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A tool to reflect on the process,
progress and priorities of your
multi-stakeholder forum

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ISBN 978-602-387-139-1

DOI: 10.17528/cifor/007796

Sarmiento Barletti JP, Larson AM, Cisneros N, Heise N, Liswanti N, Mariño, H and Tamara A. 2020. *How are we doing? A tool to reflect on the process, progress and priorities of your multi-stakeholder forum*. Bogor, Indonesia: CIFOR.

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We would like to thank all funding partners who supported this research through their contributions to the CGIAR Fund. For a full list of the 'CGIAR Fund' funding partners please see: <http://www.cgiar.org/our-funders/>

Any views expressed in this publication are those of the authors.
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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This work was supported by the Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation; the European Commission; the International Climate Initiative of the German Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety; and the United Kingdom's Department for International Development. It was undertaken as part of the CGIAR Research Programs on Policies, Institutions and Markets (PIM), led by the International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI) and on Forest, Trees and Agroforestry (FTA), led by CIFOR. The opinions expressed here belong to the authors, and do not necessarily reflect those of CIFOR, IFPRI, or CGIAR.

The authors would like to thank Marco Arenas from the Participatory Management Unit of Peru's Protected Areas Service (SERNANP) for his support throughout the process. We also thank Alejandro Corisepa, President of the Management Committee for the Amarakaeri Communal Reserve (RCA), Maria Celmira Bustamante, President of the Management Committee for the Alto Mayo Protected Forest (BPAM), and the members of their Management Committees, the Executor of the Administration contract for the RCA (ECA-Amarakaeri), and local SERNANP offices for BPAM and the RCA, for their active participation and support throughout the tool's development process. We would also like to thank Prof Daddy Ruhayat and Reonaldus Paembonan from the Provincial Council on Climate Change (DDPI) in East Kalimantan.

We also thank reviewers Blake Ratner, Christopher Hewlett, Constanze vonOppeln, Delia Catacutan, Iliana Monterroso, Jonathan Fox, Kristen Evans, Markus Ihalainen, Moira Moeliono, Peter Cronkleton, Pratiti Priyadarshini, Reilly O'Hara and Suzanne Salz for their comments.

SUMMARY

This handbook explains how to implement *How are we doing?*, a tool that enables participatory reflective monitoring in multi-stakeholder forums (MSFs). MSFs are spaces that include a wide range of stakeholders in a topic or region, to engage in dialogue, decision making and/or the implementation of activities for common landscape goals. *How are we doing?* supports enabling conditions to allow the MSF to achieve its goal(s) equitably and effectively. Here we provide a step-by-step process on how to do that.

MSFs have gained much attention around the world because of their potential to improve collaboration between different actors, sectors and governance levels to address complex challenges, which cannot be resolved by one actor alone. They can also include actors that, throughout history, have not been able (or allowed) to participate in decision making on land use and land-use issues and/or the design of initiatives that may affect their rights, territories, lives and livelihoods.

This handbook is the product of collaboration between members of MSFs and researchers from the Center for International Forestry Research (CIFOR). The collaboration emerged from the identification of the need for a simple tool to allow MSF participants to monitor their forums, and reflect upon and improve their processes and results. In response, CIFOR held a series of participatory workshops in Indonesia and Peru to develop *How are we doing?*, to reflect on and learn from what the MSF has been doing well (and not so well); examine progress toward the objective(s), including the challenges faced and the ones still ahead; and support the annual planning process.

How are we doing? has three main features that set it apart from other tools. First, it was developed together with members of several subnational MSFs. Second, it was designed to be used by MSF participants themselves, not to be applied by external evaluators. And, third, its objective goes beyond a simple assessment of indicators, rather inviting participants to discuss and reflect on their answers. The purpose of this reflection is to learn from the past, consider progress and obstacles to further progress, and collectively plan how to achieve the MSF's goals in the future.

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PURPOSE: WHAT IS THIS TOOL FOR?

This handbook explains how to implement *How are we doing?*, a tool that enables participatory reflective monitoring in multi-stakeholder forums (MSFs). MSFs, or multi-stakeholder platforms, as they are often called, are spaces that include a wide range of stakeholders in a topic or region, to engage in dialogue, decision making and/or the implementation of activities for common landscape goals. *How are we doing?* supports enabling conditions to allow the MSF to achieve its goal(s) equitably and effectively. Here we provide a step-by-step process on how to use it.

Background and objectives

This handbook is the product of collaboration between members of MSFs and researchers from the Center for International Forestry Research (CIFOR). The collaboration emerged from discussion of research results from a comparative study of MSFs in Brazil, Ethiopia, Indonesia and Peru that dealt with subnational land use challenges. This identified the need for a simple tool to allow MSF participants to monitor their forums, and reflect upon and improve their processes and results. In response, CIFOR held a series of participatory workshops in Indonesia and Peru to develop *How are we doing?*, a participatory monitoring tool to reflect on and learn from what the MSF has been doing well (and not so well); examine progress toward the objective(s), including the challenges faced and the ones still ahead; and support the annual planning process.

How are we doing? has three main features that set it apart from other tools. First, it was developed together with the members – representing a wide range of actors – of several different subnational MSFs. Second, it was designed to be used by MSF participants themselves, not to be applied by external evaluators. And, third, its objective goes beyond a simple assessment of indicators, but rather, invites participants to discuss and reflect on their answers. The purpose of this reflection is to learn from the past, consider progress and obstacles to further progress, and collectively plan how to achieve the MSF's goals in the future. For this exercise to be effective, organizers and participants need to be prepared and willing to make major re-alignments to their MSF, when room for improvement is identified. Otherwise, the monitoring exercise validates the MSF's weaknesses rather than overcoming them, or fails to address exclusion.

What is a multi-stakeholder forum?

MSFs (also known as multi-stakeholder platforms) have gained much attention around the world because of their potential to improve collaboration between different actors (e.g. government agencies and indigenous organizations), sectors (e.g. development and environment) and governance levels (e.g. national ministries and municipalities) to address complex challenges, which cannot be resolved by one actor alone. They can also include actors that, throughout history, have not been able (or allowed) to participate in decision making on land use and land-use issues and/or the design of initiatives that may affect their rights, territories, lives and livelihoods.

Nevertheless, MSFs are not new. Many of us have taken part in all kinds of participatory processes that include different types of actors. MSFs – like other participatory processes before them – can often fall short of truly equal and effective participation because they are unable to level out the power inequalities between participants and thus risk legitimizing unequal practices. Power inequalities may be different in each MSF and depend on the characteristics of participating actors, including access to wealth, political influence, gender and level of technical knowledge. For example, a participating actor can be considered to be powerful if his or her voice is heard over others; or a marginalized group may think that they are not powerful enough to voice their opinions.

In other words, if we do not pay enough attention to how we organize and manage our MSFs, we might limit the possibility of having real conversations and collaborations among equals. Even worse, we run the risk of reaching agreements that are unfair for some: that benefit more powerful actors at the expense of the less powerful. Having seen some of these dangers during research, the tool development team believes that it is crucial that MSF members periodically evaluate and reflect on processes, priorities and progress in order to keep adapting and improving in an equitable and effective way.

Although MSFs are as different as the issues they address, the forums involved in the development of this tool included a wide range of actors with a stake in a topic or region, to engage in dialogue, decision making and/or the implementation of activities for common landscape goals. These actors include indigenous and local communities, farmer cooperatives, national and subnational government agencies, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), researchers and private companies.

How will we benefit from participatory monitoring and reflective learning?

As noted above, this tool is designed to be used in a participatory manner, meaning that MSF participants will be the ones to implement it and use it to assess how well their MSF is operating. They can then use the results to plan their future work.

Research (see page 5) shows that participatory monitoring brings multiple benefits, as it:



builds trust among MSF members, because it is more transparent than other ways of monitoring;



responds to the priorities of MSF members, as they are involved directly;



helps plan for more effective activities, because it allows participants to identify their strengths and weaknesses, the capacities they need to develop, what they have been doing well and what they can do better, and to take those lessons into the future;



develops participants' capacities to implement projects;



invites participants to share their experiences with and learn from each other through the implementation process;



improves participants' access to information, increases transparency and reinforces accountability within their MSF, as it assesses progress from multiple perspectives, together.

PURPOSE: WHAT IS THIS TOOL FOR?

Through research and collaboration, CIFOR has learned that effective participatory monitoring is put into practice through four key 'dimensions' or principles. By applying these, *How are we doing?* includes not only participatory monitoring but also reflective learning. These principles are: participation, learning, negotiation and adaptability.

Participation:

Participatory monitoring and reflective learning invite the actors in the landscape who affect or are affected by the issue in question to participate, especially those who are normally excluded from decision-making processes. We designed *How are we doing?* so that everyone could participate in the implementation of the tool: it is not a process just for MSF organizers or conveners or to be implemented by an outsider. If an MSF is not inclusive and fails to treat everyone equally, the process could worsen inequalities among MSF participants. For example, if some groups are excluded from MSFs, such as women or indigenous peoples, or if they are too uncomfortable to voice their opinions, not only will they be at a disadvantage, but also the MSF itself will lose the opportunity to learn from their input, and may even undercut its reason for existence.



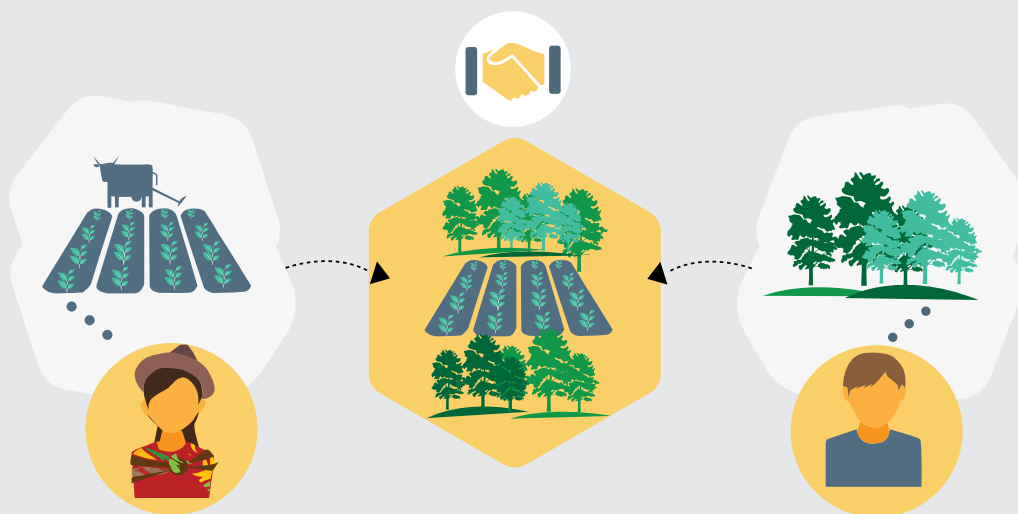
Learning:

Participatory monitoring and social and reflective learning allow us to learn from what we have been doing as an MSF. By carrying out this reflection as a group, we can learn about what we have been doing well, what we can do better, what goals we should be setting for ourselves, and which of our current objectives we should change or update. This learning process also allows us – as individuals and as a group – to recognize what capacities and knowledge we need to strengthen or develop to improve our work as an MSF, by encouraging participants to ask fundamental questions about the MSF. In doing so, it allows us to share and build trust among participants. Being able to reflect and share in a safe space is an essential function of an MSF.



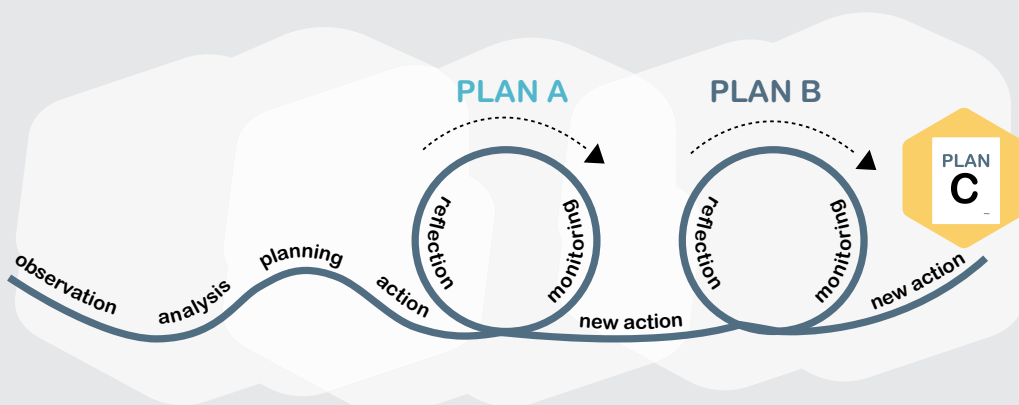
Negotiation:

Participatory monitoring and reflective learning involve different people that represent different organizations, institutions and communities that often have different interests. Thus, we must negotiate, and often compromise, to reach solutions that benefit all. In the process, we build trust, share opinions and negotiate among equals to continue working toward our MSF's objectives.



Adaptability:

Participatory monitoring and reflective learning invite us to be flexible and open to adapting our practices to the new information produced in the process of reflection that takes place in our implementation of the tool. Thus, the tool allows us to change and adapt to work better to reach our goals.



Colfer CJP. 2005. The Complex Forest: Communities, Uncertainty, and Adaptive Collaborative Management. Washington, DC: Resources for the Future/CIFOR.

How can I learn more?

Better Evaluation¹, Collaborating for Resilience², Wageningen University's *The MSP Guide*³, and Partnerships 2030⁴ provide resources for further learning on these topics. The following documents have more information on MSFs and/or participatory monitoring:

- Brouwer JH, Woodhill AJ, Hemmati M, Verhoosel KS and van Vugt SM. 2018. *The MSP Guide: How to Design and Facilitate Multi-Stakeholder Partnerships*. Wageningen: Wageningen Centre for Development Innovation.
- Estrella M and Gaventa J. 2001. *Who Counts Reality? Participatory monitoring and evaluation: A literature review*. IDS Working Paper 70. Brighton, UK: Institute of Development Studies.
- Guijt I. 2014. *Participatory Approaches, Methodological Briefs: Impact Evaluation 5*. Florence, Italy: UNICEF Office of Research. https://www.unicef-irc.org/publications/pdf/brief_5_participatoryapproaches_eng.pdf
- Kristen E, Larson AM, Mwangi E, Cronkleton P, Maravanyika T, Hernandez X, Müller P, Pikile A, Marchena R, Mukasa C, Tibazalika A and Banana A. 2014. *Collaborative Management and Improving Women's Participation*. Bogor, Indonesia: CIFOR.
- Kusters K, De Graaf M and Buck L. 2016. Guidelines: Participatory planning, monitoring and evaluation of multi-stakeholder platforms in integrated landscape initiatives. Working paper. Wageningen, The Netherlands: Tropenbos International and EcoAgriculture Partners.
- Larson AM and Sarmiento Barletti JP. 2020. Designing for engagement: Insights for more equitable and resilient multi-stakeholder forums. CIFOR Infobrief 280. Bogor, Indonesia: CIFOR.
- Ratner B and Smith W. 2016. *Collaborating for Resilience: A Practitioner's Guide*. Washington DC: CoRe. [French and Spanish versions also available at <https://www.coresilience.org/resources#manuals>]
- Sarmiento Barletti JP and Larson AM. 2020. *Models of participation in multi-stakeholder forums: Lessons from a realist synthesis review*. CIFOR Infobrief 281. Bogor, Indonesia: CIFOR.

¹ <https://www.betterevaluation.org/>

² <https://www.coresilience.org/>

³ <http://www.mspguide.org>

⁴ <https://www.partnerschaften2030.de/en/>

PURPOSE: WHAT IS THIS TOOL FOR?



Photo by Marlon del Aguila/CIFOR

Members of the Alto Mayo Protected Forest MSF (San Martin, Peru) at the first implementation of the tool.

METHOD: HOW SHOULD YOU RUN THIS REFLECTIVE EXERCISE?



METHOD: HOW SHOULD YOU RUN THIS REFLECTIVE EXERCISE?

These instructions are intended for all MSF members but must be read in detail by the people who will facilitate the implementation of the tool. The tool is divided into five stages, each with multiple steps. The following pages will take you through these in detail below. Your group will need at least 3 hours to implement the tool. If it is the first time that you use it, implementation may take up to 4 hours.

A | Preparation stage

- Step 1.** Get to know the tool and its instructions.
- Step 2.** Read the 'Frequently Asked Questions' section.
- Step 3.** Decide how frequently you will implement this tool.
- Step 4.** Choose a voting method.

B | Selection stage

- Step 5.** Designate a facilitator and a secretary.
- Step 6.** Register participants in the attendance record.
- Step 7.** Select six statements (indicators) from the *Pool of Statements* to add to the four fixed statements, for a total of 10 statements.
- Step 8.** Write the statements (indicators) in *Worksheet 1 Statements*.

C | Voting stage

- Step 9.** Vote on how much you agree or disagree with each indicator and record the results on *Worksheet 1 Statements*.
- Step 10.** Calculate the average score for each statement.

D | Reflective stage

- Step 11.** Select 4 out of any of the 10 statements you voted on for the reflective process.
- Step 12.** Discuss the reflection questions for each of the four selected statements.
- Step 13.** Write down the results of the group reflection.

E | Summary stage

- Step 14.** Complete the written summary in *Worksheet 2 Summary and Roadmap*.
- Step 15.** Complete the visual summary of voting results in *Worksheet 2 Summary and Roadmap*.

A | Preparation stage



A | Preparation stage

Step 1

Get to know the tool. Please read through the tool's instructions, statements and reflection questions and watch the accompanying videos. Send print or digital copies to as many participants in your MSF as possible or make them available on your website or in your social media group, if you have one.

Step 2

Read the *Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)* section (pages 34–37). Keep a copy of the FAQs with you throughout the process.

Step 3

Decide on how frequently your group will implement the tool (e.g. every 6 months, or once a year). The tool development team recommends that you implement it at least once a year in order to reflect on, assess and learn from the past year's work and inform your workplan for the following year.

Step 4

Choose a voting method (or methods). Before moving on to the next stage, you will need to decide on a voting method to register each member's opinion (see Box 1). It is important to select a method that all members understand, that will document that all participants have expressed their opinion (i.e. that they voted) and that registers those opinions. It is also important to ensure that voting is as inclusive as possible, and that all opinions are taken into account. If there are any participants who cannot read in your group, make sure that you select a voting method that allows them to understand what they are voting for (e.g. show of hands or voice vote). In some cases, it may be necessary to use methods that are anonymous and allow members to express their opinion in secret (e.g. secret ballot). You will need to vote during steps 7 and 9 of the tool and can select a different voting method for each. For Step 7, you will select six statements from the *Pool of Statements* (page 41-43). Statements are sentences that describe an aspect of the MSF that you can agree with, disagree with or have a neutral opinion on; this tool captures the perceptions that the MSF participants have on each statement. You will add these 6 newly selected statements to the 4 fixed statements, for a total of 10 statements to rank and reflect on. For Step 9, you will rank how much you agree or disagree with each of the 10 statements.

Box 1. Choosing a voting method and determining quorum

Participatory monitoring invites each participant to express their opinion and document it through voting. It is important that all MSF members understand and agree on the voting method before starting. Your MSF may already have a voting method, but if you do not have one or want to try something different, consider the following:



Secret ballot: Write your selection on an unmarked piece of paper and hand it in for counting.



Chart: All choices are written down on a chart and everyone marks their preference(s) based on how much they agree or disagree.



Show of hands: Participants raise their hand to show their vote and are counted.



Voice vote: Participants are asked to say yes (agree) or no (disagree) and are counted.

Voting takes place in two different phases; each is a little different. For the voting process in Step 7, you will count votes and select the statements that get the most votes. The group should have a discussion during Step 7 so that you choose the statements that will best allow you to reflect on the past year and support your planning process for the next year. For the second voting process in Step 9, you will each rank the 10 statements based on your perceptions, so we recommend either a secret ballot or a chart vote. The objective of this voting stage is to express your opinion about the statements under discussion.

Quorum: Your MSF may also have rules on quorum – the minimum number of members that must be present at a meeting to make it valid. We recommend that you follow that rule for the implementation of the tool; if you do not have a quorum rule, make sure that as many MSF members as possible (at least half) participate.

METHOD: HOW SHOULD YOU RUN THIS REFLECTIVE EXERCISE?



Photo by Pavel Martiarena/CIFOR

A member of the Amarakaeri Communal Reserve MSF (Madre de Dios, Peru) ranks statements on a chart.



Photo by Marlon del Aguila/CIFOR

The facilitator, with the help of the secretary, counts the votes in a completed Worksheet 1-Statements the Alto Mayo Protected Forest MSF (San Martin, Peru).

B | Selection stage



B | Selection stage

You will need to carry out the Selection stage (and the subsequent parts) every time that you implement the tool. The steps you will follow are:

Step 5

Designate a facilitator and a secretary. The facilitator will lead the implementation of the tool. This person will be responsible for reading out the tool's statements, organizing the voting process for each, and reading out the reflection questions in the Reflective stage (page 46). It is important that the facilitator is clear and articulate when reading out instructions and makes sure that all participants understand what each statement means. If you are working in different languages, you may want to consider having an additional co-facilitator for each language. The secretary will complete the tool's worksheets, although additional participants should take good notes throughout the implementation process. You must be mindful of who you select as facilitator and secretary; we strongly encourage you to choose different people every time you implement the tool, as rotation shares the responsibilities of running the meetings, and encourages everyone to be more engaged with the process. When you select them, make sure that there is a gender balance and representation of different types of actors in your group (e.g. government representatives, academia, local population, indigenous representatives, NGOs and others).

Step 6

Register participants in an attendance record. Fill in your name and contact details in the *Attendance Record* (page 39). The facilitator and secretary will verify that everyone present has completed the attendance record. Tracking who is present is important in monitoring processes as it allows the MSF members to observe any changes in its composition between different monitoring cycles.

B | Selection stage cont...**Step
7**

The tool starts with four fixed statements, meaning that they will be used every time that you implement the tool. Led by the facilitator, and keeping in mind your MSF's priorities, you will select 6 additional statements from the *Pool of Statements* (page 41-43) to add to the 4 fixed statements, for a total of 10. The facilitator must read out all statements so that everyone can have a fair chance of participating. Although you do not need to choose the same six statements every time you implement the tool, it is a good idea to repeat some in subsequent implementations in order to compare your perceptions over time. There are four fixed indicators for two reasons. First, as you will have read in the introduction to this tool, these indicators are informed by research on the topic. Second, they give you at least four statements to compare period after period and track how well (or not so well) your forum is doing.

**Step
8**

The secretary will add the six selected statements to the four fixed ones in *Worksheet 1 Statements* (page 44). You have now defined the statements that will be used for the reflective process and selected a voting/selection method during the Preparation stage (go back to Step 4 if you have not).

C | Voting stage

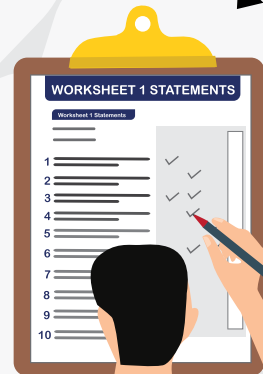
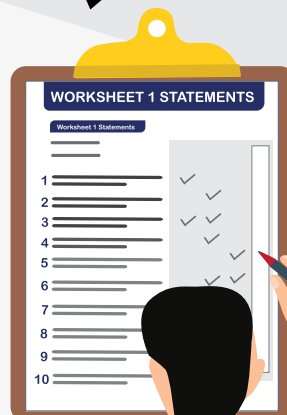
Step
9

Vote on how much you agree or disagree with each indicator and record the results on Worksheet 1 Statements



Step
10

Calculate the average score for each statement



C | Voting stage

Once all preparations have been made, you can move on to vote and score each statement. The votes are the information that will be used to rank each statement as part the reflection process. For this, the next steps need to be followed:

Step
9

Conduct the voting process for each indicator, pointing out how much you agree or disagree with each statement. The facilitator will read out all the statements, one at a time. It is important that the facilitator makes sure that all of you have understood each statement clearly. Every participant will vote for each statement following the method agreed on in the Preparation Stage. Participants will score each statement based on how much they agree or disagree with it, on a scale from 1 to 5 where:

- 1 = Strongly disagree
- 2 = Disagree
- 3 = Neither agree nor disagree
- 4 = Agree
- 5 = Strongly agree

If the chosen voting method is by raising hands or voice vote, the secretary will write down the number of hands raised or voices in agreement with each of the options in the scale. Once everyone has voted, the secretary will register the votes for each statement using *Worksheet 1 Statements*. It is important that the facilitator ensures that every participant has understood each statement clearly. The facilitator also needs to ensure that all participants have voted, including himself/herself and the secretary, otherwise the calculations will be incorrect.

Step
10

The secretary, using a calculator, will calculate the average score for each statement and round them to the nearest half (0.5) and register each average score in the corresponding box on *Worksheet 1 Statements* (see page 44).

Box 2. Example: Calculating the average score for each statement

An MSF had 28 participants taking part in the implementation of the tool. The group decided to vote using a secret ballot. Each participant voted by rating agreement (from 1 to 5) with all 10 statements and then submitted their ballot to the secretary. The secretary then recorded and counted the votes on *Worksheet 1 Statements*.

Their results for the statement "Our MSF includes everyone who should be present" were:

Statement	How many people...?					Average score
	1. Strongly disagree	2. Disagree	3. Neither agree nor disagree	4. Agree	5. Strongly agree	
2. Our MSF includes everyone who should be present.	2	2	0	4	20	

To calculate the average vote for each statement, the secretary used the following procedure:

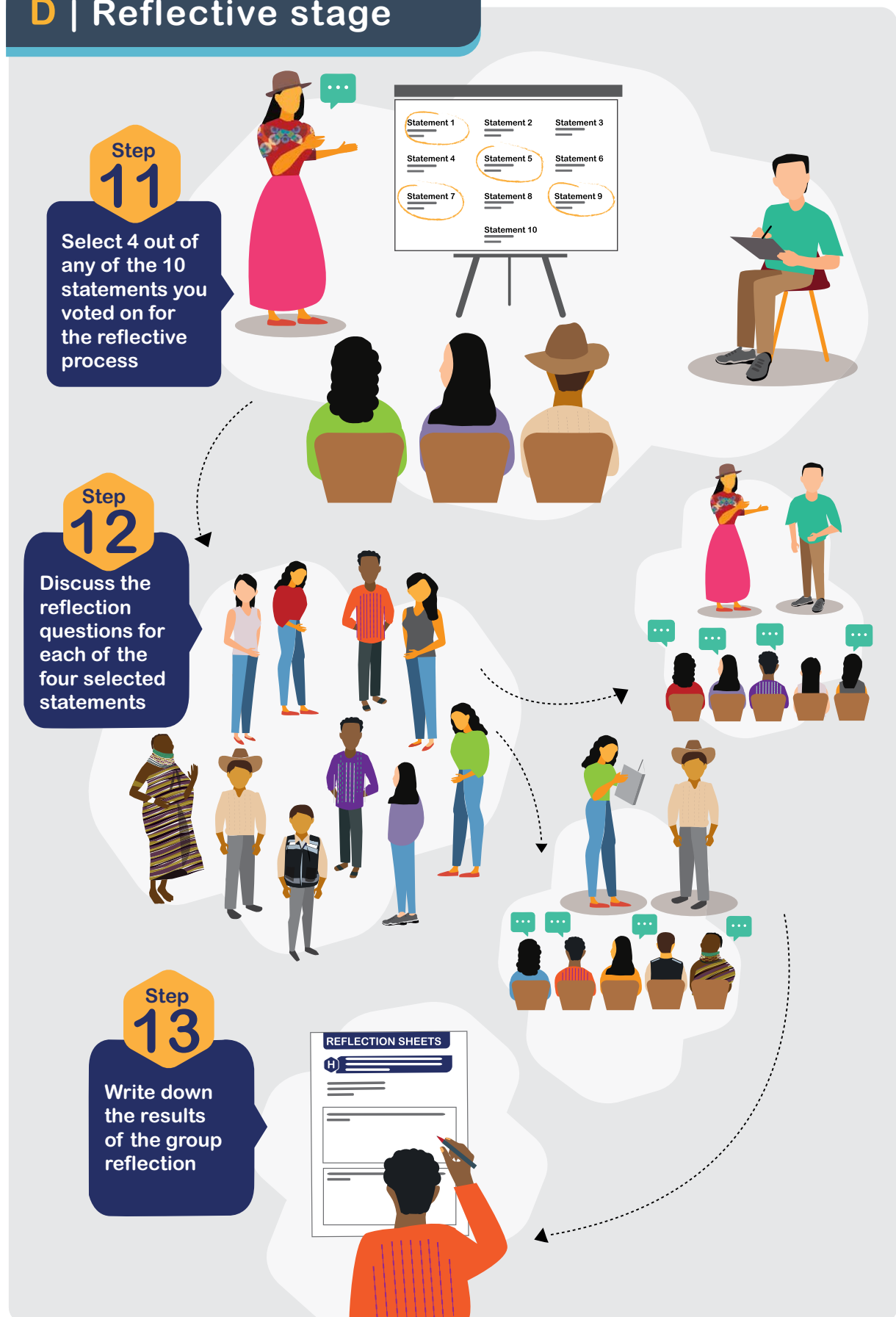
AVERAGE = [(1 x number of people who voted "Strongly disagree") + (2 x number of people who voted "Disagree") + (3 x number of people who voted "Neither agree nor disagree") + (4 x number of people who voted "Agree") + (5 x number of people who voted "Strongly agree")] / Total participants

$$\text{Average} = [(1 \times 2) + (2 \times 2) + (3 \times 0) + (4 \times 4) + (5 \times 20)] / 28 = 4.35$$

The secretary then rounded the result to the nearest half (0.5) and wrote the results in *Worksheet 1 Statements*.

Statement	How many people...?					Average score
	1. Strongly disagree	2. Disagree	3. Neither agree nor disagree	4. Agree	5. Strongly agree	
2. Our MSF includes everyone who should be present.	2	2	0	4	20	4.5 [4.35 rounded to the nearest 0.5]

D | Reflective stage



D | Reflective stage

Once you have all voted and calculated all averages, you can move on to the reflection process, which consists of statements and questions in two phases. For this, you will:

Step 11

Select 4 out of any of the 10 statements that you have just voted upon to carry out the reflection process. The tool development team recommends that you select the statement with the highest average score (the one that was agreed with the most), the statement with the lowest average score (the one that was disagreed with the most) and two that the group considers are most important to reflect on based on your MSF's priorities. Other options include statements where opinions are polarized (with several people agreeing and several disagreeing) or, if available, the statement where the average score differed the most from your previous implementation of the tool.

Step 12

The secretary will select the Reflection sheets (pages 46-60) for the four statements your group chose in Step 11. If you are using the version where you have printed the "printable" material, then select four "blank statement sheets" and fill them up with the statements that you will reflect on, as well as copying the reflection questions for each statement. The facilitator will then read the reflection questions for each statement out loud, one statement at a time, and moderate the group discussion, also one statement at a time. If you all feel that your group has too many participants to engage in an effective discussion within the time you have allocated for the tool, you may want to consider breaking down into smaller groups. Each group can discuss the reflection questions for each of the four statements, or the statements can be divided among them so that each group carries out the reflection for fewer statements. In this case, each group must select its own facilitator, who will read out the reflection questions (one at a time) and moderate the discussion, and a secretary, who will take notes.

Box 3. Sub-groups

In areas where there are barriers for different groups to participate equally or deep-rooted power inequalities, your MSF may want to consider doing these exercises in sub-groups to understand how the responses differ for various groups, and then facilitate a discussion on this. In this case, the group will split into 3–4 smaller groups (sub-groups) to discuss a smaller set of questions, each sub-group with its own facilitator and secretary.

Step 13

Once you have discussed the reflection questions for each statement, the facilitator (or facilitators, if you decide to divide your group into smaller groups, or sub-groups in case you consider this a necessary measure, as mentioned in Box 3) will read out the summary questions in each statement's Reflection sheet. One statement will be discussed and completed at a time. The secretary (or secretaries) will take notes of the discussion, and then as a group you will answer the following summary questions in the allotted space:

- What are the three most important lessons learned from this discussion?
- What are our three main challenges to improve or maintain this statement's score for the following period? How will we address them?

Once these are completed, you can move on to the next statement, until you complete all four (or the statements that were assigned to your group).

Box 4. IMPORTANT

If you have decided to carry out the reflection process in groups, leave time at the end of the exercise for each group to present a summary of their discussion to all participants. After this, the Reflective stage will have been completed.



Photo by Marlon del Aguila/CIFOR

Members of the Alto Mayo Protected Forest MSF (San Martin, Peru) prepare to use the *Reflection sheets*.

Box 5. Example: completed Reflection sheet

4

We have a positive impact beyond our MSF

Example

Reflection questions:

- Has our MSF helped to connect the different sectors/groups/communities that we represent?
- Have we applied any lessons learned in our MSF to our work with the communities/institutions/organizations we represent?
- Have new conflicts arisen outside our MSF, or have existing conflicts worsened? If so, which ones?

What are the three most important lessons learned from this discussion?

1. The national government and the local communities support the protected area, but the local government and farmers do not. They see a need for the building of a road directly through the protected area's buffer zone that could allow for illegal logging and invasions in the area. Our mayor has been discussing the road in recent radio interviews and says that it is key for the development of our jurisdiction.
2. All of our MSF's participants support the protected area, but we have no participants from either the local government or the farmers' organization, so we do not know for certain their priorities or plans, or why they want to build the road where they do. We only know about what might happen from radio interviews and protests by farmers.
3. Some of the communities represented in our MSF do not know that our MSF exists and that their priorities are represented in our group. Also, there is a rumour that the MSF is working with the local government to support the building of the road and people are scared of the potential land loss and logging that could come with the road. Some community leaders have started speaking against our MSF, saying that we are corrupt and are not having an impact in their communities. They are unaware that the eco-tourism and park ranger programs are both organized by our MSF.

Box 5. Example: completed Reflection sheet cont...

4

We have a positive impact beyond our MSF

Example

What are the three main challenges to improve or maintain this statement's score for the following period? How will we address them?

We had an average score of 2.5 for this statement. Our three main challenges are:

- 1. There is a conflict between our role in support of our protected area and the local government's plans to build a road for farmers to take their products to sell in our regional capital.*
- 2. There are land conflicts between local communities and farmers in the buffer zone of our protected area.*
- 3. Some of the communities that we represent do not know that our MSF exists or that it represents them*

To address these challenges, we will:

- 1. Start a radio campaign about the threat of the road to the protected area and the services it brings to local populations.*
- 2. Bring in representatives of local farmers to learn about our MSF and for us to learn about their needs and find middle ground.*
- 3. Encourage participants to report to their communities after each of our meetings and actively advertise our activities on our Facebook page and look into designing and printing flyers explaining our work.*

E | Summary stage

Step
14

Complete the written summary in Worksheet 2 Summary and Roadmap



Step
15

Complete the visual summary of voting results in Worksheet 2 Summary and Roadmap



E | Summary stage

Once the *Voting and Reflective* stages have been completed, you will summarize your results to inform your future work and share them with more clarity. For this:

**Step
14**

The secretary will complete the two summary boxes and the roadmap in Worksheet 2 Summary and Roadmap (pages 61-62) based on your discussions during the Reflective stage. The information for both boxes and the roadmap will come from your four completed Reflection sheets. One of the boxes will be filled with the key activities that you want to continue carrying out, while the other one will include the activities that you want to correct. After completing this part of Worksheet 2, the secretary will fill in the roadmap with the activities (and their objectives) that your group identified as key to address the challenges to improving or maintaining your scores for the next implementation of the tool. In the meantime, the facilitator will lead your group in discussion to collectively decide who of you will be responsible (as individuals or as a group) for leading each activity. In your discussion, think of your organizations' strengths and the capacities necessary to lead each activity. The secretary will add the names of those that accept to be responsible for each activity onto Worksheet 2 and will then read out the completed Worksheet 2 to the whole group, which will approve it or propose changes.

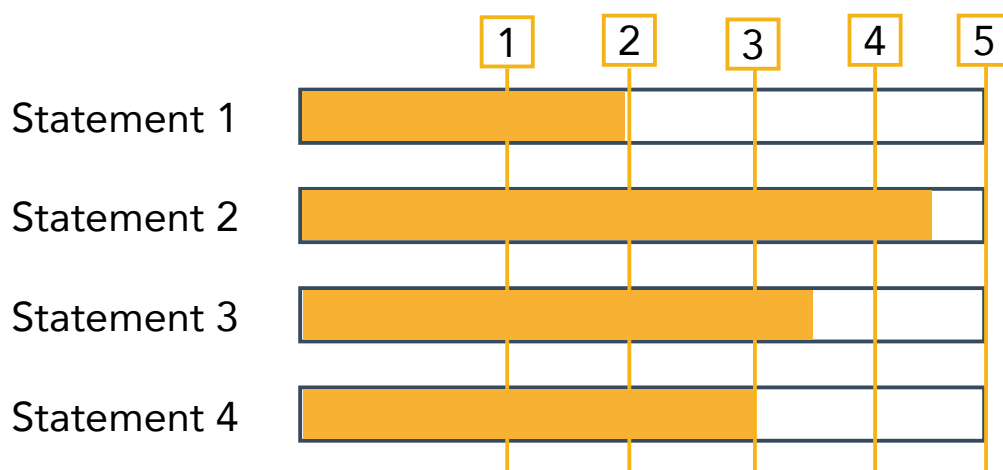
Box 6. Supporting your roadmap

To support the MSF members that are responsible for the activities in the roadmap, your forum should consider including those activities in your annual work plan and meeting periodically to review them. Those meetings could also serve for MSF members to present their concrete work plans to fulfil the tasks in the roadmap, update others on progress on the activities, and to request help or advice from other members in order to work towards the objectives before the next time the tool is implemented.

Step 15

The secretary will also complete the visual summary in **Worksheet 2 Summary and Roadmap** by coloring the bar up to the average score for each of the 10 statements you reflected on in your implementation of the tool. This will provide a visual representation of the assessment for an easier understanding of its results.

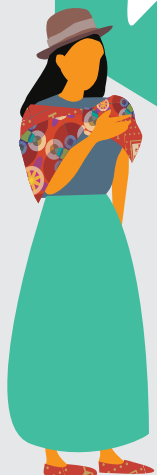
Box 7. Example: completed bars



Box 8. IMPORTANT

Keep all of the sheets completed during this exercise. These can be used for multiple purposes in the future. For example, you might want to use the results to plan the MSF's activities in the next period, track results for comparison next time this exercise is implemented, or to present the results to other members of the group that were unable to join you or to other groups that you might want to inform about your work. If, at any stage, there are any doubts, please review the *Frequently asked questions* section.

CHECKLISTS AND FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS



Checklist: Responsibilities of facilitator

Here is a summarized list of functions to guide the facilitator throughout the process.

The facilitator's responsibilities:

- ☐ Verifying that everyone present has completed the attendance record.
- ☐ Reading out the statements clearly, and making sure that the group understands them and selects 6 additional statements from the *Pool of Statements* to add to the 4 fixed statements, for a total of 10 statements.
- ☐ Conducting the voting process for each indicator, reading out all the statements, one at a time, making sure that they are understood by all participants.
- ☐ Ensuring that all participants vote (including the facilitator and the secretary).
- ☐ Making sure that 4 out of the 10 statements that participants have just voted upon are selected to carry out the reflective process.
- ☐ Reading the reflection questions for each statement out loud, one statement at a time.
- ☐ Moderating the reflective process group discussion, one statement at a time.
- ☐ Leading the breakdown of participants into smaller groups to discuss the reflective process, if considered necessary (e.g. if there are too many people), each group with its own facilitator to lead the discussion and secretary to take notes.
- ☐ Reading out the summary questions for each statement's *Reflection sheet*, once the reflection questions for each statement have been discussed. One statement needs to be discussed and completed at a time.
- ☐ Progressing through the statements: once the summary questions in each statement's *Reflection sheets* are completed, moving on to the next statement until all four statements (or the statements that were assigned to each facilitator's group) have been completed.

Checklist: Responsibilities of secretary

Here is a summarized list of functions to guide the secretary throughout the process.

The secretary's responsibilities:

- ☐ Verifying and recording attendance in the *attendance record*.
- ☐ Adding the six additional selected statements to *Worksheet 1 Statements*.
- ☐ Registering the votes for each statement in the voting process in *Worksheet 1 Statements*.
- ☐ Calculating the average score for each statement and rounding it to the nearest half (0.5) for each statement voted on.
- ☐ Registering each average score in its corresponding box on *Worksheet 1 Statements*.
- ☐ Selecting the *Reflection sheets* for the four statements the group chose for the reflective process.
- ☐ Taking notes of the discussion led by the facilitator(s) when answering the summary questions for each statement, once the reflection questions for each statement have been discussed.
- ☐ Completing the written summary in *Worksheet 2 Summary and Roadmap* and reading it out for the group to either approve or propose changes.
- ☐ Noting down the activities, time frame and members responsible for each activity on the third box (the Roadmap) in *Worksheet 2 Summary and Roadmap*.
- ☐ Completing the visual summary in *Worksheet 2 Summary and Roadmap* by coloring the bar.

Frequently asked questions



What is this tool for?

How are we doing? is an invitation for your group to reflect on, and learn from, what you have been doing well (and not so well). Its aim is for you to use this information to adapt your MSF's work to address problems, and to design a pathway for how you plan to achieve your objective(s) and follow your priorities.



How often should we run this exercise?

We suggest that the first year that you run this exercise, you do so every 4 or 6 months so that you can practice implementation and compare your results. Once you familiarize yourself with how it works, you can shift to annual evaluations, based on what your group decides is best. You should have regular intervals that are defined independently from the MSF's internal ups and downs. Stick to the time interval that you decide – one common pitfall in monitoring is that little attention is paid to the issue when we are 'doing well', and exercises tend to be run when there are conflicts or problems (and thus the exercises reflect them).



How much time will we need to invest in implementing this tool?

As with similar processes, tool implementation will get easier (and some of its parts faster) as you practice. You must set aside at least 3 hours to implement the tool fully.



Why are there fixed statements?

There are four fixed indicators for two reasons. First, they are indicators defined by research on the topic, which shows them to be important dimensions of effective and equitable MSFs. Second, they give you at least four statements to compare and track how well (or not so well) your MSF is doing after each reflection period.



Can we discuss more than four statements?

Yes, discuss as many as you want. The tool suggests that you do four so that you have enough time to discuss them in full and fill in the relevant forms. If you choose more, make sure that you have planned for enough time, at least 30 minutes per extra statement. You might also want to break down your group into smaller groups to cover more statements in the same allotted time.

Frequently asked questions



Can we add statements or change the statements?

Yes, this tool is a collaborative and 'living' exercise. Please add statements (and reflection questions) or change the ones in this document (including the fixed statements) if you do not think that they address the needs of your MSF. If you do make any changes, please get in touch with the tool development team who will be interested in learning about them for future versions of *How are we doing?*



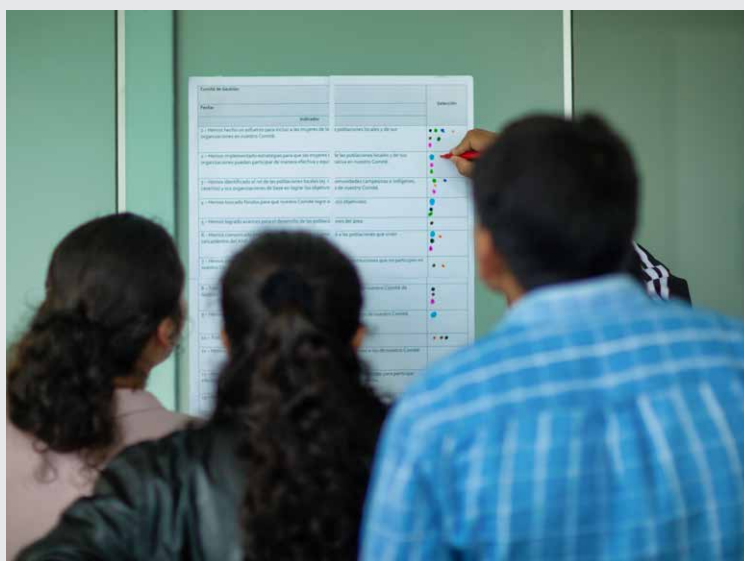
Who should be our facilitator and secretary?

That is completely up to you. However, it is not necessary to choose the same people every time you implement the tool. When you select them, the tool development team recommends that there is gender balance and that they represent different types of actors in your group (e.g. government representatives, academia, local population, indigenous representatives, NGOs and others)



Who can take part in the implementation?

The tool development team recommends that at least half of the members of your MSF participate in the implementation of the tool. However, it is up to your group to decide who you invite to participate in the group reflection, including new MSF members that may know little about your work, or allies and other organizations from outside your MSF.



Members of the Alto Mayo Protected Forest MSF (San Martin, Peru) vote to select their elective statements.

Photo by Marlon del Aguila/CIFOR

Frequently asked questions



What should we compare our results to if this is the first time we have used the tool?

Worksheet 2 Summary and Roadmap was designed to summarize the key positive and not so positive points that come up from your reflections about your past work and priorities to inform how you plan and prioritize your future work. The first time that you use the tool, you can compare results across responses and between statements and discussion questions. While it does not allow you to consider change yet, it is an assessment of your MSF's current state and a baseline for later comparisons.



How should we conduct this exercise if our MSF is new and we are still currently in the design stage?

If you are still setting out the objectives of your MSF, mapping out how to include participants and creating alliances with other organizations or government institutions, you may use the statements and questions in the *Reflection sheets* to discuss your priorities at this stage. For example, you can discuss what you think the MSF's objective(s) should be in Statement 1; who you think should be included or present in the MSF meetings in Statement 2; what the potential sources of funding could be in Statement B, etc.



Who should participate in this discussion?

This tool aims to allow MSF participants themselves to answer this, based on the following two questions: Who should be present for the group to be able to carry out its mandate? Who should be present for the group to have sufficient representation of all stakeholders who might be affected by its decisions? Ideally, those participating in the MSF and this evaluation would come from a diverse array of backgrounds, each enriching the discussion with their own needs and points of view. The idea behind this is that the group is as representative of the local reality as possible – not only for the discussions, as the discussions ought to be a part of the MSF itself.

Frequently asked questions



What should we do with our results?

The tool brings together your perspectives and (hopefully) has led to rich discussion about your work. As such, use your results as you best see fit. You should save all of the completed worksheets to support your annual planning and to allow you to compare your perceptions of your own work overtime. You should also share the results with members of your MSF who were not at the implementation of the tool or others that join your MSF afterwards. You could also share them with other allied organizations or organizations that require evidence of your work, including government agencies and donor organizations.



Photo by Pavel Martiarena/CIFOR

Members of the Amarakaeri Communal Reserve MSF (Madre de Dios, Peru) during the tool's reflective process.



What if the reflection brings up strong points of disagreement and debate that the discussion does not resolve?

Collaborating for Resilience: A Practitioner's Guide – the CORE approach – suggests the need to create an environment that allows for open dialogue, supporting participants in exploring the implications of different options (see Ratner and Smith 2016 in the *How can I learn more?* list above). In this case, the facilitator(s) should address power imbalances or clashing points of view by creating conditions for effective listening, which would lead to dialogue before reaching a decision-making stage. The CORE approach suggests that identifying new collaboration opportunities requires exploring stakeholders' commonalities and differences at higher purpose levels before moving on to the next phase.

ATTENDANCE RECORD, REFLECTION SHEETS AND WORKSHEETS



ATTENDANCE RECORD SHEET

	Name	Surname	Gender	Organization/ Institution	Email	Phone	Signature
1							
2							
3							
4							
5							
6							
7							
8							
9							
10							
11							
12							
13							
14							

Date:

— HOW ARE WE DOING ? —

ATTENDANCE RECORD SHEET

	Name	Surname	Gender	Organization/ Institution	Email	Phone	Signature
15							
16							
17							
18							
19							
20							
21							
22							
23							
24							
25							
26							
27							
28							

Date:

— HOW ARE WE DOING ? —

Fixed statements

1

We are all aware of what our MSF's objective(s) is/are:

These questions seek to ensure that everyone knows and shares the same information on the MSF and understands its purpose and goals. If this is not the case, the group may reflect on the reasons why these are unclear or unknown to some members.

2

Our MSF includes everyone who should be present.

These questions address the adequate representation and participation of stakeholders who will be directly or indirectly impacted by the MSF's work. It is important to evaluate if all of the stakeholders that ought to be involved are in fact participating. If this is not the case, the group is encouraged to consider how to integrate these stakeholders in future activities.

3

We are learning what we need to know in order to participate effectively.

It may be that one or more participants are not participating effectively or do not have a voice in setting the MSF's objectives. For that reason, these questions will guide participants on how to improve representation and the MSF's participation processes.

4

We have a positive impact beyond our MSF.

It is interesting to know and reflect on the MSF's strategies. These reflection questions may help verify that activities are being implemented according to what was agreed or expected by the group.

Elective statements

A

We are all treated as equals in our MSF.

It is fundamental to consider the skills needed for facilitating internal processes. At the same time, it is essential to clarify our shared responsibilities.

B

We have sought sources of funding for our MSF to achieve its objective(s).

These questions aim to address the different types of resources that the MSF needs to carry out its activities in an effective and equitable manner. These resources can be human, financial or logistical, among others.

C

We have implemented strategies for the women of indigenous and local communities and their organizations to participate effectively and equally in our MSF.

These questions aim to delve into the specific activities that have been carried out or are currently in progress to include women in the MSF, as well as guaranteeing their effective participation.

D

We have identified the role of local populations (e.g. indigenous, customary and peasant communities) and their grassroots organizations in achieving our MSF's objective(s).

In order to have a real impact, it is essential to be clear about the roles, knowledge and needs of the local population and their organizations, and how they can support the MSF's objective.

E

We have effectively communicated our work to the communities, organizations and institutions who do not participate in our MSF.

The questions aim to reflect on the tools, strategies and platforms that have been used or can be used to effectively transmit and communicate the MSF's work and purpose to actors who do not participate in it.

Elective statements cont...

F

We are all clear on our own and everyone else's role in our MSF.

To work equitably, effectively and in a collaborative manner, all participants must understand the different organizations represented at the MSF, their goals, and their roles within the MSF and in reaching its objective.

G

We have engaged with other institutions/organizations/entities and/or other participatory spaces that impact our MSF's objective(s).

To increase the MSF's possibility of reaching its objectives, its members must be aware of other participatory spaces with similar or related objectives, and other actors that can impact those objectives. These questions invite reflection on the processes and strategies that would foster working together with other spaces that may impact the MSF's objectives and activities.

H

We have engaged with the interests of actors whose objectives differ to those of our MSF.

Discussing what actors are not aligned with our objectives and interests, hold a neutral position or are potential allies, will let us reflect on how to find a middle ground or improve our collaborations with them.

I

We have identified what capacities we need to develop to be able to participate effectively in our MSF and have made an effort to develop them.

These questions are aimed at assessing and addressing our progress and challenges regarding everyone's effective participation in the MSF.

J

We have supported research studies (e.g. carried out by different organizations or by our members) to reinforce our MSF's objective(s).

These questions aim to reflect on the information that research might provide our MSF to help us pursue our objectives.

Worksheet 1 | Statements

Facilitator: Secretary: Date:	How many people....?					
	1. Strongly disagree	2. Disagree	3. Neither agree or disagree	4. Agree	5. Strongly agree	Average
Statements						
1 – We are all aware of what our MSF's objective(s) are.						
2 – Our MSF includes everyone who should be present.						
3 – We are learning what we need to know in order to participate effectively.						
4 – We have a positive impact beyond our MSF.						
5 –						
6 –						
7 –						
8 –						
9 –						
10 –						

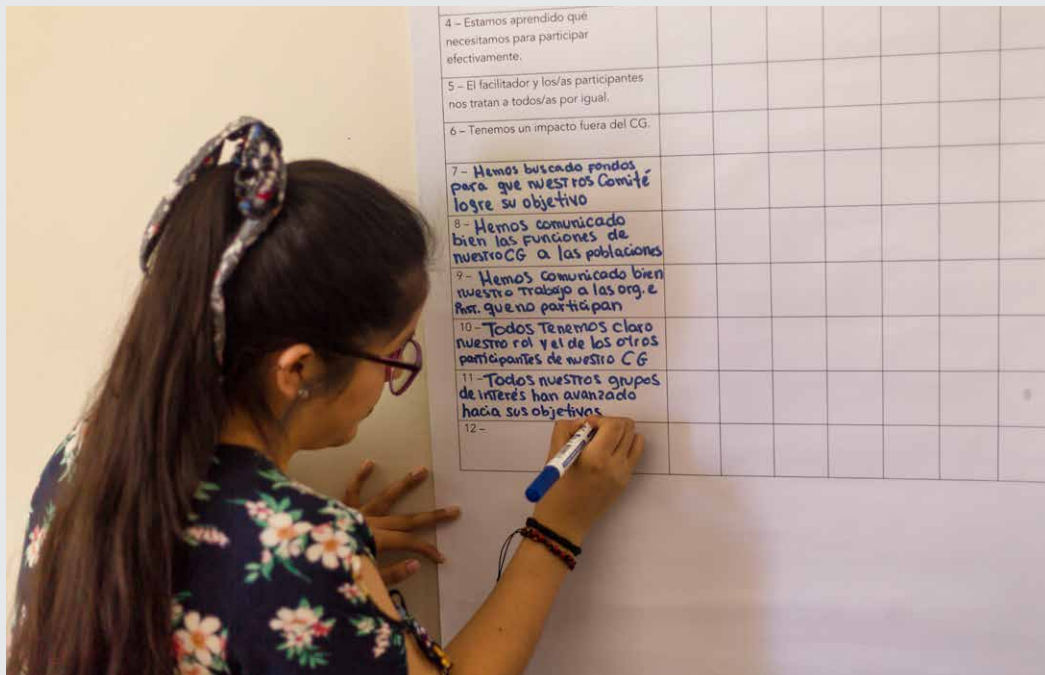


Photo by Pavel Martiarena/CIFOR

A member of the Amarakaeri Communal Reserve MSF (Madre de Dios, Peru) writes down their elective statements on a chart in preparation for voting



Photo by Pavel Martiarena/CIFOR

The designated secretary in the Amarakaeri Communal Reserve MSF (Madre de Dios, Peru) counts votes to calculate average votes for each statement.

1

We are all aware of what our MSF's objective(s) is/are

Reflection questions:

- What is/are our MSF's objective(s)?
- Why don't we all know what the MSF's objectives are?
- Do we all agree on the objective(s) of the MSF? Does/do the objective(s) need to be updated?
- Have we progressed toward it? What progress have we made? What hinders us from making more progress?

What are the three most important lessons learned from this discussion?

What are the three main challenges to improve or maintain this statement's score for the following period? How will we address them?

2

We have included everyone who should be present

Reflection questions:

- Who is invited to participate in the meetings? How are they invited to participate?
- Are there any stakeholders (e.g. communities, institutions, organizations) who could be affected by our decisions who do not attend our meetings, either because they were not invited to our meetings, or because they stopped attending? Why? How could we include them?
- Do we have an imbalance in the gender of our participants? Why (or why not) (e.g. are there enough women representatives from the business sector, or from indigenous communities, if applicable)?
- Do we all feel like we can say what we think in front of our group? Why (or why not)? (Note for facilitator: Make sure that those who do not normally voice their opinion are able to speak up here.)

What are the three most important lessons learned from this discussion?

What are the three main challenges to improve or maintain this statement's score for the following period? How will we address them?

3

We are learning what we need to know in order to participate effectively

Reflection questions:

- What have we learned and what do we still need to learn to support the fulfillment of our MSF's objective(s)?
- Can we improve our knowledge on our sector/community/institution's standpoint regarding our MSF's objective(s)? How?
- Has our MSF helped us to understand and respect other people's ideas/standpoints?
- How can we incorporate these multiple perspectives/priorities in our MSF's work?

What are the three most important lessons learned from this discussion?

What are the three main challenges to improve or maintain this statement's score for the following period? How will we address them?

4

We have a positive impact beyond our MSF

Reflection questions:

- Has our MSF helped to connect the different sectors/groups/communities that we represent?
- Have we applied any lessons learned in our MSF to our work with the communities/institutions/organizations we represent?
- Have new conflicts risen outside our MSF, or have existing conflicts worsened? If so, which ones?

What are the three most important lessons learned from this discussion?

What are the three main challenges to improve or maintain this statement's score for the following period? How will we address them?

A) We are all treated as equals in our MSF

Reflection questions:

- Which qualities, skills and knowledge are important in a facilitator?
- Do we all participate in setting our meeting agendas?
- Do we equally listen to and take into consideration all contributions?
- What methods do we use for decision making?
- Do we keep minutes of all meetings? Do we share them with all the MSF participants?

What are the three most important lessons learned from this discussion?

What are the three main challenges to improve or maintain this statement's score for the following period? How will we address them?

B

We have sought sources of funding for our MSF to achieve its objective(s)

Reflection questions:

- Do we all know our MSF's budget and how it is funded?
- Do we have enough funds to support our objectives or annual plan (if we have one)?
- Where have we sought funds? Which other financial alternatives could we access?
- Where are our funding gaps? If we had more funds, how should we prioritize their use?

What are the three most important lessons learned from this discussion?

What are the three main challenges to improve or maintain this statement's score for the following period? How will we address them?



We have implemented strategies for the women of indigenous and local communities and their organizations to participate effectively and equally in our MSF

Reflection questions:

- Have we reflected on what factors hinder women's effective and equal participation? How can we enable their individual participation? How can we ensure that women's interests are represented?
- Have we reflected on how our MSF can support women to participate effectively and equally? What have we done to make this happen? What could we improve?
- Have we developed the capacities of the women of indigenous and local communities to participate in our MSF?
- Have we trained our members on the importance of the participation of the women of indigenous and local communities? What could we do better?

What are the three most important lessons learned from this discussion?

What are the three main challenges to improve or maintain this statement's score for the following period? How will we address them?

D

We have identified the role of local populations (e.g. indigenous, customary and peasant communities) and their grassroots organizations in achieving our MSF's objective(s).

Reflection questions:

- What is the role of local populations, and how can we support them in accomplishing their role in accordance with the objectives of our MSF?
- Have we given enough thought to how to create awareness in local communities and with their representative organizations on the importance of their participation in our MSF? What have we done? What can we do better?
- How have we decided which communities and organizations to include in our MSF?
- Have we given enough thought to how to generate awareness among other participants about the importance of the participation of indigenous/local communities in our MSF? What have we done? What can we do better?

What are the three most important lessons learned from this discussion?

What are the three main challenges to improve or maintain this statement's score for the following period? How will we address them?

E

We have effectively communicated our work to the communities, organizations and institutions who do not participate in our MSF.

Reflection questions:

- Which strategies and types of tools have we used to communicate or engage with those who do not participate in our MSF to learn more about it and its objectives (e.g. information-sharing through participation in events organized by the MSF or by other institutions)?
- What could we improve?
- Do we know what the most effective communication media in the area are (e.g. radio, newspapers) so we can effectively communicate our messages? Have we approached them?

What are the three most important lessons learned from this discussion?

What are the three main challenges to improve or maintain this statement's score for the following period? How will we address them?

F

We are all clear on what our and other participants' roles in our MSF are.

Reflection questions:

- Who leads our MSF? Why?
- What are our responsibilities and obligations as members?
- What have we done, as MSF participants, to support our MSF in achieving its goals?
- Do we need to change our MSF's role or structure to better work toward achieving its goals?

What are the three most important lessons learned from this discussion?

What are the three main challenges to improve or maintain this statement's score for the following period? How will we address them?

G

We have engaged with other institutions/ organizations/entities and/or other participatory spaces that impact our MSF's objective(s).

Reflection questions:

- What other spaces could we participate in as an MSF, or represent our MSF in?
- Have our priorities and work been taken to/presented at other roundtables or workspaces? If so, to which spaces, who did this, and was it reported back to the MSF?
- Which other institutions/organizations that are unrelated to the MSF could we articulate our work and proposals with?
- Is there a duplication of responsibilities/objectives/goals with other spaces?

What are the three most important lessons learned from this discussion?

What are the three main challenges to improve or maintain this statement's score for the following period? How will we address them?

H

We have engaged with the interests of actors whose objectives differ to those of our MSF.

Reflection questions:

- Which actors/organizations have different objectives to those of our MSF?
- What actions have we taken to approach these actors? If we have not done so, why not?
- What more sustainable land or resource use alternatives could we offer them?

What are the three most important lessons learned from this discussion?

What are the three main challenges to improve or maintain this statement's score for the following period? How will we address them?

I

We have identified what capacities we need to develop to be able to participate effectively in our MSF and have made an effort to develop them.

Reflection questions:

- What capacities do we need to develop to be able to participate effectively?
- Do we have a capacity-development plan (e.g. roadmap)?
- If we do, have we evaluated our progress in this regard? What could we improve?
- If we don't, what should we prioritize and who could help us to implement the capacity-development plan?

What are the three most important lessons learned from this discussion?

What are the three main challenges to improve or maintain this statement's score for the following period? How will we address them?

J

We have supported research studies (e.g. carried out by different organizations or by our members) to reinforce our MSF's objective(s).

Reflection questions:

- What don't we know that would help us meet our objectives? What are the research gaps we need to fill?
- Who can work with us and what have we done to promote and support this research? What could we improve?
- What topics would we be interested in carrying out research on to support the achievement of our MSF's objective(s)?

What are the three most important lessons learned from this discussion?

What are the three main challenges to improve or maintain this statement's score for the following period? How will we address them?

BLANK REFLECTION SHEET

Statement:

Reflection questions:

What are the three most important lessons learned from this discussion?

What are the three main challenges to improve or maintain this statement's score for the following period? How will we address them?

Worksheet 2 | Summary

	1	2	3	4	5
Statement 1					
Statement 2					
Statement 3					
Statement 4					
Statement 5					
Statement 6					
Statement 7					
Statement 8					
Statement 9					
Statement 10					

What have we not done well (that we want to correct)?

What have we done well (and want to keep doing well)?

WORKSHEET 2 | SUMMARY AND ROADMAP

[illegible]

How are we doing? is a tool that enables participatory reflective monitoring in multi-stakeholder forums (MSFs). MSFs include a wide range of stakeholders in a topic or region, to engage in dialogue, decision making and/or the implementation of activities for common landscape goals. *How are we doing?* enables an MSF to achieve its goal(s) equitably and effectively.

This handbook provides a step-by-step process on how to do it. It aims to support complex decision processes that cannot be resolved by one actor alone, and particularly the engagement of actors who, throughout history, have not been able (or allowed) to participate in land governance and decision making that may affect their rights, territories, lives and livelihoods.

How are we doing? is the product of collaboration between members of MSFs and researchers from the Center for International Forestry Research (CIFOR). The collaboration emerged from the identification of the need for a simple tool to allow MSF participants to monitor their forums, and reflect upon and improve their processes and results. The purpose of this reflection is to learn from the past, consider progress and obstacles to further progress, and collectively plan how to achieve the MSF's goals in the future.



RESEARCH
PROGRAM ON
Policies,
Institutions,
and Markets
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