Chapter 3 Conflict analysis

Conflict analysis

People tend to start thinking about solutions as soon as they are aware that a conflict exists. Tensions and differences are hard to bear, and most people want to get rid of them as quickly as possible. Usually, however, seemingly quick and easy solutions are not sustainable because they do not take all the aspects of the conflict into account.

On the one hand, the more conflict management practitioners know and understand about the situation in which they are working, the less likely they are to make mistakes, and the more likely to assist stakeholders effectively. On the other hand, it is essential to differentiate between very important and less important issues – most conflict analyses are constrained by limited time, resources or expertise.

The conflict analysis activities in this chapter have been designed to help participants gather all the information needed to decide what kind of conflict management procedure is the most appropriate to resolve a conflict – informal or formal, with or without the assistance of a third party – and to assess the possibility and viability of a negotiated settlement.

Systematic analysis of an issue, problem, dilemma or conflict helps identification of the main parties or stakeholders, their key interests and the critical conditions (opportunities or barriers) that affect resolution. It also helps the assessment of possible procedures for addressing and resolving issues, and decision-making about how to proceed, including what steps to take first.

This chapter starts with an energizer to introduce conflict analysis, which is followed by a rapid conflict assessment (Session 3.2). Depending on the complexity of the conflict case and the information needs, a conflict management practitioner may choose to do a more in-depth conflict analysis. Tools for doing so are introduced in Sessions 3.6 "Root cause analysis", 3.3 "Stakeholder identification", 3.4 "Analysing stakeholder relationships", 3.5 "Analysing the 3Rs: rights, returns and responsibilities" and 3.7 "Examining power and influence".

Trainers have two options for introducing the tools: they can be applied to participants' own cases (following up on Session 2.5 "A picture of conflict") or they can be applied to simulated conflict cases (see Chapter 6).

SESSION 3.1 A KNOTTY PROBLEM

PURPOSE:
■ to energize the group;
■ to prepare the ground for conflict analysis;
■ to underline the importance of not interfering more than is necessary in other people's affairs.

TIME: 15 minutes.

MATERIALS: none.

PREPARATION: none.

STEPS

1 Explain that the group is now going to do a fun energizing exercise.

2 Ask two volunteers to act as "solvers" and ask them to leave the room.

3 Ask the other participants to stand up and form a circle, holding hands. They should then tie themselves – without letting go of each others' hands – into a firm knot.

Ask them to remain like that and follow the instructions given by the solvers.

4 The solvers are asked back into the room to untangle the knot, giving only verbal instructions to the group. Instruct them to hold their hands behind their backs to prevent them from touching the group or using body language.

5 After a couple of minutes stop the exercise. Most likely the solvers will not have managed to solve the problem. Ask them to join the group and repeat the exercise, this time letting the group disentangle itself: this should take about 20 seconds.

6 As feedback, encourage participants to relate the game to their own lives. Emphasize the following key learning points.

KEY LEARNING POINTS

• This game demonstrates that everybody is better placed to solve their own problems than outsiders are.

SESSION 3.2 INTRODUCTION TO RAPID CONFLICT ASSESSMENT

PURPOSE: to help participants identify what they need to know about a conflict in order to facilitate its resolution.

CROSS REFERENCE: Section 4.5 and Chapter 5.

TIME: 45 minutes.

MATERIALS: none.

PREPARATION:
■ select a conflict case from the examples in Chapter 6 and photocopy the background information for participants;
■ prepare photocopies or flip charts of Attachment 3.2.A "Conflict analysis and strategy design table".

STEPS

1 Introduce the session by explaining that there is a natural tendency to think about solutions immediately after becoming aware that a conflict exists. Tensions and differences are hard to bear and most people want to get rid of them as quickly as possible. However quick solutions are not likely to be sustainable, because they often overlook important aspects of the problem. Thorough conflict analysis is essential because the more conflict management practitioners know and understand about the situation in which they are working, the less likely they are to make mistakes, and the more likely to assist stakeholders effectively. On the other hand, it is essential to differentiate between very important and less important issues – most conflict analyses are constrained by limited time, resources or expertise.

2 A conflict practitioner needs to understand enough about a conflict to:
■ decide what kind of conflict management procedure is the most appropriate to help parties to further their interests – informal or formal, with or without the assistance of a third party;
■ assess the possibility and viability of a negotiated settlement;
■ decide whether or not to pursue negotiations.

3 Explain to participants that the rapid conflict analysis tool provides an organized way of preventing information overload. Explain that you are going to lead a joint conflict analysis using the tool, to demonstrate how it works.

4 Distribute background information about the selected conflict case. Give participants sufficient time to read the case.

5 When they are all ready, turn to the conflict analysis and strategy design table (Attachment 3.2.A). Ask the participants to list the key conflict parties in the first column. Explain that conflict parties or stakeholders are those "*individuals or groups who are affected by the outcome of a conflict, or those who influence that outcome*". Indicate that there is risk that some groups of people, such as a local community or women, may be viewed as sharing a common identity, even when the members of that group have diverse and contradictory interests and needs.

6 When all the stakeholders have been listed, identify the most important issues. Issues are topics or problems that parties would like to discuss in a conflict management process. Remind participants that issues need to be phrased in ways that make people with different views willing to talk about them, for example, by stating general tasks, such as "clarify the relationship" or "clarify the authority", or questions, such as "what needs to be done to address issue x?". It is also important to be as inclusive as possible, by listing the issues of all, and not just of some, of the parties.

7 Next, the issues need to be put into order of importance. Conflict management practitioners enter a conflict situation by starting with discussion of the easier issues, where agreement can be more rapidly achieved. Conflict managers also have to identify which issues are most important to the parties; if these concerns are not met, it is unlikely that an agreement can be reached and sustained.

8 Once the important issues have been selected, the parties need to discuss them, in order to understand each others' interests. Interests are all the things a party wants to have satisfied. Interests are of three types: substantive, procedural or psychological (see Session 2.6). Interests should be probed – their history, what is important and why. Conflict managers must ask open-ended questions to find out why the interests are important to the stakeholders. Analysing interests enables the conflict management practitioner and the disputing parties to determine whether any common interests exist.

9 Explain to participants that a conflict management practitioner would now usually work with disputing parties separately to assess potential and, in some cases, probable conflict outcomes. Suggested options need to satisfy at least some of the interests, but not necessary all.

10 The next column on the table refers to the power that some parties may use to influence the conflict management process so that it furthers their own interests. Clarify that "*power is the capacity to get things done".* Explain that all parties in the conflict resolution process require some power and means of influence. When there are very severe power differentials, it is necessary to decide whether or not these can be balanced by a third party.

11 Next, the stakeholders' willingness to settle the conflict needs to be assessed. Is resolution of the dispute a high priority for all stakeholders? Or will some refuse to take part in the process because they do not understand their own best interests or suffer from emotional or other blocks?

⑫ Explain that by reaching the final column in the table, participants have considered the main factors and conditions that determine the possibility and viability of a negotiated settlement. The information gathered should make it possible to assess the chances of collaborative approaches – negotiation or mediation – succeeding and producing a good outcome. In the final column, decisions are made about the most appropriate conflict management procedure and the next steps to be taken in preparation for it.

⑬ Wrap up the session by explaining that other conflict analysis tools can be used when any of these aspects need to be analysed in greater detail. Emphasize the following key learning points.

🔑 KEY LEARNING POINTS

- Conflicts are often about different perceptions and the different meanings that people attribute to events, policies and institutions. Hence, conflict analysis must be organized in a way that involves all the conflict stakeholders. Ideally, conflict analysis brings together the main stakeholders in a joint multistakeholder event. In situations where tensions are high or direct communication among stakeholders is not possible, conflict analysis can also be organized as separate meetings with individual stakeholder groups. However it is done, it is important that a conflict analysis is based on a wide range of views.

HINTS This session should be followed by sessions introducing more detailed conflict analysis tools, such as 3.6 "Root cause analysis", 3.3 "Stakeholder identification", 3.4 "Analysing stakeholder relationships", 3.5 "Analysing the 3Rs: rights, returns and responsibilities" and 3.6 "Examining power and influence".

To illustrate the point about different perceptions, it should be combined with Session 2.7 "Partisan perceptions".
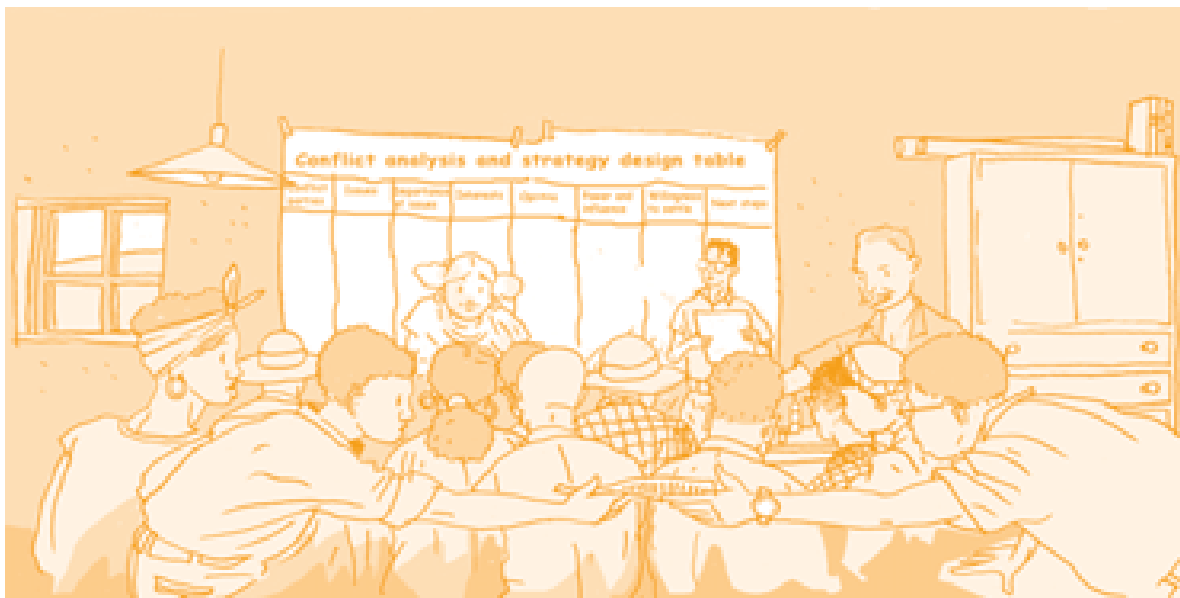
Attachment 3.2.A Conflict analysis and strategy design table

CONFLICT PARTIES	ISSUES (all the topics that need to be dealt with)	IMPORTANCE OF ISSUES (in order of priority)	INTERESTS (the substantive, procedural and psychological interests of each party)	OPTIONS (for meeting most of the parties' identified interests)	POWER AND INFLUENCE	WILLINGNESS TO SETTLE	NEXT STEPS (fora, procedures or strategies to address the issues)

Source: Adapted from Centre for Dispute Resolution (CDR Associates).

SESSION 3.3 STAKEHOLDER IDENTIFICATION

PURPOSE: to help participants identify, characterize and analyse the various groups of stakeholders.

CROSS REFERENCE: Section 5.5.

TIME: one and a half hours.

MATERIALS: pin board or flip chart, cards, coloured marking pens, tape.

PREPARATION: copy Attachment 3.3.A "Stakeholder analysis questionnaire" for each participant.

STEPS

1 Explain that the purpose of this activity is to demonstrate a tool that is useful for facilitators and stakeholders in analysing conflict situations.

2 Together with the participants, select a conflict over the use of natural resources with which the participants are familiar. The conflict taken as an example can be a case that the group has worked on in a previous activity, a real case that participants are familiar with, or a case taken from the examples provided in Chapter 6.

3 Explain that identification of the key stakeholders in a conflict may be easy in many interpersonal and organizational disputes, but it can be a challenge in multiparty conflicts. Stakeholders are people or groups who/that are directly involved in the conflict, affected by the conflict or dependent on the resources concerned. Omitting somebody in a key position of authority at an institution involved in the dispute, or an individual who can mobilize a group of supporters, can critically jeopardize the process. Hence, a conflict management practitioner always needs to keep on asking "Who is it important for me to talk with?" Secondary parties to the conflict are often invaluable resources in conflicts, because they may have more objective views and may also be able to introduce the conflict manager to the central people and principle parties in the conflict. Names gathered during this process need to be cross-referenced. When the major groups of stakeholders are identified, they are to be listed.

4 Divide the participants into groups of three or four according to which stakeholder group they are familiar with and/or knowledgeable about.

5 Distribute the stakeholder analysis questionnaire and give the groups 45 minutes to fill it in.

6 After 45 minutes, reconvene the participants. Ask one person from each group to explain its analysis to the other groups. Allow members of other groups to ask questions and comment on the description.

7 Initiate a discussion around the following questions:
- How useful was this activity for understanding the situations, behaviour and interests of the stakeholder groups?
- Is it important to know the different groups?
- Which areas and issues of potential or existing conflict can be derived from the analysis?

8 Wrap up the session by emphasizing the following key learning points.

🔑 KEY LEARNING POINTS

- Problems are not "objective" but always refer to an individual or group. What one group sees as a problem or disadvantage may not be a problem, and may even be an advantage, for another group.
- Stakeholder groups differ in their awareness of problems and the ways in which they explain a problem. For example, child mortality can be attributed to lack of hygiene (the scientific viewpoint) or to the influence of bad spirits/demons. The design of effective conflict resolution strategies depends on knowing about these belief patterns.
- Stakeholder analysis helps to identify how different stakeholder groups can participate in the design and implementation of conflict management strategies. All parties in the conflict resolution process require some power and means of influence, which can come from various sources (see 3.7 "Examining power and influence").

Attachment 3.3.A Stakeholder analysis questionnaire

Please describe and analyse the stakeholder group by answering the following questions.

Social characteristics

Composition of the group – age, gender, ethnicity:

_____

_____

_____

Organizational structure: informal or formal (organization, institution)?

_____

Authority and leadership: which bodies, committees or individuals represent the group?

_____

_____

Social, political and economic status:

_____

_____

_____

Negotiation position – strength in relation to other stakeholders:

_____

_____

_____

The group's potentials and strengths – specialist knowledge, control of resources:

_____

_____

_____

Situation

Sources of income:

_____

_____

Natural resources on which the group depends for its survival:

_____

_____

The group's biggest problem, from its point of view:

_____

_____

_____

The group's explanations or rationalizations of the problem:

_____

_____

_____

_____

How are group members involved in or affected by the conflict?

_____

_____

_____

_____

What is their role in the conflict?

_____

_____

_____

Attitudes

The group's attitude to the issue and to other parties: are there preconceived ideas, prejudices, convictions?

_____

_____

_____

Group members' position regarding the conflict issues and other parties: what are their demands and conditions?

_____

_____

_____

The group's interests and needs arising from the conflict issue:

_____

_____

_____

The values and norms that guide the group's actions:

_____

_____

_____

Strategies and tactics adopted by the group to deal with the conflict:

_____

_____

_____

The group's expectations regarding a consensual negotiation process: their hopes and fears regarding the process or the outcome:

_____

_____

_____

Implications for consensual negotiation and mediation

Which of the positions taken by the group could endanger the process?

_____

_____

_____

_____

Which are legitimate needs and interests?

_____

_____

_____

_____

What benefits are the stakeholders likely to derive?

_____

_____

_____

_____

How should the group be involved in the process?

_____

_____

_____

_____

What kind of role could the group play?

_____

_____

_____

_____

SESSION 3.4 ANALYSING STAKEHOLDER RELATIONSHIPS

PURPOSE: to introduce a tool for exploring the relationships among different stakeholder groups.

CROSS REFERENCE: Section 3.2.

TIME: one hour.

MATERIALS: pin board or flip chart, cards, coloured marking pens.

PREPARATION: photocopy or copy on to a flip chart Attachment 3.4.A "Sample relationship map".

STEPS

1 Explain that the purpose of this activity is to familiarize participants with a tool that is useful for facilitators and stakeholders in analysing conflict situations. Present the relationship map (Attachment 3.4.A) and explain the design and symbols it uses.

2 Together with the participants, select a conflict over the use of natural resources with which they are familiar. Preferably this should be a case on which the group has already worked in a previous session.

3 Ask participants to list all the stakeholders identified in the stakeholder analysis (Session 3.3).

4 Ask the participants to discuss the relations among the stakeholder groups, illustrating how these work by using representative lines and symbols. Ask participants to add specific information about relationships on cards.

5 Review the diagram and modify it if necessary.

6 Initiate a discussion around the following questions:
- How useful was this activity for understanding the relations and attitudes of stakeholder groups?
- Which relationships have to be worked on in order to improve the chances of reaching an agreement?
- What are the implications of this analysis for the conflict management process?

HINTS The relationship map gives a broad overview of a large number of stakeholder groups and their relationships to each other. It illustrates important information,such as which relationships have to be improved to allow direct communication between stakeholders. The degree of information it contains is, however, limited. A conflict line or symbol linking two groups does not provide information on the nature of the conflict – the same line or symbol can have different meanings for different relationships. More information should be added as short comments on cards. This activity can follow stakeholder analysis (Session 3.3) or analysing the 3Rs (Session 3.5). If necessary, a relationship matrix can be used to analyse relationships among the most important stakeholder groups.

Attachment 3.4.A Sample stakeholder relationship map
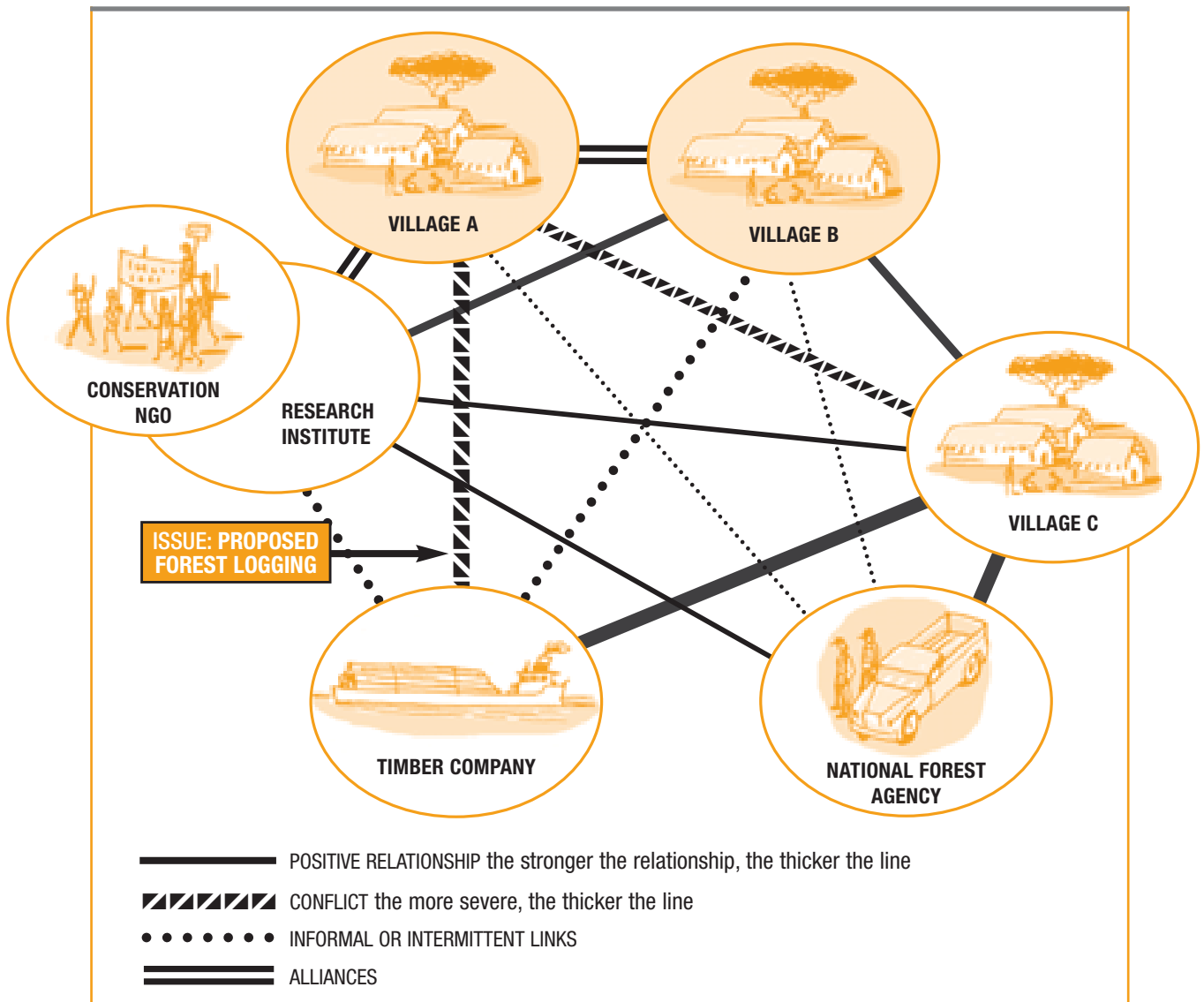
Analysis of relationships from the map

Issue: A logging company is to harvest a forest area that is a primary use area of villages A and B.

VILLAGE A:

Alliances with research institute, conservation NGO and village B. Major conflict with logging company over harvesting the forest area. Minor conflict with village C over supporting the company's proposal. Past relationships with forest agency have been good.

VILLAGE B:

Alliances with research institute, conservation NGO and village A. Strong kinship ties with village C. Very little interaction with forest agency or logging company.

VILLAGE C:

Company says it will purchase produce from village C in exchange for support of logging proposal.

RESEARCH INSTITUTE/CONSERVATION NGO:

Good relationship with forest agency through shared work on forest biodiversity strategy. Partners with all villages in forest inventory work. Some contact with logging company, but interaction so far has been poor.

POSSIBLE ACTIONS:

To strengthen the influence of villages A and B:

■ they use their alliance to lobby the forest agency and external stakeholders;
■ village B acts as an intermediary between villages A and C to renew and strengthen their ties;
■ research institute presents the concerns of villages A and B to the forest agency;
■ research institute explains concerns about logging impacts to village C.

SESSION 3.5 ANALYSING THE 3RS: RIGHTS, RESPONSIBILITIES AND RETURNS

PURPOSE: to examine different stakeholders' rights, responsibilities and returns regarding the resource, as part of understanding stakeholders' present and potential roles in a conflict.

CROSS REFERENCE: Sections 5 and 6.

TIME: two hours.

MATERIALS: pin board or flip chart, cards, coloured marking pens.

PREPARATION:
- copy Attachment 3.5.C "Sample 3Rs matrix" on to a flip chart;
- photocopy Attachment 3.5.A "Instructions for group work", Attachment 3.5.B "Sample conflict background sheet" and Attachment 3.5.C "Sample 3Rs matrix" for each participant.

STEPS

1 Explain the purpose of the activity and the meaning of the 3Rs: rights, responsibilities and returns. Show the sample 3Rs matrix (Attachment 3.5.C) and explain the design and procedure. Answer participants' questions.

2 Explain that participants will learn how to identify the 3Rs by filling out a matrix. Divide the participants into two or three groups and distribute the conflict background sheet and the instructions for group work (Attachments 3.5.A and 3.5.B).

3 Explain that the participants will now apply this tool to a sample conflict (Attachment 3.5.B) and then to a real conflict case. Take a case that the participants have worked on before and ask them to list all the stakeholders identified in the stakeholder analysis (Session 3.3).

4 Divide the participants into groups. Each group is to identify and analyse the 3Rs of one or two of the stakeholder groups identified, following the instructions in Attachment 3.5.A. Assign one or two of the stakeholders to each group, and give them 45 minutes to complete the task.

5 After 45 minutes, reconvene the participants. Ask one person from each group to present and explain its analysis to the other groups. Allow members of other groups to ask questions and comment on the description. Compare the results and correct any misunderstandings regarding the 3Rs that participants may have.

6 Initiate a discussion around the following questions:

■ What did you learn about the conflict from completing the 3Rs matrix?

■ How different are the stakeholders regarding their rights to, responsibilities for and returns from the resource?

■ How do differences in these factors affect stakeholders' levels of power or influence in the conflict?

■ How could these different factors be changed in order to reduce the conflict?

HINTS The 3Rs analysis is a very sensitive tool and needs careful application. It should be applied only as an internal mental model for the conflict manager or to help a particular stakeholder (group) to prepare for negotiations. It is a way of levelling the playing field among different stakeholders.

When applied in rural communities, this tool may need careful explanation and guidance from the conflict management practitioner, because it requires a sound understanding of specific conceptual categories. People may not find such categorization easy.

Attachment 3.5.A Instructions for group work

Step 1

1. Review the terms "rights", "responsibilities" and "returns": these describe stakeholders' relationships to the resource base:

- ■ Rights regard access and control over a resource, as defined legally or informally.
- ■ Responsibilities are the roles and power that a stakeholder has in the management of a resource.
- ■ Returns are the benefits and costs that a stakeholder derives from a resource, based on rights and responsibilities.

2. Define and clarify what you mean by each term, and how the terms are used in relation to the stakeholders and forest resources in the conflict you are examining.

3. Read the conflict background sheet (Attachment 3.5.B). Identify and discuss which rights, responsibilities and returns the stakeholders in this case have.

4. On a pin board or flip chart draw the 3Rs matrix according to the following pattern.

Stakeholder	Rights	Rank	Responsibilities	Rank	Returns	Rank

5. Write the name of a stakeholder group in the first column and describe its rights, responsibilities and returns in the relevant columns.

6. For each stakeholder, score each of the 3Rs on a scale of 0 to 5, with 0 meaning none, and 5 meaning high/maximum. Note that with responsibilities there may be a difference between what the stakeholders are legally responsible for and the responsibility that they actually display. In such cases, the descriptions should reflect the policy/legal requirement, and the score for that column should reflect the reality.

7. Repeat this process for all the stakeholders described in the case study.

8. Prepare to present and explain your results in the plenary session.

Step 2

1. Create and fill out a 3Rs matrix for the stakeholders assigned to your group, following the same steps and procedures.

Attachment 3.5.B Sample conflict background sheet

An overseas logging company has approached the national forest agency for a seven-year timber concession to harvest 50 000 ha of forest that had traditionally been occupied and used by local indigenous communities. The proposal has resulted in a conflict involving local communities, the government and commercial interests.

Under the country's legislation, all forested land belongs to the State, and the national forest agency is legally responsible for its administration and management. Prior to colonization, however, most forest areas within the country were held in some form of customary tenure by indigenous tribes. This customary tenure has never been recognized formally by the State, either during colonization or after independence. Forest use rights and management authority have been, and continue to be, a contentious issue.

The proposed concession area lies in a remote region of the country that is poorly serviced and lacks infrastructure. The government does not have adequate funds or staff to manage the forest in this area, which has been used increasingly by migrants – refugees who have crossed the border illegally from a neighbouring country. In order to improve its control of forest use, the government has initiated a collaborative forest management programme that engages the assistance of local communities. The indigenous people have strong cultural ties to the forest and depend on forest products for their livelihoods. They are concerned about the migrants' burning and clearing of the forest, and have offered to work as forest guards in order to prevent the forest from degrading into open access. They have also helped a national research institute and an overseas conservation NGO to conduct an inventory of forest plants and animals and to implement special measures to protect endangered species.

The government is interested in increasing its revenue through logging royalties, and the logging company has agreed to construct a major road through the area. The road would increase access for future development and assist the patrolling of the country's border and control of the influx of refugees.

The logging company has insisted that, for safety reasons, its lease should prevent local people from using the forest area. The company is also concerned about community opposition to the logging activity. The government has assured the company that, in the past, the existing collaborative management programme has gained the communities' assistance, without giving local residents legal authority to make forest land-use decisions, or providing them with greater access to forest areas.

Two of the three villages (A and B) have opposed the logging, claiming that it would limit access to the forest materials, food and medicines they need. Village A is additionally concerned that its river, and only source of drinking-water, would become polluted from the upstream logging activities. These villages have been supported by a development NGO, which is working on health issues in the area and is also active nationally in advocating greater recognition of forest rights for indigenous people.

Members of a third village (C) are more supportive of the logging operation. Unlike the other two villages, the sale of market produce is a key source of village C's income. Its villagers feel that the influx of loggers would reduce the need to travel to distant market areas. Increased sales and reduced costs are perceived as a boost to the local village economy.

For six months, the conflict has continued to escalate. Members of villages A and C have been increasingly involved in heated arguments, and violence against forest agency staff has been threatened. A national training institution with experience in managing forest conflict has been asked to intervene and assist with meditation. In preparation for meetings among the groups, the conflict management practitioner has worked with each group to develop a matrix showing each stakeholder's forest rights and management responsibilities. The conflict manager has also recorded the perceived returns of each group from the proposed logging operation. As several of the groups felt that they would be adversely affected, they chose to record returns both as positive (gains) and negative (costs). This was followed by an analysis of the relationships among stakeholders.

Attachment 3.5.C   Sample 3Rs matrix

Stakeholder	Rights	Rank	Responsibilities	Rank	Returns	Rank
National forest agency	Supervision Management	4	Administer timber concession Ensure annual national cut is achieved Implement biodiversity strategy to meet international commitments[1]	3	+ Royalties and logging income + New road into area - Weakened biodiversity protection in forest site	4
National department of international affairs[2]	None exclusive to forest area (but powerful government office)	1	National security Immigration control	3	+ Improved access to the border	4
Logging company	7-year exclusive lease on 50 000 ha of forest	5	Road construction[3]	3	+ Expected timber sales and profit	5
Village A	Unrecognized customary forest use rights	1	Continued role in day-to-day management (fire management, controlling forest entry by migrants)[4]	5	- No further access to needed forest products	1
Village B	Unrecognized customary forest use rights	1	Continued role in day-to-day management (fire management, controlling forest entry by migrants)	5	- No further access to needed forest products	1
Village C	Unrecognized customary forest use rights	1	None	0	+ Increased revenue from sale of produce	3
Migrants	None	0	None	0	- No further access to needed forest products	1

Attachment 3.5.C continued

Stakeholder	Rights	Rank	Responsibilities	Rank	Returns	Rank
National research institute[5]	Research permit	3	Inform government of biodiversity inventory Assist forest agency with biodiversity management	3	- Inventory stopped, leaving gaps in national forest database - Weakened biodiversity protection	0
Conservation NGO[5]	Research permit	3	Inform government of biodiversity inventory Assist forest agency with biodiversity management	3	- Inventory stopped, leaving gaps in national forest database - Weakened biodiversity protection	0
Development NGO	None exclusive to forest site (but empowered under government health programme)	3	Improvement of local livelihoods	4	- Increased pressures on local livelihood support	1

Notes:

1 Despite the national forest agency having a number of formal (legal) responsibilities to manage the forest sustainably, it was given a lower ranking (for responsibility) because of its inability to carry out its duties. The effectiveness of the forest agency in all responsibilities hinged on the support of various partnerships (for example with communities, the research institute, the logging company).

2 Many of the villagers initially saw all the interests of the government as being represented by the national forest agency. In preparing the matrix they realized that they needed to engage the office of international affairs, as well as the national forest agency. These two government departments have quite distinct interests, authority and strategies.

3 In discussion of the matrix, it was pointed out that the company had a low level of responsibility in terms of ensuring that the harvest was sustainable or that it provided for future local needs. It was also feared that constructing the road would open the area up to more settlers from other areas, and would not control the migrants as intended.

4 The forest agency acknowledged that it would continue to need the assistance of local people in forest area management.

5 In discussion of the matrix, the local villages opposing the logging decided to enlist the support of the research institute and conservation NGO, as these two groups had some formal rights to the area and their interests were potentially threatened.

Ranking of stakeholders according to respective 3Rs weight

Rank	Greatest rights	Most responsibilities	Most benefits
1	Forest agency	Villages A and B	Logging company
2	Logging company	Forest agency	Forest agency
3	Research institute/conservation NGO	Research institute/conservation NGO	Village C

SESSION 3.6   ROOT CAUSE ANALYSIS

PURPOSE: to help participants examine the origins and underlying causes of conflict.

CROSS REFERENCE: Section 3.2.

TIME: two hours.

MATERIALS: pin board, cards, coloured marking pens, tape.

PREPARATION:
- copy Attachment 3.6.B "Sample conflict tree" on to a flip chart;
- photocopy Attachment 3.6.A "Instructions for group work" and Attachment 3.6.B "Sample conflict tree" for each participant.

STEPS

1 Explain that the purpose of this activity is to increase understanding of how and why conflict originates and the sequence of contributing causes. Explain that when the root causes of a conflict are not properly understood, any steps to manage and solve the conflict may miss some important causes. The conflict may then not be properly managed, and may re-emerge later on. This is similar to felling a tree without eradicating its roots, which causes the tree to start growing again.

2 Post the sample conflict tree (Attachment 3.6.B) and describe the steps of the process. Explain that the starting point is the specific conflict. To discuss the root causes of the conflict, participants have to ask why the conflict has occurred, or what the immediate causes of the problem are. Each reason should be written on a separate card, and placed under the appropriate conflict heading. Participants need to keep asking the question "why?" for each of the immediate causes. These steps are repeated until the root causes of the conflict or issue are discovered. Finally, the cards are to be connected with lines to show the linkages between causes and effects.

3 Distribute the instructions (Attachment 3.6.A) and form small groups of four to five participants. Ask each group to select a conflict from within its own experience as a sample on which to practise the problem tree technique. Allow one hour for this activity. Spend time with each group to ensure that its members have understood the process.

4 After the groups have completed their trees, reconvene the participants. Ask one person from each group to present and explain its chart to the other groups.

5 At the end of the presentations, start a discussion with the following questions:

■ What problems did participants face in completing the conflict trees?

■ Has this exercise improved participants' understanding of the causes of conflict or its origin?

■ Does the conflict tree demonstrate the importance of linking local causes to much broader social, political and economic issues?

■ Would the conflict tree help conflict parties and interested outsiders to understand the conflict? What constraints might be faced? How could these be overcome?

6 Close by pointing out that a conflict has multiple contributing causes and it is unlikely that all of these causes can be tackled or addressed simultaneously. Priorities have to be established. Emphasize that there are no set rules for establishing priorities. An important aspect of conflict analysis is to identify the most significant causes of conflict. One way of doing this is to rank the issues in terms of significance. In doing so, it is also useful to distinguish which issues are:

■ *immediate* and require urgent action;

■ *underlying*, presenting significant obstacles for lasting peace and perhaps needing to be addressed over a longer time period.

The root cause analysis can be repeated at different times during the conflict analysis process, as more information becomes available and new issues arise. Initially, many of the linkages in the problem tree may be based on assumptions. Identifying areas where more information is needed and collecting this information from the field provides new insights, which help to verify or modify these initial assumptions.

HINTS The final product of the root cause analysis depends on the participants, their level of knowledge and the information they have. The analysis has a greater impact when the stakeholders have participated in it. There can be different interpretations of cause and effect, unwillingness to bring out key problems, and differing perceptions about the importance of issues. The process of comparing and discussing viewpoints and eventually agreeing on a diagram is in itself beneficial and can increase mutual understanding. Tactful and respectful guidance is essential, however.

Attachment 3.6.A Instructions for group work

1. Select and discuss a conflict that you are all familiar with from your sphere of work. You should choose a conflict about which most of your group's members have relevant and accurate information.

2. Write the conflict issue on a card and put it in the middle of the pin board. The conflict issue can be an action in the conflict process that marks a new development in the conflict, giving it a new quality.

3. Analyse the immediate causes of the conflict: Why did it occur? Which factors led to the latest development? Write the factors on cards and pin them underneath the issue.
Note: The immediate causes are independent of each another, but accumulate to produce the effect described in the issue card (A + B + C = Issue).

4. Analyse the causes of each of the immediate causes (A, B, C,…), and pin these "sub-causes" beneath the respective immediate causes on the board. Repeat these steps until you have reached some basic or root causes of the conflict or issue being addressed.

5. Identify the potential effects of the conflict issue described on the issue card. Post these above the issue card.

6. Review the cause-and-effect relationships and modify them as necessary. Check the logic of the tree diagram by asking "why?" through all the levels of causes. Then, connect the cards with lines to show the linkages between causes and effects.

7. Discuss and prepare the presentation of your diagram.

When doing the root analysis, please remember the following:

■ Do not get bogged down in arguments about whether or not a "why?" is valid. This is an exploratory activity and the truth or relative significance of the "why?" can be determined later.

■ Sometimes there is confusion between cause and effect. This is common, and the difference will become clearer through discussion and practice. Always ask the lead questions: Why did this happen? Which other factors contributed to this problem?

Attachment 3.6.B Sample conflict tree

The following conflict tree illustrates a simplified root cause analysis of a conflict over forest logging. The conflict involved traditional owners, a timber company and the government forest service. The traditional owners, who opposed timber harvesting on forest land that they claimed was part of their ancestral estate, prepared the conflict tree diagram. They wanted logging to be stopped, and argued that this conflict was brought on by:

- river pollution and contamination of their water resources;
- damage to culturally important sites;
- the involvement of the wrong group of traditional owners, resulting in questionable legality of the logging contract;
- encouragement of further damage to the forest by neighbouring clans.

The traditional owners identified and recorded each of these issues, exploring the contributing events and causes. The causes of conflict listed on the conflict tree reflect the biased perspective of the traditional owners. In discussing the diagram, they conceded that not all of the causes listed might be real. The diagram does, however, provide a framework for:

- investigating the various causes in greater depth;
- collecting additional information;
- determining which of the statements describe true contributing factors to the current conflict and which do not.

The diagram drew attention to a number of other stakeholders and subgroups – other than the traditional owners, the logging company and the forest service – involved in the conflict. Gaining support from some of these groups was a key to managing the conflict.

The diagram helped the group to decide the scale at which they needed to manage the conflict in the short term. It identified a number of places for possible action to manage the conflict and improve collaborative management processes. For people in the local community, the diagram linked broader political and policy decisions to impacts in their area. It also showed which actions they could take to anticipate and address possible future conflicts.

Conflict: Indigenous community (IC) group takes action to halt logging operation on forest land

Additional forest damage from removal of extra trees at request of neighbouring clan

Damage to spiritually important sites

Dispute over legality of agreement of timber concession

IC unhappy about pollution of river and water source

Neighbouring clan lacks understanding of good forest management

Insufficient forest management extension

No access to forest conservation NGO

Neighbouring clan has no customary management rules for timber

No forest agency community education available

Timber harvest is non-traditional use of forest

Insufficient funding of government

Little interest or low priority of forest agency officers

Plant operators not aware of spiritual sites

Sites not marked on logging plan

Local clan did not inform forest agency of spiritual sites

Local clan did not understand reason for giving this information

Inadequate consultation by forest agency officers

Little interest or low priority of forest agency officers

Inadequate training of forest agency officers

Forest agency logging guidelines inadequate to protect resource base

Plant operators breaking rules of logging agreement

Incorrect customary tenure holders and resource users signed logging concession

Forest agency guidelines not designed to protect resource interests of landholders' use rights

Inadequate supervision of operators by forest agency

Plant operators do not worry about damage to resources

Local authority misinformed forest agency about who the correct tenure holders and resource users were

Low level of participation and consultation with forest users before timber agreement determined

Inadequate forest agency requirements about consultation process with tenure holders and resource users

Forest agency has no access to technical information

No political will for enforcement of forest agency guidelines

Company has no code of practice or education on environmental impacts

Inadequate procedures for checking tenure and resource users

Local authority with poor knowledge of customary authority

Signatories encouraged by logging company not to consult other resource users

Forest agency short of trained staff

Company with no interest in educating plant operators

Local authority composed of young local people not educated in customary authority

Timber company interested in completing contract quickly and quietly

Lack of funds for salaries and operations

Lack of staff training in enforcement of guidelines

No requirements from forest agency

Local young people educated outside of area and never learn traditional knowledge from elders

Reductions in government expenditure

Insufficient funding of government

Insufficient funding of government

Insufficient timber royalties being directed back into operation of forest agency

Insufficient timber royalties being directed back into operation of forest agency

SESSION 3.7 EXAMINING POWER AND INFLUENCE

PURPOSE:
■ to identify and explore various means of influence and power that conflict parties or conflict management practitioners can use to move towards agreement;
■ to consider when influence or power are appropriate and/or will be effective;
■ to demonstrate how to coordinate parties' and conflict managers' use of influence and power.

TIME: one hour.

MATERIALS: flip chart.

PREPARATION: copy Attachment 3.7.A "Definition of terms" on to a flip chart.

STEPS

1 Explain that all the parties in a negotiation process need to have some power and influence. Clarify that "*power is the capacity to get things done".* As conflict management practitioners, participants will have to have some influence, as well as power.

2 Ask the participants to think about the forms of power and influence involved in human interrelationship conflicts. Divide the participants into pairs of one man and one woman for the exercise. Their task is to try and negotiate an agreement on the issue, problem or conflict provided by the trainer. They should identify and use as many means of influence as they can to persuade their counterparts to agree with them or give them what they want.

3 Ask the pairs of participants to consider the following problem:
You are one of two people who are committed to each other in a relationship. You really care about your partner, but three years ago you were in a relationship with someone else – a colleague – in a very romantic affair. You have been offered an assignment for a month to work on a project in another town. This other person lives in that town, and will be on the project team. You want to go and do this job, but your spouse does not want you to. Use every means of influence you can think of to try to persuade your partner.

4 Give participants ten minutes to conduct the negotiation. Then reconvene the participants and start a discussion around the following questions:
■ Who convinced their partners about going? Who did not?
■ What forms of power and influence did you use to convince your partner? (Participants often

mention: appealing to feelings – "Honey, if you really trust me you would let me go"; appealing to trust – "Don't you trust me?" or "You should trust me!"; risk minimization strategies – "You can accompany me to the town"; incentives for going – "Think how well the job is paid and what we could do with the extra income"; and threats – "If you don't let me go ...".)

■ What other sources of power and influence do you know (compare with Attachment 3.7.A)?
■ In natural resources conflicts, how is power likely to affect collaboration and the willingness of all parties to negotiate outcomes?

4 Ask participants to discuss what actions can be taken to level the playing field, or how marginalized stakeholders can increase their influence. Record their suggestions on a separate flip chart and compare with ideas in Attachment 3.7.B.

Attachment 3.7.A Definition of terms

Power is "the capacity to achieve outcomes".

Power sharing in collaboration implies an agreement among stakeholders that they accept one another's legitimacy and power to define problems and propose solutions.

Sources of power and influence

Physical strength: endurance, violence.

Emotional strength: courage, leadership, commitment, integrity.

Control of resources: access, tenure, rights, money, material goods, political institutions, human resources.

Control of information: technical, planning, economic, political.

Ability: capacity or skills.

Knowledge: access to traditional knowledge (insider and outsider).

Ability to coerce: threats, access to and use of media, family or political ties, mobilization of direct action.

Attachment 3.7.B Levelling the playing field

Identify which of the forms of influence used by parties are effective and which ineffective: Study the ways of persuasion that parties are using on each other. Consider what might influence their emotions/feelings and views about procedures or the issues under discussion.

Select the right form of power for the issue and the person being persuaded, and select the right moment: Decide what means of influence are likely to be most effective. When considering effectiveness, most people tend to think about what would influence themselves, rather than what would influence the other party. Instead, consider methods of persuasion that will appeal to the other side by considering *values,* such as cost-effectiveness, efficiency, fast and immediate results, versus relationships, trust, long-term connections.

Encourage conflict parties to use effective means of influence or power: Referent or association power is the most powerful of the various sources of power. It is the power that stems from being in coalition with others who have power. For example, when a local elder knows a small business that sometimes provides services to a mine, he/she is in a better position to influence the mine owners in negotiations. The elder has more power because of her/his connections. The more associations a person has with powerful people, the more power that person will have.

Discourage or inhibit parties from using means of influence or power that are ineffective: In general, assuming strong positions and coercing are the least effective sources of power. Negotiators should therefore hold off using coercive power for as long as possible, as it creates resistance. Coercion works only when a party actually holds power that it is willing to use, and the counterpart cannot withstand the pressure.
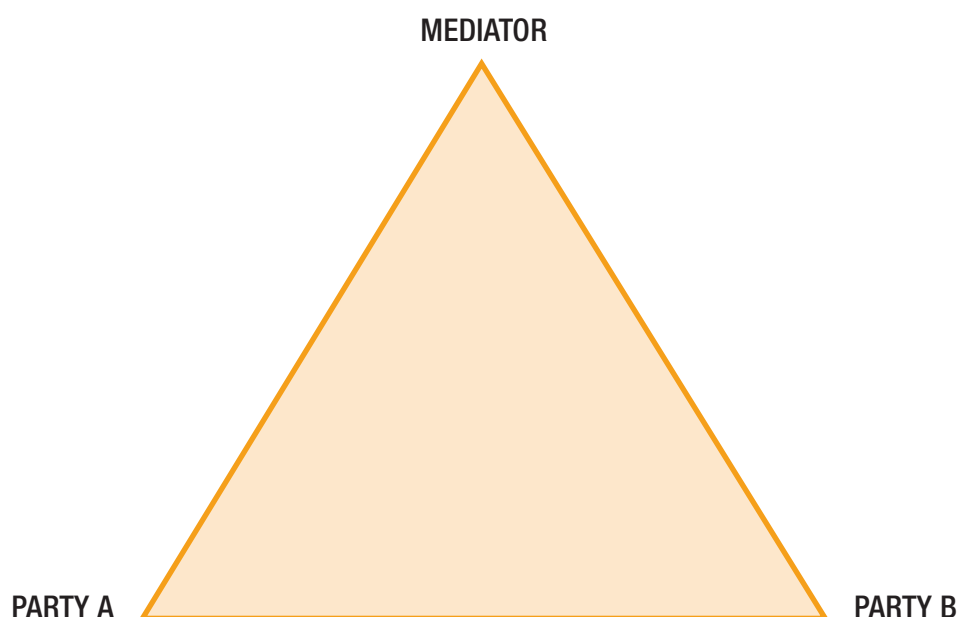
Use the minimum of power and influence necessary to induce change: Others should be influenced gradually, with no hard pushing. Overuse of any source of power may cause undue resistance from counterparts.

Differentiate between actual means of influence or power and potential sources: For example, a community group negotiating with a company threatens to block the road and stop the company's machinery. The company may not believe that this will happen because it knows that many people in the community are scared and will not speak out. In this case, the community has potential power but, unless it uses this potential power, it does not have actual power. The community must have the will to use its power.

The existence of negotiating power does not in itself determine the outcome of negotiation. For power to work, a negotiator must be able to:

- distinguish between actual power and potential power;
- coordinate or mobilize his/her/its power and convert it into influence so that it can be used effectively;
- determine the costs and benefits of exercising different types of power;
- determine how much power she/he/it will have to use;
- muster the will to use this power when necessary