

Building Capacity for Improved Forest Governance: Experiences and Lessons from Central and West Africa

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Strengthening African Forest Governance Project

1. 4 years – end Jan, 2015, **EC** and **DFID** funding
2. Partnership with in-country NGOs - Cameroon, DRC, Ghana & Liberia with international partners
3. Target; **civil society, communities** and **private sector**, incl. the informal sector
4. Activities;
 - Capacity building and awareness raising events
 - EU based training courses
 - Forest Governance Forums

What is Capacity building?

1. Also known as capacity development
2. No single agreed definition
3. Most linked with the broader concept of social development
4. Focus on **technical knowledge** and **skills** including **information** for individuals to function
5. Needs to be understood at multiple levels; **individual, institutional** and **societal** levels.

Key Lessons

1. Clear understanding of what the needs are
 - Things are not always what they appear to be
 - Assessment has to be based on target group's understanding of their roles and functions e.g. in post VPA negotiation contexts
 - Should not be a one-off
2. Identify existing strengths to build on
 - Not easy but critical for organic and sustained capacity – individuals, institutions/organisations & processes
3. Platforms and working groups help keep the momentum going

Key Lessons

4. Engaging the private sector (PS) has been a challenge
 - Federations/associations vs individual companies
 - Partners did not have historical and strong links with the private sector (particularly formal sector)
 - Collaborations to bring PS on board e.g. Kumasi Wood Cluster in Ghana
 - PS targeted events e.g. information exchange meetings, 'TLAS' courses

Key Lessons

6. Sustainability - Training of trainers and development of readily available materials e.g. toolkits, and online etc.
7. Inter-regional exchanges and peer training – exchanges between the Anglo-phones and Franco-phones
 - IFM Training in DRC
8. Coaching and mentoring **can** be very effective compared to traditional training approaches e.g. in Liberia - CS-IFM group

Other issues

1. Networks and coalitions vital - **‘strengths in numbers’**
 - If too formalised can suck funding and attention
 - Risk of over dependency on big personalities
 - Autonomy therefore a key ingredient
2. Impact of initiatives
 - More challenging when looking at wider development impacts
3. An enabling environment is essential for lasting change

Other issues

4. Need to work with **processes** rather than **events**

- align with key in-country processes and avoid fragmentation
- Including funding opportunities for immediate application



Merci pour votre attention
Gracias por su atención
Thanks for your attention