2011

MANAGEMENT & OWNERSHIP OF DRYLANDS

An Accountability Report for “The Securing Rights & Restoring Lands for Improved Livelihoods” Project in Jordan

© Mohammad Asfour
Introduction

The notion of “Accountability” is the sense of taking responsibility for one’s own behavior, at the same time being able to account for the effects of such behavior to others (Laban, 1993). The term denotes first of all an intrinsic and personal value and it is certainly not restricted to its mere financial meaning as in bookkeeping. It has to be emphasized that accountability, just as other measures for natural resource management, has to be defined at all levels from local farmers and target groups up to national governments and donor agencies.

Accountability can be used not only in a financial sense or to assess accountability of an organization towards its constituency (donors, target groups). Accountability is also important when assessing the degree that local people in communities (groups and individuals) are willing and able to take ownership for the management of their local natural resources. To avoid any confusion, such ownership is not necessarily the same as ownership over the land use resource itself.

Ownership and as a consequence accountability will only be assumed by individuals or local community groups when they perceive the benefits, have access and control over resources, have the knowledge and capacities to implement them, have the organizational strength to realize these activities as well as the claim-making-power to make sure that these conditions can be fulfilled/maintained.

In-depth social analysis is needed to assess if such conditions are in place (or not). This has to be done while differentiating among gender and different wealth and power groups, to ensure that also the poorest and most vulnerable have their equitable share in water and can exercise control and ownership over it.

Pre-conditions for local level accountability in Natural Resources Management “NRM”

1. Existing economic and other benefits
Protection and management of natural resources have to incorporate the multiple interests of local people. These can differ in nature, ranging from religious or social convictions to subsistence and economic benefits. Situations with common property resources as forest and water and land vegetation need specific attention to deal with the problem of different social group.

2. Appropriate skills and capacities
People need to feel that they are competent and have the right skills (knowledge, technology) and means to carry out activities leading to sustainable management of natural resources. Under changing socio-economic and environmental conditions indigenous knowledge might have become less appropriate and needs to be adapted through participatory research and appropriate training and extension in 'new' technology.
3. Guaranteed property and usufruct rights:
Local populations are often in a state of uncertainty about their rights to land, water and trees. In these conditions, it is not surprising that villagers no longer feel accountable for the protection and management of these resources in their land. Without this accountability, any intervention will fail to succeed.
Usufruct, access, control and ownership rights for individuals and community organizations need to be made more explicit in formal legislation and regulations.

4. Claim making power:
It is often extremely difficult for individuals to secure the necessary rights of land ownership, land tenure, usufruct, and access to water, credit schemes, information, and other basic conditions. Organizing community leadership and strong and functional village groups with similar interests becomes a necessity to increase their claim making power and to confer sufficient autonomy and independence.
Different interests may exist between men and women, large farmers and landless, small or marginal farmers, different castes, ethnic groups, political parties, or other interest groups. Such differences may lead to situations where natural resources management could essentially be considered as a problem of conflict management. A pro-poor, rights-based approach will especially focus on strengthening the claim-making power of under-privileged groups.

Analysis of the pre-conditions and their indicators
To analyze the degree that rights are secured, the accountability for NRM is taken by a specific community group and indicators above are used, discussed and assessed in a participatory way. For each of the 4 or 5 pre-conditions (in the example here, community leadership is added separately as a special dimension of claim-making power) it is determined to what extent the pre-conditions are met by assessing the importance of each indicator. A qualitative rating is given according to 4 values:

Ok = above expectations
Mid = as expected
Slight = below expectations, but not all together negative
Low = the factor is not matched and this will contribute to un-sustainability of NRM

Each rating for a pre-condition is substantiated through a qualitative assessment of a number of parameters or indicators (4 or somewhat more for each pre-condition). The indicators are formulated in a positive sense (e.g. women in landless families have full access to NRM) to facilitate the overall assessment of the pre-condition. If the analysis group judges that the overall assessment of the identified indicators for a pre-condition is positive (Mid or even OK) this will contribute to ownership and accountability and thus to higher sustainability of proposed management of the resource (water, land, forest). If not (Slight) or not at all (Low) important action has to be taken here to improve the situation (e.g. if access and control scores low, this may mean that focus of a project may have to be shifted to this aspect).
Success / Failure factors for target group access and rights to the land use accountability

The extent that such pre-conditions (or success/failure factors) are in place can be assessed in a qualitative/semi-quantitative way, e.g. in the following format:

Table 1: set quantitative preconditions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Success/Failure Factor</th>
<th>Low</th>
<th>Slight</th>
<th>Mid</th>
<th>OK</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Awareness/Capacities and knowledge</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Benefits</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Access Rights and Control</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Facilitation and Leadership</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group Processes</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Claim-making Power</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Each pre-condition is required to be assessed by a number of indicators that need to be brainstormed for each governorate/country to make it locally specific. The identified indicators will help structure PRAs.
Accountability Analysis for Targeted Communities

Securing Rights and Restoring Drylands for Improved Livelihoods Initiative is premised on the following theory of change: if rural people enjoy secure rights and tenure to both private lands and common property resources (such as forests and woodlands, grazing areas, river and water catchments), they have an incentive to invest in sustainable management and in restoring degraded resources. This will reap livelihood benefits, reduce poverty and create wealth. To avoid elite capture, marginalized groups (e.g. women, landless, pastoralists) need to build their capacity to negotiate for their rights in land and to resources, to enter the market (business skills), and to make their case with government.

The sustainability of specific NRM measures is at risk when those directly concerned in local communities are not involved and feel no ownership over the resource and/or ownership for the way it is used and managed. In cases that direct ownership of the land resource is formally in the hands of the state, still many issues related to management and usufruct, as well as to the ownership of the management needed to exploit the land resource and access to be resolved and clarified. Therefore, local ownership is a critical factor in NRM. Ownership and as a consequence accountability will only be assumed by individuals or local community groups when they perceive the benefits, have access and control over resources, have the knowledge and capacities to implement them, have the organizational strength to realize these activities as well as the claim-making-power to make sure that these conditions can be fulfilled/maintained. The issues mentioned here can be considered as pre-conditions for local level ownership in NRM. At the same time these issues are critical to determine to what extent basic rights of local people are or can be fulfilled to use a resource as land vegetation.

Based on the following framework the accountability for the local community is analyzed, four pre-conditions are necessary for local people to assume accountability for natural resource management activities, which are:

- Right
- Claim-making power
- Benefit
- Capacity

These preconditions can be analyzed and discussed as per the following definitions:

- **Awareness/Capacities and knowledge**: Different targeted groups can identify there problems, analyze the current situation & have needed skills (Knowledge) to manage their land access.

---

1 Developed by Care International Jordan Team through the Regional “EMPOWERS” project (EC-funded/MEDA Water Programme, 2003-2007), which focused on community-level, stakeholder-led gender-sensitive participatory planning approaches for local water governance.
• **Benefits**: Different targeted groups need to have ownership towards their land resources. To be sensitive & aware of different socio-economic interests and rights of their community.

• **Access rights & Control**: Different targeted group need to be aware of their dryland situation, their rights, roles & responsibilities to be accountable toward its resources.

• **Facilitation & Leadership**: Different targeted group have ability to organize themselves in a structured form in order to find proper solution to their problems.

• **Group Process**: Local community has organized groups that works together & develop to advocate rights and claim benefits over their land uses.

• **Claim Making Power**: Organized community groups & leadership to have the information, facilitation skills, awareness and the attitude to claim rights.

**Accountability Analysis Procedure**

Accountability analysis for this project was used for three areas in Jordan (part of the project); Halabat, Duliel and Hashmiyha. These areas were considered and undertaken through focus groups that took place for one day in November 2011. The participants for the focus groups, Land Users groups (LUGs) chosen based on the analysis of the data gathered and on the results of PRA (Participatory Rural Appraisal) carried this assessment out with the participation of all stakeholders (villagers and governmental officials).

The below questions chosen through PRA, were set to determine LUGs:

- Identifying all sources of Land
- Identifying all Users of Land
- Identifying ALL uses of Land *(formal and informal)*
- Gender disaggregation of data
- Identify access to Land (When, How much, How long, To what access of land benefit)
- Identify control over land (Decision making power (formal/informal), Rights (formal/informal; visible/invisible), Recognition and respect as user, Action to change is respected)

After analyzing the PRA, the project team chose with the community the most 2 LUGs which were considered as marginalized groups\(^2\) in their village and represented the average situation in terms of rights and accountability. This was used to study and analyze with the selected LUGs, what their rights to land use and the degree of accountability among different LUGs where.

\(^2\) By this way the project team can classify and focus on the issue of grazing land use rather than water or agriculture use where communities keep consisting that the solution is only on providing more water resources or digging wells
Semi-structured criteria were developed to get information needed (table 2). The following serves as an example in regards to the Benefits:

- What are your expectations?
- Why are you interested in restoration planning?
- What is ones land rights?

These answers are then analyzed in terms of degrees; that rights are secured and that accountability for NRM is taken by specific LUGs. The parameters defined above will therefore aid in developing a site rate report.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Factors</th>
<th>Low</th>
<th>Slight</th>
<th>Mid</th>
<th>OK</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Awareness/capacities, knowledge</strong></td>
<td>Awareness among local community regarding to their dryland situation</td>
<td>Local community is aware regarding their dryland resources with capacities to identify their problems</td>
<td>People are aware of problem &amp; have the ability to rank priorities.</td>
<td>Local community has capacity &amp; skills to manage their natural land resources.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Benefits</strong></td>
<td>Identify individual interest (benefits, revenue) regarding to their dryland situation</td>
<td>Address rights &amp; interest of others in the community</td>
<td>Understanding the different interest &amp; rights of various social groups &quot;women group, poor, ----&quot;.</td>
<td>Take under consideration the needs of various social groups.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Access Rights and Control</strong></td>
<td>Dominant group have access according to the rights</td>
<td>Rights &amp; roles of different community groups are addressed</td>
<td>Local community accountability toward respect the right for the social group &quot;women group, poor, -- --&quot;.</td>
<td>Group accountability to government authorities for respecting their rights toward their natural land resources.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Community Leadership</strong></td>
<td>Address individual leaders among local community</td>
<td>Identify potential groups to promote a collective work &quot;voluntary work&quot;</td>
<td>Organized groups can promote voluntary work &amp; advocate rights</td>
<td>Responsible leadership activities accepted from local community</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Group Process</strong></td>
<td>Organized group include dominate sector only.</td>
<td>Identify various social group in forming organized groups</td>
<td>Consider social diversity within organized group</td>
<td>Organized group have the ability &amp; capability claim benefits.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Claim-making Power</strong></td>
<td>Ability to identify problems according to needs.</td>
<td>Ability to solve local &quot;internal&quot; problems considering rights.</td>
<td>Have an access to authorities to participate in solving problems.</td>
<td>Authorities take in their consideration different groups rights when making decisions.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Halabat Site

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pre-condition or Success/Failure Factor</th>
<th>Low</th>
<th>Slight</th>
<th>Mid</th>
<th>OK</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Awareness/Capacities &amp; knowledge</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Benefits</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Access Rights and Control</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community Leadership</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group process</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Claim-making Power</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**OK** = above expectations  
**Mid** = as expected  
**Slight** = below expectations, but not all together negative  
**Low** = the factor is not matched and this will contribute to un-sustainability of NRM

Specific indicators are determined with stakeholders for the above framework items to know what extent the pre-condition is met to fulfill the accountability.

Based on PRA the project team noticed that the local community in Halabat is different from the rest of the communities, with regards to the Dryland Project. This is due to old customs and traditions that are inherited. Such traditions affect women a lot. Women do not mingle with men publicly. The population belongs to one of the big tribes without any members of other tribes. The same tribe includes families like Al-Faeiz, Al-Khreisha and Al-Zaben, who are cousins to those from the same family living in Azraq and Madaba.

Concerning the leadership in the community, the PRA study results show that the local community leaders are from the same tribe, truly representing the population. Being relatives makes it more difficult to accept any type of work because of the “Culture concept of Shame”. Young people do not accept vocational or low-paid jobs. They keep refusing to be workers. Consequently, there is a high percent of unemployment among the young population. On the other hand, they offer jobs to those from outside the area or expatriate workers to do the low-paid jobs.

Most of the people work in either irrigated farming or in breeding livestock. Some, though, have left to get involved in trade or public work. There are voluntary societies in the Halabat North, Halabat south district and the Deihthem. However, most of the time, heading a society is considered prestigious without any real work on the ground to benefit the community.
Other cases that affect the pr-condition to be fulfilled are due to a high percent of illiteracy among women coupled with conservative social traditions, women’s public participation is very weak. Women have no places to mingle even with each other. The main challenges for the local women were willing to sell their products for 10 piasters compared to 40 piasters in an effort to sell more, unfortunately only a quarter of their product was sold.

The level of living conditions is currently lower, based on livestock owner focus groups. This made the economic, environmental, agrarian and educational situation very difficult. People give the following reasons:

- **Uncontrolled grazing in the area is highly evident.** This has caused for tremendous vegetation loss and competition between livestock for food, resulting in limited growth of livestock numbers that further threatens the only income these communities have. Over grazing has reached local and public lands that were should be controlled socially, further creating land degradation and indigenous plant cover deterioration.

- **No roles for the local community in the decision making process.** It’s highly evident that the local community have no role in the decision making process in their community. They perceive the government as the only entity that’s responsible for any decisions that may concern their livestock, they are purely consumers that have little or no ownership towards their community and are excluded from all levels of communication with local government entities.

- **No or little awareness about land degradation and over grazing.** The local community has little awareness about the consequences of over and uncontrolled grazing. Their initial perceptions about the current situation, is that the number of livestock is the only cause for land degradation in the area. They believe that public land can be used whenever they please since it’s their ancestors land and they have the full right to use it when they want. This situation has escalated over the past year since the price of fodder increased and there were no alternatives available for sustaining their livestock.
Hashmiyha Site

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pre-condition or Success/Failure Factor</th>
<th>Low</th>
<th>Slight</th>
<th>Mid</th>
<th>OK</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Awareness/Capacities &amp; knowledge</td>
<td></td>
<td>•</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Benefits</td>
<td></td>
<td>•</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Access Rights and Control</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>•</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community Leadership</td>
<td></td>
<td>•</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group process</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Claim-making Power</td>
<td></td>
<td>•</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Ok = above expectations
Mid = as expected
Slight = below expectations, but not all together negative
Low = the factor is not matched and this will contribute to un-sustainability of NRM

Specific indicators are determined with stakeholders for the above framework items to know what extent the pre-condition is met to fulfill the accountability.

Located in the Zarqa Governorate with several villages diversified in culture, customs and economic activities. Hashmyia area includes different sites Beni Hashim, Um Sleih, Sukhneh, Gharisa as well as the hashimieh Palestinian refugee camp which competes in the trade and labour. In general, it is inhabited by a majority of 85 of Beni Hasan Tribe members. Beni Hasan is composed of several families, among them are the Ziyoud with slightly different traditions than the rest.

Based on the PRA analysis there is a constant fight amongst the same family members over voluntary work as well as the collective work. There are several voluntary societies and cooperatives, but with constant conflict because of absence of harmony within the community.

It’s worth highlighting that Hashmiyha area has the least grazing area between the three sites. Most of the public land that could be used for grazing is either used for private investments or belongs of the Mafraq governorate, leaving the local community with little space and no alternatives. The local community’s only income comes from livestock, which is in this case a tricky situation, since not enough space is available for grazing. This is a major problem which tops an increase in fodder prices and a huge difficulty in marketing their products.
It was obvious at the beginning of the project, that everyone was waiting for personal benefits, where the project is facing difficulty because of the fight among the cousins and the members of the same family. Some of the existing NGOs are formed for personal benefits; socially and financially. Accordingly, the whole civil society is weak.

For income, Al-Hashmiyha inhabitants depend on agriculture, livestock, enrolment in the military and trade. We can say that the Hashmiyha District is a rural, agrarian and civic society. Regarding the leadership in Al Hashmiyha, competition is high over prestigious positions in municipalities and the parliament amongst the same family members in Al-Ziyoud.

Regarding women’s situation, the participants in the focus group said that they are suffering because most of the projects target families are not women as such. Families get benefits that help men, whereas women do not benefit.

The local community is known for its strong family and social ties that descend from tribal culture. Families help each other socially through family celebrations and social bonds; nevertheless, it’s clearly noticed that community have low awareness and capacity about their right. This means that small families, women and youth role in decision making process is marginalized and their opinion is not accounted; in addition to their willingness to change and increase their capacity was weak. It was also evident that weak relationships between local pastoralist existed; no one is willing to look for environmental or social solutions or alternatives.

Concerning the group process in the community, the study shows that urgent need for capacity building of the cooperative society members and the local water committee members is needed, in order to provide them with the necessary skills to plan, increase empowerment of the marginalized groups to participate in the decision making process in a way that doesn’t contradict with local customs and habits. This will help them to have a better effective role in their communities. People become more aware of their role in order to claim their rights through channels of communication between different stakeholders (including CBO’s and end-users) which need to be strengthened to be used in a more useful manner by all concerned parties.
Duliel Site

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pre-condition or Success/Failure Factor</th>
<th>Low</th>
<th>Slight</th>
<th>Mid</th>
<th>OK</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Awareness/Capacities &amp; knowledge</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Benefits</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Access Rights and Control</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community Leadership</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group process</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Claim-making Power</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Ok = above expectations
Mid = as expected
Slight = below expectations, but not all together negative
Low = the factor is not matched and this will contribute to un-sustainability of NRM

Specific indicators are determined with stakeholders for the above framework items to know what extent the pre-condition is met to fulfill the accountability.

Based on the PRA analysis, Duliel is located in Zarqa governorate with 45 thousand inhabitants of Bedouin origin. The inhabitants are mixed of Beni Hasan tribe, Bedouin of central Jordan, Bedouin of Northern Jordan, Beer Sabi tribes and other tribal families of Palestinian origin. The population used to live the Bedouin lifestyle depending on livestock breeding in the surrounding pastures.

So the local community in Dulail is known for its strong family and social ties that descend from tribal culture mentioned above. Families help each other socially through family celebrations and social bonds; nevertheless, it was found that their willingness to change and increase their capacity was weak. The local communities were not cooperative when wanting to change certain aspects in their day to day lives that may later help increase income generation and decrease unemployment.

For that reason, it was concluded that the following are pressing issues:

- **Weak relationships between local livestock producers.** This has been proven since no one tries to find solutions for production inputs that may benefit the product outcome. Moreover, no one competes in the local market, since no effort is put into making the product better. Competing products are of high quality and have a lot of experience in marketing their own products; therefore the local
community has no chance in competing. However, if enough effort is made, their product can compete in the market since it could be sold for cheaper prices; one kg of cow milk could be sold for 20 piaster and 1 kg of goat milk for 40 piaster.

- **In regards to claim making power analysis its noticed that the weak relationships between the local community and government institutions.** This has been evident since livestock owners find it hard to communicate their problems and suggestions to local government entities. One example is the fact that the local community has veterinarian center. Nevertheless, the center lacks all kinds of resources, from vaccines to transportation trucks. Most of the resources are not enough to cover the whole community, since there is always a high demand for it. Priority in these cases, are given to huge manufacturing livestock owners, leaving negligible quantities of supplies for the poorer community. Poor communities therefore resort to private veterinarian centers that are not subsidized and cost a lot compared to their social income status.

- **No roles for the local community in the decision making process.** It’s highly evident that the local community have no role in the decision making process in their community. They perceive the government as the only entity that's responsible for any decisions that may concern their livestock, they are purely consumers that have little or no ownership towards their community and are excluded from all levels of communication with local government entities in addition there is no cooperative CBOs for the pastoralist or farmers in order to have a strong voice and actions to support solving their difficulties.

Life has changed due to climate change and shortage of the rainfall. Consequently, people abandoned raising animals and moved away to the army or the factories or agriculture and trade. In Dhleil the community suffers from health, environmental and social problems, as shown by the above indicators.

Socially, people suffer because the population is a mix of several types of tribes that have different traditions and habits. In addition the expatriate workers started to marry from among the tribes causing psychological, health and legal problems. Women work in all types of work, including industrial, agricultural, livestock breeding and handicrafts. Regarding the claim making power, there is no culture shame with workers being spread in factories and as daily-paid jobs in agriculture where women are participating in all types of work to face the difficult economic conditions.

Concerning benefits, the community needs to build their capacity in a way that they can address the rights & interests of others in their community, where livestock owners always consider themselves as the main group.