



Netherlands Commission for
Environmental Assessment

Gwen van Boven

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Building Capacity for EIA in Central Africa

A Regional Approach through
National Associations for EIA



On behalf

- SEACA: Secretariat for Environmental Assessment in Central Africa
- Dieudonné BITONDO
 - Executive Secretary, SEACA



A Short History

- 1998: - EA professionals in Central Africa
organise themselves in national
associations under SEACA umbrella
- 2005: - SEACA develops programmes for
regional support & capacity
development
- 2007: - DGIS decides to fund programmes
with NCEA as technical partner &
programme manager
- 2008: - start programmes

- EIA mapping in eight countries:
 - assessment of current system – theory and practice
 - analysis of gaps & priority setting of needs
- Good awareness raising tool!
- Results basis for regional programme

Conclusions of EIA Mappir (1)

- EIA systems are underdeveloped & institutional capacity within the administrations to change this is limited
- It would be more effective to support government agencies in charge of EIA indirectly, through national EIA Associations

Working through associations would require two programmes:

- 1) To support the functioning of the national EIA associations
- 2) To strengthen EA systems and practice in the region: capacity development

General objective Support Programme

Aims to ensure **proper and sustained functioning** of the EIA Associations so that they are able to contribute effectively to the development and strengthening of EA in their country



General objective Capacity Development Programme

- To strengthen and activate the national EA associations and its regional secretariat SEACA so that they are able to:
 - **Support government** agencies in charge of EA
 - **Critically follow** the consideration of environment in decision making

The associations have:

- become fully functional associations of EA professionals demonstrating:
 - *active, representative membership (critical mass)*
 - *(improved structures for) increased financial autonomy*
- increased their level of knowledge and expertise on EA and have become:
 - *Recognised, critical partners for governments*
 - *Centres of expertise and debate on EA*
 - *Contributors to an improved context for EA systems through regional harmonisation*

Practical set up of programmes

- National Associations and SEACA formulated a 5-year action plan
 - *on which they base annual work plans*
- Accompanied by a plan how to become self-sustaining after the 5 years of the programme



Programme coordination

- SEACA coordinates the work
- NCEA as technical partner
- NCEA manages budget & programmes on behalf of donor DGIS
- NCEA and National Associations have signed contracts
 - Detailing obligations of all parties and provisions of the programmes



The Support Programme provides...

- Seed funding only!!
- a one time investment budget of € 12.500 / € 15.000
 - *Office furnishing & equipment*
- an annual core funding of € 8.500 / €25.000
 - *Office rent, telephone, internet, permanent office staff*
 - *SEACA: organisation annual regional conference and participation CLEEA/IAIA meetings*
 - *Upon justification of expenses of preceding year only!*



(Mechanism for) capacity development activities

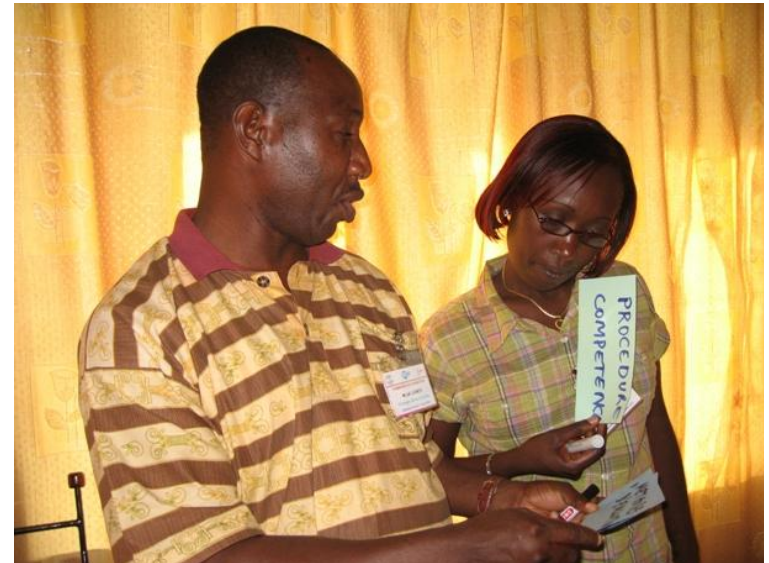
Nationally

- Funding available for individual activities
- Each association can apply for an activity they consider important for their country
- Proposals & finances to be approved by SEACA and NCEA
- *Funding for joint activities with administrations also available*

(Mechanism for) capacity development activities

Regionally:

- Yearly international seminar
 - with associations and administrations present
- Training of Trainers
- Regional studies/projects (through SEACA)
- Finances:
 - SEACA annual budget,
 - SEACA membership fee of € 850 per year,
 - additional programme funding



Implementation



Hick ups at the start

- Delayed signing of contracts
- Limited experience within associations caused further delays
 - on setting up/managing an association
 - on financial management
 - on event management
 - on lobbying/outreach
- Initially, limited visibility of associations due to initial lack of technical activity

Experiences so far – countries

- Offices set up, permanent staff functional
- (Active) membership grows
- Some external funding is secured, but limited
- Training of Trainers conducted
- Seminars, training sessions organised



- Contributions to debate, projects: more expertise available

*and: increased
visibility of associations*

- SEACA offices operational
 - *with staff and trainees*
- Yearly regional seminars increasingly draw international attention
- Strategic partnerships show establishment of SEACA as regional knowledge centre for EA
 - *with COMIFAC, CEEAC, IUCN*



- Programmes focus now on:
 - Financial sustainability of the associations
 - Consolidation & strengthening of skills and knowledge on EIA in the countries
 - *Coaching to be continued!*
 - Further support to EA systems in countries through joint projects with governments
 - *esp legal framework and information aspects*
 - Regional harmonisation of EIA & Forestry guidelines (with COMIFAC)
 - Repetition of EIA mapping for learning & monitoring & evaluation purposes

Suggestions for interested regions

- Base approach on thorough needs analysis
- Ensure initiative from region (demand-driven)
- Indirect support to administrations: a good alternative to consider
- Leadership crucial: a true ambassador is needed to initiate & execute a regional programme
- Ensure strong partnerships to sustain (technical) quality of the programme

Thank

