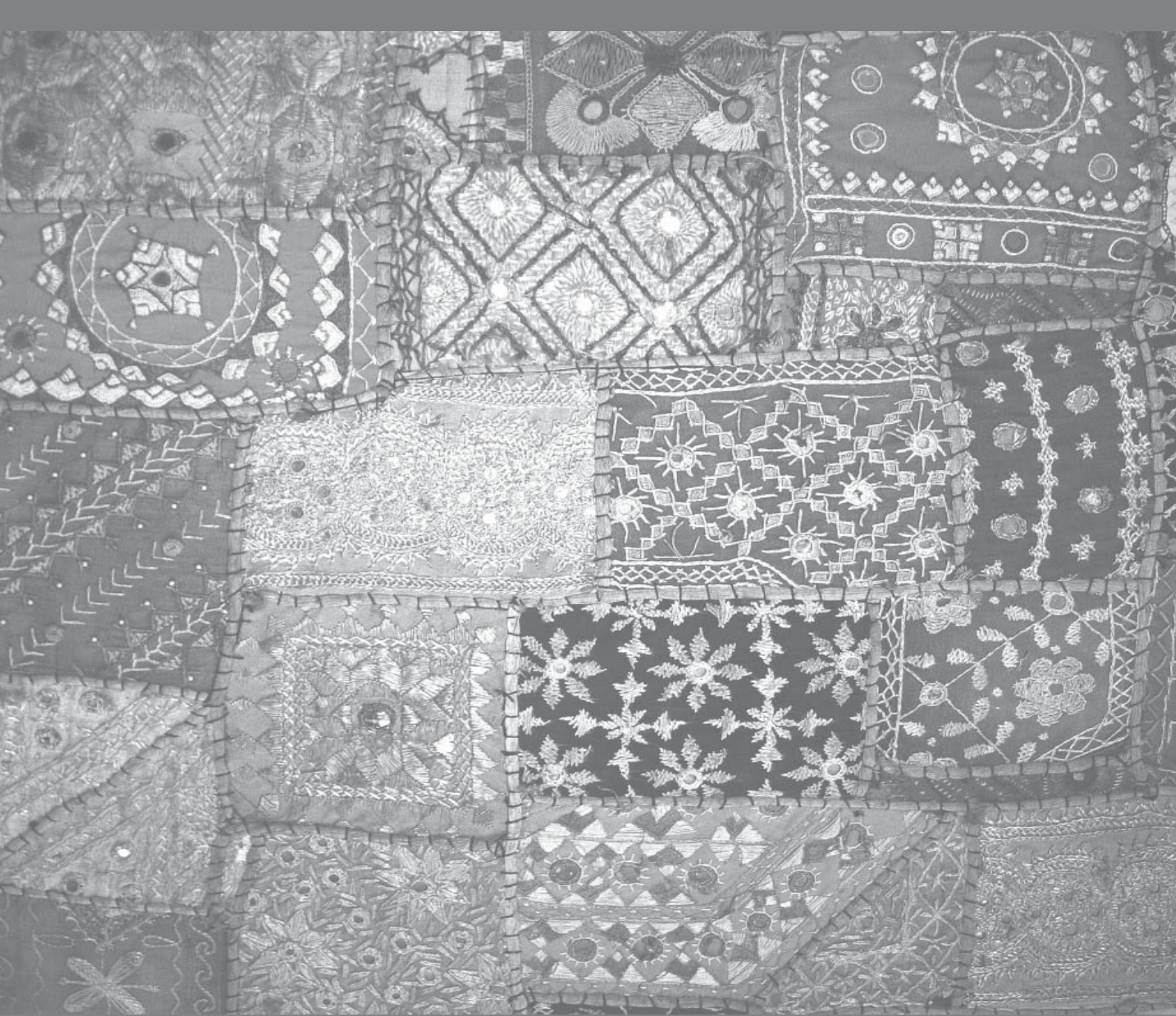


# Resources, Rights and Cooperation:

A Sourcebook on Property Rights and Collective Action for Sustainable Development



**CAPRI**

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### **Correct citation:**

CAPRI (CGIAR Systemwide Program on Collective Action and Property Rights). 2010. Resources, Rights and Cooperation: A Sourcebook on Property Rights and Collective Action for Sustainable Development. International Food Policy Research Institute: Washington, DC

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The CGIAR Systemwide Program on Collective Action and Property Rights (CAPRI) is an initiative of the 15 centers of the Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research (CGIAR). The initiative promotes comparative research on the role of property rights and collective action institutions in shaping the efficiency, sustainability, and equity of natural resource systems. CAPRI's Secretariat is hosted within the Environment and Production Technology Division (EPTD) of the International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI). CAPRI receives support from the Governments of Norway, Italy and the World Bank.

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# Acknowledgments

The secretariat of the CGIAR Systemwide Program on Collective Action and Property Rights (CAPRI), the producers of this sourcebook, gratefully acknowledges the contribution of many people who made this book possible. First and foremost, we thank our Executive Committee members for their endorsement, excitement, and support of the whole process, and Patti Kristjanson (ILRI), Pablo Eyzaguirre (Bioversity International), and Juan Camilo Cárdenas (Universidad de los Andes, Bogotá), who dedicated their time to carefully review and revise each article. Leticia Merino (Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México), Namita Mishra and Venkat Raj (Foundation for Ecological Security, Anand) also made valuable contributions as advisors for the sourcebook. We are especially grateful to Nancy Johnson (ILRI) for working closely with Helen Markelova to lead the process and helping us fulfill this long-standing wish.

Julian Gonsalves deserves special credit for advising us on our training approach, conceiving the sourcebook, and guiding us through the process of making the book and the posters happen. Julian and his team (in the Philippines, editors Claudia Svetlana Z. Cabrera, Bernadette Joven, Butch Pagcaliwagan, Lorna Calumpang, Josephine Bo, Lily Ann Lando, and Kim Escobin, desktop publishing specialist Noreen Carada and Charmaine Leynes and illustrator Roger Villar; and in Goa, India, editors Miguel Braganza, Kashinath G. Hiremath, and Rena Menezes Fernandes, illustrators Alexyz Fernandes, Prasanth A.V., Kedar Dhondu, and Justin Lobo, and desktop publishing specialists Supresh A. Kharbe and Clifford Fernandes) have done an immense job of turning dense research papers into user-friendly, readable materials suitable for a wide audience.

We sincerely thank Joy Caminade who took time during a busy season at work to ensure that the writeshop went smoothly and efficiently. The Goa team, led by Roque Fernandes, not only made the final writeshop possible, but also welcomed us to their beautiful state with open arms and created a great working atmosphere that allowed us to finalize the volume.

We would also like to express our gratitude to the governments of Norway and Italy and the World Bank for their continued support of CAPRI's work, including this volume and much of the underlying research. We are thankful to Betsy Pereira (IFPRI) for providing logistical support for the sourcebook process.

Finally, we are most grateful to the numerous authors whose works are included in this volume. We believe that their research will inspire and instruct the users of the sourcebook and will contribute to improvements in the livelihoods of many indirect beneficiaries of this book. We appreciate your intellectual contributions to the CAPRI program over the years, and hope that this sourcebook will enable your research findings to reach a broader audience.

**Ruth Meinzen-Dick**  
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# Preface

The Systemwide Program on Collective Action and Property Rights (CAPRI) is an inter-center initiative of the Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research (CGIAR) that was created in 1995. The CAPRI program promotes, facilitates, and conducts collaborative research on institutions and rights that relate to agriculture and natural resource management. The collaboration includes researchers and practitioners from CGIAR centers, national agricultural research institutions, universities, NGOs, and development organizations. All 15 CGIAR centers and over 400 institutions from developed and developing countries are currently members of CAPRI.

The overarching goal of CAPRI is to contribute to policies and practices that reduce rural poverty by analyzing and disseminating knowledge on the ways that collective action and property rights institutions influence the efficiency, equity, and sustainability of natural resource use and technological innovation in agriculture. Because natural resource management (NRM) issues are at the forefront of the development agenda, a thorough understanding of the factors that contribute to sustainable management is critical to the formulation of viable strategies to enhance resource productivity, both now and in the future.

CAPRI has compiled a substantial body of empirical research on the formation and effectiveness of voluntary, community-level organizations, collective action, and property rights institutions, including common property, in a range of developing regions and contexts. In addition to agriculture and NRM, CAPRI works on rural markets, risk and vulnerability, and climate change, as well as cross-cutting topics of poverty reduction and gender. Addressing these complex interactions between institutions, natural resources, and livelihoods requires an interdisciplinary approach that combines insights and methods from social and natural scientists as well as the rich body of knowledge held by rural people.

CAPRI has three main objectives: to contribute to research, to influence policy, and to build the capacity of national and international researchers to study collective action and property rights. The working papers series ([www.capri.cgiar.org](http://www.capri.cgiar.org)) contains over 100 papers based on original research and synthesis that have made a major contribution to improving understanding of the role of collective action and property rights in agriculture, NRM, and poverty reduction in developing countries. On the basis of this research, numerous research and policy briefs have been produced that translate research findings into concrete recommendations for policymakers and practitioners.

# Preface

CAPRI conducted its first training course in 2004 in Nairobi, Kenya. Additional courses were conducted in 2005 (Hyderabad, India), 2007 (Bangalore, India), and 2010 (San Salvador, El Salvador). Given their success and the growing demand, the scaling up of the training program was beyond CAPRI's capacity and mandate. In response, an assessment of capacity building strategies recommended producing a sourcebook that would capture and disseminate the results of the large body of CAPRI research.

This first CAPRI sourcebook is a fitting commemoration of the 15<sup>th</sup> anniversary of CAPRI. Unique among other training materials, it is based directly on the experiences and lessons of research on CAPRI core themes from around the world. The presentation is simple and straightforward, but it is based on sound underlying research. The objective of the book is to build capacity of research and development organizations to recognize the importance and relevance of CAPRI concepts and to apply the lessons and methods from CAPRI research in their work with communities, policymakers, and other stakeholders. It is our hope that it will serve not only as a relevant and practical guide for development practitioners, trainers, and policymakers, but will also be used in universities and other institutions of higher learning.

# Foreword

The capacity to tackle major challenges facing society depends on our ability to work together voluntarily, globally as well as locally, and to devise and maintain a diverse range of institutions for governing ourselves and our resources. Why people cooperate and how cooperation can be catalyzed and supported are two of the most important questions facing science and society. The answers will not come from a single discipline within social science or even from social scientists alone. To date, major advances in understanding complex policy questions have come from comparative work across methods and disciplines. This often happens serendipitously; systematic collective action among researchers may be a precursor to understanding and enabling collective action more generally.

The understanding generated by collaborative research is too important to be left to researchers alone. It has important practical applications for sustainable management of resources and for poverty reduction. The complexity of institutional arrangements can be daunting for non-specialists, but simplistic “solutions” that are often promoted as panaceas cannot solve complex problems. What we need are clear ways to relate the insights from research to the experiences of development practitioners.

The CGIAR Systemwide Program on Collective Action and Property Rights (CAPRI) plays a critical role in bringing together a diverse set of actors including theoretical and applied researchers from social and natural sciences, policymakers, and practitioners from developed and developing countries. CAPRI facilitates not only knowledge generation, but also dialogue, comparative analysis, and mutual learning. Considerable diversity and healthy debates exist within CAPRI. Trust and respect are common denominators, a factor that strongly supports collective action and helps to explain the Program’s successful 15-year history.

This sourcebook draws on the experiences, lessons, and principles derived from a body of research spanning disciplines, countries, and sectors. It addresses the challenges of sustaining collective action and securing property rights in agriculture, natural resource management, and rural development more generally. Targeted towards development practitioners, the

# Foreword

text communicates concepts, empirical findings, and their implications for action in clear language. It offers frameworks, guidelines, methods, and tools for addressing institutional issues in development work. What it does not offer are panaceas. The topics addressed in the sourcebook are inherently complex, and the goal is not to simplify them but rather to learn to manage this complexity. Furthermore, the Sourcebook will help equip development practitioners, policymakers, and others interested in sustainable development to learn how to cope more effectively with complexity.

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# Introduction

## **What is a Sourcebook?**

A sourcebook is a collection of short readings that present the key results and, most importantly, implications for action from over 15 years of research on property rights and collective action for poverty alleviation and sustainable development by CAPRI members, partners, and associated organizations. The sourcebook is designed to provide both a general orientation to the issues as well as practical insights on how to address specific, real-world problems.

The sourcebook is divided into eight sections, each addressing an important aspect of property rights and collective action on which CAPRI has generated a significant body of research. Also included is a glossary of relevant terms. The pieces in each section were specially selected to cover different aspects of each topic and to complement each other in terms of the range of experiences available from different regions and contexts. In its entirety, the sourcebook is a comprehensive synthesis of key concepts, insights, and lessons from Asia, Africa, and Latin America. It is important to note, however, that the articles are also explicitly designed to stand alone so that they can be used individually or re-combined with pieces from the same or other sections, depending on the needs of the user.

## **How to use the Sourcebook**

Most users of the sourcebook may not read it from cover to cover because it is designed primarily as a reference guide. Instead, they may search for information on a specific topic, resource, method, or region. The table of contents was designed to make it easy for users to identify relevant materials from different parts of the sourcebook. However, readers may find it useful to begin with Chapter 1, which presents an overall framework for understanding the relevance of collective action and property rights for sustainable development.

Since the sourcebook's primary target audience is field-based practitioners, the readings present theory and analysis in simple terms and extract practical lessons for action. The sourcebook was not designed as a research reference and therefore does not go into detail on research methods and approaches. Nonetheless, researchers may find the sourcebook useful to identify relevant studies, as well as to see the kinds of results and conclusions that can be drawn from applied research on collective action and property rights. Each piece is based on a research paper, noted in the "Source" box on the first page. Suggested readings at the end are provided for those who would like more information.

# Introduction

## **How this Sourcebook was developed**

This sourcebook was developed from original research outputs identified by the CAPRI team, mainly from the research work it supported via its global network, supplemented by key pieces from other experts.

Most of the readings are from social science researchers working in the fields of agriculture, natural resource management, and poverty reduction, often as part of multidisciplinary teams. In addition, many of the pieces are based on “research for development” that involved not only scientists, but also development practitioners and communities.

A team of editors and artists in the Philippines helped repackage longer articles into short, succinct, user-friendly materials. This compilation was critically reviewed by a CAPRI Executive Committee at a review-writeshop held in Goa, India, October 27-30, 2009. Articles were further revised and improved upon during this workshop, where specialized assistance was provided by a local team of editors, artists, and a graphic design team. The original authors then approved the repackaged versions of their original articles before they were sent for copyediting and final layout in the Philippines. A series of posters was also produced as part of this same effort, but are packaged as a complementary publication (Resources, Rights and Cooperation: Education Poster Resources). These were initially developed in the Philippines, but further revised and amended with new artwork in Goa, India. A CD is also available which contains electronic versions of the original papers, the repackaged articles, and the posters. The sourcebook is also available online at [www.capri.cgiar.org](http://www.capri.cgiar.org).