



Guidance on Integrating Justice Issues into the Planning of Ecosystem-based Adaptation Interventions

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Objective of the guidance and structure of the document

This guidance document provides an overview of the considerations and process for integrating justice issues into project planning for Ecosystem-based Adaptation (EbA) interventions. It is **primarily aimed at the practitioners and planners** who design and implement EbA on the ground, offering them guidance on how to integrate justice aspects into the planning phase of an EbA project.

The **main objective of the guidance** is to show how justice aspects can be integrated into project planning in a practical way by:

- Understanding and anchoring climate justice at a **strategic level**
- Integrating justice aspects into the **project objectives and measures**
- **Designing the implementation setup to enhance climate justice**
- Designing a **participatory planning process** that involves Indigenous Peoples and local communities as well as marginalised groups to foster justice

This guidance document is not a detailed manual for integrating justice issues into planning. Rather, it describes key considerations and steps in a condensed form, and points to methodologies that involve more specific instructions. This guidance document is not intended to serve as a detailed manual. Rather, it describes key considerations and steps in a condensed form, and points to methodologies that involve more specific instructions.

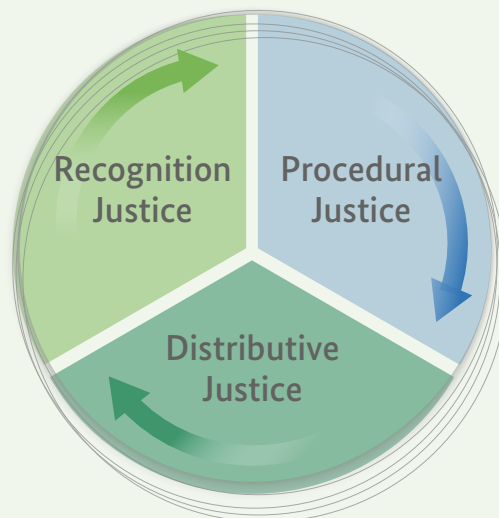
The document is intended to complement other **material available, including:**

- A collection on **climate justice in EbA**, notably a [policy paper](#), good practice examples and [guidance on monitoring and evaluation \(M&E\)](#), which GIZ published in 2022.
- **Guidelines** that provide practitioners with more general background ('Governance for Ecosystem-based Adaptation' and 'Toward gender-responsive Ecosystem-based Adaptation'), published by GIZ

This guidance document was developed on the basis of results from a desktop review as well as stakeholder consultation and dialogue conducted by GIZ from May to July 2022. The process involved over 60 representatives of Indigenous Peoples and local communities, local civil society organisations (CSOs), non-governmental organisations (NGOs), research institutions, national policymakers, implementing agencies, donors, and climate and biodiversity funds. At the end of the process, this guidance on Integrating Justice Issues into the Planning of Ecosystem-based Adaptation Interventions was identified as an important tool for helping development cooperation projects take justice aspects more fully into account.



Climate Justice is about recognising social differences



Recognition justice: Justice-based EbA is rooted in Indigenous, local, traditional and diverse knowledge, and recognises the different cultural values of ecosystems. It actively promotes the recognition of Indigenous Peoples and local communities as well as particular groups, such as women, youth, people with disabilities, LGBTQS2+ and underrepresented groups, as key stakeholders in EbA projects. It accounts for their distinct rights over natural resources, based on human rights principles and the specific rights of Indigenous Peoples.

Procedural justice: Justice-based EbA includes creating an open, fair and inclusive governance structure, and integrating existing human rights procedures into planning, implementation, and monitoring & evaluation of EbA projects. It grants access to information on projects and ecosystems to all stakeholders. It enhances their ability to organise and influence rules on ecosystem use through effective and meaningful participation. It ensures that individuals and communities have effective access to complaints and grievance mechanisms or other legal procedures.

Distributive justice: Justice-based EbA ensures equitable and fair climate change policies and projects that protect individuals and communities from the loss of their land and livelihoods, and generate benefits for all affected stakeholders and rightsholders. It offers equitable compensation mechanisms for any losses or negative effects on land, resource access or livelihood opportunities in surrounding ecosystems impacted by the execution of EbA.

Definition: justice-based EbA accounts for the specific rights of people of all genders, cultures, classes and ages, including Indigenous Peoples and traditional communities, as part of international and national human rights. It is based on approaches that are non-discriminatory, transparent, accountable, meaningfully participatory and inclusive in their design and execution. Therefore, it ensures equitable and fair climate change legislation, policies, action plans and projects.

GIZ (2022). Defining Climate Justice in Ecosystem-based Adaptation.

Key elements of climate justice in EbA include integrating and recognising human rights principles and the specific rights of Indigenous Peoples. Climate Justice in EbA builds on an understanding of social dynamics and vulnerabilities on the ground, and examines the local situation through a cross-sectoral approach. The approach values Indigenous and local knowledge, and recognises different cultural values.

Background

Nature-based Solutions (NbS), which serve as an umbrella for EbA, have generated disputes over violation of human rights. There is increasing concern about disregard for justice aspects in development projects, leading to a fair portion of these having a negative impact on the rights of Indigenous Peoples and local communities, especially land use rights. There is also concern that these initiatives barely reach or do not really address the needs of the marginalised population. In early 2022, the Sixth Assessment Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) highlighted the role of climate justice as an enabling factor and a precondition for successful adaptation processes and projects (GIZ 2022a).

Justice-based EbA, as defined by FEBA (Friends of EbA), builds on the recognition and implementation of human rights principles and procedures to ensure equitable, transparent and fair outcomes for all stakeholders. According to this definition, justice-based EbA:

- Accounts for the specific rights of people of all genders, cultures, classes and ages, including Indigenous Peoples and traditional communities, as part of international and national human rights principles.
- Is based on approaches that are non-discriminatory, transparent, accountable, meaningfully participatory, and inclusive in their design and execution.
- Ensures equitable and fair climate change legislation, policies, action plans and projects.

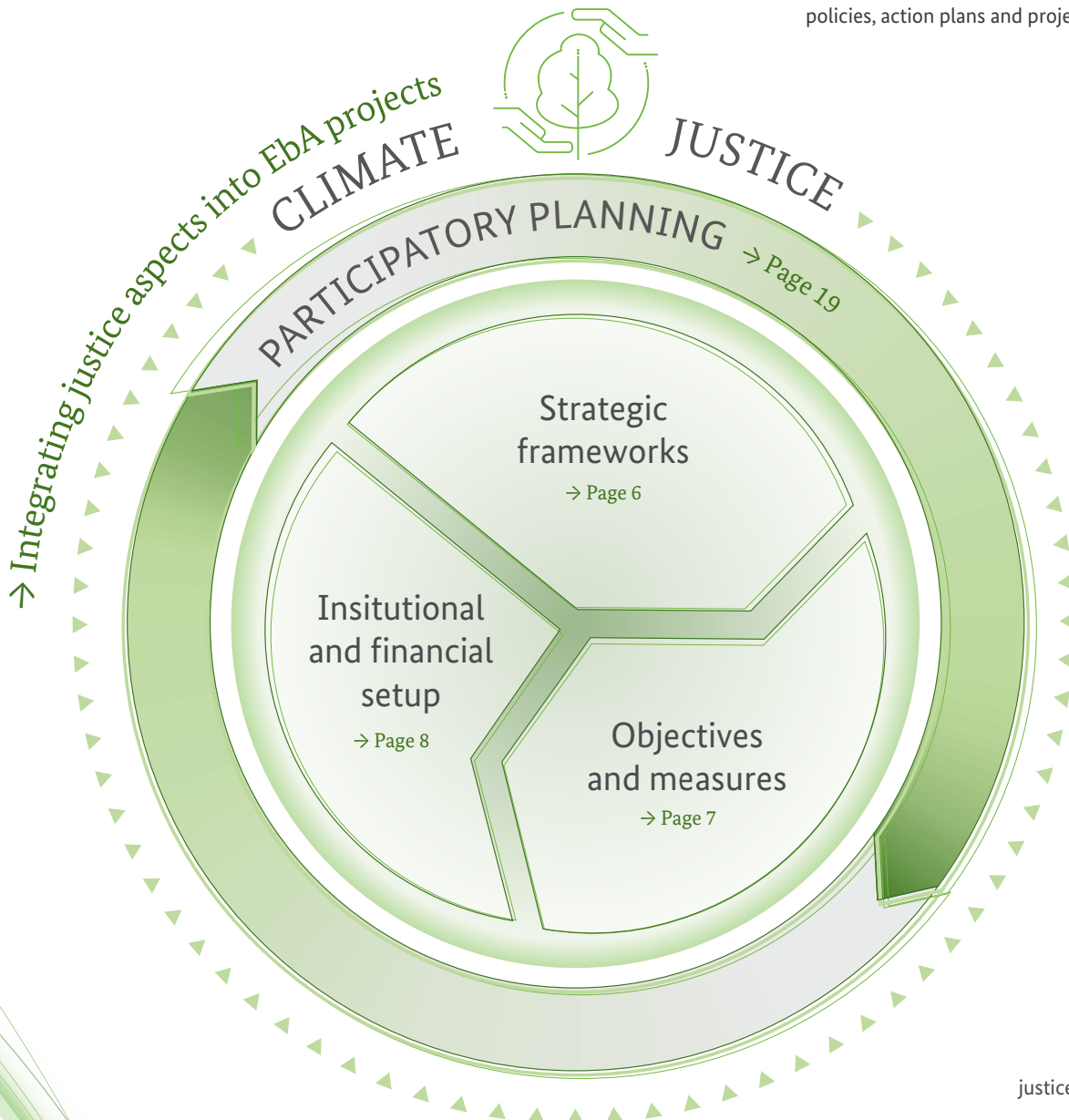


Figure 2: Entry points for justice issues in project planning.

→ Why is project planning key to climate justice?

How EbA projects are planned strongly influences how well they capture and address context-related structural challenges. **Project planning is thus a key entry point for:**

- Ensuring that the project has an **inclusive problem statement**, which takes into account the perspectives of marginalised groups
- Building an **inclusive and diverse knowledge and information base** from different sources to support planning
- **Facilitating participation and ownership**, which improve project implementation and sustainability

It is crucial to address justice issues in the planning phase (see Table 1). This can be done in four ways: (1) anchoring the project within justice-related strategic frameworks, (2) integrating climate justice into the project objectives and measures, (3) designing an inclusive institutional and financial setup, and (4) conducting a fully participatory planning process (see Figure 2).

Considering climate justice aspects in project planning supports efforts to ensure that ...	
ARGUMENT	WAYS OF INTEGRATION
... EbA projects benefit marginalised, often Indigenous, groups and do not come at their expense	by understanding climate justice as a strategic issue and by integrating it into the project objectives and measures.
... the EbA project strategically pursues and promotes aspects of justice (e.g., women's participation and youth promotion)	by considering justice issues in the project objectives and measures.
... social risk factors, such as conflicts and discrimination, are prevented or minimised, thereby improving the sustainability of the EbA project,	by using results from the peace and conflict, safeguards, and risk assessments for project planning.
... the target group is more committed to effective project implementation and has an increased sense of project ownership	by involving the group actively in the project planning and institutional setup.

Table1: Arguments for and ways of integrating justice aspects into EbA projects.



Entry points for integrating justice aspects into project planning

Justice-based planning relies on inclusive decision-making. EbA projects may have impacts on rights, resources or livelihoods, or involve the use of traditional knowledge or cultural heritage. **Free, prior and informed consent (FPIC) thus needs to be the backbone of justice-based project planning**, as defined by the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP). For this purpose, it is important to treat FPIC as a process and not as a one-off event. At any stage in project planning as well as during implementation, communities need to be involved, and they have a right to ask for more information, say 'no' or withdraw entirely. In this way, justice-based project planning defines the orientation of the project.

Understanding justice as a strategic issue for EbA

To make EbA projects more effective and sustainable in the long run, it is crucial to **identify and address structural challenges**. According to the **FEBA qualification criteria**, EbA aims to deliver these benefits:

- Help people adapt to climate change by reducing social and environmental vulnerabilities (criterion 1) and by generating societal benefits (criterion 2).

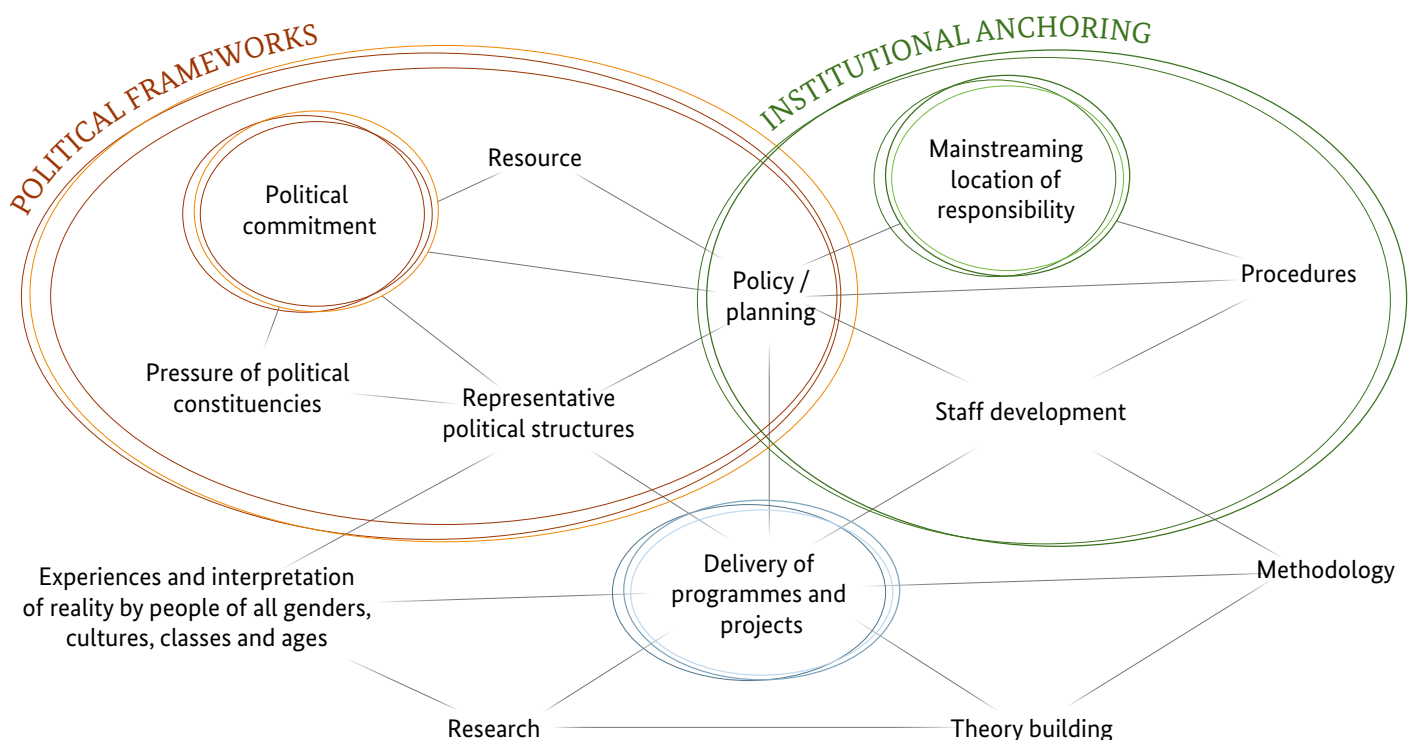
- Make active use of biodiversity and ecosystem services by restoring, maintaining and improving ecosystem health (criterion 3).
- Form part of an overall adaptation strategy supported by policies at multiple levels (criterion 4), whilst supporting equitable governance and enhancing capacities (criterion 5) (FEBA 2017).

To this end, every EbA project needs to develop a strategic vision and direction, support empowerment, ensure social and environmental accountability, and enhance access to justice, as key underlying principles (GIZ 2019).

Justice issues are thus not just nice to have but are strategically important for EbA projects, as underlined by the Sixth Assessment Report of the IPCC. According to the report, **climate justice is an enabling factor and a precondition for successful adaptation processes and projects** (IPCC 2022).

The success of projects and programmes strongly depends on **institutional anchoring** of justice issues and on the **policy frameworks** that define the context for both project planning and implementation (see Figure 3).

Figure 3: Entry points for institutionalising justice issues as a basis for project planning. Source: Adapted from Levy (1996)



→ Institutional anchoring

An important precondition for climate justice is institutional anchoring of the issue within the implementing organisations (see Table 2). Climate justice needs to be considered as an essential part of the organisation's strategy and institutional arrangements. The guiding questions that follow can be helpful for assessing whether this is the case:

How are justice issues anchored in the strategic goals and objectives of the implementing organisation? Are there sectoral strategies, internal procedures and guidelines that should be considered within the implementing organisation, the project donor or the fund for which a project proposal is developed?

What institutional arrangements does the implementing organisation have to support climate justice?

Justice-related anchors	Context	Rationale	Examples
Does the institution follow a rights-based approach? Does it have specific policies (e.g., on intersectionality, gender or Indigenous Peoples) that need to be considered?	Institutional strategy	Institutional guidelines for a human rights-based approach can give concrete guidance with respect to topics and procedures in the planning phase.	GIZ Human rights in biodiversity conservation , HEKS-EPER Human rights-based approach
Is there a specific policy for Indigenous Peoples or gender, which gives guidance for strategic priorities, planning requirements and indicator development?	Institutional strategy	Standards or policies from implementing organisations, funds and donors highlight their priorities or have standard indicators on which all projects have to report.	Green Climate Fund (GCF) Indigenous Peoples Policy , German IKI Gender Strategy
Is there a staff member or unit in the organisation responsible for justice issues?	Institutional arrangements	Specialised staff can be consulted during the planning phase to support EbA project staff.	Gender and Safeguards Helpdesk (GIZ)
Does the organisation have partnerships with other institutions or individuals specialised in justice issues?	Institutional arrangements	Existing partnerships can be built upon and used for the EbA project.	
Does the organisation offer capacity building on justice-related issues?	Institutional arrangements	Training on justice-related topics (e.g., gender and human rights) or on tools for participatory planning can build the capacities of staff responsible for the EbA project.	

Table 2: Examples of institutional anchors for justice-based EbA projects. Based on [UN Women \(2016\)](#)

It is generally much easier to plan and implement a justice-based EbA project in an institutional and political context that supports justice-based approaches. Hence the importance of considering these aspects. If there is no such context, it is important to push for institutional anchoring of justice issues, using project experience and evidence collected through M&E.

→ Policy frameworks and priorities

When starting to plan an EbA project, it is important to **consider the policy frameworks**, whether national or international, that can provide a basis for justice-based EbA implementation (see Table 3). It is also important to **identify and reflect the national priorities** of the country in which the project is being implemented. In bi- and multilateral development cooperation, the political partners of the governments involved discuss and prioritise their ideas for cooperation with regard to concrete development projects in intergovernmental negotiations. The aim is to match the needs and priorities of partner countries with donors' strategic priorities, and to agree on concrete ideas for development projects in their respective fields of action. In the next steps, these ideas need to be made more concrete. Here are some guiding questions on policy frameworks and priorities:

What international and national policy frameworks support the rights of Indigenous Peoples, local communities and marginalised groups? How can these frameworks be used in the project?

What country priorities and needs are relevant for EbA? How do these relate to justice issues?

Table 3: Examples of relevant policy frameworks for justice-based EbA projects.

Justice-related anchors	Context	Rationale	Examples
International human rights treaties that have been ratified by the national government	National/ international frameworks	International human rights treaties are important reference points for justice-based EbA implementation.	ILO Convention 169 , UNDRIP
Government policies defining specific rules for local communities or Indigenous Peoples (e.g., on protected areas, forests, fisheries or natural resource management) that can favour or inhibit their rights	National/ international frameworks	Knowing the specific policy and legal context for an EbA project helps define entry points for project objectives and measures.	UN Women Policy Tracker , National climate and biodiversity plans (NDC , NAP , and NBSAP)
National priorities articulated for sectors relevant to EbA or on the rights of Indigenous Peoples or local communities	National priorities	Integrating justice issues into bilateral negotiations can help ensure government support for the project.	



Entry points for justice aspects in developing the project logic

Based on how the project intervention is anchored and framed, the project objective is next defined together with all key stakeholders. This step serves as a key entry point for justice aspects, followed by the selection of project measures.

→ Defining the project objective

Justice-based EbA projects need to consider justice and social issues in the local context from the beginning of the planning phase, when project objectives are defined. This is crucial for ensuring that the project enhances these issues. Justice aspects need to be strategically anchored in project planning through the steps illustrated in Figure 4.

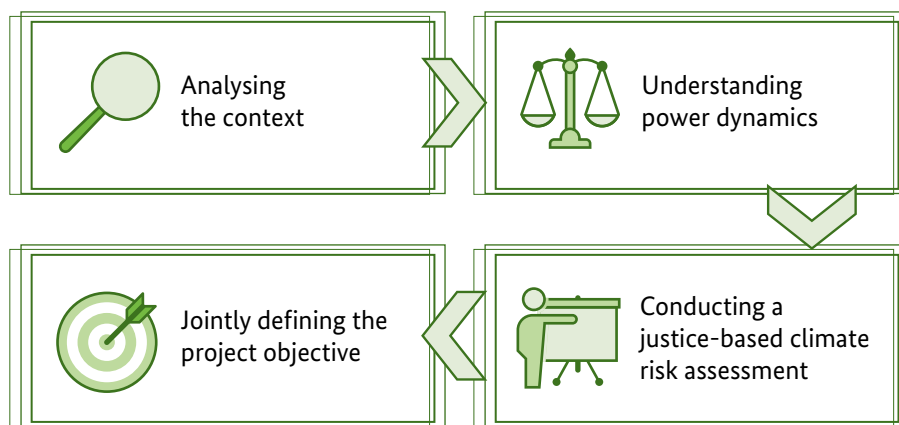


Figure 4: Steps for anchoring justice aspects in project objectives.



Step 1: Analysing the context

From the start, it is crucial to **analyse the context** and understand the system of interest as well as the actors within it. The guiding questions that follow can help:

System:

- What is the **system of interest** that should be addressed (e.g., a watershed, sector or policy), and where are its boundaries?
- What are the **immediate needs** that must be addressed in the specific context (e.g., lack of food or water)? How do these needs rely on ecosystems and their services?
- What are **structural barriers** within the system that influence people's livelihoods and ecosystem use?
- What are the **potential trade-offs** between different kinds of benefits for different actors (e.g., reforestation gains versus less agricultural production or conservation versus ecosystem use for livelihoods)?

Actors:

- Who are the **rightsholders** in the context (i.e., actors who are socially endowed with legal or customary rights with respect to land, water and natural resources)? What marginalised groups (e.g., Indigenous Peoples and local communities) and subgroups (e.g., women, youth, people with disabilities, LGBTQS2+ people and underrepresented groups) are present? What are their priorities, and are they able to express their views?
- Who are the key **stakeholders** that have direct or indirect interests and concerns but do not necessarily enjoy a legally or socially recognised entitlement?
- What other **actors have a disproportionate influence** that can counteract EbA, (e.g., individuals trying to make a personal profit, powerful conservation actors or other influential development actors, such as private companies)?



In justice-based project planning, **rightsholders** should be put **at the centre of the EbA project**. The project should correspond to and prioritise these groups' needs, build on their perspectives and expertise, and not undermine their rights and livelihood strategies. The guiding questions listed in Table 4 can help structure the analysis of governance in a specific context.

At the end of this step, it is important to **identify the core problem** that the project wants to address. This is the starting point for further analysis. To identify the core problem within a given system, it can be useful to conduct a **problem tree analysis** (see Box 1).

Justice-related challenges	Good governance principle
Are the EbA-relevant laws, rules and regulations consistent and coherent, and are they applied fairly, transparently and consistently?	Rule of law
Are structures and capacities in place for people to hold governments, the private sector and other actors with roles in and authority over adaptation and natural resource governance responsible for their actions (e.g., for the long-term impacts of climate action or inaction)?	Social and environmental accountability
Do all actors or community members (e.g., women, youth, other social groups, NGOs and academia) know their rights?	Access to justice
Are formal structures in place for resolving disputes between rightsholders and stakeholders, and are these structures accessible?	Access to justice
Are community rights over territories (land and sea) or resources known, recognised, respected and fully exercised?	Recognition and respect for land tenure rights
Have mechanisms been established to resolve overlapping land titles or resource use rights issued by different state agencies?	Recognition and respect for land tenure rights
Do all actors have the skills, knowledge and capacities to contribute effectively to EbA decision-making? Can they claim their rights, articulate their needs and use their knowledge and skills?	Empowerment

Table 4: Examples of guiding questions for context analysis. Source: GIZ (2019)

Box 1: Problem tree analysis

1. This exercise helps think through the root causes of problems and identify solutions to aim for.
2. Together with other relevant actors, follow these steps:
3. On a large piece of paper, draw a tree with multiple roots and branches.
4. Select a 'main problem', and write it on the tree trunk.
5. Identify the consequences of the problem, and write these on the branches.
6. Reflect on the causes of the main problem, and write these on the roots. These are the root causes. The core question is 'why' or 'what causes the problem'.
7. Discuss the relationships between the ideas collected, and organise them. The deeper root causes should be placed below the others.
8. Check to see if the core problem is correct. It may not be the most important problem or the one that can most readily be influenced.

Source: [GNDR \(2016\)](#)



Step 2: Understanding power dynamics

Based on the selected core problem that should be addressed, it is important to gain a deeper understanding of the context through an analysis of the power dynamics between relevant actors. The following questions can help go beyond the classical stakeholder mapping that most projects apply.

*What is above the surface? What **relevant actors and formal as well as informal rules and processes** can be perceived in the context? What are the relationships between the different actors?*

*What is below the surface? What **patterns shape these actors' behaviour and relationships** that are not visible at first glance? What hidden interests and incentives influence their behaviour?*

From the answers to both questions, a more complete and systemic picture emerges. Conducting a **Political Economy and Power Analysis (PEPA)** makes it possible to assess power dynamics more systematically ([HELVETAS 2021](#)). This helps to identify both the visible and hidden power dynamics influencing the problem that EbA projects aim to address. In consultation with other relevant stakeholders, the following steps should be taken:

1. List **key actors**, both organisations and individuals, that play a role in the context. Keep in mind that within the institutions blocking justice issues, there may be individuals who can act as **change agents**; it is also important to consider **neglected actors**, such as women, youth and other persons with informal influence.
2. **Collect information** on these actors from different sources to get a complete picture.
3. Map the different actors' level of **interest** in the project and their level of **influence** on project outcomes in the context.
4. Identify and discuss the **formal and informal power relationships** between actors that are relevant to the selected problem. This helps understand the power dynamics and identify entry points for changing the situation in line with the project objective.
5. Discuss how these power dynamics **influence and affect the project's ability** to address the problem within a given time frame. What are supporting and hindering factors? What is the project's level of influence on this problem?



Step 3: Conducting a justice-based climate risk assessment

For an EbA project, climate risk assessment provides the basis for adaptation planning. Such an assessment should consider climate hazards, exposure and vulnerability as well as the inter-linkages between social, ecological and economic systems. For this purpose, it is important to conduct the analysis with a **holistic view of the local situation** and explicitly consider elements that influence vulnerability from a justice perspective. It is particularly important to ask the following questions during the climate risk assessment:

Does the community have access to land, water and other natural resources that sustain their livelihoods? What types of (formal or informal/traditional) access rights are there?

What types of social organisations or community groups are there to organise natural resource management in the community, and how can they help protect ecosystem functioning and services?

How are the political decision-making processes that define the rules for natural resource management and EbA organised, and who can or cannot participate in them?

Justice-based EbA project planning involves an analysis of the justice-relevant risk factors and their structural root causes. This assessment provides important information on the **neuralgic points** that the EbA intervention will address. Justice aspects related to climate risks and risk management approaches are mainly found in the areas of **vulnerability** (adaptive capacity and sensitivity) and **exposure** (see Figure 5).

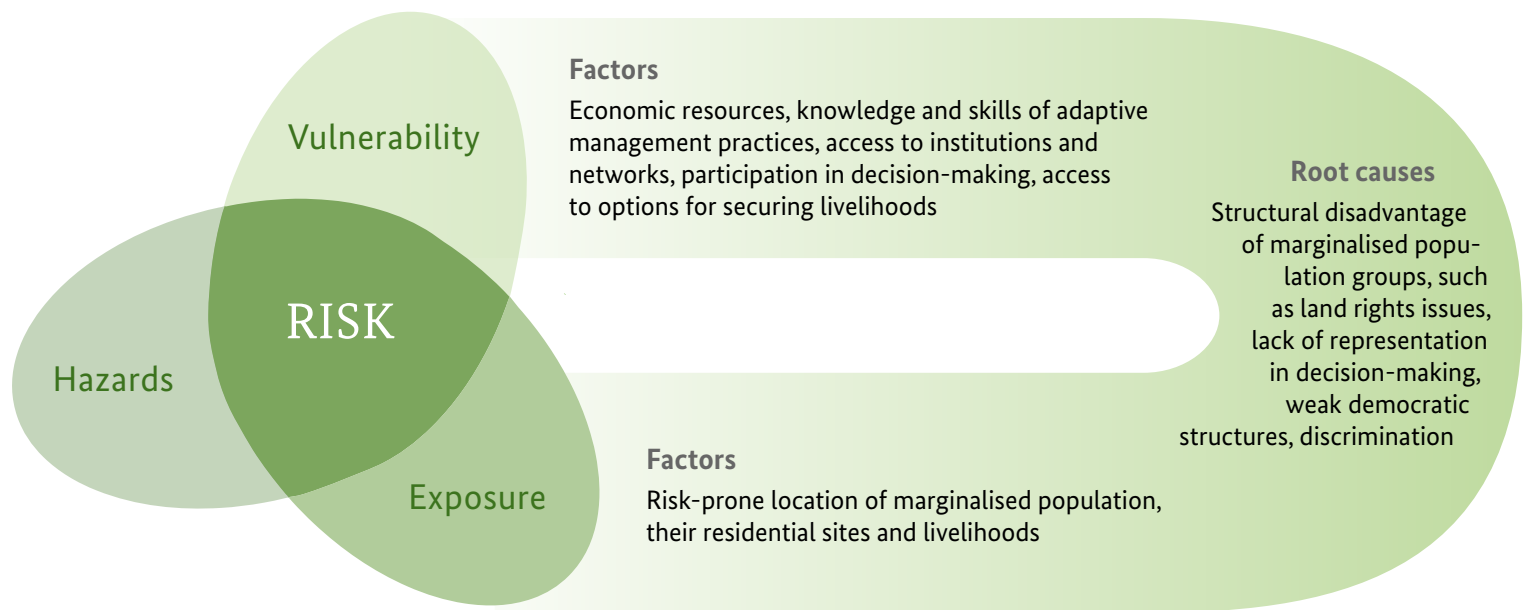


Figure 5: Entry points for justice issues in the climate risk framework. Source: Adapted from IPCC (2022)

Climate risk assessment (see also Box 2) involves the development of a climate risk impact chain, which illustrates the relevant climate hazards and all the factors that influence exposure, sensitivity and adaptive capacities. For these factors, indicators are developed, which provide the project with a basis for monitoring climate risk. A justice-based approach can help **address 'blind spots'** in impact chains for EbA projects by examining issues that are often not explicitly addressed in climate risk assessments (see Table 5).

It may also be useful to consider **other relevant analysis documents** that are part of the standard planning procedure (see Box 3).

Box 2: Tools for climate risk assessments

- Many tools are available to conduct a climate risk assessment with different resources and at different levels:
- GIZ's Risk Assessment Guidebook provides guidance for such assessments, with a specific focus on EbA; it can also be used for larger or policy-related projects.
- Other tools have been developed for **smaller grass-roots organisations** working at the community level, such as CARE's Climate Vulnerability and Capacity Assessment (CVCA) and Participatory Assessment of Climate and Disaster Risks (PACDR), developed by Brot für die Welt and HEKS-EPER.



Guiding questions for identifying justice-related indicators	Climate risk factor	Rationale
Where do marginalised communities or groups within communities (e.g., women-headed households, ethnic minorities and people with disabilities) live?	Exposure	Marginalised groups sometimes live in more risk-prone areas (e.g., next to river-banks or on degraded land).
What physical characteristics make the infrastructure and livelihoods of Indigenous Peoples and marginalised communities vulnerable to climate hazards?	Sensitivity	Weak housing structures or living on small and/or degraded plots of land can increase the vulnerability of marginalised communities to climate change impacts.
Who has access rights to land, water and other natural resources? What types of formal/informal rights do they have?	Adaptive capacity	Marginalised groups can lack access rights or can have informal access rights, which need to be strengthened or recognised. There may also be overlapping access rights (complementary or conflicting).
What types of community groups are there (e.g., disaster risk reduction committees, savings and loan groups or others)? Who is part of these groups and who is not?	Adaptive capacity	The level of social organisation defines communities' capacity to claim their rights and protect themselves against climate risks
What rules define natural resource management? Who can participate in decision-making on these rules?	Adaptive capacity	Existing regulations may be in accordance with community priorities and traditional management systems, or they may contradict and suppress them.
Do the communities or marginalised groups have access to legal systems in case their rights are violated? Can they make use of these systems? Do these include traditional or indigenous mechanisms?	Adaptive capacity	Filing complaints in case rights are violated is important for enforcing the rights of local communities or Indigenous Peoples.

Table 5: Examples of justice-related indicators in the climate risk impact chain.

Box 3: Other important sources for considering justice issues during planning

Some organisations rely on standard analyses as part of the planning phase. These can provide information on injustices and conflicts in resource use and decision-making, and point to possible solutions:

Environment and Social Safeguards (ESS). This approach covers the policies, standards and operational procedures that international development organisations use to identify, avoid, mitigate and minimise adverse environmental and social impacts, which may arise in the implementation of development projects. The results from ESS may highlight, for example, environmental conflicts, unjust decision-making structures and processes, and disadvantaged groups in society.

Peace and conflict impact assessments (PCIA). These assessments can provide vital information on the complexity and dynamics of conflicts over resource use (e.g., forest resources) as well as the interests, objectives and actions of involved stakeholders. PCIA also include proposals as to what the project should do and not do to decrease the level of conflict.

Gender analysis. This analysis explores the roles and relationships of people of different genders as well as gender-specific opportunities, barriers and decision-making power. Combined with an intersectional approach, gender analysis helps create an understanding of gender differences and systemic discrimination, particularly toward women or LGBTQTS2+ people, which must be addressed to make progress toward gender equality. With this knowledge, EbA actions can be planned and implemented in ways that recognise gender roles and dynamics, whilst tackling discriminatory norms and practices.



Step 4: Jointly defining the project objective

Creating a sense of ownership of the project objective amongst key stakeholders is important to create a strong alliance in support of the project. This makes it possible to achieve the systemic change that is needed for justice-based EbA. In this effort, it is important to formulate a **realistic** project objective. It is also important to clearly understand the project's **sphere of influence** and to avoid being over-ambitious. Critical questions to ask are:

What are the project's chances of achieving the desired changes with regards to justice issues?

To what extent can the project objective be met in the given timeframe? How can the objective be adapted, if it turns out that the strategy selected does not work?

Does the objective risk causing negative effects on rightsholders or key stakeholders? What alternative objective might entail less risk?

Are any political changes expected that could alter the project's possibilities to enhance justice issues?

This analysis needs to be critical and self-reflective, because working on justice issues can bring risks, which need to be analysed carefully. If the **risks are estimated to be too high**, it may be advisable to change the project objective to a less ambitious target that involves improving local conditions at a different level. This improvement can lay the groundwork to pursue the initially selected objective at a later stage.

→ Elaborating project measures

Based on the project objective together with results from the climate risk assessment and other analysis, the next step is to **identify** and **select** suitable EbA measures, according to their potential effectiveness, co-benefits, stakeholder buy-in, feasibility and other criteria (see Table 6).

It is important to address justice and social issues that EbA projects often do not address explicitly, recognising that different stakeholders have different needs and capacities for adaptation (GIZ 2021). Adaptation measures thus need to be designed to **address inequity and inequality** in ways suggested by these questions:

How can the EbA project reduce the vulnerability of livelihoods, recognising stakeholders' different roles in the project context and gender-specific roles within communities to generate equitable benefits and not undermine the resilience of any group?

Which targeted EbA measures are needed to overcome barriers to resource access and control by Indigenous People, local communities and different groups (e.g., men, women and non-binary people) within a community?

What measures can channel resources on a priority basis to groups that are typically excluded, such as women's groups or Indigenous communities, to ensure that they can meaningfully participate in the planning and implementation of EbA actions?

It is important for **different actors' responsibilities for action** to be clearly agreed upon **within a specified time frame**. This enables other project parties to hold those actors accountable for their agreed actions and for inaction. If actors break their commitments, the project needs to provide easy access to effective dispute resolution mechanisms.

In complex environments, good procedures are needed to **select between different options** for planned project measures. For this purpose, the guiding questions for selecting the objective can be useful. Alternatively, an options-by-context matrix can be used to weigh options according to their potential for enhancing the resilience of livelihoods and ecosystems. Also, consider the **trade-offs and synergies** between different measures (e.g., [IISD 2017](#)).



Justice-related EbA measures	Entry point	Rationale
Building the capacity of rural populations for sustainable resource management	Recognising different roles	Targeted capacity building for different groups in rural communities is a precondition to implement sustainable resource management actions.
Targeted livelihood measures for different ecosystem user groups	Recognising different roles	Different groups need to have their livelihood systems strengthened (e.g., women and men in their different roles in fisheries or forestry).
Strengthening of participatory decision-making on EbA at the local level	Overcoming barriers to decision-making	It is important for government to strengthen subsidiary decision-making as a means to increase the influence of local communities.
Support for Indigenous Peoples' participation in decision-making bodies involved in natural resource management	Overcoming barriers to decision-making	Participation in decision-making bodies is a precondition for Indigenous People to have a say on EbA-related issues.
Strengthening women and youth organisations to participate in natural resource management	Targeting excluded groups	Development of women and youth organisations and of participatory processes improves their chances to be heard in decision-making.
Support for communities to define their territories and map resource use and access rights	Targeting excluded groups	Supporting communities to define the rules and procedures for ecosystem use in their territories (e.g., in community protocols) provides a basis to influence local decision-making.

Table 6: Examples of justice-based EbA measures.

An inclusive institutional and financial setup for fostering climate justice in EbA projects

Justice-based EbA requires more than the integration of climate justice into project objectives and measures. It is equally important to consider justice issues in project implementation, because this plays a key role in **determining how project stakeholders interact** with each other. Consider the following **key entry points** when setting up the project's implementation modalities:

How does the project's institutional setup support achievement of the project objective and increase the sense of project ownership amongst rightsholders (Indigenous Peoples, local communities and marginalised groups)?

How do funding conditions enable and enhance local and marginalised actors' access to funding sources for EbA measures?

How does the implementation plan allow for flexibility and learning to adapt to changing conditions? How is the M&E system set up to support justice-based implementation?

Considering climate justice aspects in the institutional setup supports efforts to ensure that ...	
ARGUMENT	WAYS OF INTEGRATION
... project implementors understand the needs of the community	by maintaining a constant dialogue with the community and by being located in close proximity to it.
... communication and cooperation between local actors and international institutions are improved	by bringing together in the project setup all stakeholders and rightsholders, such as Indigenous Peoples, local communities and/or marginalised groups, including women and youth.
... transparency with respect to the planned and implemented measures is enhanced	by integrating representatives of all key stakeholders into project steering mechanisms.
... stakeholders' sense of ownership is strengthened and local capacities are built	by acting as a facilitator for local actors and by advocating for them at different levels.
... the target group is more committed to effective project implementation and increases its sense of ownership	... the target group is more committed to effective project implementation and increases its sense of ownership

Table 7: Ways of integrating justice aspects into an EbA project's institutional setup.

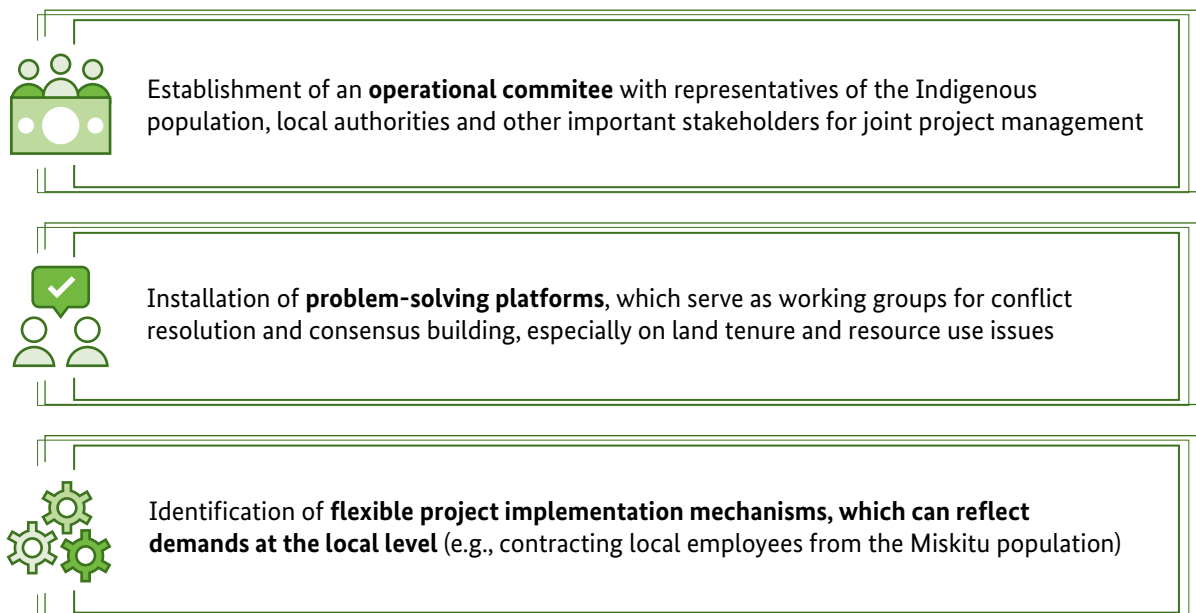


Figure 6: Considering Indigenous People in operationalising a project in Honduras. Source: GIZ (2022)

→ A justice-based institutional setup

Inclusive decision-making requires strong organisational representation. Power imbalances between international implementing organisations, donors, national and local government authorities, private sector actors, and local communities, if not properly reflected and addressed, can prevent the enhancement of justice issues. **Creating an alliance between different stakeholders and actively promoting the agency of Indigenous Peoples and local communities** can facilitate changes within local power structures (see Table 7).

Concrete examples show that such an approach can work in practice. The project ‘Sustainable Natural Resource Management under Climate Aspects in Indigenous Territories in La Mosquitia’, implemented by GIZ in Honduras, strengthened governance structures for the participation of the local population in development planning. The project actively involved the local population right from the start, both in the planning and implementation of EbA through agroecological approaches (see Figure 6). This gave local project stakeholders a strong sense of project ownership and gained political recognition for the participatory approach (GIZ 2022c).

→ Justice-based funding schemes

Financing schemes need to recognise the **structural barriers to funding access** that local actors face and that EbA projects need to address. The following are options to create funding conditions that favour and enable local actors:

- **Channeling international funds to the local level via small grants schemes:** Larger regional or national organisations can access international climate and biodiversity funds, such as the Global Environment Facility, Adaptation Fund, and Green Climate Fund (GCF). They can then offer community-level organisations the possibility to submit project proposals and can support them in developing these. Some government-managed funds can also provide linkages with countries’ decentralised structures as well as national plans and processes.
- **Funds specifically targeting grassroots organisations,** such as farmer/producer cooperatives, savings and credit groups, women’s groups, and informal housing and settlement associations. With this option, local actors from communities can propose projects and gain experience in managing small-scale funds. With such a bottom-up approach, the funds define their own priorities and procedures, and do not rely on the standards of international funds. For example, the Climate Justice Resilience Fund (CJRF) was set up specifically to provide funding to community groups, which are usually too small to receive funding from larger funds or donors.

Considering climate justice aspects in the financial setup supports efforts to ensure that ...

ARGUMENT	WAYS OF INTEGRATION
... funds reach groups that are usually excluded (e.g., women and landless people)	by designing flexible microfinance schemes that consider the situation of these groups and adapt to their conditions.
... funding conditions are adapted to local conditions	by offering locally adapted repayment schemes (e.g., after harvest instead of on a monthly basis).
... funding reaches communities quickly, as needed,	by establishing simple decision-making procedures to enable quick disbursement of funds in case of an emergency.

Table 8: Ways of integrating justice aspects into the EbA project financial setup. Source: [WRI \(2022\)](#)

There are also different possibilities to integrate **justice-based funding schemes** that support local actors as part of an EbA project (see Table 8).

→ Implementation plan and M&E system

Justice-based EbA projects need to be flexible within an operational framework that **allows for context-specific solutions that foster local processes**. **Adaptive project management** is based on regular **assessment of and joint reflection** on the project's context and progress.

Justice-based EbA does not end with the planning phase but requires follow-up throughout project implementation. Setting up a justice-based M&E system is an important step to guide **justice-based implementation**. (GIZ 2022d)



Designing a participatory planning process

Participatory planning is a key entry point to involve relevant local stakeholders and representatives in developing the EbA intervention. The design of the planning process is crucial to **establish an atmosphere of trust** amongst participating actors and to underline that justice-based EbA is an **inherent part of the project**.

Taking into account stakeholders' views in the planning process

The design of the planning process needs to set the basis for justice-based implementation. Participatory planning is a key entry point to capture the views and perspectives of all stakeholders in developing the EbA intervention.

With regard to justice issues, participatory planning ensures that...

.... the most marginalised population groups and their needs are taken into account in the project strategy.

... the knowledge of the local population and marginalised groups is integrated into the prioritisation of fields of action, the project design and the implementation of the project strategy.

... the quality, accountability and transparency of project implementation are increased.

→ Steps to integrate stakeholders' views into project planning procedures

Participatory planning requires a paradigm shift in the planning phase of a project. Planning should encourage inclusive decision-making and make use of innovative participation formats to react flexibly to the different needs of various stakeholders.

There are four key phases in the planning process, in which a participatory approach needs to be followed systematically (Figure 7).

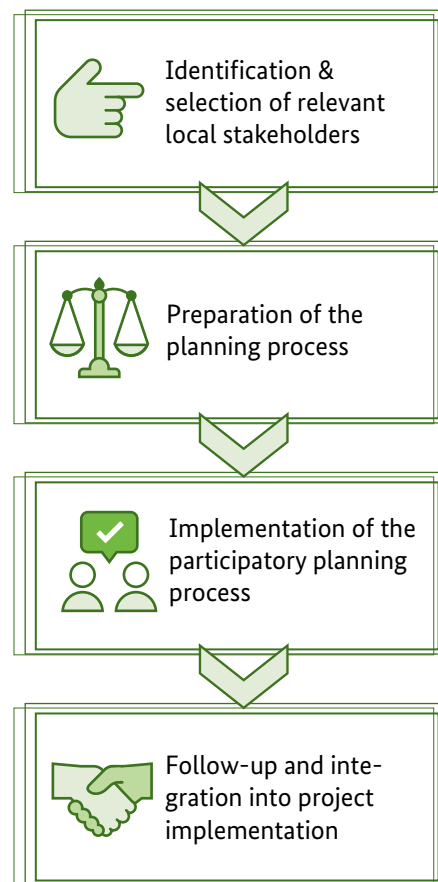


Figure 7: Steps for anchoring justice aspects in planning phases.



Step 1: Identification and selection of relevant local stakeholders

The **selection criteria** for actors need to be **transparent** and should be based on **stakeholder mapping** to ensure that all relevant stakeholders who have an interest in the project participate in the process. It is important to:

- Place the **rightsholders** at the centre of planning procedures.
- Include **all key stakeholders** (project implementors, government actors, the private sector, funding partners and other influential actors) in the process.

Keep in mind that Indigenous Peoples and local communities are not monolithic. Special emphasis should be placed on involving different subgroups of **marginalised groups** in the target population to include their views and values regarding an effective, successful project from its conception. Subgroups can be defined according to

- Gender (man/woman/diverse)
- Age (elderly/adults/youth/children)
- Different religions and cultural backgrounds
- Different livelihoods (e.g., forest users, arable farmers or fishermen),
- Different functions (e.g., members of the Council of Elders)
- Regional affiliation (e.g., lowland/mountain dwellers or inland/coastal dwellers).

What to keep in mind in selecting stakeholders:

- Inclusive decision-making needs to recognise that actors are not on a level playing field. **Existing power structures** can prevent some actors from speaking out freely. The planning process thus needs to counteract these dynamics by **providing a space to speak for stakeholder groups, such as Indigenous Peoples, local communities and marginalised groups**.
- In some cases, CSOs or other intermediaries may play an important role in supporting certain stakeholders to express their views. But intermediaries need to play this role in a way that does not take over but rather **supports the agency of these groups**.
- **Community catalysts** can also play an important role in the planning process, even if they do not have an official mandate. These could be women, youth or elders from diverse backgrounds. These are actors within the communities that have a keen interest, the capacities to engage in the process and the potential to take up the work afterwards. Projects can identify them and include their capacity development in the process.





Step 2: Preparation of a participatory planning process

In the preparation phase, it is important to establish cooperation with participating stakeholders, to plan the different steps in the planning process and to ensure the necessary capacities (Natural Justice 2012).

What to keep in mind for preparation of the planning process

Establishing cooperation with stakeholders:

- Identify the scope and objective of project planning together with all key stakeholders. For this purpose, it is important to **discuss the roles and responsibilities of each stakeholder, so they know what is expected of them.**
- Identify potential barriers to open and trustful communication, **and establish rules that provide a basis for reliable cooperation and communication.**
- In contexts where the project implementor is not already working with local communities, it is important to **work with trusted actors** at the local level (e.g., local CSOs) to establish contact with marginalised groups.

Planning the different steps in the planning process:

- Integrate the **routines and schedules of the community** into the planning process. There are occasions (e.g., during harvest) when local communities have little or no time to engage in project planning. This may make it difficult to meet deadlines for project applications, thus requiring a longer term perspective in planning.
- Adapt to the **situations of different groups** in planning the engagement. Some groups, like women, generally have limited time and cannot easily travel long distances to participate.
- Allow enough **time and resources** for participatory planning, because it takes time to find common ground between different actors. Reaching consensus on controversial topics may require several feedback and discussion loops. Resolving these topics takes time but is important to prepare the ground for smoother implementation of the EbA project.
- Plan to use **different tools and methods** in the planning process. People respond differently to certain learning, documentation and communication styles. Some base their knowledge on research and written documentation, whilst others gain knowledge by watching or listening to others or through concrete examples and physical movement. Discussions and activities thus need to be facilitated in culturally appropriate, diverse and engaging ways.

Ensuring staff capacities:

- Ensure that **project staff have the necessary capacities** in participatory planning methods. For this purpose, all staff involved in the planning phase need to be trained, so they understand and can apply the different tools.
- Cooperate with **actors experienced in using participatory tools**. These may be individuals or organisations that are active in the project context. They can play an important role in guiding the process and enhancing the capacities of all actors.



Step 3: Implementation of a participatory planning process

During implementation of the different steps and tools explained in the first part of this guidance document, it is important to steer the process in a way that enhances cooperation. This means giving different actors the necessary space, reacting to unforeseen (positive and negative) developments, and documenting all results.

What to keep in mind when implementing the process:

- **Reflect the project implementor's role as a facilitator** in bringing together different types of expertise from local, national and possibly international actors (see Box 4).
- **Create safe spaces** and an atmosphere of trust, particularly for marginalised groups. Separate discussion spaces may be needed for different groups within a community (e.g., women/men and youth/older people).
- **Provide translation** for groups that can better express themselves in local languages.
- **Document and communicate** the results in a transparent way. Think about different ways to share information (oral, written, video, etc.).

Box 4: Understanding the role of a facilitator

- Be an active listener.
- Play a supporting role.
- Respect the local culture and traditions.
- Maintain an atmosphere of respect and openness.
- Foster trust and confidence.
- Be consistent and clear.
- Remain neutral and level-headed.
- Keep up positive momentum.
- Take notice of subtle changes in energy and tone.
- Develop positive rapport with a range of community members.
- Keep the broader objectives in mind, and help focus discussion on key issues.

Source: Natural Justice (2012)



Step 4: Follow-up and integration into project implementation

In following up on the process, it is important to build on stakeholders' ownership of the results. Participating in such a process creates expectations, which should not lead to frustration and disillusionment if these are not met.

What to keep in mind when following up on the process:

- Leave any results from community assessments (e.g., maps and other results from the Climate Risk Assessment) with the communities to **enhance their sense of ownership** and enable them to work with these materials independently from the project.
- Be **transparent about the next steps**, and explain clearly what stakeholder expectations the project is able to meet. It is equally important to specify expectations that cannot be met, the reasons for this and other options that stakeholders can explore.
- Consider the **project in the broader context**, as it is not implemented in isolation. Whilst focusing on the concrete objectives and capacities of the selected EbA project, note potential alliances and complementary projects. This also enhances networking with other actors.
- Involve key actors in developing the **concept for implementation, M&E system** and institutional setup for the EbA project.

EbA projects play an important role in supporting the efforts of Indigenous Peoples and local communities to realise their rights in the context of EbA. National or international project implementers thus need to adopt a justice-based approach to planning and implementing EbA projects. Such an approach can contribute to the systemic and fundamental change that is needed to ensure effective and sustainable adaptation, thus protecting marginalised communities and the ecosystems they live in from increasing climate change impacts.

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