Process Monitoring (ProM)

Work Document for project staff

Deutsche Gesellschaft für
Technische Zusammenarbeit (GTZ) GmbH

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Work Document for project staff

Pilot Project
Natural Resource Management by
Self-help Promotion (RMSH)

K E K ▲ C D C
C O N S U L T A N T S

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Foreword

The Process Monitoring/ProM Work Document is a product of the supraregional NARMS pilot project of the GTZ. The project is designed to strengthen and enhance **participatory and self-help approaches** in natural resource management projects, thus helping promote their **sustainability**.

What is ProM?
Process Monitoring is a term used in professional jargon to denote the careful and systematic observation of the activities of a deliberate selection of processes, enabling us to consult with others on those processes, and learn how to steer them.

The Document is aimed primarily at the staff of organisations **directly involved** in projects of international cooperation. Secondly, it is designed to assist those who facilitate, advise on and help steer these projects **from a distance**. In these two roles we are both actors in and observers of **the processes of technical and social change** initiated and supported by projects.

The involved **actors** perceive and judge these processes differently. Process Monitoring therefore rests on a fundamental attitude based on mutual respect and goodwill, across all divides of authority and power. Moreover, we have to accept that we often miss a great deal, that intentions and interests are often negotiated backstage of the arena, to which we have no access. Bearing that in mind, if we still wish to understand actors' motives when they appear surprising, and create fresh scope, then we will need to adopt a circumspect and sensitive approach.

The ProM Document makes two assumptions of the reader: we assume that you will search in six fields of observation for possible ways to **systematically observe** processes in which you are involved. And we assume that you will set-up a process monitoring system in the context of your own work which is **in tune with the situation** in which you find yourself.

Action and reflection form an iterative loop:
We know that what we want to achieve is brought about in the first place by our actions. Reflection alone is not enough. But we also know that reflection on our actions and achievements is a necessary precondition for circumspect action in a highly complex and dynamic context.

With regard to the first assumption: we have defined the six fields of observation on the basis of an evaluation of our experiences. We know there are others.

With regard to the second assumption: in view of the different circumstances under which you work, and the aims of natural resource management projects, it seemed to us more appropriate to offer you a number of **different routes** - as opposed to a prescribed formula. What we mean by that is: you ultimately have to decide with whom and on what you wish to reflect on a selective and regular basis. ProM is about **this selection of iterative loops**.

The elaboration of this work document was and is designed as a learning process. Benchmarks of this learning process were:

- Need assessment with GTZ-desk officers and project staff and evaluation of experiences (2-5/95)
- Elaboration of a discussion paper (6+7/95)
- Expert consultation with GTZ-desk officers, -project staff, a German Development Service-desk officer and external resource persons (7/95)
- Elaboration of a concept for the work document (8/95)
- Discussion on the concept in the NARMS project advisory council and in the informal working group (9/95)
- Elaboration of the draft of the work document (10+11/95)
- Discussion of this draft in the informal working group (12/95)

This learning process will continue. The focus will now shift to the level of those projects who are interest to gain practical experiences with the work document "in process". The respective experiences should be jointly evaluated and conceptualized. According to the needs of the project staff, an improved version of this work document might be elaborated.

Thomas Schwedersky   Oliver Karkoschka

Bonn, Mai 1996

1   How to read and use the Document

The first time we interact with a new environment, knowing barely anything of our partners' intentions and wishes, we make the mistake of applying our own "standards" to interpret and explain situations. This is a trap.

ρ *The Document will be of no use if we*
- *try to copy solutions instead of working them out,*
- *apply tools mechanically, i.e. without understanding how they work,*
- *look for tricks,*
- *are unwilling to take risks and learn.*

The term **steering** can mean different things, especially where development processes are involved. It implies that we have something "under control". This is certainly not the case with TC. Which includes projects pursuing the NARMS approach.

In our work we deal with changing problems and interests. As a rule, we find it difficult to admit that we understand only little, that we are mistaken, that we are taking decisions based on inadequate data, and that we barely understand the complex, dynamic processes in which we are involved. The ProM Document is designed to encourage us to make these admissions. We ourselves have to develop the confidence needed for that.

The **basic understanding** of development and steering on which the ProM Document is based invites you to do three things: We invite you to get into the habit of stepping back and taking a detached view of your own role; we invite you to think in terms of processes; and we invite you to inquire as to the fundamental values of development. Let us cast light on that with a few questions:

(1) **We need to ask questions of ourselves**.
What am I doing here in the first place? What is the point or purpose of my actions? Who understands that? Who is interested? What is going on around me? What processes am a part of? Which processes am I promoting or slowing down? How interested am I in other interpretations of the situation? How do others see me? What is expected of me, and by whom? Which roles do I find difficult/easy? How do I make myself superfluous?

(2) **We question the relationship between the head, the heart and the hand**.
What significance is attached to my actions and the actions of others? On what desires and visions are those actions based? How do others interpret the causal relationships I believe I see? What impacts do the explanations we construct have on our willingness to act, and on interests and intentions? How do explain complex processes of social and technical change? What can I learn from my partners?

(3) **We need to ask what development means**.
What have we taken on? Are our plans in harmony with the ambitions, aims and visions of our partners? What are we contributing to? Which decisions brought us to where we are now? How far have we got? What do we conclude from that? What else needs to be done? What are we going to do?

Projects and programmes of TC are planned and implemented by numerous organisations within a **decentral system of cooperation**. Consequently, they cannot be steered by one organisations from one point in time and space. **Steering** therefore means negotiating which route we want to take. We can involve our partners in this steering process, and we can participate in their steering processes. This will involve **changing locations and perspectives**, a point we touch on repeatedly in this Document.

The ProM Work Document is not a set of **technical directions for use**; it can only supplement existing experiences. It is the reader who fleshes it out with content and direction. For instance when you ask yourself which processes in your life you have experienced, helped shape or suffered. Or by drawing your own learning tree. Where am I coming from? When did I learn something crucial? Which way did I go at the various cross-roads? Which landmarks did I leave behind?

The ProM Work Document contains **tools**, which can also lead to blind activism. This is not our intention; we wish to invite you to act cautiously and with circumspection: you yourself have to decide what is **appropriate, beneficial and reasonable** in your particular situation. - We hope that you will apply one or other of the tools. Please don't expect things to work at the first attempt. Don't put all your eggs in one basket. Adapt the tool to your needs, and give it a number of tries! - **Start with what you know:**

- Which tools have you seen before?
- Which have you already used?
- What other instruments are you familiar with?
- Which tools do your partners in cooperation know and use?
- What do you feel capable of?

The ProM Work Document is not a "golden path" from the first to the last page. If you browse through it forwards and backwards, **picking out what appears useful to you**, then you will be using it as we intended. It all depends on the situation in hand: When the time seems right, you can pick up on a selected process field.

Thousands of years ago, labyrinths were being scribbled on rocks in Sumatra, India, Scandinavia, by the Hopi Indians in North America, and in Crete. The idea of a building in which one loses one's way, or a path ending in the darkest depths of madness or the saving grace of enlighten-ment, is a metaphor of life itself.

"We go wrong and are wiser after the event!"
This truism sums up process monitoring in a nutshell: we gain experiences, and reflect on them.

ρ *Which processes are involved here?*

- *division of tasks*
- *learning of new tech-niques*
- *adoption of new forms of cooperation*
- *coordination between institutions*
- *power conflicts*
- *action strategies*

21   What is Process Monitoring / ProM?

As you read this first introductory sentence, you can decide whether you want to carry on reading or not. If you were to stop reading here, and flick through the Document until you found something you wanted to continue reading, this would be one way of steering the reading process.

Whether you continue reading or not, what you have done can be called "process monitoring". Reading is a fairly complex process of information intake and information processing. On the basis of your own **criteria** and **assumptions**, you have observed, assessed, discontinued or continued the process. Later, you might perhaps find that you made a mistake.

By this we mean that you yourself define "process monitoring". You decide which way to go as you move around in the **labyrinth**. You walk into an unknown world, are confused, and make discoveries. Labyrinths are images representing complexes processes of searching, which we rephrase as "learning". We learn when our curiosity is aroused by fresh stimuli as we move on through our experiential world, but often the shortest route takes us no closer to the target. As everyone knows, to get to know a place really well it is necessary to have taken a good number of wrong turnings.

What **questions** did we ask ourselves when drawing up this Work Document? This is best explained by way of an **example**:

In a village forest management project, user groups form which negotiate with the government forestry service the arrangements for management of a large area of forest owned by the local government. On paper, everything appears straightforward at the first glance: competences for logging and afforestation, extensive management of the forest margin zones, consensus-based monitoring of sustainable manage-ment. Shortly thereafter, two systems of forest management emerge which operate in parallel: on the one hand, a small powerful group of families continue to use the forest as before. Their family connections are far-reaching: they extend as far as the government forestry service, political parties, and even reach as far as haulage and construction companies. Their preferred forms of forest use also include slash-and-burn, and commercial logging.

On the other hand, the organised members of the community are using the forest for firewood and construction timber, operating a large tree nursery, and are taking on afforestation and forest tending work. They accept periodic monitoring by the government forestry service, and maintain a delicate balance in their activities towards the more powerful user group which, on the basis of a old unwritten law, allocates them marginal zones for grazing purposes. Major logging activities do not come to their attention until the wood has already left the valley.

In everyday practise, process monitoring activities are a matter of course. We observe ourselves and others, we continuously steer our behaviour on the basis of these observations, we reflect on our lives and are constantly reconstructing our own life histories.

The processes mentioned in the example are spasmodic, and **open-ended**: the project plans make no mention of two forms of management operating in parallel, and we do not know how the forestry service, the local authorities and the village population will behave in future. In other words: we often have to deal with unexpected events, and find a path to take us through the confusion of experiences and norms, which we also at the same time have somehow to comply with.

We can observe, reflect on and influence the processes outlined above, but they cannot be **reversed**: we will never be able to jump into the river of time twice at the same place.

ρ *Processes are sequences of states in time. They are initiated, influenced, suffered, observed, measured and described by people. People construct explanations of those processes, which guide their actions.*

The example outlined above show two basic **characteristic features of processes** which - in contrast to the controlled kind of production processes encountered in a factory - are dealt with here:

- We cannot observe and talk about the totality of interwoven events taking place at the same time.
- The particular geographical perspective and interests of each observer make his or her perceptions partial, representing only one section of reality.

In a natural resource management project it is therefore appropriate for us to **select specific processes** (e.g. the dialogue between the forest administration, beneficiary groups and local authorities), to observe their **development** and **impacts**, and to **learn** from those observations.

ρ *Process monitoring is a management instrument such as planning or results-oriented controlling. It is there to help steer those processes in which we participate to achieve common goals.*

The term *process monitoring* is used in professional jargon to denote the activities of **consciously** selecting processes, **selectively** and **systematically** observing them so as to **compare** them with others, and **communicating** on that in order to **learn** how to steer and shape the processes.

Natural resources (water, soil, forest, biodiversity etc.) form the base on which all life forms depend. When people use these resources, they simultaneously change the **ecosystem**, their **social relationships** and **themselves**. Such processes of change are initiated, speeded up, slowed down or prevented by projects pursuing the NARMS approach.

Moving away from the **actors** and towards the tasks of ProM, we see that we are dealing with processes which take place initially irrespective of whether a *project* exists or not:

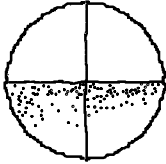*These processes are initiated, influenced, suffered, observed, described and measured by people. Those people construct explanations of these processes, which in turn steer their actions. People's capacity to act is determined both by these constructs, and by the respective social and institutional environment.*

ρ   The actors construct within their own life space concepts of human ecology to describe or explain the relationship between humans and their natural environment, and the degree to which the natural resource base on which their life depends is finite or renewable.

ρ   The actors decide to pursue certain forms of management based on their traditions, their knowledge, their experience and the anticipated benefit.

ρ   The actors use techniques of natural resource management, and learn to apply new techniques.

ρ   The actors declare (irreconcilable) claims and interests vis-à-vis the forms of use, elaborate rules and pass laws to govern rights of use.

ρ   The actors define roles and delimit the freedom of action.

ρ   The actors keep or break the rules, and negotiate sanctions.

ρ   The actors learn to deal with the conflicts associated with the access to or use of scarce resources, either by solving them through agreement, or discontinuing the cooperation.

ρ   The actors adapt their organisations in line with the calculated benefits, the environmental trends, the available technologies, and the forms of cooperation.

Projects pursuing the NARMS approach intervene in these endogenous processes. Ideally, they do so - in line with the guiding principle of minimum intervention - by focusing on the elimination of limiting factors, and by enabling their partner organisations to solve their own problems self-reliantly.

> The processes involved in natural resource management have one characteristic feature in common: they are **socio-technical processes**. In other words, real economic output and the application of technologies are linked to individual, social and organisational relationships and learning processes.

Experiences gained in projects pursuing the NARMS approach indicate that the systematic **observation** of processes of change, **reflection** on those observations and the corresponding **steering** of those processes are key tasks to identify sustainable, ecologically-sound and locally-appropriate natural resource management forms.

Through projects we initiate processes of technological, social and organisational change, and we ourselves are actors in those processes which we influence and steer more or less consciously. Whatever we move, we at the same time intervene in technical, human and organisational structures. We therefore use the term **socio-technical systems** when the focus is on technical innovations. This always involves people. They decide what is to be changed, when, and how.

It is therefore essential that we approach process monitoring **together with the actors**, that we seek their participation. This might not be easy, but it does have many advantages:

- We gain access to the perceptual world and experiences of the actors.
- We identify the various interests and action strategies of groups and organisations.
- We become familiar with the passive and active resistance to processes of change.
- We promote the willingness of the various actors to respect different viewpoints.
- We elaborate practical solutions based on the experiences and action strategies of the actors.
- We promote the assumption of responsibility.
- We simplify complex and dynamic processes, which facilitates communication with the actors.

ProM gets people on board. There is no other way to access the experiences and action strategies of the actors. And there is no other way of achieving more self-reliant steering and greater assumption of responsibility. By definition, participation is an integral component of ProM.

ρ*Non-specific participation by everybody in everything prevents clarity and transparency. Differences in interpretations, interests and positions of power do not become apparent unless we address them and do not gloss over them. This often means we are forced to work first of all with groups which have the same interests.*

ρ   *ProM promotes the quality of cooperation when it succeeds in defining the division of tasks and roles among the actors with the least possible input. In extreme cases, such clear definition leads to the co-operation being discontinued; as a rule, it promotes and consolidates both the cooperation and the performance capability of the participating groups and organisations.*

> Process monitoring is **participation-oriented**. Participation in the systematic monitoring of processes is designed to promote the **autonomy** and **self-responsibility** of the actors.

The very mention of the word participation raises the **issue of power**: Who decides who may or should participate? Which decisions will the actors be involved in? What influence will we have over their selection? Is it appropriate, and are we willing, to declare openly our interests in exercising that influence?
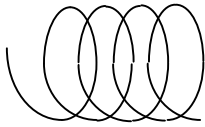
Process selection, observation, reflection and process steering are the four basic activities of process monitoring. In relation to this sequence, the following questions might for instance arise:

We need to question our eyes, so that we can start to see more clearly.

ρ *ProM comprises four basic activities:*

- *process selection*
- *observation*
- *reflection*
- *action*

Process selection
ρ Where do we direct our attention?
ρ With whom do we wish to select important processes?
ρ How does that relate to our objectives?

Action
ρ What do we want to do differently than before?
ρ What do we hope to achieve by that?
ρ Who can support us?

Observation
ρ What are we able and inclined to observe?
ρ Who should do the observing?
ρ How can we measure and represent what we wish to observe?
ρ How can we present the information accessibly?

Reflection
ρ What turned out differently than we thought?
ρ Which aspects of our approach proved their worth?
ρ With whom do we wish to exchange our observations?

ρ ProM is driven by syste-
matic observation and
reflection:

- *What (which processes)*
  do we wish to observe?
- *Who is observing whom?*
- *What can we conclude*
  from that?
- *What will we change on*
  the basis of our obser-
  vations?
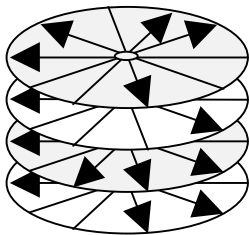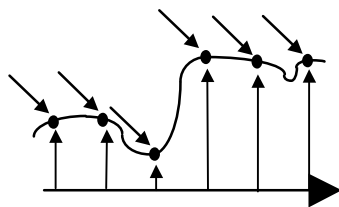
The sequence *process selection - observation - reflection - action* requires coordination: we need to know when we have to get together with whom and why. A **core task of process monitoring** is therefore to organise and - again on the basis of observations - steer this meta-process. The quality of ProM is dependent on this being done **regularly** and **systematically**.

To ensure that the Work Document retains its practical orientation towards **introducing ProM**, a line needs to be drawn at this point: the fourth step, i.e. action, will not be a major topic of the Document. The window on issues of process steering will be opened if at all by way of examples, and in the presentation of the tools.

The observation of selected processes requires at least a **minimum systematic approach**:
- The processes must be observed at different **points in time**, so that changes become evident.
- The observations made by **different** actors at different **locations** must be comparable.
- The observations must be based on the assumption that they will be beneficial for **decision-making**.

25   The levels of action of ProM

Process monitoring can be set-up at various **levels**, and can address the **interplay** between these levels:

- an individual activity within a project, e.g. tree nursery
- relations of cooperation within an organisation, e.g. between extension team and management of the forestry service
- cooperation between various actors, e.g. local government, forestry service, user groups, project team
- institutional and socio-economic environment, e.g. effects of import restrictions or trends of national programmes

ρ Projects aim to achieve
certain goals, and in-
evitably narrow down the
field of vision. To over-
come this "tunnel vision",
ProM also needs to take
into account the wider
context.

In practice, ProM operates **on all levels**: usually we observe both processes closely related to projects, and processes related to the wider context. ProM which is narrowly focused on project objectives turns into a trap: we dig a tunnel and lose sight of the mountain, we ignore the tremendous tectonic forces in play all around us.

The levels move at **different speeds**, and are interconnected like spiral staircases. The basic features of ProM are the same at all levels. In practice, however, different terms are used: project ProM; strategic ProM (for context monitoring).
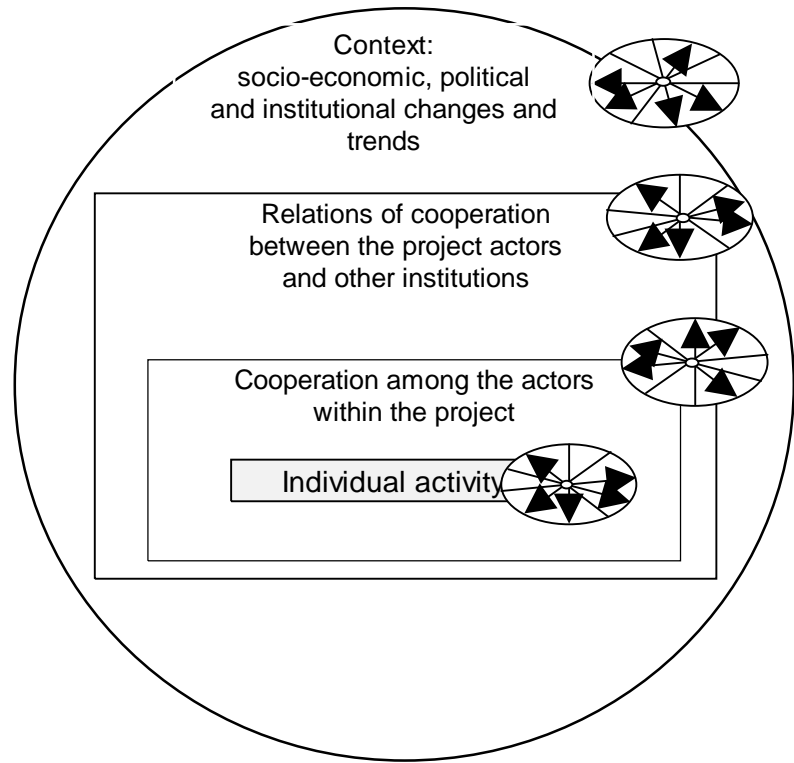
We can observe processes taking place within the **wider context**. The difficult thing is to **define** what we mean by the term *wider context*: each project defines its own context.

The levels are linked by two interlocking processes:

- **bottom-up**: the evaluation of experience, and translation thereof into policies, norms and rules.
- **top-down**: formulation of policies, elaboration of norms and rules, and the monitoring thereof.

As a rule, we observe processes within an operational project cycle, from planning via implementation through to evaluation (including results-oriented M&E). To take into account the perspectives and interests of the various actors, we need to look beyond this cycle. What this means is: various groups of actors observe, reflect on and steer what we can term **their projects**. The standard construct *project* then breaks down into a number of projects or sub-projects of individual actors. Seen from this angle, the *project* then resembles a **platform** on which we need to negotiate joint projects with the actors.
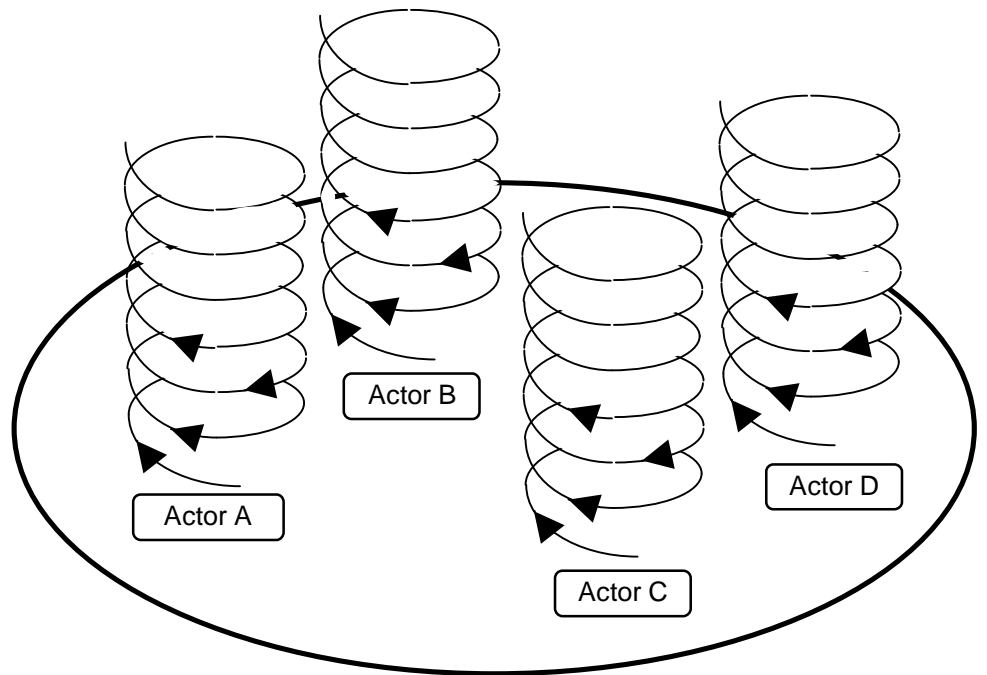
ProM can embrace one or two of these sub-projects; there is no such thing as all-embracing ProM. That would be neither appropriate nor economical, and is quite simply impossible. As this observation is per se of little help, we have dealt with the issues of where to start and possible ways to approach the problem in Section 4.

When selecting the processes, it is a good idea to first ask where we are at present:
- at which **level** do we wish to focus ProM?
- with which **actors** are we going to begin ProM?

To achieve sustainable change, we must also devote some thought to the **interplay of levels**.

3　Key messages and questions
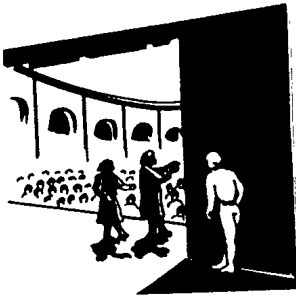
As everyone knows, every stage has a backstage area. There, alliances are forged and roles negotiated. Friendships, rivalries and intrigues emerge.

ρ *Power gaps create stigmas. They pervade all social relationships. Not even participatory methods can obscure this fact.*

ρ *When we are denied access to the backstage area, we use our imaginations and projections to supply the information we lack: we invent someone pulling the strings, and come up with conspiracy theories, or put things down to "cultural traits". We overestimate our ability to influence things, and forget that we are guests, and often only spectators.*

31　The project stage: where are we?

Projects create a **framework for communication** - as on a **stage**: we negotiate objectives, take decisions, define responsibilities and scope for action, try out new forms of cooperation, make pledges and enter into agreements.

We often deceive ourselves about the viability and binding character of agreements concluded in spite of large power gaps. Agreements are useful, but trust is essential. **The barriers to communication** which exist everywhere can only be overcome in face-to-face situations, however. These also express various aspects of a relationship: predictability, liking, common interests and a sense of humour.

A TC project places only a thin, brittle veneer of rules and agreements over the live **scene of cooperation**. The characteristic feature of the production is that the actors create an **artificial reality**: they invent an outside word which is favourably disposed or hostile, they invent their own organisational theory on which they base their behaviour, and they admire or disparage events within the organisation. Organisations are a dance floor for social intercourse, for the assertion of claims, for power games and conflicts. The dancers do battle for status and symbolic power, and grapple for power to define.

Whilst we shine the limelight on the actors at the front of the stage, the most crucial goings-on remain in the shadows **backstage**. Often we simply don't have a clue. This is difficult to bear when we have grown accustomed to always having an answer straight away.

Key questions
| What is the issue at stake here? (... the selection of villages, award of concessions, roles in cooperation, old conflicts, etc.?)
| Who is asking which questions?
| To whom are the questions addressed?
| How will this agenda of questions change in the course of time?
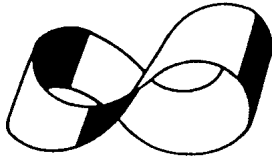
*ProM is a piece of music
we compose and play. The
actors play in the same
band - but their styles are
different. Local interpreta-
tions are as diverse as the
music that would be played
at a dance in Chulumani:
samba, salsa, cueca,
merengue, mazurca.*

ρ   *Are we also willing to
    accept processes which
    conflict with our inter-
    ests?*

ρ   *What do we have to offer
    to enable the actors to
    put forward their ideas
    and interests?*

ρ   *All too often we do only
    the things we know how
    to do, the things we are
    good at, that we under-
    stand straight away and
    believe we have "got a
    grip on".*

ρ   *If consultancy inputs are
    to be effective it is essen-
    tial that the TORs, modus
    operandi and consultant
    profile can be jointly
    agreed on with the
    actors, and if necessary
    renegotiated. Process
    consultancy without a
    periodic review of the
    inputs is blind.*

If we were to walk along the **Möbius strip**, we would move along the inside for a while, and then along the outside again. The two perspectives are complementary: we come to understand the shape of the strip by moving, by going inside the system, by "becoming part of that unfamiliar system". The process of understanding unfamiliar action strategies is based essentially on this principle of **changing perspectives**.

Entering the system: Projects are co-productions of temporary institutional arrangements The participating groups and organisations agree to change a situation perceived to be unsatisfactory, over a limited transitional period. The actors, together with their various interests, are involved in these processes. We have to enter and become part of these processes, and do so **at a point where something is already under way**. We therefore have to select the processes we wish to observe together with the actors.

The view from inside: Organisations and groups function according to their members' understanding of what those organisations are. We can only identify and understand the **intentions**, **interests** and **motives** of the involved groups and organisations if we help enable the actors to express them

The view from inside and outside: The tasks associated with ProM (process selection, observation, reflection) need to be performed from the seemingly opposed standpoints of **detachment** from and **involvement** in the process. We must make a calm and sober attempt to understand what is objectively going on, whilst at the same time being a part of the process. Both attitudes are necessary. And we need to be able to reflect on both. This gives us the detachment necessary to reflect on our own conceptual framework

The view from outside: It may be appropriate to provide **external** facilitation and consultancy inputs to help set-up and promote ProM, for instance where the actors are unable to begin ProM, or where the application of ProM methods proves difficult.

Key questions
| What do our partners consider important?
| Which processes do they wish to observe?
| What must I do to ensure that different interests and power positions can be accessed?
| Where are our blind spots which need to be looked at from outside?
| What external support would be appropriate?
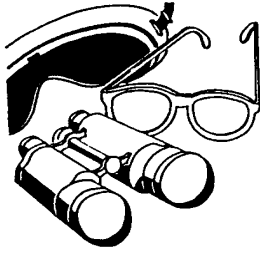
A pair of binoculars, even if we turned them round, would not do the job of a microscope.

Tools are like spectacles: we put them on so that we can see better. Under water we put on goggles, and on sunny days we put on sunglasses. We use optical instruments to enhance our limited powers of visual perception. By doing so, we also restrict our field of vision. Consequently, we need to bear in mind not only the **capabilities** of tools, but also their **limitations**. This calls for a keen eye, or in other words: a **strategy**:

- Why are we using this tool?
- What form of cooperation does it imply?
- What would I like to try out?

We cannot simplify a complex situation, but we can simplify the way we deal with it. Methods and tools are designed to facilitate **communication** on dynamic, complex processes.

With respect to the four basic activities of ProM, the instruments are designed to

- facilitate the selection of processes,
- support the observation and comprehension of the emergence, development and impacts of processes,
- stimulate self-reflection: in which processes am I, are others involved? What has proved successful? What do we wish to approach differently than before?

ρ *The increasing process-orientation of TC projects has led to a number of methods taking the same direction as ProM: methods of self-evaluation for instance, or the PRA tools. ProM utilises these and similar methods. Where methods overlap, this is a good thing. We expect very little of more orthodox methods. But we do have high expectations of locally-appropriate instruments, ideally emerging from the situation in which they are to be applied.*

Repertoire: There is no single instrument on which we can play every tune. We therefore need a **range** of methods to create a clear framework of communication, inviting interpretation and stimulating creativity. The tools presented here are simple, user-friendly, adaptable and largely independent of expert support. In other words, their malleability is self-evident.

Adapting to the situation and ongoing development: We first need to find out what people are already doing themselves. On the basis of these observations, we can **adapt** a tool. Where proven instruments are not available or will not work, we need to develop new methods together with the actors.

Courage to try things out: Anything we are not familiar with and are trying for the first time involves the risk of failure or collapse. It is therefore worthwhile to make several attempts, as this will give us greater confidence.

Communicative equipment: The tools have been designed on the assumption that we possess the relevant **consultancy expertise**: we need to be able to submit proposals, we must be able to set-up and facilitate a working group, we need to be able to organise a workshop and steer it using visualisation techniques. If we do not feel up to these tasks, either because of our experience or the role allocated to us, then we need external support. It is far better to focus our energy on the orientation of this support, rather than tinker around in a dilettantish fashion.

Key questions

| Which tool is simple and can easily be adapted to my situation?
| Which tool can be linked up to the data available?
| Which tool will counterbalance the power of interpretation held by certain actors, by providing comparisons?
| Which tool will facilitate the qualitative analysis of selected processes using the simplest possible quantifiable indicators?
| Which tool will promote cooperation by pointing to ideals and common goals?

ρ *ProM is the business of the actors themselves. The purpose of external support is therefore to demonstrate to the actors ways and means for them to set-up ProM.*

34   Information: What information interests us?

What may be important information to some people may be gibberish to others. In everyday terms, what we don't understand we call "Double Dutch". Or some say "It's all Greek to me". In ProM, the only information that interests us is what we can use in an **exchange of experiences**. This applies both to factual information, and to interpretations thereof.

Cold and warm information: Human behaviour is determined less by statistics, and more by interests, moods and associative interpretations. The acquired and deep-rooted patterns of perception, and the social framework of behaviour, are the foundation on which constructions of reality rest. We therefore need a skilfully-mixed blend of "cold" information and "warm" interpretations: we need clearly-presented figures, studies and analyses, as they stimulate communication on processes of change; but we also need interest-driven interpretations and passionate debate on those data with the actors. The consequences of ignoring data are just as serious as having total faith in them. People telling their own life histories, or explaining pictures, can be just as informative as the presentation of figures, graphs and reports.

It is less a question of how many individuals know, and more a question of how many know a certain thing, so that we can communicate about it.

ρ *Heaps of dead data and concentrations of information are a dead end.*

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Engineer the information and communication process:
Each item of information which is relevant to people's actions has an **addressee**. For ProM, this means selecting and packaging the information such that it can be used.

ρ *"Critical events" and "interference", which we react to by improvising, can yield profound insights into group processes. Conversations with individuals of intercultural background or experiences reveal to us how removed our thoughts and actions are from the reality of the other actors. It is therefore both appropriate and efficient for us to take the time to exchange life histories, go on a field trip with decision-makers, visit farmers, take transect walks through institutions or attend social functions.*

Make use of open-ended information transfer processes:
We have a highly-developed need to systematically organise information transfer processes. Within socio-technical systems, however, interlocking processes of information transfer unfold in an unstructured and disordered fashion. Information is selected, amplified, ignored, distorted and circulated. In organisations the term "communicative noise" is therefore used, which is just as important for performance as the well-ordered flow of information. The formal structures and processes are as it were the parasitic beneficiaries of informal relationships, which cut across the barriers set up by the rules of authority and power. **Irregular** and **casual** exchanges therefore often convey more authentic information on experiences, intentions and shifts in power than do the written report, the specifications or the organisation chart.

Key questions
| What am I unable to see from the "cold" data?
| How should data and reports be presented so that ideas on them can be exchanged?
| Whom do I need to approach to get hold of "warm" information?
| How much time do I invest in face-to-face encounters with the actors?
| How much time do I invest in encounters outside of or peripheral to my contract?
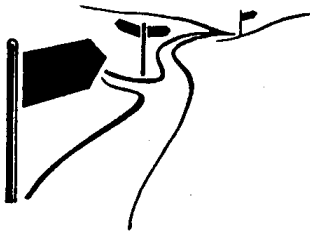
If you want to build a ship, then don't gather people round to distribute tools and chop wood. Inspire them with a vision of sailing the open seas.

Projects begin with a process of communication and agreement between people who want to change something together. The joint, limited-term undertaking aims to build-up the participating actors' **capability to act**, and support them in solving the tasks and problems self-reliantly. Conceived of in these terms, the notion of a project as a mechanistic operation designed to reach a preconceived end is transformed into a **concept of cooperation as a process**. Together we cover a certain amount of ground, and at the next cross-roads we think about which way we might go next. Discussing what our visions are is just as important here as realistically assessing what resources are available.

We see the planning and implementation of projects as processes which are initiated, observed, steered and assessed by the various actors. This involves three interlinked **input processes**:

- The input processes of the **target groups**, designed to achieve a concrete **development goal**, e.g. the ecologically-sound and sustainable management of community forests by the community itself.
- The input processes designed to achieve a **project goal** performed by the supporting **partner organisations**, e.g. the private consultancy organisations, local authorities, government forestry service, a commercial bank, private sawmill, local building contractors.
- The input processes designed to achieve a **promotion goal** provided through consultancy and training services **of TC**, e.g. consultancy and training inputs to decision-makers of the supporting partner organisations.

ρ *The complexity of the project process weakens the prognostic force of planning activities, revealing the need for an iterative, flexible and cyclical approach: we need to periodically re-negotiate the objectives and roles of the involved organisations.*

Actors interpret a *project* differently, depending on their perspective and interests. ProM aims to help the actors describe and communicate on their various *projects* within a process of dialogue. In our view, we need to ask ourselves the following questions on this:

Key questions
| What do the various actors expect of the *project*?
| To which of the partners' *projects* do we subscribe?
| How can we promote dialogue among the partners?
| How can we support individual and organisational learning processes?
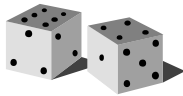
41   Landmarks

There is no prescribed way to begin ProM: **the actors themselves** must decide when to start and which processes they wish to select. Consequently, ProM is different in each individual TC project.

ρ *ProM is custom-made.*

We basically have to accept that - as long-term advisors or external consultants - we will always be working in a project as *outsiders*. We therefore need to **become members** of the *other system* (self-help organisation, local government, agencies of central government, enterprises, consultancy organisations etc.).

People usually respond to suggestions that might affect their behaviour or identity with reserve or scepticism. This also applies to organisations: they have an **immune system** to protect themselves against the outside world. Consequently, the suggestion to adopt ProM as a rule does not only meet with approval; disinterest, scepticism or open resistance can be expected just as often.

ρ *Shaping the context: the first task of any ProM consultancy involves us helping create a context conducive to our work.*

The first thing ProM needs is a **conducive environment**, which we need to help create. What can we do? How should we deal with resistance to ProM?

When helping **shape the context for consultancy**, we need to bear in mind primarily the following: In the first place, each consultant is on his/her own with his/her own views and ideas. This entails risks: others might treat us as a foreign body and isolate us, or brand us a fool. Moreover, ProM then remains the domain and "property" of the consultant. A number of conclusions can be drawn from this regarding the **definition of our role** and the launch of ProM:

ρ *Viable working relation-ships based on trust.*

- We need to invest a great deal of **time** and energy in establishing **working relationships based on trust**, so that any resistance to the unfamiliar or unwanted ProM can be discussed. We work towards being personally and professionally accepted, and inspiring confidence.
  How often are we addressed, and by whom, at meetings?
  What about my personal communication chart? Whom do I deal with regularly? Whom do I avoid?
  How will this agenda change in the course of time?

ρ *Learn from other people's experience.*	• We arrange **face-to-face encounters** with other actors to focus minds on practical ProM. The aim of these encounters is to arouse the interest of involved groups and organisations in ProM, and that our partners themselves come up with suggestions as to what would be appropriate and useful for them. What kind of encounters would serve this purpose?
ρ *Practise self-reflection.*	• We begin where a process is already under way. We utilise the existing structures and sites of communication to raise ProM issues. We utilise face-to-face cooperation with the actors to **practise self-reflective thinking**: What have we just done? Did that meet our original expectations? Are we satisfied with the result? Where and when do our partners normally reflect on their work? At what point and in which working context is it appropriate to raise issues of ProM?
ρ *Have the courage to be simple.*	• We choose to **begin simply**, so that we can more easily become familiar with the resistance we expect. In other words: the number of fields of observation and questions should at first be kept small, and practical procedures simple. Emphasis should be placed on a process of dialogue on experiences and views. Step by step, the simple structures which emerge can then be elaborated into something more complex. Which simple and immediately appealing instruments do we wish to use?
ρ *Create a clear picture.*	• We define the **boundaries** and **time frame** for ProM. In so doing, we create for our partners a **clear picture** of what initially to them seems new and strange. They begin to see themselves as actors in ProM, and acquire a grasp of first, simple tools. What do we want to try out first for a limited period? How much time do we need for people to get used to things and try them out? Who should evaluate the experiences?
ρ *ProM must help promote efficiency.*	• We attach importance to **efficiency** and **transparency of the results**. Otherwise, ProM will always be vulnerable to the suspicion of having done nothing except expel hot air. How much time and resources will ProM cost? What do we expect ProM to achieve? How will that help us achieve our objectives?

ρ *Any plan is a simplifi-cation, and needs to be adjusted.*

- We support a **flexible approach to planning specifications**, and look for ways to apply results-oriented monitoring (cf. Section 44 below).

42   On selecting processes

As a rule, fields of observation and processes are selected when **problems** arise. We observe that something is not going as we expected it to, and therefore we want to find out why.

ρ *Starting with process selection: together with the actors, we establish what we wish to observe.*

Process selection puts to the test the actors' willingness to question themselves and their forms of cooperation. These discussions are conducted along three **polar axes**:

Perception of the environment

| **Opportunities**: that will open up new horizons - just what we need. | | **Risks**: nobody will accept that - it's against the rules. |
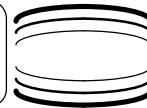
Social stability

| **Flexibility**: we can do things differently and set new goals. | | **Rigidity**: that will rock the boat and upset the normal run of things. |
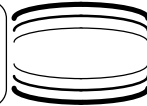
Individual attitudes

| **Self-confidence**: we'll make it - we can do it. | | **Insecurity**: I don't feel up to that - I feel unsure of myself. |
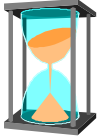
ProM can begin **at any time**. The actors themselves decide why and when they want to step outside of a process of which they are a part in order to reflect on it.

ProM begins where actors start to reflect on processes which are already under way. Things start when we **ask questions** about our own work. Here is an example:

ρ   *There is no prescribed formula for ProM. It starts at the point where actors begin to ask questions.*

In a land-use project, agreements are being drawn-up between various user groups. It is clear that the targeted ecologically-sound but profitable land-use arrangements are dependent on the success of these agreements. There is no prescribed formula for launching and stabilising this cooperation. A number of practical questions arise:

- *Who should negotiate the agreements?*
- *How much energy should we invest in producing the formal written agreements?*
- *How are the agreements being negotiated?*
- *Under what circumstances are the agreements kept or broken?*
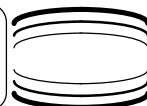- *For how long are they kept?*
- *What fresh conflicts arise in the course of the cooperation?*
- *How do the expectations of the parties to the agreements change?*
- *How does a functional cooperation differ from a conflictive one?*

On the basis of these questions we develop a simple procedural guide for observation, on the basis of which the experiences of cooperation can be compared.
We confine ourselves initially to four simple reference values: fluctuation of members among the user groups, frequency of joint meetings, definition and review of roles, number of explicitly addressed problems and conflicts.
We present the observations systematically and discuss them with the user groups at a meeting held every two months. At these mirroring meetings, we initiate a process of reflection among the groups. The problems explicitly addressed are entered in a simple matrix, together with the possible causes.
Within the user groups, different conclusions are drawn from the observations. So we add another component to ProM: meetings are held at each of which three user groups are brought together to exchange their experiences horizontally. This ProM step promotes learning in the user groups, and leads to marked improvements in practical solutions.
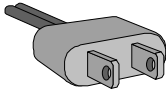
Results-oriented monitoring may be the simplest place to start, but it is not the only one.

Results-oriented monitoring tells us for instance to what % value an objective has been reached, but does not tell us **how that came about**, nor what we need to be aware of next time.

ρ *ProM complements results-oriented monitoring by broadening the field of vision. We leave the project tunnel.*

If we observe only what we produce through TC projects, then we are placing excessively tight constraints on ProM. ProM **complements** results-oriented monitoring, and **broadens** it beyond the more narrow scope of project activity. The wider context comes into view, and the groups and organisations involved in a project are able to contribute **experiences** they have gained outside the project.

Results-oriented monitoring and ProM can be **linked** to good effect. At the monitoring sessions held periodically we can, for instance, ask ourselves the following questions:

ρ *Results-oriented monitoring sessions are an ideal platform for deciding where to start ProM.*

- Why does the same activity take a different course in different cases?
- Why does the cooperation work wonderfully in one case but not another?
- Why do we never reach the agreed goals, contrary to all expectations? Are we too ambitious?
- Why do we/they do everything our-/themselves?
- Why do we always keep making the same mistake?
- Why do we never have any new ideas on that?
- Why do people never invite us/them to their functions?
- Why are the economic incentives not having any effect?
- What do the others really expect of us?
- Why have our expectations changed?

ProM begins where the actors select on the basis of such questions a number of the cooperation processes, in order to systematically observe and evaluate them.

5　Six fields of observation and tools

As explained in the introduction in Section 2, the processes involved here have two basic **characteristic features**:

- We cannot observe and talk about the totality of interwoven events taking place at the same time.
- The particular perspective and interests of each observer make his or her perceptions partial, representing only one section of reality.

ρ　*ProM focuses on the following fields of observation:*

- *The actors allocate tasks and take on roles among themselves.*
- *The members of groups and organisations acquire new expertise and capabilities which they apply in their daily work.*
- *Groups and organisations deliver inputs on an agreed scale.*
- *Groups and organisations cooperate and coordinate.*
- *Conflicts of interest and power arise between the actors vis-à-vis access to scarce resources and influence.*
- *Actors' action strategies are adapted both to world pictures and visions, and to risk assessments and anticipated economic benefits.*

We therefore propose confining ourselves to **six fields of observation** which project actors mention with noticeable frequency.
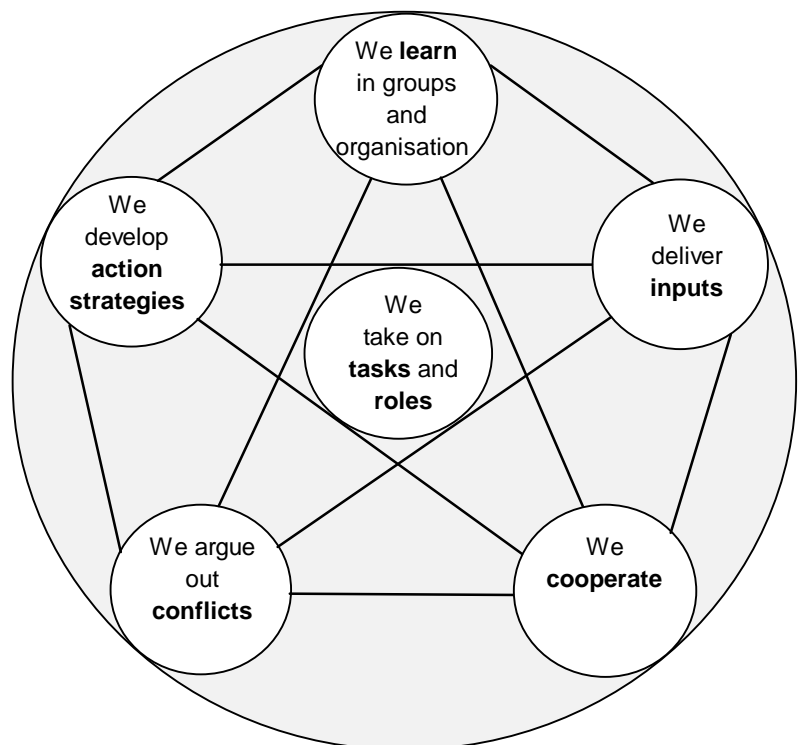
The **key messages and questions** presented in Section 3 form the circular backgrounds of the six fields of observation.

By this we mean that in all six fields, **primary processes** are under way which are crucial for the success of projects pursuing the NARMS approach.

The central question is that of the distribution and allocation of **tasks and roles** among the involved groups and organisations. The process can begin in any of the six fields. The relative significance of these arenas varies, depending on the natural resource management project in question. It is the actors themselves who decide which of the arenas they wish to illuminate.

On the following pages we have illustrated each of the six fields of observation by way of example with a picture, text and an introduction for the tools.

Can we afford to repay this month's credit instalment on the tree nursery? We are liable with our land titles for timely repayment. The representative of the bank takes the floor, flanked by his assistant and the village chief. We debtors are sitting on the floor, men at the front, women at the back

Example

In a project to promote sustainable management of pastureland, the important actor groups are visited individually in their own working environments, and invited to hold discussions (separation of perspectives). Some of those involved know each other from the planning workshop held two years previously. On that occasion, all actors agreed to the project. Since then however, their different intentions and interests have brought the cooperation to a standstill. The groups and organisations visited include the responsible agency for land titles at the Ministry of Agriculture; representatives of the powerful national cattle breeders' association in the capital; selected small farming families who jointly farm and manage community land in their villages; representatives of the expanding export-oriented agro-industry.

The discussions are steered by a moderator, whilst a small group of three individuals minuting the proceedings raise questions when they simply require further explanation.

Projects are laboratories for **reallocations of tasks**. The concentration of public services on core tasks, complementary cooperation between public- and private-sector partners and the involvement of people's organisations are on the agenda in many natural resource management projects. However, tasks cannot be reallocated by force from the top down, nor can a prescribed formula be transferred from one context to another. We need to ascertain who can best do what in each particular instance.

Goal: determine the ideal mix of institutions and groups to deliver inputs (public sector, private sector and civil society) on the basis of concrete experiences. &⌒ **T-01**

During the cooperation, the **roles** of groups and involved institutions change. Who can and wishes to cooperate with whom, and who is willing to assume responsibility, often do not become apparent until cooperation is under way. The partners get to know each other during cooperation. Interests, claims and dependencies change. **Periodic role reviews** are an appropriate tool to steer the process of cooperation. An **interface analysis** can be an appropriate way of taking the review of roles a step further, and steering it in the direction of possible practical improvements: the availability of contact persons, their contactability, the frequency of encounters, the

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The discussions are based on the Analysis of Tasks: What constitutes the common task? Which sub-tasks do we perform? Which tasks need to be performed by other organisations?

A group minuting the meeting compiles the results, and draws up working hypotheses on role and land-use conflicts. The results are presented for discussion at an internal work-shop, to ascertain which questions need to be fed back to the actors. Looking back at the ground already covered, the project officers ascertain that all activities initiated by the project need to be accompanied by discussion of roles among the actors. They decide to hold role reviews at regular intervals.

regularity of information exchange, the use of technical means to facilitate information exchange.

Goal: negotiate mutual expectations at a "round table".

☞ **T-02**

Organisations and groups involved in projects provide services and goods to others, who in turn are often also providers of services or producers of goods. The afforestation of a piece of land, for instance, is dependent on a chain of supporting organisations performing different tasks. Problems that do arise are often due less to individual organisations' unwillingness to perform their tasks, and more to **coordination**: in other words, those activities which aim to establish and maintain communication between the organisations. To address these issues, we need to focus our attention on the process of exchange between organisations.

Goal: improve the coordination of inputs. ☞ **T-03**

Tools

T-01 Analysing the Tasks

T-02 Negotiating Roles

T-03 Analysing Interactions

Should we participate in the tree nursery? Do we want to take that step into the unknown and tread new ground? How would we acquire the knowledge that we would need?

Example

In a project to conserve and manage natural forests in the Amazon basin, relations between the villages and the government district forestry service are strikingly one-sided: the long distances make it impossible for the villages, or their chiefs, to raise matters of concern to them; the forestry service intervenes from above with no regard for the precarious natural resource base on which the life of the local population depends.

To date, the experiences of the village chiefs when dealing with governmental agencies have all been negative: shifting cultivation was banned, the population was displaced, or they were exploited as cheap labour.

Close personal ties exist between the district forestry service and commercial timber merchants. Logging licenses are granted regardless of the interests of the local population.

The national forestry policy provides for organisation of the population into trans-community forestry cooperatives. This would put them in a stronger position when dealing with the district forestry service.

Natural resource management projects have one overriding learning goal. This can be summed up as a single key qualification: growing **competence to act** in sustainable natural resource management. We aim to develop this competence to act on **three levels**:
- as an individual learning process,
- as a process of learning in groups,
- as an organisational learning process.

The three learning processes promote or retard each other on a reciprocal basis. This becomes clear where individuals have acquired expertise or capabilities, but are unable to apply them within their organisations. The task is to close this **transfer gap** between the individual and organisational learning processes.

Learning processes are too often designed to achieve a fixed state: "the municipality is able to draw up a budget". To design an effective learning process for adults, we need to base things on **key qualifications** that promote learning in the work situation. This generates a **culture of learning** with the necessary **scope for action**: people must be allowed to make mistakes, people must feel sure that others are also able to admit their mistakes and willing to make corrections.
Goal: achieve optimum development of key capabilities with scarce resources. ✍ **T-04**

Learning in groups has objective advantages over individual learning: there is greater potential for discovery, experiences are broader, the incentives to learn are more numerous and diverse. The limiting factor in this situation is the quality of **interaction within the group**, i.e. whether or not the members are willing to communicate openly with one another and learn from experience.

Goal: open up routes to open communication and self-evaluation. ↷ **T-05**

In **organisational learning**, individual, social and structural processes are closely interwoven. An organisation's capability to learn is crucially dependent on how it deals with **voiced criticism**. This friction results from the members of the organisation deviating from or having problems with standard procedures. Friction between the **outside world** (e.g. demands of the market, legal system, offers of cooperation) and the **world within the organisation** can only trigger learning processes if people are permitted to voice it. Consequently, organisational learning is crucially dependent on whether the **organisational culture** prevailing within the organisation will allow discussion of such phenomena. An organisation which neither admits to nor deals with voiced criticism, or even an organisation which responds to it on a casuistic basis, but **does not make any structural adjustments**, is suffering from a learning block. ↷ **T-06**

Goal: create frameworks and opportunities for criticism to be expressed.

In purely quantitative terms, **experiential learning** outweighs all other forms of learning. It is therefore appropriate to systematically observe and reflect on learning processes of this type too. This promotes consolidation of what has been learned within the group, and focuses attention on the joint progress achieved. The act of reflecting on past processes also has the advantage in the present of focusing our minds more sharply on those situations that are really important for decision-making. ↷ **T-07**

Goal: strengthen participants' confidence in their own experience by reconstructing process histories.

| **Tools**
    T-04 Management of Learning
    T-05 Learning in Groups
    T-06 Organisational Learning
    T-07 Process History

How many more hands should we employ? Can we pay back the credit? Will the merchant buy the saplings from us at the agreed price? With whom might it be a good idea to cooperate?

Example

A project is helping rehabilitate smallholder irrigation schemes by providing extension inputs and credits. The cohesion and capabilities of the beneficiary groups vary widely. It becomes apparent that two very different types of group have a strong commitment to the project: on the one hand, groups with a rigidly hierarchical structure, led by landowners, and on the other hand strikingly homo-geneous groups of landless small tenants.

The organisations providing extension support (one govern-mental agency and two NGOs) have to learn to take into ac-count these differences when networking the two beneficiary groups. They also have to re-design the extension inputs and the credit terms in line with the needs of the groups, who are their clients.

One of the NGOs is small, and sees an opportunity to grow larger through the project. At this point, it begins an intensive process of self-diagnosis.

Development takes place inside organisations: in the household, in self-help groups, in small enterprises, in non-profit organisations, inside local government, in pressure groups and trade associations, in governmental agencies and in corporations. It is the **people** working inside those organisations who deliver the inputs and seek to bring about change.

We often think in terms of **group performance**. In other words, we ask ourselves why a certain group or single agency has not delivered the desired inputs, or not all of them. We might ask ourselves how the group differs from others, and what conditions might be conducive to enhancing its performance. ☞ **T-08**
Goal: observe the characteristic features of group formation and group performance.

Organisations set themselves apart from their environment through their internal rules and conventions, which establish a given **order**. These structures represent clots, or coagulated experience: they simplify the performance process within the organisation by firmly ascribing responsibility, routine and standardisation. **Structures** promote or hamper the per-formance process. Where there is free **scope for action**, structures are continuously interpreted and modified. It is a characteristic feature of organisations and their sub-

organisations to **divide** themselves up into structural and process components. Having said that: there are a very wide variety of structure and process mixes, which can nevertheless be entirely appropriate. Observation of the task-related division into structure and process provides pointers to **development trends** within the organisation. ✍ **T-09**

<u>Goal</u>: select and observe indicators of division into structure and process.

Self-help groups and bottom-up social movements differ significantly from other organisations in terms of their **origins** and **dynamics**. ✍ **T-10**

<u>Goal</u>: observe characteristic features and development trends of grass-roots organisations.

When assessing organisations, we are guided by our own standards, which we apply to them. However, organisational change is based on the principle of **minimum external intervention**, leaving as much as possible to the initiative of the organisation's members, or in other words to **self-organisation**. The organisation must change itself, hence that is where the insight needs to grow. ✍ **T-11**

<u>Goal</u>: initiate self-diagnosis within organisations.

Organisations cut themselves off from the outside world. They have an **immune system** to ward off extraneous influences, and attempt to prevent any unsolicited glances backstage. At the same time, an organisation clearly cannot function only in the way it is portrayed to outsiders. Organisational reality can only be captured from a **variety of perspectives**, angles and interpretations. ✍ **T-12**

<u>Goal</u>: gain an understanding of the dynamics of an organisation from different perspectives.

If we take the principle of **minimum intervention** seriously, we need to feel our way into organisations **from the outside in**. In other words, we must help enable organisations to perceive their **environment** and their **clients** there with greater depth and clarity of focus. Organisational adjustment is then the task of the organisation's members. ✍ **T-13**

<u>Goal</u>: sharpen focus on orientation towards client needs.

Tools

T-08 Group Performance
T-09 Structure and Process
T-10 Characteristics of Grass-roots Organisations
T-11 Systemic Diagnosis
T-12 Subjective Organisation Charts
T-13 Client-orientation

Example

In a regional irrigation scheme built decades ago, yields are very low due to heavy water losses, salinisation and the rise in the groundwater level. The responsible ministry, supported by projects, is carrying out comprehensive technical measures to rehabilitate the main and feeder channels, and is building a network of drilled wells to lower the water table. The construction works are being planned by engineering firms, and executed by major building contractors

These projects need to be complemented by maintenance of the irrigation and drainage channels in the fields. This would be inconceivable without coordination between the farmers and landowners: large landowners, who have good connections inside the public authorities, small tenants and landless families, who to date have gone largely unnoticed by the authorities, and part-time farmers, for whom the channel is not a major concern, need to be brought to the table and tied into an organisation.

The actors rate differently the benefit they derive from coop-erating in the construction and maintenance of the channels.

Whose is that truck? Who's in charge here? What benefit will we get from this cooperation?

As a rule a variety of private and public, local, national and international organisations are involved in natural resource management projects - depending on their comparative advantages in the case in hand. Focusing on one organisation which plans, implements and completes a project is an oudated approach. Tasks of natural resource management are complex: they include both economic, technical, social and organisational components, as well as training tasks, which are performed by different organisations.

As a result - in organisational terms - projects become dynamic **co-productions**, which function as contractually-bound arrangements, or are coordinated via the market mechanism. They are dynamic because the relationships between the partners also change in the course of the cooperation. This presents the participating organisations with a fresh challenge: the **capability to cooperate** becomes a **key competence**.

Co-productions and associations are - in contrast to individual organisations - constructions of horizontal cooperation across a **plane**. As a rule, pronounced hierarchies lead to one or other partner withdrawing from the cooperation. The key factor in a group or organisation remaining is the **advantages** it derives from the cooperation. ☞ **T-14**
Goal: observe how the partners rate the benefits they derive.

The tasks of water distribution and management dictate that a committee be formed for each section of channel, on the one hand to handle arrangements for water management, and on the other hand to interface with the agency operating the major feeder channels.

As a result of traditional barriers, tenants and landless are barred from membership of local organisations on the grounds of their low social status. The vitally-important issue of water management arrangements therefore re-quires all participants to re-think.

Tangible economic incentives ultimately lead to first success-ful cooperations:

Prompted by the agricultural extension service, the com-mittee decides to rehabilitate the watercourse at channel 32500-LJ with prefabricated concrete elements. The com-mittee purchases the elements from a local manufacturer, and commissions a mason to supervise the work.

Improved yields and marketing prospects generate a demand for extension inputs: farmers want to familiarise themselves with new crops and farming methods. To obtain seed more easily and boost marketing, the farmers begin to organise in a purchasing and credit cooper-ative.

The more **diverse** the participating organisations are, the more important it is to observe changes in the individual relationships of cooperation. Weak points only come to light on in-depth analysis, carried out repeatedly. ᘛ **T-15 /** ᘛ **T -16**

Goal: periodic qualitative and quantitative self-evaluation of cooperative relationships.

The dynamics of cooperation entail **shifts in power** in two directions: a concentration of power, and a redistribution of power (empowerment). The two processes need not necessarily run in opposite directions. The case might arise where a concentration of power occurring at the expense of a middle level would be desirable, in order to create space for action at a lower level, for instance for self-help organisations. Natural resource management projects often involve **delicate social processes** in the struggle for distribution of scarce resources, which take time to unfold and allow shifts in power to come into play. Consequently, it is often clumsy to approach these issues with a view to addressing them directly and formally. If we rely on **self-interpretation by the actors**, then we achieve the aim of the actors' determining their own way forward. ᘛ **T-17**

Goal: promote self-reflection among the actors on the distribution of power.

Efforts to **decentralise** overtaxed central government structures, currently a common phenomenon, create new potentials for cooperation at the local level: local municipal administrations need to bring local organisations together, in order to harmonise the development of urban core zones and the development of the periurban rural population. There is often a lack of simple tools with which to observe the potentials for cooperation. ᘛ **T-18**

Goal: compare self-assessment and outside assessment of local organisations.

Tools
T-14 Benefits of Cooperation
T-15 Qualitative Analysis of Cooperation
T-16 Quantitative Analysis of Cooperation
T-17 Power and Shifts in Power
T-18 Cooperation at Local Level

What advantage is he gaining from this? Who is entitled to that share? Who is in the right? Who will gain the upper hand? What is really going on?

Example

In line with the new forest management law - codesigned by a government advisory services project - a village community is allocated rights of use over forest plots. The terms of enforcement are unclear and contradictory

The state supervisory body insists that the local administration take care of land-use rights. The local forestry agency and the central environmental agency, already at odds due to the shortage of funds, agree to act in a schematic vertical fashion.

The local administration is closely intermeshed with the agencies through political party membership. It does not have any professional technical services.

In various municipalities within a region, local user cooperatives have been formed which are firmly rooted within the population. The cooperatives measure themselves by the economic success of their members. They maintain a reserved stance towards the municipal administrations.

Natural resource management projects hinge on **the conflicting interests** behind economic, ecological and political ideas and actions. In many cases, relations of control, disadvantages and privileges, direct coercion and phenomena of social disintegration are directly linked to the struggle for access to scarce resources.

Project actors often **overestimate** their legitimacy, and erroneously believe they have the scope for action needed to deal with conflicts. At the same time, they tend to **underestimate** the social forces underlying those conflicts. Hence their assessment of both their role, and the capabilities required to manage conflicts, is inappropriate to their situation. It is therefore advisable to put up a number of **warning signs** in this area. ↝ **T-19**

Goal: areas of conflict need to be discretely illuminated and observed over a long period. Legitimation for the conflict management role must be worked out with the parties to the conflict.

Conflicts are based on issues of the distribution of goods, resources and power. Yet they only become conflicts because of the **different interpretations** of these issues. Consequently, we can best gain an understanding of them by looking at their **history**, which is made up of a number of histories constructed from different perspectives Types of conflict can then be identified from this (What does the actor want?). ↝ **T-20**

The new law puts the old user cooperatives in the wrong. They would now have to come under the supervision of the municipal administration, which they see as the long arm of central government. None of the active cooperative members want this.

For several reasons, the various interests at stake are not easy to expose:
The arguments put forward by representatives of the central government agency are based entirely on legal interpretation of the new regulations; they turn a deaf ear to technical and social arguments.
The representatives of the municipal administrations avoid making any unequivocal statements; they look the other way and adopt a wait-and-see approach. The cooperatives make no headway with their social and technical arguments; as the conflict smoulders, their representatives are turned into defendants in the dock: they are accused of self-interest, perverting the course of justice, arbitrary appropriation of public property and subversive gangsterism.

Personal relationships are a major factor in the conflict: several of the user cooperatives have their origin in the failed government land reform project of the 60s. Descendants of the former big landowners, who control party politics, see in the new land-use law an opportunity to regain through political channels the land-based advantages formerly enjoyed by their families.

Goal: deconstruct the history of the conflict from the perspectives of the participating and non-participating actors.

Parties to a conflict load it with **affects**, which are attached to participating **individuals**. As a result, the conflict itself becomes displaced, submerged and nebulous. Interpersonal judgements and disputes become the affect-laden centres of conflict. The closer the parties know each other, the more this is the case. This makes it both easier and more difficult to manage the conflict: it becomes easier and more logical to also deal with the conflict on the personal level; and it becomes more difficult to remain detached and define the actual point or points at issue. If the credibility of the opposing party is undermined, and the conflict is accompanied by wounding, moralistic disparagements, the parties find it increasingly difficult to gain a **clear picture of the points at issue**. This creates unrealistic expectations of the conflict management process. Consequently, we often have to be satisfied with a modus vivendi, since many conflicts cannot be solved, and recur time and time again. ᐳ **T-21**
Goal: observe conflict strategies and create a clear picture.

As a rule, **projects to initiate change** trigger conflicts. Initially, they are perceived as a threat to individuals' psychological status quo. Should I decide to accept the changes or not? Feelings of insecurity, doubt and unease are normal reactions to impending change. Within groups and organisations, these reactions split the community into **progressive** and **reactionary forces**. Within this **field of forces**, new coalitions and alliances are formed. To find our bearings within these conflicts, we have to try and understand the **different forms in which resistance is expressed**: resistance can be silent or manifest, objectively well-founded or evidently irrational. Once we learn to work with the **resistance**, it becomes an important source of learning and of steering change.
ᐳ **T-22**
Goal: observe and understand the forms in which resistance is expressed.

| **Tools**
  T-19 Warning Signs
  T-20 Phases and History
  T-21 Conflicts between Groups
  T-22 Resistance to Changes

Example

Within the scope of a research project, soil-conserving cropping methods are being developed. The research group invites small farmers, who are considered in the region to possess a particularly high degree of initiative, to a one-day workshop. The aim is to gain their consent to carry out self-responsible field trials. The simple cooperation agreements have already been prepared.

The researchers explain their results and proposals using clear examples. The farmers listen closely to what is being said, without comment. At first they do not ask any questions, and at lunch they tuck in.

Shortly before the end of the workshop the researchers pose the question directly: Who is willing to carry out the trials on his/her own land?

After some initial hesitation, the farmers begin to ask questions which the researches thought had long since been answered. Who will pay for the seed, the fertiliser, the draught animals? What is the expected yield? Who will help us to fill in the protocols? Why should it be only us who carry out the trials? etc.

What's in store for us? What will give us security and strength? What do we feel capable of? Whom can I rely on?

Thoughts and actions are not only determined by rewards and incentives. The motivation to **act with ecological sustainability in mind** is crucially dependent on deeply-rooted strategies for action, for instance whether or not the action in question is consistent with the **cosmic world picture**, or whether it might alter social bonds that provide security. Superimposed on this underlying current of motivation are economic considerations, for instance whether or not there is a prospect of achieving **tangible results**, and what **risks** that involves.

Whilst it has to be conceded that economic incentives do play a major role in motivating people to act, their impact is often overestimated. The well-established equilibrium between the sexes, between the generations, towards those in positions of power, or between cattle farmers and crop farmers, play just as much a part in determining people's action strategies. People with charisma, and the sense of security conferred by the social institutions governing people's lives, are equally important. We can only gain an understanding of the complex **logic of action strategies** of the actors through a process of observation and self-reflection thereon: Why do people act in one way and not another? Do they see themselves as active subjects? How do they themselves explain their behaviour? What motivates them to act in that way? What do they expect to achieve by that? ᘓᕽ **T-23**

The research station personnel are growing impatient. The farmers are keeping them waiting.

Their questions refer to both the economic and the social risks. If the trials go wrong, the farmer will be laughed at, or even made responsible for other problems.

To date, agricultural innovations have consisted of ready-made "packages" prescribed and implemented first by missionaries, then by the government extension service. The farmers have no faith in their own powers of innovation; they place their expectations in external agents, but do not want to take any risks at all themselves. They have already seen too many things go wrong for that.

Nevertheless, a first phase of field trials is commenced on individual farms. On visiting those farms, the research personnel discover that work in the fields is performed mainly by women and children. They realise that they had invited the farmers, whilst leaving out other household members actively engaged in productive activity.

Goal: gain an understanding of how motivation and a sense of active locus of control emerge, and disseminate as group action strategies.

Where human behaviour is driven by some economic consideration, a pragmatic **calculation of the benefits** is made: We ask ourselves the question of what future benefits a defined input, the taking of a risk or the making of a sacrifice will have. These calculations are also made on the basis of **experiences**, and projected **risk assessments**. The positive balance of a calculation of benefit then becomes the driving force of action, provided that it can be harmonised with a life plan. Life plans are socially-acquired concepts of what constitutes a good life worth living. ☞ **T-24**

Goal: gain an understanding of economic expectations and their integration into life plans.

Strategies for action have a **biographical origin** and a **history**, which runs in parallel to the history of the individual, who gradually leaves the more narrow confines of the family. These histories can be seen in the **life world systems** of the family **households**. Such systems embody the social organisational forms and behaviour patterns found in the wider institutions of society: status, roles, obligations of solidarity, power gaps, and interpretations of the spatiotemporal horizon are nurtured there. The **boundaries** between households are blurred. Whilst certain tasks are performed only within the nuclear family, other functions are distributed along the axes of family ties, which extend far beyond the household residence per se: welfare obligations, production and accumulation, consumption, insurance against risks. A basic socio-economic pattern is formed by three structural characteristics:

- access to and control of **resources**.
- **division of labour** between men and women, adults and children.
- **obligations to contribute** to the household.

☞ **T-25**

Goal: gain an understanding of behaviour patterns by observing everyday activities.

| **Tools**

T-23 Motivation and Visions
T-24 Calculations of Benefit and Life Plans
T-25 Household Forms

6   List of tools

51 Tasks and roles

T-01   Analysing the Tasks
T-02   Negotiating Roles
T-03   Analysing Interactions

52 Learning

T-04   Management of Learning
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53 Performance of organisations and groups

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54 Cooperation between groups and organisations

T-14   Benefits of Cooperation
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55 Conflicts over scarce resources

T-19   Warning Signs
T-20   Phases and History
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56 Strategies for action
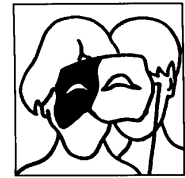
T-23   Motivation and Visions
T-24   Calculations of Benefit and Life Plans
T-25   Household Forms

A   Method

In many projects, new forms of cooperation represent the crucial pivot around which tangible results emerge: village beneficiary groups cooperate with the government supervisory body, and private construction companies cooperate with both.

Projects are **co-productions** staged by a number of partners; they form a cooperation system based on a bottom-line common denominator: the partners must be able to say to themselves and each other that they are helping achieve a joint goal.

There is no universally-valid answer to the question: **Who should do what?** Private-sector, non-profit and governmental organisations can share in performing an overall task in a wide variety of ways.

The tasks taken on by an organisation by virtue of its function and role within a cooperation system need to be analysed in relation to the **overall task**. This is particularly advisable in case of division of tasks between very different organisations. It then becomes evident which new public-private partnerships the project is inclined and able to bring about.

We know from experience that **similar organisations** "understand each other well", or in other words: they tend to transfer their own practises to other organisations. The vertical management logic of a governmental agency, the profit interest of a private enterprise, the ideological orientation of a non-profit organisation, or the measures taken by an association to gain political leverage, are clearly essential features, which even at the task analysis stage may already point to future difficulties in the cooperation.

Task analysis will obviously form part of any planning process. However, since the cooperation changes in practise, it will need to be **repeated periodically**. It thus becomes an instrument of process steering.

The tasks in hand can be analysed either **jointly** with the participating partners, or on a **contrastive** basis. In the latter case, the partners first need to be **interviewed separately**.

The results should be presented and discussed at a **workshop**.

Clearly, a contrastive approach also requires that a further condition be met: the various partners must be capable of negotiating and reaching a consensus. In many cases, this cannot be expected at the outset of the cooperation.

B   Application

Step 1: Describing and representing the overall task

- What is the overall task or objective which the participating partners are working towards?

- Which sub-tasks can the overall task be broken down into?
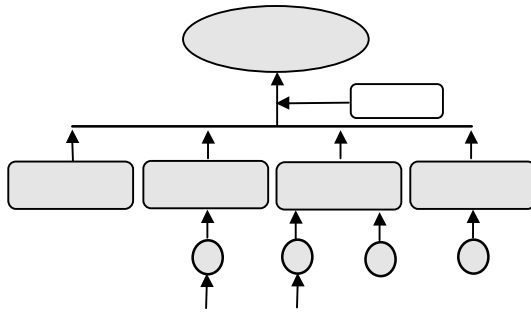
Step 2: Critique of the tasks

- How have the sub-tasks been performed to date?
- What was the result in terms of quality and internal efficiency? (management of time and scarce resources)
- What were the critical, limiting factors?
- Which minimum requirements need to be met for each of the sub-tasks? (human, economic, technical)

Step 3: Distributing the tasks

- Which organisations are capable of taking on sub-tasks, given the human, economic and technical requirements?
- What expertise do they possess? (strengths and development potentials)
- Do these organisations want to take on sub-tasks?
- What experience do these organisations have with cooperation?

When applying this tool, we usually come up against the cardinal question of what, in the given context, are the core tasks of government. Here too, there is no universally-valid answer. Yet we will have no difficulty in identifying a trend towards a **differentiation** between the roles of government and society as a whole: undisputed core tasks of government include for instance guaranteeing legal security, and social and regional adjustment (integration). For all other tasks, we need to ask the question of how far the public services advance along the continuum of tasks of standardisation, monitoring of those standards, provision of guarantees, and performance, or where the **interfaces** are located with those private organisations which could assume

responsibility for tasks to benefit the public interest.
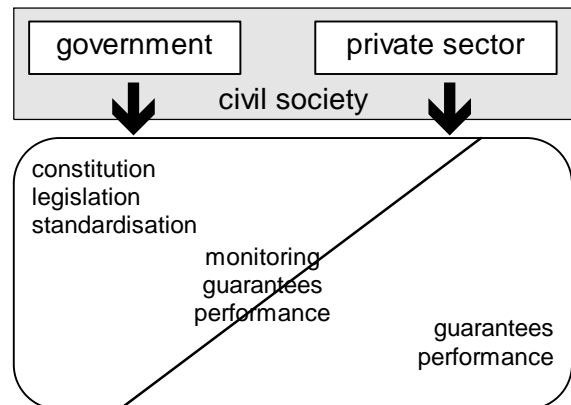
C Result

Analysing the tasks serves a dual purpose for the cooperative co-production: it orientates the partners towards a **joint overall task and goal**, and heightens awareness for solutions which are feasible in the given situation.

This approach has the advantage over an analysis of **problems** and **deficits** in that attention is focused on **potentials** and **visions**.

Furthermore, the analysis of tasks forms the starting point for the issue of the **performance capabilities** of the individual partners:

- Are the partners selected for the sub-tasks actually willing and able to perform the assigned sub-tasks?
- What are they willing to do to ensure that the cooperation runs smoothly and successfully?
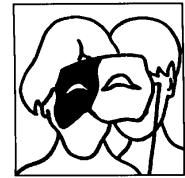
T-02: **Negotiating Roles**

A Method

Wherever possible, we normally define the roles of the organisations participating in a project at the beginning of the cooperation. We consult, identify the intentions and expectations of the various actors, and enter into contractual agreements stipulating rights and obligations.

Having said that, we observe that these roles undergo constant change during cooperation. This **dynamic process** is the result of new expectations, modified demands, asymmetrical relationships, distortions of communication and shifts in the balance of power.

In most cases, we cannot simply define the roles once and for all and then forget about them. As cooperation progresses, it is necessary to constantly renegotiate those roles, as the partners themselves undergo change during cooperation.

Since roles are negotiable, the definition and redefinition of roles form one basic element of process monitoring. The three **key questions** here are:

- What do the others expect of us?
- What do we expect of the others?
- What do we expect of ourselves?

B Application

Step 1: Describing expectations

The following matrix is designed to enable the actors to describe both their expectations of the other actors, and their own conception of themselves

organisation ➜ **expects** of organisation ⬇	A	B	C	D
A				
B				
C				
D				

The matrix is based on the assumption that roles are being defined between the four organisations A to D.

Step 2: What others expect of us (horizontal) **and self-images** (diagonal)

- Do we understand the expectations of the other partners in cooperation?
- Which expectations do we agree with? What do we disagree with?
- Is the sub-task allocated to us consistent with our own self-image (= boxes in the diagonal)?
- What is absolutely essential and necessary in order for us to perform our role?

Step 3: Our expectations of others (vertical)

- Do we expect too much/too little of others?
- Does the self-image of others correspond to the expectations we have of them?
- Do the partners have the means and methods at their disposal to meet our expectations?

- What are our minimum requirements for the task to be performed?

Step 4: Interfaces

Addressing and attempting to answer the above questions usually brings to light **conflicts**, the underlying motives of which remain concealed. The latter include the fear of losing power or image, rivalries and mistrust, the removal of professional responsibilities, and the working methods used by others.

(Re-)negotiating roles can help alleviate or resolve these conflicts, if we succeed in focusing attention on **practical issues**. Where are the key interfaces? What can we do to make these **interfaces** "work" like plugs and sockets? Here are a few key issues to be considered in this more in-depth process of negotiating roles:

We confine ourselves here to one relationship which we consider it important to analyse more closely. The two organisations A and B first ask themselves, separately, the following four **interface-related questions**:

interface A/B
- **relevance of relationship**
- **staff commitment**
- **binding character**
- **sockets**
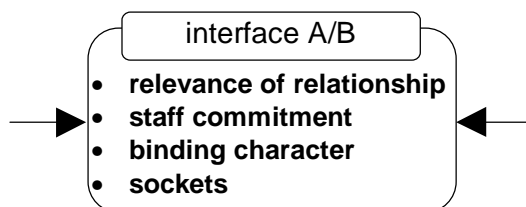
- index of the **relative relevance of the relationship**: number and frequency of the exchange of goods and services in relation to overall production of A/B.

- index of **staff commitment**: number of staff in direct/indirect contact with other organisations.

- index of **the qualitatively binding character of the relationship**: verbal and written agreements, contracts, compensations, terms of withdrawal, sanctions.

- **sockets**: communicative design of the interfaces between A and B; availability of contact persons and their obtainability, regularity of information exchange, use of technology for exchange of information.

When different experiences and perceptions are **compared**, a process of negotiation develops which leads to practical improvements

C Result

Role negotiations are an appropriate way to facilitate dealing with the slightly nebulous issue of **coordination**: we discuss mutual expectations, and the practical demands we place on a co-ordinated approach.

If we negotiate roles with the key partners **regularly** during cooperation, we focus their attention on the observation and design of those processes which shape any cooperation: changing mutual expectations.

After a certain period, the partners will become so experienced in and accustomed to this approach that they will continue to pursue it without external support.

T-03: **Analysing Interactions**

A Method

Many projects aim to create an operational **production and exchange system** between various actors: services and goods are produced and exchanged, for instance between municipalities, user groups, a cooperative, the district administration and an NGO.

The more actors are involved, the sooner the following **questions for the observer** arise:

- What kind of relationships exist among the actors?
- Who is providing which services and/or goods to whom?
- How satisfied are the clients with the services/goods provided?
- At which level (local, regional, national) are which services/goods to be provided?
- Where do we observe overlaps?
- Where are unnecessary services/goods being provided which we could do without?

An analysis of interactions attempts to answer these questions. It makes the complex interactions within a network of organisations, working for instance in the field of natural resource management, more easy to grasp. And it identifies concrete steps which can help **boost the efficiency** of these processes.

In the case of services, this therefore becomes very important, as their characteristic feature is that the recipient of the service is involved in its production (= client involvement). Services are produced through close interaction between the provider and the recipient.

B Application

Step 1: Matrix of relationships

At a workshop attended by the major actors, we enter the participating organisations in a matrix. (Instead of a matrix, another means of visual representation can of course also be selected, for instance a Venn diagram or an organisational landscape).

organisation → **interacts** with organisation ↓	A	B	C	D
A			§〰⊠	| ⇔
B	| ⇔		⊠+	⊠
C	§⊠〰	| ⊠		⊠
D	|+	⊠	| ⇔	

Various types of relationship are then entered in the boxes using simple symbols:

\| **Service relationship**: organisation A provides a service to organisation B.

§   **Legal relationship**: between organisations A and C there exist contractually-stipulated rules and standards governing the exchange of goods and services.

⬌ **Market relationship**: the relations of exchange between organisations A and B are determined by supply and demand.

✉ **Information exchange relationship**: information is regularly exchanged between organisations A and C.

♒ **Interpersonal relationship**: close personal relationships exist between organisations A and C.

+ Power relationship: between orga-nisations A and D there exists a power gap which consists in the fact that organisation D cannot of its own accord escape the influence of organisation A.

The matrix of relationships is a first approximation, and creates a clearer picture. Consequently, it is not necessary to shed full light on all relationships. As a rule, it is sufficient to use the tool to address discrepancies in assessments made by the actors themselves.

Step 2: Production/exchange and market interactions

In the second step we focus on **production/exchange and market relationships**. We list the various providers and recipients of goods/services. With membership organisations - e.g. cooperatives and associations - we have to take into account the fact that their members are both producers and recipi-ents of the goods/services in question. Here too, the relationships can be represented in the form of a matrix.

organisation ➜ **provides goods/ services** to organisation ⬇	A	B	C	D
A				
B				
C				
D				

In practise, it has proved beneficial to distinguish **three types** of good/service:

- material inputs: goods, money, trans-port
- know-how: information, consultancy, training, planning, R&D
- regulation and coordination: legislation, standardisation, monitoring, coordina-tion of the division of labour

C Result

Cooperation networks are often based on plans which are too complex; after a short time they collapse as the excessive number of interfaces overstretches them.

Regular observation of interactions supports the gradual simplification of the division of labour in networks and within co-productions. It promotes client-orientation, and an exclusive focus on core tasks.

A Method

Learning takes place automatically always and everywhere as a communicative process. We are familiar with it in the form of everyday **problem-solving behaviour**.

Learning is more than just the intake and storage of information. Learning is a **process** driven by incentives, new ambient conditions, and models or ideals: we see new differences (differentiation), and new commonalities (integration) - and **act** on them, in order to learn from that experience.

In all projects designed to promote change, the actors learn: during the work, or through coaching or training. The effectiveness of these learning processes is determined to a large extent by **three management functions** with which we shape learning processes:

- we define **learning goals** according to the necessary competences,
- we **facilitate and support** the learning process through moderation, methods and didactic aids,
- we prepare the ground for and support **transfer into practise**.

With **adults**, these management tasks need to take into account the following:

- Learning is an individual act, determined by the personal **learning biography** of the learner, and the physical and social **environment** (e.g. the working group and the availability of conference rooms). Both support and promote, or hamper and block, learning. We can help make **learning processes** more effective by taking learning experiences seriously and creating conducive environments.

- Adults find learning easier when it is linked to their **experiences**, **interests** and **desires**. Subjective plausibility is often more important than scientific objectivity and a systematic approach.

- Adults expect a **balance** to be created between instrumental/rational, and experiential/creative activities. Their well-being and sympathies (affective states) determine their willingness to learn.

- Adults have already developed **learning styles** which differ from individual to individual. Activities to promote learning therefore need to combine different **social forms** of learning, and involve **several channels** of communication:

  - **didactic social forms**: individual work, group work, project work, problem conferences, coaching, learning and project groups.
  - **communication through several channels**: listening, reading, watching, discussing, observing, feeling, experiencing.

- When learning, adults feel a need for organisation and co-determination. Learning should therefore take place in **recognisable blocks** (sequences), and be **evaluated** periodically together with the learners.

- Adults expect the learning process to be both **goal-directed** and **flexible**. To

meet these conflicting needs, learning activities must

- be planned less in terms of their content and more in terms of **the learning goals**,
- be designed less with a view to the acquisition of factual knowledge, and more with a view to the capability to **solve problems self-reliantly**.

B Application

B-1: **Key qualifications**

Learning goals must be derived from the anticipated **work to be performed at the workplace**.

We can assume that learning always takes place at the workplace itself, and that adults always already possess skills which we can build on. **Learning** (whether in training or coaching courses, or in working groups at the workplace) should extend these skills and support the process of learning by doing.

It is therefore appropriate that we focus on those **key qualifications** which **affect the learning process** in the working environment. In other words: the learning goals are geared to the **capability to learn**.

Step 1: The workplace environment

We cannot define any learning goals unless and until we are familiar with the workplace of the target groups and their environment. We have to ask ourselves the following **questions**:

- With which other individuals do the learner group perform their tasks (e.g. staff, clients)?
- To whom do those individuals report?
- What support do the learner group receive from their superiors and those on the same level?
- How many individuals report to the learner group?

- What kind of leadership/management do the subordinate staff expect?
- What experiences of learning and change have the learner group gained to date?

Step 2: Core tasks

- Which tasks will the learner group be performing in future?
- Which activities do they comprise?
- Which activities are recurrent, which are of a one-off problem-solving nature?
- Which of the recurrent activities cannot be learned through practise at the workplace?
- Which of the problem-solving tasks are especially important for performance and quality?
- Which quantitative and qualitative expectations vis-à-vis performance are attached to these tasks?

Step 3: Promoting learning at the workplace

- How do the learner group learn at the workplace?
- Which forms of work promote learning, and which impede it?
- Which social skills promote the learning process?

Step 4: Prerequisites for learning

- Which professional and social competences are particularly highly developed within the learner group?
- Which experiences and interests of the learner group will motivate them to develop these competences further?
- Which learning experiences and styles do the learner group have at their disposal?

Step 5: Four-dimensional goals

The questions for steps 1 to 4 should provide the **basic information** required to define learning goals. Having said that, we

cannot be certain we are marching in the right direction until we have tested things out under practical conditions and evaluated the results.

By learning, the individual develops various **competences simultaneously**: both social and communicative, and manual and theoretical. Learning goals can be correspondingly distinguished according to the contained proportions of **knowledge for orientation**, **knowledge for action**, **skills** and supportive **behaviour**.

We can break down the learning goals focused on **key qualifications** into four dimensions:
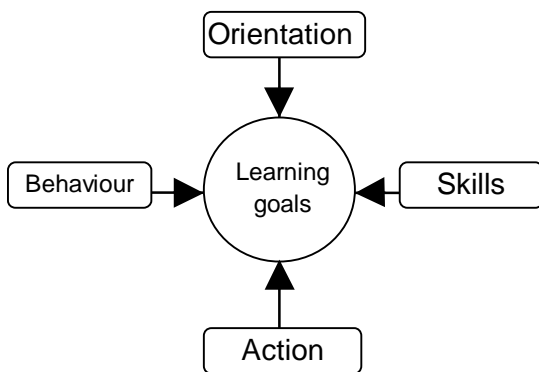
- **Orientation**: What do I need to know about my environment in order for my actions to be successful?
- **Action**: How much do I need to know to be able to perform the task efficiently and as specified?
- **Skills**: What skills do I need to be able to perform the task?
- **Behaviour**: Which behaviour will support my performance of the task?

For these **key qualifications** to become **activated** in the subsequent **learning process** within the working environment, we need to equip the target group with an additional tool: They must learn to monitor their own **learning progress and learning blocks**. Achieving this will mean involving the learner group in the **evaluation** of learning processes. In other words: We give them an opportunity to assess their own performance capability, and measure it in relation to the key qualifications.

B-2: **Coaching**

Coaching in the sense of **facilitation of learning** is **consultancy for learning,** and aims to enable learners to learn and solve problems self-reliantly. It is based on the assumption that **potentials can be tapped** within the learner group if and when we adhere to the principle of **minimum intervention**. In other words, coaching - as opposed to instruction - is the approach of choice wherever the aim is to increase the autonomy of and empower learner groups.

Coaching is **problem-oriented**: Facilitation starts with the problems encountered by the learner group, and the methods employed are adjusted to the problems at hand: within the scope of problem conferences, case studies or expert meetings.

Coaching is a process of **assuming responsibility**. Responsibility for learning and for the outcome rests with the learner group. Coaching promotes the assumption of responsibility through non-directive, circular enquiry; it unfolds in four phases: G-R-O-W

- **G**oal setting: What are our aims? What do we consider important? What is our task? Which problems do we find difficult to deal with?
- **R**eality checking: What is happening to us? Where are we? Which factors are influencing our actions?
- **O**ptions: What options do we have? Which are the best? What risks will we then be taking?
- **W**ill: What needs to be done when and by whom? Which decisions do we need to take? Whom shall we involve? In what form?

Coaching presupposes a **basic supportive attitude**, based on faith in the development potential of the learner group. This is expressed most clearly through withdrawal from decision-making situations:

the learner group decides		... and coaching asks
nothing	☯	whether something ought to be done
that something should be done	☯	what might be done
what should be done	☯	on which assumptions and motives that is based
when, how, where and by whom something should be done	☯	whether the actors can perform the tasks
nothing	☯	what the anticipated consequences are
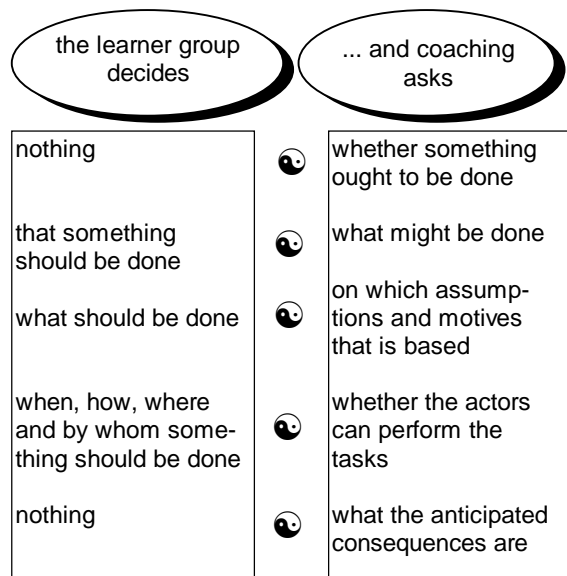
B-3: **Bridges across the transfer gap**

The third core task of learning management involves bridging the gap between the learning process and practical application of what has been learned.

The following suggestions make no claim to completeness:

- We promote all forms of **practise-oriented** learning: coaching, mentorships, work experience, horizontal exchange of experience.

- We rely on the observation of **problems** and **critical events**, in order to harmonise the learning process with the practical problems and task-related competences involved.

- We work on **genuine issues and problems**: through problem analyses, search conferences, mirroring sessions and research groups.

- We develop training courses and coaching for **operational teams** working together. Or we offer courses for function-based groups which overlap, so that the various groups experience within the learning process how crucial the **interfaces** between the learner groups are.

- We ensure that training is held at a location far from the workplace, in short, intensive blocks, and that it includes the development of social skills.

- We develop learning activities to match the given situation, in response to the problems experienced by the learner group: Training and coaching involve a high proportion of **practical skills development** through exercises, problem-solving activities and case studies.

- We consolidate individual learning through regular **group work**.

- We avoid blanket training and coaching, and focus on **selected organisational units** which serve as a model.

C Result

Management of learning is at the core of any consultancy. Learning processes become effective when we take the time to identify the **key qualifications**, when we combine training away from the workplace with **coaching**, and when we do the groundwork for **transfer** of the skills and capabilities learned into practise.

A Method

Learning in groups has **advantages** over individual learning: the potential for discovery is larger, experiences are broader, and the incentives to learn are more numerous and diverse.

The **quality of interaction within the group** can stimulate or block the process of learning in groups. If the members are **not** willing to speak openly with one another and exchange experiences, then learning is confined to interaction within the group. In other words: Under these circumstances, the group becomes occupied primarily with itself. The performance capability of a group is adversely affected as the group becomes cut off from the outside world, as well as by the opposite, i.e. dissolution.

The **Johari window model** demonstrates the two ways in which we can improve the interaction within groups: through self-presentation, and by stimulating feedback.
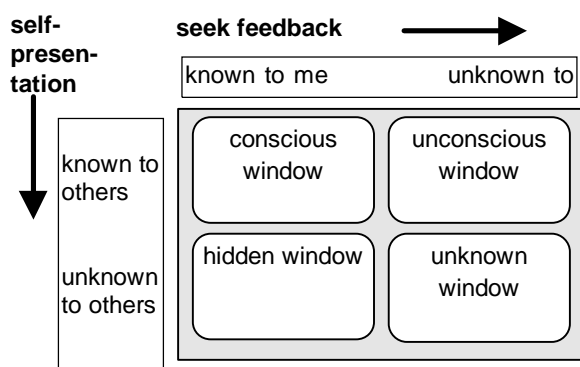
As a rule, the concealed and blind windows are filled with assumptions, imagined ideas and projections.

The model initiates a sequence of communication acts, involving two **pro-active behaviours**:

- letting others know more about oneself through targeted **self-presentation**: The "hidden window" becomes smaller, the "conscious window" becomes larger.
- seeking feedback from others through active **enquiry**: The "unconscious window" becomes smaller, the "conscious window" becomes larger.

Deadlocked **personal relationships** block learning within groups. To turn groups into active learner groups, we need to counteract two tendencies which inhibit many group processes:

- **Horizontal relationships**: People tend to seek reassurance and conform to the norms of a group. People must be enabled to express divergent opinions or attitudes, and criticise and contradict.
- **Vertical relationships**: People tend to behave in a reciprocal fashion to avoid power conflicts. They react to dominant behaviour by being submissive. - Power gaps and pronounced dependencies structure communication such that it is often necessary to first of all form groups with similar interests.

B Application

Groups can modify their learning behaviour within a short period, and increase it to an astonishing degree, if and when a common **orientation** is found, and scope created for self-appraisal and feedback. To this end, it is beneficial to regularly apply **mirroring tools**.

Example 1: Appraisal of self and others
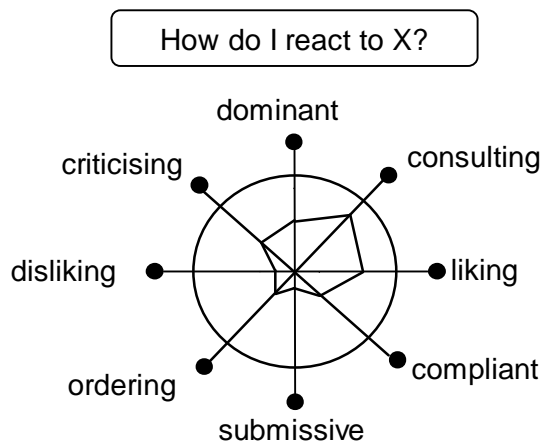
Example 2: Learning climate

The following 15 statements are rated both by the individuals and within the group on a scale of 1 (completely false) to 5 (completely true). By repeating and comparing the ratings through time, a **picture of the group process** is obtained.

Information
01 We possess the necessary information to complete our task.
02 All group members are aware of the purpose and objective of our task.
03 We know how and where to obtain further information.

Leadership
04 We consider the management competent.
05 The management is engaged chiefly in organising the work.
06 We are supported by the management in the performance of our tasks.

Disagreement
07 The individual contributions are barely criticised.
08 New ideas and proposals meet with keen interest.
09 Critical contributions modify our approach.

Decision-making
10 The management decide everything by themselves.
11 We are given a hearing prior to each important decision.
12 We know which decisions we can influence.

Atmosphere
13 The cooperation is slow and sluggish.
14 The discussion is marked by personal conflicts.
15 Problems can be addressed immediately, directly and personally.

Example 3: Criticism of roles

If a group wishes to establish how its members deal with one another and how their roles change in the course of cooperation, it can insert a **pause for thought** at regular intervals. The following questions are based on the assumption that the group has already developed an interest in the **transparency of roles**. This is designed to make the role descriptions tangible, i.e. modifiable.

01 Which two members of the group do I acknowledge most on the basis of their professional competence?
02 Which two members of the group can the others least influence to change their opinion?
03 Which two members of the group can the others most easily influence to change their opinion?
04 Which two members of the group have, in the course of our work, been most at odds with each other?
05 Which two members of the group are most willing to protect and defend members who are being attacked?
06 Which two members of the group keep reminding the group of its objectives?
07 Which two members of the group tend to withdraw from discussion when differences of opinion arise?
08 Which two members of the group tend to succeed in pushing through their personal objectives and interests?
09 Which two members of the group often discuss issues which have nothing to do with our task?
10 Which two members of the group show the greatest need to accomplish something?
11 Which two members of the group make a special effort to settle disputes?
12 Which two members of the group make the greatest effort to keep the cooperation under way?
13 With which two members of the group do I normally talk the least?
14 With which two members of the group do I normally talk the most?

Example 4: Self-evaluation

Learning processes in groups are steered and promoted primarily by the **group observing its own work**. The **S-W-O-P model** (**S**trengths, **W**eaknesses, **O**bstacles, **P**otentials) is a simple method of **periodic self-evaluation**. The basic element comprises a **window** with four boxes:

looking back into the past	looking forward into the future
strengths	potentials
weaknesses	obstacles
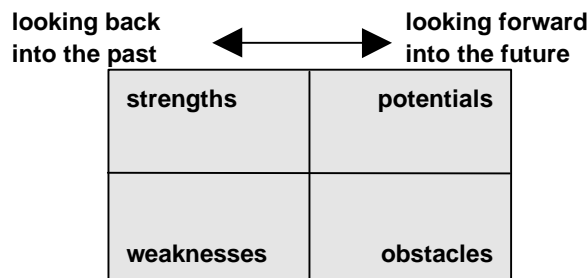
The two boxes on the left relate to the **past**, whilst those on the right contain an assessment of the potentials and risks for the **future**.

This tool has proven valuable for an approach involving **the separation of perspectives**: groups with homogeneous interests present their different experiences, perspectives, group interests and positions of power, in order to be able to compare them at a later date. The tool unfolds its full potential when applied **regularly**, such that **comparisons** can be made through time.

actor A   actor B
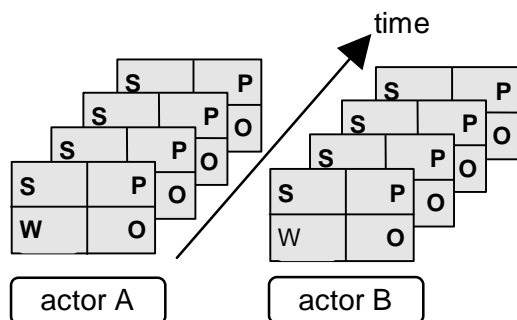
Step 1: Preparation
The group agrees on a **task** which it wishes to observe using the SWOP tool described above, for instance the marketing of saplings, coordination meetings with the forestry service, negotiations with the land-use authority, maintenance works on the irrigation channels. A large

SWOP window is drawn. The **intervals** for the projected and retrospective observations are defined.

Step 2: Collecting experiences and assessments
The group members write their responses on cards, and stick them in the appropriate boxes.

Step 3: Evaluation
The members comment on each others' cards. In each of the four boxes, a summary of observations is produced.
The summary of **experiences** (= left-hand side) in compared with the **future prospects** (= right-hand side) of the last SWOP window produced: Have we utilised the potentials? Did we underestimate the obstacles? The members adjust their work schedules in line with the evaluation.

Possible further steps
The tool can be adapted to the particular situation, for instance by making the following further **distinctions** when filling in the cards:

- **consensus/dissent**: What do we agree on? Where do out opinions differ?
- **internal/external influences**: What can we influences using our own resources? What are the external influences over which we have no control?
- **empirical/non-empirical influences**: What can we measure precisely and address directly? Which statements constitute assessments and observations which cannot be addressed directly?

C Result

Learning processes within groups can be observed and reinforced by simple means.

The impacts of self-reflective loops, as suggested for instance using the SWOP method, include not only an enhancement of group performance, but also greater group inclusivity (we-feeling), and a stronger will on the part of the group to perform tasks under difficult conditions.

T-06: **Organisational Learning**

A Method

We are all familiar with the concept of learning as applied to individuals. We have all had the experience of overcoming and extending the limits of our knowledge and expertise.

With organisations too, we can observe that they become able to achieve things which they previously did not achieve. This is not only due to an increase in individual capabilities. Organisational learning involves a network of **interlinked individual, social and structural** processes. Organisational learning is based on the assumption that individual learning is incorporated into the **organisational memory**, or in other words that it leads to a change in procedures and structures.

It is widely acknowledged that organisations are vital and open systems which constantly adapt to their environment, for instance the market or new tasks, in order to maintain themselves. There must be a demand for the product or service which they generate from their own resources and feed back into the environment. The **need for organisational learning** is therefore a consequence of continuous change in the **environment**. Organisations must learn to realistically assess the legal, political, economic, social and market environment in which they exist, and to identify the potentials generated when they help shape that environment.

Organisations can wait **passively** until change is thrust upon them, or they can attempt **actively** to harmonise their own development in line with new potentials and challenges. This **forward learning** occurs when an organisation draws up a **strategy** in response to trends and scenarios for the development of its environment.

We have thus identified three features of a learning organisation: An organisation learns when its members **actively** draw up **medium-term plans** (a model or strategy), designed to guarantee the continued existence of the organisation by making **it best fit with the environment**.

This can be summarised in the following diagram:
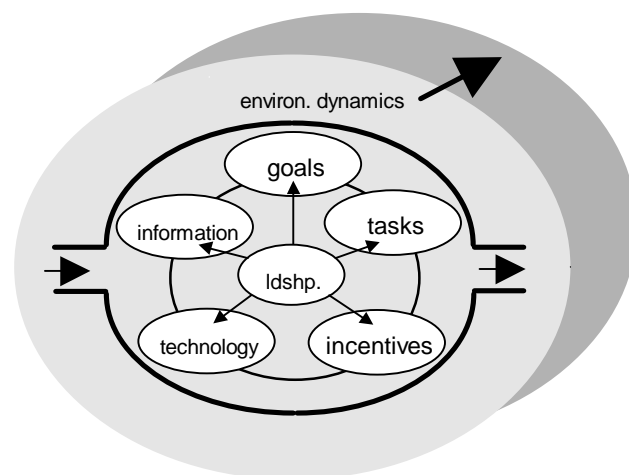
Organisational learning is a process of transforming the internal structures and processes of an organisation, with the aim of adapting to the changed environment. This requires both knowledge and expertise on the part of individual persons and groups, and changes in routine procedures and fixed rules within the organisation.

Two **key questions** can be asked in the context of organisational learning processes, which can serve as the starting point for all observations:

- How does the organisation deal with **information** from the environment?
- How does the organisation deal with **voiced** differences of opinion?

The **first question** is based on the assumption that each organisation needs to absorb information important to it from the complex environment in the simplest way possible.

The **second question** presupposes that individual and structural learning processes in organisations are interlinked, and that it is therefore important for the organisation to respond to differences of opinion and "local theories".

B   Application

B-1: **Information management**

What can organisations do when having to deal with a high level of environmental complexity undergoing constant change?

The following **checklist** contains positively worded qualitative indicators of a dynamic organisation which is willing to learn.

01 **Information sources**: Does the organisation make use of a wide range of mutually independent information sources? How does the organisation define its environment? Which trends does it monitor?

02 **Information flow**: What incentives to pass on information does the organisation create? What technical aids and methods does it make available? How does it promote informal exchange of information?

03 **Information processing**: Does the organisation make use of both encoded (figures, statistics) and narrative forms (stories, group discussions)? Does it have a medium-term strategy?

04 **Interest in interpretations**: What opportunities does the organisation offer for different interpretations to be expressed and compared?

05 **Evaluation of experience**: How does the organisation evaluate its experiences? Does it adapt the evaluation to the environmental dynamics?

In order to identify and put forward for discussion the trends in the development of an organisation over a prolonged period, it is appropriate to quantify specific indicators.

B-2: **Voice and exit**

The quality of organisational learning can be measured by the dynamics of **voice behaviour**. The way an organisation deals with criticism has a crucial effect on learning processes, and thus on organisational change. Let us first define the basic concepts:

Voice denotes those behaviours which call into question the status and prevailing routines of an organisation. Voice means that standard procedures are not being fully complied with, or are creating problems.

Voice becomes manifest when people express direct and open **criticism and value judgements**; in other words, they draw attention to shortcomings, mistakes and faults, as well as good experiences and unharnessed potentials. In so doing, they call into question the prevailing understanding of how the organisation functions: The "local theory" is born.

The term **exit** denotes the phenomenon of an individual withdrawing from a relationship (to individuals or organisations), and terminating it in order to seek an alternative relationship. Frequent exit is a **signal**: Something is wrong when staff hand in their notice and clients disappear.

Exit is the most determined form of voice, and presupposes that the individual making the exit has **other alternatives to choose from**. Although exit is entirely consistent with market principles (...we will select the best product, the best organisation), it **inhibits organisational learning**: Organisations may lose their best and most creative people as a result. Organisations whose only scope for dissent is exit (... those who don't like it here can go elsewhere!) have a massive learning block.

Willingness to **assume responsibility** and the possibility of voicing differences of opinion are closely related. Those who are able to express different opinions without risk will identify with a problem, and be willing to assume responsibility for it.

It goes without saying that any voice behaviour is strongly influenced by **socio-cultural factors**, and the **status** of the involved persons and groups. In other words, in each organisation the strength of loyalty to "local theories" is differentially distributed among persons and groups.

The repertoire of responses to voice and exit is wide:

- Express criticism which is voiced and calls into question existing notions can either be accepted and taken into account, or rejected and ignored, or merely ostensibly accepted.
- Latent criticism (dissatisfaction, passivity, exit in spirit or in fact) can also either be ignored, or actively addressed, for instance through a process of questioning and discussion.

Step 1: Observation
Self-observation:
- To whom can I express criticism and meet with their interest?
- What makes it easier for me to express criticism?
- Who will support me if I express criticism?
- Who is interested in what is changing outside our organisation?
- What advantages would I be hoping to gain if I were to move to another organisation?
- What reasons or advantages here prevent me from moving to another organisation?

Observation of others:
- By whom have major changes been initiated recently?
- Who has tried to bring about an open exchange and discussion regarding those changes? How successful were they?
- Who has exited recently?
- What reasons did they give?
- Who showed interest in those reasons?

Step 2: Culture of horizontal exchange
- What opportunities do we have within our organisation of work to exchange experiences?
- How are we rewarded for exchanging experiences?
- Who is interested in our insights, assessments and suggestions?

Step 3: Voice culture
The behaviour of organisations vis-à-vis voice varies from case to case, as it is influenced by a number of situational characteristics, e.g.

- by the degree to which the arguments voiced are convincing and objectifiable
- by the status and influence of the individual voicing the opinion ("messenger profile")
- by the degree to which the status quo is threatened

Nevertheless, we can distinguish four patterns of how organisations deal with cases of voiced criticism:

1 Denial
The organisation closes its eyes and ears to any need for change which might have been identified, or possibly seeks to perfect existing structures and consolidate the official perception of the environment.

2 Pseudo-acceptance
Cosmetic measures are taken to create the false impression that the suggestion for change has been accepted, whilst the structures to resist the voicing of criticism may possibly have been strengthened, e.g. through marginalisation or defamation.

3 Reactive adjustment
Voiced criticism is taken seriously and leads to concrete, albeit sporadic changes in internal procedures and structures, and possibly the perception of the environment is also adapted.

4 Active adjustment
The organisation actively seeks to identify problems and criticism, with the aim of adjusting its own structures and processes, and redefining the environment.

C Result

The degree of an organisation's willingness to learn can be observed through its behaviour with respect to information and voiced criticism. Discussion of these issues as a rule initiates both strategic planning, and strong team-formation processes.

A   Method

Whilst we are constantly involved in processes of change, we nevertheless have surprisingly little **process experience** at our disposal. This also applies to projects of cooperation which, as a rule, expend a great deal of energy on planning, but spend little time on periodic **adjustment of the plans** in the light of experiences.

The parameters of a project are in constant flux: New emphases emerge, others fade, and roles, interests and power structures change in the course of cooperation.

As a rule, we find it difficult to concede that we fully grasp only little, that we make mistakes, that we take decisions on the basis of inadequate data, and that we barely understand the complex, dynamic processes in which we are involved. Nevertheless, planning does make sense: We want to agree on goals, and we can observe the discrepancies between our planned targets and what we have actually achieved.

We know where we started from, and who we were with along the way, but we barely know **how** we reached the goal.

Methods of self-evaluation are an appropriate means of reshaping planning into an iterative process responsive to experiences. Having said that, the majority of methods focus on the results, and in doing so neglect the **detours**, the **errors** and the **uncertainty** which have been with us along the way.

To **learn from the history of the process**, we must take the trouble to look back over the **individual decision-making processes**. At first glance we often observe a chaos of facts and an agglomeration of interests, of which we understand only little, even though we did take decisions at the time.

Reconstructing process histories has the benefit of making us focus more closely on factors influencing decision-making in the present. Instead of seeing uncertainty, errors and contingency as obstacles, we can harness them as **creative potentials**: We look back at selected processes we have undergone and ask ourselves:

- What decisions did we take at the time?
- What information did we base those decisions on?
- What did we expect to happen as a result?
- What was the actual outcome?

B   Application

Step 1: Determining the scene

Any situation in the present can be seen as the **result of decisions** we have taken in the past. In other words: The scene in which we find ourselves now was constructed, and has a history. Which major decisions brought us to where we are today?

First of all, the question contains a problem of delineation: We must confine ourselves to a **section of the present** which can be described, and whose history we wish to shed light on.

When first attempting to work with process history, it is recommended to **select a concrete result**: The village tree nurseries are being run self-reliantly and on a break-even basis, loans are being repaid, the user groups are not keeping unwritten agreements, etc.

In the following steps, the method gains momentum if - in order to separate perspectives - we work **with different groups in parallel**, so that we can later compare the decisions taken and their importance.

Step 2: Fishbone

If we focus on a particular scene, e.g. the tree nurseries, we can hold a workshop to collect the decisions which brought us to where we are today. We plot the decisions along the **time axis**, and draw a fishbone of the decisions D-xx:
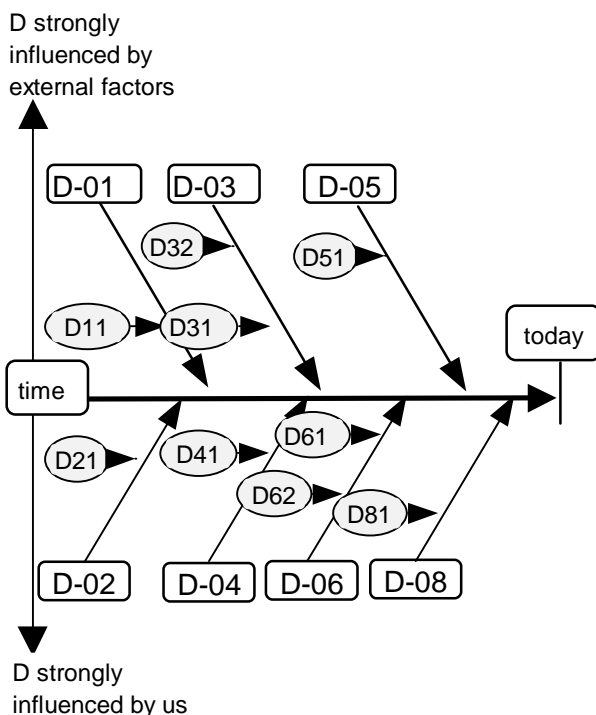
Decisions with **even numbers** were strongly determined by us.
Decisions with **odd numbers** were strongly influenced by external factors.

We can distinguish several **hierarchical levels** of decisions, for instance the relationship between D-05 and D51 is that the latter influenced decision D-05.

The straight line along the time axis should not give the impression that the path taken was itself a straight line! This becomes all the more clear when we take into account decisions which at the time **appeared minor**, or which at the time we did not even see as being formal decisions.

Step 3: D-matrix

We can now enter the decisions in a matrix which will make it easier to begin discussion of the process history:
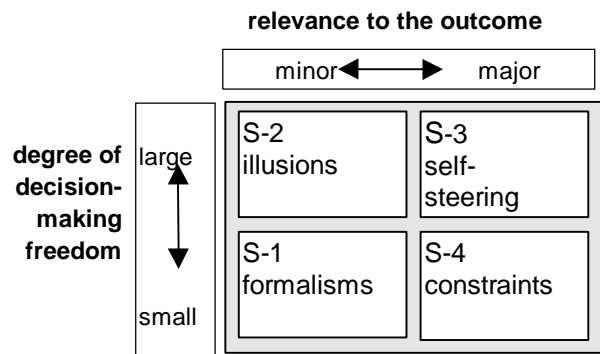
Step 4: Styles of decision-making

We assume that decisions were taken on a **more or less participatory** basis, and that **alternative options** were compared in the decision-making process. We will now attempt to characterise the decisions in S-3 (= with a large degree of freedom and of major importance for the outcome) on the basis of these two criteria

- Which three decision-making styles do the decisions in S-3 display?
  A: Autocratic - one individual or group of individuals took the decision on the basis of their position and function.
  B: Consultative - one individual or group of individuals took the decision after consulting other individuals and asking for their opinion.
  C: Group-centred - one group of individuals reached agreement on the decision through an opinion-forming process.

- What alternative options were considered before taking the decision? What and who played a crucial role in our deciding this way and not differently?

Step 5: Evaluation

Once we have worked with various groups, we begin evaluation by comparing the results. To learn from the process history, it is now necessary to focus on the following **questions**:

- Which decisions proved to be of major importance in retrospect?
- Why did they prove important?
- What information did we base the decisions on?
- What was the level of acceptance of the decisions at that point in time?
- Where did we make mistakes and end up in dead-end situations?
- What detours were necessary? What did we learn from that?
- What did we forget? What did we not want to acknowledge, and what did we put out of our minds?
- When were we blocked, with none of us knowing what to do next?
- What and who helped break down these blocks?
- How much weight did we attach to formal decisions? Where did real self-steering actually take place?
  (Comparison of squares S-1 to S-4)
- Why did something take longer than expected?
- Why did certain actors remain committed and others drop out?
- What alliances were formed between the actors, and how did they affect the decisions?
- What do we see differently now than then?
- In which decisions now under consideration do we wish to take that into account?
- What can we do to ensure that the lessons from the process history are not forgotten?

C Result

The reconstruction of process histories promotes the incorporation of what has been learned into the existing body of knowledge of a group or organisation: We retrace our steps, and recall what we learned.

Process history focuses attention on jointly achieved development, on our development. Through a process of experiential learning, it promotes the adjustment of plans to those processes which we have helped shape.

T-08: **Group Performance**

A Method

Organisations consist of groups: working groups, user groups, departments, functional groups, operative groups, management ranks, directors etc., which in turn form sub-groups.

When **observing group processes**, several basic questions arise both for outsiders, and for the group members themselves:

- What is a group?
- How does it develop?
- What holds it together?
- What performance advantages does it have?

Once the group members begin to consciously ask themselves these questions, the ability of the group to steer itself increases.

B Application

B-1: **What is a group?**

Not every collection of people constitutes a group. When using the term group, we refer to an entity with the following dynamic characteristics:
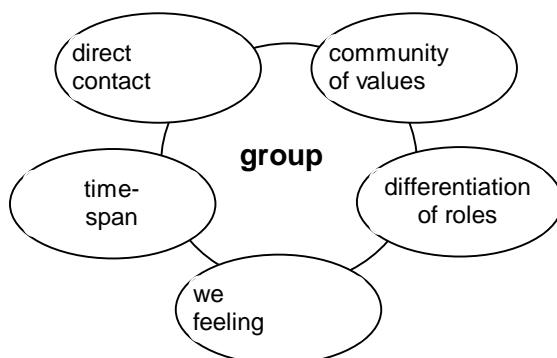
- **Direct contact**: The members of a group are in direct personal contact. They meet regularly, and exchange information on their work. The members know each other, and enter into relationships with each other which are more or less related to the work.

- **Timespan**: In contrast to functional groups formed coincidentally (e.g. in a lift or in a queue), the group survives over a relatively long period.

- **We-feeling**: The members perceive themselves to be part of the group. Unlike groups upon which we impose a definition based on socio-economic or socio-cultural characteristics (landless female farmers of Indian origin, established civil servants of salary bracket X), the members themselves are aware of belonging to the group. This may be reinforced by formal or symbolic conditions for admission. The individual member develops a more or less pronounced "we-feeling".

- **Community of values**: The members have a minimum, in some cases tacit consensus on how the outside world, and behaviour within the group, are to be judged, and which norms are to be complied with. This forms the basis for the admission or exclusion of members, and for the joint goals of work.

- **Differentiation of roles**: On the basis of their ascribed status or their social and professional skills, the group members develop mutual expectations. Positions and roles emerge, for instance leaders, moderators, co-workers etc. Attached to

these roles are prestige, respect, feelings of liking, disliking, competition and rivalry etc..

Where direct contacts are a condition, a group cannot be enlarged indiscriminately. With working groups, it has proved to be the case that - depending on the task - the **upper limit** is six to twelve members.

B-2: **How does a group develop?**

The most common **group formation processes** emerge from one of two sources:

- The group is formed around a **core of founders** who join forces in the light of common interests and projected benefits: Common economic interests lead to the founding of a company, common awareness of discrimination leads to the founding of a social movement.

- The group is formed on the basis of a **functional division of labour**: To guarantee coordination, a working group is formed; to divide up maintenance work and assert water rights, a user group is formed.

Admission to a group can be based on a number of different criteria:

- compulsory membership: social groups, occupational groups, age groups which at the same time function as working groups.
- appointment or nomination: decision rests with a higher authority.
- selection by the group itself: group decides on the basis of prescribed rules or its own criteria.
- voluntary membership: new members seek contact and make an active effort to be admitted.

Each change in the composition of the group changes its internal dynamics, more so in the earlier **phases of development** than in the latter, when the group has already developed a pronounced task-orientation.

Phases of group development:

Phase and group structure	Task-orientation and group dynamics
1 **Forming** uncertainty regarding expectations; heavy dependency on founders or leadership; situational trial of behaviours; negotiation of rules.	understanding of tasks characterised by views of members; much time and energy expended on relationships, rules and methodological issues.
2 **Storming** formation of sub-groups and alliances; resistance to division of labour; revolt against leadership; mistrust towards and rejection of strong group members.	task-orientation disappears behind issues of relationships; polarisation of opinions; rivalries and conflicts; affectively laden rejection of roles and tasks.
3 **Norming** development of we-feeling, group cohesion grows; norms and rules perceived as supports; members provide mutual support; conflicts are settled.	common goals come to the fore, pragmatic task-orientation becomes stronger; open exchange of opinions facilitates cooperation, overcoming barriers caused by relationships.
4 **Performing** problem-solving strategies developed, division of labour is functional; mutual expectations are addressed periodically; role changes are possible.	relationship problems are considered resolved; constructive handling of tasks becomes the norm; communication problems and relationship-related issues are addressed, where the work demands.

This diagram does not imply that every group will undergo all phases in a linear fashion: There are groups which never move beyond phases 1 and 2, and there are groups which move backwards again, for instance because new members have joined.

The diagram will prove useful when the group asks itself at what stage it is at and where it is going.

B-3: **Group cohesion**

The **internal cohesion** of a group is a measure of its stability. Group cohesion has an **ambivalent** effect on those outside

the group: On the one hand, it can seem attractive to new members, as they see a "social home" inside the group; on the other hand, cohesion can cut the group off from the outside world, even turning it into something like a sect or secret society.

promoting cohesion	inhibiting cohesion
frequent and regular direct contacts	size of group inappropriate to the task
agreement on goals and values	inconsistent goals, and conflicting basic attitudes
competition between groups and group rewards	performance assessed individually
cooperation and synergistic effects among members	loner culture and rivalries between sub-groups
success, acknowledgement and visible benefit to members	failures

As well as cohesion, there are other **advantages** which make a group distinctly attractive:

- **pragmatic benefit**: the anticipated economic benefits of membership.
- **protection**: collective protection against violence and coercion guaranteed by membership.
- **safeguarding of interests**: strengthening and protection of members' interests by the group.
- **aura**: gain in social prestige associated with membership.
- **self-actualisation**: opportunity for members to use their own expertise and capabilities.
- **learning**: possibilities for acquiring new expertise and capabilities in the group.

Strong group cohesion can also have **drawbacks**:
- Highly cohesive groups are resistant to organisational change.
- Group pressure can lead to isolation, and thus to a clouded perception of reality.

Sociograms can be an appropriate means of observing the development of cohesion within a group. These respond to the questions: Who gets on best with whom? Who enjoys the highest level of acceptance? Which sub-groups are forming?

The members of the group are invited to select two or three other group members. The **question of selection** is always posed in relation to a concrete goal, for instance:

- With whom would you like to cooperate in connection with afforestation?
- Whom could you not cooperate with under any circumstances?

For each of the questions, each result is then shown in a diagram as below:
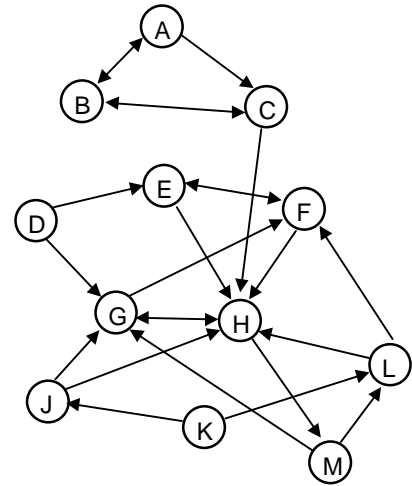
D ⟶ G means: D chooses G.
G ⟷ H means: G and H choose each other.
Numerical values can be added to the diagram, indicating the number of times each individual has been selected.

Sociograms need to tread a fine line between **discretion** and **transparency**. Not all groups can withstand the level of self-analysis necessary. Inappropriate application of this instrument might cause irreparable damage, for instance if rivalries were to become visible or loners to become branded.

Cohesion and **performance** only go hand in hand if and when the group identified with the superordinate objectives of the larger organisation. If this is not the case, the group constitutes a threat within the organisation. The ideal situation is one in which highly cohesive groups are well led.

B-4: Performance advantages of groups

The performance of a group is greater than the sum of its members' individual performances if and when the **group size** is optimal, and the members **complement** each other **qualitatively**. This will not be the case where the group is homogeneous, yet performs different tasks, or if

it contains freeloaders or passive members.

Experiences from the working world indicate that **partially autonomous groups** which plan, implement and evaluate entire tasks, perform better than highly-specialised groups, provided that their members possess the necessary **social skills** for internal coordination.

Designing the task lays the foundation for the performance capability of a group. What requirements must **a learning-oriented** task design fulfil?

- The task allows the self-reliant definition of goals, within the framework of the known superordinate goals.
- The task comprises the planning and steering of the work.
- The task makes it possible to maintain contacts with internal and external clients.
- The task allows corrections and other adjustments to be made during execution.
- The task allows for review of goal attainment.
- The task allows for a horizontal exchange of experiences with other groups.
- The task allows for the rewarding of group performances.

The **social skills** of the members are therefore a further limiting factor, since performance-orientation and members' needs often conflict. **Competent group leadership** must be able to harmonise group needs with task-orientation. Search tasks, problem-solving tasks and routine tasks require different communication patterns. Consequently, group performances are promoted primarily through targeted training of leaders, in order thus to stimulate the self-reflectivity of groups.

This is best illustrated on the basis of several internal **communication patterns** of groups:
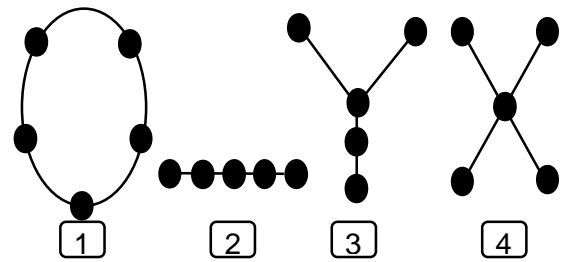
Circular (1) and linear communication (2) are least conducive to **task performance**: communication takes longer than necessary, the paths of decision-making are long and complicated. Having said that, where errors of information do occur, these are most quickly corrected in the communication circle (1), as this pattern provides the best guarantee of creative and rapid exchange.

Group members prefer the circular arrangement (1), as they see this as providing an opportunity to enter into discussion with others more quickly and more easily, and see the least danger of being excluded.

The fact that these patterns are strongly influenced by the respective superordinate organisational culture need not prevent us from discussing them.

C Result

Observation of group formation processes, and the dynamics between task-orientation and internal cohesion, enables us to assess the performance capability of groups. Once groups automatically see process observation as being their own task, they begin to steer themselves.

T-09: **Structure and Process**

A Method

Organisations are subject to the twin polar influences of **order** and **chaos**.

Rules and norms simplify internal coordination and control of the performance process; these include for instance: safety regulations, rules governing working hours, service regulations, definition of responsibilities and relative positions of personnel within the hierarchy, rules governing the use of infrastructure. Taken in their entirety, these rules, together with the material resources (buildings, machinery etc.), form the **structure** of an organisation.

Structures are expressed in organisation charts, specifications, in the number of levels of the hierarchy, or in the division of duties. They provide actors with a binding, secure framework within which the production process takes place. Ideally, the rules are only so dense as to promote initiative and innovation, whilst at the same time securing the "regulated" production process.

The alteration of rules, output-oriented resource management, all interpersonal dealings and all communication thereon form the **processes** of an organisation. These also include **personal relationships**, which cut across and may circumvent or threaten formal structures. This is the case for instance with friendships or family ties, as they exist independently of the asymmetrical power gap and relationships of authority.

A **symbiotic relationship** exists between structure and process: structures promote or hinder processes, whilst the largely invisible processes have a dynamic effect on the structures of the organisation - they are the engine driving the structures. Without processes there are no structures, and structures are pointless unless they form the riverbed for processes

The **aim** of the organisation-specific balance between structure and process is to achieve a **maximum of clarity, binding force and adaptability**, with **a minimum of rules**.

STRUCTURES continuity security routine	PROCESSES flexibility initiative innovation
rules and norms	production processes
organisation chart and levels of hierarchy	formal and informal communication
division of labour, description of tasks and functions	interpersonal relationships
instruments and methods of work	learning processes
planning, monitoring and sanctions	

Rules and norms are clots of coagulated experience. They lead to a certain degree of **routine**, **security** and **standardisation**, and serve a dual purpose:

- **increased efficiency**: We know e.g. who we have to approach (proper official channel!) and which form to fill in.

- **quality**: We achieve a consistent quality of products and services.

There are declared and undeclared, regularly observed and tacitly ignored rules. **Interest** in the density of rules and their observance varies. In most organisations, the density of rules decreases at the upper levels of the hierarchy, whilst interest in their being followed increases.

Organisations are made up of sub-organisations and niches, which are structured and regulated to differing degrees. The **ratio of the mix** is reflected for instance in the **scope** for decision-making on a discretionary basis as opposed to by the book. It may also be expressed in the material structures, for instance a workplace design conducive to communication, or in values, for instance the attachment of positive value to informal contacts.

Wherever order is defined by rules, there are also **sanctions** to punish infringements of the rules, and there are disputes over which rules should be kept and which thrown overboard. People adopt an **attitude** toward the structural and process components of the system: for instance, they seek security in routine, and accept a large gap in power between themselves and their superiors. Or they are comfortable in processes which feel chaotic, and seek out their own reference groups.

Processes are determined by task-related cooperation between people, their affective relationships, their expectations and desires.

The **division** of the (sub-)organisation into structural and process components is dependent on the nature of the task, and the resources available. It is also influenced by culturally-determined thought and behaviour patterns, and organisational traditions: the same tasks are performed differently in different places!

B Application

B-1: **Indicators of structure and process**

It is a characteristic feature of organisations and their sub-organisations to **divide** themselves up into structural and process components. This generates key information on existing **scope for action** and the prevailing **organisational culture**.

A working group wishing to conduct an organisational diagnosis can select those **indicators** from the following list which it considers especially significant:

- number of levels of the hierarchy involved in the performance of a task or in a decision-making process
- number of formally distinct tasks
- design of tasks: breakdown of objectives, planning, regulation, quality control, evaluation vis-à-vis execution
- number of meetings at the horizontal level
- number of meetings within the vertical structure
- time taken for decision-making
- number of individuals involved in decision-making
- interval between planning and execution
- time needed by new staff to feel integrated
- frequency of formal alterations to regulations and organisation charts
- staff turnover
- ratio of number of individuals with and those without direct external contacts
- number of standardised work instruments: manuals, forms etc. and their distribution
- frequency of sanctions
- frequency and target groups of promotions
- methods of monitoring presence
- methods of staff evaluation

B-2: **Shifts in the balance between structure and process**

Where specific tasks need to be redesigned, either for individuals or for teams, the redefinition of structural and process components can be discussed.

First of all, the tasks (in this case A and B) are entered along the continuum of structure and process, with selected **indicators**.
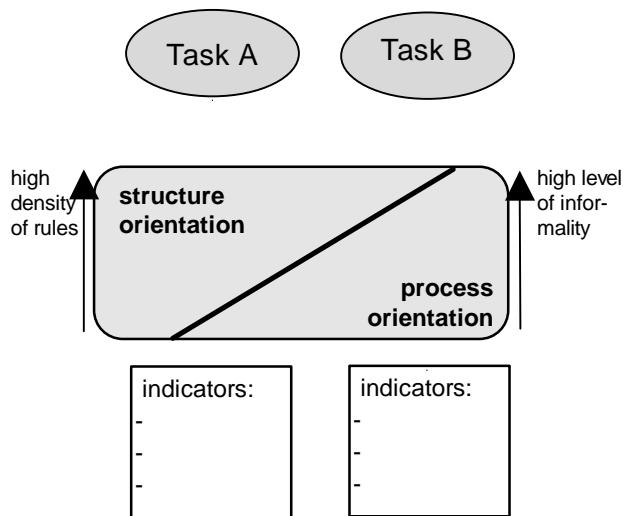
In a second step, the direction in which the task needs to be developed in order to achieve the objectives is discussed. The rationale of why a shift in one or other direction is appropriate consists of three arguments:

- the targeted increase in quality,
- the anticipated increase in efficiency (in the sense of improved resource management),

- the new skills possibly required by the personnel performing the task, necessitated by the shift.
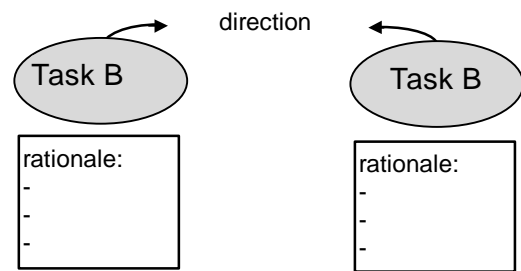
C Result

The insight that there is a need for both structures and processes leads us to pursue a question-and-answer approach: we attempt to find out what would be the **ideal mix in our particular case**. As a result, we begin to develop our own concepts of the organisation in question.

By analysing the balance between structure and process, we discover something about the dynamics of an organisation, laying the foundation for appropriate interventions. We address the issue of whether and where we have too few structures, and whether and where we are creating too little scope for processes.

A Method

The term **grass-roots organisation** is not clearly defined. It is applied to a broad field of highly diverse organisations, whose common feature is that they all maintain more or less **direct relations with the people**.

- as a **territorial community**: extended family, village, parish, local administration, urban district group, school parents' group, etc.
- as a **productive membership organisation**: user group, self-help group, co-operative, small business association, credit association, etc.
- as a **social movement**: self-help groups, human rights association, trade union, cooperative, etc.

The terms themselves point to the fact that there are a large number of **hybrid organisations**, which makes them more difficult to typify. For example: Self-help groups which have been formed in response to a collectively felt deprivation in villages, join forces in a federation, form a credit co-operative, and develop into a powerful pressure group which controls a political party.

The **grass-roots orientation** of these organisations, in the sense of their being obliged to the people, is compromised by the need for internal professionalisation within the organisation.

Ethnic affiliation and **clientelistic family allegiances** of these organisations in many cases prove to be both strengths and weaknesses at the same time: they strengthen the grass-roots orientation, whilst possibly accentuating social differences.

These organisations' **close links with political parties** and pressure groups of civil society create scope for action for them, whilst at the same time binding them to their governmental and non-governmental partners in alliance.

We also need to see the **distance** between these organisations and public administration structures as a dynamic process. Extensive decentralisation of governmental structures and the strengthening of local administrations can lead to territorial grass-roots organisations becoming involved in close cooperation with the local administration in local areas.

Many grass-roots organisations perform a **bridge function**: They link rural sections of the population, largely neglected by governments, to the modern urban-oriented world. These agents of this link are in many cases young university graduates who assume leading positions in these organisations.

Normally, when dealing with grass-roots organisations, greater emphasis is placed on **intercultural issues** than when co-operating with governmental agencies or large NGOs, for instance. With rural grass-roots organisations, we also look for authentic, genuine and exotic "otherness", and when we do not find it (...They're already hooked up to the Internet), we suspect them of operating on the basis of instrumental and rational (i.e. western!) logic.

The development of grass-roots organisations is characterised inter alia by the following conflicts:

- Local versus modern forms of communication: written contracts, planning, technical rationality.
- Breadth of values of members (seniority, social obligations within the community, local knowledge) versus professional orientation and upgrading of the leadership group: growth in power through professional competence.

B Application

B-1: Points to observe

- People are already organised

   People unsuspectingly referred to in planners' jargon as target groups always have organisational experience no matter where they are. Organisational cores exist everywhere. Project planners occasionally overlook this fact. They want to organise the target groups from scratch. People react to this with a reasonable social technique: they allow themselves to be organised. Cooperation must build on the existing organisational cores and local organisational experiences. In many cases, the establishment and development of new organisations will be superfluous.

- Paradoxical cooperation

   In many cases, raising the issue of organisation consists in placing the naked demand on user groups to provide material inputs: manual work as day labourers, provision of materials, money. Grass-roots organisations see this as the collection of a tribute, a practise which in many places awakens memories of compulsory measures imposed by colonial administrations.
   Organisations based neither on benefit nor on voluntary understanding of their value tend to crumble and fall apart once the inputs have been made.

- Dormant rump organisations

   Everywhere there are organisations which have become dormant, because they are not needed at present. These can be self-help organisations, or associations. We do not see these organisations at first glance.
   Rump organisations contain development potential. They can be reactivated with only little input.

- Demoralised grass-roots organisations

   Expectations which have not been met are among those obstacles which are most difficult to overcome: Following a painful disappointment, a Bolivian campesino or an African cooperative farmer, with his perforce pragmatic strategy for survival, will take care not to join an organisation a second time, thus risking his economic and social survival.
   It is absolutely essential to evaluate local organisational experiences, in order to be able to answer the question as to who we want to work with.

- Culture of negotiation

   Nothing is so time-consuming as two different partners moving onto common ground and negotiating their interests. Organisations are places for the slow to sojourn. We cannot develop and change non-stop. Hectic activity blocks sustainable learning processes.
   We need to gear communication to the slow learning processes. The harmonisation of different interests requires time.

B-2: Diagnosis

Step 1: Self-profile in facts

Facts are objective, their selection and evaluation are not. Where the opportunity arises, it is also recommended to establish a **separation of perspectives** here: We work with two or three groups whose composition is relatively homogeneous. Two questions interest us: What is factually the case? Who knows what? We are interested in both the facts and their interpretation, in other words the "local theory" of the organisation about itself.

We can gain an overview with the following twelve thematic fields:

1 **Establishment**: When was the grass-roots organisation founded? Who founded it? With what intentions?

2 **Members**: How many persons belong to the grass-roots organisation as
   - members
      > in total
      > honorary staff
   - permanent staff
      > in managerial positions
      > in operative positions
      > auxiliary staff
   - temporary staff

3 **Legal form**: What legal form does the grass-roots organisation have? (informal group, legally incorporated society, cooperative, association, private company, etc.)

4 **Products and clients**: Which goods and services does the organisation produce? (also: empowerment, protection of interests, etc.) For whom?
Which products are in greatest demand among which client groups?

5 **Cooperation**: With which other organisations does the grass-roots organisation cooperate on a regular basis? What is the purpose of that cooperation?

6 **Reach**: How far does the grass-roots organisation extend (local, regional, national) in terms of
- its own infrastructure? (e.g. with branch offices, means of communication)
- its members
- its partners in cooperation

7 **Tasks**: Which main tasks does the organisation perform?
- core tasks
- supporting internal tasks

8 **Structure**: How many hierarchical levels does the organisation have? What are they called? How are staff distributed across the levels? What professional qualifications do these groups of individuals possess?

9 **Funds**: Where do the funds come from?
- members' contributions
- revenues earned
- credits
- grants

10 **Infrastructure**: What infrastructure and assets does the grass-roots organisation have at its disposal?
- buildings
- production plant and vehicles
- means of communication
- other

11 **Planning**: When and where does the grass-roots organisation plan its activities? Does it have a medium-term strategy or ideal?

12 **Evaluation of experiences**: What positive experiences can the organisation look back on? How are experiences evaluated within the grass-roots organisation?

Step 2: Visions

Even a grass-roots organisation with limited performance capability constitutes a **development potential**. If the social energies can be successfully focused towards a joint vision, this potential can be harnessed. Consequently, the second diagnostic step focuses attention on the future.

- **Images of the future**: What do we want to achieve in the next two (three) years? We collect the concepts and ideas, and turn the suggestions into pictures, for instance a hill with a forest on top, or a well-attended meeting of members.
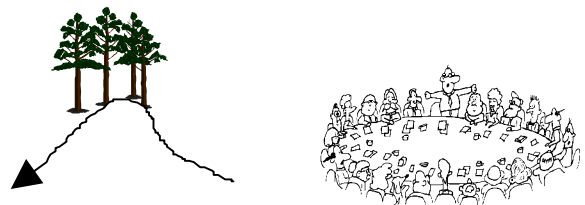
- **Growth**: How are we going to achieve that? We use a simple, everyday image to illustrate growth and change, for instance the growth of a tree, the path of a drop of water on its way to the sea, the transformation of a silkworm into a cocoon, or the lunar phases leading to full moon:

Phases	Path marks: How do we know that we've got that far?
●	....
◗	....
☾	....

This illustration is designed to focus attention on a **stepwise** procedure outlined more precisely in the next step.

Step 3: Limiting factors

To refine the diagnosis, we can ask ourselves which **capabilities** the organisation lacks in order to develop in the prescribed direction. Here too is it appropriate to avoid applying a preconceived list. It is a known fact that there are grass-roots organisations capable of performing well without duplicate bookkeeping, organisation chart and computers.

We ask two **key questions**:
- What must we know and be capable of doing in order to attain our goals?
- Where are we strong already?

The results can be illustrated in the form below, for example. First of all, fields of competence are delineated, for instance:

A deposits in the credit cooperative,
B number of active members,
C coordination with the local administration,
D regular meetings with the women's groups to evaluate experiences.

The **segmented circle** distinguishes three different degrees of competence. (1) low, (2) medium and (3) high. To provide a clear representation of the development process, this can be applied repeatedly through time.
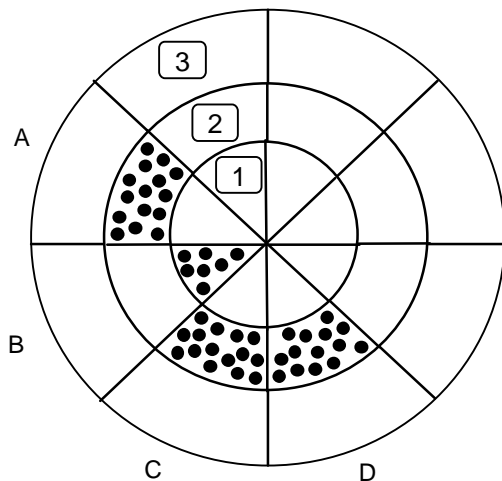
Step 4: The outside world

Every organisation has relations with the outside world, and its members develop ideas concerning that environment.

Key questions:
- Which developments encourage us?
- What do we observe with concern?
- Which relationships with other organisations (private and public) will become more important in the future?

C Result

Cooperation with grass-roots organisations places high demands on our flexibility: We must become detached from our own organisational concepts.

Diagnosis of these organisations' performance capability is based on the experiences and assessments of their members. This helps the grass-roots organisations realistically assess their potentials and limits, and open up to the outside world.

T-11: **Systematic Diagnosis**

A Method

Organisations are living organisms, shaped by their own members. Each member has his or her own understanding of how the organisation works or should work. These "local theories" contain notions on leadership and cooperation, and on the purpose and quality of the work. Some have very clear and explicit ideas, whilst others have a more intuitive grasp of what is going right and what is going wrong in an organisation.

The members differ in their ability to put across their local theory, and in their influence, or **power of definition**, in terms of being able to transfer their ideas to others and have them accepted.

Systemic diagnosis is based on the constructivist assumption that behaviour and willingness to learn are moulded by the members' local theories.
'
The aim of this procedure is for a working team or organisational unit to elaborate its **own diagnostic model**, and on that basis to think about and discuss possible modifications.

The method complements and extends other types of diagnosis based on facts, figures and surveys. Organisational change is based on the principle of the **minimum possible external intervention**. The organisation must change itself; consequently, that is where the corresponding insight must also start to grow.

B Application

Step 1: Bird's-eye view and logo

Organisations are complex. We see something different depending on where we are standing: from above or below, from the inside or the outside. What is striking to some, is insignificant to others.

The first step consists in preparing a coarse-grained **snapshot** of the organisation.

We work with a working group. Each member first selects eight specific features to describe the organisation.

Task: Select eight **typical positive and negative features** of the organisation, four of which are qualitative characteristics and four of which are quantifiable magnitudes (or relationships). Draw a logo of the organisation which characterises the present status quo. Represent the result as follows:
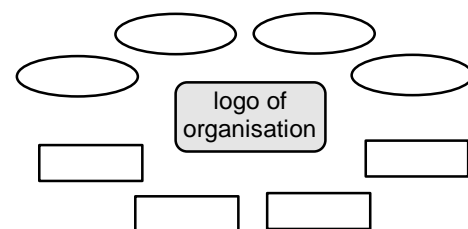
Step 2: Zoom

The representation of the eight features, based on personal organisational experience, is compared with a **list of systemic functions** which an organisation comprises. The list of systemic functions is open-ended, and may be supplemented. Examples are:

- satisfaction of client needs
- economic profitability
- social integration of members
- internal coordination
- stability and continuity
- ability to cooperate with other organisations
- adaptability
- self-reflexivity and learning capability

Task: Mark with a cross those systemic functions which correspond to the eight main features you selected, and represent the result as follows:

Step 3: Limiting factors and strengths

In the third working step, the individually-elaborated diagnostic models are compared and discussed in the working team. The aim is not to build a model applicable to all, but to identify **limiting factors**. The reasons for these problems are complex, and can be identified on the basis of the individual models. Equally important for the diagnosis are the **strengths and potentials** which we can rely on.
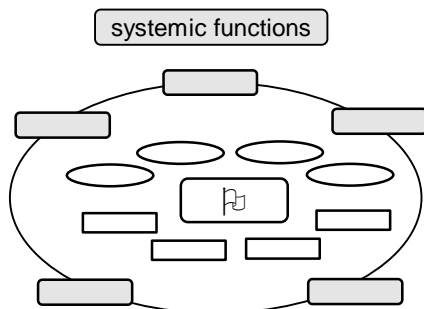
Task: Draw up a list of the systemic functions which you crossed. Bearing in mind the main features you selected, ask yourself which limiting factors, bottlenecks, deficits, weaknesses and which strengths and potentials you observe.
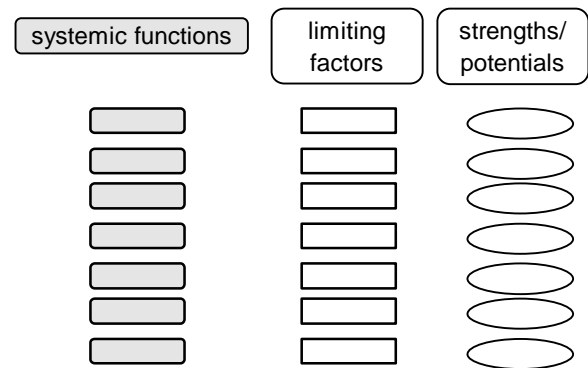
Step 4: Objectives for change

The three columns are now used to draw up objectives for change. In this context, the following **sequence of priorities** should be observed:

(1) **Environment and products**: quality and quantity of goods and services, demand and market position, portfolio.
(2) **Ability to cooperate**: cooperation with other organisations.
(3) **Staff development**: expertise and capabilities of staff, team development and social skills.
(4) **Internal structures and processes**: allocation of tasks, rules, information flow and decision-making.

The objectives for change must be sought at the highest possible level of objectives, so that the forces for self-organisation can be mobilised and strengthened: What must we change at the level of objectives (1), such that (2), (3) and (4) are adjusted automatically? What must we change at levels (1) and (2), such that (3) and (4) are adjusted automatically? etc..

C Result

Systemic diagnosis takes the organisational experiences of the members as its starting point, and leads to a consensus regarding the key limiting factors and potentials. It promotes the willingness to change, and allows objectives for change to be drawn up which build on the organisation's own strengths.

T-12: **Subjective Organisation Charts**

A Method

There is no ideal organisation chart X for organisation Y, and an organisation chart tells us nothing about the performance capability of an organisation. Organisation charts are simply cognitive maps representing an organisation from a **functional perspective** as a hierarchical system of division of tasks.

Organisation charts represent an ideal situation, are **aids to orientation** and serve as planning tools. They cannot show the real socio-technical dynamics of the organisation: open positions, the performance capability of an organisation, circumvention of official channels or the real relations of communication remain invisible.

Organisation charts reveal and conceal at the same time. Since more coordination tasks are generated as the division of tasks increases, organisation charts attempt to prevent this by methodological means, for instance by creating staff units or organisational matrices. When this occurs, communication, relationships and work procedures are deliberately neglected.

Organisation charts express the **perspective** of the management of an organisation, and to a certain extent represent the official version of things. We can also elaborate organisational charts from different perspectives, for instance from the perspective of the staff, or the perspective of outsiders. This makes sense if we are interested in subjective organisational experiences, or client-orientation.

B Application

B-1: **The view from inside**

We ask the staff of an organisation the following question: With which supra-ordinate, coordinate and subordinate colleagues do you cooperate?

To represent this we use a circular model. At the centre of the circle is the name of the staff member (X). Superordinate, peer and subordinate colleagues are entered on the concentric circlers. The size of the entry represents the number of working contacts per unit of time.
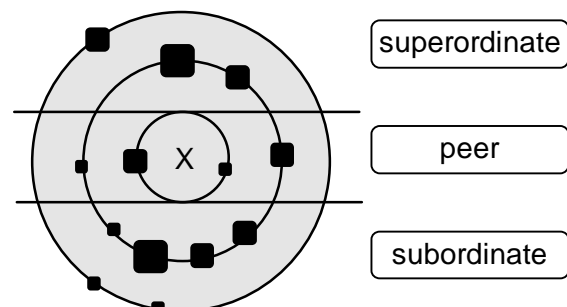
B-2: **The view from outside**

We ask outsiders, for instance the key partners in cooperation or suppliers, the following question: How do you see the organisation on the basis of your relations with it?

To represent the responses we use a model based on perspective: Those individuals and units with whom relations are most intensive are placed at the front.
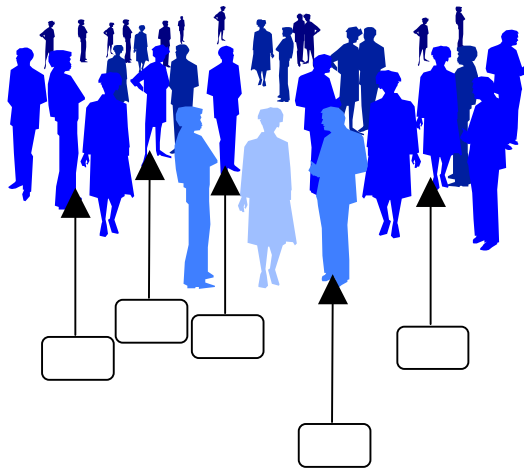
C Result

We access the organisational reality through these numerous perspectives, angles and interpretations. It is revealing to compare different organisational charts as cognitive maps. This provides information on the organisational structure, the informal flow of information, on intersections, on the degree of centralism and power centres, and on client-orientation.

B-3: **Client contacts**

We represent the organisation from the perspective of a client. Whom does the client deal with most frequently? Who supports the staff with whom the client deals?

To illustrate this we use a semicircle. The connecting lines represent support. The size of the entry (node) represents the number of interactions with the client per unit of time.
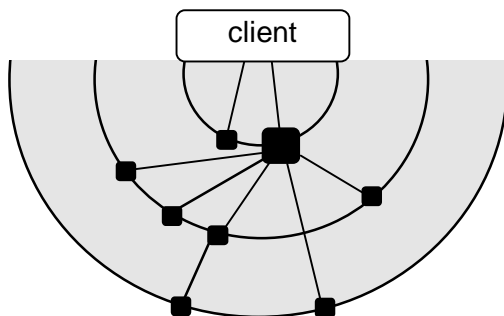
T-13: **Client-orientation**

A Method

Organisations produce goods and provide services to satisfy a **client's need**. The benefit derived by the client is a key criterion for the success and continued existence of the organisation.

There are a range of possible ways in which an organisation can make itself **client-oriented**. Here is a selection of **seven fields of observation**:

1. **Client needs**: The organisation identifies client needs on a regular basis, takes seriously problems emerging during interaction with the client, responds to changes in client needs and monitors development trends within the wider environment.

2. **Communication**: The organisation links goods and services to messages which are appropriate to emphasise and firmly establish in the client's mind the benefits of the product(s).

3. **Centring of competence**: The organisation concentrates on goods and services which it can produce especially well and economically.

4. **Cooperation**: The organisation seeks cooperation with other organisations, to profit from comparative advantages.

5. **Task structuring**: The organisation gears its internal structuring of tasks to client relations.

6. **Quality management**: The organisation monitors quality and adjusts it in line with client needs.

7. **Personnel management**: The organisation develops the key qualifications, primarily of those staff dealing directly with clients.

B Application

To find out where the organisation can improve its client-orientation, it is appropriate to examine closely the **interactions with clients**.

Step 1: Client-bonding

A working group selects **clients** on the basis of two aspects:

- clients with **strong client-bonding** who have availed themselves of goods and services repeatedly.
- clients with **weak client-bonding**, i.e. whom the organisation has only dealt with once.

Step 2: Chain of interactions

For selected clients of both groups, the working group draws up the **chain of interactions**: from the first point of contact, through to the point at which the client was satisfied, and finally returned as a client.
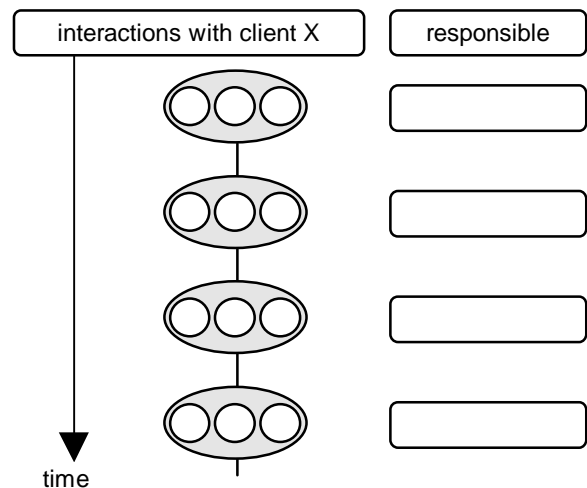
The working group rates the interaction on the basis of a first assessment:

1 = excellent
2 = satisfactory
3 = unsatisfactory
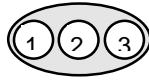
Step 3: Evaluation

The working group presents its evaluation for discussion at a workshop. The responsible staff are requested to **add further comment**, and are asked whether or not they agree with the assessment.

A selection is made from the numerous chains of interaction of those which include a high number of excellent and a high number of unsatisfactory ratings of the interactions with the client. These are then taken as a basis for making **proposals for organisational improvement**. The figure on the right relates to the above-mentioned **seven fields of observation** of the organisation:

C Result

Organisations have a tendency to become so introspective that they begin to operate as if they were an end in themselves. Focusing attention on the clients promotes a more outward-looking approach, and thus the organisations' adaptability. Repeated regularly, the method presented here can become an instrument of quality management, and can be used to carry out on a self-reliant basis, small but important organisational changes.

T-14: **Benefits of Cooperation**

A Method

Voluntary cooperation between different partners is only possible when an **advantage**, a benefit to the actors, is generated by that cooperation.

We can regulate horizontal cooperation through contracts, but the crucial factor for performance of the contract and for remaining in the cooperative relationship boils down to one question: What's in it for me?

This question can only be answered from the **perspective of the actors** themselves, and the answer given will change during the course of the cooperation. In other words, we will need to ask ourselves this key question on repeated occasions.

Considerations of benefit are relative. If in the eyes of others certain partners are deriving a disproportionately large benefit, this **imbalance** - irrespective of how objective the judgement is - can lead to a termination of the relationship.

The benefits of cooperation consist not only in economic advantages. We also have to include **independence,** or the possibility of **learning** within an alliance. Consequently, cooperation of a voluntary nature will withstand only a low level of hierarchical relationships. Accentuated hierarchies lead to individual actors withdrawing from the cooperation.

B Application

Step 1: Analysis of actors

The term "actor" is not sharply defined. In one case it might denote governmental or private organisations, in another it might mean specific sub-organisations or groups of individuals. Decentral sub-organisations, for instance the local branch of the ministry for forestry or the operational extension unit of an NGO, differ so profoundly from their head offices (in terms of mandate, resources, client-orientation) that it is appropriate to view them as different actors.

It is quite possible for individuals to belong to different groups of actors: they lead a women's group and hold a seat on the local council, they are cattle farmers and at the same time are on the board of the cattle breeders' association.

group of actors 1

group of actors 3

group of actors 2
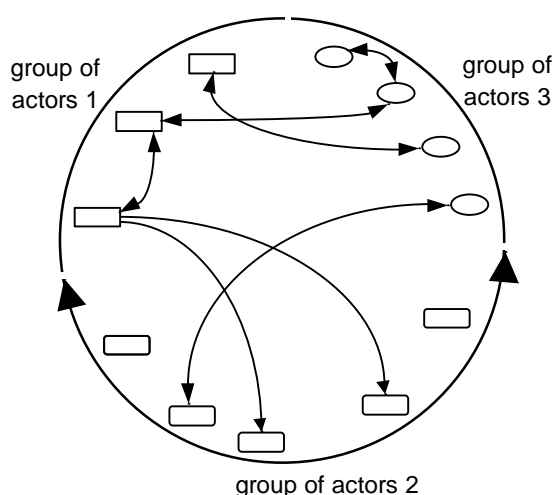
→ subordinate relationship
↔ relationship of intensive exchange

The circular diagram emphasises cooperation within the plane. The three key questions are:

- Who is involved?
- To which group - differentiated by level - does the actor belong? (local - regional - national)
- What major relationships do the actors maintain with each other?

Step 2: Analysis of benefits

We need to ask each one of the actors the question as to the benefits of cooperation.

To present the results for discussion, we can use the same circle diagram:

group of actors 2
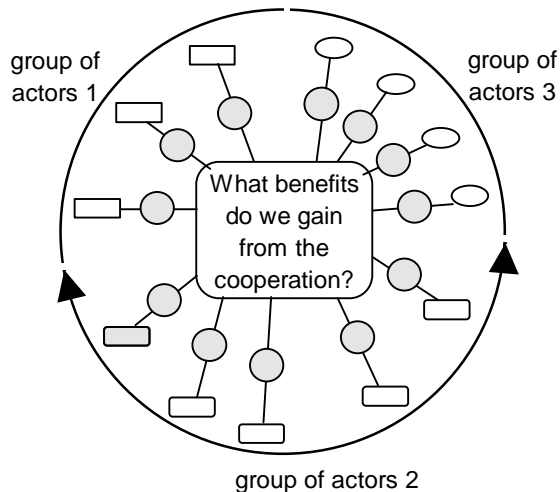
Should actors have difficulty in seeing any benefit in the cooperation, this indicates that there are already pre-existing or latent **problems for cooperation**.

Commonalities with regard to the benefits of cooperation are **ambivalent** in terms of what they signify: The actors may have an interest in close cooperation, or they may be in competition.

Where the targeted benefit of an actor is in harmony with the **objective of cooperation**, we can assume that the actor will have a growing interest in the cooperation. However, we should not be surprised by the fact that, in most cases, the benefit turns out to be more or less far removed from the **declared objective of cooperation** (e.g. afforestation). In each case, the objective of cooperation is the lowest common denominator upon which the actors have agreed.

C Result

Actors draw different benefits from a cooperation. Their motives for cooperation are diverse.

Observation of the benefits of cooperation provides important information on the behaviour of the partners in cooperation.

T-15: **Qualitative Analysis of Cooperation**

A   Method

Organisations exchange information, goods and services. However, it is almost impossible to predict the **developmental dynamics** of relationships between different, independent private and governmental organisations. It is therefore all the more important to **observe** them **continuously**. Yet we cannot see everything! The image which springs to mind is one of jumping fleas: Imagine we lived in a two-dimensional world. A flea jumps - through the third dimension - from one place to another. Whilst in mid-jump it disappears from our sight, to reappear unexpectedly somewhere else. The spatial dimension to which we have no access leaves us in wonder and amazement ...

And yet: There do exist a small number of normal economic phenomena. The division of labour leads to increasing **transaction costs**, caused by coordination and steering. At the point where these costs exceed the benefits of cooperation, one would expect organisations acting rationally to withdraw from that cooperation. Yet cooperation is just as little based exclusively on rational calculation of benefits as any human relationship.

Relationships of cooperation range from mere **exchange of information**, via strategic **alliances** and through to limited-term **cooperation agreements** which establish a cooperation based on the division of labour. These warm up, turn dormant, and cool down again.

A network of cooperation is seen differently by each of the participating organisations: there is **no objective centre**. We need to change our location and perspective, so that we can draw conclusions from comparison of our observations.

Within the cooperation system, all participating partners are involved in steering, albeit to **differing extents** and with different **interests**. Ideally, the network is comparable to points on the surface of a sphere: All points are potential centres, but the network looks different when seen from each of the points.

When one of the partners in cooperation takes on a **task of coordination**, an automatic shift in power and influence takes place. The following questions might be raised:

- Does the coordinating organisation enjoy the necessary acceptance among the other organisations?
- Does the coordinating organisation have at its disposal the capability and the necessary resources to perform the communicative tasks?
- What shifts in power are to be anticipated?
- Which decisions must the coordinating organisation discuss and agree on with all participating organisations?

B   Application

B-1: **Observation of steering**

Who performs the following core tasks?

1   Communication
- emphasis on overriding, common goals.
- processing of information on important development trends.
- promotion of exchange of information and active participation in planning and evaluation.
- drawing-up of plausible, transparent and acceptable criteria and methods for evaluation.

- definition of binding rules and conflict management procedures.

2 Clarity
- stimulation of cooperation through greater clarity:
  - periodic review of roles.
  - support in the simplification of planning, contractual agreements, definition of quality criteria and methods of evaluation.

3 Complementarity
- emphasis on strengths, potentials and complementarity of the participating organisations.
- periodic analysis of tasks with the participating organisations.

4 Focus
- confinement to key areas and strengths: core business.
- gradual, cautious expansion in agreement with the existing partners.

5 Competence
- promotion of mutual recognition of professional capabilities.
- arrangement and support of personal exchange of experience.

6 Coherence
- identification and clear presentation of the advantages of cooperation and the lowest common denominator.
- evaluation of experiences with the participating organisations, also in connection with the impacts of the cooperation on the participating organisations.

7 Continuity
- emphasis on the long-term, common interests.
- support of sustainability through strategic planning.

B-2: Critical events

Once a cooperation system has been formed on the basis of an analysis of tasks, and the coordination tasks have been defined, the structure begins to **move** as practical cooperation progresses. In other words, the tasks already defined and the obligations entered into change. Organisations which respond not **flexibly** but formalistically to this will soon break off cooperation, or attempt to impose their view on their partners. There are a number of critical factors or symptoms which point to a looming **crisis** in the cooperation system:

💣
If the processing and exchange of **information** are not based on accepted agreements, **imbalances** and **mistrust** arise. The information gaps are filled by the partners' imaginations, | mutual predictability and trust subside.

💣
During the cooperation, shifts in influence and power take place. This does not exclude the possibility that rivalries and competition may arise. If tensions grow into a dysfunctional conflict, which threatens to turn into a **game of winners and losers**, | then potential losers withdraw, regardless of how important they are for other partners in cooperation.

💣
When specific organisations feel controlled by more powerful partners and a **vertical** pattern of behaviour becomes the norm, | weaker partners withdraw from the cooperation.

💣
One organisation is of the view that another is interfering in its **internal affairs** | and as a result withdraws from the cooperation.

💣
In the course of the cooperation, **fresh alliances** are formed among the partners which others perceive as a threat, as they then become de facto excluded from the **inner circle**. This can lead to | the entire cooperation network collapsing and having to reform.

B-3: Analysis of a relationship

The following method has proved useful for in-depth analysis of a single relationship of cooperation:

Step 1: Separation of perspectives

The two partners in cooperation are invited to analyse the relationship on the basis of **their experiences and assessments**. Steps 2 and 3 below are carried out **separately**, i.e. with two working groups from the two organisations working separately.

Step 2: Criteria

The seven criteria are explained with a positively worded indicator. They can be **adapted** to the situation, and **weighted** with a factor F of between 1 and 3: Which of the seven criteria conveys little or no significant information? Which criterion is missing? Which criteria are in our view more important than others?

Criteria	F
1 Agreed goals We periodically define goals on a joint basis.	
2 Contract We enter into unequivocal, clear written or verbal agreements concerning rights and obligations.	
3 Contractual fidelity We comply with agreements entered into, or give early notice of any deviations.	
4 Advantages We derive benefit from the cooperation.	
5 Trust We actively inform our partners of our intentions.	
6 Communication We nominate contact persons, respond as quickly as possible and make appropriate means of communication available.	
7 Conflicts We address conflicts early on and directly, and offer to help find ways of dealing with them.	

Criteria & examples	F	++	+	-	- -
1 Agreed goals e.g.					
2 Contract e.g.					
3 Contractual fidelity e.g.					
4 Advantages e.g.					
5 Trust e.g.					
6 Communication e.g.					
7 Conflicts e.g.					

Step 3: Rating

The two working groups continue working with their revised and weighted list of criteria. They **rate** their relationship to other organisations, and supplement the **relationship profile** with examples and comments.

Step 4: Discussion and evaluation

The two working groups present to each other their seven criteria, their respective weightings and their relationship profiles. They explain their ratings by giving **examples**. The overall rating can also be expressed as a numerical value, representing the total of ratings of the individual criteria on a scale of 1 to 4.

During the evaluation, **the atmosphere of the discussion** will be crucially determined by the extent to which commonalities are emphasised. As a rule, the answering of questions requesting further explanation of points not understood will lead to a comparison of the different interpretations of the relationship derived from the different perspectives.

Marked discrepancies are symptoms of smouldering conflict. Having said that, an imbalance need not always be redressed, as asymmetrical-complementary relationships are quite capable of being functional. The partners in cooperation lay down in a **plan of action** which measures they wish to take to improve the cooperation.

C Result

The observation of dynamic processes of cooperation can focus on important tasks and critical factors. Nevertheless, surprises are not ruled out. Specific important conflict-laden relationships must be analysed regularly, together with the partners in cooperation.

T-16: **Quantitative Analysis of Cooperation**

A Method

Relationships of cooperation have **substantial content**: information, goods and services are exchanged. This relationship of exchange is steered by rules, which are initially only of an informal nature, and are strongly influenced by personal relationships. When products are exchanged, the need to secure the relationship within a contractual framework increases, as the level of interest and associated risks grows.

In view of their dynamic and turbulent nature, we should also attempt to describe relationships of cooperation using **simple quantitative magnitudes**. This makes it easier for the partners to understand imbalances and to review roles.

If we confine ourselves to a relationship between organisations A and B, we can ask ourselves the following two key questions:

- What is the relative significance of the cooperation to the two organisations A and B?
- What other relationships bind the two organisations together?

B Application

- **Financial volume**: We compare the total annual turnover (or annual budgets) of organisations A and B. The relative sizes of the two circles correspond to this ratio. We then enter segments in the circles which represent the percentage of total turnover accounted for by the cooperation for each of the organisations A and B. This can be represented as follows:
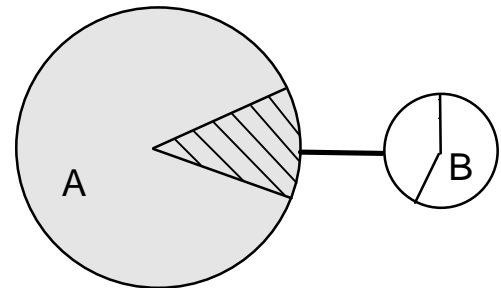
The sizes of the segments in relation to the total volume mean that, for organisation A, the cooperation accounts for approximately 10% of **economic and human resource deployment**, whilst for organisation B the figure is over 40%. The **dependency** of organisations A and B on the cooperation is also correspondingly disequitable.

- **Staff commitment**: Similarly, we compare for the two organisations A and B the relationship between total working time per year, and working time generated by or invested in the cooperation.

- **Memberships**: A further relationship which may be significant is that of common memberships of third organisations held by individuals belonging to organisations A and B, or by the organisations themselves.

C Result

Quantitative relations make an important contribution to our understanding of the behaviour of partners in cooperation. In particular, they reveal the relative dependence on the cooperation.

A Method

In social and organisational relationships, power is the ability of a person or an institution to impose their will on another person or institution, even if the latter does not wish that to occur.

Relations of power and coercion permeate all areas of life, since we are both dependent and vulnerable: physically, emotionally, socially and economically.

In groups and organisations, power is distributed, exercised, declared and transfigured in different ways. Yet it is most certainly a **human invention**: created and changed by people.

For a relationship of power to come into play, there must exist a **dependency** between the two parties, usually involving several dimensions: economic, social and emotional. The **enforcement of power** is based on the threat or exercise of **coercion**.

The exercise of power is governed by different rules in each society, and within each smaller social unit. To understand power relations within relationships of co-operation, we need to ask ourselves three **key questions**:

- On what foundation is power built?
- How does power affect a relationship?
- When and why do relations of power change?

Power has a **material base** in the inequitable access to scarce resources, for instance to land, water or capital. This inequity is cemented through educational inequity, and a lack of equal opportunity to assert legal rights.

Power always takes on **symbolic** trappings: spatial demarcations mark out distance, ceremonial actions and signs enhance, consolidate and legitimate it.

Power relations have a **history**: they exist within the context of a social, cultural and symbolic world view. This means that characteristics such as gender, age, educational status and ethnicity are inextricably linked to relationships of power.

The most naked form of the exercise of power is sheer **violence**: the power to inflict harm on others, to turn them into helpless victims. Consequently, we can never quite conceive of a life free from anxiety and fear of others. Coexistence also means constantly having to live in fear and protect ourselves.

Power can be exercised more easily through direct violence where

- socially-conditioned **indifference** to the suffering of victims causes people to look the other way, and erodes scruples and
- the face behind the violence is made anonymous through mechanisation and automation.

We can distinguish three categories **of acts of power**:

- acts which guarantee or **damage material security**,
- acts which strengthen or **reduce social status**,
- acts which physically injure or protect.

The three acts of power mutually reinforce each other: a curtailment of resources

leading to a loss of the means to subsist can, for instance, entail exclusion from a group. Punishment and loss of freedom are often associated with a loss of social recognition, and economic disadvantage.

The very **possibility** of power being exercised is enough to make power relationships work. Many acts of power are preceded by censure and admonition, to promote this gentle form of coercion.

Power relations are dialectic: The anticipation of rewards or sanctions lend the powerful an **aura**, which facilitates the exercise of power and promotes the identification of the less powerful with the more powerful (power fantasies). The exercise of power leads to **compulsive behaviour** when people can only act under the pressure of the threat of sanctions, or promise of rewards, in the future. Or if they aspire only to maintain or extend their power.

The structures of an organisation are coagulated clots of power: They regulate and organise access to power and power competences. Norms, habits, routines and symbols secure those structures.

When structures change or dissolve, the established balances of power also change to the benefit of individual persons and interest groups. We perceive these shifts as moments or periods of crisis and insecurity.

The dynamics of power distribution in relationships are complex. We will confine ourselves here to **two fields of observation**:

- **Sources of power**: How does the power which individuals and groups have, arise and develop?
- **Power relations in organisations**: Which characteristics of an organisation reflect the relations of power within it?

Issues of power are considered delicate, as we are unable to address power relations if the actors are unwilling to do so.

B   Application

B-1: **Positional power and sources of power**

Members of groups and organisations have an ascribed or acquired **positional power**, expressed through their position and function within the hierarchy. The organisation assigns it, consolidates it, secures it and attaches **status symbols** to it.

Positional power involves the **right to wield authority**. The range of this power is finite; is confined for instance to the authority to issue instructions to the staff of a department, but not fix salaries or take decisions on promotion. Only the **power of money** knows no physical boundaries.

Step 1: Positional power

The participants of a workshop, or individual members of an organisation are invited to discuss their positional power.

Practically speaking, we exercise positional power through:

- **TQ**: targets and quality control,
- **IP**: access to information and participation in decision-making,
- **M**: allocation or refusal to allocate materials,
- **SI**: standardisation and issue of directives,
- **RS**: rewards, acknowledgement and sanctions.
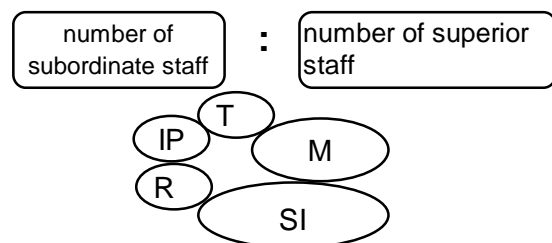
The relative proportions of the positional power components can be expressed by the sizes of the ovals.

It can be illuminating in the discussion if the participants also describe their earlier position in the organisation.

Additional step 1: For purposes of comparison, the same picture can also be drawn up by outsiders, for instance by superiors and subordinates. However, this is not possible in organisations where power issues are taboo. How openly power issues can be addressed is dependent on the **power culture** in the respective groups and organisations. This is shaped by both sides of a relationship of power: on the one hand by the extent to which the individual exercising the power feels subjectively entitled to do so, and on the other hand by the **acceptance** s/he enjoys among his or her subordinates.

Additional step 2: The opinion that, in western-oriented organisations, professional competence alone is the key to positional power, is a widespread misconception. In all organisations, this power is legitimated through organisation-specific and social means. **Subjective reports** (constructs) on the issue of the legitimacy of power can be illuminating: background, gender, age, property, influence, merit, industry, professional experience, expertise, social and professional competence.

Step 2: Sources

In groups and organisations, positional power is docked into **power sources** which reinforce or weaken it. It is easier to tap into and exhaust these sources from a strong position of power than it is from a weak one.

Processes of extending power (self-empowerment) are, as a rule, less geared to achieving positional power than to gradually tapping into new power sources.

Which sources are these?

- **IN - information**: power derived from control over the flow of information and influence over the information contained.
- **CN - communicative and negotiating power**: power to grasp, describe and convey ideas comprehensibly, to convince, and in so doing to assert one's own interests.
- **EK - expert knowledge**: power based on specialised knowledge which others do nor possess and which, as a rule, is protected by formal titles.
- **PO - practical orientation**: power growing from learned capabilities, and ex-

pressed in the ability to bring something about.
- **CR - creativity**: power arising from the capability to develop new ideas and things, and to look at existing ideas and things from a fresh angle.
- **SR - social relationships**: power derived from belonging to a social group, stratum or class, and secured through relationships with other power holders.
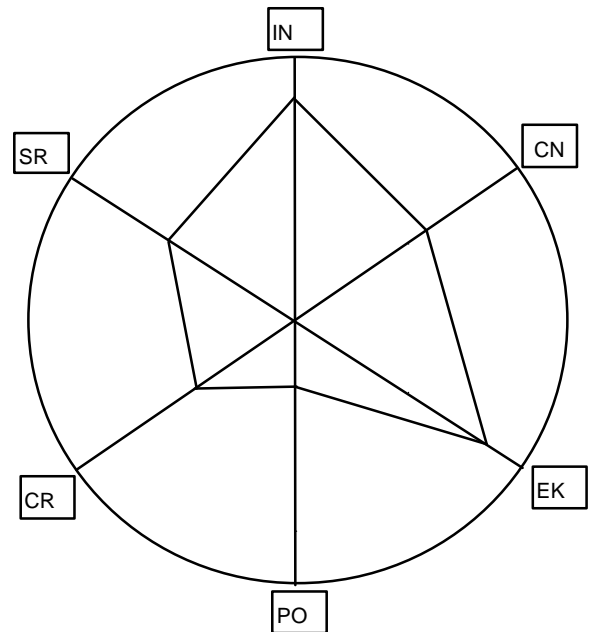
The participants draw their own hexagon of power sources, and offer it for discussion in a small group, giving examples.

Use of the various power sources is steered by three salient factors:

- **organisational cultures**: these create better or worse preconditions for specific power sources.
- established **communication patterns**: these make it possible to utilise or inhibit the utilisation of specific power sources.
- **gender-specific** behaviour: women and men attach different values to and anticipate different benefits from specific power sources.

B-2: Power relations in organisations

Organisations assign roles, and determine who may influence decision-making processes. In other words: They define the circle of people involved and framework for **participation**. Why is participation appropriate?

- Participation makes people more shrewd: It creates access to knowledge and experience, and brings solutions to problems more closely into line with practical conditions.
- Participation promotes self-confidence and responsibility: The participating actors grow into their active role, and influence decisions.
- Participation creates acceptance for changes: The participating actors adjust to new things.

Organisations attempt to keep complexity low by imposing **hierarchical structures**: The prescribed order acts as a substitute for negotiation of working relations, and is designed to make the work easier to monitor and control. However, this standardisation weakens **flexibility** and **adaptability**. Consequently, the performance capability of strongly hierarchical organisations is disputed - even as regards repetitive tasks.

Depending on the tasks involved, organisations have a **shallow** or a **steep** hierarchy.

Steep hierarchies have the advantage of being clearly structured, thus inspiring confidence in their members that they are doing the right thing. They are predictable, since roles are clearly allocated. As the division of labour increases, they are conducive to the formation of broad **intermediate hierarchical strata** involving complex decision-making paths. However, even the most rigid hierarchical structures are constantly being evaded, as peoples' capacity to anticipate the consequences of their own actions are limited. Therefore, once structures have been defined they are then evaded, and periodically revised. Those at the top of steep hierarchies run a constant risk of being cut off from reality. This is the case, for instance, where the management surrounds itself only with faithful paladins.

Shallow hierarchies have the advantage of being adaptable, conducive to cooperation and learning-oriented. The shallow hierarchy, as encountered for instance in project groups, does however require that members talk to each other, and are capable of constant self-coordination. The malleability of these structures makes them prone to the emergence of informal power structures which lack transparency.

Looking at a hierarchical structure we can identify the **routes up the career ladder**, which not all will be able to follow. Since not everyone can reach the top, this creates competition. However, selection procedures often consume a great deal of social **energy**: Members watch each other, and self-serving cliques and rivalries emerge. In the cut-and-thrust of competition, it is precisely those qualities which are crucial for tasks of leadership and coordination which are not rewarded: ability to cooperate, transparency, trustworthiness, and an ability to support others.

Step 1: Structural characteristics

The power culture within groups and organisations can be observed via three **structural characteristics**: the power gap, the degree of bureaucratisation and the styles of management practised. Simple indicators include for instance:

- **Power gap**: number of hierarchical levels. number of persons in staff units in relation to personnel with line management functions. number of personnel with supervisory responsibilities. wage gap. centralisation of decision-making on issues of policy, strategy, personnel, technical matters.

- **Degree of bureaucratisation**: number of separate tasks with prescribed procedures, responsibilities and official channels. density of regulations and standards. importance attached to written communications in keeping of records. formal conditions for entrance and requirements for promotion. graduated remuneration and status symbols. depersonalisation of responsibility for decision-making.

- **Styles of management**: Management is practical steering work in relationships of power. It is dependent on communication and allegiance. The style of management practised is always a compromise reached under the influence of four polar factors:

  | biography of the superior, e.g. authoritarian role models.
  | the nature of the tasks themselves, e.g. problem-solving tasks involving non-standard procedures
  | expectations of the individuals being managed, e.g. clear definition of goals with maximum individual scope
  | power culture of the organisation, e.g. bureaucratic procedures.

There are no ideal management personalities. There is merely empirical evidence that complex problems are better and more quickly solved through a **consultative** and **goal-oriented** style of management. Consequently, the **level of conscious awareness** of the management style needs to be questioned:

Are different styles of management possible?
Are their impacts observed and thought about?
What expectations do the superiors/subordinates have regarding management?
Are the superiors aware of the style of management which they are practising?
Do the superiors negotiate the social relationship of "leadership" with those involved?

Step 2: Distance of power

The power culture in groups and organisations is reflected in the **bonds of authority** within power-based relationships. There is always a greater or lesser degree of **distance** between those holding power and their subordinates, which the subordinates either more or less accept and tolerate.

Observation of this distance provides pointers as to

- the **stability** of the distribution of power as it stands
- the **identification** of the subordinates with those holding power
- tendencies and efforts to bring about a **redistribution of power**

Rationales of distance can be addressed in structured group discussions, or in one-on-one meetings; they can be related to four aspects:

- **Personal qualities** of those wielding power: charisma, background, prestige, influential connections.
- **Professional capabilities** of those wielding power: expert knowledge, experience, brilliance, speed, clarity.

- **Social capabilities**: reliability, predictability, openness, cooperativeness, transparency, trustworthiness, fairness, willingness to support.
- **Organisational culture**: models, group culture of superiors, management directives.

C Result

All human beings observe relationships of power involuntarily. They fascinate us, and give rise to wild speculation. If and when we are able and willing to address issues of power, it is all the more important that we do so with caution and on the basis of a thought-out strategy.

Raising issues of power is equivalent to asserting a claim to power. Consequently, we first need to ask ourselves the questions raised here.

T-18: **Cooperation at Local Level**

A Method

As is generally known, a **diversity of organisations** operate in local areas: the local administration, municipal enterprises, the justice of the peace, the police force, the parish, religious and ceremonial associations, neighbourhood self-help groups, special-purpose associations for the maintenance of community facilities, savings associations and credit cooperatives, purchasing and marketing cooperatives, parents' associations, mothers' clubs, youth groups, artisans' associations, user associations for forest, water, pasture or electricity users, manufacturing enterprises, small engineering offices, building contractors, local groupings of regional or national parties, trade unions, professional bodies, etc.

Cooperation between organisations in a specific locality is also shaped by **personal** and in some cases **family relationships** among its members. People know each other, they meet on a regular basis, and are at the same time members of several organisations.

It is therefore a logical first step to familiarise ourselves with and observe these **memberships**.

The size, purpose, goals, resources and performance capability of these organisations vary widely. However, it is often less what an individual organisation can achieve that is important, and more what the organisations can achieve in **cooperation**. This question arises for instance in cases where central government devolves new **tasks** upon local authorities, and allocates to them the necessary **resources** and **competences**. Within these processes of **decentralisation**, the local administration is assigned the core task of bringing together and coordinating local organisations.

The question raised in this context is: Who can do what best: What are the **comparative advantages** of the various organisations?

B Application

B-1: **Memberships**

Step 1: The network

It is basically of no significance where we begin within a network of organisations to examine the issue of memberships. The simplest approach is to start where we know relationships already exist. (Enquiring about memberships of third parties should if at all possible be avoided, as this creates mistrust).

Our mapping of the network of personal interconnections will be more reliable if we proceed from several individuals at the same time. The network might for instance be represented like this:
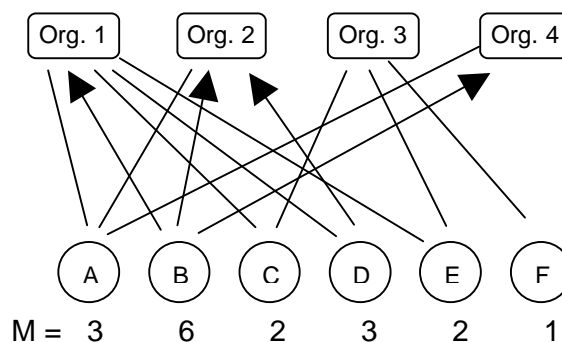
The arrows indicate that the membership of the respective organisation involves a senior position. The arrow is counted double in determining the value M (= number of memberships).

Step 2: The membership matrix

To obtain a clearer overview, we represent the relationships in matrix form. We enter the positive numerical value M (= number of memberships) in the respective box where a membership exists; we enter the negative value where no relationship exists.

Organisations ➜ Individuals ⬇	1	2	3	4
A	3	3	- 3	3
B	6	6	- 6	6
C	2	- 2	2	- 2
D	3	3	- 3	- 3
E	2	- 2	2	- 2
F	- 1	- 1	1	- 1
Value V	15	7	- 7	1

Value V is a simple numerical indicator of the relative significance of organisations 1 to 4. What is surprising in this example is the fact that organisation 4 has a higher value than 3, because although it does not have many members, it has more influential ones such as B, who also hold positions in other organisations.

B-2: Comparative advantages

Step 1: Representation

Local organisations can significantly increase their performance capability through cooperation. This also creates motivation for community development.

By holding workshops with local organisations, or by visiting them, **self-assessments** can be generated, leading to the question of comparative advantages: With whom do we wish, with whom are we able, to cooperate in order to raise our performance?

The self-assessment focuses on four characteristics:

- **Willingness to achieve (W)**
Have we set ourselves goals?
What are we doing to attain our goals?
How great is our interest in cooperating with other organisations?

- **Performance capability (P)**
Which human resources and capabilities do we have at our disposal in order to attain our goals?
What material resources can we count on?
Do we know how to deploy these scarce resources most effectively?

- **Cohesion (C)**
Since when have we been cooperating?
How many members are actively involved?
How many members have we gained or lost over the last twelve months?
What keeps us together?

- **Legitimacy (L)**
What secures us recognition among other local organisations?
What influence do we have on other organisations?

Step 2: Radial profile

To begin the discussion, the self-assessment can be represented as a radial profile:
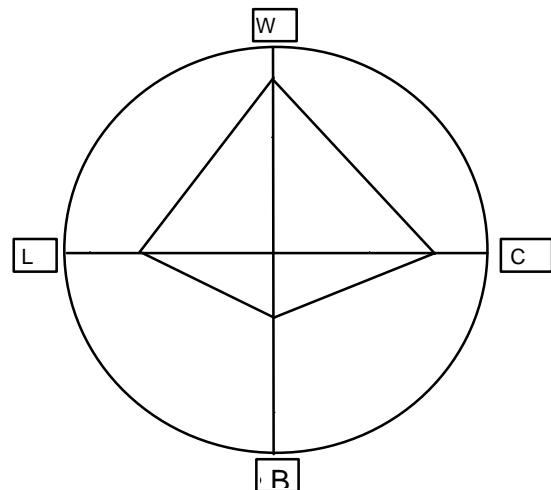
C Result

The boundaries of local organisations are fluid, and the performance capability of those organisations fluctuates. By observing memberships, we can better understand the fluid boundaries and the relative importance of specific organisations. Before focusing on the promotion of specific organisations, it is appropriate to sound out the potentials for cooperation. In many cases, when an organisation becomes open to cooperation, this triggers off sustainable learning processes.

A Method

Conflicts are an everyday concomitant of any cooperation. There is no such thing as **permanently conflict-free relationships**. Wherever people work together, there will be clashes between different opinions, needs and interests, both between individuals, and between groups and organisations.

In everyday life, we resolve most conflicts in an unspectacular fashion. We negotiate **compromises**, make concessions, and the next day nobody remembers that there was any conflict at all.

There are **latent** (cold, smouldering, concealed) and **manifest** (hot, openly argued-out) conflicts, which mutually reinforce each other. Conflicts are processes of negotiation which usually lead unexpectedly from dialogue via debate and dispute through to emotionally-charged argument. Anger, feelings of helplessness, contempt and hatred fuel the conflict. The parties to the conflict turn into merciless enemies and lock antlers. Annihilation of the adversary becomes the main objective. The damage remains: destroyed interpersonal relationships, physically and emotionally injured human beings, ruined settlements, scorched earth.

Projects also trigger conflicts, and fuel them unintentionally. They draw **new lines of conflict** in the organisational landscape, make them visible and accentuate them through the targeted changes: For instance, a new land-use strategy ascribes to women a new, active role, shifts the relationship of dependency between small tenants and landowners in favour of organised user groups, or requires a change in the prevailing land-use system.

Where users compete for scarce resources, the question arises of the extent to which **we ourselves are part of the conflict**, and to what extent we should become **actively involved** in solving the conflict.

The ability to act **appropriately** in conflict situations and in a manner **acceptable** to the actors presupposes **powers of empathy** and **self-detachment**. We perhaps need to ask ourselves the following questions:

- What is going on here? What is at stake? How can I obtain information in order to gain an initial overview of the situation?
- What is my role? What is my part in the conflict?
- What do I lack and need in order to be able to make a contribution to management of the conflict?

Conflicts are a source of interference, because they frustrate our plans. We are capable only to a limited extent of understanding and predicting the consequences of our actions and the actions of others. To rectify the **problem**, we tend to seek rash solutions. For many conflicts, however, there is no final solution in the given time span and social framework. We have to come to terms with them and live with them. We perhaps have to smooth them over or postpone them, even at the risk that they might erupt again. To detach ourselves from the negative understanding of conflict, it is beneficial if we call to mind the **positive aspects** inherent in such sources of tension:

- **Signal effect**: Conflicts point to symptoms and open questions.
- **Interests**: Conflicts reveal where interests lie.
- **Stimulus**: Conflicts make self-observation more acute.
- **Cohesion**: Conflicts consolidate social relationships.
- **Change**: Conflicts push forward changes.

B Application

There are a broad **selection of possible ways to act** in conflict situations. They range from observation, via inquiry through to active conflict moderation. Actions may be directed with differing degrees of intensity at the **causes of the conflict**, the **progress of the conflict** and the possible **impacts of the conflict**.

	causes of conflict	progress of conflict	impacts of conflict
become aware and observe	💣		💣
ask questions	💣	💣	
suggest dialogue		💣	
establish dialogue	💣	💣	
define roles		💣	
ascertain expectations		💣	💣
share emotions	💣	💣	
sound out scope		💣	
elaborate solutions	💣		💣
evaluate solutions		💣	💣
negotiate solutions		💣	
reach agreements		💣	
monitor impacts			💣

The ability to recognise conflicts in good time and influence them such that the damage is limited, and the parties to the conflicts reach agreement on solutions, requires a great amount of social skill and life experience. Also essential is the **acceptance** an individual needs when actively entering conflict situations. The following **warning signs** point to a number of further pitfalls:

- **Naivety**: "It's a cut and dried case; I know the causes." - Conflicts have a history, which consists of histories told differently by the different parties to the conflict.
- **Violent potential**: "It'll be possible to sort it out." - We often operate in an environment of smouldering violence which defies rational control.
- **Social romanticism:** "I must help the disadvantaged groups." - Taking sides prematurely makes it impossible to take on the role of moderator, and weakens the disadvantaged: Only those who have liberated themselves know how to utilise and defend what they have achieved.
- **Megaphone**: "I've got to get this out into the open." - Many tensions and conflicts are everyday concomitants of cooperation. They constantly build up and subside. Discretion is often more advisable than transparency. Outsiders are not entitled to step backstage and broadcast everything.
- **Umpire pose**: "I am neutral." - This self-assessment is not sufficient for an active, neutral mediator role. The key criteria are acceptance by and expectations of the parties to the conflict.

C Result

It goes without saying that our behaviour in conflict situations is not only rational. Both our assessment of the risks and potential damage, and our understanding of our own role, are coloured by our biographical experiences. It is therefore all the more important that we proceed cautiously, shedding light on fields of conflict, and observing them over a long period before becoming actively involved.

Conflict management requires professional expertise and a level-headed assessment by the moderator of his/her own role. The task confers prestige and power, but also entails risks.

A Method

Anyone wanting to repair something first has to understand how it works. Conflicts develop in several **phases**, can **escalate** through several **stages**, and as a rule involve different **sub-conflicts**.

Conflicts bring the actors under their **influence,** as in conflict situations the actors suddenly become conscious of what the were previously only unconsciously aware of: standards and rules, relations of ownership and power, dependencies and interests. This triggers off anxieties: What some are relieved to see finally reach the light of day, poses a threat to others.

Conflicts narrow **perception**. The actors reconstruct their view of the situation such as to support their own standpoint:

- **Defensive attitude**: The parties to a conflict see themselves as being surrounded on all sides by a hostile environment. A friend-or-foe schema is superimposed on and distorts their perceptual world. The protagonists expect unquestioning and unconditional allegiance. Dissent is not tolerated. This paranoid narrowing of the mind means that members expressing criticism are quickly branded as traitors.

  Efforts to restore harmony: The parties to a conflict gloss over mistakes and failures. Only good news is welcome news. The protagonists surround themselves with unquestioning yes-men. The status quo must be maintained at all costs. Things which might damage harmonious relations are made to look unimportant and shut out in an attempt to pacify. The experience that seeing

conflicts through leads to nothing can also help keep a conflict latent; It smoulders away, damages the working atmosphere, and promotes an attitude of ironic and cynical detachment.

Avoidance of conflict can be put down to factors directly related to the nature of the conflict itself:

- The nearer protagonists are to reaching their goal, the less willing they are to engage in conflicts.
- If the goal is acceptably similar to the original goal, the protagonists will come to some arrangement.
- The more the conflict is seen as unpredictable, the greater the reluctance to become involved.
- Conflict is also avoided where there is a high risk to the loser, or
- a threat of losing face, or status.

It goes without saying that the parties to a conflict deal with it now on **the level of the issue at stake**, now on the **level of the relationships involved**. They defend their material interests, and voice opinions on their adversaries. The primary task of a moderator is therefore to obtain clear answers to the following questions:

- **phases**: Where are we?
- **types of conflict**: What kinds of conflict are involved?
- **stories**: How do the actors explain the causes of the conflict?

Conflict management aims to establish a process of **self-observation** among the parties to the conflict, and halt or reverse the narrowing of perception. The role of the moderator shifts along the continuum between the two opposite poles of an **intervention by force**, which might be necessary under certain circumstances, and an observational role of **process facilitation**.

Between the two lies the role of providing intermediary services and consultancy on request.

B Application

B-1: Phases

Conflicts undergo a cycle of different **phases** of development.
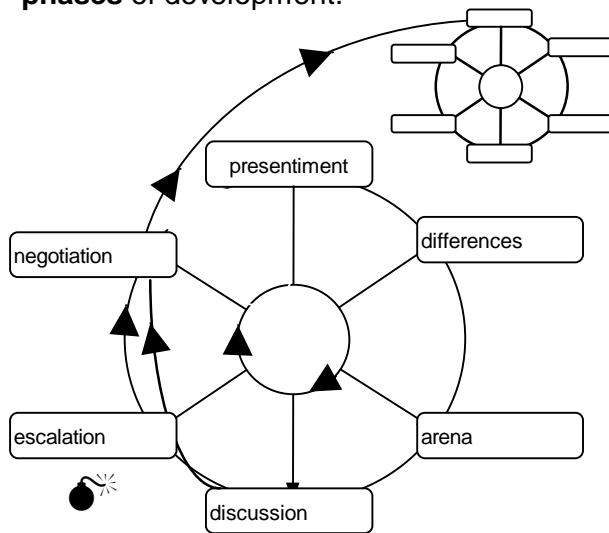
Presentiment
The parties to the virtual conflict are not consciously aware of the differences. They allude to them. Outsiders are already able to identify growing conflict potentials.

Conscious differences
The parties to the conflict are consciously aware of the differences. For economic or social reasons, they refrain from addressing conflict-related issues. The parties to the conflict cut themselves off and avoid direct encounters. They form cliques and actively seek allegiance, especially among individuals with power and influence. If the action of the conflict being fought out is moved backstage - where spite, rivalry and disparagement become concealed - then the path to open conflict management becomes littered with obstacles.

Demarcation of the arena of conflict
The parties to the conflict mark out the conflict with a selection of opinions and interests. In some cases they repudiate the points made by the opposite side in the conflict. The parties compare advantages of location, arguments and coalitions. Depending on how they estimate their chances of success, they attempt to demonise or play down the importance of their adversary, or blot out the conflict.

Discussion
The parties to the conflict attempt to defend their own standpoint and interests. The uncompromising game of win-or-lose elicits resistance from the opposing side, leads to injuries and cripples the forces for compromise on the side waging the battle. Unless external mediators are called in (appeal to civil or criminal law, decisive verdict by someone in power), the conflict escalates.

Escalation
The further the conflict escalates, the more difficult and complicated it is to manage:

Stage I - The fronts harden: Opinions turn into creeds, to which the parties firmly adhere. Direct encounters are accompanied by verbal offence with a high symbolic content, which is then reduced to labels. The parties conceal their own weaknesses, and close ranks. The cooperative forms of conflict management still prevail: The parties may be at odds, but they take note of each other and the arguments put forward. The grim debate remains confined to a small circle. Outside witnesses and interested parties fuel the conflict.

Stage II - Actions speak louder than words: The debate fails to reach a solution. Arguments and errors of the opposing side are polemicised, brought to a head, embroidered and made to seem ridiculous. Meetings take longer and longer, but do not lead to any tangible result. The conviction grows that there will no longer be any agreement. Within the parties, a strong pressure to conform emerges. Anyone willing to compromise or accept the other side's view is suspected of treachery. The social arena suddenly becomes much wider, whilst the arguments become unsophisticated. Both parties become more preoccupied with the nature of the opposite side than with the problem itself. They see themselves as victims, and make the opposing party responsible for their own behaviour. When one of the parties sees an opportunity to assert its interests, it does so. The conflict then becomes a question of power.

Stage III - Threatening attitudes and loss of face: The parties to the conflict are unwilling to make concessions, and adopt an "all-or-nothing" attitude. Mild forms of threat turn into radical ultimatums with firm deadlines. Mistrust and fear develop. The parties become completely cut off from one another, and their behaviour follows a pattern of threats and sanctions on one side, and a feverish quest for countervailing power on the other. The conflict has become com-

pletely divorced from the real issue, and has turned into a matter of principle. Attacks are focused on the adversary's moral integrity and basic attitudes. The aim is to publicly expose the opposite side, cause them to lose face and thus justify the sanctions.

Stage IV - Final blows - If I go down, the enemy goes down with me: The loss of grip on reality leads to a situation in which both parties now think only of their own survival. Thinking about the source of the conflict is now taboo for the actors. The opposing sides avoid direct contact, and keep an even larger psychological distance from each other by denying each other's basic human values, also by spreading deceit and lies. By doing so, they lower their own threshold as regards the use of violence. The opponent's intention to inflict damage becomes a paramount concern. The solution is now: Forward at all costs! The only satisfaction is that, when one side goes down, it can also drag the enemy down with it.

Negotiation

The parties succeed in breaking the spiral of escalation. They return to the discussion phase. With external assistance, direct communication leads to a controlled dialogue. The two sides agree on rules of communication. Different opinions and interests can be expressed. The history of the conflict is jointly analysed. The scope for negotiated solutions widens again. For both sides, provisionally viable and acceptable solutions emerge.

Scope for negotiation between parties A and B:
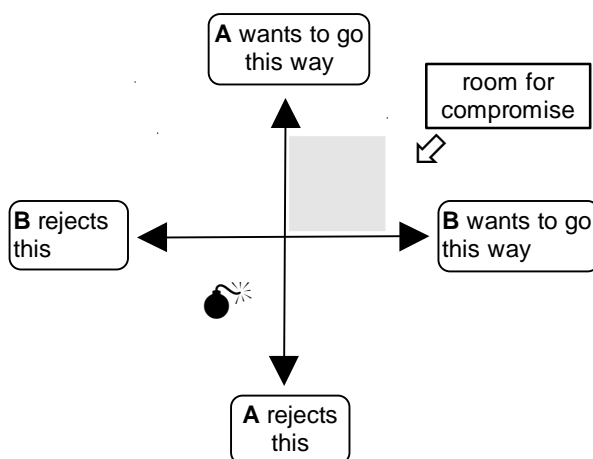
B-2: Types of conflict

Conflicts become suppressed, deferred or poorly resolved when the parties remain unclear as to the **sub-conflicts** of which it is comprised. Within a field of conflict, we can observe different **types of conflict**:

- **Conflict of values**: The parties judge causes and effects of situations differently, which in many cases is attributable to their holding incompatible values.
- **Conflict of cultures**: The actors hold incompatible values as a result of their different cultural backgrounds. These values include ways of encountering people and ideas from other cultures, and the constructions placed on those other people and handed down through one's own cultural tradition.
- **Conflict of distribution**: The parties do not agree on access to and the (fair) distribution of scarce goods and services.
- **Conflict of goals**: The parties are pursuing conflicting goals, which under certain circumstances may be detrimental to the other party.
- **Conflict of schools**: The parties are in dispute over methods and routes of goal attainment, and over scientific hypotheses.
- **Conflict of roles**: The mutual expectations of the parties are incompatible or only partially compatible with the respective conception each side has of its own role.
- **Conflict of information**: The parties try to prevent each other from obtaining information, withhold information, and defame the information sources and the reliability of the information which they supply.
- **Conflict of power**: The parties compete for power, influence and material advantages. They ignore decisions made by the other side, question the other side's professional competence, and evade or obstruct decisions.

B-3: **History**

The management of a conflict always leads back to the **history of its origins**. This history is constantly being written and re-written by the actors. The key questions are:

- **Boundaries**: Who are the parties to the conflict? Who is in dispute with whom? Who is intervening?
- **Issues**: Over which issues are the parties to the conflict in dispute? What do they see as being the issue at stake?
- **Support**: What support from groups or organisations are the parties counting on?
- **Relations**: Since when have relations existed between the parties? Of what nature are they?
- **Objectives**: What are the parties to the conflict aiming towards? What do they seek to achieve? What have they calculated as being their chances of success?
- **Means**: What inputs are they willing to make in order to attain their goals?
- **Conflict experience**: Which major conflicts do the parties remember? What experience do they have of conflict management? How are conflicts dealt with in the groups and organisations within their immediate environment?

The **conflict history** can be visualised through simple means; the starting point is a **concrete event** which one of the parties to the conflict considers important:
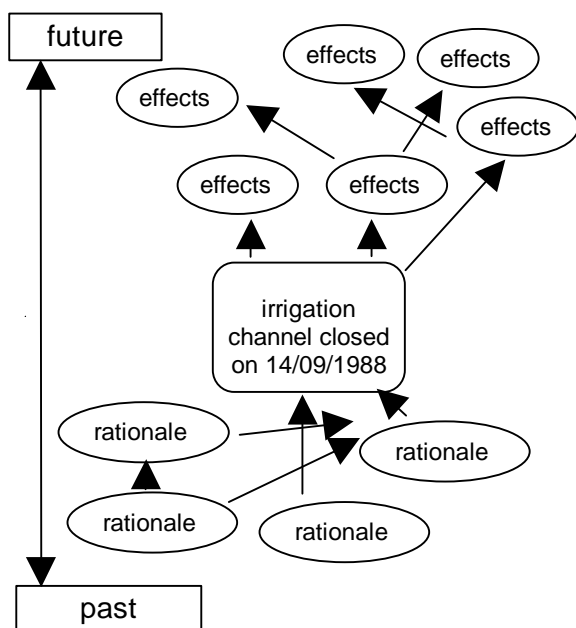
To enable the conflict history to emerge such that it incorporates the different interpretations of the involved actors, we need to apply this method separately with each of the parties to the conflict. A comparison of the results can be a useful starting point for the conflict management process, as the actors are then invited to consider the "objective situation" from various angles.

C Result

A knowledge of the phases, types of conflict and conflict history forms the basis for all active roles in the conflict management process. This knowledge is obtained through observation, and patient listening.

In many natural resource management projects, conflict management can ultimately only be understood as a **dilemma**: On the one hand, projects aim implicitly to redistribute power - for instance with respect to access to and the management of scarce resources. On the other hand, many projects lack the process consultancy component which would be necessary in this context.

The earlier consultancy inputs are fed into the conflict management process, the greater will be its chances of success. Observation of specific fields of conflict therefore needs to be commenced as early as possible, and continued over a prolonged period.

T-20/4

T-21: **Conflicts between Groups**

A Method

Tensions and conflicts between groups are an everyday occurrence in any cooperation. **Within an organisation**, they arise naturally as a result of differences in function, for instance between

- staff departments and line management
- development and production
- planning and execution
- controlling and line management
- project groups and line management

Claims on scarce resources place groups in a competitive situation, which can end in a life-and-death struggle. If the conflict remains unrecognised and untackled, it soaks up a considerable amount of energy, and becomes correspondingly costly. Competition is narrowed down to rivalry, and comes to a head in direct hostility. Information gaps, misunderstandings and errors gradually become firmly established in the shape of enemy stereotypes. Ultimately the parties to the conflict are no longer able to **communicate** with each other.

The following method of **Intergroup Conflict Management** (**ICM**) has proved successful in a variety of practical situations. It reduces competition and selfish parochial group politics, creating greater scope for communication. The method steers the parties towards the following questions:

- What do we really want?
- How are we different from each other?
- What are we able and willing to communicate about?
- Which modus vivendi do we wish to achieve?

ICR forces each side to **see things from the other's point of view**, thus diluting established attitudes held by group members.

Conflicts are **diffuse** and **complex**, since they are viewed and affectively charged differentially by the different parties. ICM forces the parties to take part in a structured communication process. This controlled communication is designed as and where necessary to bring out into the open and negotiate experiences, images, interests and emotions. ICM is based on the following **working hypotheses**:

- **equality**: Parties A and B are equal partners in terms of their right to express their own viewpoints.
- **constructs**: Parties A and B have constructed conceptions of themselves and the other party which can be put forward and exchanged.
- **openness**: The ability to listen, an effort to understand other viewpoints and the willingness to see things from the other's point of view can be learned and acquired more easily when the communication is structured by certain rules.

ICM is a planned sequence of **Conflict Resolution Conferences** (**CRCs**). Depending on the conflict situation, these conferences last one-half to two days. They establish **direct dialogue** between the parties.

Between the CRCs, the parties need **time** to digest the confrontation. In other words, they must unlearn things already learned, and learn new things; they must also take note of unpleasant information, and deal with that within their own group. This involves a risk of **conflicts within the group** emerging for one or other of the parties in

the course of the ICM process. It is therefore appropriate that not only the CSCs, but also the group meetings of the parties, be supported by external moderators.

The **external moderation** - ideally comprising at least two individuals - must plan, steer, observe, continuously evaluate and adjust the process. The tool is based on the assumptions that:

- the moderators are **accepted** by the involved parties,
- the parties **wish** to resolve the conflict,
- the groups are not larger than **eight to ten persons**,
- primarily those **directly involved** and those with a major interest in the conflict work in the groups,
- the parties to the conflict are willing to invest the **time necessary** for an ICM process,
- the moderators **introduce** and **steer** the process carefully, and insist on the schedule and rules being adhered to.

ICM can even be useful in the event of conflicts of objectives and socioculturally-induced tensions, although in such cases it will often need to be expanded:
(1) Conflicts of objectives require greater openness: Where the visions are fundamentally at odds, further cooperation is no longer conceivable.
(2) Culturally-induced tensions are based on disturbances rooted in one's own culturally-induced perceptions of culturally alien phenomena. To bring to the surface (misleading) constructions of alien phenomena transmitted through one's own culture, the (unconscious) constructions of self held by the actors need to be addressed. Intercultural conflict management makes the constructions of self available, and dilutes and modifies them. As a rule, this takes more time than is available for the ICM process.

B Application

As with all the tools, the following steps of ICM need to be adapted to the respective situation. Some steps may have to be omitted, or expanded. Depending on progress, breaks, pauses for thought and interim reviews should be incorporated into the process.

Planning and preparation:

The moderators hold **a preliminary discussion** with two representatives of the parties to the conflict.

- They provide them with thorough information of the purpose and steps of ICM.
- They answer all questions on points not understood.
- They explain their own role, and gain an impression of their level of acceptance.
- They work towards establishing on the part of the conflict party representatives a pledge to seek ways and means improve relations between the parties to the agreement.
- They ascertain where resistance to the process is to be anticipated.
- They influence the size and composition of the groups.
- Together with the representatives, they draw up the time schedule for the CSCs.
- They discuss the logistic issues affecting the workshops: premises, teaching aids etc.

The representatives of the two parties to the conflict are requested to inform their groups of the purpose and structure of the ICM process.

If necessary, the moderators hold additional one-on-one discussions, and then prepare the first workshop.

Step 1: Opening the dialogue

The initiation of the process of dialogue is deliberately highly structured. This promotes confidence in the method on the part of the parties to the conflict, and consolidates the role of the moderators. The participants should find the working rhythm pleasant, and be given clear tasks.

01. Plenum: Welcome and introduction by the moderators: **general timetable** of the ICM process, aim and structure of the workshop, rules.

02. Group work: The two parties A and B draw up in separate rooms a **presentation** of themselves on a flip-chart.

03. Plenum: half-hour presentation by party A. Party B allowed to **request explanation of points not understood** (no discussion!).

04. Plenum: half-hour presentation by party B. Party A allowed to **request explanation of points not understood** (no discussion!).

05. Group work: group work in separate rooms. Presentation on a flip-chart. Parties A and B answer the following **four questions** separately:

- What did we understand as being the key messages?

- What do we find new, and possibly surprising?

- What is directly related to our conflict with the other group?

- What did the other group conceal?

06. Plenum: brief presentation of flip-charts. Questions requesting explanation of the **first two points**. The parties exchange flip-charts and retire again.

07. Group work: The groups comment on the answers supplied by the other party. Per question, **precisely the same amount of space** is provided in which to **write these comments**.

08. Plenum: **exhibition** of the four flip-charts (answers to the four questions of the two groups + feedback of the other group).

Step 2: Deepening the dialogue

This step can be commenced either immediately, or on the following day. Interruptions which are too long should be avoided, however.

In this phase the sequence plenum-group is interrupted. One aim of the committees is to ensure that the parties are no longer able to maintain taboos on certain ways of thinking within their own group.

09. Plenum: welcome and introduction by the moderators: **calm, sober review** of the results of step 1, repeat explanation of the general timetable for the ICM, aim and structure of the process to deepen dialogue, rules.

10. Group work: The two parties A and B separately draw up **three flip-charts** (possibly have them illustrated with drawings).

- **Our image of the other group**: How do we see and experience the other group? How do they behave towards us? What harm have they inflicted on us or do they wish to inflict on us? What are they more interested in, and less interested in? What are their weaknesses? Which mistakes and false assumptions do they make? What are their strengths?

- **Their image of us**: How do the others see us? What do they think of us? What do they expect of us?

- **Zoom**: Based on the presentation of our image of the other group and their image of us, what are the **questions** which we have wanted to have answered for a long time?

11. Plenum: One after another, the two groups first present their projection of the **other group's image of them**. No discussion! Between the two flip-charts, the moderators place an empty chart containing a question:

Projection of group A: How does group B see us?	What do we find new or surprising? A B	Projection of group B: How does group A see us?

12. Plenum: One after another, the two parties present their **own image of the other group**, and their **zoom questions**. The groups first discuss amongst themselves what they have just discovered about themselves and the other group. In the next plenary session, the groups will have to answer questions requesting further explanation of points not understood regarding their **own image of the other group** - possibly giving examples. Once there are no further questions remaining regarding the zoom questions, the parties retire to the next group work session with the **list of questions posed by the other party**.

13. Group work: The groups answer the **zoom questions** of the other party.

14. Plenum: Presentation of the answers and discussion, with the aim of collecting questions and problems. The points are arranged by **thematic fields**, and by their importance and degree of urgency. Under certain circumstances, it may be useful to break things down by **type of conflict**.

15. Plenum and groups: Per thematic field, the two parties form **mixed committees** made up of the same number of representatives from each group.

The committees discuss the thematic field, and draw up **proposals for action**.

Beware! - This intermediate phase can be short or long. It may be the case that the committees require a day or a week as **time** in which to elaborate their proposals.

Step 3: Solutions

Solutions only make sense if they can be put into practise at a later date. The plan of action worked out here should therefore be aiming to achieve a modus vivendi rather than any grand visions.

By this point at the latest, the moderators must point to and address those conflicts rooted in personal relationships which jeopardise realisation of the measures.

16. Plenum: The committees present their **proposals for action**. Questions on points not understood are raised and answered.

17. Group work: **Feedback** of the proposals of the committees on a flip-chart. How satisfied/dissatisfied are we with the proposals? Which proposal stands the best chance of being successful?

18. Plenum: discussion of the feedback from the groups. A decision is taken on the three to five most important **measures**.

    N.B.: - If during this discussion no minimum consensus emerges on concrete measures, the moderators must **interrupt** the ICM process. The parties are invited to suggest dates for re-commencing. On the second occasion, the moderators themselves should present a **proposal** containing the simplest possible measures.

19. Plenum: A new mixed committee is formed and mandated to draw up the final **plan of action** (What? Who? With whom? By when?).

    N.B.: - A break will need to be inserted here, depending on the amount of work involved.

20. Plenum: The new committee presents the plan of action. The two parties accept the plan, and decide how to

facilitate and possibly monitor **implementation**. At this point the parties can also decide on **sanctions**, to lend the measures a sense of urgency.

C Results

Many conflicts over scarce resources reach a fatal conclusion. They are resolved not through communication, but by power and violence.

When farmers north of Mardan in Pakistan wish to settle a dispute over land or water, they do so within the framework of several "Jirga", or assemblies in which the issues can be argued out and solutions sought. The assemblies are structured according to strict rules and rituals. The highly esteemed arbitrators who are called in pay scrupulous attention to compliance with these pre-scribed practises. In other words, the farmers have their own ICM mechanism.

ICM is appropriate in cases where a potentially explosive conflict has existed between two groups over a prolonged period of time. In contrast to the energy consumed by smouldering conflicts, this method is efficient. It forces the parties to communicate, and leads to acceptable solutions within a relatively short period.

It is necessary to regulate the communication in a structured fashion, as the issues at stake in the conflicts cannot be clearly separated from the relationships and feelings involved. Only experienced moderators will be capable of steering ICM in a manner adapted to the situation and appropriately structured.

The moderators must also be aware inter alia of how deeply they wish to probe into the tensions which arise. This places high demands on the moderators, for instance where the parties' aggression is directed against them, or when delicate, personal conflicts arise.

T-22: **Resistance to Changes**

A Method

Resistance is a natural concomitant of changes. There is no learning and no change without resistance.

We first notice resistance in ourselves: Changes are disconcerting and make us anxious, as the **future is uncertain**. This is also the case when we plan the change, in other words when we attempt to gain an overview of the uncertainty. Although changes are a natural part of the human life cycle, from birth, via adulthood and through to death, we are basically conservative beings: A bird in the hand is still worth two in the bush.

Resistance to change is an expression of **insecurity** and **worry** that it will not be possible to deal with the new by applying the old experiences and action strategies. Caution and reserve towards any change at all is a natural defence mechanism against losing control: We know from experience that an abrupt burst of change throws us off balance. Here too, **Paracelsus' rule** applies: What makes a man ill also cures him, it is simply a question of the dose.

When changes are pending, as a rule three groups form: the pros, the indifferent and the contras. Changes - whether technical, methodological, organisational, economic, social, political or cultural - are therefore always **potential sources of conflict**. If redistributions of **power** are not addressed **openly**, but tacitly ignored, this will even stimulate resistance.

The greater the **pressure of time** to implement a change, the more of a problem, the more of a burden the resistance seems to be. We tend to disregard it, and try to push through the change. However, as a rule this **cardinal error** reinforces the resistance. Ignoring resistance leads to **blocks** and costly errors. Dealing constructively with resistance, indeed **learning** from it, is therefore a central prerequisite for the success of changes.

The sequence of events leading to the **development of resistance** to impending changes is, in simplified form, as follows:

1 **Announcement of a change**: If the information on the change is fragmentary, and the consequences unforeseeable, this generates anxieties and fears.

2 **Disturbance of the psychological equilibrium**: The necessity and rationale of the change are called into question: Why should anything be changed here? What were we doing wrong before? Who is hoping to gain something from this? What do I have to fear?

- the new is unknown:➔ suspicion
- the benefits are unclear:➔ scepsis, wait-and-see
- the way there is unknown: ➔ fear of losing control
- I haven't got the strength:➔ flight

3 **Rationalisation**: In a state of disequilibrium, we look for more or less plausible explanations as to why the change should not take place. Arguments and objections are signals we must take seriously, for instance:

- Considered, objective arguments indicate a need for information and interest.
- Negative talk, jokes, rumours and intrigue usually have their origin in a diffuse information situation.
- Attacks on individuals who embody the change point to the tabooing of power issues.
- The casting of doubt on information sources indicates fundamental rejection of the objectives of change.

4 **Symptoms and actions**: Sickness, high staff fluctuation, absenteeism, withdrawal (emigration within), friction losses, confusion, paper warfare, sabotage, staff departure.

Dealing constructively with resistance means reducing **loss of control in favour of participation**.

Loss of control in this context means people losing their grip on the situation ("What is actually going on here?"), because the familiar rules no longer apply and people can no longer assess the consequences of their own actions. As a rule this leads to anxiety, and it is widely acknowledged that anxiety gives bad counsel: It reduces self-confidence, narrows the field of vision and blocks willingness to learn.

In this unpleasant situation we tend to fend off the threat to the status quo with pseudo-logical arguments: We rationalise our preconscious, affective disinclination, and mobilise from the rich fund of stock responses that we can summon up without thinking, those which speak against the change:

- That will have the opposite effect.
- That will have no effect.
- That will destroy what we've already got.
- In our organisation, department etc. everything is quite different.
- Not bad really, but not really for us (not invented here syndrome).
- Nobody does it like that.
- We've always done it that way.
- That's too theoretical.
- There's too little empirical/theoretical evidence of that.
- That's not our problem.
- That's too complicated.
- That doesn't interest me.
- It's too late for that.
- It's too early for that, we're not ready for it yet.
- That would cost too much! We haven't got the money for it.
- That would be all right, but we haven't got the time.

- Actually we've got much more urgent problems.
- Nobody here wants that.
- That comes from outside, it's alien to us.
- We'll never manage with that for one minute.
- I personally would be in favour, but I don't believe it's got any chance of getting through with us.

An objective and logical argument can easily be unhinged by these stock responses. Despite appearances they all boil down to a single statement: We don't want to change anything!

These stock responses are encoded messages. We need not take them literally, but we must take them **seriously**. There are very many more emotionally charged resistances than rationally founded ones. If they are not interpreted as **signals**, they lead to never-ending communication loops along the rhetorical lines of: "We know what's going on, but we don't want to change anything, so we don't understand anything."

Resistance indicates where energy is blocked. Conversely, this means: Where there is resistance, **energy** can be **released**. In other words, resistance is basically not a source of interference, but a source of energy, which we need to tap for changes.

B Application

Step 1: Understanding resistance

Resistance is often diffuse: We notice that something or other is "not quite right". Suddenly things clog up, everything turns stop-and-go, there is endless debate over insignificant issues, the "thread" is lost, a sense of helplessness and disgruntlement prevails, an awkward silence develops.

The **forms of expression of resistance** are many and varied. The matrix below is useful for providing a clear illustration of observations, and possibly comparing them over a longer period of time. The simplest approach is to enter the **verbal** and **non-verbal behaviours** of individuals and groups in the matrix, with examples.

	verbal (speech)	**non-verbal** (actions)
active (attack)	**resistance** counterarguments - accusations - protests - threats - suspicion of others gaining advantage - polemics – stubborn formalism -	**agitation** unrest - disputes - intrigues - rumours of negative consequences – formation of cliques - sabotage – boycotts - withholding of information
passive (flight)	**evasion** silence - trivial debate – debasement of individuals - ridiculing and debasement of new ideas – belittlement - fooling around - jibes - sarcasm	**apathy** bad moods – sulkiness –inattentiveness - anger - fatigue – absenteeism - withdrawal - sleepless nights - fear for one's economic position - sickness

All resistance contains encoded messages which we need to **decipher**. We cannot do that without entering into direct contact with the persons and groups concerned. In this context, understanding means trying to see behaviours **from their point of view**. In the face of impending changes, the actors ask themselves three interrelated questions:
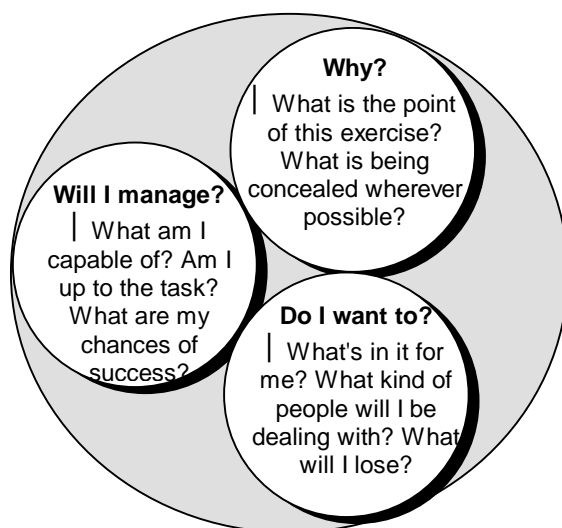
The various forms of expression of resistance **mutually reinforce each other**. When individuals do not see the point of a change or understand their future role,

they do not believe the well-meant assurances of the protagonists, and fear only negative consequences. This produces a **climate of mistrust**, which we can carefully attempt to break down by adopting an inquiring attitude:

- What objections and questions do the actors have?
- What is especially precious and important to the actors?
- What are their interests, needs and concerns?
- What might happen if we proceed as planned?
- What ought to be prevented in the view of the actors?
- What alternatives do the actors themselves see?
- How should things proceed in their view?
- What is acceptable and appropriate?

To prevent different groups from reinforcing each other's resistance and forming mutual alliances, it is important to work with **groups separated according to their respective interests** (= principle of separation of perspectives). In attempting to understand the resistance, actions are guided by two **rules**:

- We must encourage and support people in expressing and explaining their resistance.
- We must transform non-verbal and passive forms of resistance into verbal, active forms.

Step 2: Learning from resistance

The art of dealing with resistance is related to the Japanese martial art of "aikido": Instead of launching a frontal assault on it, we have to absorb the energies enclosed in it.

If we wish to reduce actors' loss of control, help resistance be expressed and get the people on board, then we need to tread several paths at the same time. All paths lead to the common goal of **learning** from the experiences and arguments of the actors.

Inform
The purpose of the change is made known clearly and sustainably - route and methods are known - target situation is made clearly evident.

Support
The actors are taken seriously - their concerns are listened to - they are given a forum to present their experiences, interests, fears.

Involve
Affected persons and groups are involved early on according to their capabilities - their experiences are taken into account in implementation.

Change the environment
The actors are given an opportunity to look beyond their garden fence: they become familiar with other ways of working and other environments.

Try out new social forms
The actors work in working groups which cut across existing boundaries within the organisation - they establish new relationships.

Observe critical-fields of conflict
E.g. loss of wages or other material benefits - loss of personal relationships - fear of being overstretched - loss of decision-making authority - constriction of scope for action - poor prospects for development and learning.

learn from resistance

Step 3: Turning resistance into dialogue

The **field of energies** between advocates and opponents of a change, between negative and positive forces for change, can be captured and illustrated by simple means:

positive arguments, actions and behaviours		actors who influence the change	negative arguments, actions and behaviours	
+	+ +		- -	-

...

As a rule, this **observation of the field of energies** brings to light numerous insights into the driving forces behind, resistance to and dynamics of processes of change:

- The same individual or group can mobilise both positive and negative energies simultaneously or, in other words, have two souls in one breast.
- The field of energies draws to our attention where we are making assumptions and where we know too little.
- We recognise which actors embody the resistance and need to be involved to an especially high degree.
- The field of energies provides information on alliances and self-serving cliques.

The tool is especially revealing when applied several times during the course of a process of change, if possible with groups separated according to their respective different interests.

C Result

Projects for change trigger conflicts, which take the form of resistance to the change. Anyone understanding and observing the open and discrete forms of resistance can adjust the change process to the given circumstances and the actors' standards of acceptance, and help steer it accordingly.

T-23: **Motivation and Visions**

A Method

The complex **logic of motivation** can be illustrated by the example of two user groups: One works with high motivation and strong internal cohesion, whilst the other - under the same external conditions - cooperates only hesitantly, and falls apart again after a short time.

The **different motives** for the behaviour of the two groups is to be found in the behaviour of the individual members, in the internal structure of the group or in environmental influences. Motives are always **pseudo-rational**, as they are characterised by **obscurity**:

- It is not possible to draw a sharp distinction between the behaviour of a group as a whole and the behaviour of individual members.
- Environmental influences are interpreted differently by groups and organisations, and permeate groups to quite different depths.

Motives are the causes of behaviour: we eat because we are hungry. In other words, hunger is the motive for the behaviour "food intake". However, this **mechanistic view**, as postulated for instance by the Maslow pyramid (ascending from physiological needs via social recognition up to self-actualisation), falls short of the mark. It is widely acknowledged that there are many more reasons why we eat: for instance pleasure or worry, boredom, human contact, festive occasions, politeness, the end of Lent or religious feast days.

Motivation explains why we do something, and why we do it one way as opposed to another. Biological, personal, social and cultural motives merge in one explanation. Motives are deeply rooted both in culture and in the **experienced present**. They should be understood as the product of a **dynamic relationship between humans and their environment**.

Against this background, the **rain dance of the Hopi Indians** appears in a new light: It is effective not because the Indians know how to successfully outwit the meteorological turbulence, but because by doing this, even if they are still thirsty, they maintain group cohesion in difficult times.

Three observations can be drawn from this:

- Behaviour cannot be reduced to a one-dimensional motive. Consequently, behaviours can only be predicted with great difficulty.
- Human beings are at once both free agents and determined beings. Their behaviour takes place within a socially and symbolically charted space, through which they move as more or less active subjects.
- Motives are linked to cultural orientations, in that they are either faithful to them or reject them. Dissent from dominant cultural values is part of any culture, and is a driving force of cultural development.

Long-term **cultural orientations** provide a community with a relatively stable ready-made **stock of motives**.

Cultural orientations determine in language, symbols and images how experiences are to be evaluated, and what aims are worth striving towards. They construct meaning for people's actions, and provide rationales for the causes and effects of natural events. They contain life plans and norms for the individual and the community, and describe what is considered appropriate and acceptable, or what is to be rejected. They determine moral distinctions between virtues and vices, and contain models of a good life from birth until death. They regulate coexistence, and the management of natural resources.

Comparative studies indicate that there are a number of **fundamental differences** which affect motivation, for instance:

- **Conceptions of space**

  sedentary (rooted): The life space is given; the perceptible horizon describes the life space; travel creates feelings of insecurity; the familiar and known are important.

  mobile (movable): The space is opened-up, conquered, measured; various horizons intersect; life has a vector; travel is considered enriching; the new is considered worth striving towards.

- **Perception of time**

  polychronic: A human lifetime is part of an eternity or a natural cycle; individual aspirations are unrewarding; life is determined by waiting for favourable opportunities.

  monochronic: A human lifetime serves ends worth achieving ;it is divided into small units and activities; planning, order and punctuality serve to control time.

- **Demarcation of the boundaries between private and public life**

  clear boundaries: Private walks of life are shielded and protected. Public life is governed by market laws and publicly verifiable rules. Mutual support based on family and group ties is considered a distortion of the market. Connivance and corruption result in criminal prosecution. Protection and nepotism are suppressed.

  obscure boundaries: Family, community or ethnic obligations are at least as important as market demands. Connivance and solidarity confer prestige. Economic success is worth striving towards if it can be transformed into social recognition and liking.

These comments are intended to illustrate that we need to use the following tools with care. They simplify the situation in order to bring us closer to the old question of **why we do one thing and not another**. We should certainly take a look at the first question - the question as to the actors' visions.

B Application

B1 Visions

Visions of the future are **sources of motivation**. They focus and mobilise energies towards an imaginary state, and they show what we want to guard against and what we are afraid of.

How do the actors (e.g. user groups) see their **future**? Supported by creative techniques such as group discussion, drawing, photography, model construction, theatre or video, we try to find answers to the following questions:
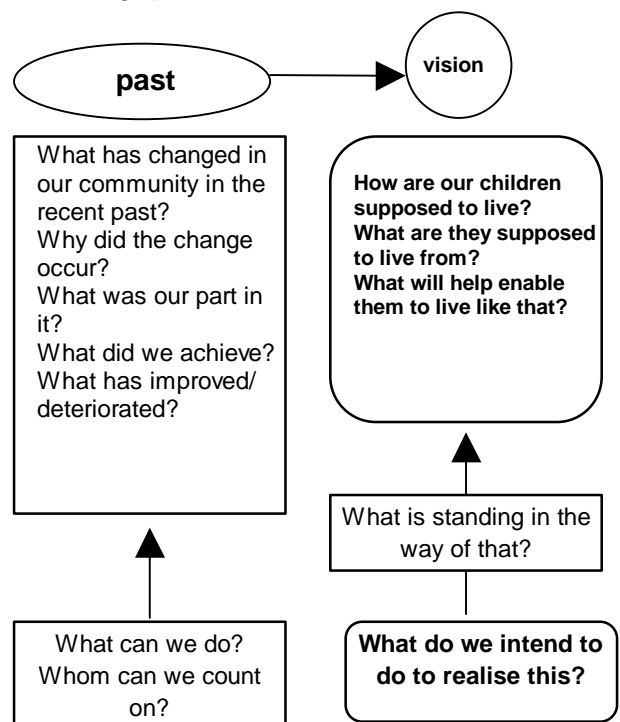
The translation of diffuse motives and inclinations into a clear vision releases energies. Visions unfold their power of motivation through obvious **images**, which also include stories and fairy tales. More is contained in these ambiguous and ambivalent forms of expression than in straightforward descriptions.

B2 History of motives

Motives are concealed, behaviour can be observed. Picking up on the earlier example of the two user groups who behave differently, it would be helpful to ask

the groups what their motives were, so as to be able to compare them.

The **reconstruction** of motives (reverse engineering) is based on the assumption that when we archaeologists find an artefact, we inquire as to the purpose behind the "mysterious behaviour".

- What did we expect? What did we hope to gain?
- Who acted?
- What moved us to act that way as opposed to another?

```
   ╭───────────╮          ╭───────────╮
  (  behaviour  )        (  behaviour  )
  (  of user    )        (  of user    )
  (  group A    )        (  group B    )
   ╰───────────╯          ╰───────────╯

  ┌───────────┐          ┌───────────┐
  │  motives  │          │  motives  │
  └───────────┘          └───────────┘
  ┌───────────┐          ┌───────────┐
  │  motives  │          │  motives  │
  └───────────┘          └───────────┘
  ┌───────────┐          ┌───────────┐
  │  motives  │          │  motives  │
  └───────────┘          └───────────┘
                         ┌───────────┐
                         │  motives  │
                         └───────────┘

  ┌───────────┐          ┌───────────┐
  │   What    │          │   What    │
  │distinguishes│        │distinguishes│
  │us from group│        │us from group│
  │    B?     │          │    A?     │
  └───────────┘          └───────────┘
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This comparative observation of the history of motives (benchmarking) promotes **self-reflection** within groups and organisations, and focuses their attention on their own strengths.

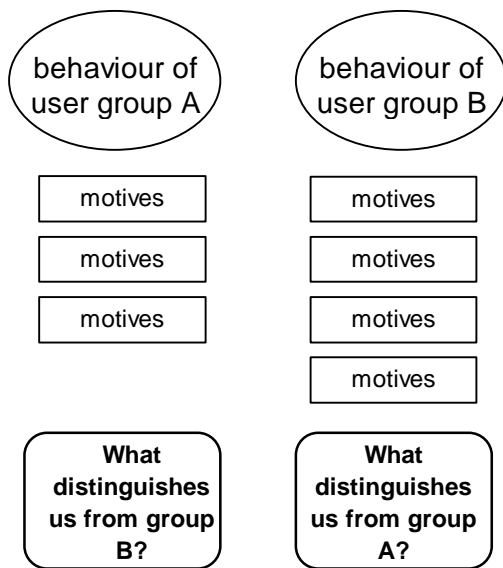## B3 Social fields of motivation

People acting as members of a group anticipate tangible **benefits** which they could not achieve as individuals. The **input** made by the individual **member** must be economically proportionate to the **benefit** which the member derives from the group.

However, the cohesion and performance of groups are also dependent on whether the group is able to bind and integrate its members. This occurs primarily through the **satisfaction of needs** which the members can only realise within a group, within a social environment. Observation of these **social fields of motivation** therefore provides valuable information on group cohesion, stability and willingness to achieve.

┌─────────────┐
│   social   │
│ motivators │
└─────────────┘

┌─────────────┐
│ achievement │ Group promotes will to achieve
└─────────────┘ and stimulates comparisons.

┌─────────────┐
│   support   │ Group helps spread risks and
└─────────────┘ provides a sense of security.

┌─────────────┐
│   learning │ Group makes it possible to learn
└─────────────┘ from others.

┌─────────────┐
│   helping   │ Group promotes sense of re-
└─────────────┘ sponsibility and selfless action.

┌─────────────┐
│ recognition │ Group strengthens self-esteem
└─────────────┘ through rewards

There are "freeloaders" in all groups. Members who try to keep their own input as low as possible, and only climb on board once the risks are foreseeable. It is to be assumed that social motivators play a more minor role with these individuals.

With regard to the performance capability and stability of a group, the satisfaction of social needs becomes all the more important, the more heterogeneous the **interests of the members** are. It goes without saying that this cannot mean whitewashing over diametrically opposed interests of ownership and status, as occur among user groups. These interrelationships are represented in the following matrix:

	low social needs	high social needs
high performance	unstable group, but of high performance in the short term	stable, high-performance group with strong cohesion
low performance	unstable, poor cohesion	recreation club with limited performance

B4 Assuming responsibility

The central question is whether people see themselves as **active** and free **agents** (subjects), or as **victims of circumstance** or the power of fate (objects). The fact that people can be willing or motivated to accept or reject **responsibility**, to **stand up**

for or **put aside their own interests**, leads back to the following observation: People believe that their lives and actions are either more or less determined by themselves or by others. They implicitly answer questions regarding the **relationship between human beings and their environment**, e.g.:

- Do I determine my life and actions myself?
- To what extent are my life and actions determined by other people, the organisation of work or environmental constraints?
- Is my life characterised by chance, strokes of fate or other unforeseeable influences?
- Am I subject to laws which, although I am familiar with them, I am nevertheless at their mercy?
- Can I overcome restrictions and constraints or not?

The responses to these questions provide information on **the subjective locus of control**, or in other words: the conception an individual has of the scope of his or her influence. These notions represents **insights** and **world pictures** gained from everyday experience. If we listen carefully, we can glean these from casual statements made to justify behaviour:

"Never let things get you down."
"The way my parents and forebears did it is best."
"That is futile."
"One has to adapt."
"That's the way it's always been, it's in the regulations."
"I can wait."
"I'll struggle through."
"I'm expecting something from that!"

Subjective notions of locus of control are **socio-culturally** and **biographically** learnt ideas on the effects of an individual's own actions, and are relatively stable through time. All an individual's experiences of his or her own **effectivity** or **powerlessness** shape their subjective locus of control. Key formative experiences of this kind are already acquired during childhood:

"Our place in life is preordained." - "We still managed it." - "You'll never get past her up there!" - "Do not contradict figures of authority (father, teacher, superiors, government officials)."

Subjective loci of control are **cognitive maps** with which we continuously evaluate what we think ourselves capable of, which options are promising and what we would be better advise to avoid or take flight from.

- **Subjective loci of control**: To what extent are my/our life/lives and actions determined by myself/ourselves or by others?
- **Perceived constraints** in the environment: What do I/we believe is in my/our way?
- **Actual constraints**: What is actually in the way? What obstacles do the others see?

There is **no** right or wrong subjective locus of control! If we compare these subjective notions with the actual constraints, we might be able to draw conclusions regarding the **appropriateness** of the constraints. But this says nothing about the success of the subjective locus of control. "Unrealistic" ideas of control are also quite capable of being successful. It is widely acknowledged that someone who believes strongly in him-/herself is also more likely to overcome obstacles.

When groups and organisations develop a **jointly accepted picture of the constraints**, the actors become clear in their own minds as to what they wish and are able to assume **responsibility** for. Only those things can be changed which the people involved feel able to change.

Methods of self-observation and **self-evaluation** promote the exchange and comparison of subjective loci of control, and thus the self-reliance of groups and organisations.

C   Result

Motives and motivation have their origin in visions. Knowledge of the social needs and subjective loci of control which these incorporate provides a good basis on which to understand strategies for action.

T-24: **Calculations of Benefit and Life Plans**

A Method

As we can never grasp the full complexity of circumstances and influences, action involves **risks**. We compare the initial situation with the anticipated economic, social and symbolic benefits, we consider our own inputs and the risks. In short, we perform a **calculation of the benefits**. This economy of action is based on learned assumptions of the effects and interplay of actions and circumstances, on **causal schemata**.

These calculations of benefit include considerations on both the **current** and the **anticipated situation**. As a rule, an unsatisfactory initial situation triggers actions to change it; in such cases we speak of **push factors**. Visions of alternative life potentials exert a **force of attraction** and give actions a target; in these cases we speak of **pull factors**.

Individual calculations of benefit are often not expressed through actions until they are discovered within a **group** to be a joint experience. Within a group the experience of deprivation is reinforced, individual interests coalesce into a collective will, and risks can be spread.

Although **life plans** are largely predetermined by values and rules, they also contain an individual core: the totality of desires and expectations, dreams and visions. The prospect of economic or other benefit alone is not sufficient to make us act accordingly. Actions must be consistent with culturally-determined life plans, or at least not diametrically opposed to them.

When we ask ourselves how people can manage scarce natural resources soundly and sustainably, we need to understand their **calculations of benefit** and **life plans**; the following questions need to be asked for example:

- What expectations and desires do the people have?
- Which economic or other disadvantages do they suffer?
- Who are the agents?
- What benefits do they expect to gain from that?
- Which subjective successes gradually raise the expectations?
- To which incentives to act do the people respond?

People with the same or similar calculations of benefit and life plans form **communities of values** responding to the same incentives. These groups are bound together by **cultural orientations**.

Even highly individualistic societies contain communities of values bound together through common **cultural orientations**, for instance through the consumer experience or motor vehicle mobility.

In order to become familiar with cultural orientations, it is appropriate to inquire as to the **inputs** which a community of values derives from a culture. We can thus assess which energies are mobilised when values change, when people are influenced by extraneous cultural values, or when they are cut off from their own culture.

```
┌─────────────────┐
│   members of    │
│  a community    │
│   of values     │
└─────────────────┘
         │
┌─────────────────────────────────────┐
│          cultural inputs            │
└─────────────────────────────────────┘
```

Support: care, devotion, upbringing, social ties: sense of belonging to family and the community. Provides: sense of security and link to communication as well as symbolic actions and their interpretation.	**Order**: differences with regard to background, property, age, profession, gender, education, power and authority. Provides: norms, concepts of law and incorporation into structures of power and dependency.	**Strategies for action**: visions, goals worth attaining, technical and organisational capabilities, forms of cooperation. Provide: concepts of achievement and benefit, scope for action.

The western industrialised societies for instance offer their members a culture with marked individualistic traits. The support is limited, and its aim is to develop a competitive individual fit for life. The life plans contain an evolutionary view of history, and place a positive value judgement on individual success achieved in competition with others. Incentives to selfless, altruistic behaviour are in direct competition with these life plans.

Support, order and strategies for action merge into one cultural orientation. The members of a community of values, for instance pasture or forest user groups, draw their **life plans** from this source. New forms of resource use which are promoted through economic incentives, but are inconsistent with cultural orientations, will become established either only slowly or not at all. They will meet with the resistance of **attitudes**, with opinions and value judgements which are affectively laden and relatively **stable through time**.

Attitudes are coagulated experience. The more important those attitudes seem to people for their life plans, the **stronger** they become. They facilitate selective perception and moral judgement of behaviour; they serve as mutual supports, and provide people with a basis on which to justify their own behaviour. Attitudes are learned through:

- **Assimilation**: New attitudes adjust to become as consistent as possible with existing life plans (= avoidance of dissonance).
- **Reification**: Abstract concepts (natural resource management, sustainability, autonomy etc.) are translated into images or stereotypical aphorisms, or personified.

Incentives are designed to influence people's calculations of benefit and life plans. The aim is to reinforce a certain behaviour, for instance ecologically sound and sustainable land-use forms, or diminish or prevent another behaviour, for instance exhaustive exploitation.

Anyone consciously employing incentives in their work must therefore become intimately acquainted with **the calculations of benefit** and **life plans** of the people concerned.

B Application

B-1: **Life histories**

Historians' interest in biographies is founded on the insight that they contain something which cannot be obtained through structural history: **moods**, **mentalities**, **personal world pictures**, **life plans**, **attitudes governing behaviour**. It is barely possible to capture all this through surveys. Conversely, even a modest qualitative cross-section through a social group involves complex methodological problems and a large amount of work.

The only way out of this dilemma is to keep ambitions modest, a healthy eye on things and remain cautious. The following observational design offers a corresponding framework .

Life stories are **narrated**, and in the course of a life are retold repeatedly. They belong to the people who tell them. They decide - inter alia on the basis of the relationship they enter into with their interlocutors -

what they want to tell. This situation pre-supposes trust, openness and **mutuality** on both sides. But it also presupposes on the part of the listener powers of empathy, discretion and a questioning awareness of his or her own life experiences.

- **Definition**: By which structural charac-teristics (property, land-use forms, in-come, age, gender, number of persons per household, etc.) can the **group** whose calculations of benefit and life plans interest us be defined?
- **Selection of interviewees**: To which individuals (at least five) do we seek access in order to interview them?
- **Contact persons**: Who can establish contact with these individuals, and hold four or five long biographical interviews in an atmosphere of mutual openness?
- **Establishing contact**: How and where are the contact persons going to estab-lish the relationship with the inter-viewees leading up to the first inter-view?
- **Interview guide**: With which questions are we going to establish the relation-ship of trust? Which experiences and changes do we wish to address in the course of the interviews?
- **Interview notes**: In what form and on what scale should the contact person put the interview down on paper on the following day?
- **Evaluation group**: Who should form the evaluation group? What should be the group's task? What behavioural change do we anticipate on our own part?

Practical tips:
- If biographical literature is available, it should be consulted beforehand. It may provide valuable tips for the interview guide.
- It has proved useful to complement the inter-views with photographs, following the first inter-action. The small selection of subjects should be made by the interviewees themselves. The pic-tures and discussion thereof will facilitate the interview process.
- Individuals with intercultural backgrounds or experiences will be able to provide valuable tips on establishing contact and on conducting the interviews.

B-2: **Changing attitudes**

Attitudes (value judgements and opinions expressed as behavioural habits) are sub-ject to social change. They are changed through:

- coercion and the threat of sanctions
- rewards and incentives
- models and ideals (personification)
- reduction of dissonance between attitudes and behaviour.

The **permanence** of a change in attitude is dependent inter alia on the following fac-tors:

- prospect of advantages and benefits
- tangible proof of the benefits
- credibility and social status of role models and individuals with different attitudes
- certain knowledge that an individual would not isolate him- or herself by virtue of the new attitude

Individuals tend to revise an insight if they are the only ones to have it. New attitudes are more likely to be accepted when they are confirmed by others, and put to the test and demonstrated with others. The learning of attitudes therefore needs to be **socially supported**. **Learning in groups** through dialogue and experience is the most appro-priate means of achieving this, applying the steps of PLA (participatory learning and acting):

- Address and make visible attitudes in the group, without placing value judgements on them: **rela-tive situation in the field of attitudes**.
- Get to know the attitudes and thoughts of other people, reinforce surprise and curiosity: **dilution**.
- Note and record differences, get to know advan-tages and disadvantages of one's own attitude, see the familiar in a new light, through new eyes: **differentiation**.
- Try out new attitudes under practical conditions, evaluate experiences in group discussion, link new attitudes to existing ones: **integration**.

Changes in attitude occur within a field of forces. A **tension** known as "cognitive dis-sonance" arises between new demands and old habits which is perceived as being unpleasant. There are various ways of relieving this tension, for instance:

- Ignore the call for a change in attitude.
- Avoid further contacts.
- Call into question the rationale for the new attitude.
- Seek confirmation of the existing attitude.

The more pronounced habits and opinions are, the less effect a direct assault is likely to have. As a rule, assaults of this kind even reinforce the existing attitudes. The following **model** therefore focuses attention on those "soft" attitudes which are of a more provisional nature.

The model raises the following **question** for discussion: How do people react to information which contains value judgements?
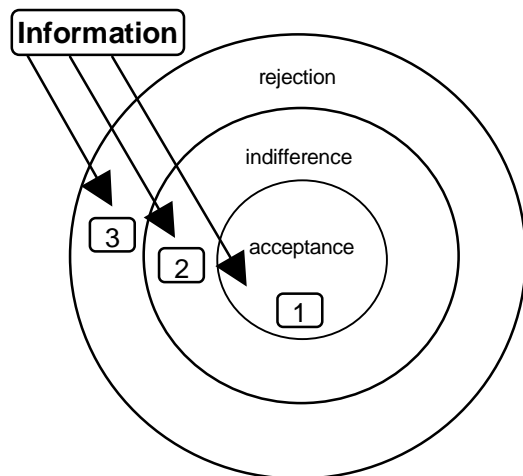
The model distinguishes three **fields of response** to value-laden information:

- **Field of acceptance**: Contains those attitudes which an individual adopts on the grounds of personal conviction - the information **confirms and reinforces** existing attitudes.
- **Field of indifference**: Contains attitudes which apply from case to case, are adapted to individuals and situations, and point to indecision - the information elicits hesitation and surprise, is **examined** and depending on the benefits offered **integrated** into the field of acceptance.
- **Field of rejection**: Contains attitudes which an individual firmly rejects on the grounds of personal conviction - the information is **questioned** and **rejected**, previous attitudes are reinforced (boomerang effect).

A number of conclusions can be drawn from this contrastive model of assimilation for the **observation** of **changes in attitude**:

- It is not worth fighting windmills. Changes in attitude are best achieved through the field of indifference.
- Information which neither confirms nor directly conflicts with existing attitudes opens up access to the field of indifference.
- New attitudes need to be linked to existing, positively experienced values and ideals.
- The consequences of changes in attitude must be clear and predictable.

B-3: **Indicators for observation**

If user groups observe the consequences of their actions themselves, they are more likely to become willing to change their behaviour. On the basis of an observational model to examine natural resource management and its impacts, we can survey **user groups** as to which indicators **they consider** important. The model distinguishes three groups of indicators:

- **Pressure**: natural resources utilised by people, e.g. water consumption, logging, land use.
  How high do we estimate consumption of the resources we use? Is it increasing or decreasing?

- **State**: impacts of resource use on environmental quality, e.g. lowering of the ground-water level, reduction in forested area, erosion.
  What are the impacts of resource use?

- **Response**: preventive, controlling and regulative measures of resource management, e.g. water rates, afforestation, land-use rights.
  What can/must we do to ensure that our children will still be able to use these resources? What are the impacts of the measures we/others have taken?

These **P-S-R** indicators sharpen the awareness of user groups vis-à-vis their own resource management activities, and form the starting point for periodic monitoring to provide information on which incentives are effective.

B-4: **Economic incentives**

It is widely acknowledged that subsidies on capital goods and loans, price supports and subsidiary direct payments on the introduction of new technology **distort market conditions**. They raise profitability at the level of the individual farm or enterprise in order to create an incentive. The extent to which limited-term incentives are justified is measured by the long-term benefits to the economy as a whole. The crucial question is therefore whether or not the user groups will continue the new forms of management once the incentives have elapsed. If economic incentives are to be effective, we must ask the following **questions** when designing and applying them:

- Were the nature and scope of the incentives **negotiated** with the user groups? What means of articulating themselves do the user groups have in the determination of economic incentives?
- With which expectations, life plans and calculations of benefit will the economic incentives be **competing**?
- How will the economic incentives change the status of the recipients within the family and within the user groups?
- What impacts will the incentives have on other **sector policy** measures?
- When and how is the **transition** from the system of incentives to market integration planned to take place?
- Does the **scope** of the subsidies correspond to the recipients' own inputs and solvency?
- Is the new management forms' **profitability at the level of the individual farm or enterprise** guaranteed?
- Will subsidies and compensation be **awarded** selectively to the legitimate recipients on a timely and efficient basis?
- Will the recipients use the subsidies in the **intended** manner?
- Will **additional income** be earned on a continuous basis?
- Will the recipients' **own inputs** and other conditions attached to the subsidies be adhered to?

- How will the **capabilities** of the recipients develop with regard to the new forms of management?
- Will the **overall economic benefits** come up to expectations?
- Will the subsidies lead to ecologically damaging behaviour? Will other user groups crowd into ecologically sensitive zones in order to be able to participate in the incentive systems?
- Will a **dependency** develop among the recipients of subsidies, stifling initiative and self-responsibility?
- Will individual user groups receive **preferential treatment and come off considerably better**? Will subsidies have undesirable social impacts, for instance in the form of a more pronounced social differentiation among the rural population, or a diminution of the status of individual family members?

C Result

The transition to sustainable forms of natural resource management is interwoven with social learning processes which are foreseeable only to a limited extent. New forms of resource management - especially when coupled with economic incentives - also always modify people's life strategies. It therefore makes little sense to organise user groups and use incentives unless we are familiar with the experiences of change and calculations of benefit in which their life plans and attitudes are rooted.

A Method

Within the horizon of natural resource management, family households are perhaps the most important **strategic group** pursuing their own interests and with their own project. Like other groups -administration officials, entrepreneurs, foreign consultants etc. - they act according to their own logic, and are in a continuous process of exchange and negotiation with their environment.

The microcosm of the family household is a **small enterprise** in which production is based on the division of labour, and in which investments are made of both a material and an immaterial nature (welfare, social relationships). The family household is closely interlinked with other households and larger enterprises via markets.

The family household is at the same time a **social community** within which various roles are allocated by age and gender, and in which decisions are taken and power and dependency are negotiated. In the outside world, the family household plays a central role as a solidary community and as a participant in the political process.

The family household is held together by a dense network of **sociocultural norms and interpretations** which govern relationships between its members and the outside world.

The **boundary** between a household and larger organisational units is blurred. Whilst specific individual tasks are performed within the nuclear family, other functions are spread along the axes of family ties, which extend far beyond the household per se: for instance, obligations to care for children and the aged, production and accumulation, consumption, insurance against risk. The basic socioeconomic pattern of family households consists of five characteristics:

- central or decentral **community of residence**
- access to **resources**
- **division of labour** between men and women, and between adults and children
- **obligations to contribute** to the household
- distribution of **usufruct** of the household

This focuses attention on two key properties of the household:

- Family households feed, care for and instruct growing children, and exert a formative influence on **the behaviour patterns** of their young members; to ensure survival, their exists a mutuality between the generations which is redeemed at a later date.
- Households maintain intensive **relations of exchange** with the outside world; they exchange what they themselves produce for those goods and services which they do not; relations of exchange between nomads, agricultural societies and urban zones, between lowlands, mountain areas and coastal regions are typical examples of this.

The members of user groups are often reduced to one function: they are water users, cattle farmers, consumers of fuelwood. Their rationality of action, however, is derived from the **life world context** of the family household. Efforts to guarantee survival are mingled with business calculations. Investments in line with market conditions compete with obligations to contribute to the household. Economic be-

haviour is linked to symbolic and ritual actions. The utilisation of natural resources is weighed up against commercial industrial activity, and wage labour against cliente-listic protection.

In the relationship to family households, the most important interface is to be found between two widely divergent knowledge systems: between local knowledge and the instrumental-technical rationality of action of the economy. Observation of the diverse **hybrid forms** of the family household is therefore key to understanding an unfamiliar and complex rationality of action. In the dwellings and houses people build, this diversity is manifestly materialised: in the finca in the Bolivian highlands, in the igloo of the Inuit, in the Indian tepee, in the Kyrgyz yurt, in the mud house of the Dogon, in the pile house of the Toradjas of Sulawesi.

B Application

Step 1: Pictures of houses

Definition: We define the group whose households interest us on the basis of simple structural characteristics: location, property, land-use forms, income, number of persons per household etc.

Photography: We establish contact with a small number of families and declare to them our intentions, i.e. that we would like to take pictures of their houses, so as to be able to talk to the families about them afterwards. Pictures of our own houses and other dwellings can be useful when explaining this.

It may be necessary to pay several visits in this connection. Which members of the household make themselves available to talk to us is in many places culturally determined.
As a rule, only outdoor shots are taken; entry into the interior of the house and entering individual rooms infringes the intimacy of the family organisation, and in many places is subject to ritual activities.

The approximately ten pictures should show both the house within its immediate environment, and striking or puzzling details (the various construction materials, the ornamental door, the projecting canopy, etc.). The inhabitants of the house should only be photographed at their express request.

Step 2: Explanations

Presentation: We prepare enlargements of the pictures in DIN A4 and A5 format, selecting only pictures that do not show any people. We visit the families in order to show them the pictures and talk about them. After that, we give the pictures to the families.

Discussion: The first discussion focuses initially on the following aspects:
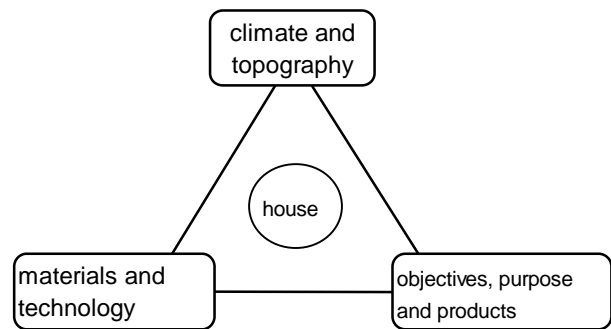
This will provide us with insights into
- the ecological, economic and institutional environment
- the resources, capabilities and knowledge of the family members
- the economic and other purposes and objectives

Photography: If the interlocutors permit, we now take additional pictures with the members of the family on them, for instance a group photograph of the children and the adults, a group picture of the women, a picture showing people doing housework etc., and shots of the interior might also be permitted.

Step 3: One step further

Presentation: Again we prepare enlargements in DIN A4 and A5 format, selecting shots showing both the house and the

people. The shots of the house now also show ornaments or other non-directly-functional features, and possibly also the interior. We visit the families to show them the pictures and talk to the families about them. After the discussion, we give the pictures to the families.

Discussion: The discussion should first address the issue of the history of the house: When and by whom was it built? Why did they build it just here? etc.. The discussion should focus on the following aspects:
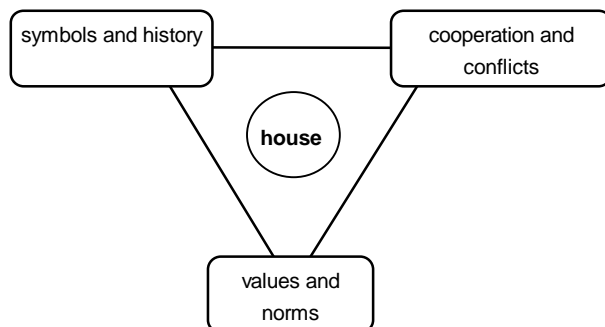
This will provide us with insights into
- social relationships, spatial planning, division of labour and forms of cooperation
- values and common experiences
- history, symbols and their significance

Step 4: Evaluation
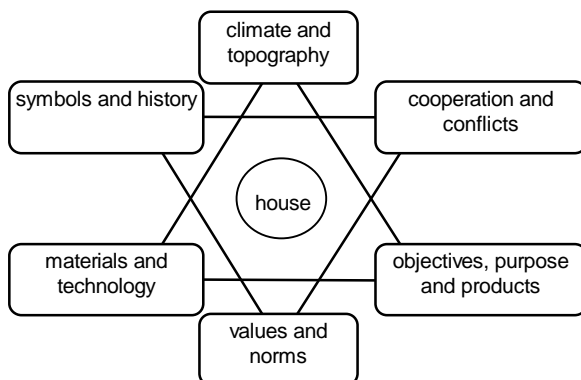
The pictures of the visited families are now put together in the form of an **exhibition**. Where possible, the captions should include **verbatim quotes** from the interlocutors. The six-point star formed by the two superimposed triangles helps illustrate the areas discussed.

Comparative viewing of the pictures leads spontaneously to striking **correspondences** and to **new questions**. If we identify important **information gaps** in these questions which we need to fill for our work, this will require further rounds of discussion, possibly also with other households.

Among the most important insights and findings we seek the link to our project. **Key questions**: What does this mean for our project? What influence will that insight have on what we do or what we are planning to do?

C Result

Observation of the diverse functions of family households enables us to understand the behaviour patterns of the actors in their everyday context. By doing this we create favourable preconditions for us to harmonise what we do or are going to do with the thoughts and actions of our partners, in other words to become a part of what they do.

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