



The World Bank Group's Common Property Resource Management Network

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What is *CPRNet*?

The World Bank Group's Common Property Resource Management Network (*CPRNet*) is an international network that links World Bank staff and outside practitioners and experts interested in issues related to the management of common property resources (CPRs). *CPRNet* was established in 1995.

Background

CPRs, as found both in rural and urban areas, includes, among others, community forests, pastures, uncultivated waste areas, sacred groves, coastal zones, river basins, and wet-lands. Though faced with neglect and degradation, these types of resources continue to be important parts of community resources in developing countries.

CPRNet is concerned with any resource management regime that requires collaborative action, as found in, for example, irrigation, watersheds, pastures and community forests.

CPRs play a crucial role in: (i) Reducing rural poverty and inequality; (ii) Maintaining local-level biodiversity and micro-level environmental stability; (iii) Enhancing agricultural productivity and diversity; and (iv) Promoting collective sharing and group action. These issues constitute key areas of concern for the World Bank. However, in spite of this, CPRs continue to be largely ignored in both the World Bank's policy and operational work.

Furthermore, several state policies and programs, including the ones supported by World Bank projects, have often gone against a focus on CPRs, and thus neglected a vital area for development intervention.

Rationale for *CPRNet*

Guided by the above considerations, as well as the need for harnessing the potential of CPRs as an important component of development strategies in its own right, *CPRNet* aims to:

1. Enhance the awareness about CPRs and their importance within the World Bank,
2. Function as a clearinghouse for information and data on CPRs as they pertain to World Bank operations,
3. Link World Bank staff that need specific property rights-related (incl. CPRs) operational input with outside practitioners and experts,
4. Liaison between outside professional organizations and NGOs interested in working on policy-related property rights issues (incl. CPRs) with World Bank management, and
5. Define and facilitate pro-active policies and operational work aimed at CPRs.

Areas of Focus and Issues

A list of areas within the World Bank with a clear CPRF angle or connection, and the specific nature of these issues (including concerns, interests and requirements), would include the following (see Table 1):

Table 1. CPRs in the World Bank Group: Areas and Issues

Areas	Issues
Agriculture, Fisheries, Food security, Forestry, Rangeland mgmt., Water	Agricultural intensification, Agroforestry, CPR-PPR complementarities (CPRs as support lands for croplands), Crop-livestock complementarities, Diversified agriculture, Integrated coastal zone mgmt., Irrigation, Rangeland mgmt., Resource-centered research and development, River basin mgmt., Water resources mgmt., Watershed mgmt., etc.
Biodiversity, Environment	Annual-perennial linkages and biomass stability, Biodiversity outside protected areas, Biophysical rehabilitation of degraded/waste lands, Deforestation and overgrazing, Economic benefits of CPRs, Environmental law, Future of marginal lands, Medical anthropology, Micro-environment issues and land degradation, Micro watershed (hydrology) stability, Natural resource mgmt., Participatory approaches, Public forests and parks, etc.
Poverty and policy Work	Gender, Indigenous peoples, Land intensification programs, Land policies, Land titling, Open access resources and options for rural poor, Resettlement, Resource access and autonomy issues, Tenure security, etc.
Social policy and programs	Beneficiary assessment and public consultation, Civil society and grassroots level initiatives and group action, Community-based development, Community-based natural resource mgmt., Conflict management, Gender, Indigenous peoples, Indigenous resource use systems and their relevance, Intellectual property rights, Internal equity and access, Local and traditional institutions, Local level initiatives on resource upgrading and regulation, Participatory approaches, Resettlement, Social assessment, Traditional knowledge, User groups and NGOs, etc.

Scope and Content

CPRNet aims to be a community of practice for its members, and promotes exchange of information on CPR management, including the relation between CPR regimes and other property rights regimes. *CPRNet* is located within a more general context consisting of a broad, interdisciplinary and intersectoral approach to natural resource management that is emerging within the World Bank. This context emphasizes, among other things, community-based management of sustainable natural resources, institutional reform, legal codification of relevant local institutions, and collaborative approaches – including partnerships – involving a wide range of stakeholders, in pursuing these goals.

It follows that a major emphasis is placed on awareness-raising of World Bank staff and others, followed by supporting them in working with CPRs, both at the policy level and at the operational level. Furthermore, *CPRNet* promotes World Bank policy dialogues and investment operations aimed at supporting and facilitating community-based natural resource management (CBNRM).

The primary way in which this is done is through the *CPRNet* mailing list. Of particular importance is the emphasis given to such exchange of information between outside practitioners and experts on the one hand and World Bank staff on the other hand, whether they are members of *CPRNet* or not. The type of information circulated include (but are not necessarily restricted to) the following:

1. Announcements of seminars, conferences, presentations, or meetings relevant to CPRs,
2. Relevant findings and recommendations reached at such meetings,
3. Information available in periodicals and technical publications to which network members subscribe,
4. Pertinent information posted on relevant Internet mailing lists,
5. Interesting lessons of experience from particular countries, regions and projects,
6. Any other issues that may be of Bank-wide interest, and,
7. Cries for help or assistance in technical or managerial tasks.

Activities

A major current activity, in addition to the above, is a seminar series sponsored by *CPRNet*, called "Common Property Resource Management and the World Bank." Invited speakers, both World Bank staff and others, present and discuss their work on CPR issues. The topics covered range widely in terms of geographic location, type of property resource, type of intervention, and lessons learned.

Regarding future activities, *CPRNet* aims to contribute to organizing training both for World Bank staff and for others, as well as in disseminating best case practices.

Some Preliminary Conclusions

The results so far with *CPRNet* can be summed up as follows: (i) The CPR agenda is expanding, both inside the World Bank Group and in partnership with outside organizations; (ii) New critical analysis is coming forth; and, (iii) CPRs have an obvious potential in the context of the World Bank's emphasis on poverty reduction, specifically in regard to risk reduction and poverty-equity-livelihood strategies.

Membership

The members are both World Bank staff and others working on a range of issues relating to, or incorporating, a CPR focus. That this World Bank network is open to the outside is quite deliberate, and qualified outside members are actively pursued. The World Bank staff members work in all the World Bank's Regions and Sectors, as well as in all the Networks and Families. The outside members are constituted by people with a broad range of training, backgrounds and approaches to CPR management, and they represent NGOs, civil society more generally, the private sector, the public sector, research and training. *CPRNet* has over 200 members, among them both individual and institutional members.

List Management

Requests to be added to, or removed from, *CPRNet* should be directed at the Coordinator.

Access

World Bank Staff Members: The *CPRNet* mailing list can be accessed by typing the following at the "TO:" prompt in the Message Header (capitalization is not necessary): <cprnet - all>.

Outside Members: Based on a received *CPRNet* mail, use the "answer" or "reply" function (depending on the mail software) and create a personal distribution list. As an alternative, send your communications to the Coordinator (see below) and ask that they be posted to the *CPRNet* list (an improved listserv terminology will hopefully soon be available).

Web-Based Information

Information about *CPRNet* is available on the web site of the World Bank's Social Development Family at: <http://essd.worldbank.org/essd/sdv/sdvhome.nsf/CPRNETView?OpenView>. The *CPRNet* site can also be accessed from the web pages of the World Bank's Rural Family.

Information about *CPRNet* is available also on the web site of the International Association for the Study of Common Property (IASCP) at <<http://www.iascp.org/>>.

Management

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