

Report Part Title: International FGLG work in Social Justice in Forestry

Report Title: Social justice in forestry:

Report Subtitle: gains made and tactics that work

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International Institute for Environment and Development (2014)

Stable URL: <http://www.jstor.com/stable/resrep18070.16>

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Forest Governance Learning Group, March 2013, Tengchong, China. Lumber yard. © Simon Lim / IIED



International FGLG work in *Social Justice in Forestry*

Key features of FGLG progress, impact and future plans

- Facilitation, internationally and at country level, of a strong level of cross-learning, collaboration and communication between the FGLG initiative and a range of international processes and initiatives in the forest sector.
- Shared learning enabling a series of co-funded events, studies, reports, trainings, workshops and actions to take place.
- Effective support to enhance impact at a country level – especially on governance issues explicitly prioritised by country groups.
- Successful launch of the China-Africa Forest Governance Learning Platform, with initiatives underway to build on its outcomes and strengthen its strategic scope and impact.

Progress – learning, promotion and launch of a China-Africa platform

Complementing the pursuit of impact on forest governance by country groups in the ten focus countries, the FGLG project has been an international initiative. As well as supporting the work of the FGLGs through individual advice on methodological approaches and best practice and the facilitation of exchange and learning between countries, the FGLG initiative has drawn on the emerging pool of experiences and impacts at country and regional levels to promote lessons and recommendations internationally.

With the overall aim of influencing international policies and processes (project output 4), the specific purpose of this international work has been to ensure that international networks and processes better incorporate understanding about effective action for improved social justice in forestry.

IIED has been in charge of steering this international FGLG work alongside its role in managing the project. The work has involved three main approaches: fostering cross-country learning and partnerships amongst the groups; synthesising and promoting overall learning in international networks and forums and advocating changes in international policy regimes; and developing particular international initiatives for this purpose.

Selected highlights of this work, focusing on 2011-13, are outlined below, with particular attention paid to the launch of a distinct initiative to address the strategic importance of the China-Africa relationship on forest governance as an issue that had increasingly come to the fore during the implementation of the *Social Justice in Forestry* project.

Cross-country learning and partnerships

- Cross-team work between the Malawi and Mozambique FGLGs on the charcoal trade, and between the Mozambique and Tanzania groups on the cross-border timber trade and REDD+ strategy, leading to signs of positive action by governments (see relevant country sections).
- Production and dissemination of a position paper on *REDD+, governance and community forestry*, following dialogue and joint work among Asian FGLGs facilitated by the Regional Community Forestry Training Centre (RECOFTC). This was well-received by stakeholders.
- The capturing and promotion of 'FGLG – Stories of Change' in audio-visual, online and print outputs by the Vietnam and Indonesia groups, supported by RECOFTC, highlighting the lessons and tangible impacts of the FGLGs' work in the two countries.
- Effective use of the Stories of Change and the *REDD+, governance and community forestry* publication by RECOFTC to boost the public profile of FGLG in Asia, using these outputs and findings in presentations and discussions.

International learning

- Continued organisation of international learning events to facilitate in-person exchange, learning, joint planning and targeted FGLG collaboration in engaging with international forums and processes on forestry governance.
- In March 2012, the eighth learning event, held in Hue province in Vietnam, provided a valuable opportunity to share experience of work on forest rights, provide and receive feedback and mutually develop FGLG capacity, as well as strengthen strategies on processes such as FLEGT and REDD+.
- In March 2013, the ninth international learning event, held in Yunnan province, China, provided a forum both to tighten plans to maximise and evaluate impact in the final year of the FGLG project and to contribute to crucial new initiatives being launched such as the China-Africa Forest Governance Learning Platform and exchange insights with Chinese colleagues on its future development (see section below).
- Launch and widespread in-country and international broadcasting of six justice-in-the-forests films, as well as production and promotion of the *Just forest governance* report highlighting the impacts and plans of FGLG work.
- Internal and external recognition of the benefits and effectiveness of the FGLG approach, as reflected by two major new initiatives led by IIED – the South Asia Climate Resilience Alliance, and Sustainable Artisanal and Small-Scale Mining – which explicitly adopt the FGLG model of in-country learning teams together forming an international learning group.

International influencing and initiatives

- Vital contributions from country FGLGs enriched IIED's production for the FAO of an implementation guide on forest issues in support of the Voluntary Guidelines on the Responsible Governance of Tenure of Land, Fisheries and Forests in the Context of National Food Security agreed by FAO member states in May 2012. The result of the two years' work, *Improving governance of forest tenure: a practical guide* was published in 2013.
- Participants in the FGLG initiative, including IIED personnel, were heavily involved in a three-year initiative of the Forests Dialogue to hold dialogues on forest governance with communities, different investor groups and other stakeholders in 10 countries. This culminated in a synthesis of evidence and helping to shape the content of a *Guide to investing in locally controlled forestry*, jointly published by the Forests Dialogue, IUCN and IIED.

The guide has been used by FGLGs in several countries to support practical action aimed at increasing investment in locally controlled forestry. In Mozambique, for example, the group took part in a detailed scoping exercise in Niassa province with the support of SIDA, the Swedish development agency.

Launch of the China-Africa Forest Governance Learning Platform

In 2013, a major development and achievement in the FGLG initiative's international work was the launch of the China-Africa Forest Governance Learning Platform at an inception event held in Beijing. Bringing together over 80 participants from China, African countries, the UK and Indonesia among others, the gathering was organised by IIED in collaborative partnership with China's Global Environmental Institute (GEI), the Chinese Academy of Forestry (CAF) and the State Forest Administration.

The vital importance of this initiative cannot be over-emphasised in that China has become Africa's biggest trading partner – the value of trade surging from US\$11 billion to US\$166 billion over the last decade – and African timber exports to China are very significant for a range of countries in the region. Some 90 per cent of Mozambique's timber exports are destined for China, for example.

Set up as a mechanism for African policy researchers and opinion formers and their Chinese counterparts to engage in exchange and strategic policy intervention on investment and trade issues affecting forest governance, the platform links FGLGs in key African countries, where Chinese investment in the forest sector is of increasing importance, with a small team of China policy researchers and opinion formers. The aim of the platform is to facilitate exchange and learning about the key links in supply chains where stakeholder action is needed to improve the prospects for sustainability and local livelihoods, with findings and lessons shared and explored more widely to influence decision-making.

To help set the scene for platform discussions, and to provide an initial analytical foundation for the immediate development of the platform, IIED worked with African consultants and African FGLGs, particularly in Mozambique and Tanzania, to hold a preparatory review of available evidence and perceptions of the China-Africa forestry trade and forest governance issues, with one synthesis looking at the 'Africa side' of the relationship and the other at the 'China side'.

The syntheses were debated at the event in order to engage stakeholders from Africa and China, in particular invited leading officials and high-level forest sector leaders. A more targeted discussion was also held, with a smaller group of Chinese and African opinion formers, organisation leaders and forestry initiative managers and practitioners further debating the key issues and identifying a programme of actions to address them.

Policy opportunities and priorities for action, including research

A significant observation in the discussions was that there would appear to be growing momentum among Chinese stakeholders to improve the regulations and legality of imported timber, including positive policy development such as the 2013 issuance of Guidelines for Environmental Protection in Foreign Investment and Cooperation aimed at overseas Chinese companies. This complemented the earlier Guidelines on Sustainable Overseas Forests Management and Utilization by Chinese Enterprises released in 2009 to improve both the sustainability of Chinese companies operating overseas and forest governance and livelihoods in Africa.

On reaching a firm consensus that China has an increasingly important role to play in improving forest governance in Africa, the launch agreed several priorities for detailed action planning and implementation in the wake of the event. As well as sharing the Chinese guidelines with African stakeholders and finalising and publishing the two evidence and perceptions reviews in the light of feedback, the meeting agreed that a much more ambitious portfolio of research needed to be launched and promoted to lay the basis for full and shared understanding of the positive and negative effects of China-Africa forest governance links. Among the key topics identified for exploration were:

- Existing and emerging guidelines, standards, principles and legislation in Africa and China affecting the activities of Chinese forest enterprises in African countries.
- Practices and models of scales and types of effective forest management, in the context of related issues such as land and forest tenure, in China and African countries.
- Cross-sectoral analysis to understand how Chinese investments in non-forest sector investments impact on forest governance.
- Case studies of timber trade and forestry investments involving Chinese companies in specific African countries with investigative reporting by Chinese journalists.
- Chinese domestic market regulations and consumer priorities and their potential to encourage overseas Chinese companies to apply sustainable forest management principles.

The meeting also agreed that it would work towards the holding the next major meeting of the platform in Africa. This would assess progress against the above research agenda and also review experiences and pilot projects to implement the Chinese guidelines.

IIED published a full report on the agenda of the China-Africa Forest Governance Learning Platform, *Report of an Inception Event and Future Agenda*. In 2014, it also published '*Chinese views of African forests: evidence and perception of China-Africa links that impact the governance of forests and livelihoods*'.

Impact – adding value and achieving recognition

The main achievements and impacts of the FGLG initiative's international work include:

- Facilitation, internationally and at country level, of a strong level of cross-learning, collaboration and communication between FGLG and a range of international processes and initiatives in the forest sector. These have included REDD+, FLEGT, the Forest Dialogue, Growing Forest Partnerships, Forest Connect, African Model Forests Network and PROFOR.
- Increased profile and influence of the FGLG initiative, with shared learning enabling a series of co-funded events, studies, reports, trainings, workshops and actions to take place within the participating countries that would otherwise have not happened if work had taken place in isolation.

- Helping to enhance impact at a country level – especially on governance issues explicitly prioritised by country groups. For example, Indonesia's FGLG significantly improved transparency and participation in REDD+ and Ghana's FGLG achieved greater civil society voice in the VPA negotiations.
- Agreement of a memorandum of understanding between the Chinese and Mozambican governments in the wake of the launch of China-Africa Forest Governance Learning Platform. This paved the way for training in Mozambique on regulatory frameworks and guidelines with 50 small and large Chinese-owned enterprises.
- Donor recognition of the quality and value of the FGLG approach. For example, UK aid of the UK government decided in early 2012 to provide additional support for FGLG work through a grant covering a range of IIED initiatives on natural resource management, tackling climate change, sustainable markets and shaping urbanisation.

Future plans – embedding lessons and sustaining China-Africa momentum

The main initiatives planned to build on the progress, achievements and impact of international FGLG work include:

- Engagement by FGLG participants in international processes to embed FGLG findings. For example, the convener of the FGLG in Cameroon has taken part in the International Expert Group for the Least Developed Countries initiative on the post-2015 development cooperation framework. Meanwhile, IIED is involved in helping to roll-out of the FAO's Voluntary Guidelines on land.
- Sustaining the momentum created by the launch of China-Africa Forest Governance Learning Platform. As well as ensuring that priorities agreed at the event are taken forward as effectively as possible within currently available time and resources (see above), a major push is planned to secure proper finance for the further development and consolidation of the initiative.

In support of the latter, IIED has developed a three-year project, starting in 2014 and funded by the UK Aid's Forest Governance, Markets and Climate programme (FGMC), to promote China-Africa collaboration to improve forest resource governance. This will involve IIED working with Chinese partners GEI and CAF, African partners from Cameroon, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Mozambique and Uganda as well as the World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF) International, which has a strong record of regional and global work on forest-linked investment between China and Africa and has also been promoting sustainable forest management within the Forum for China-Africa Cooperation (FOCAC) process.

Involving a similar FGLG approach, with expert multi-stakeholder 'practitioner teams' conducting collaborative research and verifying and promoting findings through policy stakeholder engagement, the initiative will take forward more robustly key research issues identified

at the 2013 China-Africa platform launch event – such as the need to examine guidelines, standards, principles and legislation in Africa and China affecting the activities of Chinese forest enterprises in Africa.

In addition to stakeholder dialogue and learning events to nurture shifts in policy and practice, training is envisaged in the African focus countries. One strand of training will be aimed at government officials, small, medium and large enterprises and civil society organisations to raise their understanding of regulatory frameworks on legality and sustainability so they can variously adopt best practice in the traceability of supply chains, monitor timber trading effectively, enforce penalties where necessary and hold each other to account.

The other strand will be aimed at providing enterprise support training for Chinese-linked small and medium enterprises. Interventions to encourage Chinese investors to implement and monitor codes of practice and to support Chinese-linked enterprises to achieve legal verification and certification will be organised.

Also envisaged, to contribute to wider public awareness, are media visits and exchanges involving African and Chinese journalists. Meanwhile, advocacy is planned to influence governments and investor groups so that public policies are introduced and business standards upheld to tackle the trade in timber and other commodities from illegal forest practices. The aim is to achieve policy consistency between China and Africa on forests and deforestation, particularly through engagement with FOCAC, in the context of other international processes such as REDD+ and FLEGT.

Evaluating ‘*Social Justice in Forestry*’: achievements, impact and lessons

An independent evaluation of the 2009-13 *Social Justice in Forestry* project was undertaken and its results published in early 2014. Research involved three country visits (India, Cameroon and Mozambique) where the consultant held workshops, meetings and discussions with key individuals and FGLG members and undertook one field visit (in Mozambique).

It also involved a desk review of reports, documents and other materials (such as websites and videos), telephone conversations (based on an open questionnaire) with FGLG members in other focus countries, email discussions with key individuals concerned with forest governance globally, as well as meetings and telephone discussions with IIED staff.

The consultant drew in addition on responses to a self-evaluation form that each country FGLG had completed. The findings were finalised and published after presentation and discussion with forest trade and governance officials from the EC, the project donor. This section synthesises some of the evaluation report's main findings.

Good performance and good value for money

The evaluation concluded that the overall performance of the project had been moderate to high when assessed against evaluation criteria such as relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact, sustainability and innovation. It judged that the project had been particularly strong in terms of its conceptual relevance and methodological approach (operation of country FGLG teams), as well as its efficiency. The project had been in line with, and made its own significant contribution to, global thinking increasingly recognising the centrality of governance issues to forest conservation and poverty reduction. And, for relatively small country budgets – around €25,000 per year – very significant results had been achieved at a country level.

Optimal impact?

At the same time, the report found that the project, despite the frequent progress represented by such achievements, had not registered impact as high as planned on country level forest governance and international processes, particularly from the point of view of the positive policy shifts frequently generated by the FGLG teams being translated into practical implementation and enforcement eventually benefiting forest-reliant communities. This was partly due to the understandable gap between ambition and the scale of the considerable challenges involved, but also reflected possibly avoidable problems in project design, planning and implementation, according to the evaluation.

While recognising that the project's purpose and theory of change had concentrated on improving forest governance rather than immediately securing tangible gains for communities, the report claimed that the project could have included a stronger emphasis on promoting the voice and influence of forest-dependent people in governance processes, notwithstanding noteworthy examples of such an approach being taken in countries such as India and Vietnam.

Overall achievement of outputs

Whatever the project's gaps and challenges, however, the overall conclusion of the evaluation report was that the 'direction of change is mostly positive' and that project had laid an important foundation on which future progress in pursuit of better forest governance could be built. Indeed, it noted that of the project's four intended outputs, three had been largely met (output 1 on reforms and decisions in favour of forest rights and small enterprise; output 3 on pro-poor climate change mitigation and adaptation through forestry; and output 4 on transnational learning on effective action for improved social justice in forestry), while output 2 (on improving the legality of forest products and institutionalising citizen engagement on the issue to strengthen broader forest governance) had been partly met.

Further insights were provided by the report's examination of work to achieve the specific target indicators set to measure progress towards each of the four project outputs. It found that areas in which the project had registered strong achievement included policies and procedures favouring local forest control (output indicator 1.1); multi-stakeholder engagement in forest legality and other decision-making processes (2.1); all aspects of engagement with national REDD+ processes (3.1, 3.2 and 3.3) and the use of various media aimed at influencing debates and governance for social justice (4.3).

By contrast, the FGLG project had performed less well against indicators for actions aimed at bringing greater areas of forest under sustainable management controlled by community institutions (1.5); initiatives for putting forest information into the public domain (2.4); and establishing synergy between adaptation and mitigation forestry (3.5). The report noted, however, that this apparent weaker performance was largely due to the country FGLG teams' lack of specific engagement in these areas rather than actions proving ineffective. Indeed, as shown by the earlier country sections, FGLG teams have tended to identify areas for intervention based on their own knowledge and interest, with the result that other areas may have been given less attention.

Country impacts: highlights

Extensive detail on national achievements and impact in the *Social Justice in Forestry* project is provided in the country sections above, but among the examples of governance impacts briefly highlighted by the evaluation – and with potentially beneficial reverberations for people – were:

- **India:** the project contributed to the formulation and subsequent rules and guidelines for the Forest Rights Act. This has established the legal rights for forest dependent and tribal people to utilise local forest resources and will increasingly have an important impact on social justice.
- **Indonesia:** the project strengthened the country's REDD+ process and programme by linking the national programme to the sub-national (actual implementation) level and by increasing transparency, stakeholder participation in the REDD+ process. As a result, REDD+ is now much more likely to be implemented in a way that contributes to social justice and local needs.
- **Malawi:** the project provided evidence to influence policy discussions and government actions on the charcoal trade. This led to an understanding of the legitimacy of the charcoal trade and its importance for local communities. When translated into supportive programmes and regulations, this will enable local people to establish charcoal enterprises from sustainably managed forests for the first time thus contributing to their livelihoods.
- **Mozambique:** the project raised civil society and media awareness on the illegal timber trade that was leading to over-exploitation of forests and led to action by government to combat corruption and engage in discussions with Chinese logging companies and timber traders for the first time. This has also had impacts for the local people who depend on these forest resources.
- **South Africa:** the project initiated a shift in the government's approach to working with outside stakeholders by organising and supporting small forest growers to lobby for a more favourable institutional and regulatory environment that will stimulate small-scale forest enterprises. This has been strengthened by the possibility of a government-sponsored enterprise support programme.

Setting benchmarks for change to maximise strategic focus and targeting

In assessing impact, however, one of the main problems faced, according to the evaluation report, was the alleged failure of the project to determine well-defined outcomes and specific outcome indicators geared to each country, relying instead on use of general indicators across the board. Though acknowledging the difficulty of assembling and managing such a high level of detail in a complex ten-country initiative, the report suggested that the lack of clear benchmarks had also been due to gaps in information-gathering and situation analysis.

Critically noted was the fact that insufficient efforts had been made to hold systematic assessments of forest governance prior to the start of the project to pinpoint weaknesses and opportunities. Better preliminary analysis of the existing governance situation in each country, the report suggested, followed by agreement within and among FGLG teams on strategies, targeting of actions and identifying specific tactics would have strengthened both the identification and maximisation of potential impact.

Thus, while one of the strengths of FGLG teams' operation across the focus countries had been their flexibility and responsiveness to policy opportunities as they arose, questions were begged as to whether the most strategic course of action had always been adopted in each case, with variations across countries in terms of the extent to which they had taken a more focused and targeted approach probably better geared to achieving impact. A greater balance was needed. In project management terms, noted the report, weaknesses in this area had similarly led to variations in the content and approach of annual project planning and reporting and monitoring and evaluation.

Impact evidence, risk assessment and gender

Furthermore, sustaining situation analysis and organising a greater number of impact studies during project implementation would have enabled risks and emerging challenges to be better assessed. Studies on charcoal in Malawi and illegal logging in Tanzania, for example, had been effective in providing empirical data and stimulating public interest and action, but there was a lack of evidence on what governance changes had meant or would mean for communities, given the typical gap between policy and practice. In Cameroon, the achievement of more effective controls on commercial logging had been matched by an apparent increase in less-regulated and potentially more damaging 'small licences'. Commissioning more impact studies, along with better assessment of the status of forest governance, featured strongly in the evaluation's recommendations for future work.

Gender considerations would not appear overall to have been an explicit focus in project planning and targeting, despite individual instances of gender-focused interventions and a positive gender balance existing across FGLG teams.

Adding significant international value – aligning ambition and capacity to achieve impact?

In relation to output 4, the evaluation found that the project's significant activity such as international learning events, the facilitation of country and regional exchanges, the creation of specific learning platforms as well as the production of tools and materials had often enabled effective engagement with international networks, policy learning and influencing processes on forest governance such as REDD+ and FLEGT. Such initiatives and benefits would not have existed without the FGLG project.

Nevertheless, the report, while valuing the strong benefits of such a collaborative approach for FGLG capacity-building and the overall FGLG initiative's profile and thematic projection, judged that impact at this level – promoting findings and learning to embed recognition and integration of a social justice focus in forest governance – was less clear than that achieved by FGLG teams in the ten focus countries. This was partly because of the wide diversity of processes potentially to be targeted, each with its own characteristics and dynamics requiring more extensive engagement than the FGLG initiative globally could have feasibly undertaken. The evaluation suggested it was probably over-ambitious for a relative small initiative such as *Social Justice in Forestry* to achieve significant impact of its own in such an international environment.

Drawing the lessons for the China-Africa platform as a milestone achievement

The evaluation went on to draw out the implications of this dilemma for the recently launched China-African Forest Governance Learning Platform, suggesting that IIED should consider carefully how to find a strategically appropriate niche on the China-Africa trade and investment relationship, with the social justice in forestry perspective providing the most potential for doing so. The report highlighted the emergence and establishment of the China-Africa FGLP as a milestone achievement in international FGLG work, stating that this initiative, still at too early a stage for impact to be assessed (notwithstanding signs of early progress in Mozambique), represented a solid foundation on which to build in the future, if given appropriate support.

Validity, achievements and constraints of the FGLG approach

In looking at project effectiveness, the evaluation concluded that the learning group approach had been confirmed as a valid and innovative methodology with a proven record of achievement. It found that the informality and autonomy of FGLG teams' operation, with teamwork based on individual rather than institutional membership, had been effective in influencing policy and practice as members were recognised for their expert knowledge and professional expertise rather than for any pre-established policy positions they might hold. As a result they were better able to nurture open debate and trust among stakeholders and also exploit, to the considerable advantage of the FGLG teams, the value of their wider policy contacts and links with the networks.

At the same time, the evaluation observed that such strengths also entailed implicit weaknesses. An important constraint noted was that high external demand for FGLG members' engagement

outside the group, along with their inevitable professional mobility because of their considerable expertise, had often imposed limits on the immediate time they could devote to the group and on their sustained participation and commitment. The fact that FGLG members would move to take up influential responsibilities elsewhere was of course a positive outcome of the project's work, asserted the evaluation, but the risk was that changes in the composition of the groups threatened to undermine the retention and future deployment of effective approaches.

Recognition, innovation and lessons-promotion challenges

Though the need for stronger institutionalisation related to lessons and approaches rather than FGLG teams as 'organisations', the evaluation raised the question of whether more could have been done to boost team cohesion and identity as well as the public profile and stakeholder understanding of the groups' actual work. The fact that groups operated as loose networks of collaborators rather than as institutions frequently meant that their work tended to be associated with particular individuals and organisations rather than the FGLG teams themselves. Internationally, by contrast, a fair degree of recognition of FGLG work had been achieved, but detailed understanding of its actual substance had been weaker, according to stakeholder interviews.

As it was often unclear what would happen with the body of practice generated by FGLG work, the evaluation concluded that more effort could have been made and needed to be invested to institutionalise experiences, lessons and good practices. Among the tools suggested were stronger documentation, the establishment and use of websites and strategic exploitation of initiatives such as Indonesia's 'alumni' system, which lent itself well to the potential of social networking.

While praising the continued value of the FGLG approach, the evaluation found that in comparison with the earlier phase of work in 2005-09, the adoption of new creative methods and actions in the *Social Justice in Forestry* project had not been as strong. For example, the full potential of social media to facilitate communication and coordination within and between FGLG teams had not been exploited, although there were many instances of on-line exchange producing impressive results such as the Malawi FGLG being inspired by the work of its counterpart in Uganda to tackle corruption in forest concession processes.

Social networking and media

Better use of information, communication technologies and social media was therefore a key recommendation, to complement and sometimes replace workshops and workshop reports as a project tactic. Workshops had been very effective and involved the benefits of in-person discussion, but this was time- and resource-intensive – particularly at an international level, where participants tended to be existing leading experts and where effective follow-up action was not always ensured to sustain the value of ideas generated during the rich discussions held. Country participation in international learning events would appear to have involved benefits for country capacity development rather than direct contributions to country level governance outcomes. Universally valued in project self-assessments was the effectiveness of IIED support for project implementation and coordination.

The evaluation recommended in turn – noting examples of influential media attention surrounding illegal logging in Tanzania and Mozambique – the need to fully exploit the value of engaging the wider mass reach media as a channel for public awareness and pressure on policymakers. This would help ensure that FGLG and stakeholder debate and action stemming from research studies and findings would be extended from workshops to the public arena where it matters most.

Sustainability and systematisation

In assessing the overall sustainability of *Social Justice in Forestry*, the evaluation report concluded that most of the country FGLG teams established would persist in one form or another after the end of the project and that the FGLG approach would continue to operate – a view also expressed by all FGLG teams consulted. At the same time, how structured the FGLG teams' operation and teamwork would prove to be in the future remained to be seen, with the evaluation scoring sustainability as moderate.

The evaluation identified the social capital accumulated during the project as a strength. An advantage of the FGLG teams was that they did not have expensive infrastructure and salaries to maintain, because of the fluidity and informality of FGLG membership, but they would nevertheless require funds to cover essential initiative costs such as travel, workshops, meetings, publications and media work. The prospects for fundraising, including at a country or regional level, to support such activities varied across countries and regions. Meanwhile, the positive start of the China-Africa initiative and likely external interest in its development and consolidation suggested favourable circumstances for finding funds and ensuring its future sustainability.

In terms of global support for sustaining current achievements and impact as well as future FGLG initiatives and approaches, a key recommendation of the evaluation was that the project should immediately establish a central archive and online repository providing easy access to all materials generated during the project. Vitally recommended too was an effort to capture and consolidate evidence of what FGLG approaches work, and of why and how they work, under different governance settings.

Such a systematisation of experiences would not only help strengthen FGLG teams' future development of theories of change. It would also be aimed at external audiences keen to adopt effective approaches on forest governance, making the most of the considerable potential for exploring and promoting FGLG linkages with wider donor-supported initiatives in the forest governance field.

It would appear that stronger advocacy may be required to support the emergence of such a wider critical mass of engagement on social justice in forestry. Despite evidence that both Brussels and EC delegations overseas had shown limited engagement with the FGLG initiative during the course of its implementation, the evaluation praised the EC for its courage and forward-looking approach in deciding to support *Social Justice in Forestry*.