

# RESOURCE ACCESS AND CONTROL

## Conservation, Livelihoods and Governance Programme Tools for participatory approaches

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A resource access and control matrix and resource picture cards are both methods of understanding access to and control of natural resources (or other resources) by different groups within a community.

### What is it useful for?

- Understanding the variation in the access and control of natural resources (or any other resource) by women and men, and other socio-economic groups.
- Discussing how women and men (or others) use different resources or the same resources differently.
- Identifying constraints and opportunities regarding access to and control over resources.
- Identifying who may lose and who may gain from a planned intervention, and revise plans accordingly.
- Informing an understanding of the different values of ecosystem services to women and to men (or other social groups).
- In the context of climate change, exploring how access to resources may influence the adaptive capacity of women, men and other groups.
- Monitoring changes in access and control of resources over a period of time, including during the course of a project.

### Suggested steps

Allow approximately **one and a half hours** for this exercise.

- 1) Ensure that all group members understand the concepts of access, control and ownership. This exercise focusses on access and control but an extra column can be added if it is considered beneficial to also consider formal ownership.
  - **Access** represents the opportunity to use a resource (such as to work on the land or to use a forest resource) without having the authority to make decisions about its use.
  - **Control** represents the full authority to make decisions about the use of a resource (but does not necessarily imply ownership).
  - **Ownership** is the legal right of possession and can determine access and control. It is possible for a resource to be owned by one person whilst another person uses it or makes decisions about its use.
- 2) Ask participants to first brainstorm as a group to get a list of resources that are important for the community.
- 3) If you are preparing a **Resource Access and Control Matrix**, when the resources have been agreed they can be listed in the first column of the matrix.

- 4) Ask participants to allocate each resource a total of 10 ticks (or another symbol) for each of the columns (Access and Control) to be divided between women and men (or other social groups). For each resource, the 10 ticks / symbol should be assigned according to the relative level of access by women and the level of access by men, so the more ticks the higher level of access (for example, 10 ticks allocated to women and zero to men indicates that women have exclusive access to a particular resource, five ticks to women and five to men indicates that both have equal access. Two ticks allocated to women and eight to men indicates that men have more access to a resource than women).
- 5) For each resource, ask participants to assign 10 ticks according to the level of control by women and the level of control by men, repeating the process for each resource.

**Figure 1: Examples of access and control matrices carried out with separate groups of women and men in Childukhtaron, Tajikistan**

**Group of 6 women**

Resource	Access		Control		
	Men	Women	Men	Women	Other (forest service)
<i>From forest:</i>					
Fruit	5	5	0	0	10
Nuts	5	5	0	0	10
Firewood	5	5	0	0	10
Medicinal plants	2	8	0	0	10
Spices	0	10	0	10	0
Herbs	0	10	0	10	0
Grazing	7	3	3	3	5
Timber	10	0	0	0	10
<i>Other:</i>					
Vegetable gardens	5	5	0	10	0
Water	3	7	5	5	0
Livestock	2	8	7	3	0

**Group of 5 men**

Resource	Access		Control		
	Men	Women	Men	Women	Other (forest service)
<i>From forest:</i>					
Nuts	5	5	0	0	10
Fruits	3	8	0	0	10
Firewood	8	2	0	0	10
Grazing	9	1	0	0	10
Timber	9	1	0	0	10
Medicinal plants	5	5	0	0	10
Herbs	0	10	0	0	10
Birds (hunting)	10	0	0	0	10
Spices	0	10	0	0	10
<i>Other:</i>					
Water	5	5	5	5	0
Vegetable gardens	1	9	7	3	0
Livestock	9	1	10	0	0

- 6) If more than two socio-economic groups are being considered, increase the total number of ticks. If 3 groups are being considered the total number of ticks to be divided will be 15, for 4 groups 20, and so on.
- 7) If you are using **Resource Picture Cards** each resource identified in step 2 should be drawn or represented on a small piece of card. Ask participants to prepare three drawings - one of a man, one of a woman, and one of a man and woman together – and place them on the ground (or stick up on a wall) in a row with adequate room between them. Ask local participants to sort the resource cards by placing them under the three large drawings, depending on who has **access** to the resource, whether women, men or both. A second set of drawings and cards are placed on the ground, close by to the first set. The exercise is repeated, but this time the focus is on who has **control** or decision-making power concerning each resource.
- 8) Discuss and analyse the results, focusing on the constraints and opportunities for different groups. Any inconsistencies or differences of opinion should be discussed, exploring the reasons for these differences and preparing more than one diagram if necessary. The group can also discuss the likely impact of a proposed intervention on access to and control of resources in general and for different socio-economic groups.

### Questions to guide discussion and analysis

The following questions can be used to guide the discussion but should be adopted and adapted according to the focus of the exercise.

- Which resources do women and men (and the young and the old) use? Are there differences in their use according to gender, age, social group? What about disadvantaged groups or other relevant socio-economic groups?
- Who makes decisions about the use of each of these resources?
- Who has ownership over the resources (the right to sell or give them away)?
- What are the main differences between men and women when it comes to the type of resources they have access to, control and have ownership of? Is it women, men, or both, who have access to resources of higher value, such as land? Who controls (makes decisions about) these high value resources?
- Among the women and men of different socio-economic groups, who are the resource-rich? Who are the resource-poor?

#### Points to remember:

- ❖ Investigation of control might be sensitive in certain situations, although this can be addressed by good facilitation.
- ❖ Local participants should be encouraged to build as much of the diagram as possible without interruption and to suggest anything else that should be recorded.
- ❖ Before using this tool read the accompanying document, *A guide to using tools for participatory approaches*.

## For further information

FAO (2001) *Field Level Handbook (Socio-Economic and Gender Analysis Programme)*  
[http://www.fao.org/sd/SEAGA/1\\_en.htm](http://www.fao.org/sd/SEAGA/1_en.htm)

Field Tools Section of <http://www.fao.org/Participation>

This tool is adapted from the *Resource Matrix* at <http://www.fao.org/Participation> and the tool *Resource Picture Cards* is from the SEAGA Field Level Handbook.



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