

CBNRM IN COASTAL BULGARIA: ADVICE ON USE AND NETWORKING

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INTRODUCTION

This note addresses Community-Based Natural Resource Management (CBNRM). The context is the Black Sea NGO Network (BSNN)'s work, and more specifically the project that the Community-Based Natural Resource Management Network (CBNRM Net) has provided support to, with funding from the EEA Financial Mechanism (the funding comes primarily from Norway). The note is intended to provide practical advice to BSNN on how to use the approach of Community-Based Natural Resource Management (CBNRM), and network with likeminded entities in the region that may be interested in learning about what CBNRM is and how it can be used. In geographic terms, the note is directed at countries in Eastern Europe, that is, the new EU member countries. Countries in the broader region, including in Central Europe and the Baltic countries, may, in addition, find the idea of CBNRM interesting to pursue. More generally, the note has relevance for the countries often understood or categorized as 'transition countries/economies'. In this respect it is an adjunct to and an important part of a new CBNRM Net strategy that targets transition economies.

The Background examines some preliminaries....

1 BACKGROUND

CBNRM is a recent term for approaches and activities that are found across sectors and boundaries. It is not limited to any particular culture, ecosystem or political system. CBNRM addresses universal aspects of how man relates to local natural and renewable resources, including how s/he exploits and utilizes these resources, and in the process enters into various types of collaborative arrangements as well as conflicts. In terms of stakeholders, CBNRM is used by people and institutions located in the public sector, civil society and the private sector. As a practical, goal-focused agenda, CBNRM is concerned with sustainable resource management and with change management. The following paragraphs constitute a logical sequence in terms of building upon each other, and represent necessary preconditions for each other.

^{1/} This document was prepared in 2009 under a contract with the Black Sea NGO Network (BSNN), with offices in Varna, Bulgaria, and is available on: www.cbnrm.net, www.cbnrm.eu, and www.bsnn.org (in Bulgarian).

1.1 Points of departure: Society, culture and values

At this bottom tier are societies and cultures. As obvious and mundane as it may sound, it is essential to understand and accept that CBNRM – in fact any conscious approach to engineer and engender change – address and focus upon societies and cultures. More specifically, the focus is on the individuals that constitute societies and cultures, and the exceedingly complex and shifting relationships between various constituting elements, from the basic individual unit to ever larger and encompassing collectives of individuals, be it family, kinship group, neighborhood association, Non-Governmental Organization (NGO), public sector agency, or private firm, to name but a few. This complexity is further underlined by the number of values and mores that define and guide individual behavior. The individual is, at one and the same time, part of, or member of, several such collectives, and operates within them through simultaneously playing out a number of roles, for example, son, grandson, board member, program manager, secretary and accountant. This bundle of allegiances includes elements that often time support each other and work in tandem, but that often also contradict each other and result in conflict.

1.2 Analysis and assessment

In order to change societies and cultures it is necessary to address squarely the constituent elements, namely the individual citizens and the various institutions they are involved in, and how they interact. Such analysis of a situation, be it in the form of a baseline or otherwise, is a necessary precursor to any planned and directed change. A number of key terms, view, and approaches have over the years developed, that partly are elements of such analyses, and partly represent societal goals with planned change and directed interventions. They are, *inter alia*, advocacy, decentralization, democratic structure(s), devolution, empowerment, equity, gender, governance, human rights, participation and participative approaches, rights, social justice, and transparency.

Local ownership to and/or local control over (use right to) resources is crucial. These can be understood as one important precondition for CBNRM to work. In an alternative scenario, the absence of property rights or use rights means that CBNRM would first have to focus on ensuring that local people receive the necessary legal title (or minimally secure right of access or use right) to local resources. The specific focus of CBNRM deals with understanding the relationships between relevant or key individuals and collectives/groups, and between them and the natural environment.

There are a number of approaches and tools available for analyzing cultures, stakeholders, and institutions, together with the characteristics of their interactions and relations. Below two such tools are briefly mentioned, namely stakeholder analysis and social analysis.

1.2.1 Stakeholder analysis

Stakeholder analysis aims to determine and understand the interests that specific stakeholders have on a particular project, task or activity. There are four steps involved:

1. *Identification*. Identification of stakeholders. Relevant stakeholders include those that are affected – negatively or positively – by the activity, as well as those that can impact the activity.
2. *Assessment*. Analysis of the stakeholders' interests, and the potential impact of the activity on these interests.

3. *Assessment*. IN this step the stakeholders' ability to influence the activities, together with their importance for the activity, is determined.
4. *Participation strategy*. Based on the information about the stakeholders gathered in the above steps, in this step a strategy for involving the stakeholders in the activity is prepared.

1.2.2 Social analysis and social assessment

Social analysis is understood as a systematic investigation of, inter alia, demographic factors, socio-economic determinants, social organization, socio-political context, needs and values, and institutions. The purpose of this investigation is to: account for social differences, assess impacts and risks, mitigate adverse impacts, and build capacity of institutions and individuals.

There are five entry points to social analysis. They represent different angles from which to observe and assess a given social reality. The combination of these angles constitutes of leads to a new and more complex social reality, greater than the sum of its parts. The five entry points are:

- (1) *Social diversity and gender*. Here the focus is on how people are organized into different social groups, based on given or acquired criteria.
- (2) *Institutions, rules and behavior*. These groups relate to each other in different ways – there is cooperation, there is competition, and there is conflict.
- (3) *Stakeholders*. This is identical with stakeholder analysis as presented above. (Focus on: social dynamics, examines characteristics and interests of the vulnerable and the poor, as well as those stakeholders who may have greater influence on the activity. Considering social differentiation, social analysis analyses not just where boundaries lie but how permeable they are.)
- (4) *Participation*. Participation works best when it is built into ongoing public institutions and decision-making procedures and processes. Participation refers to the extent to which stakeholders can influence development by contributing to project design, influencing public choices, and holding public institutions accountable for the goods and services they are bound to provide. It also refers to the extent to which poor people are likely to benefit from access to opportunity. Focuses on opportunities and conditions for participation in the development process.
- (5) *Social risk*. Looks at what could go wrong when constraints are removed and people compete for the opportunities created. Social tensions or conflicts between groups can undermine project/activity objectives. Also important is addressing social risks emanating from the project, for example, involuntary resettlement, institutional reform that affect access to goods and services.

Social analysis together with participation constitutes 'social assessment', namely a process that provides a framework for prioritizing, gathering, analyzing and incorporating social information and participation in the design and delivery of activities that aim to result in positive social and/or environmental change. Social assessment is an iterative process consisting of the following steps:

- (1) *Stakeholder analysis*. See above.

- (2) *Identify social factors.* These are factors that may be important for implementing an activity successfully,
- (3) *Gather data.* Data to be gathered should focus on issues of operational relevance, and be done as far as possible with involvement of local stakeholders,
- (4) *Analyze data and assess priorities.* To focus on helping to provide answers to operational questions and generating action-oriented recommendations,
- (5) *Develop plans in consultation with stakeholders.*
- (6) *Ensure capacity.*
- (7) *Adjust and apply with stakeholder involvement.*

The socio-cultural and economic-political realities in Eastern Europe necessitates some adaptation of this general framework, and some notes on this is includes below (see section x.x?).

1.3 Practical approaches

Assuming that the above conditions are available or apply, this step addresses elements of how to strategize and work in order to identify, understand, define and implement directed change. This is done by way of presenting two complementary sets of approaches, practices and tools, namely: (1) public participation and (2) co-management. They are understood partly as necessary preconditions, partly as means (e.g., to implement CBNRM), partly as corollaries, and partly as goals in their own right.

1.3.1 Public participation

Public participation is closely related with the term stakeholder, and refers to the involvement of relevant stakeholders in decision-making processes. The underlying idea is that the people who are affected by the outcome of decisions should be involved in making them. Citizens have the right to participate in elections in order to elect those that govern them, and by the same token there should be opportunities for citizens to interact with their representatives. Such participation is the foundation of a democratic system of governance, partly through allowing government actions to become transparent, and thus avoiding – or at least minimizing – corruption. In order for a participatory democracy to function there has to be an institutional framework that will allow and facilitate it.

It follows that public participation one the one hand has to be institutionalized, while, on the other hand, at the same time allowing for the existence of a vibrant civil society with active NGOs. The premises or the conditions for this to happen are three-fold: (1) Access to decision-making, (2) Access to public information, and (3) Access to justice.

1.3.2 Co-management

Co-management refers to a situation in which two or more social actors negotiate, define and guarantee amongst themselves a fair sharing of the management functions, entitlements and responsibilities for a given territory, area or set of natural resources.

Co-management is at times referred to as: participatory management, collaborative management, joint management, mixed management, multi-party management, and round-table management.

More specifically, co-management is: (1) A pluralist approach to managing natural resources, incorporating a variety of partners in a variety of roles, generally to the end goals of environmental conservation, sustainable use of natural resources and the equitable sharing of resource-related benefits and responsibilities, (2) A political and cultural process par excellence: seeking social justice and 'democracy' in the management of natural resource, (3) A process that needs some basic conditions to develop, among which are: full access to information on relevant issues and options, freedom and capacity to organize, freedom to express needs and concerns, a non-discriminatory social environment, the will of partners to negotiate, confidence in the respect of agreements, etc., (4) A complex, often lengthy and sometimes confused process, involving frequent changes, surprises, sometimes contradictory information, and the need to retrace ones own steps, and/or (5) The expression of a mature society, which understands that there is no 'unique and objective' solution for managing natural resources but, rather, a multiplicity of different options which are compatible with both indigenous knowledge and scientific evidence and capable of meeting the needs of conservation and development (and that there also exists a multitude of negative or disastrous options for the environment and development).

2 SITUATING CBNRM

Beyond what is presented below, CBNRM – including what CBNRM is and does – is not covered to any great extent in this note.^{2/}

2.1 About

The term 'community-based natural resource management' consists of two parts. The sense of the first part ('community-based') is that the 'community' in question has the legal right, the institutional base and the economic incentives to take substantial responsibility for the sustained use of local natural resources. The second part ('natural resource management') refers to management of these local resources.

Beyond this, CBNRM is not easy to circumscribe, let alone define. CBNRM Net's approach to this is to downplay the importance of a clear-cut definition, and instead understand it as, for example, a tool box, an approach, and/or a process. The latter is fundamental, as it points to the fact that CBNRM is open-ended, adaptable, and should be tailored to the specific project situation in order to be optimally effective. It follows that, rather than understanding the lack of a definition as a drawback, this is rather an advantage, and it could actually not be any other way, given the application of CBNRM to extremely diverse situations globally.^{3/}

Having said this, there are some efforts at circumscribing and characterizing CBNRM.^{4/} First, CBNRM has been characterized as follows:

^{2/} Please consult the many resources on CBNRM available online, including the CBNRM Net's website (www.cbnrm.net) and the World Bank's website (www.worldbank.org), for details.

^{3/} For details about the history of CBNRM please consult the companion note "Introduction to the cases".

^{4/} See the CBNRM Net's website for details, including sources.

- (1) It addresses both human and natural resource issues, such as the long-term benefit of present and future generations given the inefficiency of state management and objectives such as equity, poverty alleviation and empowerment of marginalized user communities,
- (2) CBNRM as a strategy reflects in social and policy terms the parallel nestedness and connectedness of organisms, species, associations and ecosystems in the natural universe and the interdependence between micro and macro levels,
- (3) CBNRM starts with communities as a focus for assessing natural resource uses, potentials, problems, trends and opportunities and for taking action to deal with adverse practices and dynamics, with cooperation and support from other actors linked horizontally (e.g. other communities) and vertically (e.g. higher level or external entities, such as local or district governments, regional bodies, government agencies, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), universities, or other organizations that have an interest in resource conservation and management),
- (4) While in the past NRM was seen as the domain of either state sector institutions endowed with appropriate authority, expertise and other resources, or private sector institutions pursuing individual economic interests and benefits, CBNRM operates mostly in a middle sector of organizations such as user groups, community management committees, local councils, producer co-operatives and similar, though it works best when there are complementary, supportive public and private sector activities,
- (5) While management by a central government agency will not qualify as CBNRM, any organization, governmental or other, either on its own or in combination, can undertake CBNRM. CBNRM is management at the local, community level, and
- (6) CBNRM is the management of natural resources under a detailed plan developed and agreed to by all concerned stakeholders. The approach is community-based in that the communities managing the resources have the legal rights, the local institutions and the economic incentives to take substantial responsibility for sustained use of these resources. Under the natural resource management plan, communities become the primary implementers, assisted and monitored by technical services.

For another instance, CBNRM has also been characterized in this way: CBNRM refers to the collective use and management of natural resources in rural areas by a group of people with a self-defined, distinct identity, using communally owned facilities. The aims of CBNRM are to:

- (1) Obtain the voluntary participation of communities in a flexible program that incorporates long-term solutions to problems arising from the use of natural resources,
- (2) Introduce to natural wildlife resources a new system of group ownership and territorial rights for the communities resident in the target areas. The management of these resources should be placed under the custody and control of resident peoples,
- (3) Provide appropriate institutions under which resources can be legitimately managed and exploited by local people for their own direct benefit. These benefits can take the form of income, employment, and production of venison, and

- (4) Provide technical and financial assistance to communities that join the program to enable them to realize their objectives.

The focus on CBNRM is not merely the wise management of natural resources. As important, if not more important, is the need for community development, local self-government and the creation of local institutions for the management of common property resources.

CBNRM Net itself has put forward the following characterization of CBNRM (which, admittedly, can be understood as at least approaching a definition):

CBNRM is the management of natural resources under a detailed plan developed and agreed to by all concerned stakeholders. The approach is community-based in that the communities managing the resources have the legal rights, the local institutions, and the economic incentives to take substantial responsibility for sustained use of these resources. Under the natural resource management plan, communities become the primary implementors, assisted and monitored by technical services.

Finally, some further issues that contributes to delimiting and clarifying the concern and focus of CBNRM: it is concerned local / traditional knowledge, it places a strong emphasis on collective action, it is understood as a change agent, and is often employed in situations of rapid ongoing change, and, finally, CBNRM knowledge is often understand as a case of a global public good.

2.2 Foci and goals

It follows that CBNRM will have somewhat varying foci and goals, depending upon the specifics of the locality where it is being employed and implemented. A core bundle of these foci and goals/means, which will commonly be found, with differing priorities and emphases, but not necessarily in this order, are:

- (1) *Sharing*. That is, sharing knowledge. The specific meaning of the term 'knowledge' employed is fundamental to understand (see item 5 below).
- (2) *Innovating*. Focus on locating new, more efficient and optimal ways of working and achieving results.
- (3) *Mentoring*. Addressing training and capacity building. Focuses on key stakeholders in positions of influence and power in public sector and private sector, but also of the younger persons, active in organizations and NGOs in civil society.
- (4) *Connecting*. Stakeholders, across all manner of borders – natural and man-made.
- (5) *Managing*. Addresses, in particular, knowledge but also people.^{5/} Management of knowledge is usually referred to as 'knowledge management'. The term 'knowledge' here refers less to information, understood as quantified data, then to information, understood as data in a cultural, organizational and social context. The term 'management' here refers to several related tasks and process, including collecting, storing, adapting, targeting, and disseminating knowledge. The need for knowledge management grows dramatically with increases in number

^{5/} The focus here is on the management of knowledge.

of issues, stakeholders, relations between stakeholders, complexity in society, etc. That is, more knowledge is being produced and it must be managed.

2.3 Position and role of CBNRM in change and adaptation

CBNRM can be utilized in a number of cases of change and adaptation, ranging from directed and planned change (even including social engineering) as available in the context of regular development activities, over to smaller-scale activities, ranging from small-scale projects to awareness, empowerment and consciousness raising activities. Albeit such activities can (also) be initiated from the outside, the optimal approach is that they are initiated, but in many or most cases with various forms of outside help and input. The role and position of CBNRM will differ, but in general it circles around mutual beneficial advantages for (local) people and the environment (locally and beyond), and it can operate on the short term as well as the longer term.

2.3.1 Stakeholders and relations

The term 'stakeholder' is of central importance in CBNRM, as in the more general emphasis on participation and participatory approaches that are increasingly utilized in development cooperation. In this, CBNRM both epitomizes and furthers the basic notion that critiques the view that an applied developmental situation consist of, essentially, the donor, the implementing agency, and the beneficiaries. Against this, participatory approaches (which CBNRM is built upon) advance the view that there are a number of stakeholders involved in a development project or a change activity. In this view, the donor, the implementing agency and the local people are, together with others, as located in public sector, civil society and private sector, stakeholders, in the sense that they have specific reasons for being involved together with clear goals with this involvement. Thus, CBNRM can be initiated and promoted by one or more of these stakeholders, as located on: (1) The 'inside', that is, at the local level, or (2) The 'outside', or (3) it can be a joint or collaborative activity:

- (1) *Externally initiated.* Here, outside stakeholders take the initiative and are responsible. There is a lack of participation, decentralization and transparency. This is the old situation and mindset that needs to be changed. This is the overwhelmingly common situation in Eastern Europe, Central Europe and the Baltic countries today.
- (2) *Locally initiated.* Here local people take responsibility for management of own natural resources. This is, in a sense, the ideal situation, except that it is not very effective. There is lack of funding, and a lack of an appropriate legal framework, together with the means and connections to address the latter.
- (3) *Joint collaboration and shared responsibility.* This is identical with the key characteristics outlined above, namely (1) public participation and its preconditions, and (2) co-management and its precondition, namely public participation (see para 1.3.1). Joint collaboration is based on the principle of comparative advantages between involved stakeholders, which, in turn, is a basic principle behind co-management (see para 1.3.2).

2.3.2 CBNRM in use: Context and approach

CBNRM exists and operates within a framework of development cooperation and aid, no matter how small and local the operation may be. Accordingly CBNRM can be identified, constructed, implemented,

assessed, and evaluated – in short, situated – from the point of view of structured approaches to doing development interventions and targeted change. Two such mutually supportive approaches and methodologies are briefly mentioned below. Both are primarily constructed for use in connection with implementation of development projects.

(a) Logical Framework Approach

The Logical Framework Approach (LFA) is also referred to as Ziel Orienterte Projekt Planung (ZOPP) or Objectives Oriented Project Planning (OOPP). This is a project design methodology, and a fairly rigorous process that will impose a logical discipline on the project design team. The steps involved are:

- (1) *Situation analysis.*
- (2) *Stakeholder analysis.*
- (3) *Problems analysis.*
- (4) *Objectives analysis.*
- (5) *Alternatives analysis.*
- (6) *Activities planning.*

The overall design is usually presented in the form of a document called Logical Framework (LF, LogFrame or Project Matrix).

(b) Outcomes and impacts

This approach aims to increase the reliability and validity of measurement of the results of a project. This relatively recent focus on measurement was stimulated in part by increased interest, on the part of governments and donors, on quality, performance management and accountability. The steps involved are:

- (1) *Inputs.* Resources put into the project in order to deliver specific outputs are referred to as inputs. They can include time, money and premises.
- (2) *Outputs.* These include, among others, trainings courses, support sessions and publications.
- (3) *Outcomes.* These include changes and effects that take place as a result of the project's outputs, usually as found on the short(er) term.
- (4) *Impacts.* They include broader, longer-term change that relates to the overall aim of the project.

As it happens, the LFA is evolving, and today both of these approaches and methodologies belong under the broad umbrella of LFA, with the emphasis being on the latter approach.

3 SCALING UP CBNRM

3.1 CBNRM exists on different levels

Stakeholders that work on CBNRM are located at all societal levels. A general list of these levels include the following: (1) Local, (2) Sub-region (as in, e.g., district), (3) Nation, (4) Region (as in, e.g., West Africa), and (5) International.

There are three important aspects of the location of CBNRM:

- (1) *Distribution*. CBNRM activities are unevenly distributed, in that some levels, as located in some continents, figure more prominently than others. Also, CBNRM is quite widespread throughout, for example, Sub-Saharan Africa and Asia. On the other hand, transition economies / countries are lagging behind, in most cases to the extent of being 'white spots' on the CBNRM global map.
- (2) *Specializations*. CBNRM stakeholders work on all phases of the project cycle, and in a number of capacities, including: management, implementation, funding, monitoring, evaluation and research.
- (3) *Connections*. There is relatively little contact between these CBNRM stakeholders, horizontally (e.g., between stakeholders located at the same level, and working within different specializations), as well as vertically (between levels). Where it exist, it is usually transient, the result of a specific factor, like a development project, and when the project closes these connections and channels of communication are disrupted.

3.2 Networks and networking

CBNRM stakeholders need to be better connected, temporally and over time. Everybody stand to benefit from this, including the local practitioner that look for interesting experiences and results that can be adapted to an ongoing project or activity, the program coordinator who works on preparing a new project, the evaluator that needs comparative data and experiences in order to prepare an incisive evaluation of a CBNRM-related project that just closed, and the NGO that needs advice on how to work with key local stakeholders (likely located in the public sector) in order to get the message of CBNRM as a win-win situation across. The answer lies in networking, and in organizing and maintaining networks.

3.2.1 Characteristics of networks

A network is here understood as more or less formalized communication between a number of like-minded stakeholders. These stakeholders share knowledge in various ways on a more or less regular basis. While the term 'network' is old, the concern here is with the modern incarnation of a network. What sets a network in contemporary society dramatically apart from earlier networks is the advent of Information and Communication Technology (ICT).

There is a fine line between a community of practice and a network. A network is a type of, or a further development of, a community of practice. A network, as used here, bases its internal and external communication on ICTs, whereas a community of practice may or may not do so. Thus, a community of practice is not necessarily a network. There is a difference also in scale, and in whether communication between the members is direct or not. The advent of ICTs made possible the growth of networks, in scale and in space.

While a traditional community of practice is marked by physical co-location, this is not the case with most networks that are created based on use of ICTs. The separation of members – and, accordingly, the communication between them, both in space and time – of many present-day networks necessitates a discussion of the special characteristics of their specific community-aspect. Traditionally, a community was permanent, as in a village, or in the context of a community of practice. Gradually, some communities of practices could be characterized as having a temporary community-aspect – they existed

when the members were physically located in the same space. With the advent of ICTs, a further development of communities of practice – and, accordingly, of networks – took place. With ICTs the community of practice exists for a particular member when he or she is connecting with the other members through email and/or the Web. In other words, the resulting networks have an on-off community aspect to the way they operate.

Networks are a visible effect of the growing clout of local NGOs and other initiatives. At the same time, and as a corollary, networks are a key avenue to further this growing importance. This is so because in the current situation and level of globalization, the logic and rationale behind further development of the NGO sector lies in establishing and maintaining contact and communication between local people and activities across a number of obstacles, both natural and man-made.^{6/} The effect of globalization on this emerging global NGO sector has been to realize that other people are striving with the same or similar activities and problems. Likewise, a key element of globalization, namely ICTs, provides the means with which to realize this increased level of contact and communication.

ICTs have made it possible to scale up the use, importance and impact of networks and networking. They have made it possible for CBNRM stakeholders globally to interact, share information and learn from its other. In addition to facilitation of communication, the second key advantage of ICTs lies in revolutionizing the processes and procedures of knowledge management.

3.3 The Community-Based Natural Resource Management Network

The Community-Based Natural Resource Management Network (CBNRM Net), originally set up in 1998 as a World Bank activity, is the *de facto* global network for people working on CBNRM in various capacities. Information on CBNRM Net's evolution, history, mode of operation and membership is available elsewhere.^{7/}

The geographic distribution of CBNRM Net's membership deserves to be highlighted. Eastern Europe, Central Europe and Baltic countries are, together with former Soviet countries, a white spot on the CBNRM Net global map. In fact, these regions include a number of countries without any members, as well as very few users of the CBNRM Net's services, as available via the website.

4 CBNRM IN COASTAL BULGARIA: THE INITIAL SITUATION

This section outlines the initial or present situation in Eastern Europe with regard to some key / select features that are of relevance for employing CBNRM.^{8/} This review represents an outside view of the situation. Moreover, it is, admittedly, brief. Some would perhaps argue that it paints a picture of a situation that is now old, as there is a tremendous amount of change taking place in the region. The context is development cooperation. Individual projects, however small, have to be understood as being

^{6/} These obstacles include biomes, ecosystems, subsistence practices, sectors, national borders, regions, sub-regions, political system, ethnic groups, social organizations, ethnicity, language and religion.

^{7/} See especially the CBNRM Net's website at www.cbnrm.net, and also the companion note "Introduction to the cases".

^{8/} While coastal Bulgaria is focused upon here, the arguments and views put forward can to a large extent also be made applicable to the region of Eastern Europe (understood as covering also parts of central Europe and the Baltic countries, that is, basically the new EU member countries).

located in a development /targeted context of planned change, with clear value-laden, political and economic aspects. The context accordingly is directed change

4.1 Characteristics

The tumultuous happenings throughout the region in the near past occasioned, after some initial confusion, an understanding that these countries came out of a unique past and are conditioned by a set of equally unique factors that contributes to setting these countries completely apart from the typical developing countries. Thus a new term, 'transition economy' (or 'transition country') was born. Understanding what these factors are represents a kind of a macro-level stakeholder analysis and social assessment/analysis. An important question is what the salient differences between transition countries and developing countries are? While the answer to some extent will depend upon the person asking the question (e.g., an interest in CBNRM will likely lead the investigator in a specific direction), it is equally true that there are a number of basic values, facts and premises that are universal throughout the transition countries, and the set them apart. Below, the answer to this question will be approximated through listing the key characteristics of the situation in coastal Bulgaria:

- (1) *Position and role of the state / public sector.* The problems were to a large extent the result of planning and developmental activities based on wrong assumptions as well as done the wrong way.
- (2) *Position and role of civil society.* Civil society was underdeveloped, and could hardly be said to exist at all. There were NGOs, to be sure, but they were usually a very different type of entity than in the West, often functioning as extensions to the public sector or state. Civil society understood as both a goal in itself, and a means towards something else (e.g., a corrective to the existing power structures) were not available.
- (3) *Position and role of private sector.* This sector was underdeveloped, and had a fuzzy and unclear relationship with the public sector or state.
- (4) *Relations between state / public sector, civil society and private sector.* Basically, they were characterized as being unclear relationships, with lacking division of roles, responsibilities, obligations and rights. There was extensive occurrence of para-statal organizations. Furthermore, there may have been a tendency that especially private sector – but also the public sector – grew into the public sector, in a seeming fashion of cooptation. This means that these sectors were stymied and did not develop in an independent and separate way.
- (5) *Collaboration between public sector and civil society.* This was very low. Partly because there was no civil society, partly because mechanisms of public administration and governance were not evolved or in place yet, and partly because of a lack of trust.
- (6) *Trust between the sectors of society.* There was a strong lack of trust, especially between the state / public sector, on the one hand, and the civil society, on the other hand.
- (7) *Corruption.* There was a very high level of corruption throughout society.
- (8) *Role of the individual in relation to the state.* There was a low emphasis of the role of the individual in relation to the state, and a concomitantly low understanding of why this matters.

The above list of some key characteristics is written in the past tense and refers to an unspecified situation in the near past. However, as this is really near past, and because the underlying values and mores are deeply founded in the national psyche, this linguistic tool should not be understood as trying to make a clear break between ‘then’ and ‘now’. The past is still very much with us. Not in the least because all these characteristics are related in complex way, including a number of positive and negative feedbacks.

The above leaves us with a series of pertinent questions: (1) What is the present situation as regards these characteristics?, (2) What are the challenges ahead?, and, most importantly, (3) How can CBNRM, an approach that evolved in a very different societal and socio-cultural and political-economic context, be applied here?

4.2 Using CBNRM

CBNRM in Eastern Europe is so far largely non-existent. While there are a number of reasons for this, one stands out. This is that a vibrant, active and self-sustaining civil society, including local-level activities and initiatives, together with NGOs that operate under the degrees of freedom that are found elsewhere in the world, are not available.^{9/} These factors represent necessary preconditions for the introduction and successful application of CBNRM and related approaches. This, in turn, means that there are very important challenges to such successful introduction and application of CBNRM, in the region in general, and in coastal Bulgaria in particular.

In addressing the existing situation, the question is whether it is CBNRM that needs to be adapted to the available situation, or alternatively whether CBNRM is okay, and it is the local situation that needs to be changed prior to application and implementation of CBNRM. The approach taken here is that, while ideally the second scenario above applies, the reality is likely to be a mixture of the two.

The task at hand is to apply CBNRM to a different context. That is, move CBNRM from the original context of developing countries/economies to transition countries/economies. This new context represents dramatic differences in societal, political-economical and value aspects. Against the backdrop of this macro-level situation (see para 4.1), a number of further more specific obstacles – but also some incentives – can be identified (largely to be understood as differences compared with the situation in developing countries/economies):

4.2.1 Obstacles

Key obstacles include:

- (1) *Little understanding for networking activities.* Networking, across societal sectors, horizontally as well as vertically, is by many viewed with suspicion. At issue here is the fact of the position of the individual in society, or, more specifically, how the individual understands her or his position in society. At the individual level, there is a strong feeling that: (1) it is not possible to join together through networking and networks and (2) that one cannot achieve results by doing so.

^{9/} This is not to say that there were not earlier, as well as is not today, NGOs here that operate under a different mode, that is, akin to the how civil society and NGOs operate elsewhere. These are, however, as a rule either international NGOs that have established a presence here, or else local NGOs with strong ties regionally and/or internationally. That is, the impetus for the change will have come from the outside.

- (2) *Inter-generational conflict*. The older generations easily harks back to the past, and are stuck in an old mold. The younger generations, on the other hand, increasingly look to forward, to the future, and wants increased connections with the outside (read: West). The Internet and the immense opportunities available for networking here are fueling this discontent. Apart from the obvious problems that the ensuing inter-generational conflicts cause, younger people are still not in position of influence and power in order to influence the situation.

4.2.2 Incentives

Key incentives include:

- (1) *Developed public sector*. The public sector is not only developed, it is omnipresent. Whereas many developing countries/economies can be characterized as weak states, this is not the case in Bulgaria. However, understanding the public sector as an incentive is presently clearly a case of potentiality, and not reality. Important changes in the underlying value system and premises for operation and even existence would have to be negotiated successfully. Legal reform would also be necessary.
- (2) *High level of education*. This is correct both at the basic and advanced levels. There are correspondingly low levels of illiteracy. Education is key to make the leap forward to an information- and knowledge-based economy and society that, in turn, is geared towards accepting the tenets of participatory democracy and governance that is a precondition for CBNRM and that CBNRM, in turn, could contribute to evolve, nurture and invigorate.
- (3) *The EU factor*. There is clearly a strong interest in learning from, and benefitting from, the opportunities that follow along with the recent closer contact with and integration into a redefined Europe, in general, and membership in the European Union (EU), in particular. Conversely, Western Europe in general and EU in particular has major interests and stakes in ensuring that the integration proceeds according to schedule and intent, and that it is successful.

4.2.3 Implications for networking and use of CBNRM

Above the argument has been advanced that specific circumstances prevail, and furthermore, that for optimal application of CBNRM a number of preliminary activities that address these circumstances needs to be considered and implemented. This means that a primary and preliminary focus should be on a set of carefully selected issues that are separate yet closely interwoven and connected, as follows:

- (1) Democracy-building.
- (2) Conflict management.
- (3) Co-management.
- (4) Public participation.

These issues would need to be addressed through carefully constructed and conceived capacity building and training activities. Such training can be done separately for each of these issues, if so with due reference to the overlap and integration with the other issues. It can also be organized to cover two or more of the issues. This training should not to be considered as one-time activities, but as repetitive activities.

5 CBNRM IN COASTAL BULGARIA: THE CHANGE PROCESS

Above (see para 4.2.3) a number of issues that are preliminary to doing CBNRM were identified, together with proposals for how to build the capacity in these areas. Such capacities are preconditions for a successful implementation of CBNRM. At the same time this should not be understood as strictly speaking serial activities. Such preliminary training and capacity-building activities can take place in parallel with implementing CBNRM activities. In fact, such training and capacity-building can be part and parcel of, for example, CBNRM-focused applied projects.

While this section includes concrete advice and suggestions, this does not mean that the earlier sections do not include such concrete advice and suggestions – they most definitely do. Moreover, the following specific advice and suggestions are put forward within a specific theoretical as well as practical political developmental context, and it is important to realize this.

There are some ground rules and principles that need to guide and inform all CBNRM-related work. They include: (1) Transparency, (2) Governance, (3) Respect for stakeholders that have different views as well as their views, (3) Listen to other stakeholders and learn from them, (4) Search for comparative advantages (as seen from the point of view of individual stakeholders), (5) Think collaboration, (6) Argue in terms of synergies, and (7) Practice co-management. As this stakes out a learning situation and curve that is both profound and demanding, it behooves the incumbent CBNRM student and future practitioner to approach the subject in small steps, and to build capacity slowly. Also it is important to understand – as well as accept – that this will be a long-term process, actually a permanent one.

More specific ideas for actions and activities can conveniently address the situation at different societal levels, while keeping in mind that there is no clear-cut separation between the proposed actions and activities proposed at each level (quite to the contrary in fact, as the political idea as well as practical activity of co-management testifies to). It follows that several of the proposed actions and activities are available on more than one level (as general guidance, actions and activities listed under one level apply equally well to all higher levels). The proposed actions and activities are largely operationalizations of key arguments introduced above.

5.1 The local level

The key actions and activities at the local level include:

- (1) Training (see para 4.2.3).
- (2) Training and capacity-building. That is, CBNRM.
- (3) Identification of stakeholders in public sector, civil society and private sector.
- (4) Interact with stakeholders in public sector, civil society and private sector.
- (5) Reach out specifically to relevant representatives in the public sector.
- (6) Reach out specifically to relevant representatives in the private sector.
- (7) Understand how Public Private Partnerships (PPPs) can be identified and implemented (PPPs can partly be understood as one aspect of co-management)
- (8) Establish co-management arrangements

- (9) Establish networks, including identification of activities, agendas, means and goals
- (10) Applied work: identify small projects

5.2 The national level

The key actions and activities at the local level include:

- (1) Training (see para 4.2.3). Prepare proposal for national/regional training program and submit for funding to relevant EU funding mechanism. Topics: governance, conflict management, stakeholder analysis, participative approaches, democracy-building.
- (2) Training and capacity-building. That is, CBNRM.
- (3) Training and capacity-building. Focusing on networks and networking.
- (4) Identification of stakeholders in public sector, civil society and private sector.
- (5) Argue for necessary legal reform.
- (6) ICTs: include information on CBNRM, in vernacular language on own websites on a regular basis. Establish links to likeminded organizations.
- (7) Knowledge management (see para 2.2).
- (8) Funding. Collaborate on locating likely sources of funding

5.3 The regional level

The key actions and activities at the local level include:

- (1) Training and capacity-building. That is, CBNRM.
- (2) Training and capacity-building. Focusing on networks and networking.
- (3) ICTs: CBNRM Net has set up a dedicated CBNRM website for the whole region. It will have dedicated and separate country pages in vernacular languages.
- (4) Knowledge management.
- (5) Applied work: specifically cross-border project, request help from other network members in locating and identifying potential projects. Create co-management arrangements around these projects.
- (6) Funding: Collaborate on locating likely sources of funding

5.4 The international level

The key actions and activities at the local level include:

- (1) Join relevant organizations.
- (2) ICTs. Be active on the Internet, including on dedicated discussion fora and on listservs.
- (3) Use the CBNRM Net website.
- (4) Knowledge management. Contribute to building the CBNRM knowledge management globally.

6 CONCLUDING REMARKS

The purpose of employing a tool or approach like CBNRM is to construct or work toward an enabling social context for managing natural resources at the local level.^{10/} This means working to achieve enabling policies at the national level. These involve a whole set of tasks and goals, including: (1) Policies for natural resource management, (2) Decentralization, delegation and devolution principles, (3) Policies that support the organization of civil society, (4) Policies that strengthen cultural identity and customary governance systems, (5) Policies that secure access to natural resources and tenure rights, and (6) Policies that set the rules and conditions of participation and co-management.

Furthermore, CBNRM aims at empowering civil society for policy change. This involves several tasks and goals, including, (1) Participatory methods for inclusive deliberations, (2) Linking deliberative inclusive process to broader policy change, (3) Ensuring safeguards for quality and validity, (4) Strengthening civil society among others through building networks and (5) address the challenge of participatory democracy.

The idea of co-management is fundamental to the argument advanced in this note. To achieve good co-management, intellectual qualities or technical proficiency matter less than human qualities. Such qualities include, inter alia, a positive attitude, good will, attention, curiosity, care, honesty, appreciation, respect and patience. Furthermore, the ability of people to become involved is a crucial ingredient. Another key factor is what has been referred to as a “learning attitude”, including a willingness to experiment. Finally, the success of a co-management setting is determined by what local stakeholders see as important, and that affect their lives. The results of co-management should be tangible in the sense that the relevant parties should be able to figure out whether the agreement they have developed actually solved their problems. In this, a balance must be struck between local meaning and values and broader, nationally or internationally declared liberating principles. Such principles enrich and improve the life of everyone and preserve values greater than any one of us, including respect for biological diversity and human rights. In this sense, co-management may offer safeguards against both the narrow-mindedness and selfishness that can accompany localized decision-making, and the abstract rhetoric and impositions possibly related to decision-making on a large scale.

^{10/} This section draws upon the following volume: Borrini-Feyerabend, G., M. Pimbert, M-T- Farvar, A. Kothari and Y. Renard. 2004. *Sharing Power. Learning by doing in co-management of natural resources throughout the world*. Cenesta, Tehran: IIED and IUCN/CEESP/CMWG.