



# **PARTICIPATORY RANGELAND MANAGEMENT PLANNING**

A Field Guide



ECOSYSTEM PROGRAMME, GLOBAL DRYLANDS INITIATIVE

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August 2018

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## Acronyms

IUCN	International Union for Conservation of Nature
IIED	International Institute for Environment and Development
NGO	Non-governmental Organization
PRMP	Participatory Rangeland Management Planning

## About the Methodology

This practical guide illustrates the steps to be followed when engaging communities in rangeland management and planning. Although the guide is intentionally developed to be used by the project and programme managers in IUCN's dryland projects, we hope that it will be useful to other practitioners working in other fields. The guide does not need to replace established participatory approaches, but it can complement them and provide additional ideas to ensure that approaches are fully adapted to the unique context of the rangelands.

### 1. Introduction

Participatory planning has been a central tool in social development for several decades and many approaches and techniques have been developed and published. Participation is a tool for empowerment as well as for improved planning and it is therefore at the heart of good governance. This guide to Participatory Rangeland Management and Planning (PRMP) is intended to help practitioners adapt participatory approaches to the unique situation of the rangelands

PRMP is an iterative/cyclic processes laid down in the essential steps (Figure 1). The aim of PRMP is to facilitate participatory rangeland management planning in a simplified and practical way. By providing an easy-to-follow steps to assist project and programme managers within IUCN to facilitate community planning and rangeland mapping, the guide facilitates implementation of IUCN projects in the field. The first part of the guide introduces the principles of PRMP and key terminologies used in the guide. This is followed by specific steps that guide the facilitators, from preparatory activities through mapping and planning and monitoring of rangeland plans.

Rangelands are vast, unique and are used by multiple people. Due to the scale, stakeholders may be physically remote and live in different administrative areas of countries. Additionally, one sub-group may be given more attention and this consequently deny or obscure the existence of another sub-group. Thus, concretely engaging diverse ethnic, livelihood and wealth groups is a crucial but complex task that require attention.

## 1.1 Principles of Participatory Rangeland Management and Planning

- PRMP is a continuous dialogue in which relevant stakeholders express their desires and interest and reach consensus on the future rangeland use and management that respect the values of all rangeland users;
- PRMP is an inclusive process in which all relevant stakeholders are represented and engaged in the initial dialogues, preparation of maps, the attendant discussions and final agreement on the management actions;
- PRMP is centred on valuable local knowledge that should be mobilized to shape the planning processes;
- PRMP is a visionary process that builds on the current state of rangeland resources to provide a foundation for managing the rangeland in future;
- PRMP is implementation oriented – the approach is used to develop action plans that shape how strategic interventions, agreed upon by stakeholders, will be implemented.

## 1.2 Key Terminologies

There is no need to agree on precise definitions to use this PRMP approach. However, there may be misunderstanding over certain terms where it is useful to ensure people share a common understanding, particularly if work is conducted in more than one language.

- **Rangelands**<sup>1</sup>: a land on which the vegetation is predominantly grasses, grass-like plants, forbs or shrubs and is managed as a natural ecosystem.
- **Participatory**: means involving stakeholders, particularly those who has a stake in the project to have a voice, either in person or by representation.
- **Stakeholders**: those actors with stake and interest in rangeland management issues
- **Resource governance**: norms, institutions and processes that regulate how power and responsibilities are exercised, how decisions are made, and how resource users participate in rangeland management.

<sup>1</sup> Rangelands have several definitions, and they go by various names. For more discussion read [“Homing in on the Range”](#) technical brief.

## 2. Steps in PRMP

Understanding PRMP process requires the practitioners to be conversant with specific steps involved in participatory mapping and planning.

**Step 1:** *partnership building* through i) identification and analysis of relevant stakeholders involved in rangeland use and management, ii) initial community dialogues/meetings and iii) participatory identification of mapping area;

**Step 2:** *situation and context analysis*, including baseline study that involves review of related baseline reports to establish rangeland status, policies and challenges and large-scale assessment of rangeland through remote sensing.

**Step 3:** *mapping and planning* the rangeland with the community and other stakeholders; and using the participatory map to inform development of an action plan that includes actions for strengthening rangeland governance.

**Step 4:** *reporting and data storage* where field data is systematically collected, organized and the assessment reports produced and later endorsed by key stakeholders, including local communities.

**Step 5:** *monitoring and evaluation of rangeland plan and institutionalization of PRMP* process. Step 5 reinforces Step 1 and is the basis for ensuring stakeholders are engaged in the whole process and the ongoing cycle of participatory planning. These steps are shown schematically in Figure 1.

Figure 1: Steps in PRMP process



## Step 1: Partnership building

This step focuses on partnership development in preparation for participatory mapping, management and planning. The sub-steps are:

1. Stakeholder identification
2. Participatory selection of mapping area
3. Preliminary dialogue with communities and range-users
4. Preliminary site visit to the mapping area

### *1. Stakeholder identification*

Before starting the mapping exercise, an important preparatory step of stakeholder identification is essential. In this step, the relevant people and organizations with interests and influence over rangeland resource use and management are identified and understood. This will ensure full stakeholder representation. The simplest way to do this is to list relevant communities, resource users and related institutions in a spreadsheet, with their locations, roles and responsibilities. The depth of stakeholder identification and analysis can vary with time availability and financial resources. Sometimes, the scope of stakeholder analysis can be expanded to include other resource users and pastoralists with occasional reciprocal resource use rights so that their views are captured as well. Care should be taken to ensure one group of stakeholders does not block or obscure the engagement of other groups of stakeholders.

Stakeholders can be identified through:

- i. An extensive review of published and grey literature
- ii. Interviews with key informants and observations in the field
- iii. Snow-ball sampling, where initial contact persons are asked to recommend people linked to them in their network
- iv. Convening community meetings to generate all-inclusive list of communities, livelihood groups and organization that depend on or have influence over rangeland resource use and access. This can be validation meeting with community to go through the list.

Stakeholder identification can be deepened through stakeholder analysis to clearly understand how people perceive their own rights and responsibilities over resources. This is crucial to know during resource management negotiations. This is usually done through a group exercise where stakeholders can be analysed through 4Rs matrix approach by asking the following questions:

- Who has what rights to use and manage the rangeland resources and for what purpose? **Rights**
- Who takes what actions in terms of rangeland and resource management?  
**Responsibilities**
- How do the different stakeholder relate to each other? **Relationships**
- Who benefits from the rangeland resources? **Revenue**

**Table 1:** The 4Rs stakeholder analysis matrix

Stakeholders	Rights	Responsibility	Relationship	Returns
Stakeholder A				
Stakeholder B				
Stakeholder C				

## 2. Participatory selection of mapping area

After identifying the participants, the next exercise is to select appropriate site for the mapping exercise and agree on the time for the mapping. In many cases, the overall site has been identified in advance (for example during project design). Hence, this exercise focuses on validating the selection and reaching agreement over boundaries and resources that are to be included. In communal rangelands, this is an important step for ensuring that a suitably large-scale approach is used, breaking out of highly localised and village-level planning.

This will involve community meetings/ discussions to:

- a) Understand the reasons for their choice of a specific landscape;
- b) Engage knowledgeable elders who can explain the trends and changes in recent years, as well as brief on the historical context and any relevant details prior to begin the mapping exercise e.g. identify interesting features and characteristics that influence mapping and management, such as seasonal grazing areas, drought reserves, corridors etc.
- c) Additionally, with an identified group of people; Agree on the mapping objectives and discuss and list specific actors to be invited for the mapping exercise.

### *3. Preliminary dialogue with communities and range-users*

The success of rangeland mapping depends on the extent of community engagement. Prior to engaging the community in a mapping exercise, the facilitator needs to organize several dialogues with the participating community. The initial meeting provides the facilitators with the opportunity to:

- a) Introduce themselves and explain the objectives of the rangeland mapping exercise;
- b) Give community members the opportunity to express their interest, concerns and clarify questions on the rangeland mapping and planning exercise;
- c) Understand the best way to involve men and women. In some communities, men and women are engaged differently and this initial meeting will help facilitators to choose best approach to engage men and women;
- d) Make a preliminary identification of suitable mapping participants



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#### 4. Preliminary site visit to the mapping area

A Preliminary visit (time allowing) to the mapping site to understand the kind of organization required for logistics, assess the required mapping material and identify suitable venue for mapping exercise, helps the facilitators understand issues pertinent to the community. It also help facilitators and community members to discuss:

- a) The number of representatives of different stakeholder groups to be engaged in mapping;
- b) Objectives – clarify why mapping need to be undertaken;
- c) Selection of locally accepted sets of indicators;
- d) The potential value of PRMP process;
- e) Suitable site for the mapping as well as select date and time;
- f) Suitability of the mapping venue- if the site is quiet, free from interruption and accessible.



Photo credit: ©IUCN

## **Step 2: Situation and context analysis**

As part of preparatory activity, a baseline review and analysis is required to provide the context and the situation of the area where participatory mapping will be conducted. Among others, the baseline study involves establishing available environmental and socio-economic conditions from both published and non-published literature.

Depending on the availability of finance and time, analyses of the baseline condition could include among others:

### **a) Biophysical condition**

- Ecology of the rangeland site, including species composition, changes in species communities and species use;
- Topography and landscape features;
- Primary and secondary uses of rangelands;
- Existing condition of rangeland health and land;
- Soil map / geomorphology maps;
- Hydrography – distribution, availability and access to water resources;
- Significant environmental hazards, including urban areas, mining etc.;
- Meteorological data e.g. temperature and rainfall trends;
- Climate change projections.

### **b) Socio-economic condition**

- Water availability per Capita;
- Change in land use;
- Proportion of the population living above the poverty line;
- Childhood malnutrition or food consumption or calorie intake;
- Human Development Index;
- Livestock mortality rates, reproduction data, livestock commodity prices;
- Price trends for key commodities consumed by pastoralists.

### c) **Social and political context**

- Land tenure/rights arrangements for different resources and different rights-holder groups;
- Local institutions for natural resource governance;
- Public institutions with a mandate over key resources in the landscape;
- Infrastructure and other capital investments in the region and its implications.

#### *Large-scale assessment of rangeland through remote sensing*

To provide additional layers of data, like topographic maps, climate data, and indicators of land productivity from existing data, large-scale assessment of rangeland through remote sensing are carried out. This involves:

- Collecting and organizing existing relevant remote-sensing imagery on the selected landscape to produce overview map on the status of rangeland (degradation and health);
- Use the maps generated to assess and understand the baseline condition of rangeland resources at a landscape level prior to the participatory mapping;
- If resources permit, engage the community to do ground verification of the information contained in landscape maps during participatory mapping (see PRAGA methodology: IUCN 2018)

### Step 3: Mapping and planning

The following activities are performed as preparatory tasks to the mapping exercise.

#### 1. *Establish the mapping participants and introduce the mapping exercise*

As a minimum, the participants should include:

- About 15-20 knowledgeable elders/herders from the area who are fully conversant with the rangeland and the production systems;
- People with good understand of natural resource management opportunities and threats;
- People with knowledge of the social, environmental and rangeland use dynamics of diverse groups;
- Balanced participants, including women and other rangeland users to be able to fully capture their views, perception and interests.
- Give facilitators opportunity to introduce themselves and explain the purpose of the mapping exercise and build understanding, trust and confidence of the participants engaged in mapping;
- Have community members introduce themselves and make any clarification about the mapping exercise;
- Agree on how to engage women and men (either jointly or separately) – or any other marginalized group for that matter.



Photo credit: ©Jonathan Davies

## 2. *Mapping of present rangeland situation*

- Produce high resolution google map of the area for rangeland mapping.
  - The first step is to produce high resolution map of the area (on a canvas) that shows recognizable physical and geographic features.
- Allow the participants to engage with and familiarize themselves with the google map to identify key physical and geographical features.
  - Start by asking participants to mark important dominant feature (e.g. water point or forest) and explore other recognizable features to orient themselves with the map and to agree on an appropriate mapping scale of the landscape to choose;
  - At this point, the mapping participants, by reading the google map, can identify key features that they can see on the map such as rivers, mountains, grazing areas, roads and woodlands.
- Add more details to the google map showing the present rangeland situation.
  - After the participants are well oriented with the google map, ask them to add more details to the map, e.g., clearly marking wet and dry season grazing areas, degraded areas, water points etc.;
  - Map all resources accessed and used on regular basis;
  - Map mobility patterns to understand rangeland access and management; e.g. ask community to map their seasonal movements and that of neighbouring communities;
  - Consistently follow and record the discussion on interesting aspects;
  - Once mapping is complete, ask the participants to present their map in plenary and discuss key issues (such as land degradation, conflict spots, governance challenges, overlapping boundaries etc.; and capture them;
  - Check if all the required/important details are captured and fill any existing information gaps;
  - Finally, ensure that the map has a legend and details of the date, who was involved, where the mapping was carried out etc.
- Additional information and details on rangeland governance need to be added to the rangeland resource map.
  - Livestock mobility patterns and resource use arrangements;
  - Identify who has ownership rights, transit rights (and from where) etc.;
  - The existing governance challenges, for water and grazing land management.

### 3. Mapping a future vision (e.g. 10 years)

- At this point, the same mapping participants develop a precise, shared and agreed-upon description of their range resources that they aspire to see in a clearly defined future time (typically 5 to 10 years);
- The facilitators support the participants to envisage the future by building diverse scenarios. Then then participants define a range of possible future situations;
- Once the participants agree on future situation, they draw in their vision on another google map, clearly showing how they want their landscape/rangeland to look like in ecological, productive and local governance sense);
- Identify and agree on locally appropriate indicators for assessing change in rangeland status;
- Identify the type of rangeland governance desired by the range-users;
- After completing the map, share in a plenary, explaining desired future changes towards sustainable rangeland management;
- Finally, check the map with community to assess its completeness and take photo of the maps and file/store both the present and vision maps systematically (for back up).

Figure 2: Vision map.

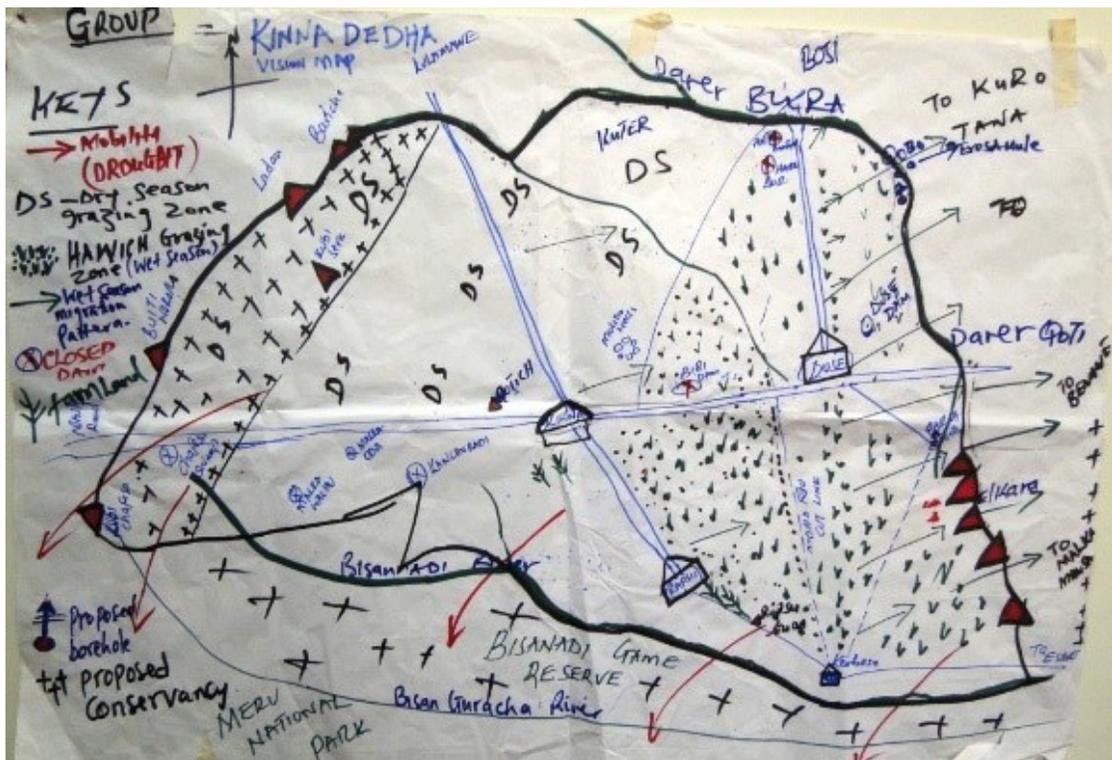


Photo credit: ©IUCN

#### 4. Developing an action plan

- Once steps above is completed, the rangeland map is ready for use as a basis for developing the action plan. Divide the mapping participants into smaller groups in order to:
  - Discuss and agree on the strategic interventions (activities) to address identified priority issues in the rangeland (see table 3.1);
  - Identify the key activities required to be implemented and the location where this activities will be implemented;
  - State the resource requirements, source of funding and time of implementation for each activity;
  - Present and discuss the content of the action plan in a plenary;
  - Based on the feedback of the plenary discussions, make any necessary changes and refinement on the action plan and endorse the plan.

**Table 2:** Example of rangeland action plan

Key rangeland issues	Potential interventions	Location	Resource required	Time frame	Responsibility

- Enforcing/strengthening local rangeland governance and creating desired agreements among rangeland communities and between them and state institutions;
  - With rangeland communities, list and discuss the underlying rangeland governance issues under 3 different categories of governance mechanism – polices and rules, institutions, and processes;
  - In a plenary, assess and understand existing governance mechanisms in the area to provide an overview of the strengths and weaknesses of the important rangeland governance mechanisms in the area;
  - Identify key opportunities for strengthening rangeland governance under each category of governance mechanism - polices and rules, institutions, and processes;
  - Develop rangeland governance action plan to address underlying governance issues affecting rangeland management.

## **Step 4: Reporting and data storage**

The report on the mapping process and attendant discussions during the mapping exercise captures crucial information on the main issues and way forward along agreed structure/format. Prior discussion and agreement between partners on who owns the data or stores the data is required. This also clarifies who does the reporting and to who.

- Develop a report that details the mapping process and attendant discussions;
- Digitize the collected information to inform decision making;
- Feedback to the wider community and to other stakeholders on the mapping and the plans that have been developed;
- The report content will include, among others, the primary and secondary aim of the mapping, details on the mapping with community, key issues identified and the action plan developed from the map, conclusion and related annexes like copy of the map, list of participants, among others;
- Ensure data backup, through photocopies, before completion of the mapping exercise and proper storage .

## Step 5: Monitoring and Evaluation

The participatory map and related information provide the basis for evaluation of changes and a baseline to assess the impact of management actions/investments on a) rangeland health and b) rangeland governance.

### ***Monitoring and evaluating change in rangeland status***

1. Develop annual participatory M&E of plans/implementation framework
2. Regular annual meetings should be organized to discuss progress in management and changes in resource condition in a short ½ day meeting. Sample questions to be considered during periodic M&E meeting are:

What was planned (maps and plans developed during the first planning exercises)?
What was achieved (review maps and plans originally developed by community)?
What was not achieved?
Why was intended change not achieved?
What will be done to address this in future?
What is the revised target (e.g. for the next 6 months or 12 months)

3. Document and structure feedback information on lessons and good practice to adapt the management decisions.

### ***Monitoring and evaluating change in rangeland governance***

1. Monitor key changes in rangeland governance indicators under each category of governance mechanism - **policies and rules, institutions, and processes**; -
2. The change in rangeland governance will be assessed through the most significant change methodology where significant change stories are collected from those most directly involved and related steps: <https://www.odi.org/sites/odi.org.uk/files/odi-assets/publications-opinion-files/6383.pdf>
3. Capture key lessons learnt from the implementation of the governance actions

## Additional reading

1. International Land Coalition (2016) Participatory Rangeland Resource Mapping in Tanzania: A Field Manual to support planning and management in rangelands including in Village Land Use Planning
2. Irwin, B., Cullis, A., and Flintan, F (2014) the Mapping Guidelines in Participatory Rangeland Management in Ethiopia.
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