**Annex 5. Participatory mapping exercise guidance.**

**Purpose:**

A useful way of deciding the proposed boundary of the CF and to do a stakeholder analysis before entering the forest. The participatory map is used as a method to enable the target community to identify the proposed CF forest boundary, land uses around it, uses and users. This helps to initiate a stakeholder analysis of the forest, the map can then be used as a visual basis to discuss and negotiate with neighbouring communities, traditional authorities etc. what would be an agreed boundary for a Community Forest according to the CF site selection criteria (See Text Box that follows).

**Steps:**

1. Bring together the headman with key forest users to conduct the exercise.
2. Identify a suitable place to draw the map. This is ideally on a flip chart using markers, but can also be done on a note book, or on the ground using local materials – although if this is the case the final map should be sketched on a note book or a photograph taken of it.
3. Ask the participants to draw all the key landscape features in the broader area that the proposed community forest is in. Ask them to identify all physical features in the area e.g. road, settlements, hills, rivers, land uses as well as any other physical features.
4. Present and discuss the criteria for the CF site selection (See text box that follows). Ask the target community to identify a proposed site based on the criteria. Explain to them that this will then have to be verified with neighbouring communities and traditional authorities as well as any other relevant party that has an interest or a claim over the site.
5. Once the boundary has been drawn ask for other relevant information, for example who are the customary rights holders of land around the boundary of the forest, who are the forest users and what are the main forest uses. Also ask about any other claimants over the forest area for example is it a Game Management Area, identify potential conflicts and discuss the causes of the conflicts etc. This all helps identify other stakeholders who should be engaged in reviewing the sketch map and in the subsequent forest boundary negotiation, demarcation and mapping in the forest itself.
6. Once the map is sketched use the map as a basis of discussion with other stakeholders, neighbouring communities etc. Identify on the map uncontested and contested areas.
7. Representatives from different stakeholders can then be brought together to negotiate on a final site for the CF on the sketch map. Sometimes this requires giving and taking, for example neighbouring communities who also have claims over the forest agreeing to share forest management and join the CF establishment process or finding a compromise boundary.

|  |
| --- |
| **Guiding checklist for identification of a suitable site for a community forest (only a guide, discretion is encouraged):*** **Uncontested.** The requesting community or communities have strong and uncontested customary claims over the forest, backed by traditional authorities, with no unresolvable conflicts and with no incompatible interests or claims over the area from other entities. Note that access rights for neighbouring communities can continue if this is mutually agreed and in line with community forestry principles.
* **Commitment.** The requesting community in the long term is committed to keep the forest rather than convert to **permanent** agriculture and is willing to protect, manage and use it sustainably.
* **Without settlements.** Ideally there are no settlements inside the forest. If there are a few settlements inside the forest these settlers must voluntarily agree to move or not expand permanent clearing of the forest.
* **Good condition.** Ideally where a substantive proportion of the forest is in good condition so that communities can get benefits relatively quickly. The investment/return in maintaining a good condition forest is much more favourable than the cost of rehabilitating a degraded forest. So good condition forest should be prioritised.
* **Appropriate size.** The area is not too small to be viable in terms of generating sufficient benefits or too big for the community to handle control and management.
* **Accessibility.** Both for ease of control/management and for extraction and selling of products there must be a consideration for accessibility of the forest to the community.
* **Boundary considerations.** Ideally where the boundaries are clear (not essential, but helpful), e.g. existing physical features, stream beds, paths, hills etc.
* **Do no harm.** Community forestry is an inclusive process designed to support especially vulnerable members of communities. It is important that community forestry establishment will not cause involuntary displacement or significant harm to livelihoods to forest area residents or users.
 |

**Figure:** Example of what a sketch map may look like. Here the main physical features, uses, users, neighbouring land uses and conflicts identified (with a lightning bolt on this occasion).