



Chapter 2

Framework and Methodologies

S.A. Long

Introduction

This chapter provides an understanding of the conceptual and methodological foundations of WILD research. It begins with a discussion of the notion of livelihoods and an understanding of the key components of a livelihoods perspective. The chapter then looks at the methodologies employed by the project. The discussion aims to give a broader understanding of the foundations and empirical focus that underpinned the implementation of WILD research.

Some assumptions

A livelihoods perspective is fundamentally people centred. It is not built on any assumptions about what rural people *need* to improve their lives, rather its starting point is to build on what people *have* in terms of assets and capabilities. It does not, for example, begin with wildlife, tourism or enterprise development. A livelihoods perspective assumes that to identify ways in which to better support people's livelihood security, it is imperative to build on an understanding of the existing activities and strategies that people are engaged with to meet their expected or desired livelihood outcomes (raising cash, providing food and meeting educational and health needs). Building on this foundation it is then necessary to identify which resources are important in the pursuit of various strategies and activities; to identify what constraints there are to using resources optimally; to identify what factors increase people's risks and insecurity and what factors make people vulnerable; and to identify the factors beyond the immediate control of people themselves (for example, policies, institutional arrangements, intervention strategies and various legislation) that have an impact on people's own ability to achieve livelihood security. In other words, to start with what people do and with what they have. This then

becomes the entry point to address the comparative advantage of supporting one or another strategy, activity or resource.

It is important to recognise that the fundamental starting point from a livelihoods perspective is different from the fundamental point of departure for CBNRM and the conservancy programme. CBNRM is essentially a conservation programme that seeks to provide incentives for sustainable management of common pool natural resources. The vision for CBNRM over the long term aims to contribute to rural development and support livelihood diversification through the promotion of wildlife and tourism as a compliment to other land-use strategies (livestock and cropping for example). In this respect the basic assumption of the CBNRM programme is that wildlife and tourism are desirable and offer the best comparative advantage for marginal lands in the long term.¹ The focus is on the management of common pool resources (particularly wildlife) and therefore the entry point for CBNRM is not concerned directly with individual or household livelihoods. In contrast a livelihoods perspective was originally derived from a range of research on poverty, that was very much concerned with individual farm and household livelihoods. The differences between the two relate essentially to focus and scale.

Livelihoods builds on farming systems research, a wide range of participatory research, agro-ecological systems analysis, the experiences and principles of integrated rural development, entitlements theory and actor-oriented approaches (see Scoones 1998). The evolution of a sustainable livelihoods framework within the context of development and research stemmed from the recognition that the 'old style' sector-based technology transfer models of development (particularly in the agricultural sector) had not achieved their objectives.

¹ Chapter 1 provides evidence of the incomes earned at an aggregate level from tourism and wildlife utilisation. This provides a strong argument in favour of wildlife and tourism as land uses.



In contrast to CBNRM a livelihoods perspective begins without any preconceptions about what activities, strategies and options may offer the best comparative advantage. It does, however, have its own basic internal assumptions. It assumes, for example, that people are knowledgeable and capable and are therefore able to address their problems and derive solutions in ways that are meaningful in their own contexts (they may not be able to address solutions entirely due to a variety of constraints, but the assumption is that they are capable of identifying problems and finding solutions). A livelihoods perspective also assumes that people (particularly those who live in risk-prone environments) face uncertainty and may be vulnerable to erratic rainfall, or drought, to pressures from living with dangerous wildlife or pests, to market uncertainty, to disabling policy and legislative environments and to health risks. It assumes that there are a multiplicity of factors associated with achieving livelihood security and that addressing policy, institutional development and governance is as important to improving livelihoods as is addressing specific production or income strategies or dealing with vulnerability and risk. It assumes that people have a concern for the future and for their children's livelihood security – that people are concerned with issues of sustainability. A livelihoods perspective is by definition holistic.

A Livelihoods Framework

In practice, people are involved in a complex mixture of decisions and activities focused on acquiring, utilising and managing resources (material and social) and maintaining relationships (institutional and personal, among others). The combination of these activities in the context of uncertainty (vulnerability) and the outcomes that are achieved are

livelihoods. Livelihoods become sustainable when they can deal with vulnerability, and maintain or enhance capabilities and assets in the present and for the future without undermining the natural resource base.

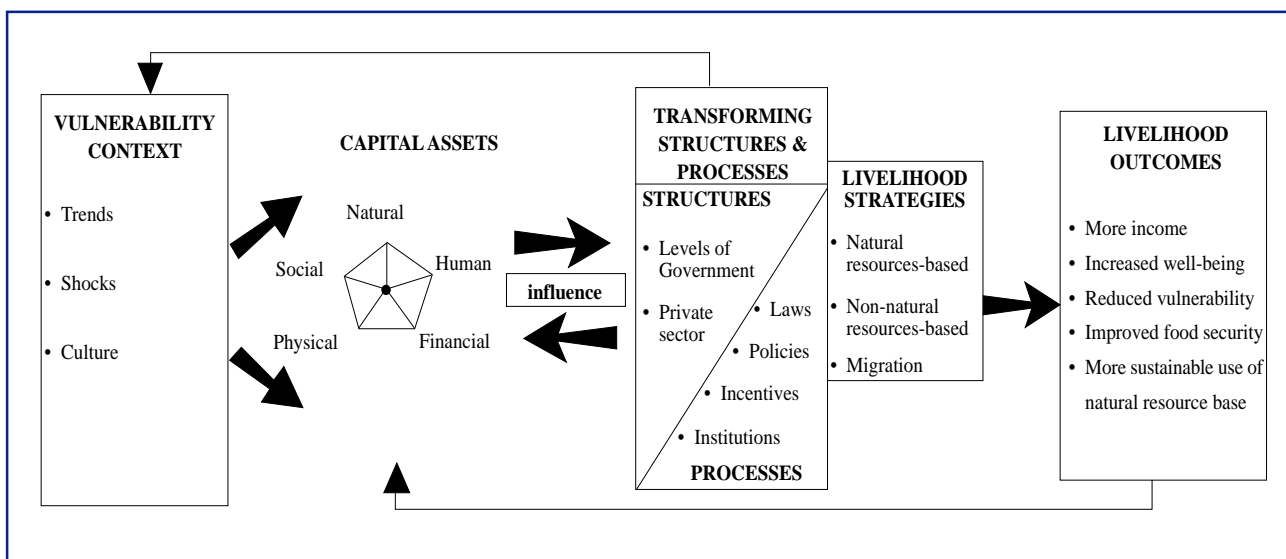
Understanding people's livelihoods in specific rural contexts can be facilitated through the use of a sustainable livelihoods approach. In summary, this approach aims to address (among others) the following basic questions:

1. *What do people have* (their assets – natural, physical, human, social and financial)?
2. *What do people do* to meet their needs (material, social, financial)? This and related questions are concerned with people's livelihood strategies and outcomes.
3. *What internal and external factors* (local and wider political, institutional and administrative structures) *shape livelihoods*?
4. *What makes people vulnerable* (natural factors and policy and institutions)?
5. *What opportunities do people have?*

(Long *et al.* 2001)

Addressing these questions provides a basis on which to analyse people's livelihoods and identify entry points for project planning, intervention or applied research. In the context of WILD it provides a useful summary for understanding the key factors that constitute livelihoods. The key components of a livelihoods framework (see Figure 3) include; 'capitals' or assets, the vulnerability context, the policies, institutions and processes (or external factors) that affect (positively and negatively) people's livelihood strategies and finally their livelihood outcomes.

Figure 3: Livelihoods framework



Source: DFID 1999



The **assets** can be physical, natural, social, financial, and human (and sometimes political). Physical capital relates to the infrastructure that is available in a given locale. Natural capital is the natural resource base upon which many people's livelihoods are dependent. Social capital relates to the range of social networks and associational links (both formal or institutional and informal) that people have access to. Financial capital is the money and cash investments that are available. Human capital relates to existing capacity, in terms of educational attainments, the knowledge base and health status of people.

The **vulnerability** contexts refer to various 'shocks and stresses' that people may experience. The vagaries of climate, health constraints (for example, HIV/AIDS and malaria), and the presence of crop pests and predators (large and small) are obvious examples, but vulnerability may also be the result of economic hardship brought about by macro economic policy, or other institutional, legislative or policy changes. In some cases, it may also be associated with civil unrest, outright violent conflict (ethnic or religious) or various forms of political oppression.

Policies, institutions and processes (or rules of the game, referred to as structures and processes in Figure 3) refer to the local and external (national and international) organisational, institutional and administrative structures and arrangements that affect the ability of different individuals and groups to access the resources and opportunities they need to improve or simply continue practising their livelihoods. In short, the rules that circumscribe practice. Policy is an important component here. The various ways in which policy is interpreted and implemented affect livelihoods. For example, a new policy that aims to protect wildlife, may impact upon local people's traditional rights to continue customary practices associated with access. A livelihoods approach includes the analysis of the roles and function of local and external rules, regulations and policies, as well as institutions that structure these. Governance in the sense of how different actors and agents use rules, regulations and policies is an important consideration here.

Livelihood **strategies** are what people do in terms of production and consumption, in mediating social and institutional relationships and in the activities that they engage with to meet their livelihood needs and expectations.

Outcomes are what are achieved through the various activities associated with production and consumption.

Each of the components of the framework can be viewed as livelihood indicators. All of which are subject to change.

Through the use of participatory methodology, each indicator can be given a local standard or equivalent. To this extent the framework can be used as a monitoring tool (Turton *et al.* 2000, Pasteur 2001). It can be used to varying degrees of complexity, from a simple matrix of indicators against changes to a full-blown research agenda using an interdisciplinary approach. A livelihoods framework is a useful tool and can be used in a variety of ways (see Ashley and Carney 1999). In the context of WILD research it assisted in identifying the various ways in which the activities associated with CBNRM support 'fit' with existing livelihood priorities and practices.

The following section of this chapter looks in more detail at the methodologies that WILD employed, and addresses the various ways in which the project approached the components of a livelihoods framework.

Research Sites²

During the inception phase of WILD, the project team consulted widely with Windhoek-based CBNRM stakeholders to identify a wide range of issues relating to livelihoods and research needs. This was followed by field-level consultation in Caprivi and Kunene. This laid a foundation of understanding, such that the project team could address the key issues and priorities for research. Both field teams then engaged themselves with a process of regional-level familiarisation and stakeholder consultation. This led to identification of research sites and priority research issues.

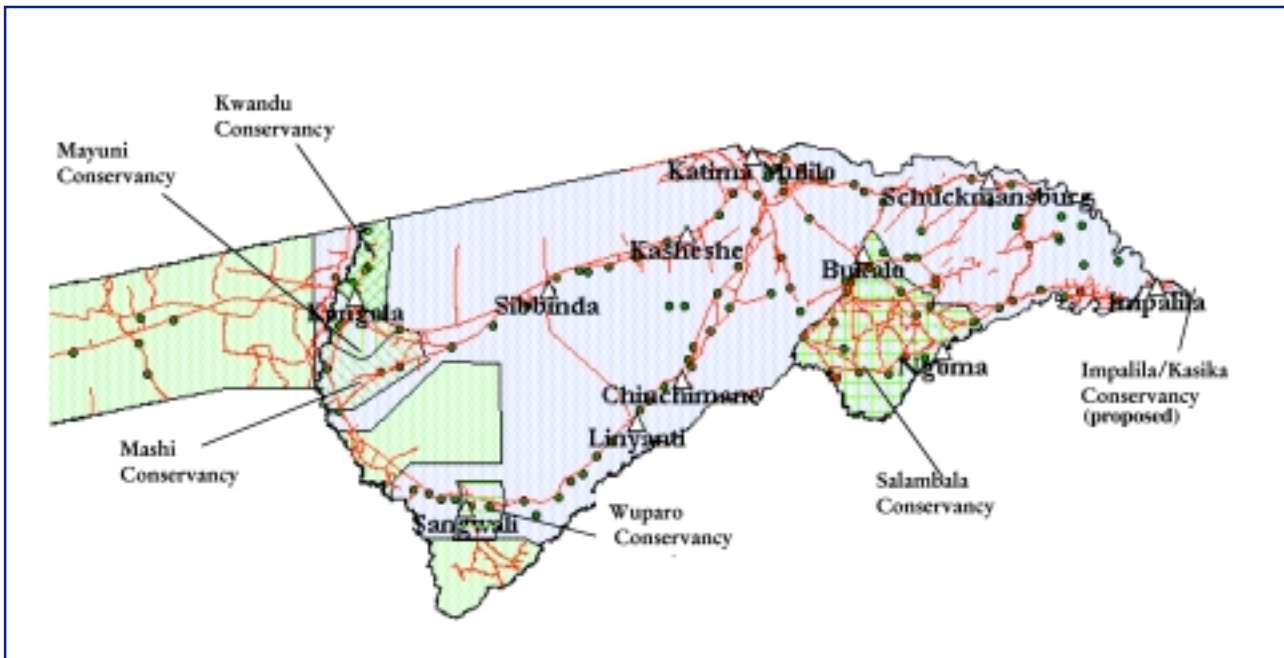
Research sites in each of the north-west (Kunene) and north-east (Caprivi) regions were selected for intensive research. These two regions provided an ideal opportunity to explore the role and implications of wildlife for livelihood diversification since they had healthy wildlife populations, there was secondary information demonstrating that they had already been affected in various ways by tourism and resource management change, and there had previously been much effort to support CBNRM in these regions. What was also significant was that these two areas had (by the time of the project's inception) already a number of registered conservancies.

Sites for intensive collaborative research were identified by the project team through consultation with key stakeholders (including MET, NGOs, conservancy and community members). These consultations allowed the research teams to gain a better understanding of the key issues associated with the implementation of CBNRM/conservancies and any impacts at household level that were already known.

² Much of the following material is derived from Humphrey and Humphrey (2003). This work was commissioned by the project to bring together background materials relating to the research sites.



Figure 4: Caprivi conservancies and protected areas



Source: Namibia Nature Foundation (NNF) (note: Mashi is an emerging conservancy)

Research sites in the Caprivi Region

In the Caprivi Region, Salambala and Mayuni provided the sites for intensive research, but other work was carried out in Kwandu and Mashi Conservancy. Other limited research including interviews and workshops was conducted in other areas. These included the Impalila Island, and //Ngobaxa near Bangani in East and West Caprivi respectively. The location of Caprivi conservancies is illustrated in Figure 4.

Mayuni Conservancy

Location

Mayuni Conservancy is situated in the Linyanti constituency in western East Caprivi, north-east Namibia. It sits on the eastern bank of the Kwando River – one of Namibia's perennial rivers, flowing from south-central Angola into Botswana. Mayuni shares its boundaries with Kwandu Conservancy to the north, the Bwabwata National Park to the west, and with Mashi Conservancy to the east and south. The Bagani-Katima Mulilo main road forms the northern boundary. Choi is regarded as the area's main centre, but Kongola is the area's retail and administrative centre

Topographical and biophysical context

Mayuni is one of Namibia's smallest conservancies, covering an area of only 15,100 ha. The area is completely flat, consisting of woodlands (Kalahari and Riverine), grassland and floodplains. Mayuni receives a high rainfall of 550-

600mm, but this is often variable. A pipeline between Katima Mulilo and Kongola provides villages with water pumped from the Zambezi River. Residents also obtain water from the Kwando River, pits, boreholes and pans.

Social context

The area is densely populated – 1,741 people and 389 households; 11 people per km² – with a population made up of three ethnic groups: Mafwe (main tribe); Mbukushu; and Khwe (San). Subsistence agriculture is the dominant livelihood activity in Mayuni (mainly mahangu (pearl millet); sorghum; maize; pumpkins; beans; groundnuts and melons). Livestock consists mainly of cattle and goats. Local residents depend on food aid when drought occurs, as in 2002. There is some sale of crafts, and reed and thatched grass sale is an important source of income to many residents.

Conservancy history and current status

Once an area abundant in wildlife, war, uncontrolled hunting and poaching led to the decimation of all wildlife in the Caprivi. The appointment of Community Rangers and Community Resource Monitors since 1992 has been successful in contributing to the recovery of wildlife populations. In 1999, Mayuni was registered as a conservancy and currently has 443 members. The conservancy has been fully funded by NACSO for the last three years (a grant for N\$95,609.76 was awarded in 2002),