



Sustainable Agriculture and Rural Development in Mountain Regions Project

Framework for a Rapid Assessment of Policies, Institutions and Processes for SARD in Mountain Regions

Practical Guide

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Foreword

This practical guide provides a general framework to assess the strengths and weaknesses of policies for SARD in mountain regions. Given the **global nature** of the SARD-M Project and the **diversity** that exists in terms of economic, social, cultural, environmental and institutional conditions found in the mountain regions of each country, the purpose of this practical guide is not to provide a “blueprint” for analyzing SARD-M policies but to offer some **basic guidelines and references** that can assist in the assessment of SARD-M policies.

This framework has been developed to assist in conducting a **rapid** assessment of SARD-M policies. It does not aim to provide an in-depth and detailed analysis, but does allow for the identification of the main elements for an **action-oriented** diagnostic of the existing strengths and weaknesses of SARD-M policies. The framework is meant **to be adapted by those undertaking policy assessments** in order to fit the social, economic, environmental, institutional and cultural setting of the country each is working in.

A tool for middle-level practitioners and trainers

This document is particularly relevant for **middle-level practitioners and trainers** involved in SARD-M policy-making, implementation, monitoring and evaluation, from:

- **Governments**, at national and decentralised levels (i.e. ministries of agriculture, environment, rural development, finances, etc.);
- **Civil society organisations**, including local authorities and private sector.

The development of this framework has drawn heavily from the work conducted by the **Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO)** in policy issues related to SARD, the **Development Assistance Committee of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD DAC)** and the **United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UNDESA)** in establishing guidelines for the development of national strategies for sustainable development (see References, page 69).

This guide takes into consideration the **lessons learned from SARD-M Project policy assessments** that have been conducted during the 2005-2007 phase of the SARD-M Project.

The development of this guide would not have been possible without the substantive technical inputs and comments provided by:

- SARD-M Project Regional Focal Points (i.e. EUROMONTANA – Ms. Kristiina Urpalainen; Global Mountain Programme (GMP) in collaboration with CONDESAN based at the International Potato Centre (CIP) – Mr. Peter Trutmann; International Centre for Advanced Mediterranean Agronomic Studies – Mediterranean Agronomic Institute of Bari (CIHEAM-IAMB) – Mr. Lamberto Lamberti; International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development (ICIMOD) – Mr. Pema Gyamtsho and Mr. Kamal Banskota; and Programme for Sustainable Agriculture in the Hillside of Central America (PASOLAC) – Mr. Carlos Perez and Mr. Manuel Martinez),
- Implementing partners (i.e. Balkan Foundation for Sustainable Development (BFSD) – Mr. Vlatko Andonovski; and United Nations Environment Programme – Interim Secretariat of the Carpathian Convention (UNEP-ISCC) – Ms. Solomiya Omelyan),
- Consultants who carried out the national policy assessments,
- FAO Interdepartmental Task Force for the SARD-M Project and Mr. Gérard Viatte, Swiss Advisor to the SARD-M Project.

SARD-M Project and SARD-M Policy Assessments

The Project for Sustainable Agriculture and Rural Development in Mountain Regions (SARD-M), in line with its objective of "***strengthening mountain populations' livelihoods with improved policies for sustainable agriculture and rural development***", has been implemented in 2005-2007 in six regions: Andes, Carpathians, Central America, Hindu Kush-Himalayas, Mediterranean Basin and South East European Mountains (see Figure 1).

Figure 1: Map of regions where SARD-M policy assessments have been conducted



The overall purpose is to provide an **understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of various policies related to SARD in mountain regions.**

In light of the specific qualities or specificities that characterize **mountain areas**, the assessments try to bring about a better understanding of how the SARD framework is applicable to mountain regions and examine the types of **policies and policy packages, institutions and processes** that are important to achieve SARD in mountain areas. They also pay attention to **how the comparative advantages of mountains can be harnessed** to promote development in a sustainable manner.

What can you expect from a SARD-M policy assessment?

- **Identification of problematic areas and priority issues** that are facing SARD-M in a region;
- **Evaluation of the overall strengths and weaknesses** of SARD-M policies, making sure that the policies examined provide a balanced coverage of social, economic and environmental pillars;
- **General recommendations** of things that need to be improved in the policies, the processes and the institutions involved in the formulation, implementation and evaluation of policies;
- **Proposals for concrete action-oriented follow-up activities** that meets the demand existing in the assessed region.

The framework will also facilitate the **comparison** of your country with other countries and regions.

The practical guide is composed of two parts:

- The first part provides a succinct overview of the important concepts that need to be understood in order to carry out a SARD-M policy assessment;
- The second part outlines **a basic framework** for conducting a SARD-M policy assessment, **including tools utilised and examples** produced in six different regions.

For more information on the outputs of SARD-M policy assessments in different regions:

<http://www.fao.org/sard/en/sardm/Communi/620/index.html>

PART 1: Some important concepts

Mountains and their Specificities

Mountain people are more exposed to poverty, hunger, social or political marginalization and conflicts and are generally behind in development.

Some features of mountain regions

- Mountains cover 22% of the global land surface
- FAO estimates that 720 million people or 12% of the world's population live in mountain areas
- 80% of the world's mountain people live below the poverty line of which 270 million lack food security and around 135 million are chronically hungry
- Mountains are home to many indigenous populations among which poverty is widespread.

Source: FAO

This widespread poverty coupled with the fragile nature of mountain environments makes mountain regions susceptible to degradation. The problems associated with this degradation also have consequences to those living in lowland areas. For example, deforestation in mountains can lead to flooding in lowland regions. The existence of such **upland-lowland linkages** thus necessitates concerted actions for the improved management of mountain resources and social and economic development of its people.

Some national level figures on poverty in mountain regions

Peru: 54% of the population is poor and close to 15% live in extreme poverty. In the rural part of the high Andes, the figures are higher. 68.5% of the population lives in poverty and 25.6% in extreme poverty.

China: Over 80% of the 592 officially recognized "poverty counties" are located in mountain areas. Most of the impoverished population (30 million people with net annual income less than US\$80) and low-income people (60 million people with net annual income less than US\$125) live in mountain areas.

Source: GMP-CIP, Rodríguez et al. (2006); ICIMOD, Luo (2006)

Mountains, however, also have **significant potentials** and provide a wide range of goods and services to the rest of society. They are important sources of water, energy and environmental biodiversity, playing an essential role in the maintenance of the global ecosystem. They provide freshwater to half of the world's population, are a source of such key resources as minerals, forest products and agricultural products and of recreation. They also possess a rich cultural diversity.

Box 1: Diverse potentials of mountain regions in Morocco

- **An economic heritage of great potential** even though the arable land area is small. Local crop varieties grown on communal land, handicrafts and tourism could be major sources of revenue in the future.
- **A rich variety of natural landscapes or landscapes fashioned by agriculture.** 154 sites of biological and ecological interest have been classified in Morocco, the majority in mountain zones.

- **Multiple identities** expressed in the ways the natural resources are used (water, forests, rangelands, farmlands), as well as in the languages and different forms of cultural expression (architecture, handicrafts, arts, oral literature, celebrations and games), etc.
- An **historical and cultural heritage**: mountains have been the centre power in various periods of history or served as a bastion of robust resistance. Despite the severity of the relief, mountains have always been used for moving goods and people between different regions of the country, and beyond, between the Sahara and the North.

Source: CIHEAM-IAMB, Herzenni (2007)

To be sustainable, any development interventions and policy-making do need to **take into account the potentialities, constraints and diversity** that characterize mountain regions.

Building on mountain region potentials

The diverse nature of the culture, resource base and environmental conditions create **potentials for products and activities that have a comparative advantage**. It offers a number of opportunities for resource and product-centred activities which could **enhance both productivity and human welfare on a sustained basis**.

Mountain agriculture indeed provides **much more than the mere production of food**, fibre and commodities. When practised in a sustainable way, it assures food security, environmental stability, conservation and sustainable use of the biological resources, rural incomes and employment, rural-urban population balance, social equity and cohesion, and maintenance of cultural features and identity in the overall context of globalization.

Box 2: The potentials of the hillsides in Central America

A wide range of goods and services that are essential for guaranteeing crucial resources for the rest of society were identified: water, biodiversity, landscape, risk prevention, specific products, and culture. These create a series of comparative benefits and economic and environmental interdependency between the highlands and the lowlands that are yet to be promoted.

The potentials offered by hillsides to the development of the region are essential for sustainable development and are reflected in different ways:

a. Economic

- **Coffee** grown in the hillside zones constitutes a major source of foreign exchange earnings in the Central American economy. In addition to being a major source of value and income, coffee is a net generator of employment in the economies of the region.
- The statistics on **rural tourism and ecotourism** reflect the growing contribution of tourism to the Central American economy, and demonstrate the need for hillside investment.
- Another major opportunity is the **marketing of genetic resources and handicrafts**.

b. Environmental

- Hillside zones are sources of environmental goods and services (**water, water management, scenic beauty, genetic resources, energy**, etc).
- Hillsides also host a great wealth of **biodiversity** offering multiple environmental opportunities.

c. Energy

The production of **renewable energy**, especially hydroelectricity and wind power as well as the production of biomass energy constitute important potentials.

d. Production

Hillside areas are providers of a wide range of products:

- Forestry products and non-wood forest products
- Coffee of traditional and organic quality
- Crops and animal species that are suited to hillside zones.

Hillside zones also have **linkages with urban and lowland zones** which must be taken into account in terms of their relevance to policies: one of them is the supply of water for various uses.

Source: PASOLAC (2005)

Mountains provide a **wide range of goods and services** essential for guaranteeing the availability of vital resources to the rest of the society resulting in a series of interdependencies between upland and lowland areas. There usually tends to be a lack of recognition of the importance of these inter-linkages in the institutional and policy frameworks of countries. Thus the promotion of sustainable mountain development can play **an important role to benefit lowland areas** by ensuring adequate supplies of water, environmental stability, conservation of biodiversity, rural-urban population balance, specific products and culture, etc.

The goods and services that mountains provide are often not taken into account by the market and these are known as positive externalities¹. The **valorisation of such positive externalities** is a way to take advantage of the potentialities of mountain regions.

Examples of mountain externalities and possible methods of their valorisation

Externalities of mountain regions	Examples of valorisation
Water quality	Payments for reforestation, sustainable agriculture practices
Water resource management	Payments for water management, good irrigation practices, choosing appropriate crops
Air quality	Payments for tree planting, sustainable forest management, agroforestry
Biodiversity conservation	Payments to respect pristine land creation, ecosystem conservation
Landscape management	Payments for reforestation of degraded zones, choice of practices
Soil protection	Payments for tree planting, sustainable agricultural practices
Natural hazards prevention and protection	Payments for tree planting
Knowledge/expertise conservation	Tourism, agri-tourism, sale of quality products
Conservation of building heritage	Tourism, agri-tourism
Conservation of cultural heritage	Tourism, agri-tourism, sale of quality products
Preserving a social fabric	Subsidising community projects

Source: SARD-M Project (2005)

¹ An individual, through his/her activity, influences the well-being of other individuals, without the latter receiving or paying any remuneration for this effect. The existence of these externalities is a shortcoming of the market, which does not incorporate all the trade-related information.

External economic and environmental pressures will lead to radical change in the distinctive characteristics and values of mountains unless appropriate policies are in place to ensure the continued supply of externalities. **Positive externalities can help communities survive; without communities many of the positive externalities will not survive.**

Constraints

The development of mountain areas faces the key constraints characterised by inaccessibility, fragility, and marginality. These specificities are **interrelated** in several ways, but not all locations in mountain areas are equally inaccessible, fragile, or marginal.

- **Inaccessibility:** Its concrete manifestations are isolation, distance, poor communication, and limited mobility. It has socio-cultural and economic dimensions which are reflected by socioeconomic differentiation and **inequity of access to resources, information and opportunities**. Inaccessibility exaggerates other conditions such as marginality and diversity.
- **Fragility:** Due to altitude, steep slopes and other biophysical conditions, mountain areas are **vulnerable to degradation**. Changes brought about in the environment by climate change will also have particularly harsh effects in mountain areas. In most cases, the damage is irreversible or reversible only over a long period of time.
- **Marginality:** Mountain areas tend to be marginal in terms of their remoteness and physical isolation, fragile and low-productivity resources. There are also **man-made handicaps** which can **prevent participation in the mainstream pattern of activities**.

Box 3: Some constraints in the Higher Chouf (Mount Lebanon)

Inaccessibility

- Although in a relative good condition, the road network linking the region to its surroundings and linking the villages needs to be rehabilitated.
- Agricultural roads need to be improved in order to better serve the population.

Marginality

- Irrigation canals still need to be rehabilitated, along with drinking water systems.
- The situation of the sewage system needs to be improved.

Source: CIHEAM-IAMB, Asmar (2006)

Diversity

Diversity is an innate feature of mountain areas as one can find **immense variations** among and within ecological zones, even **within short distances**. There is also diversity in terms of the degree to which inaccessibility, fragility, and marginality affects different mountain areas.

More importantly mountain areas are home to a large number of biological resources. There is also diversity in terms of the economic, social, cultural and institutional make-up of mountain areas. The socio-cultural diversity leads to variations in social organization, attitudes, and methods of managing collective goods and community resources.

The **harnessing of this diversity in a sustainable manner** is therefore an important issue for mountain areas.

Box 4: Diversity issues in the Higher Chouf (Mount Lebanon)

Natural

- The broad altitudinal range induces a variety of climatic conditions and a variety of crops and vegetation types.
- Water resources are abundant (rivers and water springs), mainly with the presence of the Barouk Mountain, playing the role of a huge water reservoir.
- Around 45% of the region is covered by forests and other wooded lands and accompanying flora, usually unproductive, except for the production of charcoal and for grazing.

Social

- The fragility of the region is linked to the complexity and to the rich diversity of its social structure with several religious communities living in the same territories.
- The rich religious diversity was affected by the war and many villages were abandoned. But their inhabitants have come back and rehabilitated the places.

Economic

- 9% of the total area is used for agriculture out of 30% is irrigated. 24% are rangelands that are neither planted nor managed. The local communities have adopted irrigated agriculture mainly for olives, almonds and fruit trees. Terraces were traditionally planted with cereals, legumes, carob trees and grapes, but most are currently abandoned.
- Pine forests constitute good sources of income (collection of cones for the extraction of stone pines), the region's main forest asset is the Chouf Cedar Reserve, one of the most important protected areas in Lebanon.
- The animal production is distributed among caprine, bovine and poultry; the size of the goatherds is decreasing despite the suitability of the region for this activity.

Source: CIHEAM-IAMB, Asmar (2006)

For more information on SARD-M Project work on externalities of mountain regions:

<http://www.fao.org/sard/en/sardm/Communi/2900/index.html>

Policies, Institutions and Processes for Sustainable Agriculture and Rural Development (SARD)

Sustainable Agriculture and Rural Development

What is sustainable development?

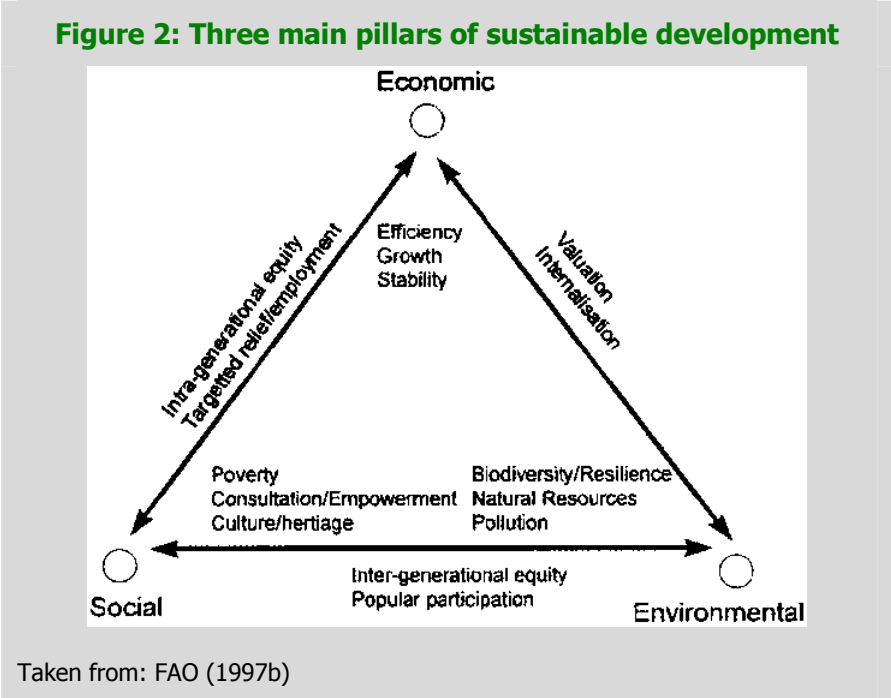
The concept of sustainable development was introduced in the 1987 report of the Brundtland Commission on Environment and Development and defines sustainable development as “development that meets the needs² of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.”

It was a means of shifting attention away from narrow sectoral interests and towards an approach that **comprehensively embraced** environmental, social and economic goals.

Underlying the **economic pillar** is the principle that society’s **well-being** would have to be **maximized** and **poverty eradicated** through the optimal and efficient use of natural resources.

The **social pillar** refers to uplifting the **welfare** of people, improving access to basic health and education services, fulfilling minimum standards of security and respect for human rights. It also refers to the development of various cultures, diversity, pluralism and effective grassroots participation in decision-making. The issue of **equity**³ remains an essential component of both the economic and social dimensions.

The **environmental component** is concerned with the conservation and enhancement of the **physical and biological resource base and eco-systems**.



² The concept of "needs" refers in particular to the basic needs of the world's poor, to which overriding priority should be given.

³ The distribution of benefits and access to resources.

The attainment of sustainable development is a formidable task, since **all three pillars must be given balanced consideration**. The **interfaces** among the three approaches are also important. Thus, the economic and social pillars interact to give rise to issues such as inter-generational equity in terms of income distribution and targeted relief for the poor. The economic-environmental interface has yielded new ideas on valuation and internalizing environmental impacts. The social-environmental linkage has led to renewed interest in such areas as inter-generational equity in terms of rights of future generations and people's participation.⁴

What is SARD?

The SARD concept emerged in the early 1990s as a **framework** for focusing greater attention on **sustainability issues within agricultural⁵ and rural development⁶ processes** in both developed and developing countries. SARD provides an umbrella that encompasses the principles of sustainable development including economic viability, cultural appropriateness, social justice, environmental soundness, and long-term productivity. SARD inherently addresses not just agriculture, but also natural resources, the environment, health, as well as the social, institutional and economic sectors.

SARD as "a journey rather than a destination"

As the OECD notes: "Sustainable development is incremental and builds on what already exists and its achievement **is as much a process as a fixed goal**. Sustainable development constitutes **a set of short, medium and long-term actions, activities and practices that aim to deal with immediate concerns while at the same time address long-term issues.**"

The successful implementation of SARD requires **integrated policy, planning and social learning processes**; its political viability depends on the full support of the people it affects through their governments, social institutions and private activities linked together in participative action.

From this perspective, the process of sustainable development will always precede the product.

For more information on FAO's work on SARD:

SARD website - <http://www.fao.org/sard>.

⁴ Annex 1 outlines key principles identified by OECD for the development of strategies for sustainable development.

⁵ The FAO Constitution defines agriculture in a broad context and states that "the term 'agriculture' and its derivatives includes fisheries, marine products, forestry and primary forest products."

⁶ The FAO understands rural development to be "an overarching concept recognizing that any support activities targeted to improve people's lives in rural areas should have a multisectoral and integrated focus." (FAO 2003). FAO (2004a) also provides an excellent overview of the various approaches to rural development.

Policies

What is policy and policy-making?

Traditionally, policy is understood as constituting the **“decisions taken by those with responsibility for a given policy area, and these decisions usually take the form of statements or formal positions on an issue, which are then executed by the bureaucracy.”** (Keeley and Scoones, 1999) The traditional understanding of policy-making, known as the linear, mainstream, common-sense or rational model, views the creation of policies as a problem-solving process which is rational, balanced, objective and analytical. The implementation of policies is understood as a separate process that begins once a policy is made.

In real life situations, however, policy processes tend to be more complex: **“policy processes are often distinctly non-linear, inherently political and contested, and more incremental and haphazard”** than the linear model suggests (Keeley 2001: 9). Moreover, **implementation of policy “requires consensus building, participation of key stakeholders, conflict resolution, compromise, contingency planning, resource mobilisation and adaptation”** (Sutton 1999: 23).

Some ways that policy is made

- Small changes to existing policy in incremental stages
- Debate and negotiation between the state and civil society actors
- A process of trial and error, with hypotheses tested against reality
- The bureaucratic process and the institutions from which it emerges
- Political struggle between interest groups within society.

Source: Karl (2002, p.4)

Summary

Thus any assessment of the strengths and weaknesses of policies for SARD in mountain regions will need to consider not only the contents of the policies themselves but also the processes in their formulation, implementation and monitoring and evaluation.

Policies for SARD: Five main types of policy instruments

- **General economic and social policies** intended to influence overall economic growth, trade, price levels, employment, investment and population.
- **Policies relating to agricultural and rural development.** Policies of this type are usually intended to influence such factors as rural incomes, agricultural resource base, agricultural production, consumption of agricultural products, agricultural price levels and variability, and the quality of food.
- **Policies relating to markets,** including the establishment of market institutions and rules, and circumscription of property rights.
- **Policies aimed at establishing a democratic and participatory process** designed to involve all interested groups in decision making and implementing SARD.
- **Policies designed specifically to influence natural resource use and protect the environment.**

While these policy instruments are not primarily intended to achieve SARD on their own, they are all essential components.

Box 5: Example of policy instruments/strategies examined in Serbia

Poverty Reduction Strategy

- Coordinates efforts to locate rural poverty through a multi-sector programmatic policy document. Emphasizes the multidimensional nature of poverty.

National Environmental Strategy

- Focuses on the improved resource management, extension and modernization of the environmental infrastructure and the objectives related to nature and biodiversity conservation

Spatial Plan of the Republic of Serbia

- Outlines the development of rural mountain and highland regions as key areas for development protection of land resources, afforestation and technical improvements of agricultural land.
- Puts the emphasis on sustainable development principles

Strategy of Regional Development

- Focuses on balanced regional development with a detailed analysis of the economic, social and infrastructural indicators in order to deal with interregional and intraregional disparities.

Tourism Strategy

- Provides an assessment of potentials for the development of tourism and activities that could be envisaged.

Source: UNEP-ISCC, Tar (2007)

Institutions and governance

The system of governance that is in place will influence the processes of decision-making and the processes by which decisions are implemented. Policy-making is an incremental process that requires a **continuous interaction between the state and civil society, including the private sector**. Thus when assessing policies within a given country it is important to **identify the kinds of governmental and civil society institutions** that exist and to see how they are involved in the policy-making process. In particular, it is important to understand the **rules and customs** that determine how each organization makes decisions and how they also interact with one another in the formulation and implementation of policies on the ground.⁷

Box 6: Major institutions identified in Lebanon assessment

- **The Ministry of Agriculture and the Ministry of Environment** are launching initiatives to save the natural patrimony and promote protection and proper management of natural resources. Laws prohibiting woodcutting and protecting forests from fires, grazing and mismanagement are issued.

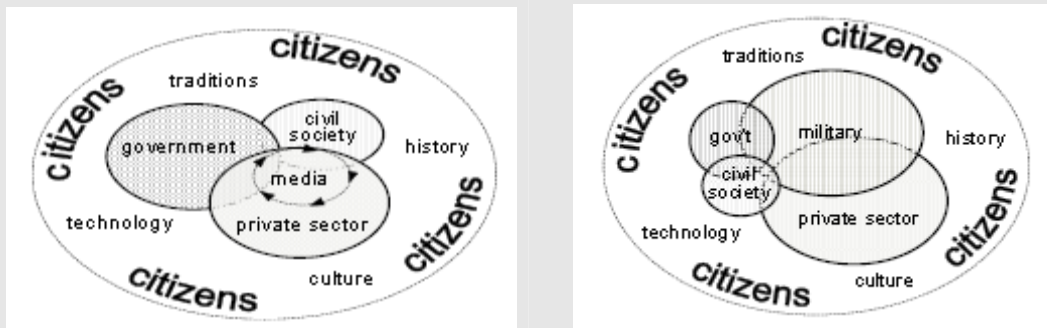
⁷ In fact, the FAO LSP (2005) definition of institutions refers to both institution and governance issues. It defines "institutions" as referring to both: a) organisations or agencies that operate within both the public and private sector (e.g. the department of agriculture, the district department of health, the local branch of an NGO, a religious organisation such as a church or mosque, a workers union, a village committee, an informal organisation); b) the mechanisms, rules and customs by which people and organisations interact with each other (e.g. the norms which shape local customs, lending, cultural events; the contract between a company and its workers; the laws governing the way companies do business with each other; the codes and rules of an organisation or bureaucracy; the allocation of responsibilities in the policymaking process; the rules for enacting legislation; the mechanisms by which legislation is implemented at national and local levels).

- **The Green Plan**, an independent organism connected to the Ministry of Agriculture, is in charge of the implementation of hill lakes, irrigation networks, agricultural roads and terraces.
- **The Ministry of the Displaced** has encouraged the return of war displaced by allocating funds for the reconstruction of villages, houses and religious monuments.
- **The Ministry of Social Affairs** is engaged in poverty alleviation.
- **The Ministry of Administrative Reform** is working with municipalities on sustainable development plans with the technical and financial assistance of the EU.
- **The Council for Development and Reconstruction** has recently prepared a land use plan in which mountain areas are given a particular focus in terms of protection and conservation (mainly high mountains, beyond human settlements).
- **The Ministry of Economy** is developing economic measures to encourage investment and improve the quality of the products.
- **The private sector, NGOs and international organizations** are assisting the country by providing technical and financial support to specific projects.

Source: CIHEAM-IAMB, Asmar (2006)

The degree to which different institutions or actors can participate in this policy process, however, is greatly determined by the **social and political landscape** in which they operate. The Venn diagrams below, for example, provide illustrations of different kinds of interactions that can exist within a given territory; with the size of the circles denoting the relative power that each has within a given society. The second diagram is an example of how a military (or political party) or how multinational corporations might play a dominant role within a given country and this can result in them having a greater influence on the policies that are made. Thus any assessment of policies will need to understand the context in which they are created.

Illustrations of interactions that can exist within a given territory



Source: Graham et al. (2003)

It is also important to note that the interactions between institutions occur at the national, sub-national, and local levels and increasingly due to the effects of globalization at the international level as well. Thus both the **horizontal and vertical linkages of these institutions** at the various levels of governance need to be taken into account.

This process necessitates the **existence of government and civil society institutions** that have the capacity to engage in such processes **as well as a system of governance** at the national, sub-national and local levels that enables them to interact in a legitimate and equitable manner. The following table groups some of the **basic principles** that are universally recognized as important for good governance.

The Five Good Governance Principles ¹	UNDP Principles ²
1. Legitimacy and Voice	<p>Participation – all men and women should have a voice in decision-making, either directly or through legitimate intermediate institutions that represent their intention. Such broad participation is built on freedom of association and speech, as well as capacities to participate constructively.</p> <p>Consensus orientation – good governance mediates differing interests to reach a broad consensus on what is in the best interest of the group and, where possible, on policies and procedures.</p>
2. Direction	<p>Strategic vision – leaders and the public have a broad and long-term perspective on good governance and human development, along with a sense of what is needed for such development. There is also an understanding of the historical, cultural and social complexities in which that perspective is grounded.</p>
3. Performance	<p>Responsiveness – institutions and processes try to serve all stakeholders.</p> <p>Effectiveness and efficiency – processes and institutions produce results that meet needs while making the best use of resources.</p>
4. Accountability	<p>Accountability – decision-makers in government, the private sector and civil society organizations are accountable to the public, as well as to institutional stakeholders. This accountability differs depending on the organizations and whether the decision is internal or external.</p> <p>Transparency – transparency is built on the free flow of information. Processes, institutions and information are directly accessible to those concerned with them, and enough information is provided to understand and monitor them.</p>
5. Fairness	<p>Equity – all men and women have opportunities to improve or maintain their well-being.</p> <p>Rule of Law – legal frameworks should be fair and enforced impartially, particularly the laws on human rights.</p>

Note: ¹ These principles often overlap or are conflicting at some point. They play out in practice according to the actual social context and they are not only about the results of power but how well it is exercised.

² Refers to text from the UNDP Report "Governance and Sustainable Human Development, 1997"

Source: Graham et al. (2003, p.3)

Summary

In order to understand why policies for SARD in mountain regions succeed or fail, issues concerning institutions and the governance system in place are important to take into account

In particular it is important to understand and evaluate the capacities and roles of government and civil society institutions, how they interact with one another (both horizontally and vertically) at the centralized and decentralized levels and how they participate in the development, decision-making, implementation and evaluation of policies for SARD.

Four main policy processes

There are **four main processes** that can be identified during the **formulation, implementation, monitoring and evaluation phases** of policy development. These include **political processes, institutional arrangements and knowledge management procedures, participatory processes, and resource mobilization processes.**

Political Processes

The political process involves ensuring the existence of a **strong political commitment from the top leadership as well as from local authorities of a country.** Those responsible for spearheading the development of policies for SARD should fully embrace sustainable development and be devoted to promoting it on a continuous basis. They will also need to promote the development of policies and policy frameworks at **sub-national levels** (e.g. provincial, district, city, local community) and provide for effective **working linkages** among strategies **at different levels.**

a) Importance of high level political commitment

A strong and long-term political commitment to sustainable development is a prerequisite in order to effectively bring about the necessary changes in policies and institutions. This not only entails the mustering of political support to pass various legislations for SARD, but there must also exist a strong political **commitment and willingness to follow-up on legislations** that have been passed to ensure that they are properly “working” on the ground. The ultimate goal is to be able to develop the capacity within a country to think and operate strategically about sustainable development.

b) Need for a central coordinating body and involvement of all ministries to build cross-governmental support

In the formulation and implementation of effective policies and policy frameworks, there must exist from the beginning a close engagement and involvement of all ministries in order to build cross-governmental support, i.e. the **Ministries of Finance or Planning with other ministries** of the government, notably those in charge of agriculture and rural development. There is thus a need for a **central coordinating body**⁸. In this way, the policy frameworks have exposure as a serious and mainstream government initiative and the links to important policies and procedures are strengthened.

c) Commitment and engagement of the private sector and civil society

It is also important to ensure that the private sector and civil society are engaged in order to foster coherence between stakeholders’ positions and policies and build broad political support and commitment. Many **community-based** and civil-society organizations are often better aware than line ministries of the social, economic, environmental consequences of the decisions taken by the central government.

Participatory processes

This process entails the **involvement of both governmental and non governmental groups in the designing of policies, exchanging of information, decision-making, implementation, etc.** It is necessary to evaluate how much participation already exists and is needed, and to design participatory processes that are **multi-layered and inclusive.**

⁸ Examples of coordinating bodies: office of the Prime Minister or President, or of a ministry with central authority – such as the finance or economic planning ministry. UNDESA mentions that National Councils for Sustainable Development have also proven to be useful in bringing together various stakeholders for the formulation and implementation of national strategies for sustainable development.

A **balance** needs to be struck between involving as wide a range of participants as possible – to forge a broad based and durable consensus – and avoiding overloading the facilitating and managerial capacities of those leading the policy development process. If managerial capacities are weak and participatory mechanisms are poor, the number of participants can be limited at first – but this should be increased with the development and reiteration of specific policy development tasks.

The **media** needs to be effectively used both to create a forum for debate as well as for awareness-raising.

a) Community-based and bottom-up approaches

The current **trend towards decentralisation** provides an opportunity to link national policy development processes to community-based participatory approaches and supporting tools (e.g. participatory rural appraisal)⁹.

b) Balancing top-down and bottom-up approaches

One of the major challenges is also trying to **find the right balance** between top-down and bottom-up approaches. Policies and policy frameworks need to consider which issues can only be addressed at the national and central level, and which can be addressed more locally. The finding of this balance is something that can only be achieved through an iterative process and a learning from experiences.

c) Balance between technical and local stakeholders' expertise

Technical expertise (e.g. gathering and analysing baseline socio-economic data, statistical assessments, economic projections, etc.) alone cannot provide access to all necessary and useful information and most key issues need to be considered by a wide range of stakeholder groups.

Institutional arrangements and knowledge management procedures

The institutional arrangements and knowledge management procedures of policy development involve a **wide variety of activities** including the “undertaking assessment of the economic, social and environmental situation, identifying problems, setting clear priorities, establishing goals and objectives, developing the investment programme, and monitoring and evaluation.” (UNDESA)

In order to accomplish these tasks, it is important to **develop the knowledge base and build on existing policies and policy frameworks, design a system for harmonizing key economic, social and environment related policies and carry out the building of capacity for policy development on a continuous basis.**

Examples of important technical capacities and skills

In practice, the technical capacity and methodological skills are needed to:

- **Craft or amend legislation** so that it is reflective and supportive of policy. The crafting of quality legislation not only facilitates the mustering of political support, but is also the key mechanism to ensure the implementation of policies.
- Properly **analyse key challenges** and their underlying causes, the actual or potential short- and long-term **impacts** of approaches to deal with them, and corresponding policy and institutional frameworks.

⁹ Although the costs of participation in terms of time and money are rather high, the costs can diminish with each iteration of policy development as the scope, purpose and methodologies for participation of each group become clearer and better focussed.

- **Collect good baseline data** whose lack might hamper the ability to conduct a proper analysis.

Source: UNDESA (2002)

Some of the **key lessons** that have been learned when implementing activities related to such institutional arrangements and knowledge management procedures are as follows:

a) **Establish long-term vision, set priorities, and achieve integration**

- Vision should evolve from national and sub-national aspirations, taking into account socially-marginalized groups and should relate to regional and international realities. Although short-term policies are needed, they should be based on a longer term vision.
- Policies work best when they are developed in line with a **comprehensive and integrated** consideration of economic, social, environmental and institutional issues.

b) **Convergence, complementarity, coherence and coordination between country frameworks at all levels**

- It is not feasible to merge all strategic planning frameworks but it is feasible to work towards complementarity and coherence to make them **mutually supportive**.¹⁰ There is a need to create mechanisms for co-ordination between sectors and coherence between both sectors and strategies. This requires improved institutional procedures and practices supported by **appropriate management systems, and systems for effective conflict management and resolution**.
- Experiences have shown that by **building on policies that already exist** and ensuring their continuous development and improvement through monitoring and evaluation, national ownership of the policies can be increased. The starting point will thus be to identify the existing processes and initiatives in a country.
- **Regional co-ordination and management** is also important when several countries share natural resources and eco-systems (e.g. a river basin or watershed).¹¹
- **Decentralisation**¹² offers an effective mechanism for fostering the convergence of different planning frameworks. Strong local institutions, accessible information, fora to allow debate, and consensus/conflict management mechanisms can all help forge integrated approaches. Hence there is an imperative to **link top-down and bottom-up approaches**.

c) **Policy management systems and capacity**

- An effective policy framework for sustainable development and SARD requires **good management**. It must provide co-ordination, leadership, administration and financial control, harnessing skills and capacities and ensuring adherence to timetables. The **roles, responsibilities and relationships** between the different key participants in policy development processes must be clearly defined and understood. **Good leadership is key**.

¹⁰ Convergence could be enhanced by government developing and maintaining a matrix framework keeping track of all the existing and new strategic planning processes in a country (national, sub-national, local, responses to international commitments, etc.).

¹¹ The Andean Biodiversity Strategy developed by several South American countries provides a shared regional vision and identifies common interests.

¹² Decentralization needs to be accompanied by: 1) The transfer of financial resources and empowerment to raise such resources locally; 2) Capacity-building; 3) Clear delineation of the respective roles of the various levels of government in planning, financial management, etc.; 4) Comprehensive legislation and administrative actions to bring about integration of the decentralised offices of government agencies into local administrative structures; 5) Coordination of development agency support at local levels. More information regarding decentralization and its relation to State actions for rural development can be found in FAO (1997a).

- A key component of policy development is to **build upon existing knowledge and expertise** and thus the development of technical skills and analytical capacities will be important. Traditional knowledge and institutions also need to be given due recognition. Indigenous know-how and systems represent a vast pool of locally relevant experience and means for survival and their adaptation can make substantive contributions. Sharing of experiences with other countries is also useful.
- **Public communication** is important and the development of policies requires **two-way** communication between policy-makers and the public, as it is important that stakeholders have a good understanding of sustainable development and the importance of changing attitudes, behaviour and institutions that are required to achieve it.
- **Systems for conflict management.** An important element of policy development is the development of mechanisms to identify conflicts and help stakeholders negotiate compromises between current positions and longer-term common interests.

d) Identifying indicators

- Strategic planning and decision-making for SARD must be based on credible and reliable information and data on environmental, social and economic trends, pressures and responses.¹³

e) Establishing monitoring systems and ensuring accountability

- There must be an agreed action plan identifying what should be monitored, by whom, and when. A good monitoring system requires action at several levels and addresses these matters in an integrated and participatory way in the planning process.
- Governance and management systems with checks and balances (including formal redress procedures) to ensure transparent ways of working.
- Should be regular disclosure of information to stakeholders.

Resource Mobilisation Process

Resources for the policy development process may need to be mobilized from both domestic and international sources, as appropriate. Policies should be financed from the **recurrent budget of the government** because “then it will be more likely to become a continuing process that will engage political support and be integrated into the policy- and decision-making process. Without such links, the policies are likely to be dependent in external funding.” (OECD-DAC 2001)

It is important to ensure the availability of adequate domestic resource for all projects; full engagement of the private sector in the policy development process. If financial assistance to fund activities is to come from an external source, the allocation of this assistance as general budgetary assistance is preferred over one-off funding for projects. As the availability of resources is limited, the establishment of key priorities¹⁴ is essential.

For more information on:

- **Livelihood Support Programme (LSP):** http://www.fao.org/sd/dim_pe4/pe4_040501_en.htm
- **Stakeholders’ involvement:** See OECD DAC 2001 and <http://www.oecd.org>
- **Participation issues:** See the FAO Participation Website: <http://www.fao.org/participation/>

¹³ An FAO paper prepared for the International Conference on Agrarian Reform and Rural Development held in Porto Alegre, March 2006, identified 28 **major indicators for rural development**. A list of the indicators can be found http://www.icarrd.org/en/icard_doc_down/tech_TD2_en.doc.

¹⁴ The ability to resolve conflicts and build consensus in setting priorities is important.

Part 2. The Framework

The overall purpose the SARD-M rapid policy assessments is to **stimulate thought and actions** of all concerned stakeholders at the country and regional levels to **improve policy, institutions and processes for SARD-M**.

The assessments provide an **understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of various policies related to SARD in mountain regions, recommendations and proposals for follow-up activities** that can help to improve the existing situation. The assessments do not aim to conduct an in-depth analysis of policies in a specific sector, but to try to provide more of a **cross-sectoral understanding**. The assessments should also pay close attention as to whether policies address the issues surrounding **mountain specificities**, i.e. constraints, diversity, potentials

The vast nature of the SARD subject matter can make the assessment of policies quite complex. This framework therefore tries to provide a general guide on how one can go about conducting a cross-sectoral analysis of policies, institutions and processes for SARD-M.

A highly participatory and multistakeholder process

Given that SARD is a process that involves **multiple sectors strongly linking agriculture and rural development and actors at all governance levels**, the assessments must pay attention to the opinions of the different components of society at different levels, i.e. national and decentralized levels of government, civil society, including the private sector, and also take into consideration the multi-sectoral nature of SARD. The involvement of the various stakeholders in the policy assessment process is also important to ensure **a greater ownership** and can provide an incentive to act upon follow-up activities that will be proposed.

Box 7: Stakeholders involved in Central America

The methodology used was highly participatory involving the following parties:

- Civil servants involved in managing SARD public policies at the central and departmental/regional level of ministries and institutions operating in the agricultural and environmental sector, or with basic services, tourism etc, in all the countries of Central America;
- Mayors and municipal government employees;
- Representatives of associations, cooperatives, producers' unions, artisans, women and indigenous peoples;
- Non-governmental organizations providing technical and financial support services for rural production and trade;
- Regional and national consultants and experts;
- Officials from international agencies and cooperation programmes: FAO, SDC and PASOLAC;
- Representatives of coordinating bodies between government and civil society: Departmental and Municipal Development Committees, the Regional Sectoral Agricultural Commission;
- The private horticultural corporation of Costa Rica.

Source: PASOLAC (2005)

Approach

As SARD requires an integration of policies across sectors, the aim of the assessments is not to conduct an in-depth analysis of policies in a specific sector, but to try to provide more of a **global overview** and **cross-sectoral understanding** of the strengths and weaknesses of policies for SARD.

As the success and failures of policies rely not only on the contents of the policies themselves, but also on the context of how they are developed and implemented, the SARD-M policy assessments place a **particular emphasis on examining the institutions** and **processes** that are involved in the formulation, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies.

Some tools for a participatory process

The assessments are to be **more of a qualitative study**. Thus the main tools utilised for the assessments are **literature reviews**¹⁵ and **interviews** of key informants, from both **government and civil society** in diverse sectors related to SARD, conducted in an **iterative** and **balanced** manner.

The holding of **multi-stakeholder workshops at decentralised and/or national levels** is an extremely useful tool:

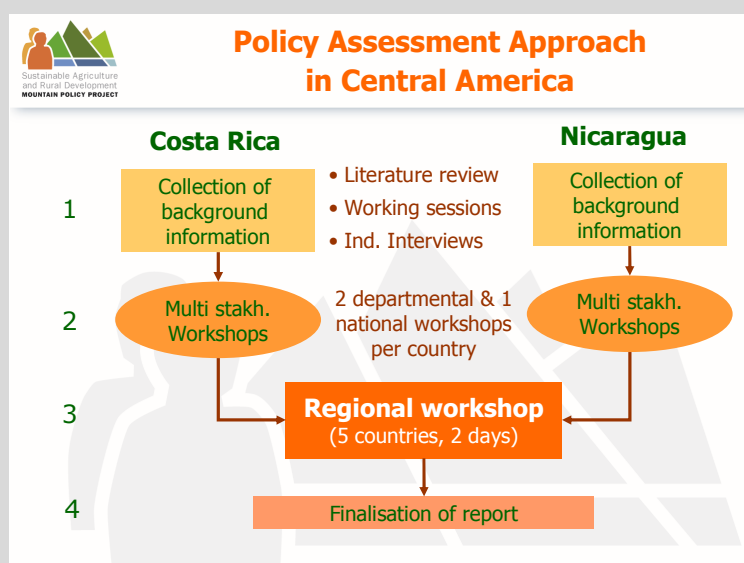
- To gather information and opinions on how well policies are working on the ground;
- To provide insights into the strengths and weaknesses of the processes involved in the formulation, implementation and evaluation of policies for SARD-M and how well the various institutions involved in these activities interact with one another.

Such workshops also act as a **forum to discuss practical problems** facing the development and implementation of policies and can thus provide **useful recommendations and proposals for follow-up activities** that answer to a demand existing on the ground. More importantly, the workshops can get the stakeholders involved at an early stage of the process and foster their commitment to carry out recommendations and proposed follow-up actions.

SARD-M policy assessments that have been conducted in Central America (Box 8) and in the Hindu Kush-Himalayas (Box 9) made use of such workshops in order to gather information.

¹⁵ Agriculture but also rural development policies and other policies impacting on sustainable rural development.

Box 8: The policy assessment process conducted in Central America¹⁶



Collection of background information

- Working sessions with key informants (e.g. experts and officials from public institutions and international cooperation agencies) to identify possible entry points, important documentation concerning SARD policies and institutions, and receive suggestions on people to interview and regions where consultation workshops could be conducted.
- Individual interviews (16 in Nicaragua and 21 in Costa Rica) were also conducted. The information obtained was used for the final report and development of an anthology of policies for SARD-M.

Multi-stakeholder workshops

These workshops were held at the departmental level (in different mountain communities) followed by a national level one. The workshops gathered representatives from state institutions, NGOs, municipal governments and producers to discuss about the strengths and weaknesses of public policies directed towards SARD in mountain regions.

Costa Rica

- Departmental Workshops
 - Cartago: 3 workshops
 - Puriscal: 27 participants
- National workshop: 18 participants

Nicaragua

- Departmental Workshops
 - Jinotega: 25 participants
 - Ocotal Nueva Segovia: 40 participants
- National workshop: 17 participants

Regional Workshop

The regional workshop invited representatives involved in policy-making and SARD-M issues from government and civil society of case study and other countries of the region. The results of the SARD-M assessments were presented as well as activities of other organizations and projects working on SARD-M related issues in the region to provide an overall picture of the SARD-M situation.

Working group sessions were also held to brainstorm and discuss about various aspects of SARD-M, including the valorisation of positive externalities, identification of SARD-M policies in non-case study

¹⁶ For further information on the assessment process in Central America, see Annex 2.

countries and an initial discussion on their strengths and weaknesses, as well as methodological issues related to the formulation, implementation and evaluation of SARD-M.

All of these activities in the end developed recommendations on improvements that need to be made and proposals for concrete follow-up activities.

Source: PASOLAC (2005)

Box 9: SARD-M policy assessment approach in the Hindu Kush-Himalaya

With some country-specific or subject-specific differences, the broad methodological approaches followed by the country teams included examination of available government reports/records, discussion with various agencies dealing with planning and implementation of policy-programme interventions, research studies and expert reports on the subject and interaction with communities or grassroots level stakeholders.

National consultations

National consultations were held to discuss assessment findings and recommendations.

The **National Consultation Workshop for Nepal** was held in Kathmandu in March 2006 and attended by representatives from governments, civil society organizations and development agencies. They also included some of the original authors as well as implementers of the Agricultural Perspective Plan (APP), the assessed policy.

In April 2006, the **Sikkim National Consultation Workshop** was held in Gangtok and was also attended by the Regional Focal Person from ICIMOD. The workshop brought together stakeholders from different government agencies and provided a platform for them to review not only past achievements in rural development of the State, but also to discuss the emerging policy thrusts, such as organic farming.

The **National Consultation Workshop for Bhutan** was held in June 2006 at Bumthang and was attended by officials from different line agencies. Mr. C.N. Anil, Associate Coordinator of ICIMOD-IFAD Project on Supporting Sustainable Livelihoods, represented ICIMOD.

In **China (Sichuan)**, inter-agency consultations/interactions were the dominant way of building the information base and assessing emerging policy changes and processes.

Regional workshop

Following the national consultation workshops, the policy assessment papers were further revised and the gist of these second drafts were presented at the **Regional Workshop on SARD-M in the HKH region** held in Kathmandu from 17-18 July 2006. The workshop was attended by senior policy-makers and representatives of civil societies, and international organizations such as the FAO Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific, Bangkok; the Centre for Rural Development of Asia-Pacific (CIRDAP), Bangladesh; IUCN Nepal; and some bilateral development agencies.

During the two-day workshop, the participants discussed the findings of the case studies from the four countries, shared some regional experiences. Working group sessions were conducted to identify strengths and weaknesses of policies and processes among the different countries. The workshop also included a session on validating recommendations and follow-up to the studies at regional and national levels.

Source: ICIMOD (2006)

What are the main steps for a rapid assessment of SARD-M policies

Step 1. Background information of the country under study (page 30)

- To provide a general understanding of the important issues facing economic, social, environmental and cultural aspects of agriculture and rural development in a country and the situation of those living in mountain regions.

Step 2. Selection of an entry point for SARD-M policy assessments (page 33)

- To simplify and focalize the analysis of SARD-M policies through the identification of a problematic or priority issue related to SARD-M in the region which will be used as an entry point for the analysis of SARD-M policies.

Step 3. Outline of governance structure and institutional setting for SARD-M policies (page 35)

- To provide a general understanding of the governance system and institutional setting that exists for SARD-M policies in the country.

Step 4. Identification of policy frameworks and policies for sustainable development and SARD in mountain regions (page 39)

- To get a broad overview on strategies and policies impacting on SARD in mountain regions, i.e.:
 - policy frameworks and strategies that exists for sustainable development and SARD-M;
 - major economic, social, environmental and institutional policies related to entry point of analysis.

Step 5. Examination of the impact and perceptions of policies for SARD in mountain areas (page 43)

- To examine the impacts that policies for SARD have on mountain regions and the perceptions that people have of policies under study in order to better understand their effectiveness and relevance.

Step 6. Effects that existing institutions and policy processes have on policies for SARD-M (page 48)

- To get an understanding on how of the existing institutions and policy formulation and implementation processes have influenced the positive and negative impacts of policies identified in step 5.

Step 7. Summary of findings, recommendations and proposals for follow-up activities (page 53)

Summary of findings (page 53)

- To prepare the formulation of recommendations through a synthesis of the major findings outlined in steps 5 and 6 in a succinct and accessible manner.

Lessons learned (page 59)

- To transform the major strengths and weaknesses identified in the SWOT analysis into lessons learned.

Recommendations for improvements (page 62)

- To assist policymakers and institutions involved in policy-making and implementation in developing improved policy packages and processes for SARD in mountain regions.

Proposals for follow-up activities (page 65)

- To develop suggestions for concrete actions that can build upon existing strengths and opportunities and overcome weaknesses and constraints.

Step 1 – Background information of the country under study

Objective

- To provide a general understanding of the important issues facing economic, social, environmental and cultural aspects of agriculture and rural development in a country and the situation of those living in mountain regions.

Main elements

Some basic background information on the country provides those familiar with the general context an opportunity to briefly reflect upon the past and how the situation of agriculture and rural development has evolved to the present day. It also allows an outside reader to better understand the general situation and context of a country.

It will in particular outline the **problematic or priority issues**, and the **role and importance of mountains and their specificities** (i.e. potentials, constraints and diversity).

A unique feature of this background information will be the special emphasis and spotlight that it places on the **economic, social, environmental and cultural situation of mountain regions and its people**.

Tools

Literature reviews and interviews with key informants.

Expected outputs

Basic elements of country background

- **Brief history and background of agriculture and rural development issues** as they pertain to mountain regions, taking into consideration economic, social, environmental and cultural issues.
- **Role and importance of mountains** in the country under study **and their specificities**, i.e. potentialities, constraints and diversity.
- Administrative **map** of the country and map showing the mountainous regions of the country.

Examples of analysis of mountain specificities

Box 10: Potentials of mountains in Lebanon

- High value-added products, with an increase in quantity, quality and uniqueness accompanied by high quality services could lead to higher incomes and better feasibility.
- The small surface area of the country and its geography could allow for efficiencies due to the proximity of different regions to each other and for the development of specialized production zones of high-quality, low-volume production. This could initiate the development and implementation of private initiatives for the production and distribution of typical products both in Lebanon and in the neighbouring countries.

- The abandonment of the non-irrigated agricultural lands and the subsequent occupation of the space by unproductive forest species could be overcome with the planting of productive forest and range species.
- The irrigated lands could be restructured and made available for agricultural production.
- The protection of the environment, through the development of a responsible agriculture, could lead to an efficient use of water resources and a reduction of the pollution caused by agro-chemicals. This requires the appropriate training of the farmers and their awareness.

Source: CIHEAM-IAMB, Asmar (2006)

Box 11: Diversity of mountains in the Peruvian Andes

- The great biological and ecological diversity of the Peruvian Andes has created opportunities for people to diversify their production and consumption. The socio-cultural diversity has also produced differences in terms of social organization, attitudes and methods for the administration of communal goods and community resources. These specificities have shaped the territory in different units each characterized by different agro-ecological and socio-economic systems resulting from historical changes.
- It has been recognized that ecological agriculture, traditional ways of management, modalities of non-monetary exchange, biodiversity, artisan work and local culture can constitute added values for endogenous development.

Source: CEPES, Ravera (2006)

Box 12: Marginality of the hillside rural population in Central America

Despite the varied and profitable potentials of hillsides, there have been fewer economic, social, cultural and commercial investments in these zones than in other geographic areas, resulting in their marginalization in various respects:

a. Economic

- Generally speaking, hillside dwellers have low incomes, or lower purchasing power because of the limited employment opportunities;
- Employment possibilities are fewer than in the plains or valleys where agricultural production for export purposes prevails. The only exception is in the coffee-producing zones where there is employment on a large scale at coffee harvesting time and temporary employment to maintain farms.

b. Infrastructure

- Run-down community infrastructure, particularly in the field of public services (drinking water, electricity, healthcare, education) are scarce and located far away from and/or are of poor quality;
- Run-down electricity and drinking water systems need to be rehabilitated;
- Poor or non-existent access to routes and tracks;
- Few or no homes are available to people, placing the health of the rural households in jeopardy.

c. Production

- Due to the low fertility of soils, yields are low and the crops produced are generally not very profitable (basic cereals), or people engage in extensive livestock farming;
- Low irrigation coverage;
- Little or no infrastructure for the storage or sale of inputs.

d. Social

- Families are generally large with high levels of fertility and teenage pregnancies, and the highest levels of maternal deaths;
- The population is fragmented and scattered;
- High levels of chronic and acute malnutrition among babies, and malnutrition, anaemia and iron deficiency among women of childbearing age;
- Illiteracy is widespread and rates of school dropouts are high;
- High levels of household violence;
- High levels of child labour.

e. Environment

- Greater vulnerability and extreme weather conditions;
- High level of dependency on natural resources for food and energy (fuel wood);
- Fragile ecosystems prone to soil erosion, contaminated water caused by coffee processing and other unsustainable agricultural practices.

f. Access

- There is generally little access to local, regional or external markets because of a lack of road infrastructure, organizations of producers' households, and other factors;
- More difficult access to technologies and technical assistance, because the institutions and service providers choose more accessible places;
- Credit access is limited because of a lack of credit services in remote communities and the high transaction costs for households with smallholdings;
- In some places there are problems of land access and land tenure registration;
- There is difficulty in gaining access to such basic services as healthcare, education, recreational amenities, etc.

g. Information

- Little access to information on laws and/or policies, technologies;
- Few or no television and radio broadcasting services, and even fewer electronic communications.

Source: PASOLAC (2005)

Step 2 – Selection of an entry point for SARD-M policy assessments

Objective

- To simplify and focalize the analysis of SARD-M policies through the identification of a problematic or priority issue (i.e. entry point) related to SARD-M in the region.

Main elements

As the subject area of **SARD is vast** and the assessments are to be conducted within a **short period of time**, the approach of the assessment is thus to allow for the **selection of an entry point** for analysis. The entry point will preferably **address problematic or priority issues facing a given region** which will also help to ensure that some follow-up actions will be taken.

To help bring about a cross-sectoral understanding, once an entry point has been identified, the assessment will then examine the relevant economic, social, environmental and institutional policies related to it.

Tools

The **selection of entry points** should be done **in consultation with stakeholders** which can also help to ensure a greater ownership and incentive to act upon the recommendations and proposals made for follow-up activities. An example of such a consultative process is outlined below.

Box 13: Selection of the entry points in the Mediterranean Basin

As a first step, a range of selected Mediterranean stakeholders from governmental and nongovernmental spheres, interested and involved in mountain development issues at the regional, country and local levels, were mobilized and consulted for information collection and discussion on SARD-M issues.

The information they collected allowed for the preparation of ten Mediterranean country profiles (covering Albania, Bosnia & Herzegovina, the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Serbia and Montenegro; Algeria, Morocco, Tunisia; Lebanon, Syria and Italy) that presented PIPs frameworks for SARD in mountain areas. The profiles identified and characterized twenty "significant stories" related to policies issues in mountain areas according to SARD principles.

Two of these twenty significant stories were selected to carry out SARD-M rapid policy assessments. In Morocco, the aim was to understand how the national policy for watershed management is matching SARD principles. In Lebanon, in the framework of the forthcoming new Lebanese Agricultural Strategy, the implementation of pilot activities for initiating Participatory and Negotiated Territorial Development (PNTD) processes in mountain territories was assessed.

Source: CIHEAM-IAMB (2007)

In the process of selecting an entry point, information should also be gathered in order to be able to provide some background information regarding the entry point and justify its selection.

Expected outputs

Selection of an entry-point

- Identification of a priority or problematic SARD-M issue facing a country.
- A justification of the selection of the entry point for the analysis of SARD-M policies.
- Information on the selected entry point:
 - basic explanation of the current problems related to the entry point;
 - a brief history or "milestones" of the policies within a selected entry point as policies are often not made from scratch, but are a product of major events (domestic and international) and lessons learned from past experiences. A timeline could be one way of succinctly outlining this history.

Examples

Box 14: Examples of entry points

Andes

Water was identified by local populations as an issue of extreme importance in the Andean region and the assessment in the Andes focussed its attention on "integrated natural resources management policies for SARD" as the entry point of analysis. The assessments not only identified the major policies and institutions related to water, but also examined the major agricultural development, environmental management, and forest policies.

Carpathians

The Carpathian Convention, which came into force in January 2006, is a framework type convention pursuing a comprehensive policy and cooperating in the protection and sustainable development of the Carpathians. Article 7 of the Carpathian Convention is dedicated to Sustainable Agriculture and Forestry. The SARD-M policy assessments contributed to Article 7 by examining the various policies institutions and processes for agriculture, forestry and rural development.

Box 15: Entry point justification in Nepal

The reason for choosing the Agriculture Perspective Plan (APP) as an entry point for analysis are as follows:

- First, it is the most carefully prepared sectoral plan as compared to others and an important component of the Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP). The APP provided fairly clear-cut objectives, targets, resources needed and identified institutional roles at least in paper. Evaluations of APP have also focused on reviewing these aspects - providing valuable indications of the overall performance. Many other policies lack this type of information on the process of planning and implementation.
- Second, the APP sought to **address agriculture and rural development linkages** and explicitly recognized the role of different ecological regions including mountains and hills and gender in the sustainable development of the economy.
- Third, the APP is still alive in some form in the Government and lessons from its development and functioning will be directly useful for improving future directions.
- Fourth, the APP came in response to the continuing concerns expressed by organizations like FAO for the development of programs in a more integrated and comprehensive manner emphasized as part of its global concern for sustainable agriculture and rural development (SARD). (FAO 1991).

Source: ICIMOD, Banskota (2006)

STEP 3 – Outline of governance structure and institutional setting for SARD-M policies

Objective

- To provide a general understanding of the governance system and institutional setting that exists for SARD-M policies in the country in order to better understand the overall context in which policies are made.

Main elements

The provision of such background information on the governance system and major institutions (including government, NGOs, the private sector, etc.) involved in SARD-M policy formulation and implementation is important to help people better understand the overall context in which policies are made. This exercise can help to provide the essential background material necessary to better make analyses and inform the discussions that will be made later on in steps 5 and 6.

Useful tools for governance system and institutional setting analysis

Literature reviews and interviews with key informants can be used to obtain the information required for this step. **Questionnaire 2** on page 73 was developed by CIHEAM-IAM Bari to identify and assess the roles and interactions between the major institutions involved in SARD-M policy development.

Flowcharts or organizational diagrams are a useful way to visually show interactions of various institutions at and between the various levels of governance.

Box 16: Additional questions examined in Nepal to understand the governance and institutional context in which policies are made

Who are engaged in policy-making? What is the cluster of actors? Is it society-centred with greater role of classes, interest groups, parties and voters or is it State-centred with greater role of technocrats, bureaucrats and other state interest groups or is it more pluralist and open for any organization to participate? Who are the owners of the policy process?

What is the nature of the political, economic and social environment?

- The political context will determine the nature of participation; the playing field for different actors, the policy space, the constraints on what can be achieved, the geographical variations in the policy content and what type of compromises are ultimately made. The final decision rests with the political leaders.
- The economic environment will determine the nature of the economic content of the policies. When economics are growing more liberal economic policies may be feasible and when conditions are not so good, difficult economic decisions may be necessary including accepting tough conditionalities of donors. What is the role of science in terms of the understanding of the different issues? This may have a role in the nature of policy choices that are made.
- The social environment will determine the nature of the social interactions and particularly which groups are involved in the process. This also has close interrelationships with the economic and political environment. What is the nature of the environmental conditions? What are the major problems, is there a crisis or a potential one, who is doing what and who is benefiting and who is suffering?

Source: ICIMOD, Banskota (2006)

Expected outputs

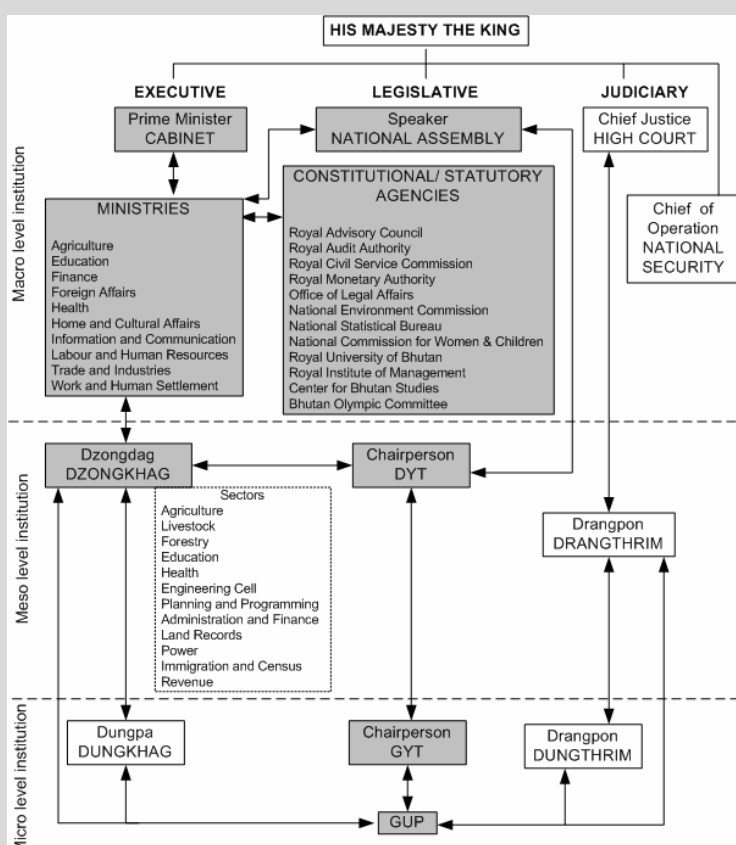
Elements of background information on the political history and system of governance

- Brief description of the political history and system of governance.** This historical past and system of governance is important as it can later provide insights into why policies are formulated or implemented in a certain manner.
- Identification of major government ministries responsible for SARD-M policies.** In particular, it is important to outline the roles and responsibilities of the major ministries and how they are supposed to interact with one another and civil society at the national, regional and local levels of governance.
- Identification of major civil society organizations** that are involved in SARD-M policy formulation and implementation.

Examples of governance system and institutional setting analysis

The boxes below provide examples of analyses conducted in Bhutan, Albania and Czech Republic for the identification of major government institutions and their roles and interactions for SARD-M policy formulation and implementation.

Box 17: Organizational diagram of governance in Bhutan



Source: ICIMOD, Duba (2006)

Box 18: Table outlining the main government institutions involved in SARD-M policies in Albania

Institutions	Functions
Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Consumer Protection	Ministry in charge of coordinating agricultural, food, and rural development policies, including SARD-M policies
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ General Directorate of Agricultural Polices <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Food Production Policy Department ○ Rural Development Department ▪ MADA ▪ 2KR Programme 	<p>Directorate in charge of agricultural and rural development policies</p> <p>Department in charge of crop and livestock production policies</p> <p>Department in charge of coordinating rural development policies, including SARD-M</p> <p>Agency whose function is to coordinate all investments in order to efficiently use the mountain area resources by providing technical, financial and management assistance*</p> <p>Operational Agency dealing with subsidy management. It is supposed to be the predecessor of “Payment Agency” which is expected to be set up in the framework of Rural Development Strategy</p>
Ministry of Economy, Trade and Energy	Ministry in charge of coordinating regional development policies
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Programming and Regional Development Sector 	Sector in charge of coordinating regional development policies
Ministry of Environment	Ministry in charge of coordinating environment policies, including policies related to protection and sustainable use of natural resources
Ministry of Tourism and Culture	Ministry in charge of preparing and coordinating the implementation of tourism policies, including cultural and eco-tourism
Department of Strategy and Donor Coordination – PM office	Department in charge of strategy and donor coordination. It is supposed to give strategic directions to budget
Ministry of Finance	Ministry in charge of preparing and overseeing the medium-term budget programme and annual budget
Ministry of Interior	Ministry covering policy on local government (communes, municipalities, regional councils, counties)
Regional councils	Second level of local government in charge of regional (qark) development strategy preparation and implementation
Communes	First level of local government. They are supposed to participate in design and implementation of SARD M policies at the commune level
MAFF	Credit institution designed to provide credit to agricultural production clients living and working in poor, marginal mountain areas
Albanian Development Fund	Agency specialized in small infrastructure: roads, water supply systems, schools, small market infrastructure, including in rural and mountainous areas

* The “Vision” of MADA may change since it is expected to convert into a regional development agency.

Source: BFSM, Skreli (2007)

Box 19: Table showing major government and civil society institutions involved in SARD-M policies in the Czech Republic

	Institutions	Roles
National	Ministry of Agriculture	Controls several state agencies, coordinates and leads preparatory works on agriculture and forestry policies.
	State Agricultural Intervention Fund	As a payment agency, administrates financial subsidies from the EU and from the national financial funds.
	Forest Management Institute	Collects and analyses a wide range of data on forests such as inventory or information services for certification.
	Ministry of Environment	Coordinates the procedure of all ministries and other central state administration authorities in environmental matters (water, air protection, landscape conservation, waste management...).
	State Fund for the Environment	As an implementation agency, administrates financial subsidies from the EU and the national financial funds.
	Ministry of Regional Development	Manages regional policy, development of housing resources, zoning, building regulations, tourism...
	Ministry of Finance	In charge of the state budget and finance, financial market, taxes and duties... It coordinates the acceptance of international aid flows.
	Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs	Responsible for labour protection, collective bargaining, wages, social and health insurance, labour conditions of women...
Sub-national	Agriculture Agencies	Provide directly to farmers information about agricultural policies, subsidies rules and conditions...
	Protected Landscape Areas Administrations	Represent the state administration as the nature conservation expert for a given territory; they also conduct major nature inventories.
Local	Municipalities	Provide a community-level spatial plan which is the main tool to influence the development of the community and coordinate waste management and water supply...
Non Governmental Organizations		
	PRO-BIO	Plays an important role in the development and promotion of organic farming, organic products processing.
	Czech Union of Nature Protectors	Helps in promoting local products brands, preservation of traditional fruit varieties and landscape maintenance.

Source: UNEP-ISCC, Hajduchová (2007)

Step 4 – Identification of policy frameworks and policies for sustainable development and SARD in mountain regions

Objective

- To get a broad overview on strategies and policies impacting on SARD in mountain regions, i.e.:
 - policy frameworks and strategies that exist for sustainable development and SARD-M,
 - major economic, social, environmental and institutional policies related to entry point of analysis.

1. Identification of SARD-M relevant policy frameworks

Main elements

Outlining the major policy frameworks that exist for sustainable development and SARD in mountain regions can provide the reader an idea of the degree to which policy frameworks for sustainable development have been taken into consideration in the development planning of a country.

Many countries are or have developed national strategies for sustainable development and are at various stages in their implementation. Some countries will already be in the implementation stage while others may only have certain components in place or have no action taken at all.¹⁷

Tools

Literature reviews, questionnaires interviews and discussions with key informants and workshop participants.

Key questions

1. Is there a rural/sustainable development strategy in the country being studied? What kinds of policy frameworks exist to address rural/sustainable development?
2. Is there a focus on mountains in any of the development strategies and what are they? In case there is not, why, or are there plans to include a mountain perspective in future strategies?

Questionnaire 3 on page 74 was developed and used in the Mediterranean Basin by IAM Bari to identify major strategies and policies for sustainable development and SARD-M.

Expected outputs

Identification of SARD-M relevant policy frameworks

- The identification of major strategies and policy frameworks for sustainable development and SARD in the country.
- An understanding of the degree to which such strategies have been developed and/or implemented.
- An understanding of the degree to which the strategies and policy frameworks identified address mountain regions.

¹⁷ The Johannesburg Summit cited 2005 as a target year for the implementation of national sustainable development strategy (NSDS). An assessment report regarding the status of NSDS around the world is available at the following address: <http://www.un.org/esa/sustdev/natlinfo/nsds/nsds.htm>

Example

A regional summary of the answers derived from the questionnaire used in the Mediterranean Basin.

Box 20: Summary of IAM Bari questionnaire results on major strategies and policies for sustainable development and SARD-M in the Mediterranean region

	National Strategy for Sustainable Development (NSSD) and for SARD	Mountain strategies/policies
Maghreb (Algeria, Morocco, Tunisia)	With some exception, no NSSD are in place. On the contrary, meaningful examples of strategies for rural development and mechanisms for stakeholders' coordination on themes related to sustainable development are already activated at the national level.	Mountain issues are often covered by strategies and/or policies, even if not having a specific focus on mountain areas. In each country, there are complex policy frameworks sensitive to problems of remote and poor areas.
Middle-East (Lebanon and Syria)	No NSSD and SARD strategies and mechanisms are in place.	Not any specific mountain policies/strategies. Some projects and territorial development schemes consider mountain regions.
South East Europe Mountains (Albania, Bosnia & Herzegovina; Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Serbia)	Countries have activated processes and mechanisms (e.g. committees) for preparing NSSD and rural development strategies.	No specific mountain policies. Mountain issues find a place in specific rural development or social development strategies.

Source: CIHEAM-IAMB (2007)

2. Identification of major economic, social, environmental and institutional policies related to entry point of analysis

Main elements

While it is important to examine policies directly related to the chosen entry point, in order to avoid a solely sectoral analysis, it is also necessary to **examine other policies** (i.e. pertinent economic, social, environmental and institutional policies) related to SARD that directly or indirectly affect the entry point under study. In doing so, the policy assessment can provide a balanced perspective of the social, economic and environmental pillars of sustainable development.

Tools

Literature reviews, interviews and discussions with key informants.

The following provides an overview of major policy instruments for SARD that can be helpful to help in the identification of pertinent economic, social, environmental and institutional policies related to the entry point of analysis selected.

Five main types of policy instruments for SARD

- **General economic and social policies** intended to influence overall economic growth, trade, price levels, employment, investment and population, attained chiefly by utilizing monetary and fiscal instruments.
 - Fiscal and monetary policies
 - Trade and exchange rate policies
 - Labour and employment policies
 - Investment and foreign aid
 - Population policies
 - Incomes and equity policies
- **Policies relating to agricultural and rural development.** Policies of this type are usually intended to influence such factors as rural incomes, agricultural resource base, agricultural production, consumption of agricultural products, agricultural price levels and variability, and the quality of food. They are usually implemented via instruments such as taxes and subsidies, direct government production and provision of services, and direct control through regulation.
 - Sustainable rural livelihoods
 - Rural infrastructure
 - Building human capital for the rural sector
 - Agricultural research and technology development
 - Agricultural prices
 - Stabilization and risk in agriculture
 - Direct government involvement
 - Food and nutrition
- **Policies relating to markets**, including the establishment of market institutions and rules, and circumscription of property rights.
 - Resource property rights
 - Institutional development
- **Policies aimed at establishing a democratic and participatory process** designed to involve all interested groups in decision making and implementing SARD.
 - Decentralization
 - People's participation and empowerment
- **Policies designed specifically to influence natural resource use and protect the environment.** These policies utilize: (i) command and control¹⁸; (ii) economic incentives such as taxes and subsidies; and (iii) persuasive measures such as education and advertising.
 - Direct government action
 - Control instruments
 - Economic incentives

Source: FAO (1997b)

While many of the policies listed are not primarily intended to achieve SARD, they are all essential components.¹⁹

¹⁸ Effected, for example, by prohibiting or limiting certain resource uses or establishing limits on emissions, with penalties for non-compliance.

¹⁹ While this classification by FAO (1997b) lists policy instruments by objective, an alternative classification has been suggested that divides the instruments according to policy type: 1) **Monetary policies**: exchange rate, interest rate; 2) **Fiscal policies**: taxes, subsidies; 3) **Trade policies**: tariffs, quotas, norms and standards, price control mechanisms; 4) **Investment policies (public expenditures)**: infrastructure, extension, research; 5) **Institutional policies**: liberalization, privatization, decentralization. Both classifications show that the assessment of SARD policies requires a cross-sectoral understanding.

Expected outputs

Identification of major economic, social, environmental and institutional policies related to entry point of analysis

- Identification of main policies related to the selected entry point of analysis.
- Identification of other economic, social, environmental and institutional policies affecting the selected entry point.

Example

Box 21: Example of major policies examined in Romania

	Policies	Objectives
Sustainable agriculture and rural development	National Programme for Agriculture and Rural Development	-Encourages the adoption of agricultural production methods designed to protect the environment and maintain the countryside. -Supports the development of practical experience of implementation of agri-environmental measures.
	Sustainable Development Strategy of the Mountain Regions	- Provides principles, objectives and measures for approaching sustainable development and biodiversity conservation of mountain regions.
Forestry	Sustainable Development Strategy of the Romanian Sylviculture	- Encourages sustainable management of the forest resources and forest lands.
	National Forestry Policy and Development Strategy	- Helps at the recognition of vital role of forests in maintaining the ecological processes and balance.
Environmental protection and biodiversity conservation	Romanian Strategy for Environment	- Provides an assessment of achievements as well as remaining gaps in all environmental sectors related to EU environment accession documents.
	National Environmental Action Plan	- Selects the priority projects to be developed in the future.

Source: UNEP-ISCC, Burdusel (2006)

Step 5 – Examination of the impact and perceptions of policies for SARD in mountain areas

Objective

- To examine the impacts that policies for SARD have on mountain regions and the perceptions that people have of policies under study in order to better understand their effectiveness and relevance.

Main elements

The main idea of this step is to provide an understanding of how well existing policies are addressing SARD issues in mountain regions. It tries to see how well the policies under study are tackling the issues they aim to address in mountain regions through the analysis of existing data and opinions of various stakeholders. A particular focus is also placed on whether the policies are creating or exacerbating inequities among the mountain populations themselves and between upland and lowland areas.

Tools

The examination of these impacts is more **qualitative in nature**, mainly utilising **interviews and discussions with key informants and workshop participants**. **Literature reviews** can also be used where relevant to substantiate opinions received and fill in gaps.

Key issues

- What are the **objectives of the policies** under study and do they address the issues facing the country at the national, sub-national and local levels taking into account the **specificities of mountains** and linkages between lowlands and uplands?
- What kind of positive or negative impacts do the policies being studied have on SARD? i.e. What are the opinions of stakeholders on the pertinence of policies? Do they feel that they are working and what are the reasons? Are there policy incoherencies or contradictions?
- Do the existing policies **create inequities**?

For an assessment conducted in Bhutan, an interesting questionnaire approach was utilised whereby people were asked to explain their **understanding or interpretation of certain key policies and acts** for SARD in mountain areas. Box 22 provides an example of some findings obtained from this questionnaire approach. It shows that the people have differing opinions on what the main purpose of the policies are about which also can have implications on the implementation of policies and whether the policies meet their intended targets.

Box 22: Interpretations of different acts and policies in Bhutan

	% response
Land Act	
Land ownership	41%
Land ceiling (5 to 25 ac)	18%
Protection form encroachment	24%
Land conversion	12%
Tseri ban	6%
National Forest Policy (1974 and 1991)	
Controlled access to forest products	61%

Protect and conserve natural resources	28%
Equitable resource sharing	6%
Formulation of community forest and private forest	6%

The above is only a partial list of policies examined. The study also examined people's perceptions of other policies including: Forest and Nature Conservation Rules 2000, Good Governance, Food self-sufficiency policy, Land development, National irrigation policy. The Bhutan assessment is available at: <http://www.fao.org/sard/en/sardm/Communi/620/index.html>.

Source: ICIMOD, Duba (2006)

Expected outputs

Impact of policies for SARD-M

- A general understanding of the impact that existing policies for SARD have on mountains and its people.
- An understanding of how stakeholders perceive policies being studied in regards to their effectiveness, pertinence, contradictions, etc.
- The identification of whether policy contradictions or incoherencies exist that can affect the effectiveness or intentions of policies.
- An understanding of whether mountain specificities and upland-lowland linkages are considered in policies and how this impacts on mountain populations.
- An understanding of whether inequities are created or exacerbated by policies that are in place.

One of the outputs of step 5 can be the **development of a matrix** that examines the effects of policies in relation to mountain specificities and SARD pillars (see table 1, page 47).

Examples

Box 23: Positive and negative impacts of the Bhutanese tourism policy

So far, the Bhutanese experience with tourism has been globally positive. The government has carefully managed tourism policies in the country. Bhutan has been fortunate to learn from the experiences of its neighbouring countries in tourism management, picking only the positive elements. The tourism policy of the country is in line with its principle of GNH (Gross National Happiness), focusing on environment and culture rather than on the accumulation of wealth from the industry.

However, there are negative aspects of tourism as well. One of these has been the imbalance of benefits from tourism in terms of geographical regions and concerning the urban versus rural areas. Most tourists' destinations are in the Western and Central regions, thus the Eastern and Southern areas, which have potential for tourism, are denied the opportunity. Tourism activities are also concentrated in the urban centres and managed by people hired from such centres, with minimal involvement of local people or communities. Although not a serious problem, environmental damage through littering and other activities from tourism can also be noticed.

Source: ICIMOD, Duba (2006)

Box 24: Excerpts from assessment in Ecuador regarding pertinence of policies

- Sectoral policies appear to be defined in ministerial offices and other centres of authority with such a level of detachment from reality that when they have to be implemented many groups do not feel involved and fail to identify with the objectives being pursued. Widespread ignorance of the rules and strategies and on the part of citizens in this sector is another indicator of the low level of participation in terms of numbers and quality. Compliance with the rules is very poor,

because the real needs of the majority of the stakeholders are not being met and they have never been acquainted with, let alone approved, the policies adopted.

- The policy priorities are primarily directed at improving productivity of certain goods, particularly for export, and hence at benefiting particular groups. When resources are allocated and actions implemented, little account is taken of objectives relating to food security or innovation and the organization of small producers or indigenous groups. Less consideration still is given to renewable natural resources sustainability, and the inclusion of marginal groups in social, rural and national life.

Source: GMP-CIP, Moreno et al. (2007)

Box 25: Excerpts from an analysis conducted of policy impacts regarding the management of water resources in Ecuador

The indiscriminate expansion of the agricultural frontier, human settlements, agroindustry, oil and mining industries with no consideration of environment issues, the construction of highways through fragile areas, and demographic pressure – among other things – are the main factors that directly or indirectly impact on the integrity of the ecosystems, fragmenting and destroying them, with negative repercussions on water availability and biodiversity. There seem to be various causes underlying these developments:

- **The mismatch between policies applied to water resources and the legal and institutional regulatory framework.** Nevertheless, a number of new legal provisions have emerged, increasing the scattering, overlapping and contradictions in water management legislation. At the present time there are 27 legal instruments, in the form of laws, regulations and decrees which directly or indirectly govern the national water resources.²⁰
- The **water management institutional framework**, which has been reformed by redefining the role of the State, far from helping to resolve the administrative institutional shortcomings has actually made them worse by creating problems of jurisdiction between State agencies, and between these and sectoral government authorities, weakening their coordination capabilities.
- **Water distribution is socially inequitable**, and water rights are monopolised and concentrated in a few hands. Acting on the principle that the greater the land area, the greater the water requirement, the State has helped to heighten social inequalities in the countryside. According to the data from the 3rd Agricultural Census, 41% of the irrigated land belongs to landowners who have inherited more than 100 hectares.
- The rapid expansion of the agricultural frontier, the ever-increasing rate of soil erosion leading to water quality deterioration and the silting of dams and canals, increasing contamination by industrial, petroleum and mining residues and waste, agrochemical use, deforestation (slash and burn) agricultural practices, the negative impact of aquaculture practices, domestic waste, and so on... A survey conducted by the Pan American Health Organization (OPS) has shown that 28.8% of Ecuador's 12.5 million population have no access to fresh water, and 54.4% have no sanitation services, while 95% of waste water is discharged into rivers untreated. According to the Ministry of Health, 50% of hospital admissions are due to inadequate sanitation services and actions. This explains why the country has one of the highest infant mortality rates in Latin America (44.8 per 1000 live births).

Source: GMP-CIP, Moreno et al (2007)

Box 26: Excerpts from policy assessment in China regarding consideration of

²⁰ Foro Nacional de los Recursos Hídricos. Propuesta política.

<http://www.sendas.org.ec/docs/PROPUESTA%20POL%C3%8DTICA%20DEL%20FORO%20y%20problematica%20nacional.doc>

mountain specificities and their impacts on mountain regions

- In 1998, the provincial Government issued a policy document "Decisions on further promoting non-collective and non-state owned enterprises in rural and mountain areas". In order to implement the policy measures, all local governments had to set up a special office to organize, facilitate and support the establishment and development of "non-collective and non-state enterprises" by encouraging credits and loans. As a result, there was a boom in the non-farm sector development in rural Sichuan during the late 1990s and early 2000s.

However, this unusual development caused two major problems:

- Most of the enterprises were "resource exploiting" type, such as mining, papermaking, small chemical factories, and caused serious environmental degradation in mountain areas.
 - There was an increasing disparity between the poor and the rich in mountain areas due to the unbalanced distribution of such resources and unequal opportunities to employment.
- Under the principle of "taking economic development as the centre", the importance of mountain development is still generally ignored as the investment on mountain agricultural and rural development is usually economically unprofitable. There are still few policy researches focusing on mountain development and mountain specificities are not generally understood or considered. Many rural policies, including those mentioned in the report, were initiated in lowland rural areas and were extended to mountain areas, without fully taking into consideration mountain specificities. The results are that there are often more negative impacts and fewer positive gains in mountain areas.

Source: ICIMOD, Luo (2006)



Table 1: Example of a matrix examining effects of policies in relation to mountain specificities and SARD pillars

	Policy Name/Type	Mountain Specificities			SARD Pillars			
		Constraints	Diversity	Potentialities	Economic	Social	Environmental	Institutional
Policies for SARD in Various Sectors	Policy A							
	Policy B							
	Policy C							
	Policy D							

Effects/Impacts of policies could be coded into the matrix as follows:

- U = Unfavourable
- N = Neutral
- F = Favourable

Step 6 – Effects that existing institutions and policy processes have on policies for SARD-M

Objective

- To get an understanding on how the existing institutions and policy formulation and implementation processes have influenced the positive and negative impacts of policies identified in step 5.

Main elements

The successes and failures of policies are greatly influenced by the institutional capacities and processes involved in policy formulation and implementation. This step attempts to analyze the strengths and weaknesses of institutions responsible for SARD-M policy formulation and implementation by looking at the various processes involved in the formulation and implementation of policies.

Tools

The examination of these impacts is more **qualitative in nature**, utilising mainly **interviews and discussions with key informants and workshop participants**.

Key issues

- What are the strengths and weaknesses of the institutions at the national, regional, and local levels responsible for formulating and implementing SARD-M policies?
- What kind of effects the existing policy formulation and implementation processes (i.e. political, participatory, institutional arrangements and knowledge management procedures, and financial mobilization processes) have had on the effectiveness and/or failure of policies for SARD in mountain areas?
- Do the policies address mountain specificities during the formulation, implementation and evaluation processes and if not, why?

Four main policy processes

a) Political processes

- Strong commitment of top leadership and local authorities to sustainable development;
- Mechanisms for engagement of all stakeholders;
- Mustering political support needed to push new or amended legislation through the Parliament;
- Willingness to follow-up on legislation that has been passed in order to ensure that it is "working" on the ground.

b) Participatory processes

- Consultation forms, communication systems to educate and involve all stakeholders in the development or/and implementation of the SARD-M policies, steering mechanisms;
- Balancing and linking of top-down and bottom-up approaches, technical and local stakeholders' expertise.

c) Institutional arrangements and knowledge management procedures

- Mechanisms and institutional arrangements to ensure convergence, complementarity, coherence and co-ordination of policies;
- Crafting or amending of legislation that is reflective and supportive of policy;
- Human and institutional capacities, tools and systems to collect and understand information

- needed to formulate policies;
- Management capacities and systems to share information, resolve conflicts, build consensus, balance technical and local knowledge, etc;
- Monitoring and evaluation systems and ensuring accountability.

d) Financial mobilization

- Sufficiency of funds, dependency on donor funding, and sustainability of financing forms for SARD-M policy activities.

Box 27: Questions asked regarding policy processes for an assessment in Nepal

Governance deals with the political and bureaucratic decision making processes. Complex as these are, what is the extent of transparency, participation and corruption? How accountable is the system for non performance of policy goals and objectives?

What is the nature of inter-sectoral and national and local linkages? Is there a deliberate effort to bring together the different sectors and hierarchy of spaces or is it a top-down system that hampers them from coming together?

What is the story behind mobilization of resources? Was it planned adequately? Was there success? How did resources status affect policy outputs, impacts and outcomes?

What was the nature of the lead organization in terms of the policy implementation, monitoring and evaluation? What role did it play and how did it affect other organization's responses? Did it leave enough flexibility for implementation?

What was the status of information and its dissemination in all stages of the policy-making and implementation?

Source: ICIMOD, Banskota (2006)

Questionnaire 4 on page 76 was developed by CIHEAM IAM Bari to examine the important policy processes in the Mediterranean Basin. **Questionnaire 5** on page 77 provides another example and sets of questions that were asked in the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia on policy processes.

Expected outputs

Effects that existing institutions and policy processes have on policies for SARD-M

- Major strengths and weaknesses of government and civil society institutions involved in SARD-M formulation and implementation;
- Strengths and weaknesses of the policy processes (i.e. political processes, participatory processes, institutional arrangements and knowledge management procedures, financial mobilization);
- How the strengths and weaknesses of policy processes, including the consideration or non-consideration of mountain specificities, have affected or impacted the effectiveness of policies.

Examples

Box 28: Three major features of the policy implementation processes in Morocco

- In relation to agriculture and sustainable development, no nationwide decision has so far been taken. Most of the actions are part of some programmes or projects often financed by external funding, from which lessons can surely be learned, but they end once funding runs out.
- A certain indecision regarding crucial issues has been noticed. Examples include the macro-economic choices to be made regarding globalisation, particularly in relation to cereals, and basic non-competitive foods. Is it necessary to continue to protect them, or should alternatives be found? Another example is the matter of land ownership and land use regimes.
- Even when the policies adopt a global and coherent approach, there exists a major disconnection between the principles proclaimed and the degree to which they are really implemented. We believe that this is a fundamental characteristic in the case of Morocco, which could threaten the effectiveness and sustainability of the actions undertaken.

Source: CIHEAM-IAMB, Herzenni (2006)

Box 29: Excerpts from a policy assessment in Serbia examining various policy processes

Intersectoral coordination of institutions that should be involved in the development and implementation of the SARD policies is insufficient and discontinuing. This goes for horizontal levels of governance - from ministerial to local, and also for a lack of vertical coordination and partnerships. A sectoral perspective is noticeable in all policy development efforts, with a narrow approach of rural economy only considering agriculture. The coordination with other ministries and stakeholders is without proper structural framework.

Central government capacities for performing both policy development and administration are not satisfactory. The Ministry lacks a number of bodies and agencies that are to collect and analyze data and provide technical support. Administrative structures dealing with rural development in terms of implementation and control are seriously understaffed. The discrepancy between scale of applications/requests and staffing capacity both number as well as complexity of controlling procedures result in not always effective responses to issues that emerged in the context of implementation of rural development schemes.

In spite of the predominant rural character of the Serbian territory, many **local governance structures** do not have funding resources or staff in charge of rural development issues. Community-based and local governance structures are randomly involved in the dissemination of information on rural development support measures from the State rural development budget. Only a few organizations, such as agro-business centres, private companies or local development support centres, are fully informed and involved in the communication of available support.

No sufficient effort is made yet to systematically strengthen the local organization network or promote them as partners in implementation of rural development measures.

Source: BFSD, Tar (2007)

Box 30: Level of knowledge of existing rules and regulations of agricultural policies in the Fúquene watershed area, Colombia

It emerged from both the workshops with the stakeholders and from the surveys conducted that the vast majority of the people know nothing of the rules and regulations governing national agricultural policy. Only about 10% of the people had a fair knowledge of the rules while some 90% said that they knew very little or nothing about them. These are similar percentages to those found in Peru.

The people living in the middle watershed area where the lagoon is situated appear to know slightly more than the others due to the fact that this is the place where many of the conflicts in the basin (disputes over land tenure, water volume management, the management of the irrigation district, etc) have broken out.

Level of familiarity with the rules in Fúquene watershed area, Colombia

Level of familiarity	Location in the watershed area						Total	
	Upper		Lower		Middle			
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Good	1	0.34%	1	0.34%			2	0.69%
Fair	10	3.44%	18	6.19%	1	0.34%	29	9.97%
Poor	55	18.90%	68	23.37%	13	4.47%	136	46.74%
Don't know	42	14.43%	23	7.90%	59	20.27%	124	42.61%
Total	108	37.11%	110	37.80%	73	25.09%	291	100.00%

The individuals enumerated and those questioned at the workshops said that regulation was needed to govern the procedures in order to give a greater encouragement to the small producers through targeted subsidies to help raise productivity: wider credit coverage, training, technical assistance and more efforts to strengthen both the production and marketing organisations.

Source: GMP-CIP, Moreno et al. (2006)

Box 31: People's perceptions as to factors that affect the proper implementation of policies in Fúquene watershed area, Colombia

The factors which seem to be responsible for the high level of non-compliance are the failure to disseminate the rules and provide training on them, a prevailing "non-compliance has no consequences" mentality, due to the disengagement of the judicial system, with particular reference to natural resource and environmental management laws, and the low level of social capital for control and oversight as a result of poor villager organisation and sensitization.

Factors underlying non-compliance with agricultural rules and regulations. Fúquene watershed area

Reasons for noncompliance	Location in the watershed area						Total	
	Upper		Middle		Lower			
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
People are not interested	2	4.08%			4	8.16%	6	12.24%
Government not interested	2	4.08%					2	4.08%
Better organization is needed	1	2.04%					1	2.04%
Lack of enforcement	4	8.16%			3	6.12%	7	14.29%
Other reasons	11	22.45%	1	2.04%	3	6.12%	15	30.61%
Ignorance of them	4	8.16%	3	6.12%	11	22.45%	18	36.73%

Total	24	48.98%	4	8.16%	21	42.86%	49	100.00%
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Source: GMP-CIP, Moreno et al. (2006)

Box 32: Excerpts from a policy assessment in China regarding problems in taking into account mountain specificities during policy formulation and implementation

Many factors threaten policy-making and implementation for sustainable agriculture and rural development...the support and policy preferences from higher governments are far from sufficient. In mountain areas, most local governments have a shortage of both financial and personnel capacities to formulate their local development policies. Because of the fragility and diversity, high flexibility in implementation and quick response to the internal and external changing environments are necessary, which requires high quality of policy-making and implementation.

There is huge gap between the requirements and the reality. In practice, there are only a few researches having ever been done on mountain specificities, including those in Sichuan Province. How a certain policy interacts with specific mountain fragility, diversity and marginality as well as the integrated impacts of policy combinations on a certain mountain area is not fully understood. The knowledge gaps do exist and are threatening the proper formation of policies for mountain development.

Source: ICIMOD, Luo (2006)

Step 7 – Summary of findings, recommendations and proposals for follow-up activities

Summary of findings

Objective

- To prepare the formulation of recommendations through a synthesis of the major findings outlined in steps 5 and 6 in a succinct and accessible manner.

Main elements

The discussions that occur in the preceding steps deal with a wide range of issues. The purpose of this step is to try to synthesize the key findings in a succinct and accessible manner. The summary of findings is important as they will be used as a basis for generating lessons learned, recommendations and proposals for follow-up activities.

Tools

The creation of a **SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats) analysis table** can be a useful tool to provide a structure that can facilitate a synthesis and allow one to quickly grasp the major elements of the discussions in the paper.

The matrix below provides an example of how one can go about summarizing the major strengths and weaknesses of policies, institutions and processes for SARD-M.

Table 2: Sample table to synthesize major findings

	Strengths	Weaknesses	Opportunities	Threats
Policies				
Entry point policies				
Other SARD-M policies				
Institutions				
National				
Sub-national				
Local				
Processes				
Political processes				
Participatory processes				
Institutional arrangements and knowledge management procedures				
Financial mobilization				

Expected outputs

Summary of findings

Identification of main strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats related to:

- Entry point and other relevant SARD-M policies;
- Institutions at the national, sub-national and local levels;
- The processes involved in policy formulation and implementation.

Examples

The following table presents an example of a SWOT analysis that has been conducted in Albania, which closely follows the format shown above.

Box 33: Example of a SWOT analysis on policies, institutions and processes for SARD in mountain regions of Albania

	Strengths	Weaknesses	Opportunities	Threats
Policies				
Entry point policies	<p>Priority to support fruit and livestock sector is considered as pertinent from economic, social, environment and cultural standpoints</p> <p>Strategic Investments Plans, based on a value chain approach, prepared by MADA, support both small ruminant and vineyard sectors</p>	<p>No distinction between mountainous areas and lowland areas in terms of orchard and fruit and livestock sectors</p> <p>Problem mapping is rather inadequate. Though a value chain approach is recommended, it becomes clear that access to land, land ownership insecurity, and underdevelopment of whole value chains (including severe underdevelopment of processing industry) rather than insufficient orchard development seems to be among the central problems for mountainous areas</p> <p>Problem analysis in terms of policy options to solve identified problems is rather poor</p> <p>Policy alternative opted for, i.e. provision of subsidies to farmers for area planted – will more likely encounter implementation problems, due to excessive administrative efforts involved</p> <p>Consultation of all stakeholders is insufficient</p> <p>Impact of subsidies to farmers on mountain area development will very likely be modest, because of improper problem mapping, problem analysis, policy formulation and policy decision</p>	<p>Agribusiness development is a major priority of the government of Albania</p> <p>EU and other donors are prone to support food safety mainly in small/lamb livestock sector due to its export potential</p>	<p>The lack of focus on mountainous areas may result in less funds to these areas</p>
Other SARD-M	<p>Several strategic documents address (often implicitly) mountain area specificities (potentialities, constraints and diversity)</p>	<p>No distinction between lowland and mountainous areas policies in the National Strategy for Development and Integration (NSDI) and in other strategic documents</p>	<p>EU integration process represents opportunities in terms of sustainable agriculture and rural</p>	<p>The lack of focus on mountainous areas may result in less funds to these areas</p>

	Specific programme - Mountainous Area Development Programme - addresses mountain area specificities	<p>Sustainable agriculture is inadequately included in strategic documents. Agricultural bio-production remains an intention and integrated production is rather unknown concept</p> <p>No focus on sustainable agriculture in mountainous areas of the SSAF</p> <p>Limited impact of specific mountainous policies</p>	development, including in mountainous areas	
Institutions	Strengths	Weaknesses	Opportunities	Threats
National	There exist directorates/sectors in charge of rural and regional development policy	Specialized sectors/directorates have insufficient capacities in terms of number of staff and expertise to deal with SARD-M policies	EU integration process provides opportunities in terms institutional strengthening	
Sub-national – de-concentrated²¹ agencies		No rural/regional development capacities (staff and expertise) at the regional de-concentrated level. Regional Directorate of Agriculture and Food at the regional level have an agricultural expertise rather than a RD focus and expertise		
Local		Capacities at the commune level (staff and expertise) in terms of implementing sustainable development policies are very limited		
	There exist policy and programming departments at the RCs level. They have a broad vision on rural and mountain area development	Lack of sufficient funds and lack of consolidated and legally and practically recognised RCs functions by central government, and communes and municipalities	Regional Cross-Cutting Development Strategy recognizes a major role for <i>qarks</i>	

Processes	Strengths	Weaknesses	Opportunities	Threats
Political processes	Clear will from the top political level on sustainable development of the country	No influential pressure groups, including farmers associations, mountainous area elected, etc. Insufficient cooperation among central government agencies and between central and local authorities involved in mountain area development, especially when they belong to opposed parties		
Participatory processes	Legal requirements to consult stakeholders	Consultation considered more as a “communication” of policies (prepared by the central government – and sometimes simply by consultants) to stakeholders rather than a partnership Participation on the side of stakeholders is rather limited due to a lack of stakeholders’ negotiation power and expertise and lack of government culture “to listen”		
Technical processes	Strategic documents, including those affecting mountainous areas embedded in a integrated planning system (IPS) Technical working groups to deal with cross-cutting strategies are set up	The IPS considered as too ambitious for the Albanian public administration to absorb Cooperation among central government agencies responsible for mountain area development is insufficient or sometimes simply missing		
Financial mobilization	Strong chances that sustainable development is continuously financed once qualified for funding into NSDI		High chances that RDS can be funded by EU since it is prepared according to EU guidelines	
		Insufficient funding at the commune and regional levels; mountainous communes are poor and RCs are financially dependent on the first-level local government and central government	Local government can attract external financial resources, e.g. from EU, DFID, USAID.	Risk of RC under-funding, especially during co-habitation

Source: Balkan Foundation for Sustainable Development, Skreli (2007)

In the Hindu Kush-Himalayas, an adapted version of a SWOT analysis was utilized to examine the strengths and weaknesses of **specific SARD-M policies of importance in Bhutan**, according to their social, economic, ecological and institutional aspects. It also outlines possible opportunities that exist to improve upon the existing situation. The box below shows an example of the analysis conducted for the forest land policies.

Box 34: Forest land policies in Bhutan – The Forest and Nature Conservation Act, 1995

	Strengths	Weaknesses
Social	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Equal access for minor forestry products to all rural households (grazing, fodder, leaf litter, dry firewood, bamboo, etc.) ▪ Strong measures for protecting wildlife 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Forestry officials seen as a policing force rather than a service agency; increasing resentment towards forestry officials ▪ Increasing conflict arising from depredation of livestock and crops by wildlife
Economic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Emphasis on protection of forest cover and recognition of indirect benefits from hydropower, tourism, etc. ▪ Strong regulation of timber production and marketing to prevent corruption 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Economic benefits from forest products like timber limited to government and influential individuals ▪ Poor generation of income from forests for communities and lack of incentives to manage forests
Ecological	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Strong emphasis on conservation and increase in forest cover (presently over 72% of total geographical area) ▪ Strong measures for conserving the environment including floral and faunal biodiversity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Land use not according to land capability and too biased towards forest cover ▪ Monoculture of aggressive forest species dominate and susceptible to forest fires and habitat quality degradation
Institutional	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Effective protection mechanisms – command and control system ▪ Community and private forest ownership recognized as a policy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Highly protection and policing orientated forest department; poor orientation to community services ▪ Poor understanding of the policies and lack of will to implement the community forestry (CF) and private forestry (PF) programmes
Opportunities for intervention	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ To clarify the contradictions between the Forest and Nature Conservation Act and Land Act ▪ To implement the community (CF) and private forestry (PF) programmes in letter and spirit ▪ To strengthen the capacity of the Forestry Department in implementing CF and PF programmes 	

Source: ICIMOD, Duba (2006)

Lessons learned

Objective

- To transform the major strengths and weaknesses identified in the SWOT analysis into lessons learned.

Main elements

The SWOT analysis has outlined the major findings of the policy assessment. The examination of the existing strengths and weaknesses of the SWOT analysis enables the construction of lessons learned that can be used as a basis to formulate recommendations.

Tools

- The SWOT analysis to see what kinds of lessons can be learned from the identified points.
- A classification of the lessons learned according to policies, institutions and processes, which can give policymakers a quick and practical overview as to what works well and what does not work well for each of these elements.

Expected outputs

Lessons learned

- A list of lessons learned categorized according to policies, institutions and processes.

Example

Box 35: Lessons learned for SARD policies, institutions and processes in Mediterranean mountain regions

Policies

1. Mediterranean countries do **not have specific governmental strategies for Sustainable Development (SD) or SARD in mountain areas**. This is not synonymous with a lack of concern for the sustainable development of mountain regions.
2. Nevertheless, a National Strategy for Sustainable Development (NSSD) in Tunisia has put into action local mechanisms (Agenda 21 services) impacting mountain territories. Governments of Balkan countries generally appear strongly committed to the setting up of a NSSD. Presumably, they will have impacts on mountain territories.
3. In Maghreb countries, mountains are impacted by significant strategies related to SARD implementation. Generally, they all promote the improvement of quality of life standards and support to more disadvantaged categories, the integration and diversification of activities, the competitiveness of agricultural products. They propose approaches for coordination among institutions at the different levels, participation of people and private society, local development processes, financial resources mobilization. Mountains, as a territory with specificities that limit the communities' opportunities, are a main target of these policies.
4. In some cases, it comes out that the adoption of SARD related strategies are not matched by appropriate operational mechanisms. This is the case of the Moroccan 2020 Rural Development strategy and of the new Lebanese Agricultural Strategy.
5. In all countries, mountain areas are generally reached and **impacted by a wide range of policies**, including policies concerned with infrastructure and services development in rural areas, social and human development, local development, natural resources management and conservation.

6. Frequently, **sectorality** is identified as a main policy constraint and efforts should be made to create linkages and synergies with other ongoing policies.
7. Policies are generally criticized for **not properly addressing the livelihoods diversity and vulnerability of mountain people** and for **not being sensitive to gender issues**. This leads to unequal access to opportunities by mountain communities and vulnerable groups.
8. Policies designed for **natural resource conservation** can provide **important lessons** for SARD implementation in mountain areas, as their very nature requires that they be adapted to territorial specificities. Their emphasis on environmental issues, however, should be balanced by social and economic focuses. In Morocco, the watershed management policy evolved from addressing mainly environmental problems to the integration of greater sensitivity to social and economic issues.
9. Policies for the **decentralization of services** and for **local development** are often in place and considered to be of key importance for the development of mountain territories. **Difficulties** are highlighted for their **implementation**.
10. Policies for **diversification** and **integration of activities** such as tourism, forest exploitation and management, marketing and processing of agricultural goods, etc. are considered very important for mountain communities.
11. Policies for **valorisation of mountain communities' knowledge and cultural heritage** are needed.
12. Policies for **controlling migration flows** are needed since these have strong impacts on mountain natural resources and on long-term economic trends.

Institutions

13. At the country level, there are several governmental institutions involved in the implementation of policies that impact mountain areas and communities. The **weakness of the linkages and mechanisms to coordinate and favour synergies** among these institutions constantly appears as a main constraint.
14. **Governmental institutions**, when it comes to mechanisms for the implementation of policies for decentralization, local development and civil society participation, often appear as being **unprepared** and face strong constraints, such as the lack of financial power, inadequate administrative capacities, weak interaction with local stakeholders.
15. The **lack or weakness of institutions** that can facilitate the access of mountain communities to land, services, credits, training is also identified as a weak point.
16. In some countries, the presence of governmental **institutions addressing mountain specificities** appears as an element of success. Examples are given in Tunisia with the Odesypano (Office de Développement Sylvo-Pastoral du Nord Ouest) and in Albania with the MADA (Albanian Mountain Development Agency). With different mechanisms and levels of experience, they are playing important roles driving policy processes that better match mountain specificities and community interests, that rely on stronger policy synergies and stakeholders partnerships that politically empower civil society.
17. Generally, institutions related to **National Agricultural Research and Extension Services** (NARES) do not seem supported by policies for promoting SARD in mountain systems. NARES are **not supportive of farmers and rural communities in mountain areas** that require different and specific solutions. NARES should insert or strengthen their focus on mountains specificities and people livelihoods, and establish stronger linkages with mountain communities.
18. Governmental institutions concerned with **natural resource conservation and protection** maintain a stronger focus on mountain systems. This concern on natural resources conservation **can cause conflicts** with mountain communities, but can be overcome through partnerships with other institutions and local people. This was the case of the HCEFLCD (Haut Commissariat des Eaux et Forêts et Lutte contre la Désertification) and was overcome by establishing partnerships with the local agricultural services considered closer to the

communities needs.

19. There is a **strong involvement of the non-governmental sector**, from the international to the local level, in promoting development in mountain areas and the improvement of the livelihoods of mountain communities. This sector is very **important for the adoption of multi-sectoral approaches**, the attitudes of NGOs to interact with local communities, their capacities to mediate with governmental structures.
20. The **strengthening of local institutions and groups** representing civil society, is identified as a consolidated strategy pursued by projects and policies to empower local communities. It is also perceived as a **primary need** by different stakeholders for mountain communities' support.
21. The **establishment of** institutions that promote regional or national joint actions for mountain regions development is considered very important by the stakeholders as a tool for creating and sharing knowledge and experiences and for influencing policy processes in favour of mountain areas. The example of the established process for the Sustainable Development of South East Europe Mountain Region is considered as an experience to be promoted in other sub-regional Mediterranean areas. Multi-stakeholders networks are seen as important for learning from other institutions and experiences.

Processes

22. The **lack of mechanisms for creating synergies and complementarities** among the different policies and institutions concerned with mountain areas development emerges as a major constraint. Such mechanisms should exist at the central and local levels, and promote a two-way communication.
In the Algerian Sustainable Rural Development Strategy, **comprehensive mechanisms** have been set up to favour SARD processes through the coordination and involvement of stakeholders at different levels, in local planning, monitoring and evaluation, and financial mobilization.
23. A **weak participation of mountain communities** in specific policy steps frequently emerges as a limitation. People participation often remains limited to project frameworks and does not become a structural part of policy processes nor result in the empowerment of mountain communities. Policy formulation, monitoring and evaluation should involve communities in a more systematic and substantial way.
24. Even when mechanisms fostering participation of civil society are in place, the **lack of institutional structures and attitudes to facilitate dialogue and partnerships** represent a limiting factor.
25. **Mechanisms** for accessing **financial opportunities** need to be simplified and made more accessible and responsive to mountain region needs.
26. Tools for generating **data and information** for driving local planning should be set up or strengthened. Mountain communities should be considered as partners in gathering and in the use of local knowledge.
27. Processes for **knowledge inventory** are needed. At present there is plenty of information on mountain regions, policies and programs, as well as their implementation, however there is no **central hub** where this information is available. The use of databases and internet-based forum can be important tools in the exchange of information throughout the Mediterranean.
28. Tunisia has acquired significant **experience on policies specifically addressing the development of mountain territories**, particularly in terms of decision-making processes, institutional building, people participation, local planning, and linkages. These experiences could be very useful for other countries that are in the process to develop specific policies for mountain areas.

Source: CIHEAM-IAMB (2007)

Recommendations for improvements

Objective

- To assist policymakers and institutions involved in policymaking and implementation to develop improved policy packages and processes for SARD in mountain regions.

Main Elements

With the identification of the major lessons learned regarding policies, institutions and processes, this step tries to formulate recommendations that can help those involved in policy formulation and implementation to improve upon the existing situation. During the formulation of recommendations, consideration should be given to the linkages that exist between the lessons identified in each of the policies, institutions and processes categories. They should also take into account the potentials and constraints of mountain regions identified in this policy assessment and see how constraints can be overcome and potentials be taken advantage of in order to promote SARD in mountain regions.

Tools

National and regional level workshops, involving both governments and civil society, to discuss and validate the first findings of the policy assessments. Workshop participants should develop recommendations for the improvement of existing policies, institutions and policy processes.

Expected outputs

Recommendations

On the following issues:

- 1) How the analysed entry point policies as well as other SARD-M policies can be improved in terms of:
 - their content;
 - capacities of institutions responsible;
 - the processes involved for developing, implementing and evaluating policies;
 - governance issues at the national, sub-national, local levels and their horizontal and vertical linkages.
- 2) How policies, institutions and processes can overcome constraints and take advantage of potentials of mountain areas in a sustainable manner.

Examples

Box 36: Recommendations for the Hindu Kush-Himalaya

The important - at times overlapping - concerns and suggestions that found frequent mention in the four country assessments and during the SARD-M Project Regional Workshop are listed below.

Policies

1. Use Gross National Happiness as promoted in Bhutan, a concept of development that shares similar features to the SARD-M approach, as a possible framework for SARD-M once it is put into a concrete usable form.
2. Introduce a more systematic approach to policy formulation using an integrated framework for SARD-M policy-programme formulation / promotion / evaluation, rather than depending on largely ad-hoc approaches.

3. Promote awareness, understanding and use of the mountain perspective framework as a tool for designing and implementing SARD-M policies, and for identifying priority areas and groups.
4. Give higher priority to human resource development, equity and women's issues to make SARD-M policies more inclusive.
5. Develop effective and equitable market links (especially with the lowland economy) to ensure development gains for mountain people.
6. Focus greater attention on the less-explored issue of supplementing macro approaches with micro-level initiatives and their up-scaling.

Institutions

7. Enhance capacities and coordination of public sectoral agencies/departments dealing with SARD policy-making and implementation as an important requirement for SARD-M.
8. Empower mountain people through education, enhanced bargaining capacities and needed autonomy to enhance SARD-M.
9. Reduce duplication and turf-wars through functional coordination and complementarities between different agencies including government departments.

Processes

10. Create a comprehensive database and analytical studies to assist sound and integrated policy-making for SARD-M.
11. Enhance interactions between stakeholders at different levels to better balance top-down and bottom-up approaches and processes required to promote SARD-M.
12. Reform institutions to enhance local participation in policy-making/ implementation, implying genuine decentralization.
13. Upgrade local/grassroots level awareness and capacity building to improve involvement of local stakeholders/communities in policy-programme formulation and implementation through a bottom-up approach.
14. Rationalise resource allocation and investment priorities for mountains vis-à-vis lowland economies, with clear understanding of mountain specificities.
15. Improve resource mobilization to reduce donor-dependency and harness public-private complementarities in promoting SARD-M.
16. Strengthen mutual sharing and systematic synthesis of past development/policy intervention experiences and build the future approaches based on successful experiences to make SARD-M approach more dynamic and effective.

Source: ICIMOD (2006)

A series of recommendations were also made in Central America that provided recommendations on a specific issue identified of major importance in the region: the improvement of the visibility of mountain potentials in the region.

Box 37: Suggestions for making hillside potentials more visible

- Identify and **make the potentials of hillsides visible** by supporting economic appraisals and disseminating the results to decision-makers at all levels and to the hillside **dwellers'** own organizations.
- **Strengthen the organizational levels** of hillside producers and dwellers.
- **Exploit the capacities of governments and local organizations** to enhance synergies between the organised families and the local authorities who are more familiar with their problems.
- **Intersectoral and co-ordinated work** between development organizations and institutions, and create synergies with other non-agricultural and non-environmental institutions with

jurisdiction over hillsides.

- **Re-examine the experience of environmental information systems**, to create information monitoring and management systems.
- **Retrieve and document experiences** with specific programmes and projects for hillsides.
- **Consider the tax revenues** from hillside zones in relation to other sectors of the economy, in order to convince public and private decision-makers of the benefits of investing in these zones.

Source: PASOLAC (2005)

Proposals for follow-up activities

Objective

- To develop suggestions for **concrete actions** that can build upon existing strengths and opportunities and overcome weaknesses and constraints.

Main elements

From the recommendations made, some **proposals for follow-up activities** that can lead to concrete actions at national or decentralized levels are envisaged as an important output of the SARD-M policy assessments. As the stakeholders at various governance levels will have been consulted during the implementation of these assessments, it is hoped that a greater sense of ownership of the results can be created and thus provide the incentive and willingness to follow through on proposed follow-up activities.

Tools

National and regional level workshops gathering key government and civil society stakeholders to formulate proposals for follow-up activities and gain their commitments to carry out concrete actions on the ground.

Expected outputs

Proposals for follow-up activities

- Activities that can strengthen the policy formulation and implementation processes and pave the way for the development of improved policies, policy packages and processes for SARD in mountain regions.

Examples

Box 38: Proposals for follow-up activities in the Mediterranean Basin

1. Promote mechanisms for the establishment of specific **Regional Conventions** for SARD in mountain areas, such as in the Atlas region, and to connect to other evolving SARD processes, such as in the South East mountain region.
2. Support **networking mechanisms** among existing mountain conventions at the level of Mediterranean countries for the exchange of experiences and mutual support. This could also lead to the promotion of a Mediterranean strategy for the development of the mountain areas.
3. Support the networking of key country stakeholders in order to promote the implementation of **case studies** focused on the analysis of policy processes. This is an important step to acquire lessons for SARD in mountain areas (e.g. the Sustainable Rural Development Strategy of Algeria, the Macedonian Agricultural Advisory Program, or others).
4. Support the establishment of a Mediterranean multi-stakeholder working group to transform the lessons learned and recommendations raised in the Mediterranean into an **action plan** to be discussed during a second regional workshop to be held in the South East Europe mountain area.
5. Development of a network and organization of workshops to promote **coordination and exchange of experiences among existing projects** related to SARD in mountain areas.
6. Prepare **training programmes** for institutional strengthening on SARD implementation in mountain areas. Training packages targeting trainers and concerning the assessment of SARD policy processes in mountain areas should be prepared in order to enable country and local mechanisms to gather information useful to underpin policy processes (formulation, monitoring and evaluation, implementation).
7. Creation of a **knowledge hub**, accessible to all the stakeholders, for collection of case studies, projects in mountains, significant stories, research findings and including a database in

partnership with different international organizations, whose aim would be to share and develop knowledge and experiences, disseminate information, promote new interventions specifically targeting mountain areas.

8. Support to **country mechanisms** that would facilitate the stakeholders' access to information/experiences produced by the SARD-M project and that would favour the stakeholders networking at all levels and the promotion of concerted activities. These activities could start in Morocco and Lebanon where two case studies have been already implemented.

Source: CIHEAM-IAMB (2007)

Box 39: Proposals for Follow-up Activities in the Hindu Kush-Himalaya

The workshop participants prioritized the activities to be taken up as follows:

At the national level

Bhutan

- Conduct further studies on land markets, taxation and administration systems as an essential input towards developing and implementing a more holistic land use policy and an equitable land reform agenda;
- Assess the capacity building needs of elected officials and local governments and develop and implement a training programme.

China – Sichuan Province

- Conduct a study to assess policy-making and implementation processes in the Hengduan ranges;
- Conduct a Sichuan provincial level consultation workshop (with participation from central government agencies) to discuss the findings of the assessment.

India – Sikkim State

- Identify and document successful horticulture-related enterprises and establish cooperatives and groups for up-scaling production and marketing;
- Conduct a study to assess land tenure, inheritance and fragmentation issues and propose options for their resolution;
- Conduct a detailed feasibility study for 'going organic', which is the adopted policy of the state, identifying potential products as well as measures to tackle constraints and barriers.

Nepal

- Study the opportunities for adopting organic farming under the framework of the Agricultural Perspective Plan;
- Study the impact of removal of fertiliser subsidies with particular reference to the implications for food security.

At the regional level

- Build stakeholders capacity at different levels of government in policy processes including formulation, analysis, negotiation and advocacy;
- Identify and put into operation methodologies/approaches for policy formulation that integrate micro-level issues and concerns into macro-level policies;
- Conduct more in-depth institutional analyses in all four countries to identify mechanisms to make policy development and advocacy more inclusive;
- Empower mountain people in the identification of problems and issues and in negotiating skills;
- Sensitise local government officials, elected bodies, civil societies, lobby groups and farmers' cooperatives in understanding and promoting good SARD policies and practices;
- Establish mechanisms for experience sharing in the region particularly in the replication of

successful enterprises based on niche mountain products;

- Facilitate south-south exchange of expertise in various mountain development fields and enterprises;
- Establish a virtual network for sharing experiences, views and concerns on mountain issues;
- Build the future approaches based on successful experiences to make SARD-M approach more dynamic and effective.

Source: ICIMOD (2006)

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Questionnaire 1

National initiatives and strategies for sustainable development in the Mediterranean region

This questionnaire is taken from Alirol (2004) National Strategies for Sustainable Development in the Mediterranean Region, a draft report for Secretariat for the Mediterranean Commission on Sustainable Development (MCSD).

Strategic Frameworks

- What are the major strategic frameworks relating to sustainable development?
- What are the focus, principles and priority areas?
- What are the institutional arrangements and procedures for preparation, implementation and monitoring?
- Are there links between different strategic frameworks and linkages to the overall national decision-making and planning?

Processes and Mechanisms

(i) Achieving Policy Integration and Convergence.

- How are sustainable development concerns streamlined into sector policies and central planning and budgeting?
- What regulatory and fiscal instruments provide for integration?
- Do decentralization mechanisms foster the preparation of Local Agenda 21?
- How do national frameworks take regional initiatives and international agreements into account?

(ii) Stakeholder involvement in decision-making and partnerships

- What steering mechanism exists to represent stakeholders in the development or/and implementation of the strategic framework?
- What regular consultation forms have been used to engage the different stakeholders across sectors and between levels?
- What communication and information systems are being used to inform and raise awareness on sustainable development?
- What partnerships have been established?

(iii) Managing and Building up the Knowledge base

- What comprehensive tools or systems exist to understand the state of resources, trends in their quality and quantity, and the pressure upon them?
- How does the diversity of knowledge among stakeholders feed into policy decisions?
- What systems are in place to assess the outcomes of the sustainable development process?
- What measures are taken to build up the knowledge and capacity of different stakeholders?

Management systems

- Is there an institutional catalyst in charge of coordination?

What are the mandates, organizational structures and membership (and chairmanship)?

Questionnaire 2

Identification and assessment of roles and interactions of major institutions in the Mediterranean Region

Institutions

a. Which kinds of institutions are involved in the project process?

Level	Institution	Role played
Macro level		
Meso level		
Micro level		

Macro = which affects the whole country

Micro = which only affects particular sectors, districts, communities, villages, neighbourhoods or groups

Meso = the level between micro and macro, or between service delivery and policy-making, and is the level that often is needed to link the two. In government terms it could be provincial or regional authorities and services. Other organisations, such as federated, regional farmers' associations are also at the meso level. (Refer to FAO (2004) Annotated Glossary of Sustainable Livelihoods Terminology, Last revision May 2004.

b. How well the institutions are working with each other? Are there synergies or conflicts?

	Inst. 1	Inst. 2	Inst. 3	Inst. 4	Inst. 5	Inst. 6
Inst. 1						
Inst. 2						
Inst. 3						
Inst. 4						
Inst. 5						
Inst. 6						

Good Synergies (3)

Low Synergies (2)

Conflicts (1)

c. Are there other any institutions that should be considered in the process?

Source: CIHEAM-IAM Bari (2006)

Questionnaire 3

Identification of major strategies and policies for sustainable development and SARD-M

Data on the partners filling in the questionnaire

Name of informants	Institutions/organizations	Role in the Institutions	E-mail

Data on any other key informant interviewed

Name of informants	Institutions/organizations	Role in the Institutions	E-mail

Driven by the acquired concepts, please gather the information required for the definition of the **existing national strategic frameworks on SD and SARD in Mountain areas**, according to the following scheme.

Agenda 21 represents the overall action plan for sustainable development agreed in Rio de Janeiro within the United Nation Conference on Environment and Development, through which participating countries have committed themselves to enacting Agenda 21 guidelines and putting SD concepts into concrete actions. Countries are at various stages in the implementation of sustainable development processes. Some countries have already National Strategies for Sustainable Development (NSSD), while others may only have certain components in place or have no action taken at all.

1. Are there in your country Sustainable Development National Coordination Mechanisms for enacting Agenda 21 and, in general, SD processes (e.g. Councils, Commissions, Inter-Ministerial Working Groups)? Give details on the mechanisms and on the main stakeholders involved.

2. Did these Sustainable Development National Coordination Mechanisms elaborate a National Strategy for Sustainable Development (NSSD)? Are they in the frame of elaborating it? Please, Give details.

3. Does, eventually, the NSSD have a focus on Sustainable Agriculture and Rural Development (SARD) and/or on Mountains areas? Give details on these aspects and on the institutions responsible for.

	Description of the Focus	Institutions concerned	
		<i>Name</i>	<i>Description</i>
SARD			
Mountains			

4. If national coordination mechanisms and NSSD do not yet exist, are there public institutions in charge of decision making in the agricultural and rural development sector (e.g. Ministry of Agriculture, Ministry of the Environment, National System for Research and Extension services, etc.) with stated strategies for promoting SARD and/or Sustainable Development (SD) of mountain areas? Give details on these and on the main measures/actions undertaken for their implementation.

Focus on	Institutions concerned	Stated strategies	Measures/actions
SARD			
SD in Mountains			
Others			

5. National Agricultural Research and Extension Systems (NARES) are of key importance for the promotion of SARD processes. Are there in your country any stated policies and/or foreseen strategies aimed at introducing in the NARES the principles of SARD? Do they contain any emphasis and specificities in order to encounter the mountain specificities?

Focus on	Policies for R&E services	Policies for Research systems	Policies for Extension services
SARD			
Mountains			
Others			

6. Do you know other sectoral policies whose impacts are or could be significant for SARD in mountain areas? (Refer to the policies classification reported in the FAO document *Framework for a rapid assessment of policies for SARD in Mountain Regions*).

Policies	Sector	Measures/ actions promoted	Mountain Specificities			SARD Pillars			
			C	D	P	Ec	S	En	I
1									
2									
3									
.....									

Effects/Impacts of policies could be coded into the matrix as follows:

U = Unfavourable

N = Neutral

F = Favourable

More details on policies impacts:

Questionnaire 4

Policy processes in the Mediterranean Basin

Regarding to the project, do you recognize any of the following process typologies, which, according to FAO methodology, stem from SARD principles and put them into effect? (For further details on process typologies, please refer to FAO – SARD Mountain project (2005), *Framework for a rapid assessment of policies for SARD in Mountain Regions*)

- a. **Political processes** (i.e. commitment of top leadership and local authorities to sustainable development; mechanisms for engagement of all stakeholders, etc.)

- b. **Participatory processes** (i.e. consultation forms, communication systems, steering mechanisms, balancing and linking of top-down and bottom-up approaches, technical and local stakeholders' expertise, etc.)

- c. **Technical Processes** (i.e. mechanisms and institutional arrangements to ensure convergence, complementarity, coherence and co-ordination of policies; human and institutional capacities, tools and systems to collect and understand information needed to formulate policies; management capacities and systems to share information, resolve conflicts, build consensus, balance technical and local knowledge; monitoring and evaluation systems and ensuring accountability, etc.)

- d. **Financial Mobilization** (i.e. sufficiency of funds, dependency on donor funding, and sustainability of financing forms for SARD-M policy activities, etc.)

Source: CIHEAM-IAM Bari (2006)

Questionnaire 5

Questions asked in the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia on policy processes

- Are the following participatory processes being used?
 - A: Consultation forms, communication systems to educate and involve all stakeholders in the development or/and implementation of the SARD-M policies, steering mechanism

 - B: Balancing and linking of top-down and bottom-up approaches, technical and local stakeholders' expertise

- What are the human and institutional capacities, tools and systems to collect and understand information needed to formulate policies

- What are the management capacities and systems to share information, resolve conflicts, build consensus, balance technical and local knowledge, etc.

- What kind of monitoring and evaluation systems ensures accountability?

Source: BFSD, Ginovska (2007)

Annex 1: National sustainable development strategies

Agenda 21 has promoted the use of **sustainable development strategies** as a mechanism that can translate the concept of sustainable development into concrete actions. Understanding of the key issues surrounding the formulation and implementation of these strategies are therefore important as they have implications for the analysis of SARD-M policies as well.

A sustainable development strategy is a **coordinated, participatory and iterative process** of thoughts and actions to achieve economic, environmental and social objectives in a **balanced and integrated manner** at the national and local levels.

The process **encompasses situation analysis, formulation of policies and action plans, implementation, monitoring and regular review**. It is a **cyclical and interactive process** of planning, participation and action in which the emphasis is on managing progress towards sustainability goals rather than producing a "plan" as an end product. (UNDESA 2002, p. 8)

The OECD/DAC conducted a **review of the practical experiences** of countries in formulating and implementing sustainable development strategies and found that successful approaches tended to share certain characteristics. They outline nine major lessons that have been learned from the application of sustainable development strategies and confirm that the principles outlined in the box below provide a good basis for success when put into practice.

Box 1: Overview of nine lessons

- 1) Establishing long-term vision, setting priorities and achieving integration;
- 2) Ownership of strategies;
- 3) Long term commitment;
- 4) Ensuring effective participation;
- 5) Analysis;
- 6) Convergence, complementarity, coherence and coordination between country frameworks at all levels;
- 7) Strategy management systems and capacity;
- 8) Identifying indicators, establishing monitoring systems and ensuring accountability;
- 9) Financial resources for strategies.

Source: Chapter 4 of the DAC Guidelines (OECD DAC 2001, pp. 35-54)

UNDESA also examined the experiences of the past decade and current practices in implementing sustainable development strategies and have found that **sound and effective strategies** share the following common elements:

- **Country ownership and strong political commitment**
- **Integrated economic, social, and environmental objectives across sectors, territories and generations**
- **Broad participation and effective partnerships**
- **Development of capacity building and enabling environment**
- **Focus on outcomes and means of implementation**

Box 2: Key Principles for Strategies for Sustainable Development

*These are principles towards which strategies should aspire. They are **all important and no order of priority** is implied. They do not represent a checklist of criteria to be met but encompass a set of desirable processes and outcomes which also allow for local differences.*

• People-centred

An effective strategy requires a people-centred approach, ensuring long-term beneficial impacts on disadvantaged and marginalized groups, such as the poor.

• Consensus on long-term vision

Strategic planning frameworks are more likely to be successful when they are based on a long-term vision with a clear timeframe upon which stakeholders agree. At the same time, they need to include ways of dealing with short- and medium-term necessities and change. A long-term vision needs to have the commitment of all political parties so that an incoming government will not view a particular strategy as representing only the views or policies of its predecessor.

• Comprehensive and integrated

Strategies should seek to integrate, where possible, economic, social and environmental objectives. But where integration cannot be achieved, trade-offs need to be negotiated. The entitlements and possible needs of future generations must be factored into this process.

• Targeted with clear budgetary priorities

A sustainable development strategy must be fully integrated in existing budget processes to ensure that plans have the financial resources to achieve their objectives, and do not represent mere "wish lists". Conversely, the formulation of budgets must be informed by a clear identification of priorities. Capacity constraints and time limitations will have an impact on the extent to which the intended outcomes are achieved. Targets need to be challenging – but realistic in relation to these constraints.

• Based on comprehensive and reliable analysis

Identification of priorities must be based on a comprehensive analysis of the present situation. Forecasted trends and risks, and the links between local, national and global challenges. External pressures on a country – such as those resulting from globalisation, or the impacts of global climate change – need to be factored in this analysis. Such analysis requires credible and reliable information on changing environmental, social and economic conditions, pressures and responses, and their correlations with strategy objectives and indicators. **Local capacities for analysis** and existing information should be fully used, and different perceptions amongst stakeholders should be reflected.

• Incorporate monitoring, learning and continuous improvement

Monitoring and evaluation needs to be based on **clear indicators** and built into strategies to steer processes, track progress, distil and capture lessons, and signal when a change of direction is necessary.

• Country-led and nationally-owned

Past strategies have often resulted from external pressure and development agency requirements. It is essential that countries take the lead and initiative in developing their own strategies if they are to be enduring.

• High-level government commitment and influential lead institutions

Such commitment – on a long-term basis – is essential if policy and institutional changes are to occur, financial resources are to be committed and for there to be clear responsibility for implementation.

• Building on existing processes and strategies

A strategy for sustainable development should not be thought of as a new planning process but instead build on what already exists in the country, thus **enabling convergence, complementarity and coherence between different planning frameworks and policies**. This requires **good management** to ensure co-ordination of mechanisms and processes, and to identify and resolve potential conflicts. The latter may require an independent and neutral third party to act as a facilitator. The roles, responsibilities and relationships between the different key participants in strategy processes must be clarified early on.

• Effective participation

Broad participation helps to open up debate to new ideas and sources of information; expose issues that need to be addressed; enable problems, needs and preferences to be expressed; identify the capabilities required to address them; and develop a consensus on the need for action that leads to better implementation. Central government must be involved (providing leadership, shaping incentive structures and allocating financial resources), but **multi-stakeholder processes** are also required. These should involve decentralised authorities, the private sector and civil society, as well as marginalised groups. This requires good communication and information mechanisms with a premium placed on transparency and accountability.

• Link national and local levels

Strategies should be **two-way iterative processes** within and between national and decentralised levels. The main strategic principles and directions should be set at the central level (here, economic, fiscal and trade policy, legislative changes, international affairs and external relations, etc., are key responsibilities). But detailed planning, implementation and monitoring would be undertaken at a decentralised level, with appropriate transfer of resources and authority.

• Develop and build on existing capacity

At the outset of a strategy process, it is important to assess the political, institutional, human, scientific and financial capacity of potential state, market and civil society participants. Where needed, provision should be made to develop the necessary capacity as part of the strategy process. A strategy should optimise local skills and capacity both within and outside government.

Source: OECD (2001, p. 27).

The methodological process used in Central America

This survey was a dynamic process of validating a number of tools and becoming familiar with others by consulting various web pages. The methodology used was highly participatory, which is consistent with one of the intrinsic elements of SARD, and thus directly involved the following parties:

- civil servants involved in managing public SARD policies at the central and departmental/regional level of ministries and institutions operating in the agricultural and environmental sector, or with basic services, tourism etc, in all the countries of Central America
- mayors and municipal government employees
- representatives of associations, cooperatives, producers' unions, artisans, women and indigenous peoples
- non-governmental organizations providing technical and financial support services for rural production and trade
- regional and national consultants and experts
- officials from international agencies and cooperation programmes: FAO, SDC and PASOLAC
- representatives of coordinating bodies between government and civil society: Departmental and Municipal Development Committees, the Regional Sectoral Agricultural Commission
- the private horticultural corporation of Costa Rica.

Implementing this study entailed applying various different techniques in accordance with the FAO framework and others designed by the principal consultant. The following methodological process was adopted:

1 Collecting Basic Materials

In this phase, key information was gathered from documents and interviews with a group of people closely involved in the issue to obtain their perceptions and assessments of SARD policies. The steps that were followed included:

a) Preliminary working sessions with experts

At the beginning of the survey conducted in each country, working sessions were held with key personnel from FAO, public institutions and international cooperation agencies, to present the survey to them and jointly define the policy needed as an "entry point" to the study, to obtain names and relevant documentation on SARD policies, and the institutional situation in the sector; the availability of compilations or documentation on impact assessments; and to decide on the venues for holding the departmental, regional and provincial workshops.

b) Individual interviews

Using the Alirol (2004) interview guide, National Strategies for Sustainable Development in the Mediterranean Region, Draft Report for the Secretariat of the Mediterranean Commission on Sustainable Development suggested by FAO in its methodological document, 16 people were interviewed in Nicaragua and 21 in Costa Rica.

The interviews were transcribed in MS Word and the results were used to form the basis of this report and for the compilation of the anthology.

c) The compiling of an anthology of policies

Following the suggestions made by experts in the initial working sessions in both countries, a compilation, documentary analysis and summary with key aspects was made of the main policies and instruments for economic, environmental, natural resource, rural development and citizen participation/decentralization management directly or indirectly related to hillside zones.

The summaries and the policy documents compiled, which include laws, regulations, decrees, policies, strategies, plans, national and local programmes, were delivered and used as the basis for seeking the opinions on these instruments of the parties interviewed.

2 Departmental/Regional and National workshops in hillside zones

a. The workshops

In order to assess the strengths and weaknesses of public policies for sustainable agriculture and rural development from the perspective of governmental, non-governmental, municipal and producers' institutions, several workshops were organised with key stakeholders.

At the workshops, the techniques for compiling the individual questionnaires were combined with brainstorming sessions, group work using pre-drafted guides, and plenary sessions. At these events, it was also proposed that the importance of public SARD policies be explained in order to create a quick methodology for evaluating them; to analyse economic, rural development, environment, decentralization and citizens' participation policies, and to explain the main findings as they emerged in the course of the survey.

In Nicaragua two departmental workshops were held: one in Jinotega (with 25 participants) and another in Ocotal Nueva Segovia with 40 participants. The National Workshop convened in Estelí was attended by 17 delegates from central and departmental institutions, and from local governments and producers' organizations.

Four workshops were held in Costa Rica: 3 with producers, NGOs and civil servants from the agricultural sector of the Central Eastern Region of Cartago (two workshops with the participation of 22 people) and one in the Central South Region, Puriscal, attended by 27 people. The National Workshop was held in the "hall of the former MAG ministers", attended by 18 people.

b. Administration and processing of individual questionnaires for key officials

In order to obtain information on the level of familiarity with SARD-M policies, the state and assessment of their management, identification of the institutions and non-governmental organizations which support their implementation and an assessment of the mechanisms existing for participation, coordination and communication, an individual questionnaire was designed and administered to each participant at the departmental/regional and national workshops.

58 questionnaires were processed in Nicaragua and 47 in Costa Rica, the results of which form the basis of the analysis.

c. Documentation on the results of the Workshops in each country

A report was drafted for each of the workshops held in Nicaragua and Costa Rica containing information on the findings of the working groups, the plenary sessions, and the initial results of processing the individual questionnaires administered to the participants.

The reports include the analyses and assessments made by the participants regarding the policies. These documents were the basic input for this present report, and contributed to the organization and documentation of the development of this survey.

3 Regional Workshop

To obtain a much broader opinion regarding the management of SARD-M policies in other countries of Central America (Guatemala, El Salvador, and Honduras) and to present the findings on Nicaragua and Costa Rica, a regional workshop was convened. The workshop was attended by 29 civil servants from the institutions responsible for agriculture and environment.

Glossary

Agriculture: The FAO Constitution defines agriculture in a broad context and states that “the term ‘agriculture’ and its derivatives includes fisheries, marine products, forestry and primary forest products.”
<http://www.fao.org/docrep/009/j8038e/j8038e00.htm>

Externalities: Externalities exist when the results of a market affect the economic agents participating in the market other than the buyers and sellers participating in it. That is to say an individual, through his/her activity, influences the well-being of other individuals, without the latter receiving or paying any remuneration for this effect. The existence of these externalities is a shortcoming of the market, which does not incorporate all the trade-related information. When this effect is beneficial to those affected by it in a given territory, it is called a positive externality.
<http://www.fao.org/sard/common/ecg/1671/en/externalitiesenfinal.pdf>

Institutions: Organisations or agencies that operate within both the public and private sector (e.g. the department of agriculture, the district department of health, the local branch of an NGO, a religious organisation such as a church or mosque, a workers union, a village committee, an informal organisation).

Governance: A process whereby societies or organizations make their important decisions, determine whom they involve in the process and how they render account. Since a process is hard to observe, students of governance tend to focus our attention on the governance *system* or framework upon which the process rests - that is, the agreements, procedures, conventions or policies that define who gets power, how decisions are taken and how accountability is rendered. (Graham et al. p. 1)
<http://www.iog.ca/publications/policybrief15.pdf>

Policy: Decisions taken by those with responsibility for a given policy area, and these decisions usually take the form of statements or formal positions on an issue, which are then executed by the bureaucracy (Keeley and Scoones 1999). <http://www.ids.ac.uk/ids/bookshop/wp/wp89.pdf>

Rural development: An overarching concept recognizing that any support activities targeted to improve people’s lives in rural areas should have a multisectoral and integrated focus.
http://www.fao.org/sd/dim_pe2/pe2_050402_en.htm

SARD: A process which is ecologically sound, environmentally sustainable, economically viable, socially just, culturally appropriate, humane, based on a holistic scientific approach and productive over the long term. (<http://www.fao.org/sard/en/sard/2001/index.html>)

Sustainable development

1) Development that meets the needs of the present generation without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. (World Commission on Environment and Development, 1987).

2) Sustainable development is the management and conservation of the natural resource base, and the orientation of technological and institutional change in such a manner as to ensure the attainment and continued satisfaction of human needs for present and future generations. Such sustainable development (in the agriculture, forestry and fisheries sectors) conserves land, water, plant and animal genetic resources, is environmentally non-degrading, technically appropriate, economically viable and socially acceptable. (FAO).

Sustainable Development Strategy: A co-ordinated set of participatory and continuously improving processes of analysis, debate, capacity-strengthening, planning and investment, which seeks to integrate the short and long term economic, social and environmental objectives of society – through mutually supportive approaches wherever possible - and manages trade offs where this is not possible.
<http://www.nssd.net/pdf/guse.pdf>