in this document is orientated towards people involved in initiating, designing, managing or facilitating on MSPs. The assumption is made that to be effective in such roles a good balance is needed between some theoretical (conceptual) understanding, a knowledge of the available methodologies and tools and how to use them in the design of a specific process, and a good set of personal facilitation, leadership and communication skills. Consequently, the objective here is to present an overarching framework to creatively guide current or aspiring MSP practitioners. A deliberate effort has been made to offer a broad

integrating framework that enables the linkages between, and use of many different concepts and approaches to be understood.

This framework consists of two parts. First is the generic process model. This provides an overview of main phases and processes common to most MSPs. It is not intended as a blueprint, but rather a starting point. This model also helps to illuminate the range of methodologies, tools and facilitation skills necessary for an effective MSP. Second is the competency framework, this outlines the competencies (knowledge, skills and attitudes) required to design and facilitate a MSP.

2 Defining Multi-Stakeholder Processes and Social Learning

Over the last decade, terms such as adaptive management, collaborative management, participation, citizen involvement, collaborative management, community participation, communities of practice (cops), dialogue, multi-stakeholder processes, communities of practice, interactive decision-making and social learning have proliferated in the natural resources management (NRM) literature. These terms all embody the idea of bringing together different stakeholders (actors) who have an interest in a problem situation and engaging them in processes of dialogue and collective learning that can improve innovation, decision-making and action. For this document and the work of the IAC a choice has been made to use the term multi-stakeholder processes (MSP) as a general reference to all these different interactive approaches.

All these concepts and approaches need to be understood within a broader context of governance, and in fact the failure of current governance mechanisms to deal with the challenges of sustainable development. Social learning is an overarching concept related to the capacity of societies and communities to be more learning orientated in the way they tackle important problems and in particular sustainable development. From this perspective multi-stakeholder processes are a specific contribution to the broader idea of social learning.

Social learning can be defined as the process by which communities, stakeholder groups or societies learn how to innovate and adapt in response to changing social and environmental conditions. One of the key features of modern society is that it must now respond to the (often negative) consequences of its own action (Beck, Giddens et al. 1994). This implies that modern societies need to learn more quickly and effectively than societies that were confronted with less dramatic change in their social and natural environment. A society that is unable to innovate in response to a changing environment runs the risk of crisis, if not annihilation. Any social change requires learning of some form, but the question here is how societal-wide learning processes can be more, rather than less, effective and how this can be facilitated.

Social learning seeks an alternative to two classical strategies for governance: (1) that government and experts should make decisions for society and 'solve our problems', or (2) believing that social change should be left largely left to market forces with minimal guidance by government. Failure at both ends of this spectrum of governance mechanisms has fed the interest in social learning and more participatory forms of democratic governance. Improving the ways in which we learn as a society means building capacity to assess consciously and critically the consequences of our behaviour and how social structures (institutions) shape the way we think and act. Social learning actively engages different groups in society in a communicative process of understanding problems, conflicts and social dilemmas and creating strategies for improvement. Thus social learning is more than just 'community participation' or learning in a group setting. It involves understanding the limitations of existing institutions and mechanisms of governance and experimenting with multi-layered, learning-oriented and participatory forms of governance. Improving the way societies learn

challenges us to think about the role of civil society, the way media works, the type of education we receive, and the relationship between science and society.

Multistakeholder processes can be considered as the practical application of a social learning 'philosophy' to a specific situation. An MSP is characterised by the following features:

1. deals with a clearly bounded context and set of problems
2. involves an explicitly defined and evolving set of stakeholders with common (but often conflicting) interests
3. works across different sectors and scales
4. follows an agreed yet dynamic process and time frame
5. is guided by negotiated and understood rules of interaction
6. deals consciously with power and conflict among stakeholders and sectors
7. engages stakeholders in learning processes (not just negotiation over fixed positions)
8. aims for a balance between of bottom up and top down approaches
9. aims to contribute towards effective institutional change

In the following section a core process model is introduced that outlines a set of key elements to consider when designing and facilitating a MSP with these features.

3 Setting the Scene - Introductory Examples

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4 Current Development Discourse and the Rationale for Multi-Stakeholder Processes

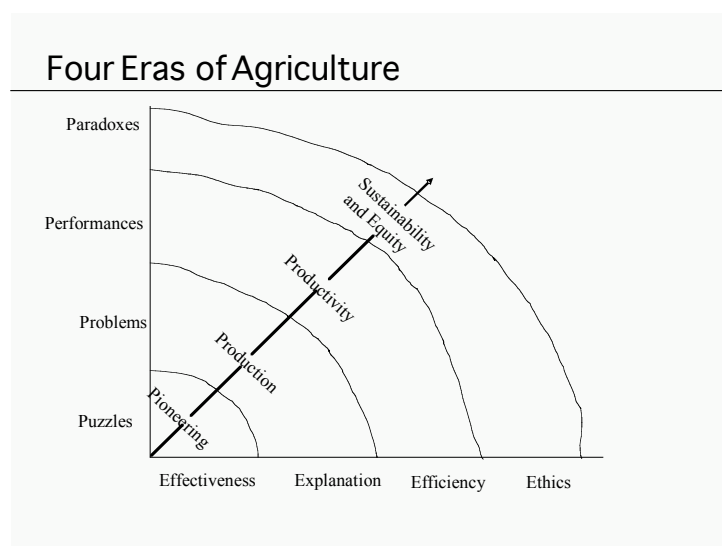
The gloss has gone from the free market mania of the 80s and 90s. While a more open and globalised economy is essentially a reality the development discussion has moved towards ideas of pro-poor growth, public private partnerships and socially responsible entrepreneurship. There is much discussion about how market opportunities can be opened up for the poor which requires effective engagement between government, agribusiness and producer groups. It is recognised that environmental issues including water resources management require much more sophisticated institutional responses. There is growing attention to chain management in relation to the international flow of products and services and the implications for environmental management, poverty reduction and consumer safety. It is now widely accepted that good governance is essential for sustainable development and that civil society is a key ingredient of achieving and maintaining transparency and accountability within government. At the heart of all these issues is engagement and coordination across sectors and between the public, private and civil society spheres. This can only be effective with greater attention to the processes of interaction and learning that underpin such engagement.

In the late 20th century, there is a dynamic of intellectual, cultural and political economic change that can be seen as shaking the foundations of modernity. Beck, Giddens and Lash (Beck, Giddens et al. 1994) refer to this as *reflexive modernisation*. They argue that in simple, or early, modernity, the driving motor is instrumental reason applied to the transformation of nature and traditional society for the creation of material and economic wealth. The major concerns for society are on how this wealth is to be distributed and how to avoid exploitation of less fortunate people in its production. In an era of reflexive modernisation, the driving motor begins to change to risk. The institutions of modernity are confronted with risks that are their own side effects. For example ecological collapse, global warming, nuclear war, social dislocation, effects of pollution on health, or economic system collapse. This is modernity turned back on itself. In simple modernity, an external environment is being transformed. In late modernity, the question is how to transform a manufactured environment to avoid its own internal risks.

Themes of Current Development Discourse

- Good Governance
- Pro-Poor Growth
- Civil Society Participation
- Public Private Partnerships
- Market Access
- Sustainable Chain Management (food quality and safety)
- Socially Responsible Entrepreneurship
- Decentralisation
- Livelihoods perspective
- Privatisation

This is the reflexive nature of late modernity.



In simple modernity, all that was required of government was overseeing technological and industrial progress. The direction and goals of this progress had been set by the Enlightenment and were largely accepted. Over time the techno-economic decisions that really impact on society have come to rest predominantly with scientists, bankers and corporate managers - and not with elected governments.

Globalisation, it can be argued, relegates democratic and parliamentary decision-making to a pawn on the global economic chessboard. The structural transformation of modernity, driven by risk, does not erupt, as Marx had predicted, as a class revolution. Rather, as Beck (Beck 1994) comments, it creeps in through the back door on cat's paws. But ultimately the political ramifications may be no less significant.

In the agriculture sphere these ideas have been captured by Bawden (1990) as reflected opposite. The figure illustrates a transition from technical questions of explanation and efficiency to ethical questions related to the paradoxes of sustainability and equity.

The argument of reflexive modernisation is that sooner or later the escalating risks of modernity start to become unacceptable to the polity, and indeed a problem for the techno-economic sphere itself. Questions of coordination, control and democracy open up. The old lines of political dissension between left and right lose their meaning and there is no Enlightenment ideal to guide society into a new or post modernity. The structures and processes of democracy, and their capacity to cope with the risks of late modernity, emerge as a central concern and the necessity of a collective response prompts a surge of interest in

democratisation and concepts such as social learning. ‘Development’ can be seen as being dominated by a globalised capitalist economic system that is largely disconnected from democratic control and has no heart, soul or ethical concern for the direction it takes. However, as the risks mount a dialectic of control comes into play, questions begin to be asked, assumptions are challenged and alternatives are sought. Nevertheless, uncertainty abounds, science is no longer seen as having all the answers for modern society, and religious beliefs have become pluralistic and unacceptable as a basis for political decisions. These are the circumstances that propel society towards a reformulation of the role that dialogue, discourse and social learning should play in shaping the future – a democratic imperative for restructuring core institutions.

In the modern world, when a government wants to claim political legitimacy it needs to claim being democratic. Over the last century, there has been a massive upward trend in the number of states that have, or at least claim to have, democratic government (Giddens 1994). All may not be well with current forms of democratic governance, but monarchies, aristocracies, dictatorships, or anarchy are hardly desirable alternatives. Significantly, Giddens, Habermas and Beck “all make the case, in one way or another, that more democracy and more radical democracy is an essential precondition of creating environmental sustainability” (Goldblatt 1996). This call for greater democratisation is also a fundamental tenet of most green political thought (Goodin 1992).

Three propositions regarding the connection between greater participation in democratic processes and sustainability can be made:

1) Power structures in current forms of liberal democracy have biased decision-making against sustainability. In other words, the political systems tend to appease powerful economic interests at the expense of the overall wellbeing of the majority. Only the active political engagement of the wider citizenry has the potential to redress this situation. Goldblatt (1996) concludes that:

The kinds of changes in consumption and definition of well-being required to bring Western societies within the orbit of sustainability are both extensive in their coverage and intensive in their consequence. Everyone will be affected in such a transition. Negotiated social change of this form is an enormous political task. At the same time, the political and legal systems of capitalist societies are not neutral but structurally biased in their allocation of power to environmentally problematic interests.

2) Sustainability is a substantively different problem from the problems for which the current political and policy system has evolved to cope (Dovers 1997). This means open and informed debate is required, across society, about the likely consequences of unsustainability and, given these, what values ought to underpin society’s decisions. Greater participation in democratic processes is required to ensure: a) a society-wide understanding of the issues; b) the contribution of society’s best intellectual resources; c) the debate is not biased by short term economic interests; and d) the debate is not biased by the short term political interests of governments.

3) Scale is a critical consideration for democratic participation and in this regard local and sub-national (regional) remain critically important. While sustainability requires a sophisticated balancing of agency from local to global levels (Conti 1997) (Gallopini 1991), enhanced local and regional action is critical for three reasons. One, it is the scale at which much direct action needs to be taken and coordinated. This local level implementation is likely to be more effective if a high degree of responsibility and ownership is felt, which presupposes a high level of community participation. Two, it is through activities at the local or regional level that individuals can engage in a meaningful political discourse about sustainability. Three, it is from this level that any counterbalancing and political opposition to

the power of purely economic interests, global corporations, or the state has to be mobilised and sustained.

At another level, however, it reflects a curious and disturbing dismissal of politics altogether and a naivety about power relations in social interaction. To claim to be apolitical is, in effect, to accept the status quo of social and political relations, which in itself is political. This is a theme picked up by Held (Held 1996):

Politics is frequently associated today with self seeking behaviour, hypocrisy and 'public relations' activity geared to selling policy packages. The problem with this view is that, while it is quite understandable, the difficulties of the modern world will not be solved by surrendering politics, but only by the development and transformation of 'politics' in ways that will enable us more effectively to shape and organise human life. We do not have the option of 'no politics'.

In modern industrialised society, liberal democracy has become synonymous with democracy *per se*. Liberal democracy is a system of representative government based on elections and competitive parties, constitutional constraints on government activity, universal suffrage, freedom of conscience, the right of citizens to stand for office and form political affiliations and the insulation of the economic sphere from democratic control (Dryzek 1992; Dryzek 1996). While there are important safeguards to democracy in such a system, Giddens suggests that “however it be organised, representative democracy means rule by groups distant from the ordinary voter and is often dominated by petty party-political concerns”. People are becoming disillusioned with politics, Giddens (1994:116) claims, because “key areas of social life - some of them areas they are able reflexively to master, others of them areas which are sources of threat - no longer correspond to any accessible domains of political authority”. Further, and critically, “nor does consumer power, as the neoliberals suppose, substitute for such absent authority” (1994:116). In a similar vein of criticism, Dryzek (Dryzek 1996) claims that capitalist democracies “are home to gathering forces either sceptical of or hostile to any deeper democratisation”. Antidemocratic constraints are, he argues, of a structural, ideological and intellectual nature and need to be comprehended in terms of the capitalist state, the international system, economic rationality and ideology.

All these antidemocratic constraints are associated with the idea that liberal democracy in a capitalist economic context is the pinnacle of feasible democratic achievement. This idea has gained considerable support in the wake of the collapse of Soviet-style communism and the crisis of confidence among socialists of all sorts in the West(Dryzek 1996).

Authors such as Habermas, Giddens, Beck, Dryzek, Held and Pepper all cast their conceptual analysis of democracy in slightly different ways, with different terminology, and by reference to differing schools of social and political thought. Nevertheless, they all highlight the common themes of: a concern for ecological decay; the anti-democratic consequences of unbridled economic power; the consequences of an unbalanced use of instrumental reason; and the need for forms of democracy that open opportunities for constructive political dialogue between ordinary citizens. It is within this context that I now examine the concept of social learning.

The figure below highlights the above discussed issues by placing a social learning as an alternative middle ground between purely market driven approaches to governance at one extreme and expert orientated top down bureaucratic government at the other.

the techniques and tools would be the carpentry, bricklaying, plumbing and the tools used to do this.

Whatever we do is based in some way on an underlying set of beliefs or assumptions about the world and the universe we inhabit; often these are so internalised we are unaware of their guiding influence. The nature of these beliefs and assumptions (or 'worldviews') leads humans to interact with their surroundings and each other in quite different ways. A particular set of beliefs, assumptions and ways of acting is what is commonly referred to as a paradigm. An extreme example, is provided by the contrast between many traditional tribal societies and modern scientific societies, each of which display very different paradigms.

There are many other examples, such as in the world of business and organisational development where, in many places, there has been a paradigm shift from top-down hierarchical management to flatter, team-orientated and interdependent approaches. In the environment and natural resource management sector there has been a significant shift from a paradigm emphasising technical solutions to one in which participatory and collaborative approaches are pursued.

Thinking about paradigms means being conscious and critical about the fundamental assumptions and philosophies that shape the way problems and opportunities are approached. Many of the problems that MSP initiatives aim to address have come about because of the dominant 20th century assumptions relating to the environment, the economy and technological progress. Improvement will often require not just trying to solve the problems within the boundaries of the paradigm that created them, but rather recognising the need for an alternative paradigm.

5 A Core Process Model for MSPs

This section introduces a core process model that outlines the most important elements of most MSPs¹. Every MSP needs to be tailored to the specific needs and context of the particular situation and there is certainly no simple and universal step by step model to be followed. However, through experience it is also clear that there are some basic elements of most MSPs that need at least some consideration. The reasons for failure of MSPs, which is not uncommon, can often be traced to no or inadequate consideration of these elements.

The model based on the common-sense action learning cycle of planning, acting and reflecting, with an additional phase of setting up. The four phases of the process model are:

Setting up — establishing the reasons for an MSP initiative, mobilising community interest, and deciding what organisational and institutional arrangements are needed;

Planning strategically — undertaking the detailed planning and strategy development needed for an MSP to be successful;

Implementing and managing — managing the implementation and ongoing resourcing of the initiative and ensuring continued community input and support; and

Learning – Monitoring and adapting — monitoring the impact, the successes and failures, learning from these, and continually improving what is being done.

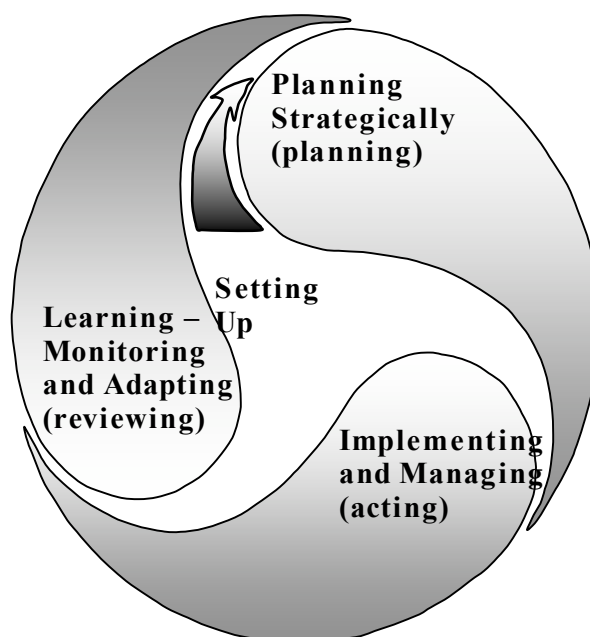
The core process model with all its elements is shown below. While there is some logic to a sequential flow from setting up, through strategic planning, implementing and managing and

¹ This model has been adapted from a model developed by Woodhill and others to guide sustainable regional development initiatives in Australia Dore, J., C. Keating, et al. (2000). Sustainable Regional Development: SRD Kit - a resource for improving the community, economy and environment of your region. Canberra, Greening Australia.

then learning and adapting this is not meant to be a step by step model. As indicated by the diagram each phase overlaps in an ongoing process cycle. The model is of course an oversimplification of reality, for example the process of learning and adapting must also begin at the setting up stage. Likewise sometimes a good process will begin by implementing a specific project to build stakeholder confidence even before more strategic planning begins.

With these qualifications we can look at some of the uses of the model. For example many MSPs go wrong right at the start because of false expectations and lack of initial understanding of different stakeholder interests. Having the wrong group of people involved with an initial steering committee can spell disaster for a whole process. When planning it is important to work with stakeholders visions about the future and not become bogged down in a world of only problems. Often MSPs fail because the process fails to move from the planning phase to implementation and all interest and momentum is lost. If all those involved are not aware of how they will judge success and the process is not carefully monitored there is a high risk of failure. These are just some of the many issues that the core process model can help us to consider when designing and facilitating a MSP.

In Section Seven of the document will return to this process in more detail.



Setting up

- Clarify the reasons for an MSP
- Undertake initial situation analysis (issues, stakeholders, institutions, power and politics)
- Establish an interim steering body
- Build stakeholder support
- Establish the scope, mandate and expectations for the MSP
- Outline the general process, time frame, institutional requirements and resource needs

Throughout: Learning - Monitoring, and Adapting

Planning strategically

- Build stakeholders understanding of each other's values, motivations, concerns and interests
- Generate visions for the future
- Identify issues, problems, and opportunities
- Examine future scenarios and feasible options
- Make decisions and agree on key strategies
- Set objectives and identify actions, timeframes and responsibilities
- Document and communicate planning outcomes

Throughout: Learning - Monitoring, and Adapting

Implementing and managing

- Develop integrated initiatives and detailed action plans
- Secure resources and technical support
- Develop capacities of stakeholders
- Establish required management structures and procedures
- Manage implementation processes
- Maintain the commitment of stakeholders

Throughout: Learning - Monitoring, and Adapting

Learning – monitoring and adapting

- Create a learning culture and environment
- Define success criteria (performance questions and indicators)
- Develop and implement monitoring mechanisms
- Review, evaluate and discuss progress and capture lessons learned
- Feed lessons learned back into strategies and implementation procedures

6 A Competency Framework for MSP Facilitation

What does a policy maker interested in initiating an interactive policy process need to know and be able to do? What does the leader of a social activist organisation interested in initiating dialogue between groups in conflict need to know and be able to do? What does a professional facilitator employed to support a MSP need to know and be able to do? What attitudes and ethical positions will make these people more or less effective in working with different stakeholder groups?

Whatever role is being taken this framework suggest there are four main areas of required competence for the design, management and facilitation of MSPs. The term competence is used here to refer to a combination of knowledge, skills and attitudes, all of which are required to be effective in practise. The four areas are:

1. The competence to understand and make explicit the theoretical and ethical foundations that underpin and justify a particular MSP approach.
2. The competence to design and adapt MSPs by drawing on, integrating and modifying a wide range of interactive learning, mediation and conflict management and analytical methodologies and tools.
3. The competence to understand the role of MSPs in institutional change and to work towards the necessary institutional support for MSPs to function.
4. The personal competence to directly facilitate MSP activities or to lead the participation of a particular stakeholder group in an MSP.

Facilitation is about helping people to work together to make a difference. Facilitation really is an art. People, organisations and their relationships are highly complex and always changing. Being able to manage this social complexity to bring about worthwhile change requires considerable insight and skill. Over the last decade the idea of facilitation has become widely accepted as central to the success of any initiative that involves different groups working together to identify and achieve common goals.

To be a good facilitator you need:

- a clear vision of what you are trying to achieve
- a set of theories, assumptions and values about how to bring about change
- a set of methodologies that will guide your action
- a set of techniques and tools to put the methodologies into practice.
- the personal qualities and skills to take on a facilitation role

However, facilitation is much more than having just one good facilitator. Leadership qualities in the different stakeholder groups and the attitudes of their members have a critical influence on the outcome of any process. There are many factors related to the institutional (policy, legal, funding, government agency, cultural) context that will dramatically effect any multi-stakeholder process and must be carefully considered. Often forgotten is the issue of political, economic and social power of different groups and how these power dynamics influence conflicts.

Further a key part of facilitation is what happens ‘behind the scenes’ when a facilitator (or facilitating group) works with stakeholders to design a specific process suited to the needs of a particular situation. There are many different methodologies and tools that a facilitator can draw on and combine into a purpose built methodology or process. And, of course processes never go exactly as planned so a facilitator needs the ability and experience to be constantly adapting and improving the process as it unfolds.

A good facilitator needs a good grasp of the theoretical, methodological and institutional aspects of social learning and dialogue. Further they need to be as knowledgeable as possible about the subject area with which they are dealing. A strong case can be made for a new type of facilitation professional. Such a person needs a multi-disciplinary training, alongside a high level of personal awareness about the role they are playing and the influence of their own character.

Unfortunately potential facilitators have often been given a bag of participatory methods to use but little other depth of facilitation training which has led to the mechanical application of methods in often inappropriate and ineffective ways. The knowledge, skill, experience and training required for effective facilitation of social learning should never be underestimated.

Multi-stakeholder processes often fail because quite simple parts of the process have not been adequately considered.



To design and facilitate an MSP process it is very important to understand the difference between paradigms, methodologies, techniques and tools.

6.1 Theoretical and Ethical Foundations

There is nothing more practical than a good theory! Whether we recognize it or not everything we do is based on some set of theoretical and ethical foundations and assumptions. An MSP facilitator does not need to be a philosopher or a sociologist, but they do need to have some understanding why they are doing what they do and of the ethical implications. Some grasp of the main areas of theoretical discourse that underpin MSP will enable a facilitator to be more creative and more confident. It will help in having a perspective on how to deal with complex social, political and economic dynamics that are inherent to MSPs.

This section provides a very quick outline of some of the key concepts and theories on which the approach to MSP presented in this document is built.

6.1.1 Core Concepts Learning, Participation and Systems Thinking

In section 6.1.3 below a number of relevant areas of theoretical discourse (from a disciplinary perspective) are introduced and many more could be added. All of this however can be boiled down into the three core concepts of learning, participation and Systems thinking.

Learning deals with questions around how individuals, organisations, communities or whole societies make sense of the world around them, create knowledge and change the way they act in response to new opportunities or threats. Of particular importance to MSPs is the way adults learn from experience and how more effective learning can be encouraged and facilitated.

Participation and Power is concerned with who participates in what processes, under what conditions and in what ways. The issues range from questions about global governance to micro level questions of who is being included or excluded from community processes. Participation is essentially about the politics and power of collective decision making. Clearly not everyone can participate in all decisions all of the time, which lead to fundamental questions about democracy and democratic representation. There are practical reasons for including different stakeholder in various processes - a diversity of knowledge is needed, and there are ethical reason for inclusion – people have a right to have a say in decisions that will effect their future.

Systems thinking – how do we make sense of complexity and how do we make decisions and take action in the face of uncertainty? Systems thinking brings a holistic and interdisciplinary perspective to complex problems. Systems thinking is about the methodologies and approaches that can be used to better understand the internal dynamics and interactions of complex social and ecological systems. In particular systems approaches help to contextualise science and technology within hard systems, hard systems within soft (or social) systems and soft systems within ethical and spiritual systems.

Within each of these three areas are a broad range of methodologies and tools that can be used in a very practical way to support different stakeholders participate in learning processes that take a systemic approach to the challenges of sustainable development.

6.1.2 On Ethics

There is always an ethical dimensions to MSPs. Often the issues with which MSP engage have difficult ethical issues at their core. Consider for example the provision of cheap retroviral drugs for HIV suffers in the developing world. It brings to the fore a clash in the rights of the poor with the patent rights of the pharmaceutical industry and involves difficult and complex ethical issues. Both sets of rights can be argued as legitimate and whatever course of action is taken there are positive and negative consequences for others (for example

the future willingness of the pharmaceutical industry to invest in research for other diseases that afflict predominantly the poor).

It also needs to be remembered that facilitation itself has many ethical aspects. It is important that facilitators and designers of MSP processes recognise that there is no such thing as a neutral facilitator and thus there is always an ethical dimension to facilitation. There are many things that facilitators can do to ensure ethical standards in their facilitation practice.

6.1.3 Relevant Domains of Theoretical Discourse

1. The constructivist view of knowledge How is knowledge constructed by humans? How do we know what we know? What is 'truth'? What is the role and validity of scientific knowledge in society? These are all questions associated with the philosophy of knowledge. For a large part of the twentieth century, a positivist and realist philosophy associated with the classical biophysical sciences dominated intellectual thought. Positivism holds that there is a 'reality', independent of human experience, the true nature of which can be uncovered objectively by recourse to the empirical methods of science (Miller 1985). Over the last 20 years or so an alternative paradigm called constructivism has emerged from the social sciences and the 'new' biophysical sciences. The constructivist paradigm assumes that knowledge and reality, as humans experience it, are socially constructed (Berger and Luckman 1991). These different (epistemological) assumptions about knowledge have significant implications for how the role of science is to be understood in society, how social phenomena are viewed and explained, how research is conducted and for the role of dialogue and social learning in social change.

2. Human motivation and action The whole edifice of twentieth-century economic and political theory revolves on the assumption that human nature is inherently individualistic, self-interested and competitive. The roots of this assumption are multifarious and lie deep in Western thought and history. They can be traced to the Sophists in Plato's time, Hobbes' political theory (Mansbridge 1990: 3-12), the application of Darwin's 'survival of the fittest' human society (Dryzek 1996), and the Calvinist religious outlook (Daly and Cobb 1989). The difficulty for current societies is that our economic and political institutions are largely based on these assumptions and that the notion of a fixed and selfish 'human nature' has become accepted social wisdom that legitimises these institutions. Repudiating, or at least questioning such assumptions, is a critical step in any debate about alternative economic and political arrangements.

3. Cognition and learning Closely aligned to the above theoretical discourses is that of cognition and learning. Cognition is the process by which humans acquire knowledge and understanding through thought, experience and the senses. It is important to recognise that humans are emotional beings who rationalise and make sense of their worlds in ways that may seem perfectly rational to one individual and quite irrational to another. This can be understood by seeing cognition as involving an interaction between four dimensions: values, emotions and goals; action; perception of context and theory (Röling 2002). These dimensions can also be applied at the level of collective cognition to try and help understand how groups, organisations or societies make sense of their worlds and reach consensus over what is 'rational' behaviour.

Allied to cognition are theories about learning. Very influential for participatory approaches has been Kolbe's (Kolbe 1984) theory of experiential learning. This theory has proved to be extremely useful in the design of participatory/interactive processes (Bawden 1989; Bawden and Packham 1993).

4. Power, social change, conflict and negotiation One of the criticisms of participatory approaches based on ideas of collective learning is that they neglect issues of power and conflict and over-simplify dynamics of social change. When naively implemented, such

approaches can indeed easily be captured and dominated by more powerful groups. Some theories emphasise conflict as the major driver of social change, while others emphasise cooperation or are concerned with the dynamics between conflict and cooperation. The key point is that, in facilitating social learning, ideas and assumptions about social change should be made explicit.

5. Holism and systems thinking Over the last 50 years, the field of systems thinking has emerged as a meta-discipline in response to the limitations of the reductionist and fragmented nature of traditional discipline-based approaches of science (Bawden 1996) (Checkland 1981). Systems thinking has a practical intent, as it aims to solve complex problems of both a physical and social nature through the conceptual and analytical insight provided by the metaphor of a 'system' (Capra 1997). The critical point about taking a systemic, as opposed to a reductionist, analysis is that a 'system' has emergent properties, which means that the whole is more than the sum of its constituent parts. Hence, understanding a system requires looking at it holistically and recognising how the parts interact. Problems, such as those faced by transboundary water resources management, involve complex social and biophysical relationships. Systems thinking and methodologies can help stakeholders to understand, analyse and conceptualise this complexity.

6. Governance and democracy Over the last century, there has been a massive upward trend in the number of states that have, or at least claim to have, democratic government *(Giddens 1994, 104). Significantly, Giddens, Habermas and Beck 'all make the case, in one way or another, that more democracy and more radical democracy is an essential precondition of creating environmental sustainability' (Goldblatt 1996). But how this translates to appropriate forms and structures of governance is intensely debated on practical and moral grounds (Held 1996). In modern industrialised society, liberal democracy has become synonymous with democracy *per se*. However, people are becoming disillusioned with politics, Giddens (1994, 116) claims, because 'key areas of social life – some of them areas they are able reflexively to master, others of them areas which are sources of threat – no longer correspond to any accessible domains of political authority.' Authors such as Habermas, Giddens, Beck, Dryzek, Held and Pepper highlight common themes: a concern for ecological decay; the anti-democratic consequences of unbridled economic power; the consequences of an unbalanced use of instrumental reason; and the need for forms of democracy that open opportunities for constructive political dialogue between ordinary citizens. For social learning to be effective, communication processes are needed that view democracy as a platform for dialogue and debate.

6.2 Using Interactive Processes Methodologies and Tools

At the heart of facilitating social learning lies the capacity to design a process in which different stakeholder groups engage diverse forums and activities so that knowledge is generated; ideas, values and perspectives are shared and contested; conflicts are negotiated; principles for action defined; and collectively binding decisions are made. The skill and art of facilitating social learning is to create situations where people can learn collectively how to improve their situations. This does not necessarily mean trying to gather all interested stakeholders in one place at one time. Rather, a facilitated social learning process is likely to run over months, if not years, and will involve different combinations of stakeholders working together in diverse ways.

A process may be initiated with a gathering of representatives from all interested parties to clarify core issues. This may then lead to more extensive consultation, learning and negotiation amongst particular stakeholder groups. Research and investigation groups may be undertaken to gather necessary information. School education and media activities may play a role in generating broader understanding of the issues. Different combinations of stakeholders can be brought together to discuss specific subjects. A representative coordinating group may oversee and facilitate the entire process. Empowerment of some groups may be required for

them to participate effectively and equitably. It is likely that the capacity of all stakeholders will need to be built in various ways to enable effective participation.

The wide use of participatory planning processes has led to the development of diverse methodologies with varying purposes (see Table 4.2). A social learning process is likely to utilise some or many of these methodologies in various combinations. A skilled social learning facilitator will adapt such methodologies or create their own specific methodology to meet the unique circumstances of the particular situation. A key part of facilitating the learning process is to use methods and tools that enable people to visualise and understand issues, to communicate with each other, analyse options and reach decisions in structured way. Many different participatory tools have been developed to aid such interactive learning such as: rich pictures, brain storming; mapping; SWOT analysis; meta-plan; matrix analysis; conceptual modelling.

Methodologies

- Adult learning circles
- Learning systems methodology
- Logical framework approach
- Open space technology
- Participatory (rural) appraisal
- Gender analysis
- Citizens juries
- Scenario analysis
- Search conferences
- Stakeholder analysis
- Soft systems methodology
- Systems assessment
- Technology of participation
- OOPP (ZOPP/GOPP)

Methodological pluralism is essential for social learning. This means being able to develop and use diverse methodologies that may range from reductionist scientific research to creative artistic expression as a means of developing community understanding. Critical is the integration of scientific perspectives and political processes. Unfortunately, such integration is often difficult or simply does not occur due to an incompatibility in the paradigms and interests of biophysical scientists, social scientists, politicians, bureaucrats, social activists, resource users and community members. The art of designing a context-specific social learning process is to combine methods, tools, techniques and activities that will enable different actors to communicate and transcend such incompatibilities.

Tools and Techniques

- Rich pictures
- Brainstorming
- Visioning
- Questionnaires and surveys
- Cause and effect mapping
- Historical analysis
- Locality mapping
- Focus groups
- Semi-structured interviewing
- Flow diagrams
- Role plays
- SWOT analysis
- Institutional linkages
- Information tabulation and graphing
- Matrix analysis
- Issue analysis
- Card technique (Metaplan)
- Nominal group technique
- Action planning

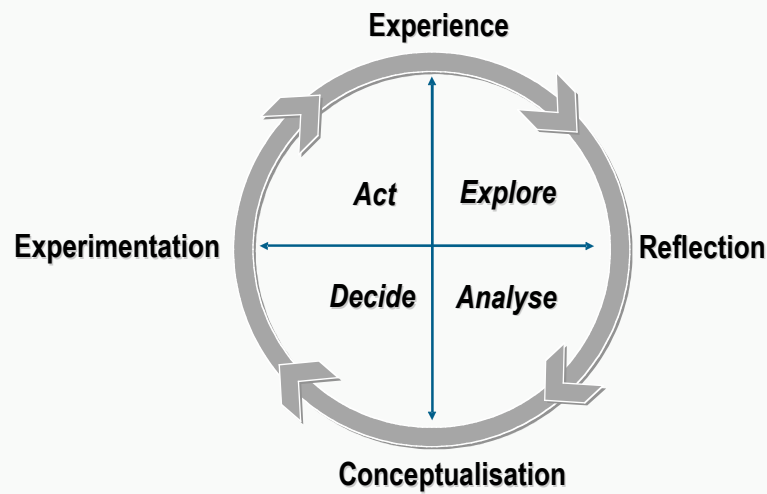
6.2.1 Using the Experiential Learning Cycle

The model of learning shown above is based on the theory of experiential learning developed by Kolbe (Kolbe 1984). Learning according to this theory involves a four-stage cyclical process. An individual or group must engage in each stage of the cycle in order to effectively learn from their experience. Think about some skills or insights that you have learnt and you can probably identify the four stages you went through!

The cycle starts with individual or group experiences of events (or things). But these experiences alone do not lead to learning. First it is necessary to reflect on this experience. This means exploring what happened, noting observations, paying attention to the feelings of yourself and others. It means building up a multidimensional picture of the experience.

The second stage of the cycle involves analysing all this information to arrive at theories, models or concepts that explain the experience in terms of why things happened the way they did. This theorising or conceptualising about experience is very important to learning. It is where solutions to problems, innovative ideas and lateral thinking come from. Drawing on existing theories is a crucial part of this stage. Armed with this understanding of past experience, the next stage involves deciding what is most important and generating ideas about how to improve future actions. It is working out how to put what has been learned into practice.

Experiential learning (Adapted from Kolbe)

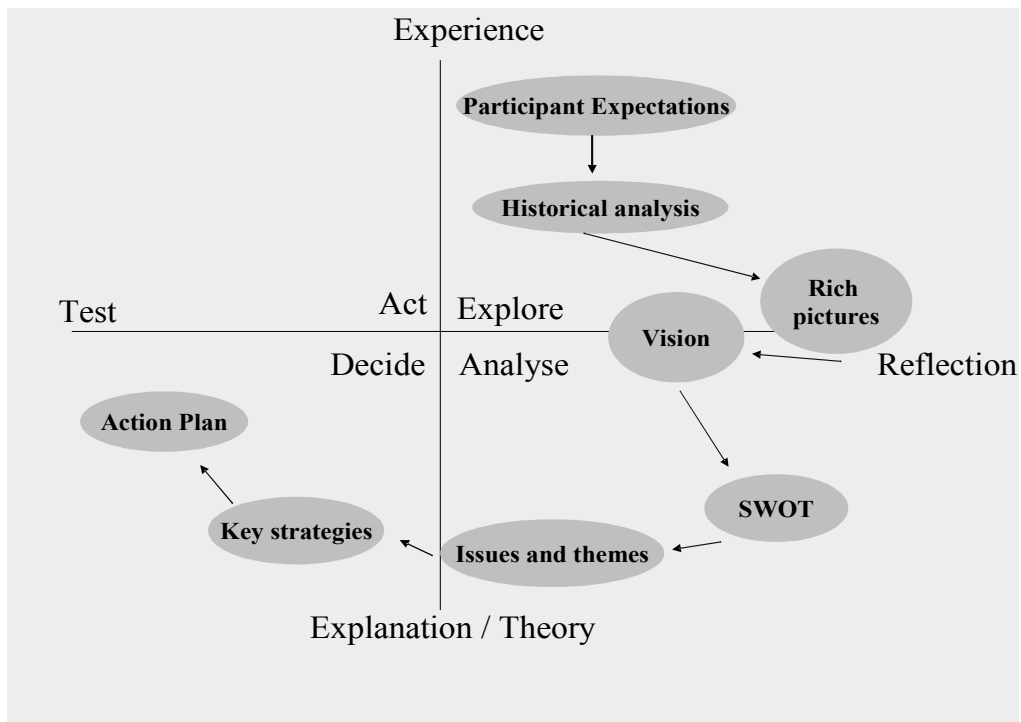


Finally, in the fourth stage, putting these new ideas or solutions into practice by taking action will result in a new experience. And so the cycle continues. Being explicit about moving through each stage of the learning cycle has proven to be a very helpful tool in problem solving and project management. What is both interesting and important for group work is that different people tend to have different styles of learning and, therefore, place more emphasis, or feel more comfortable, in some stages of the learning cycle than others. For example, some people just like exploring lots of new ideas and situations without ever moving on to taking action. Other people tend to jump to conclusions without fully exploring or analysing the whole situation. Then there are those people who are happy as long as they are busy and don't think too much about whether what they are doing will produce results. By being aware of these styles, in individuals or in groups, problem solving and decision making can be dramatically improved.

Different participatory techniques are more or less useful at different stages of the learning cycle. The next box shows which of the techniques are probably most appropriate for each stage of the learning cycle. The participatory techniques relate to activities leading up to taking action, so none fall into the action segment.

Participatory Tool	Phase in Learning Cycle
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	Explore	Analyse	Decide	Act
Brainstorming	✓			
Visioning	✓			
Questionnaires and surveys	✓			
Rich pictures	✓	✓		
Cause and effect mapping	✓	✓		
Historical analysis	✓	✓		
Locality mapping	✓	✓		
Focus groups				
Semi-structured interviewing	✓			
Flow diagram		✓		
Role plays	✓	✓		
SWOT analysis	✓	✓		
Institutional linkages	✓	✓		
Tabulation and graphing		✓		
Matrix analysis			✓	
Issue analysis		✓		
Card technique		✓	✓	
Nominal group technique			✓	
Action planning			✓	



6.3 Ensuring Supportive Institutions

Traditionally, participatory approaches have focused primarily on the communication process between stakeholders and less on the institutional dimension. Here, the term ‘institution’ is not being used as shorthand for organisation, but in the broad sociological sense to mean any established law, custom, social practice or organisation that forms part of the social structure and influences the regular patterns of human behaviour.

The most obvious institutional need for social learning is the creation of some form of platform that enables different actors to come together and which gives legitimacy to a process of interactive learning. For transboundary water resources management, this typically involves establishing some form of organisation with an established mandate from involved governments. Who constitutes such an organisation, the powers it has, the resources it controls, the legitimacy it has in the eyes of stakeholders all greatly influence the capacity for social learning.

However, the institutional dimension does not end here. A social learning approach requires support from government policies and programmes. Government agencies need to change their culture to take on a more facilitative (as opposed to command and control) role, that is, learning to develop a more communicative style. Social learning also depends on a constructive and balanced engagement between government, business and civil society, which in turn requires attention to building social capital. Media institutions play a critical role in shaping societal perceptions – they can work for or against processes of social learning. Education systems are also critical, from the messages school children bring home to their parents through to the way graduates are trained. All these issues become embedded as cultural norms and attitudes. Therefore, transboundary water resources management needs to understand the importance of a supportive institutional setting – in all the ways described above – for effective communication and social learning.

It needs to be recognised, of course, that institutions are by definition what gives society stability over time and are consequently not easy to change. However, the rapid pace of technological, economic and industrial development and the emerging consequences and risks of this development have created a situation where society’s capacity for institutional reform often lags behind what is needed to respond effectively to rapid changes.

It is important to clarify what is meant by the term institutions and why institutions are so important.

Let’s take an example - South Africa and Australia share a common national ‘institution’. In South Africa it is called a braai, in Australia it is the famous Aussie B-B-Q. We often think of institutions as being organisations – schools, departments of agriculture, research bodies, NGOs. Certainly such organisations are important institutions within society. But there are many other types of institutions that structure the way our society works, or indeed create problems for society in responding quickly to new situations. The way we greet someone, our national constitution and laws, the way markets work, the mechanisms of government decision making, newspapers, religions and our norms and values are all examples of different types of institutions. Regular patterns of behaviour characteristic of our culture, such as a braai or a BBQ, are also institutions.

Institutions are important because they structure the way humans behave. Because of institutions we know how to behave when visiting friends, attending a wedding or shopping in the market. Because of institutions we know about how government works and our responsibilities and rights as citizens. Land tenure, for example, is another institution that has a dramatic impact on how land is used and managed.

You can think of institutions as the ‘rules of the game’ of living in a society. Some of these rules (institutions) are formalised in our legal systems, for example, on which side of the road

one is expected to drive. Other rules (institutions) have no legal basis but are part of our customary heritage, for example, how celebrations for different events in life are conducted.

Institutions are so common to us all that we often take them for granted and don't think very deeply or consciously about them. The dilemma of institutions is that, on the one hand, they are essential for the functioning of society, but, on the other, they are also very often the reason why things go terribly wrong in society. By their very definition institutions are the more permanent and stable features of social life and hence are often difficult and slow to change.

One of the key features of modern society is in fact a very rapid pace of change driven to a large extent by technological innovation and functioning of globalised market mechanisms. What we find is that many of our other institutions are unable to change rapidly enough to keep pace with the consequences of technological and economic change and we find ourselves struggling to cope with environmental problems, growing inequality and poverty, and violence.

Examples of Institutions:

- Newspapers
- Parliament
- Marriage
- Universities
- Government Agencies
- Laws
- Market mechanisms
- Land tenure

6.4 Developing interpersonal communication and leadership capacities

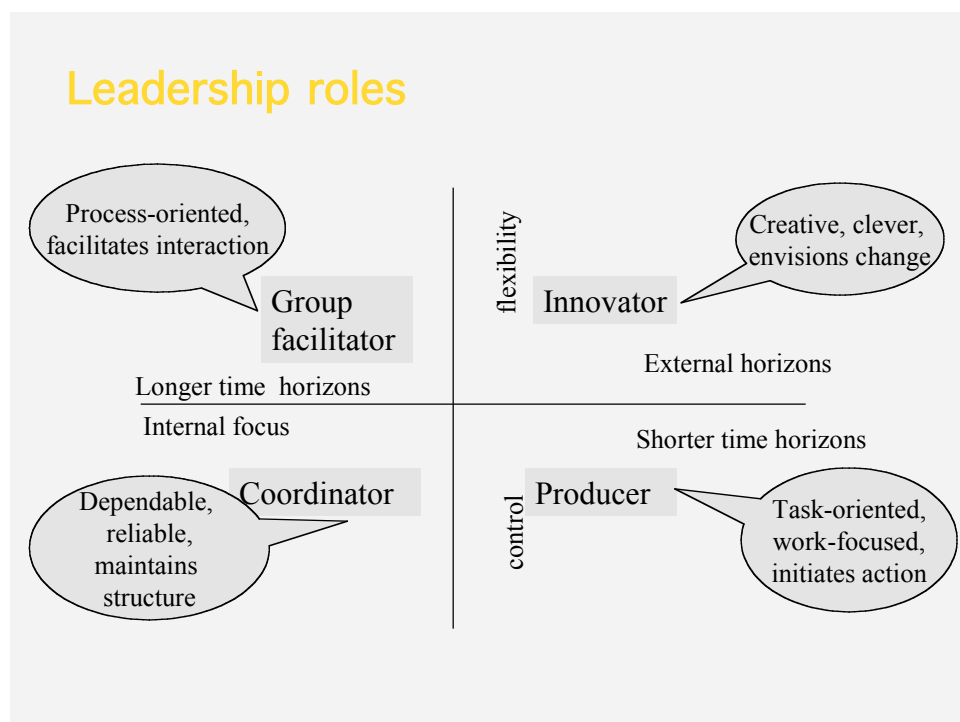
Effective social learning requires a high level of facilitation skills and enlightened leadership from within stakeholder groups. Although facilitation capacities are improving, there are too few professional facilitators to deal with the demand. It remains disappointing how few professionals entering the natural resource management sector have received training in facilitation.

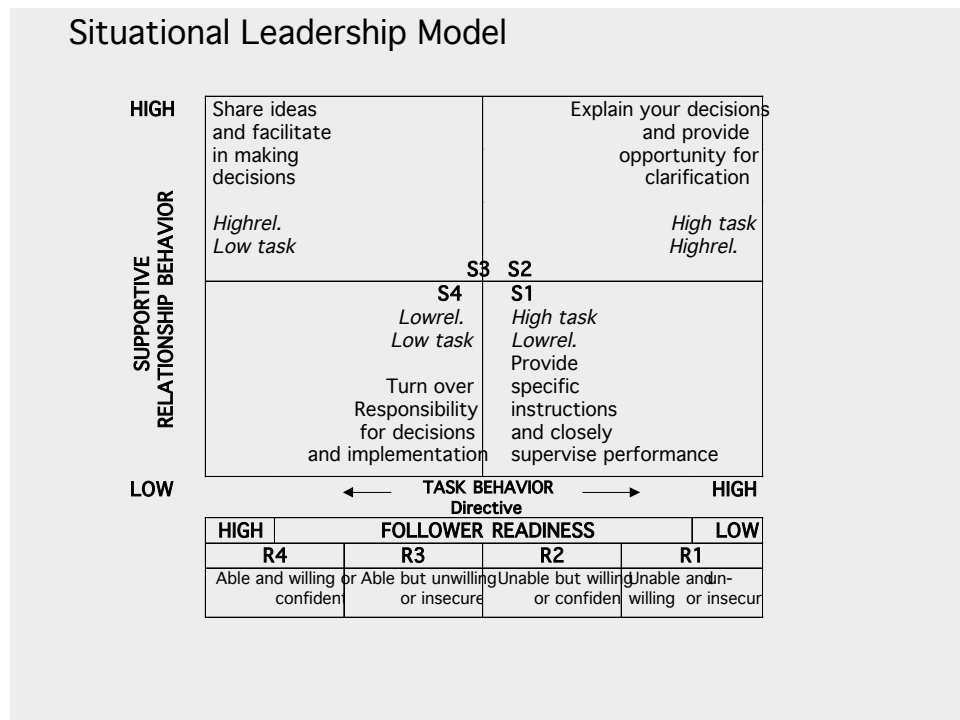
Facilitation capacity needs to be seen not just as the skills to facilitate a stakeholder workshop but as the ability to understand the culture and politics of a situation and to design and manage a long-term social learning process. A facilitator needs a good grasp of the theoretical, methodological and institutional aspects of social learning outlined earlier in this chapter. They also need to be knowledgeable about the subject area with which they are dealing.

This calls for a new type of facilitation professional. Such a person needs a multi-disciplinary training, alongside a high level of personal awareness about the role they are playing. Unfortunately, many facilitators are simply given a bag of participatory methods, but their lack of understanding leads to a mechanical application of methods in inappropriate and ineffective ways.

Facilitation capacity needs to be viewed not just in terms of individuals but also in terms of organisations. Increasingly, government agencies, for example, find themselves taking on more of a facilitation role, particularly as agencies move from providing technical pre-packaged answers to developing innovative solutions in dialogue with stakeholders. This often requires a significant internal cultural change, employment of different types of staff and the development of new training programmes. Critical is that incentive structures in organisations match the new way of working.

Social learning, however, cannot rely just on the skills of facilitators. The leadership qualities and behaviours of different stakeholder groups are also critical. While a facilitator may be working towards a participatory and inclusive process, there is no guarantee that community, government or business leaders share this outlook, understanding or capacity. Developing an understanding of what a communicative strategy for problem-solving entails may require careful negotiation and leadership capacity building.

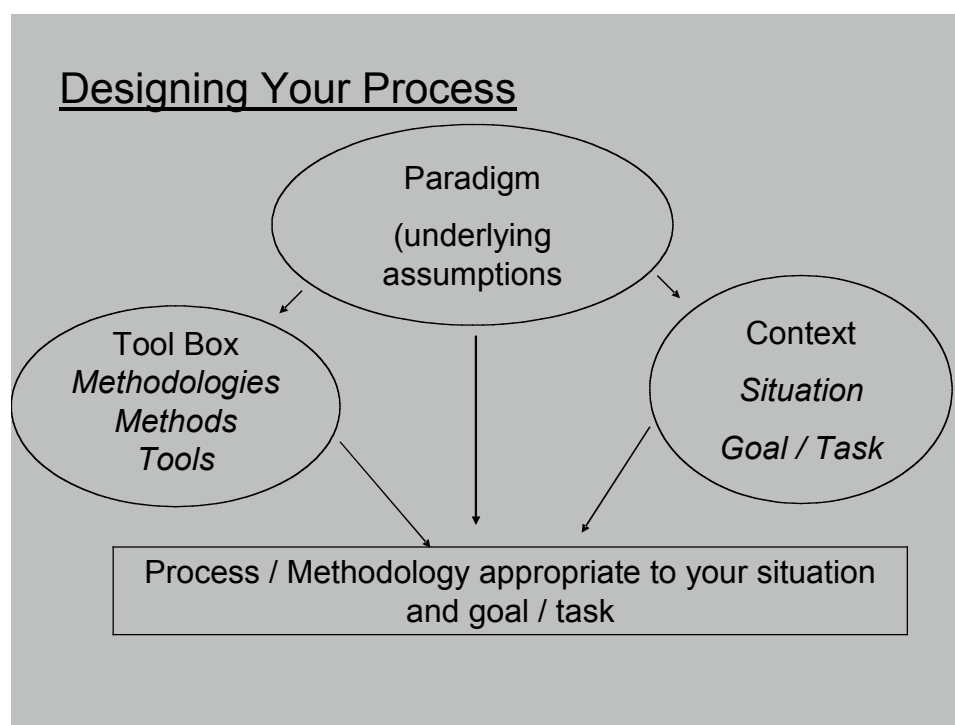




7 Designing a Multi-Stakeholder Process

In Section Five a core process model for a MSPs was introduced. This section takes the model further by providing a more detailed discussion of what to consider when designing an MSP. As emphasised in Section Five the elements presented here are intended only as an initial check list. Each MSP will be unique and will need to be designed according to the specific needs of the situation. Further few MSPs ever go exactly as planned and there will be need for constant adaptation and redesign throughout the process.

The figure below illustrates what is required to design a multi-stakeholder process (methodology) appropriate to a particular situation or goal. First it is important to be clear on the underlying paradigms (assumptions) of those involved, including those taking a lead role in designing and facilitating the process. Second, it is critical to have a thorough understanding of the situation in which the MSP will be intervening. Third, a broad range of methodologies, methods and tools need to be drawn on, adapted and linked together into the required process.



7.1 Setting up

Setting up constitutes the beginning phase of any MSP. It's here that the reasons, focus and direction are explored and initial decisions are made on whether or not to proceed with the initiative. The importance of 'setting up' is often overlooked due to well-intentioned haste or the pressures placed on groups to respond to urgent issues. The way an MSP is set up can spell success or failure for the initiative right from the start.

7.1.1 Clarify the reasons for an MSP

Examining why a particular group of stakeholders wants to engage in some form of MSP is a critical first step. It is important to ask:

- What are the motivating factors?
- What drives people? What are their major concerns?
- How will an MSP enhance what is already being done?
- Is it worth the effort?

It is very important that all the key stakeholders and the wider community are involved in the process of clarifying the reasons for an MSP. The process of developing a shared vision needs to start right at the beginning.

Being clear about your purpose is fundamental to knowing what sort of institutional arrangements will be needed, who will need to be involved, what planning processes will be needed, what resources must be secured, and what the priorities should be.

Beware of the development of a 'cargo cult' mentality (becoming involved just to access funding) amongst participants. It is important to focus on real needs and priorities and how to utilise available resources effectively. While external resources will often be critical, do not develop an initiative just to chase program funding.

7.1.2 Undertake initial situation analysis (stakeholders, issues, institutions, power and politics)

Early on you need to understand the regional and wider environmental, economic, political and funding environment in which you are operating. Of particular importance is undertaking an initial stakeholder and institutional analysis.

As a prelude to more detailed planning it is important to explore how change has occurred, why different things are the way they are, and why groups and individuals hold their particular perspectives. Trends, key local information and historical changes, as well as a greater understanding of why the community may be reticent, even hostile to ‘opportunities for consultation’, can be gleaned from examining all relevant (written and verbal) information sources.

The context for a MSP is not isolated. It can be affected by markets, politics, technology, people, programs and policies both within and beyond boundary of the MSP. Your MSP in turn may influence activities and policies outside its boundaries.

If done well, the ‘setting up’ phase contributes significantly to the group’s development: a shared understanding is gained of the history and background to situation and problems / goals of the stakeholders.

- Determine what processes have been used previously in your region (e.g. to gain community input). Which ones were successful? Don’t blunder in and repeat mistakes of the past.
- In many areas, considerable discussion, work, trials, consultation, mapping, review, data-gathering and analysis have already been done. This is your chance to use and build on — not duplicate - existing strategies, initiatives, studies and information. Pull it all together, line it up and decide which bits are critical for you.
- Identify the gaps in data/information. Determine what else you need and who has responsibility for getting it.
- Learn from history - locally, regionally, your region, other places.
- It is important to become familiar with various relevant policies, strategies programs and projects. Often these are informed by trends and research which you may not have access to.
- Develop a summary of the situation and communicate this with the key stakeholders. This will assist stakeholders to improve their awareness of the context.
- Map the stakeholders. Determine which are key/critical to the success of your MSP and/or are working to achieve similar outcomes. Determine how best to enrol them, influence them and work with them.



Examine relevant trends

Clarify (where possible) the trends that are evident in relation to: civic participation, demographics, technology, skills and extent of the labour force, available work, expressed values and concerns, family and relationships, economic and market, institutional, communication, natural resources management.



Information on the web

Many strategic, policy and program documents can now be found on the web.

7.1.3 Establish an interim steering body

To get an MSP off the ground will usually require an interim steering body or activation committee. Considering it as ‘interim’ often enables things to get started by removing some of the politics about control and concerns about being ‘stuck with all the responsibility’.

Beginning with interim management gives you a chance to see how things develop and then make a more informed decision as to the final coordination and management responsibilities. It also enables you to be more flexible in responding to the distinctions between planning and implementing.

- What type of body is appropriate? Don’t confuse an ‘advisory body’ with a ‘management body’ - members often grow weary and withdraw if their well-considered advice is constantly ignored. You need to be sure you are not just ‘placating’.
- Ask around — study other MSPs. See what structure best suits your needs and focus. Consider how a structure can be modified to best suit your needs.
- Clearly determine and communicate the responsibility, role and expected life of the interim steering body.

7.1.4 Build stakeholders support

Right at the beginning it is critical to start building community support. The key is to involve people at the start; this enables them to build the vision, assume high levels of involvement and develop ownership. MSPs require significant support from many different players. Stakeholders need to be confident that not only are their concerns and suggestions being listened to and considered, but that the MSP will deliver for the whole community and not just for a few people who have gained influence.

Being open and inclusive also reduces the possibility of being undermined later on by those who were not involved from the start.

- Cast your net wide (residents, community groups, grower/industry groups, local government, regional bodies, enterprise centres, economic think-tanks, business, corporate).
- Publicise the intent of the MSP. Actively and consistently welcome contributions and comment.
- Involve the right level. Insure that the people involved are at the right level to commit their organisation.
- Organise true participation. Listen to stakeholders. Take notice. Demonstrate that you have listened and incorporated their concerns, understandings and suggestions.
- Consider carefully the influence or independence of stakeholders and look also outside the region.

Determine stakeholder communications. Those directly involved as well as a wider network of stakeholders need to be kept informed — consider a variety of events and methods to keep informing.



Spread the knowledge

Spread the knowledge. Get each person already involved to discuss the proposed development of a MSP with ten others (business, government, friends, family, community groups) over the next fortnight.

7.1.5 Establish the scope mandate and stakeholder expectations

With key relevant stakeholders it is important to reach consensus early on about the boundaries of the MSP. It is easy for the scope of the MSP to become so wide that little can be achieved. It is also very important to understand the mandate for the MSP. Is the MSP officially sanctioned by government? Are different stakeholder groups supportive of the idea? Do some groups see the process as legitimate and other not?

In a complex multi-stakeholder situation it is easy for very different interpretations and expectation to evolve amongst the different groups. While this difficulty can often never be fully overcome the more effort that goes into reaching some shared initially understanding the better.

Of course it must always be recognised that as a MSP proceeds the scope and mandate may well change. If it does, once again it is important for this to be explicit and for it to be understood by the stakeholders involved.

With many different stakeholders involved, all with potentially different interests try to ensure that expectations are as clear as possible and widely shared and understood. Poorly defined expectations at the start can be a major source of conflict later on in the process.

7.1.6 Outline the process, time frame, institutional requirements and resource needs

In the setting-up stage it is important to be as clear as possible about the overall process and time frame of the MSP and about the institutional requirements. The different stakeholders need to know what sort of meeting, workshops and committees will be held and when. The process must be transparent so that feelings of being manipulated don't emerge.

Ensure that your chosen structure will maintain your independence whilst providing opportunities for productive partnerships.



Checklist of principles which should underpin MSP and institutional arrangements

<i>Striving for...</i>	<i>Explanation</i>
<i>Sustainability</i>	as a central goal, including taking a precautionary approach so as

	not to diminish opportunities for future generations; also recognising the pre-eminent importance of ecological processes upon which communities and economies ultimately depend
<i>Equity</i>	for its own sake, but also as a means of reducing conflict
<i>Inclusiveness and participation</i>	encouraging a high level of diverse stakeholder representation, involvement and ownership; participatory process that is clear, genuine, predictable and maintained over time — recognising that ‘participation’ is a highly complex matter
<i>Accountability</i>	of all empowered participants to their constituents: i.e. to whom is the institution accountable? In practice, how is this accountability evidenced?
<i>Effectiveness</i>	of the processes to really make a difference: i.e. does the capacity match the intent?
<i>Efficiency</i>	of the processes: i.e. do the ends (outcomes) justify the means (costs, trade-offs, time, dollars)? Also, has there been, or is there, unnecessary duplication?
<i>Durability</i>	relative to short-lived or ad hoc initiatives: i.e. has the institution had, or is likely to have, sufficient longevity to persist, experiment, learn and adapt, relative to short-lived or ad hoc initiatives?

Based on: Dale and Bellamy (1998) Regional resource use planning in rangelands

MSPs require time and resources. Based on an outline of the process and institutional needs the required resources and their availability needs to be carefully assessed. Items to consider include:

- Employment of professional facilitation
- Time input of steering committee
- Costs of hosting workshops and meetings
- Background work to be done by different stakeholder groups
- Costs involved in setting up a web-site and producing publicity materials
- Research and investigation costs.

7.2 Planning Strategically

Where are we now? Where do we want to be? How do we get there? What are our aspirations? What are our problems? What are the likely future scenarios arising from different courses of action? These are the questions at the core of planning strategically.

This phase of the model embodies a practical, commonsense approach to determining and documenting the framework of both what you wish to achieve in the long term and the broad directions you will take to get there. It requires a strong emphasis on ‘process’, because gaining participation, ownership and support are crucial to any MSP.

Strategic planning is often made out to be more complex than it really is. In essence, strategic planning asks and attempts to answer some basic questions:

- *Where are we now?* This involves undertaking an analysis of the present situation and stakeholders, plus the relevant history. It may also include using tools such as SWOT analysis to provoke discussion of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats;
- *Where do we want to be?* This involves: developing a vision of a preferred future; articulating the purpose of the MSP; agreeing on core principles; developing goals (desired end-results or eventual impact of action) and objectives (the specific shorter-term results necessary to achieve goals);
- *How do we get there?* Developing action plans that articulate what needs to be done, by whom, by when, and with what resources;
- *How do we know what has been achieved?* Agreeing on suitable performance indicators — ways of measuring and evaluating the extent to which objectives have been achieved. Also, agreeing on a monitoring system to support evaluation and management;
- *How do we adapt?* Thinking about how the MSP can cyclically improve, reassess and adapt.

7.2.1 Build stakeholders understanding of each other's values, motivations, concerns and interests

Any MSP will contain people and groups with a diversity of aspirations. If you are going to work together on what is effectively a series of joint projects aimed at achieving a shared vision, then understanding and accepting what drives people and what colours and informs their judgements and their thinking (i.e. 'where they are coming from') are crucial.

Shared understanding also renders the tough decisions that have to be made far less threatening.

- Values are often expressed in terms of behaviour. What is important to you/others? What principles guide you/others? What are the underlying values that guide/colour your/others' thinking, reasoning and action?
- Draw out, gain understanding and acknowledge the aspirations of the stakeholders in your region. Share this understanding.
- How do we intend to operate as an RO? What principles will guide our MSP?
- What do we have to do to ensure continued motivation?

7.2.2 Generate visions for the future

In simple terms, a vision is a shared practical picture of the desired future. Having well-developed and widely-shared long-term visions is critical for providing a common focus and ensuring that you are 'pulling and pushing in the same direction'.

Very often planning begins by focusing on problems and how to overcome them (typical of the logical framework approach). While it is certainly a useful part of the planning process to identify problems, problem based planning can become negative and miss new opportunities. Also people tend to function from the basis of how they would like things to be in their lives in the future on not just on problems.

As your initiative gains momentum it is often important to keep re-focusing on your MSP vision - it isn't something you 'do' and then forget about.

It is also important to think of the secondary layer - 'the visions of how to achieve the visions'. Again, keep listening for new and alternative ways that can be fed into the next elements of the 'planning strategically' phase.

- Find creative ways to glean what people would like to see happen; don't limit yourselves to the realms of today's practicalities. Often being daring (also called 'blue sky mining') picks up possibilities you would otherwise have missed.
- What vision do you have for this region 10, 20, 50,100 years down the track? What are the outcomes you would like to see in place?
- With all these individual visions you need to collectively determine a shared and common vision. There may be several visions relating to different aspects of your MSP focus: e.g. 'social', 'enterprise', 'participation'.
- Don't use jargon. Your vision statement needs to state clearly what you want to achieve. All participants and contributors need to be able to refer easily to it, to understand it and to be re-enthused or inspired to either maintain or begin involvement in the initiative.
- Putting pictures to the vision often makes it more tangible and attainable and helps in maintaining focus and enthusiasm.



"Take the time to set a clear vision but maintain enough flexibility to take advantage of opportunities as they present themselves."



"It is equally important to keep the vision fluid. Don't have the words printed in a full colour brochure or etched in stone in the corner of the building. Visions are always evolving; they are an expression of our hearts' desire. As we work toward our vision, we learn more about ourselves (individually and as an organisation) and other possibilities become clearer."

[Senge et al. \(1994\)](#) *The fifth discipline fieldbook*

7.2.3 Identify issues (problems) and opportunities

Taking the time to identify key issues and opportunities enables critical thinking about both the obstacles you will have to negotiate and the opportunities you can grab. Understanding and working with these will allow you to work smarter and will assist the attainment of your vision.

The more diverse ‘the heads’ you have contributing and analysing the better the range and quality of the analysis. Ensure that you have the broad range of interests and expertise represented when canvassing for issues and opportunities.

- Look at the broad spectrum, including trends, issues, institutional ways, people, consumers, moods, resources, markets, workplaces, livelihoods, lifestyles, historical developments, conservation, power and authority.
- What are the key issues that your region has to deal with?
- What are the key threats to realising your vision? How can you manage these? What could happen if you ignore them?
- What opportunities will greatly assist you in realising your vision? What are some of the opportunities and links you should develop or enhance?
- Gather data to justify, support and confirm perceptions, as well as to identify contradictions. Link back to data collected and analysed whilst examining the regional and wider context in the ‘setting up’ component.
- Road-test your perceptions with the wider industry and community.



"For consultation to be more than token, and for consultation to become participation, the public needs the opportunity to make informed contributions. They need access to relevant information and the time to consider it."

7.2.4 Examine future scenarios and feasible options

Ensuring your decisions are well informed by both the earlier information-gathering and analysis as well as by the breadth of contributors will pay dividends in terms of both the quality of your decisions and the confidence you can have in them. You will also be in a better position to clearly and rationally discuss your initiative.

Be aware that frustrations of not actually committing your RO to a decision often result in losing people: they have other demands and other things to do with their time, and many can only tolerate ‘planning’ for so long. Unless they see demonstrated merit and action in pursuing the initiative, they will drift away or leave abruptly.

- In dealing with tough decisions, remember to reflect back and use the work you have done in seeking out and analysing information, and consider the values you are operating with.
- A well-developed understanding of the options available, decisions made and the justification for these should lead to a reduction in the interference of both small ‘p’ and big ‘P’ politics.
- You will need to understand the principles of conflict resolution to ensure there is equity in the decision-making process.
- Remember also to consider the ‘consequences of inaction’. Whilst big decisions are not always easy to make, they may be assisted if you consider the consequences of inaction.

- Making decisions and gaining ‘runs on the board’ are significant motivators. Often a ‘best-bet decision’ based on information, analysis and collective experience is better than putting off a decision until you have ‘all the data’.



"Consultation, participation and negotiation do not necessarily bring unanimity. Responsibility for decision-making means just than, making decisions."



Try to examine issues from different perspectives

Given our economic objectives, what community and environmental benefits may be gained? What might have to be the trade-offs?

Given our environmental objectives, what economic and community benefits may be gained? What might have to be the trade-offs?

Given our community objectives, what economic and environmental benefits may be gained? What might have to be the trade-offs?

7.2.5 Make decisions and agree on key strategies

Being developed

7.2.6 Set objectives and identify actions, timeframes and responsibilities

Once decisions have been made about key strategies and directions the next step is to establish clear objectives, actions and responsibilities. This is a detailed level of planning that can often be done with a smaller group and then shared more widely for feedback.

As far as possible it is important to establish objectives that can be assessed and tracked over time.

For each objective, identify the actions that need to be carried out and who can take responsibility for them.

7.2.7 Document and communicate planning outcomes

Often and MSP will lead to some form of formalised strategy that captures and records the outcomes of the strategic planning phase. A strategy is often thought of as a ‘document’, and in this sense evokes a very static image. The MSP Process Model encourages you to think of a strategy as a living, constantly evolving framework to guide action and investment at the regional scale. Having a clear, concise, easy-to-read document of what you want to achieve and how in broad terms you are going to go about this is a significant milestone for your MSP. This clear strategy enables you to get on with the next stages of ‘implementing and managing’, which is what most people have been working towards. It also enables you to

communicate intentions to all the stakeholders and organisations with which you wish to work.

- Ensure that the strategy articulates: the underlying values and motivations which inform the vision; the vision; the issues and opportunities (detailing how analysis of information has supported them); and decisions made about the directions or strategies to be undertaken to reach the vision, including how you will keep people informed and manage feedback.
- You may need to have a series of documents varying in detail and format targeted at the range of individuals, organisations, investors etc you need and want to inform.
- Consider different ways of communicating the strategy.
- Remember to always work within the bounds of ‘keeping ourselves and others informed’: i.e. constantly telling the story.
- In short: write it, print it, distribute it, talk about it, incorporate feedback, finalise it ... then use it. Later you will need to review it and ensure it is still on target.

Use a mixture of ways to communicate the strategy....

- Perhaps a short public forum where people can hear and discuss it, A series of detailed conferences where people can dissect the technical information which

7.3 Implementing & managing

The attention required for this aspect of a MSP will vary on the nature of the MSP itself. In some cases a MSP may not move into an implementing and managing phase as the objective of the MSP was only to arrive a decisions or perhaps to involved stakeholders in a consultation process. However in many situations the MSP will move onto a phase of involving stakeholder in implementing the strategies and plans identified during the strategic planning phase.

By definition, this component of the initiative should be where the bulk of the resources, time and activity are invested. The earlier time spent researching and planning has been to ensure that the actual ‘doing’ is well-considered and appropriate. To maintain the quality and effectiveness of this component:

- management structures need to be appropriate, responsive and resilient;
- action plans need to be well-considered and responsibilities understood and communicated; and
- participants and stakeholders need to be kept informed and encouraged to ‘critique’ as they contribute.

In addition, due to the complexity of the task coordination across all phases of the initiative needs to be continually improved.

This component of an MSP is also often where people can be busy but not necessarily effective if the ‘setting up’ and ‘planning strategically’ components have not been done, and done well.

7.3.1 Develop integrated initiatives and detailed action plans

Many projects and their associated actions enable achievement of the strategy. The projects have to be well-thought-out and need to be integrated with the broader needs of other strategies and policies that are shaping the region.

- Projects need to be well-planned and well-developed. Seek the assistance of specialists outside your group.
- Determine and then illustrate how the projects are interlinked in achieving the strategy (remember the community, economy and environment foci).
- Reflect the changes in your operating conditions. Link into relevant aspects of regional/State/Commonwealth strategies and policies (e.g. regional catchment strategies, State business incentive programs, national telecommunications initiatives): often they are well-informed and/or can bring resources to your region.
- Constantly check that actions are indeed necessary; unnecessary actions are an easy way to burn out resources and people without achieving desired results.
- Matching projects with a mentor, specialist or reference group can assist

7.3.2 Secure resources and technical support

Now is the time to determine what resources and support you need - and to work at harnessing them. Having planned well, you can be confident of clearly promoting the projects that make up your initiative to potential sponsors, investors and contributors of skills.

- Secure previously-made offers of finance, materials, information and skills — return with your plan and refined thinking.
- When applying for grants or sponsorship, be aware that whilst some are set, with little flexibility, there may be opportunities to negotiate independently for a partnership that better fits your plans.
- Target and organise your lobbying - who can you influence and what will it take? Which members of your MSP have significant influence in the business sector, government spheres etc?
- Explore sponsorship both within and outside the region.
- Develop a skills inventory so you can match up the skills you already have and highlight skills you need to 'rope in', develop and/or pay for. Determine the costs involved.
- Ensure proper and transparent process is followed in the appointments of volunteer and paid staff.



Obtaining and retaining corporate sponsors

Often sponsors are more able to provide their products, services or facilities than money. Thus, seek out sponsors who make the products or services you need. For example:

- for promotion, approach radio/newspapers for complimentary air-time;
- for a small conference, approach the local council for complimentary use of hall facilities;
- if wishing to brief regional business CEOs, approach one for the use of a boardroom.

7.3.3 Develop capacities of stakeholders

Although implementing and managing your MSP is hard work, developing the capability in the region to ensure that you all make the distance is an exciting and critical element.

Assisting people to develop their capabilities gives something back to those who have contributed and helps balance the ledger.

- Teams need all types of people. Take time to value the differences and acknowledge the contributions to be made.
- Develop a skills inventory — what is required to get the job done, and what are the skills of the people involved? - and determine where these are complementary.
- Determine the training and development required.
- The rotation of board/committee members is healthy and enables individuals to develop their capabilities in a supportive environment.
- Sharing the work, often with a guide or mentor, is a practical and powerful way to foster development.
- Investigate the various training and development programs (e.g. local government/landcare facilitation/development commission) — make contact with these to see how you can participate or whether they can prepare and deliver a program for you.
- Approach government programs and business sponsors for resources to develop and deliver programs.



"Build the capacity of your stakeholders. Don't let consultants consult — make them train."



".. around the world we have found that the best leadership environments have frequently taken 10 years or more to mature, and the initial investment continues to pay off as the teams develop."

[*McKinsey and Company \(1996\) Supporting regional leaders: unfinished business*](#)



Look at the skills of your people

In determining your collective skills, tease out the skills individuals have. Don't just go by their

title or dominant occupation, look for and then utilise the capabilities of each person. For example, they might:

- be a good time manager
- be great at organising (e.g. many mothers have honed these skills!)
- be relaxed talking to all sorts of people
- listen well
- summarise well, capture the key points
- have a good economic brain
- present information clearly
- have leadership qualities
- be good at facilitation
- have strong analytical skills
- be good at compiling and interpreting statistics
- be able to delegate
- have media skills or contacts
- be good at linking people, networking
- possess effective negotiation skills
- excel at project management or community participation.



Sharpening the saw!

Covey uses a story to focus our attention on the value of personal and professional development.

Suppose you were to come upon someone in the forest working feverishly to saw down a tree.

"What are you doing?" you ask.

"Can't you see?" comes the impatient reply. "I'm sawing down this tree."

"You look exhausted!" you explain. "How long have you been at it?"

"Over five hours," he returns, "and I'm beat! This is hard work."

"Well, why don't you sharpen the saw?" you enquire. "I'm sure it would go a lot faster."

"I don't have time to sharpen the saw," the man says emphatically. "I'm too busy sawing!"

Covey's 7th habit is 'taking time to sharpen the saw'. This can be yourself, the group or the organisation.

[Covey \(1992\)](#) *The 7 habits of highly effective people*

7.3.4 Establish management structures and manage the implementation process

The appropriate structure for implementing your MSP may be different to the 'interim structure' (refer to 'setting up'), which is geared for managing the development and planning phases. Again, take the time to investigate, canvass and introduce the appropriate structure. Key aspects include: relevance to the region (including the spoken and unspoken politics); the

contribution it can make to good coordination; and its ability to encourage the development of relationships and partnerships with other organisations.

- Remember that you spent some time assessing potential organisation structures in the 'setting up' component; reflect on those assessments now.
- Clarify roles and ensure that there is a clear understanding by all members and the wider community/stakeholders.
- Ensure the community is kept informed of how and why the structure was chosen and what to expect.
- Ensure that all the responsibilities neither fall on just a few nor are actively acquired by just a few.
- Ensure that the structure chosen supports people 'doing' the associated projects.

7.3.5 Maintain stakeholder commitment

Ultimately, people and their commitment to the initiative and to all the decisions and actions that move it along are what make a successful MSP.

We are often hardest on ourselves. Burn-out is very high, because people have commitments other than the MSP. The key players in a MSP needs to dedicate time to determining how to take care of themselves and their team.

- Ensure that you don't just 'expect'.
- Determine how people like to be rewarded/acknowledged and thus become more effective.
- Give feedback and ask for feedback then make the necessary modifications - don't ignore it.
- Keep people informed as to how the decisions are being made and what progress is being made (e.g. open days, radio, media releases) — also continue to provide opportunities for their involvement.
- Celebrate the achievements, small and big - gaining funding for a small project; getting people to the open day; significant contributions; a visit from a neighbouring region or interstate tour; recruiting of new staff; the quarterly meeting.
- Combine training and personal/professional development with acknowledgment and fun. For example: organise inter-regional and interstate tours, hold a training session with partners in one of the region's holiday spots, or have a barbecue at the end of the meeting.
- Ensure there is adequate support and acknowledgment for honorary contributors.



"No-one has a monopoly on bright ideas. Develop a team feeling, encourage a camaraderie amongst members."



Motivation

Ensure that being part of the initiative has personal and professional development spin-offs. For example, share tools, tips and resources with participants that might assist them in their life outside the initiative.

7.4 Learning - Monitoring and Adapting

Monitoring and adapting is a critical aspect of anything we do and not something just tagged on the end. It enables us to improve our process and our results. The oft-heard cries of ‘Why did they re-invent the wheel?’, ‘Why are they putting good money after bad?’ and ‘Why don’t they learn from both their own and others’ mistakes and successes?’ should herald your desire for, and ongoing commitment to, learning and adapting.

7.4.1 Create a learning culture and environment

To learn people need to reflect critically about what is happening, they need to question assumptions and they need to be open to constructive criticism, new ideas and failure. For an individual or a team to learn effectively it is necessary to create a positive learning environment and culture. This means that people are encouraged to raise questions and challenge established thinking, that time is put aside for reviewing progress and that there are incentives for people to work towards improvement. Many different things can contribute to either a supportive or non-supportive learning environment. The style of leaders and facilitators are particularly important in this regard. Other factors include whether people feel their ideas are being taken seriously and acted upon and whether people feel they are in a safe environment for expressing their own uncertainties.

7.4.2 Define success criteria (performance questions and indicators)

How will you know when you have succeeded? Success can be determined for different parts of the process: success with your management structure, success in developing and nurturing partnerships, success in individual projects, success in maintaining commitment, success in keeping others informed.

You also need to determine what resources you need to commit to evaluation and how you will communicate both the process and the results.

- Ensure all projects have a portion of their resources dedicated to evaluation.
- Seek specialist assistance. Many industry groups and government agencies have staff dedicated to ‘continual improvement’ — engage their services. You could, for example, get them to run short workshops on key elements of learning and adapting, or provide a critique on your monitoring and evaluation program.
- Seek information from others about monitoring and evaluation process — aspects of their process may suit your initiative.

Systems are complex and you can’t measure everything (nor should you). However, by measuring some ‘indicators’ you get an idea of what is changing, worsening, improving etc and thus an indication of whether you are being successful. Using indicators to gauge your progress will determine if and when you need to change either the way you currently do things or how you are planning to do things.

- Be clear about what you need to monitor in order to provide the objective information required for gauging progress.
- Depending on what you are monitoring you need to select indicators for inputs, outputs and outcomes.
- Select indicators for different sectors and categories e.g. small business, regional, individual projects. Select indicators that will aid you in determining whether you are reaching the community, environmental and economic objectives of the initiative.



Use [SMART indicators](#)

Indicators need to be Simple, Measurable, Accessible, Relevant and Timely. Moreover, they should be: able to provide a representative picture; easy to interpret and show trends over time; responsive to changes; capable of having their significance assessed by users; analytically sound; available at reasonable cost; and able to be updated.

7.4.3 Develop and implement monitoring mechanisms

To effectively monitor an MSP various systems need to be in place. For example there must be procedures for monitoring various indicators, ways of storing and analysing this information and meetings to discuss the implications of the results. Very often monitoring and evaluation fails because the basic elements of the system have not been put in place. Good monitoring and evaluation requires a systematic and methodical approach, as well as creativity.

In practical terms, monitoring and evaluation can be seen as an early warning system, enabling the project to be re-thought and modified. Considering it in these terms helps establish its relevance to what you are working to achieve.

Continued monitoring requires commitment and perseverance; thus, the RO needs to determine how it will facilitate this, including what support it can give to participants.

- Do monitoring whilst ‘doing’ — it works best if it is an integral part of the project/initiative.
- Determine and communicate the monitoring responsibilities of individuals, groups and agencies. Regular updates can be useful.
- Provide opportunities for the community to understand what information is being collected, how it is being assessed and how it can guide future action.
- Allocate time and resources to follow-up.

7.4.4 Review and evaluate progress and identify lessons

Strategic planning generally involves a high degree of future uncertainty; for this reason, ongoing evaluation is needed to continually assess the effectiveness of the strategy and the actions.

- Analyse the information collected. Identify issues, trends and themes which will help you assess your progress.

- Determine the information gaps and then fill them from relevant sources.
- Determine whether your goals and objectives are still relevant.
- Determine whether your strategic directions are still relevant and effective.
- Determine whether your group processes and structure are relevant and effective.
- Determine whether the wider context has changed. How does it affect your MSP? What changes do you need to make?



Different evaluation timeframes

Every year you need to evaluate your actions

Every 1- 3 years you need to ask whether your actions are meeting your objectives

Every 3- 10 years you will need to re-evaluate the underlying strategy behind the action plan

[Thorman and Heath \(1997\)](#) Regional environment strategies

Lessons learned are insights and new knowledge that emerge from practice and experience that can be used to improve future action. Good monitoring, evaluation and reflection processes should lead to valuable lessons for the future. It is important to focus on capturing these lessons and documenting and communicating them in a way that will help to improve the overall MSP.

7.4.5 Feed lessons learned back into strategies and implementation procedures

The process of monitoring and evaluation is not just about reporting. A successful process includes responding to the information and analysis, making the necessary changes, and ensuring that the lessons have been understood, internalised and shared. Again, if stakeholders do not see learning and changes being made where appropriate, they can become disillusioned and frustrated and may remove themselves from the initiative.

- Don't just limit 'adapting/changing' to projects. From your now better-informed position, make the necessary changes to all aspects of your initiative, including process, structure, management, reporting and communicating.
- Remember to 'tell the story' of how you have adapted or are encouraging people to adapt. Often, people have not had the opportunity to share this understanding, so their commitment to change may understandably be a bit shaky.
- Feed the learnings back into practices you are currently undertaking now or may undertake in the future.
- Share the learnings on both the fine-tunings you are making to your initiative/projects and the actual process of monitoring and evaluation. To increase the relevance to other groups, perhaps highlight aspects you wish others had been able to share with you earlier in your process.



"The learning community develops a scepticism of experts and the solutions they propose, and learns to identify and challenge the assumptions underlying proposed solutions. Experts generally know a lot about a small part of the total system and it is the community which must take the lead in integrating the information and understanding how it might lead to better outcomes."

8 Examples and Case Studies

Being developed

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