Conflict Management and Resolution in Forestry and Natural Resources in Africa

Tertiary Level Training of Educators
ANAFE Secretariat, Nairobi, Kenya
21st to 25th February, 2011
Summary
A five day training workshop on Conflict Management and Resolution in forestry and Natural Resources in Africa was held for educators largely from the East and Southern Africa Tertiary Agricultural Education institutions. Two participants from West and Central African region also attended. The general objective of the training workshop was to build the capacity among educators in tertiary agricultural and natural resource management institutions on conflict management and resolution teaching and learning. In total, 27 lecturers were trained, drawn from Botswana, Burundi, Cameroon, Ethiopia, Kenya, Malawi, Nigeria, Rwanda, Sudan, Tanzania, Uganda, Zambia and Mozambique. Two resource persons, Mrs. Antonia Engel from Germany and Dr. Jose Pascal da Rocha from South Africa handled the training programme. Training process consisted of lectures, analysis of case studies and group work.

The following modules were covered: Understanding Conflict; The Process of Collaborative Conflict Management; Specialized Skills for Collaborative Conflict Management and Adult Learning Principles and Techniques.

In Understanding Conflict, key aspects covered included the definition of Conflict and the triangle of satisfaction which involves People, Problems and Processes. The five main sources of conflict include: Value differences; relationship problems; Conflict of interests; Structural problems and Data problems. Collaborative Conflict Management (CCM) was at the centre of the training programme. All the key steps were covered which included: Assessing the issue; Identifying stakeholders; designing a strategy; setting up a programme; establishing procedures; educating each other; Defining the problem; Specifying information needs; generating options; Developing a criteria for evaluation; Evaluating options; Reaching agreements; Developing a written plan; ratifying the agreement and implementing the agreement. The Harvard approach for consensual negotiations was also covered. This approach endeavors to separate people from the problem; focusing on interests; generating options and establishing criteria for agreement implementation which will be agreed upon by all stakeholders.

Listening actively in negotiations is of paramount importance; understanding other people’s concerns is also critical in the quest to construct a solution based on everyone’s needs. However, people need to enter into negotiations having already established their BATNA (best alternative to a negotiated agreement) their reservation point and zone of possible agreement. This will determine whether they settle for an agreement or walk away from the negotiation. For CCM to work there is a need of a good mediator with integrity. These were the aspects covered under specialized skills for collaborative conflict management.

Adult Learning principles and techniques emphasized participatory techniques and experiential learning. Principles of running an efficient meeting and good presentation skills were also covered.
The participants learnt a lot from the training workshop. They emphasized that given that Conflict Management in most institutions is just treated as an “add on” to other subjects, given its importance in Sub-Saharan Africa, there is a need to expand the training into a full treatise as a significant area of learning. This first group of participants felt that they can be involved in the future in learning material development and also serving as resource persons in further training activities.
**Acronyms and abbreviations**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Acronym</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ACCORD</td>
<td>African Centre for the Constructive Resolution of Disputes</td>
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<td>ANAFE:</td>
<td>African Network of Agriculture, Agroforestry and Natural Resources education</td>
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<td>BATNA:</td>
<td>Best Alternative To a Negotiated Agreement</td>
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<td>CCM</td>
<td>Collaborative Conflict Management</td>
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<td>FAO</td>
<td>Food and Agricultural Organization of the United Nations</td>
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<td>GRPs</td>
<td>Global Research Projects of World Agroforestry Centre</td>
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<td>ICRAF</td>
<td>World Agroforestry Centre</td>
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<tr>
<td>NFPF</td>
<td>National Forest Programme Facility</td>
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<td>NRM</td>
<td>Natural Resource Management</td>
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<td>SSA</td>
<td>Sub-Saharan Africa</td>
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<tr>
<td>SWOT</td>
<td>Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats</td>
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Introduction

Increased competition for natural resources among multiple stakeholders with diverse interests is occurring worldwide within the current trends of globalization, democratization, decentralization and urbanization. This is leading to the degradation of ecosystem services. Approximately 60% of the ecosystem services examined during the millennium ecosystem assessment are being degraded or used unsustainably. Forest and woodland ecosystems are the most vulnerable because they are main sources of livelihood for a wide variety of stakeholders. The harmful effects of the degradation of the ecosystem services are being borne disproportionately by the poor, contributing to growing inequities and disparities across groups of people and are sometimes the principal factor causing poverty and social conflict. Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) has not been spared from this. Examples include activities occurring in the Mau forest—Kenya’s largest water tower which is being severely degraded – relocation of the resident population has led to a social and political conflict; the case of the Mabira forest in Uganda where communities were being displaced to give way for a sugar plantation; and Kilimanjaro forest reserve in Tanzania where cattle keepers are being denied access to harvest fodder for their animals with no alternative sources offered. Many other examples abound across SSA.

Due to limited employment opportunities for the youth in rural settings and insufficient supervision of forest policies relating to forestry and other natural resources, there is resort to harvesting more products from public forests especially to meet livelihood needs. This creates conflicts between authorities and local communities as well as between different communities (resulting from competition for resources). With rising resource depletion, conflicts are bound to increase, and this can undermine the formal and informal institutions and rules that govern resource use, in addition to the environmental degradation and economic decline. The entire society can be thrown into disarray if conflicts escalate and violence erupts. Communities therefore should actively participate in natural resource management activities and learn to forestall and resolve conflicts.

The existence of so many conflicts over natural resources in SSA is at least in part a manifestation of the dearth of expertise in conflict management in forestry and natural resources. This is a new area in tertiary agricultural and natural resource management (NRM) institutions. Conflict management as a subject area is not even in the curricula of the majority of tertiary agricultural educational institutions and if taught, it is just treated as an ‘add-on’ to other subjects rather than a subject requiring full treatise as a significant area of learning. As a result, graduating students are not fully aware on how to respond to issues of conflict in forestry and natural resource management. Training in conflict management tools and processes can offer an important opportunity for the development of human and social capital in this area.

At the recent ANAFE workshop on ‘Revitalizing Forestry Education’ held in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania from the 27th to the 29th of May 2010, the need for capacity building in conflict management in Forestry and Natural Resources Management in sub-Saharan Africa was strongly emphasized as an area requiring attention. Participants at the workshop noted that the key issues militating against successful implementation of conflict management and resolutions include:
The absence of formal training in conflict management and therefore weak facilitation
Lack of contextualized learning material on the subject
Absence of credible methods and tools for predicting and forestalling conflicts
Inadequate means for resolving conflicts
Political interference

The participants identified the need for capacity strengthening, especially beginning with educators, then serving foresters/NRM experts and finally incorporating this area into the curricula. The first series of courses is therefore addressing the first group.

Objectives of the Training Programme
The general objective of the training workshop was to build capacity among educators in tertiary agricultural and natural resource management institutions in sub-Saharan Africa on conflict management and resolution teaching and learning. Thus, this was a training of Trainers (ToT) course. The specific objectives were to:

1. Create awareness among educators of the place of conflict management in forestry and NRM
2. Develop the capacity of educators in forestry and NRM to understand and design learning in conflict management in the NRM area
3. Strategize on ways and means to expand the training capacity in this area; and
4. Strengthen the delivery of conflict management and resolution in those institutions already offering the course module

Participation
This first training session was organized for the East and Southern African participants. The workshop took place in Nairobi, Kenya from the 21st to the 25th of February, 2011. In total, 27 lecturers participated in the training workshop. These were drawn from the following 13 countries: Botswana, Burundi, Cameroon, Ethiopia, Kenya, Malawi, Nigeria, Rwanda, Sudan, Tanzania, Uganda, Zambia and Mozambique. Resource persons were drawn from Germany and South Africa. There was one representative from the National Forest Programme Facility (NFPF) of the FAO.

Process and Outputs
The training programme lasted for five (5) days. Training process consisted of lectures, analysis of case studies and group work. Long term, we envisage mainstreaming Conflict Management into the curricula of tertiary agricultural and Natural Resource Management Institutions. Short term, the following will be achieved:

1. Awareness of the place of conflict management in forestry and NRM among educators created.
2. Capacity of educators in the understanding and design of learning in conflict management in the NRM area built
3. Strategies and means of expanding training in conflict management and resolution developed
4. Delivery of conflict management and resolution in those institutions already offering the course module improved.

It is only through increased capacity in conflict management and resolution in tertiary agricultural and natural resource management institutions in SSA can we see a shift towards sustainable forestry and natural resource management since graduating students will be working in policy, research, education and extension areas. The ability to manage and resolve conflicts in a peaceful, participatory and equitable manner allows for more access to and better management of natural resources. Long-term, socio-economic and political factors that constrain local participation in conflict management processes may require attention as well, through appropriate reform of policy, legislation, institutions and other areas of the policy environment.

**Training Methods**

The method adopted for the training workshop embraced the experiential mode of course delivery. This was found to be more appropriate since adults were being trained. In training adults, building on their experience is critical in passing on the message. Figure 1 illustrates the Experiential learning method.

![Figure 1. The experiential learning process](image)

Adapted from Kolb (1984)

Through research it has been established that Adults can remember just 20% of what they only hear. This increases to 50% when they hear and see simultaneously and increasing to 90% when
they do or explain. The adage then which says “When I hear, I forget, when I see, I remember, but when I do, I understand” is quite true.

Role of facilitators
The facilitators’ role in the training workshop was:

- To structure and facilitate a joint learning process.
- Share information and guide the process

Principles of engagement
The key “house rules” for engagement during the workshop were agreed upon. These included the following points:

1. Any question is a good question
2. Allow all to participate
3. Start and finish on time but accept flexibility in the schedule
4. Share responsibility for learning
5. Have mobile phones on silent mode to attend to emergency calls

Recap Team
Four participants were selected for each training day to capture the key issues of the day and present on the following morning.

Characteristics and dimensions of conflicts
The facilitators noted that all conflicts can be separated into three “Ps” which involve: People, Problem and Processes. These link up in a triangle of satisfaction. A case of natural resource management problem from South Africa was shown to illustrate the key elements of conflict and the process of managing and resolving the conflict. Briefly, a community group was being excluded from using an adjacent forest in their area. The area had been demarcated into a nature reserve without their participation. Outsiders appeared like they were using the forest much more than the communities. The communities could not even manage to access graves of their ancestors.

Following the documentary, participants were able to isolate the key issues relating to the conflict, the stakeholders involved and the steps taken to resolve the conflict as shown in Table 1.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Key issues</th>
<th>Stakeholders</th>
<th>Steps to resolve the conflict</th>
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</table>

Table 1. Key issues, stakeholders and steps to resolve the conflict from the documentary on natural resource management in South Africa
<p>| | | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Closure of forest without consultation</td>
<td>Local Farmers – medicinal people, livestock farmers, fishermen, hunters</td>
<td>Protests</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of respect for customary rights</td>
<td>Nature conservation authority</td>
<td>Mobilization and awareness raising</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Limited access to resources</td>
<td>Whites</td>
<td>Formed a lands claims committee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poor delivery of the message</td>
<td>The tourists and tour operators</td>
<td>Negotiations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deprivation of livelihoods</td>
<td>Researchers</td>
<td>Adaptive mechanisms</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>There were no alternatives</td>
<td>Media</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**Definition of Conflicts**

Conflict is generally defined as a relationship between two or more people marked by violence or not. This includes latent conflicts that if well managed can be beneficial. Conflicts develop over time from latent to manifest to escalation and then violent. The response of the people at each stage determines the path taken. Figure two shows the various stages and forms of conflict.
Conflict has various dimensions. It can be multiple in nature; have various origins; can shift over time and there is generally lack of a single true, or objective account of conflict. Apart from the four dimensions of conflict, conflicts also have the following five characteristics:

- They are inevitable
- Their occurrence is a step towards a solution to deep seated issues
- They are shared between people
- Their occurrence is a process
- They are manageable

There are five known sources of conflict. These have been separated in order of magnitude as: Conflict of interests, Value differences; Relationship differences; Data problems and structural problems; (Figure 2)
Figure 3. Main sources of conflict

When conflicts occur there are normally two responses which can occur;
1. People involved can work towards achieving their own goal only, so-called distributive conflict management
2. Working collaboratively to find the best way forward (integrative conflict management or win-win )

In assessing responses to conflict management, five ways can be isolated. These are done through avoidance, force, accommodation, compromise, collaboration (Figure 4). Collaborative problem solving is the best way to manage and resolve a conflict. The collaborative conflict management is based on such principles as being:
- Purpose driven
- Inclusive
- Educational
- Voluntary
- Self designed
- Flexible
- Egalitarian
- Respectful
- Accountable
- Time limited
- Achievement based.
The goal of collaboration is to achieve equity of decisions and reflect scientific principles of the local knowledge.

**Figure 4.** Determinants of personal responses to conflict

**Collaborative Conflict Management (CCM)**
The participants were taken further into the details of collaborative conflict management (CCM), which was the key theme for the training workshop. The CCM is composed of 15 steps starting from assessing the issues; through to defining the problem; generating options and implementing the agreement. Capacity Building is cross-cutting and will be carried out on an on-going basis. The 15 steps are depicted in Figure 5. Each of the steps will be described in the next section.
The key activities under each of the steps of collaborative conflict management are shown in Table 2.

### Table 2. Key activities under the collaborative conflict management

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Step</th>
<th>Key activities</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Assess the issue</td>
<td>Political&lt;br&gt;Natural resource</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Identify stakeholders</td>
<td>Communities&lt;br&gt;Politicians&lt;br&gt;Eminent persons</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Design a strategy</td>
<td>Collaborative&lt;br&gt;Multi-level – national, regional, continental&lt;br&gt;Develop linkages for the different levels</td>
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<tr>
<td>Set up a programme</td>
<td>Look at resource distribution&lt;br&gt;Develop a conceptual framework for linking them</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Establish procedures</td>
<td>A bottom-up approach – national, regional, continental&lt;br&gt;Education on the programme</td>
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</table>
### Information needs assessment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Task</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Evaluate the issue</td>
<td>Undertake a SWOT analysis</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Assess the risks</td>
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<tr>
<td>Define the problem</td>
<td>Look at historical aspects of the problem</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Look at alternatives to the cause of the problem</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Look at long term benefits</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Look at effects of the problem</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Specify information needs</td>
<td>Information needs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Anthropology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Generate option</td>
<td>Profile options at national, regional and continental levels</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Develop ways in which one level feeds into the other</td>
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<tr>
<td>Develop a criteria for option evaluation</td>
<td>It should be consultative</td>
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<td></td>
<td>It needs to be time-bound</td>
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<td></td>
<td>It should model outcomes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evaluate the options</td>
<td>Evaluation should be based on the model outcomes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>An evaluation for different scenarios needs to be given</td>
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<tr>
<td>Reach agreement</td>
<td>Develop the framework for getting the agreements</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Identify institutions needed to implement the agreement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ratify agreements</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Develop legislations to support the agreements</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Develop a written plan</td>
<td>Have a framework for the plan</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Build capacity of both parties on the contents of the plan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Have a monitoring plan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ratify the agreement</td>
<td>Develop a legal framework for the agreements</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Have parties sign the agreements</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Have a way of tracking progress and making recommendations</td>
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<tr>
<td>Implement the agreement</td>
<td>Strengthen implementing institutions</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Develop an M &amp; E Plan</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**Principles of Consensual Negotiations (The Harvard Approach)**

In negotiations, the resource persons covered the Harvard Approach. The Harvard approach is based on four principles:

1. It is about separating the **People** from the Problem. The idea is to focus on the Problem at hand.
2. It is about focusing on **interests**, not positions – look at all interest groups and interests and get a model that accommodates the interests of all
3. There must be scope for generating **multiple options** to the problem, not just one.
4. **Criteria** should be established as a basis for agreement. The best criteria are those jointly defined for the sake of ownership and acceptance.

In negotiations it is important to observe some rules which underpin the success of conflict management and resolution:

1. It is important to listen actively
2. Understand people’s concerns before you put yours across
3. Refer back to the other party’s points
4. Make your points firmly but remain friendly
5. Seek the other people’s ideas
6. Build on their ideas
7. Then offer your ideas
8. There is a need to construct a solution based on everyone’s needs

**Generating Options**

In generating options under the Harvard Approach it is important to systematically go through the processes of Identifying the Problem; Analysis of the problem; Evaluating Approaches to solving the problem and isolating the action ideas as depicted in Figure 6.

![Diagram of generating options process]

**Figure 6.** Process for generating options
At the stage of generating options though, the partners need to establish their BATNAS. BATNA means the “Best Alternative to a Negotiated agreement”. The idea is to boost your BATNA while you weaken the other party’s BATNA. An agreement is only possible if it is better than your BATNA. In assessing the BATNA, it is then possible to have the Zone of Possible Agreement (ZOPA) and the different parties’ reservation points as shown in Figure 7.

![Diagram of ZOPA with Buyer’s Reservation Price and Seller’s Reservation Price]

**Figure 7: Zone of Possible Agreement**

In general, in the negotiation process it is important:
1. To be conscious of the differences between positions and interests
2. be creative
3. be fair
4. be prepared to commit
5. be an active listener
6. be conscious
7. be careful about the alternatives

There is a need to be prepared to deal with people who do not negotiate fairly. They might use different tactics including deliberate deception or creating stressful situation to get what they want. They can also resort to personal attacks. These need to be acknowledged and one should insist on sticking to the principles of negotiation.

In getting to an agreement and deciding on implementation, it is important to have an objective criteria set. This needs to be explained to the parties at the beginning of the negotiation. It helps partners to focus on what is fair and how to solve the problem instead of their own partisan perspectives.
Multi-stakeholder Negotiation – a case study of Negotiating a tough land use issue in Namibia

Participants had a chance of putting into practice the concepts land through a case study of Namibian community who had interests in engaging into two projects: One on Conservancy and the other on embarking on Jatropha production. The groups in the community were split between the two projects and conflict arose into deciding on which project to embark upon.

Participants went through the 15 stage process of Collaborative Conflict Management and in negotiation applied the Harvard Principle. They chose their mediator and practiced active listening.

In conclusion, the groups observed that actually their interests were the same and they could embark on the two projects simultaneously with both groups winning.

The role of a good mediator

Through the role play in the multi-stakeholder negotiation case of Namibia and watching the video from Ahtisaari (a well known negotiator), participants were in a position to assess what a good negotiator was. The following characteristics of a good negotiator were observed:

- The negotiator must be able to motivate people
- Needs to be a good communicator
- Must be an honest broker
- Should have integrity
- Should play the role of a midwife who has a goal of delivering a healthy child…
- Should be positive. The general belief is that every conflict can be solved…

Principles of running an efficient meeting

The participants also went through the key tenets of holding a productive meeting. In negotiations this is clearly important so as not to waste time. In general work related issues, holding of meetings is also a key part of the work programme. The key principles of holding successful meetings include:

1. Planning and setting up an agenda and objective
2. Informing all concerned and providing them with enough background information
3. Preparation for the meeting into a logical sequence including allocating sufficient time to the agenda items
4. Structuring and controlling the meeting
5. Summarizing the deliberations and recording the proceedings including Action Items which leads to production of the minutes.
Training Styles – Participatory vs. Traditional
Different training approaches were also discussed with particular reference to participatory training versus the normal rote learning of lecture delivery. Participants managed to carry out a SWOT analysis on the two methods of training. Participants were in favour of carrying out participatory training as they felt the learners will own the process and will learn much more. However, costs and time requirement tended to limit the extent to which this could be practiced.

Strategy for good presentation
In discussions with people and providing feedback maybe from Conflict Management and Resolution activities, feedback is important. It was important that participants were aware of strategies for making good presentations. A video was shown which looked at aspects of Audience, Intent and Message as the key defining issues surrounding a good presentation. Key aspects of a good presentation include:

- Understanding the importance of a good beginning and a good end.
- State the main ideas first or last
- Use “direct approach” whenever possible (Put conclusions up front)
- Do not give too much information at once
- Use a preview – a teaser
- Do not look like you are repeating the information
- Infuse the unexpected (humor, story, photo, video)
- Be persuasive – statement, argument and conclude.
- Make benefit statement so that they know what is there for them
- Apply an audience filter i.e. understand who your audience are and adjust your methods appropriately
- Bring examples and case studies
- Stick to 3-4 bullet points per slide
- Do not put hands in your pocket, stand with feet shoulder apart and relax

This was a useful reminder to all the trainers on how they could further improve on their presentations.

Follow up of the workshop and Way forward for ANAFE – Dr. Aissetou Yaye
Having gone through the workshop, Dr. Aissetou Yaye, the ANAFE Executive Secretary took over the discussion into looking at the way forward regarding “Conflict Management in Natural Resources Management teaching in Tertiary Agricultural Education Institutions”. The key questions to be addressed were:

1. How has Conflict Management in Natural Resource Management so far included in the curriculum?
2. What should happen after the training and how will participants be involved in the next steps and what assistance is needed to achieve this?
Participants were divided into the Regional Agricultural For a for Training of Southern Africa, East and Central Africa, and Sahel and African Humid Tropics to deliberate on the questions raised.

The findings from the group discussions are shown in Table 3.

**Table 3.** Status of conflict management in Tertiary agricultural education institutions and way forward

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Status of Conflict Management Training</th>
<th>Way forward</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The course is taught as a topic in most cases</td>
<td>A survey of the different institutions is needed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The programmes were initiated with assistance of established institutions that have a lot to offer</td>
<td>A curriculum development and reform is needed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The content of what is being taught is variable.</td>
<td>Capacity building – short term training</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A degree or diploma though not specifically in Natural Resources Management</td>
<td>Development of contextualized learning material</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diploma in Disaster management</td>
<td>The curriculum needs reform to capture emerging issues</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Linkage with mother institutions need to be strengthened</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The participants from the current training workshop can be included in content development and acting as resource persons. There was a need to emphasize:

1. Linkage with participants on ways to improve training – networking
2. Developing a work-plan
3. Resource mobilization
4. Further capacity building
5. Getting to share on what is being coordinated by the Senior Education Fellow (SEF)
6. Get more familiarization with conflict management issues in Africa

**Reference material**

A few materials were shared with participants on where they can access further learning materials. These included among others, the following:

1. Check on [www.pon.edu](http://www.pon.edu) to get more on Programme on Negotiation
2. Getting to Yes book written by Fischer
3. Getting past No (book)
4. The Third Side (book)
Conclusion
The workshop on Conflict Management and Resolution in Forestry and Natural Resources in Africa was successfully held. Participants felt that they needed this information particularly the framework for collaborative conflict management. They will use this information in their teaching and also it will be useful in their day to day lives. Of critical importance now is the need to scale up the capacity building to many more institutions and many more lecturers. There is a need to move from the current stage where Conflict Management is only treated as an “add on” to other subjects, to a subject requiring full treatise as a significant area of learning. Students graduating from Universities and Colleges with the requisite knowledge in Conflict Management will find it useful in their future career. They will be able to contribute in the increased cases of conflict in Natural Resources throughout sub-Saharan Africa.