THE BLACK DIAMOND OF TAMBACOUNDA: CHARCOAL, REPRESENTATION AND DECENTRALIZED DEVELOPMENT IN THE FORESTS OF EASTERN SENEGAL

BY

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DISSERTATION

Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Geography in the Graduate College of the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, 2016

Urbana, Illinois

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ABSTRACT

The extent to which inhabitants in Rural Communities in Senegal are able to derive benefits from natural resources located in their zones may be largely contingent upon their ability to ask for what they are entitled to. Gaining more political clout in order to make claims to their fair share of access to their forests requires local community members to act more like citizens rather than subjects who have to endure imposed forms of government. The 1996 wave of decentralization placed forest management decision making in the hands the democratically local elected government, the Rural Councils that would henceforth act as the representative of populations in the Rural Communities. The 1998 modifications made to the Forestry Code permitted the commercial exploitation of forests through the mandatory application of a technical document, called the Forest Management Plan. In order to assist the underfunded and under-resourced Rural Councils and to make the exploitation of forests more participatory as well as environmentally sustainable, two projects: the World Bank’s PROGEDE and USAID’s Wula Nafaa were implemented. The projects produced the Forest Management Plans and introduced new institutions, Forest Management Committees that would function.

In this set of three papers, I examined institutional processes around access to forest resources, that is, the ability to derive benefits mainly from wood-based charcoal production and commerce in the Tambacounda region. Using the Ribot, Chhatre and Lankina’s (2008) Choice and Recognition framework, I explored the conditions under which higher-level institutions like the central government and international development agencies chose and recognized the local institutional partners they did. The type of institutions chosen to manage and regulate the forest
and the charcoal sector at the local level influenced the patterns of engagement with recognized authorities and the distribution of access to lucrative charcoal sector among the villagers. Participation involving democratic elements or democratic institutional infrastructure is believed to allow for participation from members of society who otherwise might not possess the advantage of being socio-economically or politically ‘equipped’ to participate in decision-making settings and processes that make their representation binding or adequate. It was found that the choice and recognition process took place over various arenas at the higher level and I identified a set of attributes that are factored in the choice and recognition of local institutions.

The second paper brings out how the institutional choices made higher up unfolded on the ground using the example of gender-focused action of projects in a decentralized forest management context. I examined how institutional set-ups affect a historically marginalized group such as women with respect to their participation in a male-dominated livelihood earning sector like charcoal. Constrictive aspects of their social roles and economic precariousness intersects with elite capture of charcoal sector, creating a greater barrier for poorer, non-elite women to break through as charcoal producers or charcoal entrepreneurs. The third paper showed the ways in which institutional choice and recognition opened the gates for elite capture, whereby a disproportionate amount of benefits from charcoal production and trade is appropriated by a small group of people possessing access qualifications, that is, social, political, economic advantages allowing them to dominate. The flaring up of charcoal niche elite capture within the Rural Communities has implications for the asymmetries in the level of development between the urban and the rural parts of the country.
When significant amounts of revenue derived from a common local resource accrue to only a few elites in the Rural Communities, it becomes more profitable to invest large amounts in urban zones, thus depleting the rural areas of locally generated wealth.

This study drew largely from the qualitative data from interviews, observation and questionnaire surveys collected during fieldwork extending from the beginning of 2012 to mid-2013. The main conceptual framework guiding this research was Ribot, Chhatre and Lankina’s (2008) Institutional Choice and Recognition with additional analytical lenses relevant to the questions being answered used each of the three papers.
To Sorsati Taucoor, Hurrynarain Jusrut, Prabha Jusrut and Amit Jusrut.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The saying goes that it takes a whole village to raise a child. What does it take to make a Geographer? In my case, it took a journey extending over almost half of the world. My training as a Geographer having taken place over four different continents, I am thankful to everybody who contributed to this ‘upbringing’; for enriching my life academically, professionally and personally. The journey began in my early teens on the island of Mauritius where, as student at the Mahatma Gandhi Institute (MGI), Moka, Mr Seetohul and Mr Pudaruth made me discover Geography as an academic discipline. To all my MGI teachers and classmates, the mountains we climbed, the gorges we descended, the craters and caves we visited, the waves we observed crashing against cliffs were among the best geography lessons shared with you.

My journey continued at Miranda House, Delhi University in India. I am immensely grateful to my amazing professors: Dr Kandhari, Mrs Behari, Dr Bhattacharya, Dr Parijat, Dr Ahlawat, Mrs Kumaria, Swati Ma’am, Anupama Ma’am, Kaushal sir and Vijay sir, for the academic stepping stone they provided me. I thank all my wonderful BA (Hons) Geography classmates who made being a student at Miranda House such a memorable experience. Landing in United Kingdom for my Master’s degree at Department of Geography at Royal Holloway, University of London, offered the opportunity to specialize in Development and Environment. The excellent courses I took geared me with the right foundation for my subsequent academic endeavors. I am thankful to Dr Vandana Desai for her support and encouragement to pursue further studies in Geography.
The formative years continued across the globe, in the Midwest, at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. Special thanks to Prof Ribot who accepted to be the chair of the dissertation committee. I thank Prof Ezekiel Kalipeni, Dr Ashwini Chhattre, Dr Brian Dill, Prof Faranak Miraftab, Dr Gretchen Walters, Dr Solange Bandiaky for the academic guidance they gave me and for their commitment to being on the committees for my examinations and dissertation. I would like to thank Prof McLafferty for her support and help in her capacity as Head of Graduate Studies and then as Head of Department of Geography. I am fortunate to have met Prof Kalipeni who is great scholar and a role model to international students like myself and the Kalipeni family for being family away from home.

I would have never thought that one day I would be carrying out research in rural Senegal, hadn’t it been for working with Prof Ribot and the Responsive Forestry Governance Initiative (RFGI). It was a pleasure meeting and interacting with all the RFGI researchers and core team. This dissertation would not have been possible without the participation of research participants in Senegal. My gratitude extends to everybody from Dakar to Tambacounda to Kolda for their warmth and hospitality. I am grateful to Susan Etter, Matt Cohn and Chris Wilcock whose help and knowledge allowed for a smooth navigation through all the paperwork.

I am indebted to my family members for the unconditional support they have provided me over all these years. Sorsati Taucoor, Hurrynarain Jusrut, Prabha Jusrut, Amit Jusrut, your prayers and blessings have been the most precious things I carried with me everywhere I went. Vishal Caleechurn, your influence on me has been tremendously positive at many levels and thank you so much for always being there for me.
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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

Under an immense star-shrouded sky, surrounded by huge baobab trees, sat a group of villagers in front of a small stove heating a teapot. The youngest of the group were fanning embers to make attaya (sweet tea). Several village youth were present at this gathering, many of them finishing their high school diploma, still considered to be a high level of education in the remote rural zones of Senegal. The youngsters started talking about their future plans, the jobs they desire to have to earn a living and the ones they will not have the chance to pursue. “I would like to join the army or the police force. Wouldn’t I look mighty in that uniform!” said one of them jovially but aware that such a highly enviable a line of duty is out of reach of most people in this small village nested in a forest far from any place that could offer appealing income generation opportunities. The discussion moved on to how they like eating meals made of the leaves of the big trees, a double entendre about the deprivation suffered by the villages in that zone. A meal made of leaves is consumed when food is scarce. A person in attendance sitting beside me started telling me, “this type of development feels like a trap; we now find ourselves in a situation where we have to get this and that job, such and such amount of money and always be pursuing material possessions and achieving things that are very difficult in this environment. It feels like such a burden imposed on us…; life without running after such things used to be so much better, simpler like it used to be in the past.” The majority of the youth, given the chance, would still choose the
occupation with the potential of earning the most income. This was one instance among the numerous encounters with the local populations sharing their perspective on the rush towards wealth-based development.

A few months later after that night’s conversation in the small village in the Kolda Region, the closing ceremony of one forestry project took place on a celebratory note at a posh hotel in the capital city, Dakar. The Wula Nafaa (‘wealth of the forest’ in Bambara) project, funded by United States Agency for International Development (USAID), aimed at helping local populations to generate wealth through the production, processing and sale of products from forest and other natural resources. “We have made a very visible impact,”¹ was the concluding remark made by the director of Wula Nafaa. The visible impact of the project is perceptible to anybody reading the Wula Nafaa project reports and anybody standing at the junction of the Missirah-Tamba main roads, watching the truckloads of charcoal passing by on their way to Dakar. The difference from previous years being that now the bigger share of the charcoal on those trucks are now produced by villagers in the Rural Communities² and not by a few big urban-based merchants and their migrant laborers. Rural Communities (Communautés Rurales) in Senegal are the most local administrative subdivisions governed by democratically elected local government, the Rural Council. Rural Communities comprise of a number of villages, on average ranging from 30 to 80 villages.

¹ The reasons attributed to those impacts were the taxes collected from charcoal produced from the forests located in rural regions, the production process being overseen by forest management committees created by the project. The rural populations were helped to better exercise the powers transferred to them, thanks to the good governance training has given them the project.
These two descriptions of fieldwork experiences are indicative of the comparative disadvantage of rural regions in accumulating wealth and the inclusion of villagers in benefitting from the process of rural development. They also bring into question the portrayal and assessment by donors of the accomplishment of natural resource-based development interventions. Since several years, as villagers pointed out, all kinds of donor-supported projects have come and gone. Who benefits from such projects? How have they re-ordered the ways in which local institutions manage access to forest resources? Why and how were those local institutions chosen to do so? The research for this dissertation was carried out to provide answers to these questions. The veneer of the project’s ‘successes’ was scratched to reveal how national priorities for decentralized forest management along with forestry projects imbued with Western canons of development practice generate unbalanced access to forests and forestry markets among rural populations.

The dissertation investigates the relation between decentralization supported by donor-funded forestry projects, the participation of local populations in decision-making about access to forests, and improvement in rural development. To accomplish this, the dissertation is organized into three papers each covering one of three focal points: 1) the conditions under which higher-level institutions choose their local institutional partners, 2) how the recognized institutions condition access to forests resources through the case of gender mainstreaming in forestry-based projects, and 3) the rural development implications of elite capture of the local institutional arrangements in the charcoal sector.
Under Senegal’s 1996 decentralization laws and 1998 forestry code, Rural Communities represented by their elected rural councils (the most-local level of local government), have gained the right to manage and to use forests within their jurisdiction. The democratic decentralization reforms of Senegal that were crafted to enable local populations to have an equitable control over and access to their forests are only partially producing the expected outcomes. Many segments of rural populations are still excluded from lucrative forestry activities (Ribot & Larson, 2012; O’Brien, 1971; Boutinot, 2005). From the stage of inception of policies or projects to that of their implementation, there are various institutions involved in the shaping of participatory and developmental outcomes of those policies and projects for populations in rural regions. Local institutions chosen and recognized by higher-level institutions such as the national government and international agencies to implement reforms, therefore, influence the access to forests and the distribution of benefits derived from the resource among the inhabitants of the Rural Communities.

I examined how local institutions are chosen by higher-level agents such as the Senegalese Central Government and international development agencies so as to be assigned the function of managing access to a natural resource vital to income generation in Rural Communities. The way local institutions are used, and by whom, influences the participatory and democratic character of the decentralization process, becoming a contributing factor as to who in the Rural Communities gets to benefit from forest resources. The observed inequalities in access to decision-making arenas and in the accumulation of returns from forests hindered the overall development at the

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3 Powers are to be devolved to the presidents of rural councils who are democratically elected to control access to community forests: the signature of the president of the rural council is required before anybody can extract any resources from the forests.
local level, the very same zones where the wealth was generated. The spatial distribution of wealth-generation opportunities within Senegal is greatly skewed in favor of urban zones, having implications for the enduring underdevelopment of the rural zones.

Decentralization is defined as the transfer of powers and resources from higher levels to lower levels within a political-administrative system of government (Mahwood, 1983). There are different forms of decentralization, but the form that this research is concerned with and which is considered the stronger form that theory recognizes as most beneficial in terms of democratic outcomes, is democratic decentralization. Democratic decentralization occurs when resources, power and tasks are devolved to lower-level authorities who possess a certain degree of autonomy and who are duly accountable and responsive to the people they are serving (Ribot, 2004; Manor, 2005). Since decentralization can offer the institutional infrastructure to deepen democracy and enhance equity, it was considered by many theorists, policy makers and development agencies to be an appropriate medium through which to implement projects.

Efforts to create wealth from forests in the study zone were supported by two projects: USAID’s Wula Nafaa and World Bank’s PROGEDE. These projects created Forest Management Committees (FMCs), structures to implement project actions and provide assistance to the local populations and the Rural Council to adapt to and build wealth from forest resources in a decentralized context. The analysis of institutional choice – the process through which higher-scale agencies, such as these projects and government agencies, choose the institutions they will work with in the local arena – aims at understanding why certain institutions (and not others) are being chosen and recognized by the central government and donor agencies. ‘Recognition’
involves the conferring of powers and legitimacy of the chosen institution by transferring powers, through partnership in projects or being involved in decision-making activities. Institutional recognition goes beyond mere acknowledgement of the existence of an institution to also include the strengthening or even creation of the chosen institution’s authority through the transfer of powers to them (Ribot, Chhatre, Lankina, 2008). Inquiry into the effects of institutional choice provides insights into the stunted political representation process, subverted resources, and weakened local government that sometimes leave people with few alternatives but to fall back onto the existing dyadic arrangements of patronage that perpetuate inequalities or onto new institutions that may offer only palliative fixes (Beck, 2008; Von Doepp and Villalon, 2005). Institutional choice and recognition made by higher-level institutions are shown in this dissertation to be linked to differentiated access to forest resources in the Tambacounda region of Senegal.

The institutional landscape of rural Senegal is characterized by a multitude of institutions with varying degrees of authority over forest resources. By choosing the institutions they want to partner with, the World Bank’s PROGEDE (Sustainable and Participatory Energy Management) and USAID’s Wula Nafaa (Agriculture and Natural Resources Management) projects have reshaped the politico-administrative structure of forestry resource management in rural Senegal. These two forestry projects were used as an entry point for analyzing how institutional choice and recognition by higher-level institutions shape representation, hence effective participation of local communities in resource management.
The plural nature of the institutional terrain of rural Senegal has important implications for the functioning of a democratic decentralized resource management because of the authority and resource reconfigurations among the chosen institutions.

Paper 1: The first paper entitled “The process of institutional choice and recognition for the decentralized forest management in Tambacounda, Senegal” explains how the mix of local institutions entrusted with forest resource management is an outcome of choices made by the national government and international agencies. To explore how local institutional partners are chosen by national and international institutions in a decentralized forest governance context, I used Ribot, Chhatre and Lankina’s (2008) ‘Institutional Choice and Recognition’ framework which provided the overarching conceptual lens and Grindle’s (2005) “Process of Policy and Institutional Reform,” to operationalize the analysis of the institutional choice component. Forest management committees run by the members of the public were created and chosen by USAID and World Bank projects to work with the democratically elected local government (the rural council) and the forestry services. The analysis revealed that although the new multi-institution configuration presents the potential for democratic resource management, the ensuing division of tasks among the various chosen institutions created new opportunities for collusion among elites who captured positions in the chosen institutions. Such an elite capture involved a small number of favorably placed villagers intercepting a disproportionately large amount of benefits from forest resources and excluding the majority poor of the population.

Paper 2: A case study of gender mainstreaming in the two projects illustrate the effects of institutional choice at village level. It was found that rural communities can now legally produce
charcoal in their forests but not everybody within those rural communities is able to gain from the opportunities offered by this change. One of the initiatives of the two projects to promote equitable access to forest resources was through increasing the participation of women in forest resource management and exploitation. Despite the provisions made by the projects to include women in forest management and use, profits from wood-based charcoal production accrue mostly to women in privileged groups or to the male family members of those women. The second paper entitled “Instrumentalizing gender: When elite capture intersects with gender-focused actions of forest resource management projects in Senegal” shows how participation, an important component of gender-responsive approach, is construed differently at the various stages of projects’ life cycle. These differences in rendition of participation in its conceptualization or application in turn affects who among the villagers in the rural communities gets access to charcoal production and trade. The analysis demonstrated how elite capture shapes the participation of women in this case. It was found that the avenues opened for women to participate in the management and productive use of forests do not challenge the specific gender-biased contextual contours of rural societies in Tambacounda that have historically prevented women from thriving economically. Due to lack of consideration to the socio-economic stratification present within the female rural population, the current focus on local governance and project efforts to involve women in the forest management and the charcoal sector have favored elite women over poorer and less advantageously positioned women.

Paper 3: The factors contributing to and the implications of elite capture spans various scales as shown by the first paper, which addresses supra-national and national forces, and the second paper, which probes into the local dimensions. The third paper: “Institutional Recognition and
*Elite Capture in the Forestry Sector: Implications for development outcomes of Wula Nafaa in Tambacounda, Senegal*” is sequitur to both the first and second papers. This third paper outlines the linkages between intra-rural differential access to a natural resource-based productive opportunities and the regional disparities in the levels of development and wealth movement between regions. In Senegal, the locus for rural development offered by democratic decentralization is an institution: the democratically elected Rural Council. Evidence indicated that decentralized forestry was accompanied by intensification of elite capture in the charcoal sector at a local level leading to specific patterns of wealth accumulation within villages. Institutions such as the Rural Council and the FMCs which have the function of democratically representing and engaging inhabitants instead enabled only a small group of advantageously placed elites to grab and dominate the access to forest resources. Elite capture not only excludes poorer groups from entering the lucrative charcoal business but has implications for contributing to the existing spatial disparities in development between the remote rural regions and the urbanized areas. Urban centers remain magnets for capital investment even for wealth generated in the rural zones.

This research explored institutional blockages using the institutional choice and recognition framework of Ribot, Chhatre and Lankina (2008). Representation when conceived as a function of accountability⁴ and responsiveness is essential to keep in check the calculated choices fuelled by the self-preservation and/or predatory instincts of institutions that govern as well as ensuring

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⁴Formal mechanisms of accountability through which citizens have the possibility of holding their representatives responsible for the decisions and actions taken. Ability and ease to legal recourse, polycentricity, independent or third-party monitoring, transparency, free media, civic education, the practice of public discussion, participatory processes, discretionary powers, proximity of leaders, administrative dependence and social movements are all aspects that give indications as to the accountability mechanisms at work.
that they respond to the populations’ needs and aspirations (Przeworski et al., 1999; Beck, 2005; Young, 1994). The objective of exploring institutional arrangements and blockages was to find context-attentive institutional configurations with that might strengthen politically guaranteed and legally protected representation.

The remainder of this introduction, section 1.2 provides the background to the case study presented in this dissertation. Sub-section 1.2.1 offers an account of Senegal’s forestry sector; describing the forests and policies and sub-section 1.2.2 covers the institutional arrangements for forest management in Senegal. Parts 1.2.3 and 1.2.4 present descriptions of the two forestry-development projects studied (USAID’s Wula Nafaa and the World Bank’s PROGEDE). This chapter ends with section 1.3 with an outline of the subsequent chapters of this dissertation.

1.2 Background

Senegal’s forests are an important natural resource providing urban households with cooking fuel in the form of charcoal. Eighty four percent of households depend on wood-based fuels for their basic energy needs (mostly cooking): 26% rely on charcoal and 58% on firewood. Biomass continues to dominate national energy consumption patterns (58%), as compared to oil products (38%), and other energy sources (4%) (World Bank, 2010).

Forests are a source of local and national wealth in Senegal. Charcoal merchants based in urban regions, however, have typically been the beneficiaries of forest commerce. There is a constant tension in Senegal between urban need for charcoal, urban-based merchants seeking to maximize
profits from forests and the needs and aspiration of rural forest-dependent populations. Now that decentralization of forest management facilitated the transfer of charcoal production opportunities from the hands of the urban-dwellers to those of rural inhabitants, there are tensions emerging within the rural communities. Charcoal production and commerce is a lucrative sector generating considerable amounts of wealth in the rural communities that have taken up charcoal production. Charcoal-derived wealth, however, is accumulated by a few rural charcoal producers, reflecting inequalities in forest villagers’ abilities to benefit from the forests.

Forest resource-based development and energy diversification projects sponsored by USAID and the World Bank respectively intervened to assist rural populations to gain greater profits from forests while also managing the forest resource in an environmentally sustainable and participatory manner. These projects, despite aiming at increasing local incomes through institutional configurations to promote inclusive or participatory forest management, were incapable of benefitting all villagers equally. The project were less beneficial to members of rural communities lacking livelihood opportunities.

The following section describes the zone under study, forest resource management in rural Senegal, the two forestry-related projects studied, and the institutional arrangements implemented by the government and development projects.
1.2.1 Senegal’s Forests and Policies

Senegal has an area of about 196,720 square Kilometers with a dry, Sudano-Sahelian, climate and a rainy season extending from July till October. Fifty eight percent (58%) of the country’s twelve-million inhabitants are rural. The vegetation consists of steppes, savanna and sparse forest cover that varies between 45% and 71% (if all forested zones are considered). Each year, 45,000 hectares of forests are lost to forest fires, agricultural expansion or human settlement encroachment, overexploitation for wood extraction, expansion of mining areas. The bulk of wood-based fuels used in Senegal are supplied from the southern and south-western zones (Kolda and Tambacounda), which account for the country’s existing standing wood stock (World Bank, 2010). The projects I have studied were located in Tambacounda, one of the larger charcoal production zones.

Forests in Senegal are divided into two categories: (i) the domaine classé (classified forest) and (ii) domaine protégé (protected forest). The domaine classé takes up 31.7% of the country’s land surface area and consists of ‘classified’ (meaning gazetted or reserved) forests, areas under reforestation and restoration, integral natural reserves, national parks and special reserves. The domaine protégé comprises of forests that are not within the domaine classé and not part of the land belonging to the local communities and that are used for settlement, agriculture and livestock farming. The domaine protégé occupies 6,500,000 hectares and its management is under the care of the local government (World Bank, 2010).

Both the domaine protégé and classé were under the direct management of Forestry Services until the decentralization in 1996 when the forests under the domaine protégé were placed under the
care of the elected local governments. In both the *domaine protégé* and *classé* zones, the authorization for hunting and other exploitation purposes was regulated according to codes and decrees laid out by the Forest Service, an executive branch of the Ministry of Environment (Hamel, 2010).

Fig.1.1. The zones in green depict the forested areas in Senegal. The richer zones (darker) are the ones where most of the charcoal production takes place.

(Source: PROGEDE)

Senegal’s 1996 Decentralization Laws⁵ transferred formerly centralized powers, including powers over natural resource management, to three orders of local government: the region, the district (la

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⁵ Law No. 96-06 of March 22, 1996 pertaining to the Local Government Code and the Law No. 96-07 of Mars 22, 1996 portant transfert de compétences aux régions, communes et aux Communautés Rurales.
commune) and the Rural Council (Communauté Rurale). Certain components of the Forestry Code - Law no. 93-06 February 4, 1993 and its implementing decree no. 95-357 of April 11, 1995 - had to be modified to accommodate the innovations made by the decentralization laws (RdS 1994, 1998). Those include the ability of the State to grant the management of a part of the forest to local government, on the basis of a management plan and the possibility to local governments subsidies on the national forestry funds according to the terms set by decree. The decentralizations reforms, thus, aim at establishing the power of local governments to manage forests belonging to the state and handed over to the local communities. The local government can enter into contracts with other parties regarding forests they have been entrusted to manage and can recruit forest agents for the surveillance of their forests. The local government, however, can exercise their rights to exploit the forest only while respecting the prescriptions of management plans approved by the State (RdS, 2003). The decentralization was a radical departure from previous policy. It gave elected local government the ability to sign off on any commercial activities in its area, and it gave them the right to allocate use and commercial rights in the protected forests in their jurisdiction.

Despite these gains, the forest service has not allowed this devolution to fully take place. The resources has been degraded over the past several decades by forest fires, overgrazing, excessive exploitation of forests, clearing of forested lands. The Forestry Service has maintained a discourse that forest degradation is due to haphazard and unrestrained use by local populations. On these grounds, the Forest Service has argued that they must continue to control management due to the superiority of their technical knowledge (Ribot, 2007; Faye, 2006).
1.2.2 The Institutional Arrangements for Forest Management in Senegal

The government of Senegal elaborated a Forest Development Master Plan (Plan Directeur de Développement Forestier- PDDF) in 1981. This was the first home-grown policy document establishing a strategy to guide forest resource conservation to promote more investment in the forest sector. The Forest Development Master Plan was then revised in 1989 to take into consideration the changing national and international context resulting in the Senegal Forest Action Plan (Plan d’Action Forestier du Sénégal – PAFS, 1993). Emanating from the Senegal Forest Action Plan were options aiming at the conservation of forest resources and maintaining socio-ecological balances as well as satisfying the need for forest products. The Senegal Forest Action Plan allowed for formalization of the participatory approach and integrating forestry in rural development.

With the onset of the decentralization process under the 1996 Decentralization Law, the Senegal Forest Action Plan was revamped to accommodate the transfer of powers to manage environmental and natural resources to the local government and the resulting document is what is known as Senegal’s Forest Policy⁶ (Politique Forestière du Sénégal – PFS) in 2005 (Hamel et al., 2010; World Bank, 2010).

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⁶ Note that the forestry policy in law is the Forestry Code. This document is the policy vision and the general set of tenets that follow from the forestry code. Forestry activities are legally held to the articles of the Forestry Code and not to this general policy document.
The main prescripts of Senegal’s Forestry Policy are: (i) greater responsibility handed to local
governments, (ii) community forest management and use, (iii) equitable wealth creation and
distribution, (iv) durability of achievements made by interventions, (v) eco-geographical zones
approach, and (vi) promoting a gender-sensitive approach.

The 1996 decentralization laws make provision for the transfer of forest management powers to
Rural Councils and the clause L.3, Chapter I of the Forestry Code: Law No.98-03 of January 08,
1998, offer the specifics about forest management with respect to charcoal production. Clause L.3
states that forests can be exploited only after the granting of a permit for exploiting the forest and
the issuing of which requires payment of fees. Furthermore, Clause L.4 stipulates that exploitation
permits are to be delivered by the Forestry Services but the exploitation should be contingent on
the prior authorization of the President of the Rural Council and complies with the prescriptions
of the approved management plans. Clauses R.19 and R.20 in Chapter II of the decree 98-164 of
February 20, 1998 of Forestry Code hold that the permits cannot be retroceded or sold and the
Forestry Services has been given the responsibility of ensuring that the forest exploitation has
been carried out according to the management principles for the sustainability of forest resources.

The Forest Service issues a limited number of permits that allow the transportation of charcoal
from the zones of production to the market (usually the city of Dakar) each year. There are two
types of permits, one for each category of charcoal producer: (i) the external charcoal producer’s
permit which is used by the big charcoal merchants based in Dakar and other cities and (ii) the
local charcoal producer’s permit destined to the producers who are inhabitants of the Rural
Communities. A transportation permit is only delivered upon the presentation of a record of
production and a voucher handed over by Forest Management Committees (FMCs) that are constituted of and run by inhabitants of Rural Communities where the charcoal is produced. This transportation permit document locally known as ‘permis de circulation’ is to certify that the charcoal being transported out of the Rural Communities is from within the zone designated for charcoal production for that year and that the required charcoal taxes have been paid by the producer (see Fig. 1.2.).

Fig. 1.2. Shows how the tax paid on each bag of charcoal is distributed (in Wula Nafaa zones).

1 US$ = 500 CFA Francs
The 1996 decentralization process restructured authority over natural resource management through the devolution of that authority from the Central State-level government to the local democratically elected representative body, the Rural Council. The 1998 Forestry Code provided the technical guidelines for how the forests are to be managed if the inhabitants of the Rural Communities were to exploit them. According to the Forestry Code, any forests under the governance of the Rural Council require a Forest Management Plan (FMP) plan laying out the technical guidelines to be followed to allow for sustainable exploitation of forests and administrative and financial procedures for a more organized management. Forest Management Plans consist of the time-specific and geographically specific programming of the management of forests for the realization of benefits – economic, cultural and environmental. That management plan is required by law for all forests that are 20 hectares or more in size.

To implement the prescriptions of sustainable forest management and the institutional in a more organized manner, each of the two projects set up their own type of forest management committees in the zones where they intervened. In the USAID zones, they were called ‘Conseil de gestion de forêt’ (Forest Management Councils) and in the PROGEDE, the committees were called ‘Comité de gestion des forêts’ (Forest Management Committees) but throughout this document I will call these all of these committees Forest Management Committees (FMCs). With the fund created through payment of charcoal taxes, the FMCs would carry out projects concerning forests designed within their annual work plan. Before decentralization, such projects were under the aegis of the forestry agents but now tasks like tree planting, the hiring of forest guards and fire-fighting are carried out in collaboration with the local population grouped and organized into FMCs.
In 2008, a development policy circular was written by the Government of Senegal about meeting the demand for household fuel in an environmentally sustainable manner. The main points of that policy move included improving both supply and demand sides of fuel wood and wood-derived resources by encouraging participatory community forest management as a means of ensuring sustainable wood fuel supply management and providing alternative sources of energy via diversification of energy sources, and research and development of, for instance, cooking stoves.

The management plans that the Forest Service could control. The plans were complex and cumbersome such that rural councils were not able to develop or propose them and the forest service itself claimed not to have the finances to develop them. Hence up until 2005 there were very few management plans. This meant that control over the forests remained with the Forest Service. Here is where development projects stepped in. PROGEDE of the World Bank and Wula Nafaa of US Agency for International Development (USAID) were already in place as forestry oriented local development projects. They both decided to fund the development of management plans in order to promote sustainable forest management and to help promote the decentralization of forest management so that forestry could serve the development needs of rural populations. In the next two sections, I introduce these two projects.

Both projects aimed at supporting, at least in rhetoric, the national decentralization and forestry policy positions – local representation in management for the purposes of sound forest management and local development. The projects had stated objectives to be pro-poor and to support gender equity in forest decisions and benefits. Their intervention contributed of the projects in turning decentralization into a motor for equitable local development, pro-poor, or
supportive of women as they had initially aimed to do. Below I describe the two major development projects, Wula Nafaa and PROGEDE that have been deeply implicated in the development and implementation of forestry policy in Senegal. These projects are the focus of this dissertation.

1.2.3 Wula Nafaa (Agriculture and Natural Resources Management Program)

Wula Nafaa is an environment and development project financed by USAID and implemented by a US-based contractor, International Resources Group (IRG). The activities of the USAID’s Agriculture and Natural Resource Program or Wula Nafaa (WN) in Senegal are within the framework of two Strategic Objectives which were agreed upon by the USAID and the Government of Senegal. The Strategic Objectives consist of: (i) Sustainable increases in private sector income-generating activities in selected sectors, and (ii) improved local delivery of services and sustainable use of resources in targeted areas. The objective of Wula Nafaa is to contribute to poverty reduction and to sustainable local development by increasing rural communities and producer revenues through handing responsibility to local authorities and encouraging decentralized, integrated and participatory resource management (USAID, 2008). Wula Nafaa is implemented as a two-phase project: Phase I, February 2003-May 2008, Phase II from 2009 to 2013.

The principal goal of Wula Nafaa has been to ‘contribute to poverty reduction and sustainable local development by increasing rural communities’ and producer revenues through handling responsibility to local authorities and encouraging decentralized, integrated and participatory resource management” (USAID, 2008). An important component of Wula Nafaa’s approach is
the integration of an administrative and financial management system (the GAF – Gestion Administrative et Financière) that defines the procedures for collecting and spending revenues generated from forest taxes. In addition to the re-organization led by decentralization, the implementation of the Wula Nafaa project required another layer of reorganization of powers among the already existing institutions- and the newly created ones –the FMCs. This re-organization involved a ‘sharing’ of tasks related to forest management whereby Rural Councils share powers with the other institutions: the project-created FMCs and the Forestry Services, all the guidelines of which are laid out in the Forest Management Plans produced by the projects.

Through its Rights and Responsibilities component, Wula Nafaa provided support to local communities by putting 77,000 hectares of forest under community management all while following the laws and regulations enacted by the Government of Senegal. Wula Nafaa introduced approaches involved assigning greater responsibility on the members of the local community in managing their forests. The people were organized into Block Management Committees: the forest of Sita Niaoulé is divided into three blocks, therefore has three Block Management Committees. A Block Management Committee constitutes one management unit for a part of the forest. Each managed part of the forest is called a ‘block’ (see Fig. 1.3.). Each block has its own bureau composed of a president, vice-president, secretary general, an assistant secretary general, a technical officer, an assistant technical officer. The blocks were delimited in such a way so that each block contains approximately the same worth of wood fuel and other non-timber products. The blocks are further sub-divided into parcels so as to allow for a rotational use-pattern of eight years – that allows for a fallow period sufficient for the regeneration of the forest,
based on research results of Arbonnier and Faye’s 1988 study. All the Block Management Committees are subjected to the authority of the Council of Forest Management, situated at the apex of the whole structure and chaired by a member of the Rural Council (See Fig. 1.4). to an overall increase in wealth generation from forests at the local level but less far-reaching was the success

Fig. 1.3. Division of Sita Niaoulé forest into three blocks according to its Management Plan

(Source: Forest Management Plan of Sita Niaoulé)

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Fig. 1.4. Organizational structure of Wula Nafaa’s Forest Management Committee for Sita Niaoulé forest

(Source: Manuel des procédures des structures de gestion des PAF, 2011)
Fig. 1.5. Administrative and Financial Management Structure for forests under Forest Management Plans implemented by Wula Nafaa (based on USAID, 2009)

**Actors providing administrative assistance and technical guidance**
- Representative of the State (Sous-Préfet) State
- Deconcentrated Technical Services State
- Regional Inspection of Forestry Services State
- Sector of Forestry Services State
- Local forest brigade State
- Village Chief

**Administrative Actors**
- Rural Council (Environment Commission) Local Government
- Council for Management of the Forest (CGF) Created by Wula Nafaa but presided over by member of Local Government
- Block Management Committee Created by Wula Nafaa, run by local populations
- Village-based Representation 6-7 representatives chosen during General Assembly

**Economic**
- Cooperatives, Economic Interests Groups (GIE), approved by the State Private
- Networks of Groups of Producers (RGP) Private
- Groups of Producers (GP) Private

**Populations living in the villages bordering community forests under management plans**
Wula Nafaa’s emphasis on a consensual procedures approach type of management system translated itself through activities involving participatory processes in the conception, drafting and adoption of documents for the administration and financial management and the setting up of the management structures. Furthermore, the project offered training to the members of the management structures in procedures and tools in Administrative and Financial Management. The bureau of the Block Management Committees was provided with a locale, materials such as work documents and furnishings. The Wula Nafaa field staff (*facilitateurs*) would pay regular visits to guide the office bearers and oversee their activities as well as provide feedback to the project staff.

1.2.4 PROGEDE (Projet de gestion durable et participative des énergies traditionelles et de substitution / Sustainable and participatory energy management)

PROGEDE is a World Bank project supported by the International Development Association and Nordic Development Fund. The first phase of the project, PROGEDE-I, was implemented by the Government of Senegal from 1997 to 2004. PROGEDE-I’s objective was to improve the management of wood resources, limiting their use through energy savings measures and improving the capabilities of the public sector to effectively coordinate and control the sector (Intelligent Energy – Europe). According to World Bank reports, PROGEDE I has been acclaimed to be the first project involving heavy reliance on active participation of the local community and has since then become a model for similar interventions in the forestry sector. The success of PROGEDE-I attracted the support of the World Bank for the second phase of the PROGEDE, spanning from 2010 to 2016.
PROGEDE’s development objective is to contribute to an increase in the availability of diversified household fuels in a sustainable and gender equitable way, and to contribute to increase the income of participating communities while preserving the forest ecosystems. The project has four major components:

- The institutional reforms of the charcoal value chain that will address the political economy and equity issues (income and decision making) especially in the supplied regions and the whole country in general. It will support central and decentralized government. Local government as well as communities for the implementation of the reform.

- The sustainable wood fuel supply management will finance technical assistance, logistical support and equipment to central and decentralized forestry services, local collectivities.

- The promotion and diversification of modern household energy will finance technical assistance, logistical means and equipment for the directorate of Petroleum Products and Household Energy (DPHE) and private entrepreneurs to support massive production and dissemination of improved stoves and alternative wood fuel.

- The institutional arrangements for project implementation will support government institutions and community organizations to play their rightful roles in scaling up the program; hence the consultants will play a more catalytic, supportive and advisory role. (World Bank, 2010).

The FMCs created by PROGEDE were initially called CVGD - Comité Villageois de Développement, a unit created for each block of the forest was divided into. All the CVGDs would then report to the CIVGD – Comités Inter-villageois de Gestion et de Développement –
Inter-village Committee for Management and Development was the inter-village committee, overseeing the functioning of all the CVGDs of the forest. The CIVGD are comparable to the Block Management Committees of Wula Nafaa as the members of the executive unit at this level possess clout conferred by the dint of being the interface between the local producers and the authorities immediately higher up in their respective institutional hierarchies. In the case of Wula Nafaa, that authority would be the President of the Forest Management Council who is also a member of the democratically elected local government. However, for PROGEDE, the CIVGD would report to the project or donor agency staff through the project field staff (called animateurs in the case of PROGEDE) instead of the democratically elected local government.

Fig 1.6. illustrates the internal structure of PROGEDE’s Forest Management Committee, formerly known as the CIVGD and now renamed as CGF (Comité de Gestion des Forêts). The second phase of PROGEDE saw a re-arrangement in the composition of the structure and the linkages with other institutions such as the Rural Council. The criteria for membership in the new forest management committees proposed in 2013 were (1) only villagers who are not charcoal producers be eligible to be members of the executive bureau of the structure, (2) candidates for positions in the bureau should be sufficiently literate in French language, (3) gender parity among the village level representatives; it should mandatorily consist of one man and one woman both having a minimum required level of French from each village. There would be 15 members in a committee per each natural forest patch designated by the project and forestry services, elected by the representatives.
Fig. 1.6. PROGEDE II’s new forest management structure, CGF – *Comité de Gestion des Forêts* replacing the structures exiting in phase one.

**PROGEDE’s organizational structure**

2 representatives per village:
1 man and 1 woman

**General Assembly**

Management Committee (15 members)

**Executive Committee:**
President and Vice-President

General Secretary, Assis. Gen. Sec.
Treasurer, Assistant Treasurer
Forest Guard, 2 assis. Forest guards
1.3 Outline of dissertation

This dissertation is organized into five chapters. Chapter 2 delineates the theoretical axes along which this research was carried out, mainly decentralization and democratic representation, theory of access and elite capture. The main conceptual framing that guided research question formulation and the operationalization of analysis were Ribot, Chhatre and Lankina’s (2008) Institutional Choice and Recognition Framework. This overarching framework was used in conjunction with additional conceptual framing in each respective chapter. The second portion of Chapter 2 is devoted the hypotheses and research questions and third portion describes the data collection methods.

The third chapter entitled “The process of institutional choice and recognition for the decentralized forest management in charcoal-producing zones of Tambacounda, Senegal” offers insight into the conditions under which the institutional choice and recognition process takes place. Based on Grindle’s (2005) “Process of Policy and Institutional Reform,” institutional choice is explained as a product emanating from various arenas of policy conception and project design involving higher-level institutions. I advance a set of criteria that are taken into consideration by higher-level institutions when choosing the local institutional partners to recognize; to give powers and resources to.

Chapter 4: “Instrumentalizing gender: When elite capture intersects with gender-focused actions of forest resource management projects in Senegal.” demonstrates, through gender-focused actions of development agencies, the effects of institutional choice within a Rural Community. This case study reveals how the recognition of specific institutions affects the outcomes of efforts
to involve women in the charcoal sector, a male-dominated income-generating sector. Inspired from Cornwall (2003) and Arnstein (1969) and based on fieldwork observations, I examine how the concept of participation which is at the core in ‘sound development practice, is construed differently and used opportunistically at the various stages of project design and implementation by various institutions and structures. The participatory approach unfolding in a decentralized context, consolidated elite capture through the involvement of some women while the women who do not possess the access qualifications remain excluded from wealth-generation opportunities.

The fifth chapter: “Institutional Recognition and Elite Capture in the Forestry Sector: Implications for development outcomes of Wula Nafaa in Tambacounda, Senegal.” exposes the broader implications of local-level elite capture. It delves into the shift of elite capture of the charcoal sector to the Rural Communities after the onset of decentralization. The resulting intra-local disparities in access to forest resources is illustrated through the emergence of a hierarchy among rural charcoal producers. The presence of this hierarchy whereby there are a few big rural charcoal producers and smaller producers earning less from their product, concentrates the revenues from a common local resource into the hands of a small group of elites who might not invest in the rural zones but in the urban zones where returns are higher. The entrenchment of skewed access to forest resources and accumulation of wealth contributes to the disparities in rural and urban development. The concluding chapter, Chapter 6, highlights the main findings of this dissertation and brings out the contribution it makes to theory, literature and methods. It concludes with a discussion of potential future directions this research could lead to.
1.4 Bibliography


CHAPTER 2
CONCEPTUAL FRAMING AND METHODS

2.1 Conceptual Framing

The first subsection entitled “The Institutional Choice and Recognition Framework” presents the conceptual framing that guided the approach to the research questions. In the second subsection, “Elite capture as a function of access”, the phenomenon of elite capture is explained using a Theory of Access outlining how elite capture and recognition of specific institutional configuration shape unequal access to forest resources for populations in the Rural Community. “Institutions, Decentralization and Democracy: Following the rules while eroding the substance?” the third section describes how following laws and regulations to the letter without adequate attention to making their content meaningful in terms of bringing positive transformative changes for the local populations. The fourth section: “Representation of Citizens,” introduces how institutional recognition determines the local institutions that will be available and endowed with resources for the villagers to interact concerning forest resources. By so doing, the recognized institutions also define who among the members of the local population can participate as a citizen or not in a democratic decentralized forest management context.

2.1.1 The Institutional Choice and Recognition Framework

In the chapters of this dissertation I use the choice and recognition framework to assess the reasons that elected local governments do or do not empower local citizens. The concept of choice and recognition is built around the notion of ‘institutional choice’ put forward by Bates (1981) and Taylor’s (1994) ‘politics of recognition’. When used in conjunction, those two notions
can help explain how higher-level institutions shape the policy outcomes, and particularly
democracy outcomes, at local level. The local institutions that outside actors, what I will call
‘intervening agents’, choose to partner with, and the agency and the actions of those chosen
institutions in turn, are influenced by institutional recognition: the bringing into being of
institutions and conferring of powers upon them, thus legitimizing the authority of the chosen
institutions. Recognition molds the dimensions of democracy: representation, citizenship and
public domain, which are crucial for determining how democratic a decentralization process turns
out to be. When applied in the context of researching a decentralized mode of natural resource
management, the concept of choice and recognition sheds light on the various processes at play
that result in the building of institutional infrastructure enabling local populations to engage with
those who govern them, and the fostering of accountability and responsiveness from those who
make and act on decisions on their local populations.

The suitability of this approach for studying the motives behind formal decision-making practices
and procedures is justified by its broad applicability: it provides a heuristic of studying the high
politics of choice (institutional choice) without having to leave out “the people” part from the
analysis. The mix of institutions chosen to secure economic development permitted the
entrenchment of enormously powerful private interests in the charcoal production sector in
Senegal. This choice can become an important source of the durability of policies and practices
with negative effects on equitable distribution of economic benefits when non-representative
institutions are selected. It can also, if intervening agents aim for democratic outcomes, present
political opportunity for the previously unrepresented or misrepresented community members
(van de Walle, 2001; Bates, 1981). The study of institutional choice offers insights on ‘windows
of opportunity’ at policy and institutional levels, for bending the path-dependency that scholars have so often used to explain institutional rigidity (Putnam, 1994; Evans, 1996).

Of crucial relevance to this research project, apart from examining the rationale behind institutional choice, is the study of effects of those choices. This is made feasible through the ‘recognition’ component of the framework which helps us to evaluate how well articulated the political system is – that is, the degree to which representatives can be influenced by the people. The effects of recognition – the acknowledgment of a local institution that has been chosen as a local partner – influences the representation, citizenship and public domain dimensions of democracy.

The effects of institutional recognition will be influenced by the type of goals that the externally funded programs want to achieve. Based on the existing literature, higher-level institutions are more inclined to choose project goals with substantive objectives over the procedural goals of democracy (World Bank, 2010; USAID, 2011). Such a preference has been attributed to several reasons such as expediency in the execution of tasks; the belief that using institutions that involve mostly civil society would equate to democracy; an anti-government stance resulting from a disenchantment based on the government’s track-record and the conscious or unconscious tendency to create spaces that privilege certain economic activities that promote prebendalism (Ribot and Oyono, 2005). Thus, this penchant for certain types of goals and the ensuing choice of

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8 Chhatre (1998) defines ‘political articulation’ as the “degree to which citizens and citizen groups can influence policy through democratic institutions”

9 Prebendalism occurs when elected and government officials feel entitled to a share of public funds and government revenues even if they legally are not authorized to do so.
local institutions to achieve them may be a product of the need to maximize benefits for certain
groups or in the self-interest of the state (North, 1990; Bates, 1981). Such types of goals also lend
themselves to policy designs currently used by donor agencies and central governments but may
not be the best arrangements to meet needs and aspirations of the majority of the local
community. Simultaneously, the need to manufacture certain forms of success out of those
projects overlooks the procedural aspects such as the presence of a terrain that will enable
democratic culture to flourish (Baviskar, 2004; Conyers, 2007). Reconciliation of both types of
goals is possible but is most potent if an enabling environment is already existent, evincing the
necessity of goals emphasizing merging procedural aspects with instrumental ones.

2.1.2 Elites and Access

Elite capture occurs when privileged groups of people manipulating decision-making arenas and
agendas and monopolizing or misappropriating benefits and resources at the expense of the non-
elites. Elite capture can performed in different ways by different types of elites. The group of elite
is not confined kin-based or hereditary government arrangements but has to be extended to
include a wider range of actors such as government officials especially forestry agents, members
of forest management committees set up by the projects as well as members of the democratically
elected local government.

Zooming in the rural communities reveals that, after the onset of decentralization and with the
advent of projects, there has been a reconfiguration in the elite capture scene with an
intensification and spreading of patron-client relationships within the rural communities. In the
past, the foresters used to connive with the urban-based merchants to extract as much profits from
charcoal made in rural areas. Now that charcoal business is no longer the turf of only the urban-based merchants and their long-standing allies, that is, the foresters, the many newcomers, that is the rural-based producers have now established themselves and have started co-opting any actor who could reinforce their position and increase their ability to produce and sell more charcoal or to siphon off privileges that would allow them to do so. This aspect reveals the dynamism of elite domination which is characterized by a process of ‘elite continuity, transformation and replacement’ through which elites cooperate, compete and reconcile their differences. This somewhat intractable nature of elite capture can make it pernicious to participatory initiatives.

Specific types of elites develop in different contexts and I have used Ribot and Peluso’s theory of access to conceptualize ‘elites.’ Ribot and Peluso (2003) define access as the “ability to derive benefits from things”, in this case, forest resources. The conceptualization of elites in terms of a group of individuals possessing access qualifications (see Fig. 2.1.) allowing them to gain and control access prevents confinement to only certain attributes such as high social class, male, wealthy, therefore avoiding the rigidity of an absolute elite/non-elite binary. When seen through the lens of theory of access, the blurring of certain social dividing lines would take place because of mutual interests; influences between economic bases, forms of social and political organization. For instance, a rural charcoal producer of higher social rank (such as that of a village chief) may not have the access qualifications to sell their charcoal on the urban market and therefore may defer to another, lower socially-ranked rural charcoal producer’s control of access to the market. The elites would pool their access qualifications to consolidate their economically-based ties through the capture of the new bureaucratic forms of management. This elite capture combined with the differential access to markets in the cities led to oligopsony in the charcoal
sector at the rural level described in the third paper. The charcoal sector offered a new niche for those who were qualified to control access forest resources, making them part of the ‘charcoal niche elite’ group. There are overlaps between those who form the ‘charcoal niche elite’ and those who are elites in other economic or social sectors highlighting the cumulative aspect of how elites construct their control over access.

The various groups of elites have different motivating factors and different opportunities. Forestry services officials seek to control access to technology and knowledge about forests while a member of the rural council might want to have the reigns of the bank account where all the charcoal taxes are deposited. Foresters often use their political clout and their knowledge of the bureaucratic machinery to retain power over forest resources, making even non-technical issues sound as if they require some kind of scientific expertise. To maintain the legitimacy of their authority, forestry services officials play their act as indispensable technicians whose arguments have incontestable scientific soundness to the hilt. As Ribot (2007) points out: foresters impose justification based on seemingly technical arguments and are unopposed even when their arguments are specious. This is backed by their long-standing image since the colonial era and now as a branch of the central government having the authority to use repressive force that often inspires fear and deference from local people rather than collaborative spirit.
Fig. 2.1. Shows the different types of “access qualifications” that lead to variation in the ability to benefit from forests or access

(Source: Ribot and Peluso, 2003)
2.1.3 Institutions, Decentralization and Democracy: Following the rules while eroding the substance?

Debates on the models of democracy that African countries need to adopt abound in the literature (Ake, 1996; Bratton and van de Walle, 1997; Villalon and VonDoepp, 2008; Beck, 2008). Many African countries have adopted the procedural forms of democracy without corresponding widespread and deep actualization of substantive effects of democracy such as inclusiveness and economic redistribution. Procedural democracy meeting the minimal requirements such as the holding of elections in order to be qualified as a democracy but which are not sufficient to systematically equate to substantive democracy.

Senegal enjoys the reputation of one of the better-faring democracies of Africa albeit with certain ‘deficiencies’ that earn it the designation of being a ‘clientelistic democracy’ (Beck, 2008). Scholars claim that there are important linkages between democracy and effective decentralization (Cohen & Peterson, 1999; Ribot, 1995). Ribot (2009) puts forward that, for democratic decentralization to operate effectively, the “first and most important step is to choose democracy by working with or building democratic institutions” which can formally be held downwardly accountable. Inclusion and representation in the local arena are shaped by the way institutions come into being (how they are recognized) which in turn influences the ways they operate; hence the need to explore the building and functioning of institutions as a fundamental component of participation and accountability. Local democracy is unlikely without the presence and recognition of institutions conducive to activating and reinforcing democratic practices.
According to North (1990), institutions are human-devised structures that are meant to create order and constraints for human activities, anything from political, economic to social. Institutions can be both formal, such as rules, laws and informal, such as social norms, codes of conduct. Although certain types of institutions dealt with in this research conform to a formalist categorization (like the central government, elected local government, project-created forest management structures) others may not be neatly reified as such, not conforming to any specific legal-formal definition. Indeed, the character of the formality of the institutions may not be indicative of the actual nature of transactions taking place or the type of constraints that are being complied to. For instance, government officials and members of civil society may willingly consent to corrupt practices regarding activities regulated by the forestry services, illustrating how institutions considered to be formally structured are embedded in informal rules or constraints.

In conjunction with North’s definition, the frame of reference used to conceptualize institutions for this research will also be based on Galvan’s definition (Galvan and Marcus, 2003), that is, institutions were considered as being “regimes of coordination among the layers of elements…: more formal and visible layers (formal organizations and formal rules) as well as deeper, less visible, informal layers (informal rules, habituated patterns of action, as well as values, attitudes and beliefs. Institutions work to coordinate behavior to the extent that they establish correspondence and synergy among...these layered components.” Recent discussions about the roles of associations and relationships of "social capital” provide useful insights about the chosen institutional strategies shaping access of local populations to forest resources (Bebbington & Kopp, 1998; Vira et al., 1998; Evans, 1996). This “social capital” is conceptualized in terms of access qualifications that condition who can benefit from forests and how (Ribot & Peluso, 2003;
Democratic decentralization reforms consisting of the establishment and empowerment of democratically elected government at the local level have been widely promoted. Underlying this thrust for democratic decentralization is the need to provide local populations in Rural Communities with institutionalized political representation with the hope that it will result in functioning local democracy (Boutinot, 2002; 2005; 2007; Ribot, 2004). Democratic decentralization is valued because of the multi-dimensional benefits are theorized to provide: 1. efficiency, 2. equity, 3. service provision, 4. participation and democratization, and 5. national cohesion (Bardhan & Mookherjee, 2006; Ribot, 2004). In theory, representation, as it is established in local institutions through democratic decentralization, plays an important role in shaping the equity and efficiency dimensions of economic development. In practice, representation has been shown to shape how benefits from forestry resources are distributed within local populations (Ribot 2004; Bazaara, 2006; Ribot, Lund and Treue, 2010).

Democratic decentralization allows for representation in the form of a formalized link between the individual, household and community and state, becoming a process that can influence the political economy of access to forests. Representation is a mechanism that can enable citizens to be active and exert influence on policy rather than just be mere subjects who have to endure the effects of policies applied to them. It is this empowering transformation, from subject to citizen that can endow community members with the ability to influence those who govern them (Ribot, 2010; Przeworski et al., 1999; Fox, 1996).
According to Ribot (2007), “well-structured elected local government may appear to be a good choice for sustainably improving local public-sector accountability and service delivery.” He holds that despite possessing this potential for democratic representation and inclusive participation of local community, the elected local governments, especially the Rural Council, in Senegal are circumvented by the central government and the donor agencies. Ribot adds that the Rural Council, the most-local democratically elected government, has been handed inadequate resources and lack any significant discretionary power over forest resources, hindering democratic representation. Seen in the light of arguments provided by Ribot, the recognition of the Rural Council would be conducive to representation of local populations in decision-making and action related to forests. As democratically elected representatives, the Rural Council would be downwardly accountable to the local populations by being responsive to the populations’ needs and aspirations.

Paper 1 dissects the institutional recognition process to examine the reasons for the distribution of authority and resources among the local institutions involved in forest resources the Rural Community level. The Rural Council is the most procedural-democracy compliant institution at the local level in Senegal but lacks the logistical means of managing its local population’s sustainable exploitation of forests for the commercial production of charcoal. Instead, structures run by the members of the public: the Forest Management Committees (FMCs), were created and recognized by the donor-funded projects to implement policy and project activities. Not having a legal status per se, the FMCs were accommodated by the Rural Councils because the FMCs shoulder a large part of the forest charcoal production administrative and management responsibilities and are an integral part of the implementation of Forest Management Plans. While
the Forestry Code makes the implementation of Forest Management Plans mandatory for any commercial exploitation taking place in the Rural Communities, it does not lay out the specifics of the modes of accountability between the FMCs and other local institutions. It then becomes the appendage of donor agencies that also provide the technical assistance and draft the Forest Management Plans on behalf of the Rural Communities, to define the institutional relation that FMCs have with the Rural Council.

The mix of institutions, currently operating in Senegal are creating a kind of pluralism that bolsters elite capture; the government and projects chosen partners who may work for vested interests and not for the community due to their lack of local accountabilities (Platteau, 2004; Platteau and Abraham, 2002). The Rural Council is thus by default ‘dispensed’ of its democratic representation functions for most of the forest management issues because tasks are now shared between the FMCs and the Rural Council. This diffused pertinence of the Rural Council in the charcoal production management institutional arrangement and the presence of an institution operated by the public further dispossesses marginalized groups of democratic representation or access to decision making and resources.

2.1.4 Representation of Citizens

The extent to which citizens in the Rural Communities are able to derive benefits from projects like Wula Nafaa, PROGEDE may be largely contingent upon their ability to ask for what they are entitled to. Gaining more political clout in order to make claims to their fair share of benefits requires local community members to act more like citizens rather than subjects who have to endure imposed forms of government (Agrawal, 2005; Mamdani, 1996). The exercise of such
citizenship depends on the presence of a public domain that consists of “the resources and decisions under public control that are the basis for public decision making (Ribot, 2004).” Citizenship is, thus, the ability of the people to be politically engaged and to shape the polity in which they are involved (Ribot, 2009). Being a citizen means being entitled to certain civil, social and political rights, irrespective of one’s identity and interests.

Shaping active citizenship is a key element towards achieving local democracy. The public domain, following Ribot et al. (2008), defines the space of representative democracy: the domain of public powers that citizens have rights to influence. Harnessing the agency of such a citizenship means increased meaningful engagement of local populations with representatives and their ability to demand accountability. The liberal-democratic/Westphalian (LDW) citizenship consist of the idea that individual political actors and the state enter a ‘social contract’ whereby the individual consents to being governed in exchange for certain privileges and protection from the state (Purcell, 2003). The Westphalian concept of citizenship implies equality in relationship between citizens and those who govern them, which in this case would signify that all citizens are entitled to equality in political representation. The discussion about elite capture throughout this dissertation confirms Pitkin’s (1972) assertion that citizens cannot be considered as political equals when it comes to representation. Their different resources and different access criteria give citizens different abilities to influence their representatives and their effective participation in the management and use of their forests.

Paper 2 looks into the participation of a specific group of citizens: women, to bring out how the constrictive character of their social roles and economic precariousness, exclusion from political
arenas become mutually constitutive factors in becoming charcoal producers or charcoal entrepreneurs. The political engagement of citizens not only permits for effective dialogue between citizens and those who govern them but also to keep the latter in check. Citizenship is not bounded and context-independent but rather an abstract construct that needs to be rethought according to the situation that real social actors find themselves in (Reed-Danahay and Brettell, 2008). The form of citizenship that will be most pertinent to this research project is one that goes beyond the mere legal status recognized by the nation-state to encompass the element of participatory citizenship; citizens are political actors that form part of a political sphere. It is widely accepted that the participation of citizens is essential for meeting democratic and development goals of projects, calling for partnerships among different kinds of institutions at local, national and international scales (Ito, 2008). Citizens can shape the local democracy outcomes of institutional choices after those choices have been made by higher-level institutions. Participation involving democratic elements or democratic institutional infrastructure may allow for participation from members of society who otherwise might not possess the advantage of being socio-economically or politically ‘equipped’ to participate in settings and processes that make their representation binding or adequate (Ribot, 2007).

Representation consists of two main elements: accountability and responsiveness. Effective representation takes place when representatives are responsive to the needs and aspirations their people and when the people under their jurisdiction are able to hold their leaders accountable, that

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10 Representation is a function of different types of relationship between interests and outcomes: (1) “responsiveness” – relations between signals and policies (2) “accountability” – relations between outcomes and sanctions (Przeworski et al., 1999).
is, are able to sanction the leaders who deliver or do not deliver (Przeworski, Stokes and Manin, 1999; Markowski & Tucker, 2006). According to Urbinati and Warren (2008), for representatives to be responsive: (i) they must have the authorization to take action, (ii) the action taken by the representatives should promote those who are represented, (iii) people should have the necessary tools to hold their representatives responsible for their actions. Past scholarship has shown that, at the level of local government, institutions must gain legitimacy in order to survive (Vira et al, 1998; Crook & Manor, 1998; Manor, 2005). Such legitimacy needs to be buttressed by a sufficient amount of discretionary power that endows local governments the autonomy to introduce modifications and make decisions that are most befitting to specific situations to respond competently to the needs of local communities. Accountability is another crucial element in ensuring that representatives live up to the responsibility entrusted upon them and are answerable for their actions both upwardly (to higher-level institutions) and downwardly (to citizens).

2.2 Hypotheses and Research Questions

The hypotheses and associated research questions stated in this section served as a starting point that led to interrogation and analysis of more specific aspects of the institutional re-arrangement concerning access to forest resources that resulted from institutional reconfigurations. Those institutional reconfigurations resulted from institutional choice and recognition. Fieldwork provided the opportunity to identify the most empirically compelling manner to answer the research questions. Hence I focused on three different aspects that would offer actionable angles for rural development linked to natural resource exploitation, the problematization of the
participatory approach used by projects and the process of institutional reform at the conception stage.

To explore how institutional choices affect representation, the first hypothesis posed was:

**Higher-level institutions acknowledge the importance of incorporating substantive aspects of democracy in meeting project goals yet the choice of local institutions made by donors and central government is not conducive to democratic representation in rural communities.** Substantive democracy is a form of democracy whereby all groups in society are represented and can participate in political processes. It is a form of democracy that functions in the interest of the governed (Cox, 1997; Heller, 2000; Diamond and Morlino, 2005). Substantive democracy comprises of the meaningful effects of democracy, going beyond the abidance of the norms of procedural democracy such as the holding of elections.

The main research questions with respect to hypothesis 1 were: (1) Why and how do higher level institutions choose the mix of institutions they want to partner with at the local level? (2) How do higher-level institutions balance their focus among the different components of project goals? Goals consist of attaining outputs that are quantitatively measurable such as the changes in the amount of charcoal produced, the number of attendees at workshops organized by the project and also a component for the building or enhancing of democratic institutional platform for achieving increased participation and representation, (3) How do institutional choices made by higher-level institutions affect representation taking place through local institutions? This question answers how institutional choices sustain or disrupt the skewed distribution of power and resources among
local institutions even when the project goals explicitly consist of or favor the substantive outcomes of democracy.

In spite of the decentralized management system already in place in Senegal, the lack of representation of local community members, especially of those who are not privileged, is very palpable. The introduction of Forest Management Committees to manage forest resources favored the maximization of charcoal production and efficiency in the delivery of services over the democratic representation of the Rural Communities. One of the canons of development practice is the inclusion of local populations in projects through participatory approaches and institutions. Involving the villagers in the forestry-related projects not only allowed for the project-created FMCs to grab local workforce to run the FMCs but it allowed for the interventions to bear the hallmark of being socially sensitive through the recognition of democratically elected local institutions or institutions formally incorporating participation of villagers. By doing so, the interventions attempted at building equity in access, especially of those who are likely to be unjustly prevented from benefitting from their forests, that is, marginalized poorer segments of the rural societies.

This hypothesis rests on the premise that if the institutional environment at the local level is to be conducive to democratic representation, then higher-level institutions need to choose local institutions that have formal mechanisms of accountability and responsiveness. In the case studied, the chosen local institutions were coordinated around charcoal production, based on the institutional configuration preferences of the donors, all of which were encapsulated and set as prescriptions in the Forest Management Plans produced by the projects for the Rural
Communities. Wula Nafaa and PROGEDE each set up their own FMCs endowing them with powers to manage forest resources albeit positioning them differently with respect to the democratically elected local government.

The probing of the conditions under which the choices also shed light on why higher-level institutions are still able to continue targeting normatively closed outcomes by applying formulaic approaches to project implementation. The policy and project outputs and outcomes that higher-level institutions seek to achieve fit their calculations but often fall short of creating an enabling environment that can allow for structurally deeper changes that are more meaningful for local communities. Most policies require, for the purpose of being evaluated as successful, the accomplishment of goals with outcomes that can be quantified, especially in material terms (Baviskar, 2004). In choosing their local partners, higher-level institutions have to factor in meeting goals that produce economic and social effects that can be tangible expeditiously (Pritchett & Woolcock, 2004; Smoke, 2007). Additionally higher-level institutions are predisposed to choose what appears to be ‘technocratically correct’ to them rather than calibrating their intervention around building more durable inclusive access to forest resources and a greater degree of ‘local responsiveness.’

Hypothesis 1 was accepted because it was found that despite the purported concordance with the ideals of democracy by higher level institutions in the choice of their local partners, democratic representation was effective mostly with respect to securing higher charcoal production allotments for the Rural Community as a whole but not in enhancing equity in access to forest resources among the various groups of villagers within the Rural Community. Comparison
between the two project phases of both Wula Nafaa and PROGEDE shed light on the changes in the ideology behind goal formulation, implementation approach and the associated triggering factors as well as any modifications in the relations with the local government.

The FMCs are institutions that do not have formal responsibilities to represent – in contrast to the democratically elected Rural Council. Although they require the participation of the local population to function, the FMCs do not possess built-in mechanisms offering all and any members of the local community the opportunity for meaningful participation and to create an institutional environment amenable to rectifying distributive inequalities. The primary function of the FMCs is to perform administrative and technical tasks to assist the Rural Council, but the presence of the FMCs also pluralized the institutional landscape, creating a situation that could deflect the domination by any single institution. The participatory mode of operation is taken as the guarantor for these institutions being inclusive and downwardly accountable. Indeed, the mechanisms of responsiveness and accountability of the Rural Council were weakened because of the distance created between the democratically elected representatives and rural charcoal producers with the recognition of project-created institutions (the FMCs) that have the capacity to accomplish administrative and forest management tasks but are unable to substitute for the democratic representation functions.

The second major axis along which this research was carried out concerned the conditions under which a proliferation of local institutions can lead to stronger or weaker local representation. Understanding how choice and recognition plays out in the context of institutional pluralism and how that in turn influences representation warranted hypothesis 2: A plurality of local
institutions that are not subject to overarching local representative authority leads to ‘pluralism without representation’, creating opportunities for elite capture.

This hypothesis addressed how, in an environment typified by the multitude of institutions: customary chiefs, private businesses, local governments and administrative bodies, there is a situation of pluralism without representation emerges. This refers to a situation whereby the advantages conferred by the synchretic processes and polycentric systems: multiplicity, interdependence, adaptive malleability, negotiated collaboration are overridden to undermine representation. Syncretism (Galvan, 2007) and polycentricity (Ostrom, 2009) can both be aspects of pluralism; the salient feature of syncretism being the transformative process that ensues from the recombination of institutional elements with diverse characteristics and polycentric system being one whereby citizens are able to organize and adjust government at different levels and scales and the presence of counter-powers that keep institution in check.

‘Pluralism without representation’ resulted out of a combination of factors including representative institutions being partially recognized for the management of forests and the flaring of elite capture capacitated through the network of chosen and recognized institutions.

Administrative efficiency was achieved through task specialization: 1) the Rural Council being the gatekeeper for any project activity implemented in the Rural Community and representing the Rural Community when dealing with other institutions, while 2) the FMCs were made in charge of the administrative procedures concerning charcoal production and became the ‘go-to’ institutions for rural charcoal producers and 3) the Forestry Services retained their policing and technical advisory roles with respect to forests. Under such configurations, the lack of democratic
representation was exacerbated for those who needed to be represented the most about issues of access to forest resources as the democratic representation responsibilities could not be outsourced to the FMCs. The occurrence wherein institutions outside of the legal-administrative structure, such as the FMCs, are chosen and entrusted with public powers without incorporating mechanisms of downward accountability left those institutions vulnerable to elite capture with the result that individuals who are already privileged continue to capture the benefits of project interventions (Galvan and Marcus, 2003; Ostrom, 1996). Whether the FMCs were subjected to the authority of democratically representative institution, that is, the Rural Council such as in the zones covered by Wula Nafaa or were expected to function as institutions that are parallel (possessing similar functions and power) to local elected government is sustained in order to prevent any political interference like in the PROGEDE zones, the configurations did not guarantee democratic representation.

The second hypothesis was accepted because the findings show that there is institutional pluralism without representation in the Rural Communities studied. The proliferation of institutions chosen to carry out forest management took place out of need for specialization to achieve efficiency and fulfilled requirements for participation and democracy mostly procedurally. The strongest democracy attribute of Rural Council, that is, the possibility of villagers to obtain responsiveness through mechanisms of accountability went underused under the institutional setup recognized for forest and charcoal production management in rural zones. The institutional pluralism offered incentives to the elites at the local level to team up and monopolize access to forest resources.
2.3 Methods

The type of data collected for this study was qualitative in nature. The case study research design type was used to give direction and to systematize the inquiry. The methods used to collect data were chosen according to the type of data required for this research project, that is, both descriptive and explanatory in nature. Yin (1993) defines the case study method as “an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context, addresses a situation in which the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident and uses multiple sources of evidence.”

The main methods of data collection included interviews (structured or loosely structured), questionnaire surveys, observation, literature review and analysis of documents and other unobtrusive methods. The four questionnaire survey instruments were targeted at (1) the local authorities, (2) members of local communities, (3) project staff and government and donor agency officials (4) households of selected villages in Tambacounda.

The research project was organized into four broad phases: 1st Phase: Literature review of project documents, legal codes, laws and relevant scholarly work. Synthesis of data from secondary sources as well as primary sources so as to depict the backdrop against which the current action is playing out and to identify the contextual variables, 2nd Phase: Studying recognition in the rural regions, 3rd Phase: Studying choice of higher-level institutions 4th Phase: Analysis of data-interpretation and analysis of interviews, surveys and observation data.
The research drew largely from a repertoire of qualitative methods to obtain primary data. Field work in Senegal was carried out over a period of 17 months, from January 2012 to August 2013, to collect such data. Formal and informal interviews were be used to understand practices of villagers, charcoal producers, members of rural councils, government officials, traditional leaders, and project officials. Participant observation, focus group discussions, questionnaire surveys helped in better grasping the different kinds of social, political, cultural dynamics at various levels of rural life in Senegal. Structured and unstructured interviews as well as direct observation served to understand the logic and dynamics of the donor agencies, government officials, project implementers, policy champions and to assess the ways in which the resulting institutional choices shape representational practice. ‘Studying-up’ (Nader, 1993) provided useful insights in the dynamics at the stages where higher-level institutions decide and plan for policies and projects to implement them are made as well as the relations among institutions across the hierarchy involved in forest management. Such an approach avoids the overreliance on examining only the communities ‘recipient’ of development aid or policy action to also include the study of those in higher-level institutions who design the projects and implement them. The data gleaned from the
questionnaire for studying-up, aimed at officials of higher-level institutions: the international donor agencies, the implementing agencies, the national government unearthed how the implementing staff thought of and conceptualized the processes and approaches adopted by the policies and projects they were implementing. The studying-up interviews shed light on the ‘bureaucratic cultures’ that prevail in the higher-level organizations and the ideologies behind the choice of local institutional partners, providing more detailed or unpublished information about the projects, the future plans, about the relations they have with each type of authority in the villages as well what are the factors they believed influenced the choice of institutions.

I carried out 58 ‘studying-up’ interviews in Dakar, Tambacounda, either using an interview guide or unstructured interviews using main research questions as lead. Another set of structured interview administered among nine implementing staff of the projects and forestry services to survey their understanding of participation and democracy and their factors affecting them. The group of interviewees for the ‘studying-up’ included officials of the USAID, World Bank based in Dakar, the implementing staff of Wula Nafaa and PROGEDE in Tambacounda and Kolda, officials of the forestry services, Senegalese rural development branches, researchers in research institutions and NGOs in Senegal, officials of the Ministries of Environment, Decentralization and Finance. Observation for ‘studying-up’ involved shadowing the officials when they would go out on missions or hold meetings and workshops in the rural zones. Attending meetings such as that about the renewal of PROGEDE’s FMCs held in Tamba also provided opportunities to interact with the officials and other stakeholders and observe how the decision-making process about project implementation took place.
The data obtained from the primary sources was triangulated with and complemented by secondary sources of data such as the media, government documents, publications from donor organizations (World Bank, USAID) and the relevant scholarly literature. The linkages among the institutions was presented in the form of an institutional map (see Fig.2.3.). The institutional map in Fig. 2.3. portrays the institutions that occupy the institutional landscape of forest sector management. The map locates the institutions at the various scales: the local, regional, national and global levels. It also shows which ones among the institutions received deconcentrated powers (in the blue boxes) or decentralized powers (in the green boxes) from the Central Government. Both PROGEDE’s and Wula Nafaa’s Forest Management Committees (in the red boxes) are entities run by villagers, not part of any other institution possessing a legal status in the politico-administrative system but expected to work with the Rural Councils and Local Forestry Services. The institutional mapping provides a panoptic view of the institutions playing a role in forest management and the regulation of charcoal production, helping in the visualization of the location of each institution on the institutional landscape. The location of each institution on the map is based on the decision-making powers and resources held by each institution which also determines the direction of any transfer of power and resources and to some extent, that of accountability. The legal texts and project documents officially defined the role and powers of institutions while interviews with actors within those institutions revealed how the institution evolved and performed. Interviews and surveys at the local level revealed the effects of the institutional choices; the form recognition took in practice on the ground. This was evaluated through questions about the adequacy and meaningfulness of the chosen institutions to the local populations in exploiting for commercial charcoal. Interviews and questionnaire surveys with local leaders offered insights into how the local institutions interact which in turn impacted on the
outcomes of democratic representation and participatory practices used by the projects. Oral testimonies, serving as substitute for archival data, were used to gather information about the institutional history and footprint and how power balances among institutions have changed over time in the rural zones.

To examine institutional choice and recognition, the interviews conducted were around the following elements (i) responsiveness, (ii) accountability, (iii) the structure of institutions, (iv) the administrative procedures involved in charcoal production and commercialization, (v) the level of material well-being of villagers, (vi) allegiance to political institutions, (vii) satisfaction with the level of democracy, (viii) access to benefits from forestry resources, (ix) participation in PROGEDE or Wula Nafaa (x) engagement with elected local institution.
Fig. 2.3. Institutional mapping of institutions involved or connected to forest management

Map of institutions involved in forest resource management in Senegal

**Central Government**
- Ministry of the Environment & Nature Protection
- National Forestry service

**Regional Level**
- Regional Level Governor
- Regional forestry service

**Local Level**
- Préfet
- Local forestry
- Sous-Préfet
- Customary Authorities

**Decentralization**
- Regional council

**Decentralization**
- Rural Council level (elected)

Donors, Development Agencies and big NGOs
- GEF (Global Environmental Fund)
- IDA (International Danish Aid)
- DGIS (Netherlands Directorate General for International Cooperation)
- USAID
- IRG (International Resource Group)
- World Bank

**PROGEDE**
- Wula Nafaa

**PROGEDE’S Forest Management Committee**

**Wula Nafaa’s Forest Management Committee**

**DONORS AND DEVELOPMENT AGENTS**
- USAID
- IRG (International Resource Group)
- World Bank
- PROGEDE
- Wula Nafaa
- PROGEDE’S Forest Management Committee
- Wula Nafaa’s Forest Management Committee

**LOCAL POPULATIONS**
This study used consisted of three main groups of survey consisting of questionnaire instruments and guided interviews:

1) Household surveys

The household surveys were carried out in a total of six villages: Koar, Dianwelly, Majialy, Madina, Gorel Bocar, Sita Niaoule. A total of 138 carrés (extended households) were surveyed about the following: number of people in each extended household (EH), number of people involved in forest-related activities in each EH, number of people engaging in charcoal production in each EH, number of people engaging in agriculture, number of people engaging in other activities, use of revenues derived from charcoal production (categorized as agricultural, marriage, motorbike, cattle, other expenses), migrants per EH, participation in meetings, whether or not active in meetings, the type of house they lived in. Apart from the close-ended questions about the aspects mentioned above, the participants in the surveys were requested to provide additional details whenever applicable about the countries where the villager’s kin member migrated to, the level of education, the most responsive local institution.

The sampling method of households was purposive, that is, they were selected based on the availability of household members to participate. The villages themselves were selected after weeks and months of observation was carried out in those villages to be able to have a good grasp of the micro-dynamics so as to have as representative of a sample as possible of the village being surveyed. Living in the villages enabled participatory observation, facilitating the identification appropriate proxies such as using the type of dwelling as an indicator of material well-being.
Fig. 2.4. House Type 1: Huts, made of thatch, branches, mud and wood. It is the type of dwelling most prevalent in the villages studied and owned mostly by the poorer members of the local populations.

Fig. 2.5. House Type 2: Zinc roofed house, owned by villagers who have a comfortable living standard. Zinc-roofed houses cost less than concrete-roofed houses but they are indicative of the family having...
I applied some degree of stratification in the sample selection of households. Stratification, whenever applied, was along the lines of income/material well-being to offer a cross-section that is most representative of the society being studied for the household survey and it was based on gender and participation in projects for the surveys of members of local communities.

2) Local leaders’ questionnaire survey and interviews

The sample of local authorities for the questionnaire survey consisted of members of the Rural Councils: Presidents of Rural Council and elected members, members of the FMCs, village chiefs, local forestry service, members of the community who play a prominent role at the local level. The sample size for the questionnaire survey was 15 and respondents were from the Rural Communities of Missirah and Koar. Interviews of local leaders in villages outside these two Rural Communities were also carried out to provide a more robust analysis of democratic representation in Rural Communities as well as tracing the trajectories of charcoal production and institutions.
engaged in forest management in those additional villages: Makacoulibantang, Sare Bidji (Kolda), Ndam, Thietty, Sakar (Kolda), Oudoucar (Kolda).

The interviews were carried out in a systematic way wherein, the members of the executive committee for each FMC of each block were interviewed along with in-depth interviews with the RCPs of the Rural Councils studied, the foresters and officials of the sous- prefecture for each Rural Community, the village chiefs of the villages surveyed,

3) Rural population questionnaire survey and interviews

A questionnaire survey was carried out among 30 villages selected randomly to gauge variables of accountability, responsiveness of local institutions and their participation in the projects. 85 interviews were conducted in villages of the Rural Communities of Missira and Koar. Purposive sampling based on snowballing method was largely employed because it allowed the selection of people based on characteristics allowing the contribution of a variety of experiences, thus the depiction of a fuller picture of the situation. Triangulation with information obtained from relevant interviews was carried out to further ensure that validity of data obtained through the surveys.

Data from the interviews and questionnaire surveys were translated from French to English. The responses were grouped according to their relevance to each research question, for example, those that answer questions about choice, recognition, responsiveness or accountability. The data from the interviews was used to map out the political and economic allegiances, connections among villagers who are members as well as non-members of the Forest Management Committees and to
gauge the effect of leaders on representation. The questionnaire survey of households in the Tambacounda region provided data about the populations’ socio-economic situation and also to record changes brought about by access to forests, the advent of projects and changes in representation. Outputs include an accurate description the context within which the current decentralized forestry resource management is operating, the relationship among various factors influencing choice and recognition that will give an indication of the level, type, strength of representation. The case studies were constructed for each rural community delineating the contextual contours.
2.4 Bibliography


CHAPTER 3

THE PROCESS OF INSTITUTIONAL CHOICE AND RECOGNITION FOR DECENTRALIZED FOREST MANAGEMENT IN CHARCOAL-PRODUCING ZONES OF TAMBACOUNDA, SENEGAL

3.1 Abstract

In Senegal, the mix of local institutions entrusted with forest resource management is an outcome of choices made by the national government and international agencies. This paper explores how local institutional partners are chosen by national and international institutions in a decentralized forest governance context. In the Tambacounda region of Senegal, Forest Management Committees (FMCs) run by the members of the public were created and chosen by USAID and World Bank projects to work with the democratically elected local government (the rural council) and the forestry services. Although the new multi-institution configuration presents potentials for democratic resource management, the ensuing division of tasks among the various chosen institutions created new opportunities for collusion among elites who captured positions in the chosen institutions. Such a capture involved a small number of favorably placed villagers intercepting a disproportionately large amount of benefits from forest resources and excluding the majority poor of the population. Ribot, Chhatre and Lankina’s (2008) ‘Institutional Choice and Recognition’ framework provided the overarching conceptual lens and Grindle’s (2005) “Process of Policy and Institutional Reform,” was used to operationalize the analysis of the institutional choice component.

Key Words: Institutional choice and recognition, studying-up, forest management projects
3.2 Introduction

In Senegal, forest resources are essential in meeting Senegal’s domestic energy demands (Tappan et al. 2004; World Bank, 2010). Ensuring the supply of forest-based fuel to Senegal’s urban centers and the creation of income-generating opportunities for the rural communities required a reconfiguration of the local institutional mix for managing the resource. The country’s 1996 decentralization laws and 1998 ‘decentralized’ forestry code allowed the rural communities, represented by the elected local Rural Councils, to have the right to manage and commercially produce charcoal in their forests. Critical are the institutions that manage access to the natural resources are vital to the livelihood of local communities, especially in poor rural regions where income-generation opportunities are scarce. The local-level institutions chosen and recognized by the higher-level institutions influence the way that local populations have an equitable control over and access to their forests.

The mix of local institutions managing forest resources in rural Senegal is explained in this paper as an output of the process of institutional choice and recognition led by national government and international agencies. The local institutions implementing policy reform and project actions were chosen to serve several specific purposes. In this case, the purposes were mainly to achieve the goals of meeting the increase in demand for wood-based charcoal in Senegal’s urban centers in an environmentally sustainable way, wealth creation in the rural charcoal-producing zones where the forests are located, and to enhance the forest resource management abilities of the rural communities through supporting participatory and democratic institutions. These goals and the local institutions chosen to help achieve them were decisions taken by higher-level institutions.
The analysis of institutional choice – the process through which higher-scale agencies choose the institutions they will work with in the local arena – aims at understanding why certain institutions (and not others) are being chosen and recognized by the central government and donor agencies (Ribot, Chhatre and Lankina, 2008). Institutional recognition involves the acknowledgement and support of the chosen institution via the transfer of powers to them, partnership in projects or their involvement in decision-making activities (Ribot, Chhatre and Lankina, 2008). Institutional choices are made by higher-level institutions in order to have local partners to implement the strategies adopted by the state and donors and to involve local rural communities in the execution of the project. Since powers and resources tend to be concentrated at the centers, be it the national government of Senegal or the international agencies located in the West, they have to be devolved or transferred from those higher-level institutions to selected local ones. This study examines the process through which the institutional choices are made as these choices have implications for the establishment of democratic decentralization – a goal of government and of the projects. Democratic decentralization is believed to foster democratic representation at the local level. Democratic representation is framed as accountability and responsiveness of leaders to the people. It could be considered as a means of politically empowering a wider swath of the populations in those rural communities and keeping in check the calculated actions fueled by the self-preservation and/or predatory instincts of those who have significant economic interests and who are well positioned to exploit the institutional machinery (Przeworski et al., 1999; Beck, 2005; Young, 1997; van de Walle, 2001).

Developing managed exploitation of a profitable natural resource at the local rural level in Africa involves a whole set of policy and institutional reforms. The state and the customary authorities
are no longer the sole managers and custodians of commercially exploitable forests in Senegal. There are now additional institutional nodes that share those forest management functions. Each institutional node represents one institution delimited by its own sets of rules, being a composite of actors, powers ascribed to it and any mechanisms of accountability. In addition to the democratically elected local government known as the Rural Councils and the Ministry of Environment’s Forestry Services, there are now forest management committees created by externally funded forestry project interventions: the World Bank’s PROGEDE (Sustainable and Participatory Energy Management) and USAID’s WulaNafaa (Agriculture and Natural Resources Management) projects which have become part of the forest resource management institutional landscape. Those committees provided additional institutional nodes for the sustainable management of forests and for the control of access to commercial charcoal production. They were placed under the authority of elected local governments and supervised by the Forestry Services local brigade already active prior to project implementation.

This article examines how and why higher-level institutions such as the central government and international organizations choose institutions for managing access to forests and benefits from wood-based charcoal production in rural Senegal. The current choice of institutions, denoting a strong shift in forest management from state-managed to ostensibly citizen-managed, was leveraged through decentralization. The decentralization reforms of Senegal and forestry projects have created a new public local management that allows for greater private economic access to the resource for rural dwellers. The findings reveal that despite the overall increase in charcoal production by local producers, the chosen institutional arrangements have stunted political representation, leading to the weakening of participatory practices for the poor and marginalized
in relation to access to forest resources. The chosen mix of institutions has facilitated the interception of opportunities and benefits from forests by a small group of elite villagers and favorably placed officials. Access to forests and distribution of benefits has improved only for certain groups of villagers since charcoal production has been opened to rural communities.

Driving this inquiry were the following questions: What specific mix of institutions – including the elected local governments – would best foster a democratic local context that could also achieve local environmental and developmental objectives? Under what conditions and why do formal state and donor actors choose such institutions? What are the effects of the actual choice of local institutions on access to wealth-generating opportunities from natural resources for different categories of local people? This paper responds to these questions by exploring the choice of local institutions by higher-level institutions in the decentralized management of charcoal-producing forests in the Tambacounda region of Senegal. Furthermore, this study also adds to the existing scholarship on democratic representation and charcoal production in Senegal which has until now been concentrated on the struggle of removing the monopoly of urban-based merchants and their long-standing stalwarts: the foresters of the forestry services so that rural communities can have access to charcoal production in their forests. The focus on the post-decentralization transition phase of forest management exposed how institutional choice and recognition has influenced the outcomes of democratic representation in the rural zones studied.

Ribot, Chhatre and Lankina’s institutional choice and recognition framework is used in this study to explore the factors underlying the choice of local institutions and the effects of the recognition
that those choices generate (Ribot, Chhatre and Lankina’s 2008). To operationalize the choice component, I devised a schema (see Fig. 3.1.) based on Grindle’s (2005) “The Process of policy and institutional reform” model. A combination of the Ribot et al. and Grindle framings is used to examine the conditions under which higher-level institutions choose the mix of institutions they want to partner with at the local level. Grindle’s model conceives of the process of policy and institutional reforms as an interactive one; wherein the choice of institutions to implement policy reforms are shaped by the interests and institutions in various arenas. The different arenas identified by Grindle are: agenda setting, design, adoption, implementation and sustainability of policy implementation and institutional re-arrangements. Ribot, Chhatre and Lankina’s framework proposes how to analytically approach an action, that is, institutional choice and recognition, which has profound implications for how institutions shape access to a natural resource at the local level and how they affect the effectiveness of decentralization. Ribot et al.’s framework provides a conceptual receptacle for Grindle’s model, situating it in a larger continuum of the policy process, that is, Ribot et al.’s framework tells us where to look and Grindle’s model tells us what to look at there while this study tells us what was found when the gaze was shifted in the direction of where policy and institutional reforms are planned and why it mattered using empirical evidence from where the reforms unfold. Ribot et al.’s framing starts at the point where local institutions are selected to implement policy and Grindle schema takes into account factors preceding and affecting that stage. Ribot et al.’s framework extends into the phase where policy implementation unfolds on the ground, which is treated by the recognition component.
The main methods of primary data collection included interviews, observation (both participant and unobtrusive) and questionnaire surveys. From the 167 interviews carried out, around 49 were semi-structured and structured interviews of officials of line ministries: Ministry of Environment and donor agencies (USAID and World Bank), the staff of PROGEDE and Wula Nafaa projects, and also officials of the Forestry Services which is the executive branch of Ministry of Environment as part of ‘studying up.’ The element of choice was empirically researched using “studying up” methods (Nader, 1972) looking at the upper and middle institutional structures, enlarging and furthering the field of vision to include the architects of projects and policy reform and the sources of ideological constructs underlying the selection. The recognition part was researched by fieldwork in the villages of mainly two Rural Communities in the Tambacounda region to studying the structures lower down the hierarchy, describing why the institutional landscape for forest resource management is what it is. Three questionnaire surveys administered provided data contributing to a deeper understanding of the context.

3.3 Background

PROGEDE and WulaNafaa are the two largest and longest standing forestry projects in Senegal. PROGEDE (Sustainable and Participatory Energy Management) is financed by the World Bank and WulaNaafa (Agriculture and Natural Resource Program) is funded by USAID and implemented by the US based contractor, International Resources Group (IRG). PROGEDE whose first phase was from 1998 to 2004 and whose second phase is from 2010-2016 has the main goal of meeting an important part of the rapidly growing urban demand for household fuels, without the loss of forest cover and the ecosystem’s carbon sequestration potential and biodiversity.
The project development objective is to increase the availability of diversified household fuels in a sustainable way and to increase the income of affected communities while preserving the forest ecosystems (World Bank, 2010).

The activities of WulaNafaa (WN), whose first phase was from 2003 to 2008 and the second phase from 2009-2014, are within the framework of two strategic objectives which were agreed upon by the USAID and the Government of Senegal. The objective of WulaNafaa was to contribute to poverty reduction and to sustainable local development by increasing rural communities and producer revenues through handing responsibility to local authorities and encouraging decentralized, integrated and participatory resource management (USAID, 2008).

The democratic decentralization reforms of Senegal, inscribed in the decentralized forestry laws, were crafted so that local populations would have control over their forests via democratically elected local leaders. These reforms are not, however, producing the expected outcome of more equitable access among all groups of people in those societies (Ribot & Larson, 2012). Several factors account for such a deficient outcome, but the foremost cause identified by international agencies was that institutions are unable to meet the demands and needs of citizens (Grindle & Thomas, 1989). This article examines the link between this inability and the choice-making process through which local institutions are/become recognized in a decentralized forestry management context in rural Senegal.

The practical significance of institutional choice and recognition performed by the higher-level institutions is that by choosing specific kinds of local institutions, they also define the type of...
citizens who they believe would be most able to use what the chosen institutions have to offer. Besides enhancing the capacity of the local populations as charcoal producers, the outcomes of those choices have not been innocuous. The creation of Forest Management Committees and partnering them with Rural Councils and Forestry services added to the complexity of the politico-administrative structure of forestry resource management while also creating openings for elites to capture benefits that emerge.

Elite capture, whereby a small group of favorably placed villagers use their social, political or economic privileges to accumulate more benefits from forests at the expense of the non-elites, is symptomatic of the exclusionary effect that the mix of institutions has engendered (Platteau, 2004). The international agencies’ evaluation of projects’ targets and goals do not capture the intra-community disparities that have started appearing with the opening up of the charcoal production sector to the Rural Communities. Instead the dysfunctions introduced through the institutional choice and recognition within those rural communities get masked behind the indicators showing improvement; such as the increase in charcoal produced, the rising numbers of participants in meetings and workshops. However, they do not tell us who among the villagers obtained the lion’s share of the profit earned from charcoal production and who cannot get their fair share and why that is so. The indicators do not tell us whose participation mattered and was effective or who got what out of those meetings and workshops.

The self-interested compliance of the elites to the projects’ actions can be capitalized on by the projects. The elites being the type of citizens most apt to execute project tasks in the villages have become the de facto development agents. They are also most able to manipulate and divert
resources and power for themselves. Foregoing the input of such local-elite as de facto project executors would be a disadvantage for projects which are pressed by time and budget constraints and the need to positively impact on performance and output indicators. The entrenchment of patterns of accumulation of forest-based benefits by the elites has implications for the overall advancement of the rural community.

Although greater technical and administrative capacity to manage forests and produce charcoal was built through the intervention of projects, inequalities in access to the resource between the well-off and the socially and economically deprived were strengthened due to the institutional set-up being prone to capture by the local elites. When charcoal production was first legally opened to populations in the rural communities, the majority resisted engaging in that activity, perceived as being environmentally deleterious and socially debasing. This resistance to charcoal production gradually turned into an almost frenzied rush to produce what has become known as the ‘black diamond’ when the news about the profitability of charcoal production spread in those communities.

The institutional landscape of forest management in Tambacounda is composed of multiple institutions characterized by a division of tasks among the institutions. The forest management committees set up by the projects and run by the villagers take care of and respond directly to the day to day in charcoal production administrative and financial procedures. The rural council oversees the functioning of the forest management committees (in the WulaNafaa project zone) and represents the rural community during interaction with higher-level institutions. The forestry services assists both the Rural Council and the forest management committees with technical and
some administrative support, while maintaining their policing role. When the actors in those chosen institutions became aware of the benefits they could derive by joining forces with each other, they built their informal network of elites connecting instead of competing with better- and less-recognized institutional nodes (Crook & Manor, 2000; Evans, 1996). Members of the project management committee, the Rural Council and the forestry services and bigger local charcoal entrepreneurs colluded to maintain control over local charcoal production mostly by giving each other preferential access to production permits and allowing the illegal interception and sale of permits.

3.4 Merilee Grindle’s ‘process of policy and institutional reform’:
Unpacking the stages of institutional choice-making

This section describes the process of institutional choice making. The Ribot et al. (1998) framework identifies institutional choice as a crucial element that sets in motion a series of actions when a specific configuration of institutions is chosen and specific institutions are recognized when they are conceded with authority and resources. The schemata in Fig 3.1. depicts the stages of institutional choice and recognition for policy reform and institutional change in the context of decentralized forest management for charcoal production in Senegal. It draws from Merilee Grindle’s "The Process of policy reform and institutional reform” (Grindle, 2005) framework operationalizes the analysis of choice and recognition by breaking it down into a process extending over a number of arenas, namely the 1) agenda-setting arena, 2) the design arena, 3) the adoption arena, 4) the implementation arena, 5) the sustainability arena. Grindle’s schema focuses on what happens at the higher level, addressing in a more systematic way the role of actors and institutions at the higher-level (as shown by Fig.2.1.): parsing actors’ intentions, ideological
foundations underlying projects, the ends and the means as well as any possible feedback loop at each stage of the choice-making process. By complementing each other, both the Choice and Recognition Framework and the Process of Policy and Institutional reform provide an adequate analytical and descriptive model of institutional processes and outcomes.

Different types of interests exist in all the arenas of policy change and institutional reform. The interests that take precedence are the ones at the agenda-setting and design level thus influencing the institutions which are chosen to implement the projects or the policies. The interests and institutions implicated in the agenda-setting and design arenas play a larger role in bringing salient issues to the fore. Thus, the institutions active at those stages, namely the international agencies and the national government, are the architects of projects and initiators of reform. In the case of the current forest management in rural Senegal, the agenda-setting and design stages involved a confluence of interests both emerging from the actors historically involved in the implementation of development interventions and laws and policies concerning forests as well as rooted in the prominent economic, development and environment trends of the moment. The set of actors figuring prominently in these two arenas are the World Bank and the USAID and their respective implementing agencies (the forestry services for the first phase of PROGEDE, replaced by independent consultants for the second phase and the International Resource Group (IRG)), the Ministry of Energy, the Ministry of Finance and the Ministry of Environment with its executive branch: the Forest Services.

The agenda-setting arena is one dominated by the international agencies with input from the Senegalese officialdom. For instance what mandates to fund or support rests on the donor
agencies preference of which portfolio to support. There is now, for example, a diminished interest in funding forestry-related programs for one of the agencies. As an official pointed out, the Natural Resource Management Section of USAID-Senegal is now re-orientating its funding and project intervention attention towards food security issues in the Sahel and away from forest management (interviews, 2012). The arguments to justify those interventions, often developed within the confines of western universities and shaped by the agenda of donor agencies provide the blueprint of institutional configurations in the recipient countries aid packages (Goldman, 2005; Easterly, 2007; Brautignam, 1992; Burkey, 1993). International actors playing the role of policy champions often are the international linkage, bringing what they believe to be urgent issues requiring external support, to the attention of international agencies.

‘Policy champions’, individuals who have experience or knowledge and who can be advocates of the policy, can affect policies (IDS, 2007; Devlin-Foltz & Molinaro, 2010). The influence of ‘policy champions’ in policy changes surrounding charcoal production is notable. The knowledge and connections possessed by policy champions across the aid industry, the Senegalese forestry services or part of western academia, often evolves to find its way as a shaping force into policy concerning the forest sector which underlies the charcoal industry. Sometimes the long-standing consultancy and research interests in the chain of charcoal production of that policy champion has translated into advocacy for democracy practices and eventually actions modifying the social and political implications of the charcoal industry. The pressure exerted by such policy champions in this case by researchers studying the subject, consultants involved at various stages of the policy process and institutional reform is palpable throughout. This was the case for the uproar especially within the forestry services and the urban-based charcoal merchants in Dakar created
by the showing of a film revealing the dark underbelly of charcoal industry (Ribot, 2014). This policy champion has also been an advocate within the funding agencies circles and has been particularly persuasive about the democratic decentralization stance in Community Based Natural Resource Management, participating in the drafting of the documents and providing conceptual framing to the goals and ideological approach used by the projects.

The policy role of the executive can be illustrated by how the Forestry Services upholds discourses that orient decision outcomes in favor of interests of high/mid-level officials in the hierarchy. One example of such a discourse used to be the “for the national good” discourse that used to be heavily evoked by the Forest Services to justify why rural populations should let their forests be exploited by wealthy outsiders for commercial purposes – for little local benefit (Ribot, 2009). The prominent position that the Forestry Services have had in any actions concerning forestry resources meant that their input such as their experience and feedback still has weight when decisions about forestry interventions are made. Foresters of the Forestry Services are cognizant of the daily matters of charcoal production in the villages and are part of information feedback loop with the mid- and higher-level officials in Dakar who participate in the agenda-setting and design arenas.

The question “who decides which local institution should do what?” pertains more to the design arena in the Grindle schema as it sequentially arrives as a preoccupation after the pertinence of an issue has been determined in the agenda-setting arena. During interviews, that question consistently fetched the answer that the role is not assigned to one single person or institution but
that the officials from the donor agencies and from the various ministries sit around a table and
discuss how the project is to be implemented.

The choice and the presence of certain types of institutions is based on the function of those
institutions, that is, the type of tasks those institutions are meant to accomplish either to fill in
lacunae or consolidate the existing institutional infrastructure for forest management or delivery
of administrative services (Brinkerhoff, 2001). Institutional choice is influenced by the type of
goals that the externally funded programs want to achieve. From the project documents, it was
garnered that higher-level institutions are more inclined to choose project goals with tangible
output potential using procedural democracy (World Bank, 2010; USAID, 2011). Such a
preference has been attributed to several reasons such as expediency in the execution of tasks; the
belief that using institutions that involve mostly civil society would equate to democracy; an anti-
government stance resulting from a disenchantment based on the government’s track record and
the conscious or unconscious tendency to create spaces that privilege certain economic activities
that promote clientelism (Ribot and Oyono, 2004).

International agencies, therefore, opted to create their structures to implement project actions
because of the dissatisfaction about the local government’s ability to execute the project goals. In
the recent decades, donor agencies have been more inclined towards civil-society-based
approaches to forestry resource management while they have been more restrained towards
choosing local governments as partners. Their discriminative reluctance to choose already
existing democratically may close opportunities for building a stable and democratic
representative system within the already existing politico-administrative structure. The
recognition of an institution goes beyond the mere acknowledgement of its authority to also consist of the creation and consolidation that authority which becomes a political act having deep implications for democracy (Ribot, Chhatre, Lankina, 2008).

Underlying the penchant for certain types of goals and the ensuing choice of institutions based on those goals may be a product of the need to maximize benefits for certain groups or in the self-interest of the state\(^\text{11}\) (North, 1990; Bates, 1981). Such types of goals also lend themselves to policy designs currently used by donor agencies and central governments but may not be the best to meet needs and aspirations of the majority of the local community. Simultaneously, the need to manufacture certain forms of success out of those projects overlooks the procedural aspects such as the presence of a terrain that will enable democratic culture to flourish (Baviskar, 2004; Conyers, 2007). Dovetailing of both types of goals is possible but is most potent if an enabling environment already exists, evincing the necessity of being more attentive to the broader socio-economic and historical context. Having project goals consistent with democratic ideals needs to be complemented by output assessments with an emphasis on what has brought about meaningful changes to people in all segments of the local communities. However, the instrumentalization of procedural democracy by projects has meant that aspects of procedural democracy (such as choosing representatives by holding local elections) are used as a voucher of good governance and gain precedence over substantive aspects of democracy (that is, actual inclusiveness and representative of people by working in the interest of people).

\(^{11}\) “Institutions are not necessarily or even usually created to be socially efficient; rather they or at least the formal rules, are created to serve the interests of those with the bargaining power to devise new rules” (North, 1990). If one goes by this logic, then the state or central authorities would seek at all cost to maintain control over profitable resource bases.
Although the two projects adopted different institutional configurations, the local institutions chosen by both projects fit the credos of participation and economic performance. Producing outputs to attain project objectives was ensured by choosing institutions that enshrine the value system shared by the donor. For instance, the democratically elected local government was recognized as the overhead institution by WulaNafaa, which sought to stimulate forest-based wealth creation through good governance and environmentally sustainability conduits. Institutions were also recognized based on their ability to efficiently perform the tasks set in the project plans in a manner unhindered by local politics to the extent possible. This was observed as being mostly the case in zones where the PROGEDE project is active.

One of the credos of both projects was the participation of the local people because local people are expected to be the ultimate beneficiaries and a democracy provides the possibility of harnessing the checks provided by mechanisms of accountability. On the ground, this would translate as the application of sanctions by citizens to ensure responsiveness from the institutions since they operate in a democratically decentralized environment. The other credo pertains to economic development: the two projects examined in this study sought to transform a predominantly peasant population into active agents in the market economy of charcoal both as a means to improve their own livelihoods and also as producers of affordable domestic fuel vital to the country’s urban centers (Ferguson, 1994). Institutions were chosen by the projects to actualize these two objectives that follow the local democracy and local development canons of modernization (Bates, 1981; Przeworski, 1991).
Fig. 3.1. The stages and process of institutional choice and recognition for policy reform and institutional change in the context of decentralized forest management for charcoal production in Senegal. This schema is inspired from Grindle (2005) and adapted to the two forestry-related projects studied.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ARENAS</th>
<th>Agenda Setting</th>
<th>Design</th>
<th>Implementation</th>
<th>Sustainability</th>
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<tr>
<td>INSTITUTIONS</td>
<td>• Higher-level institutions:</td>
<td>• The Higher-level institutions</td>
<td>• Project implementing agencies/institutions: IRG,</td>
<td>• Local institutions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- World Bank, USAID</td>
<td>• The legal, administrative and executive</td>
<td>Forestry services</td>
<td>• New stakeholders</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Government of Senegal: Ministries of Environment,</td>
<td>structures</td>
<td>• Local executive institutions: Rural Council,</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Environment, Energy and Finance</td>
<td>• Interinstitutional linkages (among</td>
<td>project–created FMCs, Forestry services</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>institutions at various scales)</td>
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<tr>
<td>INTERESTS</td>
<td>• Policy characteristics:</td>
<td>• The design team’s profile</td>
<td>• Interests of mid- and high level officials</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- decentralization,</td>
<td>• Institutional preferences of the design</td>
<td>• Interests within local populations</td>
<td>• New interests</td>
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<td></td>
<td>- International linkages</td>
<td>team</td>
<td>• Conflicts</td>
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<td></td>
<td>- Issue salience</td>
<td>• Characteristics of the implementers</td>
<td>• Implementer incentives</td>
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<td></td>
<td>- The agenda of policy champions</td>
<td>• Bureaucratic interests</td>
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<tr>
<td>ACTIONS</td>
<td>• Policy reform and institutional change initiation</td>
<td>• Choice of local institution participating</td>
<td>• Building local leadership</td>
<td>• Intra-local alliances</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>and developing proposal</td>
<td>• Mobilization of local populations</td>
<td>• Local leadership strategies</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Consultation with stakeholders</td>
<td>• Negotiations</td>
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<td>• Feed-back loops</td>
<td>• Feed-back loops</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
The exchanges among the actors in the various arenas as set out in this schema inspired from Grindle’s process of policy process and institutional reform model, especially between those who provide the ideological framework, the institutional contract design and those who oversee the implementation process defines the purpose of the project and how its accomplishment will be measured as well as what would be considered an achievement.

The agenda-setting and design stages are about the higher-level institutions’ ‘officializing strategies’ of translating the ground-level concerns into authorized categories to be acted upon. During those two stages, broader project operational and tactical concerns are also taken into consideration and the output of that phase includes the choice of institutions to implement project activities. The characteristics of the implementers (project staff and government officials) and the interests affected gain their full importance during the adoption and implementation phases during which the policies and the projects realize themselves.

The bureaucratic cultures as well as the intergovernmental structures need to be abided by the international agencies. As the head of operations of one of the projects pointed out, “we have to respect the sovereignty of the country we are intervening in” (Interviews, Dakar, 2012). The intergovernmental distribution of powers concerning forest resource management is structured by the existing decentralization laws and forestry code. This means that international agencies cannot ignore or circumvent the institutions recognized by the State of Senegal in the management of forest resources prior to the intervention of projects which in this case are the Rural Council and the Forestry Services.
Externally-funded projects are often seen as being money cows by the Senegalese Forestry Services who seek to maximize personal gains by being hired to work on the projects. This contributes towards the exacerbation of the problem of bureaucratic capture by those who want to capitalize to the maximum on their position within the project (Interviews, Dakar, 2013; 2012). The government official views secondment to external projects as an opportunity to acquire new skills or hone existing ones through the training programs provided or extend network of contacts that can make them more marketable for consultancy or other jobs outside the public service (Interviews, Dakar, 2013; Blundo, 1998; 2011).

The difference of the profile of the staff of these two projects reveals variations in the bureaucratic consciousness of the international agencies. The officials hired during the first phase of PROGEDE I were from the Forest Service however, a noticeable shift took place in the profile of those who were hired for the second phase of the project. For instance, regional heads for the project are now no longer officials of the Forest Service, but holders of qualifications to fulfill the requirements of those positions. The main reason put forward for this change is to loosen the grip that the officers of the Forest Service had over the charcoal supply chain, who exercised their power to assign commercial exploitation rights over forest resources in a way that unjustly favored urban-based charcoal traders (Interviews, Tambacounda, 2012).

3.5 Institutional characteristics influencing institutional choice

The recognition of the type of institutions to implement projects is based on a conglomerate of actions, choices based on the various interests and institutions in the different arenas as conceived
by Merilee Grindle’s *The process of policy and institutional reform*. In addition to analysis according to Grindle’s schema, we define four characteristics sought by higher-level institutions during their process of choosing and recognizing local partners. Those four elements are: 1) Efficiency, 2) Integrity, 3) Democracy/Participation, and 4) Reliability. Each of these characteristics connects factors emerging both from the ideological realm and the practical realm and are often enmeshed. For instance, the integrity element contributes to efficiency by limiting leakages through corruption. The democracy element is ensconced in democratic decentralization which offers the possibility of harnessing the participation of local populations making the internalization\(^{12}\) of costs and benefits more effective.

The pertinence of this additional analytical optic is demonstrated by the difficulty for the project to backtrack in any major way with respect to the actions and choices made in the agenda-setting and design stages. By the time the project lands in the recipient zones in rural Senegal, it is too late to make major adjustments despite the presence of feedback loops. The feedback loops were in the form of evaluation meetings regrouping stakeholders, intermittent assessments made by independent consultants or communication between villagers and project staff. These feedback loops led to single learning loops comprising of straightforward problem-solving: overhauling the organization of forest management structures, fixing the nuts and bolts of the project when the functioning became egregious but not correcting mismatches at a deeper level, therefore perpetuating their possibility to recur. They did not involve a second learning loop at the higher

\(^{12}\) Internalization results by ‘outsourcing’ decision-making and execution to the local populations. is considered economically and managerially efficient because the local populations, have the advantage of making decisions more socially and economically meaningful to them and less likely to opt for decisions/actions least harmful as they would be on the frontlines for paying the costs.
institutions level comprising of a re-examination of those institutions of their own modus operandi, the logics, values and beliefs behind to trigger a process of re-education (Friedmann, 1987).

The examination of the rationale behind institutional choices made by the higher-level institutions has led us to derive a set of characteristics or qualities sought in ‘candidate’ institutions. The activation of the initiative to induce policy reform through institutional recognition begins with the choice of the institutions. This can be thought of as taking place in two dimensions. The first dimension being that the chosen institution fits the ideology of the higher-level institutions and the second dimension has to do with the factors related to the delivery of the project through the chosen and recognized institutions. From observations and data collected during fieldwork, I identified four prominent characteristics sought by higher-level institutions in the institutions that are likely to be chosen and recognized. By understanding these characteristics we understand the reason behind the legitimization and recognition of certain institutions and the peripheralization of others.

1. Efficiency –
Administrative efficiency was the predominant type of efficiency that higher level institutions took into consideration while recognizing their local partners. The administrative efficiency incorporated considering other elements other than the service provision.

The efficiency of the interventions is measured using a repertoire of indicators whereas that of the decentralization is mostly gauged through the mismatch between the rhetoric in the laws and in practice. Efficiency in service delivery is often associated with decentralization. Relevant to this
case, efficiency would be in terms of the internalization of costs through localization. The wave of decentralization\textsuperscript{13} that swept Senegal in 1996 did not involve a form of democratic decentralization that would be ideal for efficiency because the powers, especially the financial and materials resources to manage forests that were transferred to locally elected government were insufficient or insignificant and the rural taxes collected by Rural Councils were negligible. Achieving project goals and successful policy implementation was the primary driver behind the recognition of Forest Management Committees. Forest Management Committee are composed of and run by villagers, but are outside of elected local bodies, meaning they could be removed from being under the control of Rural Councils (as in the case of PROGEDE II) as well as being just annexed to the Rural Councils (as in the case of Wula Nafaa). As Agrawal puts it “communities accomplish local regulation at significantly lower costs than any central government can” (Agrawal, 2005).

The capacity of the Rural Council to manage forests, as judged by higher-level institutions and then by the rural councils themselves, are thought to be insufficient to accomplish the goals set out by the decentralization policies and the project goals, and so additional institutional ‘support’ was introduced by the donors. This support has been through the creation of forest management committees by the projects; known under different titles in each project and depending on the level in the hierarchy of the structure. The forest management committees for both projects are

\textsuperscript{13} Blundo (2011) holds that the political reasons behind the inception of the laws of decentralization in Senegal weighed in more heavily than the administrative and social efficacies. In that respect, the rule of law or legality was used both as a legitimizing ideology and a principle of organization (Ghai, 1986). The paradox is that legal texts and their amendments proliferate which could be a misleading indication that the ideologies vehicled by those texts are being internalized and lived by. It has to be highlighted that laws are not abstract norms or ‘laws of nature’ but they are products of decisions concerned with the creation, distribution, exercise, legitimatizing effect and reproduction of power (Shivji, 1989; Okoth-Ogendo, 1991).
composed of and run by villagers but do not have a legal status. This support has been in the form of administrative and financial management capacity building, undertaken mostly by WulaNafaa, and technical skills training such as how to produce charcoal was undertaken mostly by PROGEDE in its zone of intervention.

The focus on the economic growth as a path to development has a long track record consisting more often of failures than successes which set in motion a shift in the approach of international organizations development-related interventions (Crush, 2006; Peet and Hartwick, 1999; Nustad, 2001). As a result, higher-level institutions have to balance their focus between the material gains from exploitation of nature and the social benefits that can be derived from the way that nature and those gains are governed. This concern has played a role in influencing how aid would be channeled into countries receiving them, which in turn impinges on the institutions through which the aid would flow. Alongside of this is the overarching political and economic outlook towards international aid and funding of the western countries ‘giving’ the money and the prevailing policies of the recipient country and their rationale for allocative efficiency which still supports most of this very top-down approach. (North, 1990; Brown, 2005; Sklar, 1987; Ake, 1993).

The perceived need to have multiple or additional institutions in the forestry sector arises for several reasons ranging from addressing the improvement in economic performance of charcoal production and administrative task specialization to enhancing democratic practices in resource governance and access. Institutional configurations with several types of institutions present promising conditions for democratic resource management (Cohen and Peterson, 1999; Urbinati and Warren, 2008). It could also lead to efficiency in responsiveness and service provision arising
from a division of tasks among the various institutions based on their strengths (Tamanaha, 2008; Galvan, 2008; Ostrom, 2008; Vira et al., 1998). Furthermore, each institution has its own mechanisms of responsiveness and accountability, providing more avenues for people to engage with the institution(s) they find most receptive and responsive to their needs as well as representative in political processes. However, the functioning of these mechanisms is marred by elite capture of those chosen institutions, that is, a small number of favorably placed individuals use those institutions as instruments to accumulate a disproportionate amount of opportunities and benefits excluding the non-elites. As a result, institutional arrangements sometimes leave people with few alternatives but to revert to the existing structures, namely patronage arrangements, under which they continue to be dominated by the elites. Recognized and chosen institutions may sometimes offer only a façade of democracy and participation, thereby reproducing inequalities, instead of more durable deeper changes (Beck, 2008; Villalon and Von Doepp, 2005). Thus, in spite of the significant support from donor agencies in terms of redressing inequalities in access to resource through local participation, the chosen institutional configuration in forest management has led to inequitable access to lucrative charcoal production opportunities within the two studied rural communities in Tambacounda region (Ribot & Larson, 2011; O’Brien, 1971; Boutinot, 2005).

2. Integrity –

The efficiency factor provides the major thrust for integrity as an important consideration when choosing and recognizing local institutions. The conditionality imposed by the donors also factored in the choice and recognition of which institutions would be a good fit for meeting the project goals. Donors are reluctant about injecting any kind of resource into settings which do not
offer any sort of guarantee of penalties for or safeguards against any inefficiencies, even those resulting from informal and illegal practices occurring within the partner institutions. “You know how the American agencies are, right? One has to account for every dollar that is given out,” said an official of one donor agencies while referring to how stringent the monitoring and accounting methods are when it comes to the donors’ money (Interviews, 2012). While the concern about the aid going into the right ‘hands’ looms ubiquitously within international agencies, achieving efficiency and effective democratic practices provides the main thrust for making integrity as an important consideration.

Capacity to limit corruption and informal transactions that could provide unfair access to the resources to a few and depriving those who might not be able to afford such privileged access despite the resource being a common one. The presence of accountability mechanisms is an indication of the possibility of keeping in check such transactions and ensuring integrity of institutions. This was important in this case study because corruption in the charcoal sector is rampant. It gives those with a higher socio-economic status and more resources or connections an advantage in gaining access to the resource. Informal transactions of influence, gifts, money, and illegal manipulating administrative procedures were widespread among forestry agents, some members of forest management committees and Rural Councils and local charcoal producers. There is the domination of the industry by those who have the privilege of corruption. WulaNafaa circumvented the direct involvement of opportunistic forestry services officials by employing independent consultants as project staff. There was however, a radical change in the profile of the project staff hired in the second phase of PROGEDE, which resembled more that of WulaNafaa’s staff make-up. By bringing in professional staff not affiliated to the forestry services, there was a
greater thrust towards enforcing the new forest management unit structures that would be more autonomous and less within the grips of those who divert an unfair amount of advantages in an unrestrained manner. Several actors, such as the charcoal producers and forestry service staff were disgruntled with the actions and decisions of the new staff of the PROGEDE because it disrupted the smooth running of their slush fund or overrode their direct involvement, hence, preventing them from being in contact with flows of money or access privileges. WulaNafaa on the other hand focused more on building the managerial capacity of the local people and submitted those managerial units, that is, the Forest Management Committee, to the oversight of a democratically elected authority: the Rural Council, which was a way of meeting the criterion for democracy or representation of local populations. Such an institutional arrangement met the procedural needs that emerged out of the formalization of the charcoal industry at the local level as well as the requirement of functioning under the authority of the democratically elected local government as stipulated by the laws of decentralization.

The tweaking of the project tools such as the changes in the structure of Forest Management Committees as the second phase of PROGEDE reflects the necessity for additional needs assessment. The institutional needs of that new policy environment is left solely to higher-level officials or consultants who then devise participatory structures that merely require attendance rather than creating spaces for sustained political development. The reshuffling led to forestry agents who were formerly feasting on opportunities to informally earn monies by abusing their power to allow illegal activities in charcoal and timber-producing forests to be posted in zones where minimal economic exploitation of the resource takes place, removing opportunities to earn
something ‘on the side’ from their official salary.

Another example of how the re-arrangement of the linkages between institutions was used to stall corruption among conniving actors was the relegation of the role of the Rural Council to that of an overseer of the financial audit, without any direct links to the newly reorganized executive structures. This step was taken during the second phase of PROGEDE reaction to the reported the diversion of funds by Rural Council members in during the first phase of the project. Under normal circumstances, the democratically elected local government is involved in all the meetings organized by the projects because by law, the Rural Council is the gatekeeper of rural communities with no activity allowed to take place without its approval. Furthermore, two rural councils were asked to form one unique account for collecting charcoal taxes (for the Missirah-Kothiary forest), one of the Rural Council presidents was reluctant for merging the charcoal tax coffers because that would have led to mutual co-inspection of financial transactions preventing any fraudulent activities from going undetected. (Meetings, Tambacounda, 2012-2013).

The criteria for membership in the new forest management committees proposed in 2013 were (1) only villagers who are not charcoal producers be eligible to be members of the executive bureau of the structure, and (2) candidates for positions in the bureau should be sufficiently literate in the French language. These criteria were supposed to prevent vested interests of executive members from interfering with decisions or actions taken by them while in office and from misusing their power. Since members of the elite are usually more educated, possess the literacy and numeracy skills necessary, and have the time to engage in political activities, almost half of the bureau was occupied by members who used to be directly involved in charcoal production. One of the newly
selected executive members in 2013 shared during an interview that now that he has got this position in the bureau, he is going to use this opportunity to help his family members and relatives to gain from charcoal production. The same bureau member had himself produced charcoal in the past but had abandoned it after a court case he filed against one of the *banaa-banaas* (middlemen) with whom he left his stock of charcoal in Dakar but who did not reimburse the money obtained from the sale of the charcoal. After this incident, it would be very difficult for him to re-enter the charcoal business because the social sanctioning that might prevent him from getting another *banaa-banaa* to sell his products and he is still waiting to be compensated for the remaining amount due from the sale of charcoal by the prosecuted *banaa-banaa*, added to which is his discouragement resulting from this bad experience (Interview, Missirah, 2012).

Administrative procedures are a double edged-sword in Senegal; on one hand they help to regulate the production and sale of the commodity in question and on the other hand they offer the agents opportunities to manipulate administrative procedures to informally extract benefits. Interviews reveal the bureaucratic hurdles they have to overcome in order to earn income from the opening up of the forests to rural communities. The extent of difficulty often was related to the density of the network of relations of the local producer in the various spheres of life. As shown in Chapter 4 of this dissertation on enhancing equity in access for a historically excluded group in this sector, women, especially lower class, poorer women, were at a disadvantage to enter and to participate actively in the productive sphere, that is charcoal production, ensuing from the change in the governance style, that is the decentralization of forest resources. The relation the charcoal producer had with other members of the community or with officials or with institutions was one
of the factors that defined how burdensome the administrative procedures could be to a particular local charcoal producer. For instance, a local charcoal producer shares:

There is a problem of documents, permits to cut trees for people who want to do so. They can have 20 permits but the villages are numerous. They get permits but the whole procedure is messy. The permits are gone early but their problems remain. It is the forestry services who calculated the number of permits that need to be distributed to the charcoal producer groups in the villages.

The forestry services agents make inventories at regular frequencies to record the quantity of charcoal in production in each production block of the forests so as to estimate the number of permits required by each group of villages. During those inventory outings whereby the forestry agents would be accompanied by a member of the rural council, a member of the forest management structure (often the president of the secretary) revealed that sometimes the members of those inventory convoys would connive to falsify the quantities reported in a way that the figure would be inflated so that more permits could be issued. Those ‘extra’ permits are then captured by either the agents or their collaborators who are often people in positions of authority such as members of the Rural Council, members of the forest management structures and sometimes banaa-banaas (informal sector middlemen between producers and charcoal traders). In the past, regardless of those ‘extra’ permits created based on fictitious figures invented by the forestry agents, the share of permits due to go to the villagers was often diverted by groups of local elite.
3. Democracy & participation -

Donor agencies acknowledge the ideological appeal and the practical advantages of the direct involvement of the local populations; projects are designed in way to include the local beneficiaries at some point along the whole implementation process (Chambers, 1997; 2006; Crewe and Harrison, 1998; Muller and Miltin, 2007; Kothari, 2002; Beneria, 2003). Since the coming into force of the participatory approach as the norm of how development is practiced in developing countries, it has influenced the choice of institutions entrusted with the task of carrying out the project actions (Beard et al., 2008; Pritchett and Woolcock, 2004). The core principle of democracy being “for the people, by the people” and elections being one of the procedures created and adopted for operationalizing that principle, these both underpin the ‘good governance’ component of the projects and the choice of institutions (Putnam, 1994; Ake, 1996; Edigheji, 2006). In this case, the potential of achieving an institutionalized democratic way of carrying out CBRNM is reified through an association with a democratically constituted institution, which in this case is the democratically elected local government (Ribot 2004; Bazaara, 2006; Ribot, Lund and Treue, 2010).

Alignment of the donor agencies (albeit to varying degrees for each project) with the country’s decentralization reforms is also mandated by law. This meant that the recognition of the democratically elected local government, that is, the Rural Council was also by default, although the Rural Council is the institution possessing formalized mechanisms of accountability and responsiveness. Tapping into the participatory potential of the rural council requires an informed and politically savvy population. Harnessing the agency of a citizenry able to meaningfully engage with representatives and ability for demanding accountability could increase access to the
resource (Agrawal, 2005; Mamdani, 1996). The majority of implementing project staff interviewed said they consider the participation of people with an emphasis on the responsibility of local populations, good governance and the strengthening of technical capacities as fundamental for the good implementation of forestry-related projects. The interviewees mention “participation” and “inclusive approach” as a key element for successful project implementation but to several, participation is a “local initiative”, “responsible participation” and the necessity of “a bigger responsibility on behalf of the beneficiary populations”. “Good governance and transparency in the management of forest and financial resources” was also frequently brought up by the interviewees with one of them even suggesting “an internal system of control by and for the populations”. “The strengthening of capacities” was also brought up as important aspect to be realized through the “adoption of a forest management plan”, “respect of technical norms which allows for the guarantee of the sustainability of forest”, the “strengthening of technical and organizational capacities of local government and community-based organizations (CBOs) by a better treatment and support of transferred powers.”

The consideration of citizens as political equals when it comes to representation is also problematic in this context (Pitkin, 1972) where not every member has the same minimum level of empowerment and awareness. In a democratically decentralized natural resource governance context, it is mechanisms of accountability and responsiveness that make participation of people effective. The value of democratic ways is uncontested by intervening agents when it comes to involving the people. The architecture of the chosen institutions that are supposed to be endowed with all the powers and resources to carry out policy and project goals is imbued with ideological framings reflecting the donor’s preference for democracy (USAID, 2008, World Bank, 2011).
However, by imposing certain kinds of institutions, the donors inadvertently also define what
types of citizens are more apt to use such institutions. Exhortations about setting civil society as
providing a counter-power is unyielding because of the quasi infeasibility of ‘making’ citizens
who would exactly fit the institutional configurations to make the most of opportunities. Citizens
are formed from historical processes, often specific to a society, and the expectation that a certain
type of citizenship would put everybody on a level playing field to engage with the recognized
institutions, even if they are democratically elected (Tilly, 1995; Lister, 2003). Instead, members
of the local community who are more apt to capture the opportunities created through project-
supported institutional forms and reform do so at the expense of the less-privileged members of
the rural communities.

The enforcement of mechanisms of accountability was relegated to the background by the
projects because the managerial capacity of the whole institutional setting that was prioritized.
Moreover, it was almost taken as a given that by associating\(^{14}\) with the democratically elected
rural council, that the whole polity would become automatically democratic. Relying on electoral
modes of accountability is insufficient and incompatible with contextual specificities and work
mostly when there are good leaders committed to improving the well-being of the whole
community (Fieldwork, 2012; 2013; Tendler, 1997). This is demonstrated by how the Rural
Councilors’ growing awareness of the profitability of charcoal and of their important role in
representing their respective rural communities at a higher level have led them to exploit that
position. Rural Council Presidents have started negotiating for their rural communities to be

\(^{14}\)Either by subordinating the other structures to it or arranging co-management roles.
allowed to produce a greater quantity of charcoal. But how the permits are distributed after the quantity negotiated gets approved is often prone to the discretion of the Rural Council president who might participate in allowing his cronies to intercept more production privileges than allowed or adopt a more transparent and fair stance.

4. Reliability -

Reliability is defined as having the proven capacity to use resources efficiently and in all transparency to meet project goals and higher-level institutions’ expectations. This characteristic encompasses all the previously described elements but has a cumulative dimension to it, that is, it is a trait that the institution builds over time.

This type of reliability is still being built by local institutions in Senegal, taking into consideration that the decentralization process is just out of its ‘stumbling steps’ phase. This means that at only a decade and half after the inception of the decentralization process, Rural Councils have had a history of only three terms until the most recent local elections in 2014. The familiarization of the local populations with institutions entrusted with authority and resources to manage forests, including where to place the Rural Council and Forest Management Committees in the institutional landscape, requires a lag time.

The palimpsest-like mode that characterizes how donor agencies choose the institutions they wish to channel their resources through as development aid could be very revealing about the conditions that have influenced the choice and recognition of certain institutions and not others. In the 1960s, the state was the preferred institutional partner of donor agencies because back then,
they used to abide by the notion of the ‘developmental state’ (Young, 1997). Then by the 1980s began the epoch whereby the role of the state was being questioned especially due to influx of streams of economic neoliberalism which was bent on eschewing the state. In the late 1990s, donor agencies backtracked to an approach that involved closer collaboration with the State (Blundo, 2011). Changes in approaches to implementation is not only mere trying and erring. Macro-political and macro-economic climates together with the donors and state’s ideologies are good predictors of what the policy is going to be. These ideologies are expressed in the form of the organization’s mission goals and the type of regime of implementation (Hajek et al., 2011) prevalent can give indication about the undergirding ideologies. In this case, gaining an understanding of factors crucial to the formulation of policy guiding U.S.-based donor agencies can explain the development paradigm used by the donor agencies (Tendler, 1975; Brautigam, 1992).

Reliability of a candidate institution is closely linked to the characteristics of project design and implementation because evaluation of interactions between projects and the institutions during project implementation is based on the project design. Project design determines the impact trajectory as it will determine what kind of output and outcome are expected from the chosen institution (Patton, 2008). The chosen institutions have to perform according to the standards set by the theory informing the policy champions, decision-makers and/or the donor agencies’ experience. Since the traditional evaluations use only a select set of indicators and do not incorporate process tracing of the unintended effects of the project implemented, the effects at a multi-scalar levels and assessment of performance against different time frames. Projects put chosen local institutions on a certain path that predisposes them to produce results that can either strengthen or weaken that reliability reputation of the institution. An example from the case study
to illustrate this point has to do with the differences in how each project goes about implementing their respective donor agency’s commitment to the ‘bottom-up’ approach. The efforts to reduce the distance between what the donors seek to achieve and what the local populations are perceived as needing in terms of empowerment through projects is brought into action through participatory approaches or by recognizing institutions allowing the participation of the local population. Several interviewees compared the Wula Nafaa project with the PROGEDE one by stating that the former put greater emphasis on the institutional aspect, that is, on the ways of organizing the local populations and building the capacity of the institutions meant to serve this purpose such as the Forest Management Committees. The latter concentrated on enhancing the technical skills of people in wood-cutting and charcoal production methods. The interviewees observed that although both projects brought benefits to the local communities, Wula Nafaa proved to be more effective and most likely to produce durable results in terms access to forest resources than PROGEDE, the evaluation of which revealed that more attention needed to be paid to institutional configurations and composition in order to reach project goals. During a meeting held in May 2012, in Tambacounda for assessing PROGEDE’s first phase, which regrouped representatives of all stakeholders, participants declared openly that PROGEDE needed to learn from how Wula Nafaa proceeded in its activities.

The credibility for the intervening agents of the ‘candidate’ institutions is influenced by the reputation of their reliability and how well they share the politico-ideological bearing of the donors, for instance, if they abide by the same democratic ethos. The failure to perform adequately according to the norms set by higher-level institutions when they were chosen in the past, becomes part of the profile of ‘candidate’ institutions. According to higher-level officials
and project implementing staff interviewed, there are many considerations when deciding which local institutional partners to choose. These include the quality of their performance, as interviewees stated “there needs to be good governance—if the institution can work in terms of capacity, management, and mobilization as well as in transparency”, and, “the leadership of the president of the rural council matters” (Interviews, 2013). Officials also mentioned contextual factors that influence the performance of institutions. One interviewee brought up that, “very often the cultural factors are forgotten”, and another noted that, “we need to consider their position with respect to the ruling power; the charisma (or the popularity) of leaders.” The formal status of institutions is considered to be an important factor in determining which institutions they work with: “the legal standing of institutions which are the point of entry plays a role as we cannot work on natural resources without going through Rural Council first. USAID works on forestry since projects like NRBAR (Natural Resource Based Agricultural Research Project), since more than 30 years. A lot of strategic thinking is involved in USAID’S program for research, tools of participation, institutional organization.”(Interviews, Dakar & Tambacounda, 2013).

The sum of these aspects mentioned by the officials influence the reliability of the institution as a partner for policy and project implementation. Although the quality and style of leadership within the chosen local institutions affect the policy and project outcomes and outputs, the choice and recognition of local institutions have to comply to uniformity in application. The institutional landscape has not only offered more flexibility to the elites but has even extended the range of action within which the elites can accumulate more forest-based wealth. In practice, only a few favorably positioned people take over newly introduced institutions or place their allies or
subordinates to run them. The forest management committees are institutions that are increasingly starting to bear the characteristics of entities with restricted membership and unequal membership with categories of producers able to produce only a small amount tethered to more powerful and bigger charcoal producers. These committees follow the prescriptions provided by the project documents but they do not challenge the skewed balances in access to forest resources as they themselves form a clique that wants to maintain the privileges of access to charcoal production among themselves. This mix of chosen institutions prioritized the securing of economic development for a select group. This dynamic allowed for the entrenchment of many rural elites’ economic interests.

3.6 Concluding Discussion

The choice and recognition of institutions by the state and international agencies has carved the institutional landscape of forest resource governance, impacting the overall improvement of the rural societies in Tambacounda. The outcomes of institutional choice and recognition, as demonstrated by the case examined in this article, have implications for the extent of the success of externally supported interventions, and state-led policies of decentralized forest resource management.

3.6.1 Reconciling wealth generation and participatory governance

The study of institutional recognition reveals the strengths and the lacunae of choosing certain local institutional partners and how those institutions are configured with respect to each other. Both projects recognized institutional configurations conducive to economic development and favored a participatory style of governance so as to create possibilities for inclusiveness and
equitability in access to forest resources. Choosing and recognizing democratically elected local government provided the advantage of democratic representation to the local populations but this was not always congruent with everybody’s wealth-accumulation aspirations. The costs of introducing market-oriented reforms even in a democratically decentralized context have resulted in the privileged few benefiting from reforms. Participation and representation often require disinterested cooperation that the market-oriented reforms based on models of economic efficiency, hence competition, might not offer (Przeworski, 1991).

The costs here are social costs and institutional costs which are paid by those segments of the populations who should have been the ones benefitting from rather than incurring the costs. The social costs linked to institutions include the loss of trust in institutions that fail to be equitably responsive to the needs of villagers. This social cost is a major hindrance to citizen empowerment and undermines the very initiatives which seek to build equity in distribution of access to wealth-creation opportunities. The social costs are again paid by the poorer, less politically and socially well-placed groups in the villages, resulting in lower access to forest-based income-generating activities for those groups and contributing to the reproduction of social inequalities. Elite capture prevents non-elite members of those communities from being able to count with reasonable certainty on the responsiveness of institution approached or leave those members with a feeling of helplessness about making the institutions accountable. On the other hand, the elites can rely on the recognized institutional mix because it opens a stable platform for coopting each other for sustaining mutually beneficial rackets without being sanctioned for crossing boundaries of formally and legally permissible transactions.
3.6.2 Once a winner always a winner? The entrenchment of a new cycle of elite capture

The chosen local authorities – committees and elected local governments – each with their imputed distinctive mechanisms of accountability and responsiveness, did not translate into the harmonious, well-adjusted syncretism that can be taken advantage of by all groups within the local populations. An empowered local population could be considered as being an essential element in producing more ‘winners’ out of villagers so that they are able to take advantage of benefits brought about by policies and projects and to protect themselves against domination and exploitation (Scott, 1985; Chambers, 1983). We have found that citizenry is not, however, a level playing field in the charcoal producing rural communities studied. Elites are more proficient citizens who, even within democratic institutions, can make their needs and aspirations heard and have more leverage in applying mechanisms of accountability because of their privileged status.

The expectation that with a set of development prescriptions, democratic elections and civil-society run forest management committees, any villager would be able to transform him/herself automatically into a citizen skilled in applying mechanisms of accountability did not always translate into reality. It was most likely to do so when villagers possessed the necessary access qualifications to have participation calibrated to project needs (Ribot & Peluso, 2003; Blaikie, 1989). People tap into their already differentiated sources of agency, which might not be found within electoral or non-electoral accountability repertoires, but there are differentiated abilities to use the media, legal resources, or transparency measures. The villagers with means often navigate their way through the institutional system social and political relations to obtain access to charcoal production. Villagers would go to institutions that they perceived as being able to resolve their issues regardless of whether or not the institution has formal mechanisms of accountability.
Similarly, villagers sought responsiveness from institutions that have proximity to the issues related to charcoal production or to which they are personally close to instead of approaching the local institutions that officially and legally have the authority and the resources but not lacking in familiarity with the issues.

Thus, for their forest-related demands, the villagers did not always go to the institutions that are democratically constituted, such as the democratically elected local government, but as in any forum-shopping activity, they went to the institutions demonstrating greater ability to their specialized requests, which in this case was the Forest Management Committees (von Benda-Beckmann 1981, Baviskar, 2004). In the rural communities studied, such resources are provided by the projects in the form of Forestry Management Committees that now handle the administrative and managerial tasks. These committees are more able to provide a rapid and adapted response and also act as a relay between the charcoal producers and other authorities and project staff. Such forest management committees do not have a formalized function to represent the local population. Yet they are delegated management responsibility by the democratically elected local governments – which are downwardly accountable to the public.

The findings further highlight the functional relevance of considering the ‘political game’ prevailing in a specific location where a project is intervening in order to calibrate not only the choice of institutions but also how the chosen ones are to be positioned in relation to other institutions. Linking the forest management committees to the elected rural councils has had mixed results depending on the democratically elected representative leader’s, that is, the President of the Rural Council’s, own personal or political agenda regarding charcoal production.
The personal characteristics of democratically elected leaders in the different Rural Councils is a defining feature of how the institutional choice of democratically elected local representatives performs with respect to policy (Tendler, 1997).

Democracy-imbued institutions are posited as a counter-powers to underlying social and political-economic systems deemed to be discriminatory and uncondusive to equity. But, at the same time, these institutions place the onus of action on the villager, expecting villagers to be proficient in using institutional tools maladjusted to their realities. The conceptualization of citizenship here needs to be extended and enlarged to accommodate citizen formation as constant and an outcome of historical processes that are place-specific; something that can rarely be induced by only an institutional re-arrangement but has to emerge from a combination of factors that are beyond the scope of one sector’s of activity. Thus, mobilizing change outside of the forest sector or charcoal industry related interventions becomes indispensable. Choosing and recognizing specific types of institutions, even if they are democratically constituted defines what kind of citizens can use those institutions therefore, strengthening the position of one group of citizens with specific status, resources and skill sets. Although progress was made in policy implementation for formalizing administrative and financial management of access to forest resources, they are still insufficient for guaranteeing broad representation of the social interest.
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CHAPTER 4

INSTRUMENTALIZING GENDER: WHEN ELITE CAPTURE INTERSECTS WITH GENDER-FOCUSED ACTIONS OF FOREST MANAGEMENT PROJECTS IN SENEGAL

4.1 Abstract

Gender mainstreaming in Senegal’s two long-standing forestry projects, Wula Nafaa and PROGEDE, have marked a milestone in forest management. Since 1998, rural communities can legally produce charcoal in their forests but not everybody within those rural communities is able to gain from the opportunities offered by this change. One of the initiatives of the two projects to promote equitable access to forest resources was through increasing the participation of women in forest resource management and exploitation. Despite the provisions made by the projects to include women in forest management and use, profits from wood-based charcoal production accrue mostly to women in privileged groups or to the male family members of those women. This article shows how participation, an important component of the gender approach, is construed at different stages of projects and how it, in turn, affects who gets access to charcoal production and trade. The analysis focuses on how elite capture shapes the participation of women. It demonstrates that the avenues opened for women to participate in forest management and use do not challenge the specific gender-biased contextual contours of rural societies in Tambacounda. Efforts to involve women in the forest management and production end of the charcoal sector favor elite women over poorer and less advantageously positioned women,
overlooking that stratification among women and within local population that prevented the building of equitable access.

**Keywords:** gender, forest resources, development projects, elite capture, decentralization, rural Senegal

### 4.2 Introduction

In the Tambacounda region of Senegal, externally supported projects work with decentralized local government to close the gender gap in forest management and access to charcoal sector. However, only certain groups of women can benefit from such efforts. This paper examines why the introduction of gender balance within profitable wood-based charcoal sector in rural Senegal faces obstacles in achieving equitable access in favor of those formerly excluded from such wealth-generating activities. Two projects: the USAID’s Wula Nafaa (Agriculture and Natural Resources Management Program) and World Bank’s PROGEDE (Sustainable and Participatory Energy Management Project) provided assistance to the rural communities in the Tambacounda region and the existing institutions involved with forestry resources, namely the elected rural council and the local forestry services to implement Forest Management Plans.¹⁵ In the two rural communities studied, the local elites (villagers in favorable political, socio-economic positions) captured most of the opportunities offered through the projects’ gender-oriented action. Meanwhile women from poorer and marginalized groups remained unable to participate in charcoal production and trade. The projects took the unprecedented step of promoting women in

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¹⁵ Forest Management Plans consist of the time-specific and geographically-specific programming of the management of forests for the realization of profit at the economic, cultural and environment levels. That management plan is required by law for all forests that are 20 hectares or more in size before commercial exploitation can take place.
the charcoal business but have at the same time reinforced existent elite capture of benefits generated from forest resources.

Charcoal production is a forest-based activity with a total annual revenue close to US$31 million in December 2015 (World Bank, 2015). It is also a sector that is male-dominated and still one characterized by a small number of elites capturing the biggest chunk of the profits (Jusrut, forthcoming). Elite capture refers to situation where elites shape development processes according to their priorities and/or appropriate development resources for private gain. Elites are actors who have disproportionate influence in the development process as a result of their superior social, political or economic status (World Bank, 2010; Platteau, 2004; 2008).

The decentralized system operational in Senegal involves the transfer of official powers to control and manage forests from central government to the elected rural councils of rural communities. In the two rural communities studied, each project created Forest Management Committees (FMCs) to organize local populations into structures for managing and using their forest resources as required by the Forest Management Plans. The approach adopted by the projects for including the local communities in forest management and use so as to build gender equity holds potential as well as challenges. The FMCs set up by the projects were structured in such a way so as to harness the participation of sub-groups, including women, at the local level for the management of the resource as well as participation in the wood-based charcoal business.
The participation of women in the various institutional spaces, either created by the projects or by representation through democratically elected local government, provides a platform on which women could to be heard and be responded to.

The study of the intersection of elite capture with gender-focused actions of projects is analytically pertinent for unearthing how such project actions have put an additional instrument in the hands of elites leading to more extensive elite capture at the local scale. Women in the rural regions of Tambacounda have historically been excluded from income-generating activities of significance and from holding positions to control or manage those activities. Gender mainstreaming unfolds in an institutional landscape already characterized by male elite capture with a distinctly male face. These preexisting inequalities continue to fetter effective participation of women in decision making and their access\textsuperscript{16} to forest resources.

This paper describes the extent to which the gender-affirmative actions introduced by the projects have been effective in enabling women to partake in political and economic processes related to charcoal business in Tambacounda. The analysis included identifying the challenges of using a category such as gender to promote broader participation of local people in the management of their forests in the rural communities in the region of Tambacounda. To understand the positive and limiting effects of efforts enable women’s participation in forest management and charcoal production, we examined how participation is construed at the various stages of project conception and implementation and how participation translates into action at each stage (see Fig.

\textsuperscript{16} Access here is conceptualized as not only being able to enter productive zones of the forest but also the ability to derive benefits from it.
The projects sought to dovetail increased participation of women in economically productive natural resource management with redressing gender-skewed access to forest resources and achieving longer-lasting wider inclusion. However, involving local populations, by giving them some of the responsibilities in managing those structures as well as building their capacity to economically gain from their forests, did not uplift the women who are most deprived. Women play a critical and multifaceted role in poverty reduction in the developing south (Boserup, 1970; World Bank, 2001). Marginalized groups such as women who have been conditioned to be economically subordinate to male members of their societies are also the ones who play less-prominent roles in public decision-making arena. Transforming women into more economically and politically active members through participation in forest-related activities in rural communities in Tambacounda could reduce poverty and improve the wellbeing of households (Chen, 2010) in one of the most remote and underdeveloped areas of Senegal.

The creation of spaces for the participation and representation of women through forest management structures and local institutions are bringing women into decision-making spaces, but simultaneously reproducing negative discrimination, especially towards poorer women (Bandiaky, 2008). The forestry programs not only reproduced pre-existing hierarchies in class and gender but also added strata through which inequalities are introduced and which they reinforce. They augment inequality among rural women, widening the gap between those able to engage in income-generating activity of charcoal production and those who are excluded from these activities. In addition, the opportunities created by projects that encourage the participation of more women in forest-related activities are prone to capture by elite men who use women participating in project activities as instruments to accrue a disproportionately bigger proportion
of opportunities in the charcoal sector. This paper demonstrates how the forestry programs studied for this research, albeit creating opportunities previously non-existent for women, have not been able to bring about the transformative changes they claim to seek. They cannot transform the lives of women merely through their greater inclusion in a traditionally male dominated forest-based economic sector.

Data providing the empirical foundation for this paper was collected during a study extending from January 2012 to August 2013. The methods used to collect primary data, mostly qualitative in nature, included a survey of households and formal and informal interviews with the villagers, members of Rural Councils, government officials, customary leaders, project officials at various levels of project organization. Observation, both participant and unobtrusive, were used to get a better grasp of different kinds of social, political, cultural dynamics both within the local populations in the recipient villages and within the bureaucratic milieu of project implementation and forestry services. The study took place over a period extending from January 2012 to August 2013.

4.3 Elite Capture and Gender Inequality: Framing the Questions

Charcoal produced in rural regions of Senegal constitutes a vital source of domestic energy for cities in Senegal. In 1998, the central government of Senegal allowed the transfer of the management of forests used for charcoal production to local populations and their democratically elected local government, the rural council. With the onset of this decentralization process, the transfer of responsibilities of managing forests to rural communities entailed the creation and recognition of institutions that would organize and oversee the use and management of forests on
behalf of the rural communities. The local populations in the villages surrounding the community forests\textsuperscript{17}, can exercise their rights to use the forests while respecting the technical prescriptions set in Forest Management Plans which are approved by the State (RdS, 1998). Scholars like Bandiaky (2008) point out how the ‘gender neutral’ nature of such decentralization reforms in Senegal have so far only exacerbated the exclusion of women, especially poor women, from profitable forest sectors such as charcoal because they do not challenge the larger context of inequality in which these programs are located. So, what the government’s decentralization policy lacked in gender-sensitivity, the project interventions sought to fill in by having a positive gender component integrated into project objectives or through the forest management plans they have assisted the rural communities in crafting.

Although elite capture and gender asymmetries are conceptually different, they are both phenomena that exclude segments of rural populations from the benefits that can be derived from forest resources. This commonality called for an exploration of linkages between gender and elite capture with respect to forest management and use in two charcoal-producing rural communities in Senegal. The identification of such linkages stems from the necessity to answer the following questions: 1) How do policies committed to including women as participants in forest management and use reinforce or dissipate existing elite capture?; 2) How does elite capture affect women’s ability to benefit from the most profitable forest-based product, namely, charcoal?; 3) How does elite capture promote unequal access to forest resources among the various groups of women in spite of the strong emphasis on gender by forestry-related projects?

\textsuperscript{17} This appellation will be used throughout this chapter to refer to the forests the management of which has been conferred to Rural Councils.
This paper answers these questions via a case study of local government jurisdictions called ‘Rural Communities’[^18] in the Tambacounda region in Senegal using two of Senegal’s longest standing externally funded forestry projects as an entry point. The empirical data presented in this paper describes the triggering of a cycle of elite capture through project interventions operating within a context where forest resource management has been devolved to the local government as well as one where women play a subordinate role in the economic sphere of life.

Exclusion from forest benefits, that is negatively discriminated access to forest resources, is defined by a combination of ethnicity, class, gender and other broader structural factors that create economic, political boundaries or opportunities (Vijayalakshmi & Chandreshekar, 2000; Vijayalakshmi, 2002). For the purpose of this study women were considered as an analytical group of people subordinated based on gender. Using an analytical category such as ‘women’ sheds light on the extent to which policy efforts made to positively discriminate towards women improve or diminish their political inclusion and well-being. Even while implementing policies geared at redressing gender-based inequalities, project goals are formulated in a way that considers women as a homogenous group instead of a stratified one. The policies do not make provisions to differentiate within a specific target group so as to better address the different needs of the various groups of women regarding their involvement in the charcoal sector.

The findings from this empirical study show that the persistence of elite capture and women’s subordinate social and economic position as limiting women’s ability to benefit from forests through charcoal production. The investigation of the connections between elite capture and

[^18]: A Rural community (Communauté Rurale) is a fourth-level administrative division. Rural communities comprise of a certain number of villages, sometimes up to 85. In 2013, there were 340 rural communities in Senegal.
gender discrimination show how elite capture at the various levels has long contributed to the diversion of resources and opportunities to the advantage of a small group of persons. Poorer women find themselves unable to enter in the more profitable sectors of forest resources despite the training workshops and created reserved spots in the management structures. Elite capture is one of the foremost factors maintaining social and economic inequalities in the rural communities studied. Elites are instrumentalizing women through the projects’ gender components, ultimately counteracting the promotion of women that the projects set out to achieve.

4.4 Projects and the gendering of inclusive forest resource management and access

USAID’s Wula Nafaa’s (WN) strategic objectives consisted of: (i) Sustainable increases in private sector income-generating activities within the forestry sector and (ii) improved local delivery of services and sustainable use of resources. WN was implemented by a contracting firm, the International Resource Group (IRG), as a two-phase project: Phase I, February 2003-May 2008, Phase II from 2009 to 2013. The emphasis of WN was to build the organizational capacity of the local communities by strengthening administrative skills and also subjecting the forest management committees to the authority of the Rural Councils in managing forest resources.

World Bank’s PROGEDE was first implemented by the Government of Senegal between 1997 and 2004 with the objective of improving the management of wood resources, limiting their use through energy savings measures and improving the capabilities of the public sector to effectively coordinate and control the sector (Intelligent Energy – Europe). PROGEDE’s second phase
(2010-2016) development objective is to contribute to an increase in the availability of diversified household fuels in a sustainable and gender equitable way, and to contribute to increase the income of participating communities while preserving the forest ecosystems (World Bank, 2010).

The gender aspect has been a focal point in the second phase of PROGEDE with the application of the 50% men and 50% women rule when it comes to who should constitute the forest management committees created by the project. On the other hand, WN did not have similar gender-based quota, but WN did incorporate from the onset income-generating activities that were thought to appeal mostly to women. Such activities included market gardening, the harvesting and the processing of certain forest products such as baobab fruit (Adansonia digitata), Mbepp gum (Sterculia setigera), the grain fonio (Digitaria exilis), and the fruit tree jujube (Ziziphus jujube). The involvement of women was predominantly related to market gardening activities and collection and processing of fruits from trees in the forest. WN also required there to be one woman to act as a representative of women of her village in the village representatives group in the structure set up by the project.

The participatory approach employed by the project organized villagers into rural self-governance bodies called Forest Management Committees. The Forest Management Committees are three-tiered structures that function outside the formal politico-administrative structure.\textsuperscript{19} The third or the lowest tier is constituted of villagers forming groups representing their respective villages at the meetings held by the second-tier level. The second tiers are called management committee

\textsuperscript{19} The institutions within the formal politico-administrative are the ones that have a legal status and formal in-built mechanisms of responsiveness and accountability
bureaus. These bureaus are the core executive parts of committees set up by both projects. The second tier of the WN’s structure is accountable to the democratically elected Rural Council, represented by the President of the Forest Management Committee. Due to the reconfigurations made in 2012 by PROGEDE, however, the third tier has gained in importance and its accountability to elected Rural Council has diminished.

The salient difference between the two projects lies in the hierarchical positioning of women in the management structures, which in turn determines how much influence and what kind of influence they can exert in decision making. WN requires that women participate in the decision-making process at the bottom tier of the whole structure as a representative of women of the village while in the most recent PROGEDE forest management structure, the involvement of women is now required throughout the entire management structure. The presence of women at the top tier of the decision-making hierarchy in PROGEDE’s structure has been made mandatory; women can either play the role of the president, vice-president, secretary general, an assistant secretary general, a treasurer or an assistant treasurer provided that they constitute at least 50% of the executive bureau. The bottom tier of PROGEDE’s structure also is required to be composed 50% of women. PROGEDE’s re-organization of the forest management structures it created inclined heavily in the direction of pulling in more women of the village communities to hold positions of power rather than only being a spokesperson. Although being a representative of other women of her village is in theory an important role in the bottom-up, participatory approach to the functioning of such institutions, the actual voicing of the needs and concerns by women depends largely on the personal qualities of the individual representatives.
Since there were no gender-based restrictions for the posts beholding executive and decision-making powers in the WN structure, all\textsuperscript{20} of them except one, were unsurprisingly occupied by men. The village representative groups are in practice largely ‘tokenistic’ or often passive attendees. The majority of women in those groups are most of the time oblivious to how their participation could affect women. They just attend the meeting because a family member or a relative of theirs asked them to do so, with a few women being even unaware of their names were on the list of representatives (Fieldwork, 2012). As pointed out by the women interviewed: women would often participate in meetings held in their villages but only the people who hold some kind of formal positions took the floor while women often find themselves not given the opportunity to speak.

The exploitation of forest for the purpose of wood-based charcoal production is highly gendered in Senegal and this case shows the hindrances women face in balancing their asymmetrical position in entering a natural-resource-based productive sector as well as in spaces of social and political interaction in institutions that should in principle allow them to gain power with respect to forest resources. The inclusion of women in charcoal production is still at an embryonic stage in rural Tambacounda and the number of women charcoal producers is significant enough to be perceived as competition to groups of more established men charcoal producers. Rural women charcoal producers are not currently disruptive to any existing hierarchy, which might help in explaining why the gender aspect has not attracted a lot of resistance from the male members of

\textsuperscript{20} There were a total of 19 positions for the Sita Niaoule whole management structure. The Sita Nioule Forest Management structure is divided into 3 block-level management committees each consisting of 6 executive positions, plus one member of the Rural Council who presides over the whole Forest Management Committee. The members of the village representative groups are not counted in here.
the elite group. Although not numerically as significant as men in the charcoal sector, women charcoal producers in rural regions exist and women are becoming increasingly interested in entering the charcoal sector because of the wealth-generation prospects in that sector. Women charcoal producers are currently not common but the few who engage in charcoal production activities are found mostly working as ‘intermediaries’ in the charcoal chain, that is, they would mostly buy the charcoal from the *surghas* (migrant laborers) whom they have engaged or who them find already producing charcoal in the forests or other local producers and sell it to merchants.

### 4.5 Forest-based Development Projects and Elite Capture in Rural Communities

The newly created opportunities for extracting economic benefits from forests, especially through charcoal production is being captured by local elites. Elite capture is considered a hindrance to democratic culture (Lieten, 1996; Shah 2006). In the rural regions, forestry activities are the domain of men and the elites capturing benefits in the sector are men. Elite capture is about differentiated access to opportunities based on social, economic, political privileged positioning. The involvement of women in charcoal production in the villages is greatly influenced by who, among the men, dominate that sector at the local level. For instance, Khadija Sall\(^{21}\) entered the sector via higher up connections; her husband has been producing charcoal since several years and is also the president of the forest management committee. It is therefore necessary to identify who among the men are implicated in the elite capture and what they are capturing before

\(^{21}\) Names have been changed to maintain anonymity.
engaging in examination of the gendered aspect of that capture.

As the following depiction of the charcoal industry demonstrates, the members of the rural communities who benefit the most from charcoal are men, especially men who already have advantages – such as well-established connections with leaders and officials and knowledge about and ease in navigating the bureaucratic procedures as well as commercial activities. Moreover, the elites in the rural communities studied sought mostly to maintain control over their advantageous access to charcoal production through means and strategies that could be considered as corrupt and clannish. This observation is stated here not to demonize the local elite by overemphasizing their opportunistic exploitative role but to show where they are located on the elite conduct spectrum – a spectrum ranging from the materially and humanly deleterious exploitative elite to the benevolent elites who are willing to accommodate that the non-elite benefit from opportunities permitting some kind of advancement (Wong, 2013).

Corruption is one way elite capture manifests itself. There is an array of corrupt practices associated with decentralized systems in developing countries (Shah, 2006). The ones most relevant to this case range from petty corruption through the bureaucratic system characterized by people holding official positions who accept bribes, award favors, and diversion of funds to regulatory capture or influence peddling that allows the capture of institutional apparatuses (Boone, 1992; Shah 2006). At the local level, that is, in the rural communities, patronage-based corruption is most prevalent wherein official position holders and other advantageously placed figure heads (like members of the Rural Council, officials of the forestry services or even executive members of the FMC bureaus) give preferential treatment to people with whom they
have pre-established relations (such as members of kin, friends, business partners) in return for bribes or are associated with the diversion of funds and the awarding of favors (Interviews, 2012; 2013).

Observation during fieldwork revealed that at all stages of the process of producing charcoal, from the paperwork to the actual production of the product and to its sale: 1) men are the ones who deliver the documents in the formal institutions involved; 2) they are the ones who informally sell the circulation permits; 3) they are the ones who are the most important and influential members of the rural council, and 4) they are also the ones who are the members of the forest management committees created by the projects. The prevailing ‘personalism’ (Prud’homme, 1995) whereby official position-holders pay more attention to individual needs of those who are close to them than to public interest in general, therefore bringing in more personalism than professionalism to what they do, has a gendered aspect that tilts in the favor of men in the case studied. For instance, such proximity develops because the people who are members of the Rural Councils or the Forest Management Committees were born and live in those same rural communities, or are co-opted and seek to maintain good relations with the members of the rural communities they now inhabit in cases where they are outsiders (Fieldwork, 2012; Tanzi, 1995).

Some women did enter the charcoal sector. The women in the villages who succeeded in entering the charcoal industry were able to do so partly because they had a male relative who shared information with them or a husband who is already in the charcoal sector and has the adequate social and business connections the woman could tap into or knowledge by which they can learn
the ropes of the trade. Other women, such as Aissata Sylla, can enter the charcoal sector because they hail from a family having an above average income. She is therefore able to harness greater financial security, allowing her to engage in activities other than subsistence agriculture. Charcoal production is one of Aissata’s income-generating activities, the other being trade. She trades peanuts, and cloth from Mali and now uses the money earned from charcoal to re-invest in those same trading activities. She is one of the two woman engaged in producing charcoal in this village of around 40 households. She started producing charcoal in 2009 and in 2012 she produced, 450 bags of charcoal (slightly more than a truckload), which she sold at 1750 cfa francs per bag to another woman, a banaa-banaa (a middleman) in the neighboring bigger village.

In addition to differential access to opportunities, men and women invest their incomes from the sector differently. Interviews and surveys converge to show that whenever men have the maximum control over charcoal cash, their priorities include the purchase of motorbikes, additional wives, agricultural equipment and rebuilding the house. Respect and social standing for men is derived the acquisition of status possessions like motor vehicles and material objects as well as cash that they can use and share with relatives and clients whereas women considered improved aspects of their personal lives as being important such supporting children, food security, household chores, marriage (Surveys, 2013).

4.6 Instrumentalizing gender in a decentralized forest resource management context
In the rural communities studied, men are asked or can ask others to sit at the head of tables, speak or ask others to speak on their behalf, and are given access to financially gainful opportunities. The needs and aspirations of women, whose conspicuous absence or silence prevails at all levels of forest management and political representation, are therefore overlooked. Only 6 out of 46 of the democratically elected members of the Rural Council of the Rural Community covered by Wula Nafaa were women. Such women, just like most of the other men who are Rural Council members, are recruited by party leaders to be on the electoral list based on their ability to convene crowds at meetings and to act as political outreach in the various localities of the rural community. Most of these women are barely literate and rarely take an active part in decision making. The Law No 2010-11 of 28 May 2010 required women to make up 50% of candidates on party lists from national to local level (Interviews, 2013; Arieff, 2013; UN Women, 2011). This law will be applied as from the next set of elections. The initiative of increasing the number of women on the electoral lists being still at a nascent stage, it is yet to be seen how it enables women from all the socio-economic groups in those rural communities in the Senegalese context to have access opportunities created by national development policies (Childs, 2004).

Furthermore, women who hold positions in the forest management structures, just women politicians, might not automatically become the representatives of all the women although being women, they might be thought of as being more familiar with problems other women encounter. Women who hold positions in those management structures become mouthpieces for other men, especially those whom the women want to associate with for building their political base or are related to (Fieldwork, 2013). Compliance with men’s interests might be more valuable in providing for women leaders’ own vested interests or that of their political parties (Cornwall,
2003; Chattopadhyay and Duflo, 2004; Nanivadekar, 2006). While political interests of women holding positions of authority might sometimes overshadow their sensitivity to women’s needs and demands, female solidarity does have role to play when tapped to build the confidence and motivation needed at beginning stages of entry in forest management or the charcoal sector, previously unknown terrains to rural women (Eckel and Grossman, 1998; Deininger et al., 2011). This was observed to exist to some degree in both Koar and Missirah in the form of women’s organization and groups would be the way women would usually use to engage in an economic activity.

The repertoire of maneuvers that were used by those elite men to maintain control over the most profitable source of income from forests, that is, charcoal production, might not be available to most rural women. Such maneuvers consisted of involving only individuals who were in their network of friends, family and collaborators in discussions regarding charcoal as well as not partnering with people who were not in those networks for charcoal business or by actively excluding others. The women involved in charcoal production and trade did not form a homogeneous or cohesive group. Women hailing from more affluent families and upper social classes tended to gain more profit from charcoal production than women from poorer families and of lower social standing. This is because the more-affluent women were not as burdened with the productive roles and could thus devote more time and energy to income-generating activities. Most importantly their husbands were a source of capital, both in terms of providing financial support and providing knowledge enabling those women to enter the charcoal value chain. The women interviewed reported that the financial support is never in the form of the husband giving the women an amount of money to carry out her charcoal production activities but rather in the
form of ‘loans’. Sometimes, women whose husbands are already involved in charcoal production would train themselves in charcoal production by accompanying the husband to the charcoal production site and helping with the tasks like the assembling of wood for carbonization. Whenever women would have sufficient means of their own would, they start producing the charcoal independently. Sources of finance varied based on the socio-economic status of the woman, and on the presence of financial institutions in their zone such as the micro-credit service in Koar or the Crédit Mutuel (a bank) in Missirah.

Charcoal production is a male-dominated sector, from the beginning to the end of the whole production process as well as the marketing and sale of the product. The degree of involvement of women in charcoal production and sale still largely insignificant in the Tambacounda region. Elite capture is often accompanied with corruption. Although certain practices would be considered ‘routine’ such as the giving of bribes, other corrupt activities require a deeper and more-intricate network of accomplices, and women might be excluded from those networks unless they have necessary social, economic or political capital to start infiltrating such networks. Previous analyses of women’s inclusion in forest management depict gender relations in an oppositional manner, that is, when men and women are in joint groups, the women end up being marginalized. Elite women might also be co-opted by the male elite resulting in women participating in the instrumentalization of the gender component of the policies by being complicit to men’s elite capture activities. Men would send women to follow the training and get the producers’ permit to then use the permits to also produce charcoal under the woman’s name.
As mentioned, local elites captured resources and opportunities brought in by the two project interventions. In the Rural Community where WN operated, villagers claimed that the Forest Services and the Local Elected Government were siphoning off permits for exploitation while the other villagers had charcoal left in the forests and needed to have those permits to sell their charcoal (Interviews, 2012, Tambacounda). Villagers explained that those siphoned off permits that allow for charcoal production and sale were being sold illegally at more than 700,000 cfa ($US 1400) by the Forestry Services while the regular fee is 140,000 cfa ($US 280). It is often the banaa-banaas (intermediaries between big charcoal merchants and producers, they are usually outsiders based in the towns and cities) who can afford to buy permits at such high rates. This confirms a long-standing complicity between the banaa-banaas and the local forest service still thrives at the expense of local community members’ share of the market. In certain rural communities, other than this one, the relationship can be qualified as being overtly conflictual, whereby the local government has taken a stance against the corrupt clientelistic activities of the forestry service and are bent on denouncing the tight grip they have over access to forest resources and access to markets. Inequalities are deep between elite and those in the non-elite groups as illustrated by these corrupt activities. This is the context in which women who seek to benefit from the charcoal industry have to function.

Policy action aimed at increasing women’s access to forest resources in rural Senegal has to operate against a backdrop where the institutions of participation have been co-opted by the elites, who are almost entirely male; or they are coopted by non-elite men engaged in patron-client kind of relationship with those elites. In the international development arena, gender has been accepted and used as a valid category of intervention and a constitutionally recognized (Dutta, 2009). The
inclusion of gender has become a policy norm and it is unquestioned. Albeit women in developing countries could benefit greatly from all the help they could get from development agencies provided that such kind of assistance is well formulated and properly targeted and the implementation monitored closely, merely pressing for the participation and representation in quantitative terms is insufficient. Numbers say little in such a highly stratified environment where their participation or inclusion is itself subordinate.

4.7 The problem of one bird in the hand worth two in the bush or the dysfunctional correspondence between different types of participation

There is a lack of correspondence between how participation is conceived at the design stage of projects whereby participation is functional and what it yields when it is implemented. At the design and planning stage, participation is an umbrella approach widely accepted as signaling an inclusive development planning process (Rahnema, 1992; Kothari, 2002). The participation-related goals formulated at the planning stage are achievable and are often assessed to reflect positive performance of projects (Baviskar, 2004) but for such achievements to be meaningful and to have lasting effects, the participatory process initiated by the intervention needs to be transformative. It has to be transformative at various levels ranging from the community, household and individual so as to enable the mostly domestic-sphere bound rural women in the region of Tambacounda to become savvy charcoal businesswomen.

The indicators hatched by the donor agencies, when measuring project outputs reflect advancement. In this case, indicators portray as advancement the increase in the number of
attendees to workshops and meetings and the share of allocated project budget spent. This also points in the direction that participation is construed mostly as a functional, fulfilling first and foremost the purpose of meeting project goals. Belonging to the realm of development orthodoxy, this type of ‘functional participation’ holds the functionality of a tool or medium through which project action is carried out, even if it means that participation is to become only a ritualistic process at project implementation level. The transformative potential of participatory approach is limited to those familiar and able to partake in this ritual, in this case, the local elites. The transformation of women into economic actors on par with men in the political arena requires deeper changes at various levels (Parpart et al., 2002; Kabeer, 1999). Transformative participation is a type of participation less as an element in a formula and more as one attentive to contextual contours where project action is going to unfold (see Fig. 4.1.).
Fig 4.1. Types of participation associated with each stage of project life. The fluidity in how the ‘participatory approach’ is construed and used at each stage allows for contradictory potentials. It may promote simultaneous processes of inclusion and exclusion through the structures of participation or privatization.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stage of project</th>
<th>Type of participation associated with each stage of project</th>
<th>Description of the participation</th>
<th>How the participation of women is conceived, enacted, and assessed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Formulation/design</td>
<td>Functional</td>
<td>Securing the involvement of women to fulfill the formulaic purpose of participation in project intervention. Women’s attendance quotas to be met. Women enlisted as members of committees or as part of representative groups.</td>
<td>Participation being a development orthodoxy shapes the approach utilized by projects to meet goals. Use of this approach signals bottom-up, inclusiveness, democratic, and gender awareness to stakeholders and audiences. Women as beneficiaries promises the redress (especially economic) of inequalities between genders.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Implementation</td>
<td>Consultative</td>
<td>Project facilitators to gauge the temperature of the situation. Forest management committees set up by projects organize meetings where women can participate to voice out their concerns</td>
<td>Women are just heard or are made to be present during meetings and on committees. Whether or not the issues brought to the fore by women in the discussion is taken into consideration for future action is at the discretion of project staff or the heads of committees.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evaluation</td>
<td>Transformative</td>
<td>This type of participation is considered to be the deepest type brought about by substantive changes in their empowerment as agents having critical consciousness and ability to demand for accountability</td>
<td>The project is evaluated by the donor agencies in a manner such as to depict success but do not show how participation transformed the lives of poorer women and how the partnership with democratically elected local government has contributed to uplifting women.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The type of participation observed in this case</td>
<td>Instrumental</td>
<td>Women participate to allow the projects to achieve their goals. The gender gap is minimally reduced as most women who could participate were those in a privileged position or were connected to elite men.</td>
<td>Women or any gender component of projects used by elites as instruments to their benefit instead of women in from a wider swath of the community.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Based on field data and inspired from Cornwall, 2003; Arnstein, 1969)
A look at the ‘Implementation Status and Results Report’ of one of the projects in Senegal offers insight in how the project’s success is evaluated. The current rating being ‘Highly Satisfactory’ with implementation rates indicating an increase of 145.15% for forests put under sustainable management from 2009 to 2014 and an increase of 210.28% in the production of charcoal in managed forests. This was accompanied by an increase in revenue from charcoal sale and other income-generating activities from US$ 18 million in 2009 to US$ 30 million in 2014. The report mentions that over 1000 women were trained in tree-cutting and charcoal production techniques and have become charcoal producers, but the total amount of revenue from charcoal produced by only women producers is not revealed in the report. The number of women present at the training programs far outnumbered those who were actively producing charcoal, mostly because of the novelty of the activity and the training is now needed to have a local producer’s license. The interviewed women who said they were planning on producing charcoal were from the less deprived households or/ and who had the support of male members of the family.

Instead, the ‘success story’ of only two women are cherry-picked to illustrate that women are making substantial revenue from charcoal production: “For example, one lady that is producing charcoal mentioned that she bought a truck at US$14,000 and set up a business with a few employees; another widow working with her widows is making about US$ 2,800 every two to three months; etc. Participatory forest management has become a true wealth creation tool in rural areas.” (World Bank, 2015.) Albeit these two example are impressive and the earnings made by each of these women would be considered a big fortune by Senegalese standards, they are not a representative sample of what the rest of the 1000 trained women are making.
Further incongruities manifest themselves in the participatory approach during the implementation phase wherein participation is a consultative process for most villagers and vulnerable to domination by a few elite. In the end, participation of women in forest management is reduced to being a tool for project implementation, which is simultaneously instrumentalized by a few local elites to extract gains at the expense of the broader community. Women are just heard or are made to be present during meetings and on committees. Whether or not what women bring to the fore in discussions is responded to or not is at the discretion of project staff or the heads of committees. The project is assessed in such a manner as to depict the participation as positively transforming the lives of women with emphasis on the element of institutional partnership with democratically elected local government.

Gender and development projects have become a category exemplifying the learning process of donor agencies who plan and fund such projects involving a gender component (Hulme, 1994). One of the actions taken by donors as a response to criticisms about the lack of inclusion of the voice of women in the planning and implementation of their projects was to activate a bottom-up channel involving consultation and using feedback from women in villages. However, this action turned out to be only information gathering exchanges between project staff and the women, with neither demonstration of commitment that the information provided would be used to bring the requested changes were made nor have the women seen any concrete actions based on their demands. The project was implemented mostly as it were designed by the institutions at the top, that is, the planners in the donor agencies and state. Even the decision to make gender one of the focal points in the projects was formulated by those higher-level institutions.
Studies show that women in other settings preferred women’s only groups over mixed sex groups because they felt freer to discuss and develop their ideas as well as network with other women (Saito and Spurling, 1992; Sen and Grown, 1987). There were two types of women’s groups in the village covered by PROGEDE: one consisting of married women and the other composed mostly of unmarried women. The women interested in producing charcoal or already producing charcoal were members of the married women’s group and it was composed of women from different walks of life who were also either friends or relatives other male charcoal producers.

Maimouna, one of the members from the married group of women, was the de facto spokeswoman of the group and described how women in their group were made to participate in the project. She said that the women worked in close collaboration with one the project facilitators/ extension workers who guided them about market gardening. She added that after extension agent had explained that to them the villagers have understood that the project was there to work in their interest. This belief was reinforced when they were able to observe how charcoal was beginning to yield revenues for villagers. At the time of the interview, the women in the group did not work in partnership with each other to produce the charcoal, the number of bags that the women producers in the village produced averaged only to 100-150 bags per producer largely insufficient to make a single truckload (usually 400 bags). The number of women producing charcoal in that one village are so small that even if they teamed up they would not be able to fill one truck. It is therefore much easier for the women charcoal producers to add their charcoal truckloads of men charcoal producers who produce enough charcoal to rent a truck or to just sell their charcoal to those men producers who have the means to transport the charcoal to the market. The women producers found themselves in situations where they have to sell their bags of
charcoal to *banaa-banaas* (intermediary merchants) who then transport and sell them in the cities. At the time this interview was carried out in 2013, Maimouna had begun to accrue enough capital to produce larger quantities of charcoal and was hoping that one day she will be able transport and sell all her charcoal to the cities without having to resort to intermediaries who intercept the bigger share of the profit.

When the village women were consulted by the project staff about whether they would like to become producers themselves or not, the women expressed their desire to participate in the production of charcoal but they also pointed out their lack of means to engage in such an activity. A few of them took loans from the village’s “small bank” (microfinance organization sponsored by another project) but others in the group were unable to come up with the required collateral that would make them eligible borrowers. For the women in the PROGEDE zone, looking for sources of capital other than the husband is an important strategy because that would “allow them to work and no longer be under the yoke of the husband.” (Women Charcoal Producer, Interviews, 2013) They also did not want to impose financial burdens on the husband. Asking for the husband to invest in their charcoal production venture would make them feel dominated by the husband because they would be obligated to him (Interviews, 2013).

The women appreciated certain project activities that helped them to transition from working in an ad hoc manner to a more systematic one now. Nevertheless, they claim that assistance with the marketing of their charcoal products is lacking. Further complicating the sale of their product is the remoteness of their village and the poor road infrastructure linking them to main transportation axes and urban nodes. The women constantly brought up the issue of how the zone
in which their village is located becomes inaccessible during the rainy season. Women may be
doubly at a disadvantage here because the seasonal nature of the production of charcoal due to the
road inaccessibility problem means that women would be left with no choice other than to cease
or greatly reduce productive work (such as agricultural work) and domestic chores in order to
produce charcoal unless they hire workers commonly known as *surghas*. *Surghas* are workers
who offer labor in exchange of money and having their basic needs (such as shelter, food) taken
care of. The *surghas* who are hired in charcoal production are often foreigners from Guinea and
are of Peulh ethnicity.

The 2013 decree issued by the Ministry of the Environment, regarding the charcoal production for
that year stipulated that local charcoal producers, that is, the villagers who want to produce
charcoal would not be allowed to hire *surghas* and would have to use only their personal labor in
the production process (Decree No. 04.02.2013-000788 /MEDD/DEFCCS). Only the licensed
urban-based merchants are legally allowed to have *surghas*. Such a prohibition discourages
women from entering the charcoal sector because they are already constrained by their
reproductive responsibilities and productive commitments limiting their availability for the
seasonally restricted and the physically demanding charcoal-making activities. Women also find
themselves in a situation whereby they cannot employ the other young men of the village because
of the social stigma associated with working for somebody else. Aissata Sylla one of the women
producers, reports that without the labor provided by the *surghas*, she might not have been able to
produce charcoal on her own; due to the physically intense work of cutting down the tree trunks,

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22 The charcoal production and storage is done on a yearly seasonal basis and charcoal cannot be stored beyond a
certain time period as specified by the decree issued by the Ministry of Environment every year.
assembling the wood and making the charcoal. For the past four years, she has been hiring a 
*surgha* who would be responsible for the whole process of producing the charcoal and who would sell her the bags of charcoal (Interviews, Missirah, 2013). Even as partners, the division of responsibilities could be perceived as an instrument of subordination. The young men of the village would prefer to work for their own account rather than being relegated to the status of servant. However, a few foresters of the forest services have been lenient towards women producers as they were cognizant of these constraints and did not fine them or confiscate their charcoal for using *surghas* (Interviews, 2013).

In addition to the above hindrances, women in the rural communities have to be able to break in the barriers imposed by the customary ways in which men get recruited in the charcoal sector; men would get in through their friends, kin members, political relations which make it difficult for women who lead their lives mostly in the domestic sphere and not necessarily in contact with well-connected men in the charcoal sector. The labyrinthine nature of how transactions are carried out is well illustrated by the situations through which local producers have to navigate through to get permits to transport and sell their charcoal to the cities. The informality of procedures is characterized by corruption practices widely perceived as greasing the wheels that make the system work (Wei, 1998; Meon, 2005). The head start that men have, especially those among the privileged classes, is that they have levels of political sophistication facilitated by higher educational attainment and knowledge of political ideological positions gained from interest in politics and from interaction with and exposure to public sphere. The same cannot be said of women in the rural communities studied. Most women do not have the same opportunity to be exposed to political affairs of the village so as to attain similar levels of empowerment as men in
addition to the very restrictive nature of their traditional roles, which keeps them mostly in the domestic sphere.

Indeed, women have to play multiple roles: productive, reproductive and community management in society. A staff member from one of the projects revealed what she thought about women’s inclusion. According to her, “women are considered to be the lynchpin in making development activities work. The well-being of the members of the household rest to a large degree on the shoulders of women.” Her take on the involvement of women echoes what the scholarship on development and women advances (Momsen, 1991; Sweetman, 2002; Kabeer, 2003; Rao and Kelleher, 2005). Bringing women into the private sector by getting them involved in charcoal production is not only about alleviating women’s financial and material poverty but about fighting the challenge of being excluded from decision making about forest-related resource allocation. Empowering women through creating an institutional space for women in the organizational structures like the forest management committees might be touted as being a step in what is considered to be the right direction, achieving equity in access to a resource. As Arnstein pointed out in her 1969 paper entitled “A ladder of participation”, “the idea of citizen participation is a little like eating spinach; no one is against it in principle because it is good for you. Participation of the governed in their government is, in theory, the cornerstone of democracy – a revered idea that is vigorously applauded by everyone.” Gender mainstreaming when included in a project is unlikely to face any resistance because uplifting the have-nots is after all one of the major goals of development policies and seeing past the normalcy of such an established approach would be considered as backpedaling the development process.
Some argue having at least some women benefitting from the project is better than none benefitting from it (Interviews, 2013). The caveat that has to be brought up with this line of reasoning is that it is a sweeping generalization that masks the problem of intra-group differences and the entrenchment of inequalities among of groups of women within the same society. Going for the one bird in the hand rather than two in the bush might be deleterious to the empowerment of women in the vulnerable groups. Going for the one bird in the hand signifies viewing women as numerical abstractions and having a certain number of women present at meetings and registering a the few women entering the charcoal sector as being satisfactory project achievements might end up having the opposite effect of reducing poverty. This is because those two birds in the bush represent the poorer women and the very ones that the projects’ actions has not been able to reach and have a positive transformative effect on their lives. Instead project action targeting women were taken advantage of by women in the elite group and has thus been strengthening the elite. Isolated or piecemeal moves, even when they are radical like the reservation of space for women on the electoral lists for rural council elections or in forest management structures, where women have to occupy a certain number of the positions means that the efforts to include women to have not been incremental. This case depicts how creating institutionalized spaces for women so that they can engage in one particular sector (forest sector in this case) is insufficient in empowering them to use those arenas effectively. Failing to invest in the women so that they can build themselves to become competent ‘representatives’ and office holders in the forest management committees just leaves those spaces prone to elite capture. This failure can be traced to the architects of the projects who assume that women in those societies are proficient citizens fully, capable of taking on whatever leadership roles based on values and expectations foreign to their own culture that are thrown at them. The qualitative data presented in
this paper through the portraits of women illustrate how women have been included to the benefit of the already privileged, regardless of gender.

The pecuniary opportunities at stake being sizeable, villagers who are already well positioned (in terms of social status, economic condition, educational attainment) are chosen to take up roles that regulate access to forests or occupy those regarding the management of revenues from forest resources making the less publicly visible women appear as inept or uninterested candidates for such positions. One of the findings in Bandiaky’s study in Dialakoto, Senegal points out that most women were generally less qualified to be in those positions (Bandiaky, 2008). This finding of Bandiaky’s tallies with what was observed in Tambacounda during the recruitment of members for the third tier of the recently reconfigured forest management committees for PROGEDE II. The third tier of the management structures is constituted by village-level representatives; that is, one man and one woman from each village. The selection criteria was based on voting for the most competent people be the representative, competency in this case being the ability to read and write French and count. The pool of women eligible for being on the management committees was so small or inexistent. Finding a woman who would fulfill the aforementioned criteria proved to be a difficult a task because of the low level of literacy among women in those villages and the recruiting teams23 had to forego of the voting process to then just select the most literate woman in the village who would be available to be a representative (Fieldwork, 2013). The skills set of women thus selected sometimes do not predispose them to be functional in the sort of public life that requires them to effectively convey the needs and aspirations of women in that villages unless

23 Convoys were sent to villages in the rural community and they consisted of high-ranking foresters from the forestry service in Dakar, a representative of the regional development commission, a staff of the PROGEDE, members of the Rural Council, a forester from the local forestry service
the women doing so have qualities and skills that they cultivated or possessed as an individual. However, this might not be enough to ensure that women’s interests garner the political attention they require for action to be taken. Factors such as trust in and receptiveness to women’s leadership style, the lag time required for women to become as politically experienced as men, and charcoal (Bardhan et al., 2010; Chen, 2010; Cornwall, 2004).

4.8 Conclusion
Development processes affect women and men in different ways. Donor-funded development projects have the possibility of reducing or accentuating gender divisions within the institutional landscape. Gender neutral projects or policies that are designed not to interfere with gender inequity can deepen difference between how men and women of the same rural community can have access to a natural resource (Bandiaky, 2008; 2011).

Gender-neutral projects and policies offer free rein to men to continue operating as dominant actors on what is already an uneven playing field. In this case they continue to dominate the spaces available for local-level representation. The cases of Wula Nafaa and PROGEDE in eastern Senegal provided insights into the ways that even gender-sensitive or women-promoting projects can reinforce gender-discriminatory practices in access to representation and economic opportunities.

24 Those would include oratory skills, confidence to express oneself in public as well as accurate and up-to date information about the project activities and the status of affairs in charcoal production which requires literacy and numerical skills and good network of people knowledgeable about the sector. They would also have to know all the administrative procedures and have the ability to liaise with different authorities or leaders.
The forest-based development projects considered in this study do not single out ‘elite capture’ as a problem or adopt actions that specifically counter ‘elite capture.’ Rather they adopt approaches that are believed to be inclusive or participatory. Evidence from this study reveals the pervasiveness of elite capture in the forestry sector in the rural zones. In this context, gender-based corrective actions introduced by the projects reset new cycles of elite capture whereby elite women are co-opted by elite men in a manner that reinforces social and economic stratification and the continued exclusion of poorer women. The use of a gender lens sheds light on how historically persistent discrimination against women can be deepened by the participatory approach intended to correct asymmetries. The gender-equity approach taken in these projects disadvantaged certain groups of women in both representation and in access to profitable forest resources.

Were women’s needs and aspirations addressed through the projects addressed in a decentralized forest management context? Empirical evidence from this study suggests that only a few women from higher socio-economic groups benefit from participatory projects or women who are requested to participate in management structures by well-intentioned project staff who also need to fulfill the project aims of having a certain number women present at meetings or as part of the management structure. It is nevertheless due to the dedication and enthusiasm of such project staff that some women were able to participate in charcoal production workshops and register for their local producer’s permit. However, the membership criteria to be part of the management structures such as the ability to read and write in French for holding higher level positions excluded many women right away in this region where female illiteracy is prevalent, especially among women from poorer groups. This automatically selected for women who had the privilege
to pursue at least a few years of education and are mostly from the better-off families to be part of the management committees with relatives or spouses in the charcoal business vouching for their participation on those committees.

Poorer and less-advantaged women just like non-elite men find their access to forest-based wealth generating activities obstructed by elite capture but unlike men they have to face additional hindrances due to their gender. Women have less leverage when they are targeted the same way male producers are by project designers and implementers. That is, women have less leverage than male producers when they, as an intended group of recipient for project support, are reached or are involved in project actions. Working though women’s groups might facilitate women’s empowerment in forest management. Women in the cases studied tend to have more clout when they are grouped and have a deeper involvement in women’s groups.

This research investigated the status of women and the gender dynamics in two remote marginal areas to highlight the obstacles faced by women engaging with new forest-based income-generating opportunities. Although Senegal has established democratic decentralization creating the space for local democratic representation, the nature of the devolution policies considered the rural communities as a unit without any discrimination among the needs or status of the various groups that constitute those rural societies. Senegal’s recent legislation about the inclusion of women at a 50/50 proportion on party listings at national level as well as local levels is a gigantic step towards involving more women in decision-making processes and leading to the inclusion of the vision of both genders constituting society. Experience in India shows that this approach is effective (Chattopadhyay and Duflo, 2004). It will be nevertheless necessary for women to
develop ways of being heard and not only seen in the decision-making arena. To date their participation remains skewed along socio-economic class lines and further damages the prospects for non-elite women.

Tough questions remain about democratic decentralization and its ability to sustain the channels through which the benefits of project intervention and policy would flow to the segments of rural Senegalese society that need them the most. Evidence from this study demonstrate that subjecting institutions in charge of forest management to the democratically elected local government or having them function parallel to the democratically elected local government does open up spaces for engaging women from the local rural communities. There is still a need to strengthen reliable mechanisms for actually ensuring accountability and transparency in order to also overcome elite capture.

Natural resource based development initiatives like the two projects discussed in this paper take place within a certain normative field that restrains how development takes place, with gender approaches within those initiatives dictating how women are involved in natural resource management as well as how women benefit from them. A deeper understanding of the recurrent inability of development projects to see local dynamics of hierarchy and subordination could help to push these projects to improve the situation of women. In Tambacounda, they are already in or wish to enter the charcoal sector. Projects have certainly made in-roads into involvement of women in the use of forest resources, but the balance that those projects sought to achieve is unlikely to come about within a project time frame. Whether or not the intervention of projects only places women in a better position to take advantage of the participatory space created for
thein institutions or merely contributes to buying time in order to bring about the deeper changes in social practices that would uplift women, the gendering the policy approach remains an untapped potential for breaking down inequalities to access to a natural resource.
4.9 Bibliography


CHAPTER 5

INSTITUTIONAL RECOGNITION AND ELITE CAPTURE IN THE FORESTRY SECTOR: IMPLICATIONS FOR DEVELOPMENT OUTCOMES OF WULA NAFAA IN TAMBACOUNDA, SENEGAL

5.1 Abstract

In Senegal, the locus for development at the Rural Community level offered by democratic decentralization is an institution: the democratically elected Rural Council. In an effort to support wealth creation from forests in an environmentally sustainable and inclusive way, USAID-funded project, Wula Nafaa, provided assistance to the Rural Council and Rural Communities through capacity-building and consolidating institutional infrastructure. This paper examines how decentralized forestry is leading to new patterns of wealth accumulation in villages through the intensification of elite capture of the wood-based charcoal sector at the local level. The case study of charcoal production in the Rural Community of Tambacounda showed how institutions such as the Rural Council, that have the function of democratically representing local populations and Forest Management Committees (FMCs), created by Wula Nafaa to engage inhabitants in managing forests, have enabled only a small group of advantageously placed elites to grab and dominate the access to forest resources. Elite capture not only excludes poorer groups from entering the lucrative charcoal business and creates inequitable access for smaller producers but has implications for contributing to the existing spatial disparities in development between the remote rural regions and the urbanized regions of the country.

Keywords: forests, local institutions, charcoal, elite capture, Senegal
5.2 Introduction

Fostering participation of local populations in development projects is widely believed to be a key element in project success (Chambers, 1997; Kothari, 2002; Cornwall, 2002; 2003). In Senegal, improving effectiveness and fairness of the participation of rural communities in managing and gaining economic benefits from their forests has led to specific types of institutional configurations influenced by government policies and donor-funded projects. Urban-based merchants used to extract all of the profits from charcoal production prior to the Senegal’s 1996 decentralization laws allowing inhabitants of Rural Communities to commercially use and manage forests through democratically elected Rural Council (Ribot, 2002; 2003; 2004; 2005; 2008; 2009; 2009; 2010; Boutinot, 2002; 2005). To facilitate the participation of inhabitants of Rural Communities and the sustainable use of forests, USAID introduced the Wula Nafaa project to boost local capacities and assist the Rural Council in managing forests. As the numbers in Table 4.1 show, the amount of charcoal produced by three main charcoal producing Rural Communities increased significantly since the implementation of decentralization legislation and Wula Nafaa’s re-organization of the forest management institutional landscape by creating and adding Forest Management Committees (FMCs). However, the wealth generated through charcoal produced by inhabitants of Rural Communities is accumulated by only a small group of local elite thereby crippling the horizontal spread of more profitable opportunities throughout a broader swath of the rural communities. A disproportionate amount of benefits is amassed by a few local elites who capture institutions connected to forest management, allowing them to control access to the resource for charcoal production. Elites who are economically, politically privileged are usually more educated and well connected, enabling them to market themselves as
more reliable interlocutors or middlemen between local populations and project staff.

It was observed that although the local elites were inhabitants of those villages, the wealth was not retained in the villages. Pocketing millions of CFA francs from charcoal production and trade, the elites in the villages have accumulated enough wealth to invest the profits in the urban centers where acquiring assets yields more returns than the rural regions where their investments are perceived as far less viable (Lynch, 2005). This type of bypass effect whereby finances flow from villages in Rural Communities to cities like Dakar or Tamba which grow at the expense of rural regions is not conducive to diminishing the spatial disparities in development between the remote rural zones and the urbanized zones. Using empirical data, this paper shows how the elite capture of opportunities in the charcoal takes place through the institutions operating in a Rural Community in the region of Tambacounda in the eastern part of Senegal. By examining the local institutional configuration recognized by Wula Nafaa and the Central Government to manage forests and charcoal production, we uncover how elite capture finds its way to hinder equitable access to forests despite the combination participatory approach adopted by the project and the democratic representation function of the Rural Council.

Institutional recognition involves the transfer of powers in terms of authority and resources from higher level institutions such as the National Government and international agencies to local level institutions they choose to partner with (Ribot, Chhatre & Lankina, 2008). Wula Nafaa (WN) created and recognized Forest Management Committees (FMCs) – structures organizing villagers into management units for each section of the Sita Nioule forest. With the addition of the FMCs in the lot of local institutions recognized to manage forests, the institutional landscape of the
Rural Community of Missirah consisted of the democratically elected local government (the Rural Council), the forestry services\textsuperscript{25} (the \textit{brigade}) which is a technical offshoot of the Ministry of Environment and the FMCs. Authorities like the village chief and the \textit{sous-préfet} play an important role in the life of villagers but they had been empowered to a much lesser degree by WN so they figured less prominently on the forest management institutional landscape.

The overarching objective of the Wula Nafaa project was “to contribute to poverty reduction and sustainable local development by increasing the revenues to rural communities by handing responsibility to local authorities while encouraging decentralized, integrated and participatory resource management” (USAID, 2008). Wula Nafaa’s attempt to integrate community-based natural resource management into a pre-existing decentralized local government, where the powers to manage access to forests has been devolved from the Central Government to the democratically elected Rural Council offered the potential of enhancing democratic representation in matters of forest management and charcoal production in the rural community. In theory, representation, as it is established in local institutions, plays an important role in shaping the equity and efficiency dimensions of economic development. In practice, representation has been shown to shape how benefits from forestry resources are distributed within local populations (Ribot 2004; Bazaara, 2006; Ribot, Lund and Treue, 2010). Representation through a democratically elected government is a formalized link between the individual, household and community and state and is a process that can influence the political economy of access to forests. The democratic representation is conceptualized as a function of responsiveness and (downward)

\textsuperscript{25} The Forestry Services has its headquarters in the capital city, Dakar and has branches at district levels (such as the Regional Headquarters of Tamba) and at the more local level, the Brigades in the Rural Communities.
accountability (Przeworski, Stokes & Manin, 1999). Democratic representation is therefore a mechanism that can enable citizens to be active and exert influence on policy rather than just be mere subjects who have to endure the effects of policies applied to them. It is this empowering transformation, from subject to citizen, which can endow community members with the ability to influence those who govern them (Ribot, 2010, Przeworski et al., 1999).

The findings reveal that the relationship of downward accountability established through the recognition of democratically elected local government was obstructed by elite capture. The elements of voice and sanction (both negative and positive) present in downward accountability allows for people to make those who govern responsive to their needs and aspirations. The creation of FMCs by the project WN opened an arena for villagers to participate directly in the management of their forests with the collaboration of the forestry services and under the supervision of the Rural Council. This combination of institutions with democratic representation (the Rural Council) and participatory (the FMCs) functions could be deemed as potent in terms of enhancing meaningful inclusion. Instead, it opened new channels for collusion among the office bearers of those institutions who maintain clientelistic relations with people they serve through those institutions. Members of the rural community, such as the poor and marginalized groups, who do not possess the necessary form of capital to enter the clientelistic relations are excluded from benefitting significantly from the local charcoal production opportunities.

At the time when the fieldwork for this study was carried out, the Rural Council played the role more of an ‘opportunistic mediator’ than a democratic representative between donor-funded projects and the elites in the local communities. The Rural Council is, by law, the gatekeeper of
the Rural Community, that is, any project action has to be approved by the Rural Council before it is implemented in the Rural Community under its jurisdiction (Republic of Senegal, 2003). The Rural Council, being the democratically elected representative of the Rural Community, therefore also mediates the relations between the project and the community. However, the profitability of commercial exploitation of forests for producing charcoal not only led members of the Rural Council but also members of the FMCs to become opportunistic, diverting resources and opportunities towards themselves or a small set of village elites. Such intensification of elite capture of charcoal sector at local level meant that the goals of achieving fruitful and meaningful participation of rural populations through democratic representation and project action were only superficially met. The data, qualitative in nature, for this study was collected through observation, 100 interviews and a survey of 140 households in the Tambacounda Region of Senegal from March 2012 to August 2013.

5.3 Background

The Tambacounda region, where Wula Nafaa intervened, is among the poorest and most remote in Senegal with income-generating opportunities being few. A 2001 study carried out by the National Statistics Agency of Senegal (ANSD) showed that Tambacounda had the highest number of people reporting they were in the ‘very poor’ category, more than any other region of Senegal. ‘Income-generating activities’ was identified as the most potent category of means to fight poverty compared to other means in both of ANSD’s 2001 and 2011 surveys on poverty. The 2005 and 2011 studies led by the ANSD on poverty showed the Tambacounda region as still
being in the very poor category\textsuperscript{26}. In 2005, 76.9\% of the population in Tambacounda was surveyed as living in poverty and the figure was 62.5\% for 2011. For both 2005 and 2011, Tambacounda was shown as experiencing the most severe type of poverty in the whole of Senegal (ANSD, 2011). The same surveys also revealed that over 90\% of citizens throughout the country, from all the income groups thought that terminating corruption would contribute to a reduction in poverty (ANSD, 2011).

When the commercial exploitation of forests was opened to Rural Communities in the late 1990s, it represented a much needed source of wealth creation in a region like Tambacounda. The implementation of Senegal’s progressive 1996 decentralization laws and 1998 forestry code allowed rural populations, represented by elected local councils, to rightfully manage and use their forests. Since then, progress has slowly been made in terms of local populations having access to forests in their rural communities. Every year, a set amount of charcoal, a domestic fuel in high demand in urban areas, is legally allowed to be produced in specific forested regions of the country. Negotiation meetings regrouping urban-based producers, charcoal merchants and the heads of elected local governments, that is, rural council presidents are held yearly by the regional headquarters of forestry services before the charcoal production campaign begins. The purpose of negotiation meetings are for making decisions regarding how the set amount of charcoal allowed to be produced each year would be divided between the two categories of charcoal producers: the urban-based producers and the rural producers would be allowed to produce during a particular year.

\textsuperscript{26} The survey: ESPS-II categorized the regions of the country in three categories: Very high poverty level (>60\% of the population), High poverty level (between 40\% and 60\%), Moderately high level of poverty ( <40\%) (ANSD, 2011)
The recent cohort of Rural Council Presidents (RCP) elected since 2009 are aware of the significant revenues that charcoal production could bring in to their Rural Communities and especially to the coffers of the Rural Council. As a result there has been a marked increase in the number of requests made for forest management plans – a technical document legally required before the commercial exploitation of forests can take place (Republic of Senegal, 1994; 1998) - from RCPs who would like to see charcoal production take place within their jurisdiction. The decentralization of forest resource management brought along with it the hope that democratic representation would lead to a more effective participation of local rural populations. The Rural Council Presidents used their prerogative as representatives of their Rural Communities to endorse and to push for the increase in the share of charcoal production quantities allocated to their Rural Communities during those negotiation meetings convoked at the regional headquarters of forestry services. This is an example of the democratic representation aspect of decentralization in action. Beyond the point of securing a higher charcoal production limit, how the number of permits were distributed intra-locally was often dictated by logics other than those underlying democratic representation. The unfolding of the democratic representation was influenced the personal characteristics of the rural council members and their motives as well as the interests of other rural elites (Tendler, 1997).

Local leadership has historically been the role of the village chief while the State possessed legal title over and controlled and managed the forests. The state-led decentralization initiatives have resulted in a re-coordination, re-organization of tasks and authority among already existing
institutions like the Rural Council composed of democratically elected members and newly created ones like forest management structures run by villagers. The forestry services which have maintained a tight grip over forest resources since the colonial times and which have been the strong arm of the urban-based merchants in the exploitation of forests for charcoal retained their policing role. The forestry services also continued to act as the technical advisory service in the context of decentralization and during the implementation of forest resource-based development projects like Wula Nafaa (Boutinot & Diouf, 2007; Blundo, 1995; 1998; 2011).

Wula Nafaa\textsuperscript{27} adopted USAID’s Nature-Wealth-Power paradigm, whereby Nature=Environment, Wealth=Economic, Power=Social/Political, as the ideological roadmap guiding its plan of action. Wula Nafaa provided support to put into practice the decentralization reforms in the forestry sector for which the Rural Councils do not receive any direct funding (fonds de dotation) from the central government (Republic of Senegal, 2003). Wula Nafaa aimed at reducing poverty by providing environmentally sustainable means of livelihood from forests. The project sought to do so by using a participatory approach involving the setting up of Forest Management Committees (FMCs) operated by villagers and by engaging the democratically elected local government to oversee the functioning of the FMCs.

The members of the FMCs were inducted into their roles with training about financial and administrative aspects of the functioning of the committees such as book-keeping, organization of meetings and the roles of every institution involved. The forest guards (or technical agents)

\textsuperscript{27} Wula Nafaa meaning wealth from the forest in one of the local languages, Bambara
received technical training enabling them to supervise the cutting down of wood for charcoal production. The forest guards were also in charge of surveillance responsibilities and contribute to decision-making by inputting first-hand information. The FMCs created by Wula Nafaa are organized in three tiered structures with the top tier composed of the democratically elected local government and the second tier made up of the block-level forest management committees and the lowermost tier consisting of village representatives (each village sending a representative from various groups in the village: the village chief, a representative of charcoal producers, a representative for the youth, a distinguished citizens’ (notable) representative, a farmers’ representative, a women’s representative, a representative for animal herders, a forest guard. However, this last tier which could have been a most significant catalyzer for the effective participation of villagers only became a mere group of passive onlookers while the second tier of the structure, consisting of the block-level management committee, became the most powerful executive node of the structure.

Although project designers paid heed to the criticisms about considering local populations as an undifferentiated mass of intended beneficiaries, the ways of maintaining a more democratic quality of the targeting was not adequate in this case. The inclusion of representatives could not avoid the negative discrimination against some of the groups within the societies where the project was intervening. The project ended up working with elites instead of a group of people more representative of the local population as whole despite the aforementioned efforts. Moreover, subjecting the whole forest management structure created by Wula Nafaa to the authority of the Rural Council only sharpened the appetite of many in those two institutions to
exchange favors around access to forest resources.

5.4 The intensification of elite capture of the charcoal sector at the local level

The re-organization in power among institutions brought about by decentralization and the introduction of FMCs was accompanied by the creation of positions of authority regarding forest management within those institutions. The monetary benefits at stake being considerable, the elites colluded to capture those positions or co-opted those holding those positions within any institutions related to forest management so as to steadily divert and corner power and resources to their side. According to Bratton and van de Walle “formal political institutions are thoroughly steeped in and penetrated by, informal personal networks” (Bratton and van de Walle, 1997). In this case, clientelism was pervasive and blurred the boundaries of the formal and informal, highlighting the importance of the context when natural resource management is brought closer to the rural community. For instance, a feature of the context that is of relevance here is the proximity factor that creates a propensity for rural elites to build a network to maintain their stronghold on charcoal production; most of the people, especially most of the elites, the villages know each other and sometimes already have long-standing relationships.

Respecting the canons of participatory approach in development, the rationale behind the creation of the FMCs by the donor-funded project was to increase direct participation of the villagers in the management of the forest and at the same time to circumvent corruption-led motivations of local governments to interfere with the management of forests and access to charcoal production (Pritchett & Woolcock, 2004; Smoke, 2008). Wula Nafaa’s creation and
recognition of FMCs which are entities outside of the formal legal politico-administrative structure were efficient in accomplishing the administrative and technical tasks, unburdening the Rural Council which would have not been achieve those with its limited resources. The FMCs were not spared from elite capture as they became a resource for patronage and presented opportunities for embezzlement and trafficking. Often times, the presidents of the FMCs would be cronies of members of the Rural Council, who would also be most likely to associate with those who are socially, economically or politically close to them.

A salient feature of Senegal’s Rural Councils is that the power distribution among the council members is highly skewed making it more of a one-man show than a team of representatives who have. The RCP is the mastermind behind decisions taken by the Rural Council and he is assisted by a couple of or a small group of cronies while the rest of the council consists mostly of members who are most of the time, mere onlookers during meetings and yes-men during voting. As one woman councilor put it, she stood for the elections and is part of the council because she likes politics, she likes carrying out campaigning activities. The majority of the councilors are not among the most highly educated members of the community or are not even the most aware or active regarding particular problems affecting the local community. The Rural Council members are chosen or put on the electoral list based on their ability to convene crowds at meetings and to act as political outreach in the various localities of the rural community.

28 The decentralization laws involved the devolution of authority to manage forests to the Rural Council but the law does not make provisions for any transfer of resources in the form of funds apart from the technical assistance that the forestry services have to provide to the Rural Council.
The avenues for using the formal mechanisms of accountability and responsiveness, meant to keep elected representatives in check and considered as built in the democratically elected local government system, are compromised because of the opportunistic behavior adopted by the members of the Rural Council regarding charcoal sector in their Rural Community.

The syncretic advantage conferred when forest resources are managed by a mix of different institutions had only partially promoted democratic representation despite the administrative efficiency it has brought about. ‘Syncretism’ (Galvan & Richard, 2003) is the transformative process that ensues from the recombination of institutional elements of institutions having diverse characteristics. The FMCs have added distance between the local community and the Rural Council by being now the institution specializing in the management of forest and charcoal production. The Forest Management Committees in charge of the everyday running of forest management tasks as well as being now established as the first stop shop for responding to charcoal producers’ needs. Respondents to the surveys revealed that the Rural Council and its president were not the authority the people resorted to when they had to voice out their concerns and needs about charcoal production and forest management. This division of tasks among the institutions had led to efficiency in administering the management by relieving the Rural Council of dealing directly with the villagers but has also restricted the representation role of the only institution possessing formal-legal downward accountability and responsiveness obligations. In this case, the president of the FMC was a member of the Rural Council and a charcoal entrepreneur who made fortune. This member of the Rural Council/president of the FMC/chocroal niche elite was also notorious for conniving with forestry agents and politicians. This old stager wearing several hats was able to tap into his experience and use his position in
various institutions to become the local charcoal baron.

The pecuniary benefits from charcoal production do not only accrue to individual rural producers but also to the Rural Council and the Forest Management Committees in the form of taxes charged on charcoal produced in the community’s forests. According to the Forest Management Plan (a document containing the technical and organizational prescriptions), 10% of the tax charged per each bag of charcoal sent to the cities goes to the Rural Council and around 60% of that tax goes to Forest Management Committee Fund and 10% for the running of the Management Committee.

The cap on the quantity of charcoal that rural communities are allocated to produce every year had steadily been rising, partly due the commitment of pro-active Rural Council presidents, who were cognizant of the enormous potential of charcoal to generate revenues. The taxes paid constituted a sizeable inflow of millions of CFA francs (ranging from anything from tens of thousands to hundreds of thousands of dollars) into the Rural Council’s coffers incentivizing the presidents of Rural Councils to negotiate for a bigger share of the charcoal production allotments for their Rural Communities. The Rural Communities were allowed to produce more charcoal each year on the basis that they had demonstrated their capacity to produce the full quantity allotted to them the previous year. However, not everybody or anybody within those charcoal-producing Rural Communities found themselves in a position to aspire to gain from the opportunities created through the opening up the charcoal industry to rural producers or the

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29 The remaining 10% of the tax is paid as remuneration to the forest guards (Agents Techniques) and the other remaining 10% goes to the villagers.
augmentation those production allotments.

Fig. 5.1. shows the trend in the officially registered quantities of charcoal produced in the three main charcoal-producing forests in the Tambacounda region. The limit to quantity of charcoal the rural communities were allowed to produce each year experienced an overall increase over the years which signified that the Rural Communities were able to reach the production amount allocated to them. In the past (before 1996-1998), the amount of charcoal produced by rural producers used to be insignificant while now it is almost comparable to if not more than the urban-based merchants.

Fig. 5.1. Quantities of charcoal allowed to be produced by rural-based and urban-based producers. Quantities are in quintals, 1 quintal= approximately 200 pounds.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Years</th>
<th>Missirah/Kothiary forest</th>
<th>Koar forest</th>
<th>Sita Niaoulé forest</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Local Rural producers</td>
<td>External producers</td>
<td>Local Rural producers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>37 500</td>
<td>39 620</td>
<td>62 500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>34 000</td>
<td>39 050</td>
<td>63 000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>40 500</td>
<td>36 400</td>
<td>64 800</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>71 500</td>
<td>78 670</td>
<td>190 300</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Source: IREF Tambacounda, 2013)

This favorable evolution in the consolidation of charcoal production as a source of income for villagers however masks the shift in the monopoly over charcoal production and trade by the urban-based merchants to one by locally-based elite at the rural community level. After the onset of decentralization and with the advent of forestry-related projects such as WN, there was a
change on the elite capture scene; there was an intensification and a spread of patron-client relationships within the rural communities connecting to the charcoal sector. Prior to the implementation of decentralization laws and the changes in the 1998 Forestry Code, the foresters used to connive with the urban-based merchants to extract profits from charcoal made in rural areas (Ribot, 1995; 1999; Poteete & Ribot, 2011). Now the charcoal business is no longer the turf of the urban-based merchants and their long-standing allies, the foresters at the Forestry Services in Dakar. The many newcomers, that is, the rural-based producers have established themselves in the sector and have started co-opting any actor who could reinforce their ability to produce and sell more charcoal or to siphon off privileges that would allow them to do so. This aspect revealed the dynamism of elite domination which is characterized by a process of ‘elite continuity, transformation and replacement’ through which elites cooperate, compete and reconcile their differences (Wong, 2013; Lund & Saito-Jensen, 2013). This somewhat intractable nature of elite capture made it very pernicious to participatory initiatives of development projects (Platteau, 2004; 2008).

Specific kinds of elites develop in different contexts. In the villages of the Rural Community studied, the people constituting the group known as elites were not confined to ‘traditional elites’ but extended to include villagers who have attained high economic status and strong political connections. ‘Traditional elites’ are people in kin-based or hereditary government arrangements such as the village chief and his family. Another category of elites include those occupying positions of authority such as executive members of the FMCs, members of the democratically elected local government and a wider range of actors located even at an extra-local level such as
government officials especially forestry agents at the regional headquarters.

The charcoal-related economic opportunities created for rural dwellers were grabbed by a small group of privileged villagers: the elites, at the expense of other groups consisting of poorer and marginalized villagers. Even when non-elites engage in charcoal production, they are faced with roadblocks set by the elites. “…I want to opt out of the charcoal business. Things are too complicated: politics and running after those who control the issuing of the documents required to get my charcoal to the market in the cities. I paid 815,000 cfa Francs (1630 US$) to a member of the rural council who is well connected to the Regional Forestry Services while the normal fee is 140,000 cfa (280 US$) Francs for a circulation permit…,” recounted one of the villager. This experience is shared by the other non-elite producers who were increasingly aware of the corrupt activities of the elites holding office in the institutions who would siphon off permits and resell them at inflated prices that only the other elites would be able to afford.

Using the elite capture perspective sheds light on the lacunae of participatory approaches adopted widely by donor-funded projects seeking to redress the unequal access to benefits from natural resources. There is a need to address the exclusionary practices resulting from elite capture in the villages because of the dearth of income-generating activities a remote region such as Tambacounda. When the participatory approaches themselves become prone to elite capture, they obstruct a wider swath of the rural population from benefitting from natural resources the management of which they have been entrusted with.
5.5 Charcoal-related elite capture in Rural Communities

The elites in the rural communities encroached on the charcoal sector by capturing opportunities offered by the project which were in the form positions within the forest management structures or through co-opting people holding such positions. During the initial stages of project implementation, it was mostly villagers who were members of the local elites who appealed to project staff with other members of the community not disproving of the selection of the . Being individuals having good communication skills, availability and attendance at meetings or initial project briefings, elites got handed certain positions of responsibility or resources to manage or were backed by the elites who were already in the charcoal industry and who would then pull the strings through them. Thus, began a new vicious circle of a project-capturing elites who gradually gained in prominence, skills and affluence which then enabled them to have more time and capacities as well as an enhanced ability to promote themselves as ‘bankable’ to the representatives or staff and even gain acceptance of the local populations for subsequent project tasks. Elites are the ones who can transform themselves into development ‘agents’ allowing their obsequious followers or clients to take advantage from project resources while others are excluded (Beck, 2008). As a result, instead of improving the well-being of the poor and marginalized, projects have contributed in perpetuating the skewed power and resource distribution in favor of those who are already powerful.

The supply side of the clientelism that underlies most of the elite capture practices has long been mediated by the Forestry Services. Through their many tactics and strategies, the Forestry collude with those who have economic interests at stake in the lucrative charcoal business (Poteete & Ribot, 2011; Boutinot, 2005; Roniger, 2004). One of those tactics was the traffic of permits. To
control the amount of charcoal produced the Forestry Services issue documents called ‘permits’. Each year there are a limited number of permits that can be issued based the quantity of charcoal each rural community is allowed to produce. If a charcoal producer does not possess a permit, he or she cannot legally transport charcoal to the market in the cities. Villagers reported that in 2012 they were told that there were no permits left for them when they still had truckloads of their charcoal lying in the forests, waiting to be sold. There were discrepancies in the delivery of permits with villages receiving fewer permits than they believed was due to them, while certain people including big urban merchants were able to exploit the forests beyond the amount allocated to them. This was because the permits were intercepted by the elite in the various institutions and then resold to buyers who could pay the inflated price.

5.6 Reactions to elite capture of institutions and clientelist representation

Can elite control be minimized? In theory, the recognition of democratically elected local government offers the possibility of political leverage to citizens and opens spaces where people could influence those who govern them (Ribot, 2007; 2011; Przeworski, Stokes & Manin, 1999). In reality, changing institutional forms have not been equal to changing deeply embedded power relations and has not always mitigated the opportunism of local leaders. The presence of ‘benevolent’ elites: individuals having the attributes of elites but who would engage in actions enhancing collective welfare of the community appears to be more serendipitous occurrences than prevalent mode of elite behavior in the zones studied (Platteau and Abraham, 2002; Wong, 2013; Mansuri and Rao, 2013). An example of such a ‘benevolent’ elite was the Rural Council President (RCP) in a Rural Community where another forestry project was operating who was known as being very pro-active and progressive in advancing his Rural Community as a whole. The RCP
would actively look for sources of funding to address problems afflicting his Rural Community as well as networking with political actors at various levels. This RCP was also one of the leading figures in tipping the balance of charcoal production allocations in favor of the rural communities but his stalwarts on the other hand were involved in elite capturing.

Every forestry-related project has a different approach to dealing with elite capture. To bring out the specificity of Wula Nafaa’s approach, we compared Wula Nafaa to another long-standing double-phased forestry project supported by the World Bank: PROGEDE. During its second phase, PROGEDE shied away from recognizing democratically elected local government by minimizing the involvement of the Rural Council in its forest management structure. This lack of trust in the local institution stemmed from the realization of the strengthening of the patron-client relations among the elites. Therefore, PROGEDE adopted what is termed as being a ‘counter-elite’ approach which challenges the elites by not recognizing them (Wong, 2010). On the other hand, Wula Nafaa adopted an approach closer to the ‘co-opt elite’ style which suggests co-operating with the elite. The project’s collaborative style was not formulated as a ‘co-opt elite’ one from the outset, but could be was observable only ex-post facto. Wula Nafaa worked in close collaboration with the Rural Council because that was prescribed by the donor agency through the ‘power’/governance component of the Nature-Wealth-Power paradigm. Careful about not antagonizing the powerful local people as it could jeopardize the continued partnership between the project and Rural Council and eventually the successful completion of the project, the implementing staff saw to it that the project was carried out without excluding the elites despite their misappropriation of opportunities and resources provided by projects.
The relationship between Wula Nafaa and the Rural Council was described as being a cordial one by the RCP who personally assessed the project as having handled the organization of the local communities in a very satisfactory manner. As mentioned earlier, Wula Nafaa put considerable focus on the ‘governance’ aspect, regrouping villagers into Forest Management Committees to manage the forest and subjecting those committees to the authority of the Rural Council. By doing so, Wula Nafaa coordinated its aims with those of the central government, that is, aligning them with the decentralization process which according to the donor agency’s highest ranking official is about “respecting the sovereignty of State of Senegal’s”. The same RCP also expressed his discontentment with the second phase of the PROGEDE project while being very approving of the first phase of the same project. The difference in attitude of the RCP towards the two phases of PROGEDE can be explained by the modifications brought about by the project regarding the structure of the forest management committees. In PROGEDE’s most recent overhauling of its forest management committees in the zones covered by PROGEDE, the involvement of the Rural Council was reduced to only an auditing role. This is a marked break from the previous structure of the committee exiting during the first phase whereby the committees were run by the RCPs ‘men’ allowing the taxes paid in to those forest management committees to be misappropriated by the RCP and his coterie. Those committees were very loosely monitored and sometimes manipulated by people who are outside the committee such as charcoal middlemen (banaa-banaas).

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30 Known as the ‘power’ component of Wula Nafaa’s development paradigm
31 According to the new rules of PROGEDE’s forest management committees, the rural council would be able to oversee the functioning of the new committees as it would have to send a member of the council to carry out the financial auditing.
5.7 Implications of the new patterns of accumulation triggered by the rural charcoal sector

Why does local level elite capture matter? One could argue that the battle of loosening the grip of urban-based charcoal merchants on rural forests has been won because rural populations now have access to forests and are in charge of revenues generated by the charcoal sector. On the 21st August, 2013, the closing ceremony of Wula Nafaa took place on a celebratory note. “We have made a very visible impact,” reported the head of the implementing staff of the project. Indeed, true to its name, Wula Nafaa has generated wealth in the rural communities which as accompanied by intra-community distributional unevenness. The rampant elite capture in the charcoal sector in the Rural Communities not only entrenches the disparities in the villages but it also contributed to deepening the differences in wealth accumulated between urban and rural regions.

It is necessary to zoom out beyond the scale of the Rural Community to see the implications of the new patterns of wealth accumulation lop-sided in favor of a small number of rural elites. The effects of this intra-village inequality in wealth accumulation contributes to the spatial disparities in levels of development between rural and urban zone through the continuation rural poverty cycles in the rural parts of Senegal while the urban centers grow. Despite not two households possessing the same set of livelihood strategies, the lack of investment from rural elites or even outsiders in activities that might create more wealth generating impulses for the villages was stark. Rather, they re-invested in urban areas, depriving a remote rural region like Tambacounda from retaining locally-generated wealth.
This urbanward movement of capital generated by local producers of charcoal was mostly invested in real estate such as the purchase of land in town of Tamba or building a house in Dakar which were deemed more judicious uses of money earned from charcoal. There was a limit as to the amount and type of investment that a villager, especially a well-established elite, would be willing to make in the village itself. After building one’s family a zinc or concrete roofed house, purchasing equipment for cultivation, animals for transportation, agricultural purposes or herding, or motorized vehicle (usually a motorbike), those charcoal-sector elites rarely create any multiplier economic activities in their villages.

Charcoal producers within a same rural community did not constitute a homogeneous group. The rural charcoal producers could be differentiated in terms of the degree of access each of them have to forest resources to produce charcoal. Having access to the forests for charcoal production, that is, the ability to draw benefits from it is defined by the extent they were part of or connected to an elite group. The elites already had an upper hand due to their privileged economic and social position endowing them with time, resources and connections gearing them to produce charcoal in a significantly profitable manner. The rest of the villagers become local surgas (paid laborers) who work to produce charcoal which they would sell to other villagers, mostly the elites. Selling to the elites would fetch the non-elite charcoal producers a much lower price (about 1300-1800 CFA francs per bag of charcoal\(^\text{32}\)) compared to selling their product directly on the urban markets for about 4 to 5 times more (between 5500 to 10000 CFA francs/bag depending on the size of the bag and the season). The non–elite charcoal producers do not benefit from charcoal production like the elite villagers who then have enough capital to hire more workers, produce

\(^{32}\) 1 US$= approx. 500 CFA francs
more charcoal, buy exorbitantly high-priced permits under the table and arrange for transportation of the goods to the market. For the non-elite charcoal producers who individually do not produce enough charcoal to fill one truckload, the revenues are smaller and depending on their familial situation, are most of what they earn is spent on basic needs, such as food, health care, clothing, agriculture. The wealth accumulation from charcoal for the non-elite rural charcoal producers ascends far less rapidly than the elites’.

An example of this hierarchization (see Fig. 5.2.) of charcoal producers at local level was conspicuous in the case of neighboring villages of Guinguineo, Majially and Dianwelly in the Rural Community of Missirah. The first two villages were where the more important local charcoal producers resided and who also were rural elites. On the other hand, Dianwelly’s inhabitants were mostly charcoal producers involved in the actual production process, providing the labor for the chopping, stacking of wood, making of the kiln, carbonization of the charcoal and retrieving and bagging of the finished product. The technical agent of the FMC (in charge of supervising wood-cutting for charcoal production and the surveillance of the forest) resided in Majialy and one of the members of the Rural Council, who also held an executive position in the FMC as president of the Block-level Management Committee resides in Guinguineo. Both the FMCs technical agent and the Rural Council member/president of Block-level forest management committee were kin members involved in charcoal production and buy the charcoal produced by the villagers on Guinguineo as well as producing their own. The bigger producers in Guinguineo and Majially would then act as local middlemen, purchasing the products from the smaller local producers for resale in the cities.
The growth charcoal sector in the Rural Communities caused an unprecedented inflow charcoal taxes to the Rural Council. Before the recent boom in local charcoal sector, attempts to stimulate locally-based revenue generating activities were not very fruitful. For instance, the difficulty in enforcing the payment in rural taxes deprived already under-funded Rural Councils from a vital source of local revenue. Although financial benefits from forests have begun to replenish the coffers of the Rural Councils of rural communities where charcoal production takes place, the decision of how the Rural Council spends revenues accrued from charcoal taxes has become a contentious issue. Missirah’s PCR reported how his earmarking of revenues from charcoal taxes created many discontents among the villagers from villages engaging in charcoal production who did not agree that the taxes they paid be used for development purposes in other villages not producing any charcoal. Unable to generate enough financial revenues on their own to be reinvested in facilities and infrastructure in those non-charcoal producing parts, the PCR deemed those parts of the Rural Community as being needier for funding. While the PCR himself was in favor of such kind of cross-investment, where revenue generated in one part of the Rural Community would be utilized to develop the other part of the Rural Community, the resistance to initiatives of spatially redistributing the benefits from charcoal production and the political interests of members of the Rural Council could shape how the Rural Community benefits from charcoal.

As a villager in one of the Rural communities in the Tambacounda pointed out “most things look and are almost the same as they were 20 years ago, nothing has changed much, the roads are the same, the houses look the same. The lack of facilities still persists. The villages have not developed much like the big cities” (Interview, 2013).
Most of the villages in the rural communities studied were still waiting to be connected to electricity grids, to have accessible and safe transport routes during the rainy season, schools, health care posts, water pumps. Wula Nafaa’s main goal of poverty reduction through wealth
creation from natural resources was not assessed based on who benefits from the wealth and where the wealth goes but rather on indicators such as the level of revenue earned by assisted group enterprises, the cumulative number of enterprises assisted, increase in volumes marketed by assisted group enterprises (USAID, 2008). Projects opt for tangible measurable indicators to be quantified and presented in an over indicators that give a picture of where the lacunae is found. Doing the latter would undermine the success rating of the project outputs but would have contributed the long-term enhancement of what the project set out to achieve. Simultaneously the projects offer a palliative fix to inequities linked to poverty, leading to an emerging cycle of accumulation of wealth from charcoal production by the local producers that the project has helped to create. The project does act in combination with a number the pre-existing elements which are themselves a product of policy intervention of the Senegalese state, previous externally funded project actions and the local context.

5.8 Concluding Remarks

Elite capture is not a permanent or static outcome (Wong, 2013; Lund & Saito-Jensen, 2013, Arnall et al., 2013). As shown by the case study presented in this paper, elite capture was becoming more localized. Various groups of elites: people in position of authority such as in the Rural Council, the Forestry Services and villagers who were socially and economically well-off joined forces when required to maintain control over decision-making processes and resources connected to charcoal production.

The alignment of Wula Nafaa’s community-based natural resource management with decentralization of forest resource management in Senegal might have been potent with its
conceptual ‘wealth, power, nature’ triad bringing about an all-encompassing take on the application of sustainable development in forest management and charcoal production. However, the promotion of democracy through community based natural management could not unfold to its full potential because of the spread of elite capture at the local level facilitated by the set of institutions recognized to manage forest. Downward accountability is an in-built feature of the democratically elected local government but in this case, the Rural Council and its president were not the authority the villagers resorted to when they needed to voice out their concerns and needs about charcoal production and forest management. The expectation of a commitment to responsiveness from an authority which had delegated its responsibilities to manage forests to a structure whose members were not democratically elected proved to be a moot point because the FMCs were designed for managerial purposes and while having the FMCs run by the villagers checked the participatory approach box, it was not robust enough in terms of promoting democratic practices in forest management. The members of the FMCs were held accountable only to the extent that they demonstrated incompetency in accomplishing the duties assigned to them with respect to the position they held within the structure. Among the villagers who were more deeply involved in forest exploitation for charcoal production, the majority contacted the people whom they knew would be responsive to their demands regarding forests, namely people they had seen or heard being involved in forestry activities for a significant amount of time or through their personal network.

Development agencies get served by dedicated in-country staff who need to make the project successful within certain time and budget constraints. Given such constraints, the project staff
tap into the local communities to collaborate with villagers perceived as most likely to be able to handle project implementation tasks. Among those capable of being of use to the projects were members of the elites or those already active in the charcoal sector, creating a co-dependence between the local elites and development agencies for reaching project goals. The institutional choices made by the higher level institutions opened the gates for collaboration between local elites in the Rural Community studied and the international development agencies and the Rural Council acted as the institutional platform for conforming to the democratic ideals regarding community based resource management. Such an institutional arrangement allowed the local elites to work their way towards strengthening ties among themselves and protecting their economic interests. The forest management structures set up by Wula Nafaa were vulnerable to institutionalization and managerialism with a division of tasks between the Rural Council and the FMCs. Albeit increasing the efficiency in terms of quantity of charcoal produced rurally, the local charcoal producers were thrust under the direct control of the elites who reside within their own communities. The FMCs being closer to the local communities and the villagers running those structures being more visible to the populations, they have become the ‘go-to’ person regarding forest-based charcoal production. Just like procedural democracy has not always resulted in substantive democratic outcomes in many African states, formal institutions such as democratically elected government have followed a similar kind of absorption in the Tambacounda context, meaning that the institutional infrastructure transposed by the state and externally funded projects have been modulated as per the local context.
5.9 Bibliography


CHAPTER 6

CONCLUSION

6.1 Concluding discussion

In this dissertation, I examined the institutional aspect of decentralized forest resource management in Senegal to offer explanations about how access to the resource is shaped by institutions in a rural region receiving support from international organizations. The introduction provided the background against which the phenomenon of access reforms concerning wood-based charcoal sector unfolds in the rural region of Tambacounda. This conclusion brings together what transpires from three analyses carried out in the three papers by the unifying theory of access (Ribot & Peluso, 2003). The analysis of access, which constitutes the fundamental concern of the three papers, is about who gets to benefit from wood-based charcoal production and in what ways.

Theory tells us that an empowered local institution with formalized functions of democratic representation provides a robust democratic representation. The empirics in this research revealed that the local institutions chosen and recognized by governments and international development have led to a lop-sided pattern of empowered within local communities and formalized democratic elements. The conditions under which the governments and international agencies choose and recognize local institutions was a central concern of this study as it influenced the democratic nature of local resource management and use and the patterns of access to forest resources. By using this institutional optic to explain access the research revealed that the practice of development, including the local institutions through which it operates, is contingent not only
on the recipient developing country's context but also the economic and political situation in the part of the world where the projects promoting access originate.

The democratically elected local government, the Rural Council, is the institution playing the role of democratic representation for the rural populations in their jurisdiction. However, being under-resourced to shoulder the forest management responsibilities that they were entrusted with during the decentralization process, Rural Councils were given support through Forest Management Committees (FMCs) created by the two projects, Wula Nafaa and PROGEDE. Together with the Forestry Services, the Rural Council and the FMCs were chosen and recognized by the state and international agencies with varying amounts of authority and resources to manage access to forests. This co-management set-up had indeed led to an expansion in the administrative capacity to manage forests for charcoal production entailing an increase in charcoal production accompanied by an increase in the flow of financial revenues both for individual producers engaging in the activity and in terms of taxes for Rural Councils.

The syncretic advantages meant to arise from this mix of institutions were offset by the circuits of elite capture running through and binding the institutions. The co-management strategy involving a division of tasks among the institutions led to a co-optive mode of operation among the various elites within those institutions, who would co-operate to strengthen their ability to monopolize access to profitable charcoal sector. As a result, other less-privileged villagers were more constrained in accessing forest resources despite focus on participatory approaches and democratic representation capacity of the chosen local institutions. Elite capture and access were inextricably linked as people who had elite privilege have the platform and the means to control
the access to the resource. The research analyzed how local institutional reconfigurations, that is, the outcome of institutional choice and recognition, create, modify and sustain access.

The findings show how some groups of people were able to control the access to forest resources while other groups had to maintain their access or gain access from those who monopolized it. The elites constituted the group of villagers who control access to forests and charcoal production at the rural level. Non-elite villagers then have to forego some of their benefits to the elites in order to gain or maintain access to charcoal production opportunities. For instance, the third paper describes how, by relinquishing of their access to market to the local elites who would buy their charcoal and resell it, the non-elite rural charcoal producers are able to benefit from that activity albeit not to the fullest extent of profitability. Despite the collective and democratic nature of the institutional configuration of forest access imputed through a choice of institutions formally and legally having or accepted as having representation roles, the ability to mediate the access of villagers’ to the resource was held by a small group of rural elites.

Those who did not possess the adequate or the suitable “access qualifications” were subordinated to those who possessed them. “Access qualifications” as explained in Chapter 2 are the characteristics possessed or acquired by individuals or groups allowing them to derive benefit from a resource such as forests (Ribot and Peluso, 2003). The sufficient level and type of access qualification(s) permits the individual or group of individuals willing to use them to accumulate benefits depending on the niche. Particular niches requires specific combinations of access qualifications. The group of people possessing the access qualifications that could be ‘banked’ within the niche is known as the charcoal niche elites, which in this case was the wood-based
charcoal sector. For instance, a charcoal niche elite at the village level would possess an access qualification like access to market itself mediated by access qualifications such as access to capital which also enhances access to labor, therefore augmenting the ability of that individual to produce more and sell more charcoal. Capture of the profits from the charcoal business was further enabled by access to authority, that is, though collaboration or collusive relations with the Forestry Services officials. The Forestry Services officials have their own set of access qualifications that they tap into to draw benefits from the charcoal business; they use the access qualifications conferred by their position as formal bearers of authority and technical knowledge related to forests. Villagers who had the qualifications of access through social identity like having the attribute of being male or qualifications of access via negotiations of social relations such as being socially well-connected thus providing a social conduit to collaborating with the elites possessing access to authority or capital qualifications, the foresters of the Forestry Services.

Such subordination in access to the forest’s productive opportunities would be considered by elites as well as many non-elites as a mutually beneficial type of exchange. As a result, villagers outside of the charcoal niche elite group did not have a need to overcome such a subordinating arrangement because of the advantages that this subordination provided them with, albeit locking them in it and bolstering the elites’ domination of the charcoal sector. Resistance to elite control of access was mainly from those who aspired to have their share of control over access to charcoal but who were not able to secure control over access already monopolized by the elites. The equitable access to forests was further stymied when permits for transporting charcoal to urban markets and money from one of the bank accounts where charcoal taxes were deposited
disappeared in circuits of fraud. The Rural Council President in this case, having opened the account under his name, could manage or retrieve funds as he or his ‘partners’ pleased.

“People and institutions are positioned differently in relation to resources at various historical moments and geographical scales. The strands thus shift over time changing the nature of power and the forms of access to resources” (Ribot & Peluso, 2003). In this study, the relevant historical moment that led to a repositioning of institutions and people was the 1996 onset of the most recent process of decentralization reforms in forestry where the national government devolved the forest management powers to the Rural Communities, represented by the democratically elected Rural Councils. Higher-level institutions, the international agencies and the State are the architects of policies and crafters of project interventions. The higher-level institutions have thus enabled a switch of access to forest resources from the hands of urban-based merchants into those of the peasants in rural zones. Although projects are labeled ‘demand-responsive’, the design and planning of the projects are still rigidly top-down with the higher-level institutions providing the normative framings and prescribing the institutional forms of access. The choice and recognition of local institutional partners is shaped by a combination of considerations and determinants. The ‘studying up’ method was used to identify the attributes that the higher-level institutions look for in the local institutions. Those attributes were categorized as: efficiency, integrity, democracy and participation, reliability which provided the principle anchoring for considering and determining the fitness of a local institution.
When the projects and policies land in the sites where they are to be implemented, they bring sets of prescriptions about actualizing access to forest resources in the recipient rural communities. The higher-level institutions have the ability to select the arenas that citizens in rural zones are going to engage in order to have access. By the dint of their structural position that endows them with the privilege of choosing and recognizing their local institutional partners, the higher-level institutions also define who can have access to the institutions chosen. Couched in the goals of the project interventions was the discourse about fostering democratic local climate leading to the achievement of environmental and developmental objectives was. Decentralization carries with it this promise of democratic representation and provided a legitimizing ideological scaffolding for USAID to recognize the Rural Council as their local institutional partner. Likewise ‘participatory approach’ has become a development orthodoxy, a necessary ingredient thrown in the mix to attest of the social justice potential of the project and used as a principle for organizing institutions. The strong belief in the theoretical validity and relevance that policy champions and project designers have while formulating the project goals or influencing the State’s policy decisions does not tally well with the purpose and objectives of the implementing and evaluation staff. The pressure on the implementing staff to ‘manufacture’ success (Baviskar, 2004; Mansuri and Rao, 2004) out of projects they are working for and their positionality set the tone for the type of interaction the project has with the other institutions.

The analysis of access is the cross-cutting axis of inquiry, with the framework of institutional choice and recognition (Ribot, Chhatre and Lankina, 2008) and the concept of democratic representation (Przeworski, Stokes & Manin, 1999) provided the theoretical foundation for this study. The initial hypotheses acted as a point of departure for the research questions that were
answered by focusing on three features characterizing salient problems related to access to forest resources in the two Rural Communities of Tambacounda: Missirah and Koar. The first paper 1 entitled “The process of Institutional choice and recognition for the decentralized forest management in charcoal-producing zones of Tambacounda, Senegal” unpacks the various stages of the institutional choice process and delineates a set of attributes considered by higher-level institutions while recognizing local institutions.

The second paper “Instrumentalizing gender: When elite capture intersects with gender-focused actions of forest resource management projects in Senegal” examined the attempts to create access based on one type of social identity, that is, gender. The paper probed the effects of institutional choice through emphasis on projects’ efforts to extend access to women, a group of rural society previously excluded from charcoal production. While project-induced positive discrimination towards women brings access reform for rural women to enter the predominantly male realm of forest management and charcoal production business, the quality of the access for women is impaired by elite capture. Building access for such a group not traditionally involved in a forest-related income-generating activity required a more sequential approach to endowing women with access qualifications. Such an approach did not quite fit the projects’ time, budget and scope frames. As a result, participation in charcoal production and trade can only be afforded by elite women, that is, women who have access to capital, labor, knowledge, authority and social identity often through their husband or other male relatives.

Although attempts were made to facilitate women’s access to authority and institutions by having positions reserved for women in the FMCs and having women representatives from villages
during meetings, the ability to use this access is dependent on those women having other kinds of access qualifications prior to participating in forest management. The institutional demand for rural women to be available time-wise and resource-wise, who meet literacy criteria to hold positions or play roles in forest management was not met by the supply. The paper questions the gender-focused project action that uses participatory approaches.

The third paper brings out the rural development implications of inequitable access to income-generating opportunities by linking institutional choice and recognition to elite capture in local communities. As John Friedmann (1974) pointed out in his report to the USAID “the task of developing the rural economy is a task of enormous complexity.” Indeed, it remains so as is highlighted by this case of the differentiated access to forest resources which is exacerbated by opportunistic elites setting up shop in the institutions charcoal sector. Regional programs aim at integrated forms of rural development compared to functional programs to which the projects tackle one single constraint. The projects examined in this study were more akin to functional programs with their most important goal being to kick start village-based charcoal production. Such functional projects have clearly delimited objectives and are considered effective in stimulating a specific type of development, making them appealing to planners and higher-level institutions (Lele, 1975). The question that surfaces is how can the commercial exploitation of local natural resources can benefit the Rural Community as a whole? Under current arrangements, the capture of the control of the access polarizes accumulation of wealth into the hands of a small group of elite; capturing enough wealth that it increases their ability to relocate investing it outside of the zones where it was generated.
The institutions chosen and recognized by the projects and the central government to manage forests and charcoal production at the local level contributed to creating differential access to wood-based charcoal sector among various groups of villagers.

Attempts to level the access field through access-enhancing actions benefitted mostly those who were already advantageously positioned to use their access qualifications. Endowing the local populations with the access qualifications through project interventions included helping launch partnerships between local charcoal producers and financial institutions and helping to build local knowledge of the charcoal business through charcoal chain initiation trips, holding charcoal production training workshops. Such attempts opened doors for villagers who were ready to enter the charcoal sector and promoted awareness but they were often too abrupt and rushed from the outset and in their closing. The attempts not being part of a continuum of access qualifications building process did not suit villagers who were not equipped with the suitable bundle of initial qualifications.

The research also identified some important patterns in the reinvestment of revenues from charcoal – by elites and by the rural councils. The urban pull for investment is strong because of the clear advantages that urban centers have over rural regions for capitalistic gain. Rural areas or even hinterlands of urban zones in developing countries often suffer from the shadow effect of cities or big towns that have the capacity to attract and absorb investment as well as offering higher rates of return. The legacy of French colonization in the creation of a core-periphery format of urbanization led to the neglect of vast areas of rural Senegal that the state and international organizations have been trying to remediate since independence. The Rural
Communities in a region like Tambacounda have limited capacities to retain and absorb the revenues generated by activities such as charcoal production. The data obtained from the interviews and surveys revealed that when the earnings of an individual rural producer is considerable, the extent of the amount of the locally earned revenue that is invested in situ does not exceed a certain limit. That limit is determined by each household’s own bundle of livelihood strategies and expenditure priorities. The type of housing and other assets such as vehicles and animal herds possessed by the household provided reliable proxies of wealth. The relocation of wealth is an important characteristic of the flow of resources from rural zones to urban zones in Senegal.

The dearth of high growth potential investment opportunities in the rural areas and the low threshold population necessary to support a more diverse base of specialized goods and services, compounded by problems of poor accessibility and infrastructure makes rural zones unappealing for developing financial investments. The urban-bound flight of revenues earned by peasants is not only driven by the lure of monetary gains but having links with urban zones widens life options. Most post-primary education institutions, health-care centers and other administrative, financial services as well as formal employment are located in urban regions. The flux of people to cities and towns being greater, rents for accommodation are also higher. Houses in urban regions that are owned by villages become a convenient stop points while on business not only for the owners but also to extended family members, offer accommodation for younger members of kin who attend academic institutions in towns.
The taxes levied on charcoal production have replenished the coffers of Rural Council that otherwise would have been dry because of the difficulties in enforcing the payment of rural taxes and the paucity of taxes from other sources. However, this inflow of wealth from a public resource brought about its lot of distributional complications in the form of tensions over which villages of the Rural Community were going to have access to the charcoal tax funds for local development. The villages participating in charcoal production and contributing to the taxes proclaim their sense of entitlement to those funds, therefore inclined to contest decisions of the Rural Council to invest charcoal-generated funds for developing needier villages of the Rural Community but which do not produce charcoal.

Although presented in a critical light with respect to democratic representation, the two projects studied, Wula Nafaa and PROGEDE have contributed to diversifying the livelihood earning portfolio of the peasant in the Tambacounda region. It has to be pointed out that not each and every Rural Community in Senegal can have access to forest resources for charcoal production. In 2013, there were discussions about reconfiguring decentralization by creating regional level development hubs instead of having the Rural Councils shoulder responsibilities of managing development at local level. Since the 1996 onset of decentralization, Rural Councils across Senegal have struggled to establish local bases of revenue generation in rural zones. Remodeling decentralization based on physiographic zoning so as to better tap into the potential specific to each zone as well as a recentering of fiscal responsibilities and roles from Rural Council to a higher order of local government, the regional councils, is now being considered by the Senegalese Government. The pooling of funds from the various Rural Communities located in different regions would concentrate resources sufficient to produce stronger development spurs
across the region instead of islands of prosperity in a few Rural Communities.

The pro-urban bias involving the bypass of rural zones as recipient regions of financial flows have long existed prior to the opening up the charcoal sector to inhabitants in the rural zones. Such a preference for the core at the expense of the periphery has existed since the colonial times with the difference in post-colonial times being that the trend is perpetuated when the revenues generated by the inhabitants in the peripheries (the villages) is diverted to the core or semi-cores. As mentioned earlier, higher scale governance arrangements could be developed to gather local funds with the goal of retargeting investment locally. Rechanneling funds locally would support development at the Rural Community level. There is an opportunity here for development policy to attend to regional re-arrangements and rescaling of flows of wealth.

The findings showcased in this triad of papers each focusing on an analytical entry point so as to bring out the various dimensions of reforms around access to a natural resource. The decentralization of forest resource management remains liminal. Despite that it now certainly has the administrative artillery, its potential for democratic representation has been thwarted. The decentralization of forest resource management instituted a reform in terms of opening access to forest resources but enhancing the quality of the access still remains a work in progress. The projects filled some of the lacunae by providing support to local communities for commercially exploiting forests for charcoal production. The mechanisms of accountability and responsiveness of the institutions chosen and recognized had their effectiveness respectively subdued by the institutional co-management arrangement and capitalized on by the elites.
The importance of contextual realities remain pertinent: socially ascribed attributes such as gender and economic standing intersect with the institutions chosen and recognized for decentralized forest management and participatory approaches get thrown into market-based reform molds to support existing or trigger new hierarchical relationships.

6.2 Contributions and future directions

The findings and arguments put forward in this paper corroborate with existing scholarly work. What demarcates this set of papers from the rest of the body of scholarly work on the study of charcoal production and trade and the related forest management is that it examines access to forest resources in a decentralized context through: the ‘studying-up’ dimension in paper 1, the participatory approach in gender in development dimension in the second paper, and the spatial and rural development dimensions is brought to the fore in paper 3. Each of these can be useful to policy makers, planners, project designers for charting rural development interventions since each provides insights into how hierarchies are generated or reproduced. Making the institutional choice and recognition a more reflexive process might be necessary for what Friedmann (1987) called the ‘double-learning loop’ to take place in higher-level organizations.

The first learning loop pertinent to this study is about higher-level institutions learning how to achieve the project and policy goals of creating a more democratic institutional landscape at the local level, promoting inclusiveness regarding forest-resource based economic opportunities in an environmentally-sustainable manner. This first learning loop takes place through the feedback provided by evaluations of projects. The second learning loop consists of learning how to bring
modifications to the ways of creating equitable forms of participation, questioning the persistent inability of significantly closing gaps in inequality in the local communities the projects intervene. Such modifications involves bringing about changes at deeper levels such as at the value-system level by auto-critically reflecting on the goals, values and strategies of the organization. Through Senegal’s charcoal sector, this dissertation adds new analytical angles from which to assess the distributional outcomes of decentralization interventions. The findings and observations put forward in Chapter 5 call for more attention to the search for effects of decentralization not restrained at the local level but to the patterns that decentralization has with respect to a specific sector intra-locally and inter-regionally.

Analysis of the conditions under which choices are made and the effects of recognition led to the identification of the factors influencing how higher-scale institutions make these institutional choice decisions, therefore pointing to possible directions of change. Only after comprehending the logic behind institutional choices and the effects of recognition on local representation, the successes and shortcomings, can we best feed that learning back into higher-scale policy processes. With its clear focus on the influence of institutional arrangement on policy effectiveness, this research incorporates the apropos dimension of geographical research engaging with policy. As depicted in this set of three papers, local institutional configuration, including the capture of its control by the local elites, can significantly influence the local communities’ prospects of earning a livelihood from forests and the extent to which development initiatives have a positive impact on people’s life, especially pertaining to poverty reduction and production of responsive and accountable institutional spaces.
This research furthers the knowledge so as to strengthen the ties between geographical research outputs and empirical policy studies, unearthing the dynamics among the different types of institutions at multiple scales indicated the links between the institutional landscape in a decentralized forest management context in Senegal and the rural development outcomes. The type of local institutions that were endowed with the authority and financial, material, technical resources to regulate and manage natural resources, in this case forests, were accessed mostly by the rural elites, thereby shaping the extent to which the rural populations were excluded from the economic opportunities that the rural charcoal sector represents. The findings from this research are expected to serve towards building a roadmap that will help navigate through the process of institutional choice and recognition, contributing towards governance-tool development and policy-influence efforts relevant to higher-level project designers and policy makers.

There was a need to stress the relevance of local capture because projects using the participatory approach are prone to elite capture which obstructs a wider swath of the rural population from benefitting from natural resources, the management of which they have been entrusted with. This becomes an even greater dilemma especially if it is in a region which is remote and suffering from a dearth of income-generating activities. This study depicted the kind of context in which programs like the UN’s Reduction of Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation (REDD) would be unfolding in Senegal and therefore draws attention on the problems that would need to be attended to, namely the existing exclusionary practices resulting from elite capture as well as to the strengths of the current institutional landscape.
It extends the existing conceptualization of elite capture by defining it using Peluso and Ribot’s (2003) Theory of Access. By deepening the way to identify the elites using the qualifications of access, it was showed how elites are produced. Using this more refined way of conceptualization of elites allows more precision in understanding the type of elite and knowing about the type of elite. This is slightly different from the concept of elites as commonly identified in the literature, that is, because I proceeded to look at what is being captured (e.g. illegally diverting resources, controlling institutions, manipulating politicians), by whom and for what ends. What has until now added to the elusiveness ‘elite capture’ concept is that most of the studies comprise as starting point the definition of the concept by providing what might be a close variant the definition provided in Persha and Andersson (2014), that is, elite capture being a process by which individuals with superior political status, economic, educational, ethnic and other social characteristics which leaves gaps in outlining the factors that brought.

The definition of elites and elite capture that I propose in this dissertation is based on the concept of ‘niche elite’. This concept is particularly applicable for a more systematic technique of identifying elite capture in specific natural resource-related productive activity which in the case studied, is a charcoal niche elite. Conceiving niche elite capture as a function of possessing and acquiring access qualifications based on Ribot and Peluso’s Theory of Access offers the potential to trace how capture by the charcoal niche elite was occasioned, for instance the institutional factors, the social or economic characteristics that enabled a specific group of people to benefit from charcoal at the expense of others who do not possess the suitable combination of access qualifications. Distinguishing the different groups of elites and the mechanisms of access capture could be carried out in future studies. This adds to the discussion about elite capture in Lund and
Jensen (2013) and several other scholars (Cooke and Kothari, 2001; Platteau and Abraham, 2002; Mansuri & Rao, 2004; Platteau, 2004; Arnall et al., 2013; Wong, 2013; Persha & Andersson, 2014) about the fluidity of ‘elite capture’ which describe the elite capture problem occurring and how it should be investigated. The contribution has been to provide a concrete guide about how to chart this fluidity by using the ‘niche elite’ concept and access qualifications. The relevance of the application of ‘niche elite’ and access qualifications in development practice was brought out in paper 3. Isolating elites per niche, in this case, the charcoal sector, makes it possible to establish a matrix of interaction among individuals and among groups with the access qualifications indicating the capture methods and the constitution of those groups. The concept of ‘niche elite’ lends itself to longitudinal studies to show evolution over time of the elite capture as well as multiple cross-sectional studies involving other elites capture of other niches at the local level, such as cotton, peanut, other forest products. Comparison between and among niche elites can be useful in detecting the similarities and differences in strategies used by each niche elite to, patterns in access qualifications in order to better spot the problems The similarities or differences gathered through cross-sectional studies would provide evidence about common and tenacious problems. Such comparative research could influence the business models for natural resource exploitation that are offered to rural inhabitants. Villagers not possessing the sufficient access qualifications are confronted with business models imposed on them by projects and policies.

This study focused on access qualifications with regards to institutions and the findings show how the access qualifications with respect to democratic institutions or making use of other structures such as FMCs varied among individuals in the local community. Ribot, in his paper on
commodity-chain analysis as a policy tool, (Ribot, 2005) shows that middlemen amassed a disproportionately large share of the profits from charcoal commerce compared to the woodcutters who produced the charcoal. One of the projects studied took a few villagers on a training trip from Tambacounda to Dakar to initiate them to the various steps in the charcoal supply chain but this attempt did not result in significant success as far as disintermediation was concerned nor the diffusion of the information about the chain throughout the Rural Communities.

Policies, current development orthodoxies and bureaucratic practices might still provide the broader normative codes dictating institutional choice and recognition and project format to meet the client’s needs. One way to handle this lacunae is to conceive projects as ‘cradle-to-cradle’ projects (rather than cradle-to-grave where there is a definite start point and end point) whereby project implementation is considered a cycle. More emphasis from the higher level institutions on the ‘product’ and ‘product characteristics’ than on the consumers/clients and consumption. This reinforces the double-learning loop of higher-level institutions.

Through the recognition component, I explored how the micro-dynamics of access played out in the villages and the choice component expanded the analysis to include the broader contextual factors such as the meta-positioning of higher-level institutions with respect to aid and natural-resource based development policy and practice.

The way ‘participation’ is construed at the various stages of project design and implementation and how it is reified on the ground were identified based on the interviews, observation and the rhetoric in the project and policy documents. Tracing how ‘participation’ morphs through those stages shed light on disjunctures between the logics of higher-level institutions for recognizing institutions based on conformity to accommodating participatory approaches and how the recognized institutional mix end up reinforcing trends of exclusion of poorer, marginalized women. The choice and recognition of local institutional partners did not offer secure institutional arrangements for non-elite women who did not have the suitable set of access qualifications.

Methodologically, the bimodal gaze adopted during the research underlying this case study sets it apart from most case studies about the outcomes of donor-funded projects and state policy in developing countries wherein the researching gaze is concentrated on the ‘recipient’ communities. The contribution has been to use a method of inquiry and data collection that weighs in the extra-local institutional factors, mainly covered in paper 1, as much as what happens at the ‘bottom’, in the villages.

The "studying-up" approach (Nader, 1974) used in Chapter 3 allowed the exploration of the process of institutional choice and recognition to show how local institutions are chosen by
higher-level institutions and the underlying reasons for choosing and recognizing certain institutional configurations over others for managing forests and charcoal production. Turning the research gaze towards the other end, that is, the international organizations and the national-level institutions instead of focusing only on those who 'receive' projects revealed the mechanisms connected to access are determined extra-locally, molded by the interests of the state and international actors. The projects are designed as following ideological constructs imagined by the international agencies, academics, consultants and other policy champions located in western countries and influenced by the political-economic priorities of those countries.

The three papers lay the groundwork for future research on decentralized forest resource management and development project-supported forest exploitation. Future research could include investigating the contribution of wealth from forest resources to the coffers of Rural Councils and to the well-being of villagers for judicious channeling of those funds for rural development priorities. The search for ways of creating more transparency in governance and management of the resource is inextricably linked to creating more stable mechanisms of downward accountability. The critical approach adopted towards participatory processes, the gender-affirmative and democratic representation does not mean that one should be completely opposed to them because of the pitfalls presented in this set of papers. Quite the contrary: those are deemed too important to be discarded and it is necessary to include in one’s thinking point of departure the costs and time required for decentralized development to take root. In the light of the available evidence, it is important to temper excessive overreliance on formulaic use of and expectations from participatory development and democratically representative processes. Systematic experimentation and continuous assessment is needed rather than indiscriminately
imposing the development dictates and policy trends along with keeping in sight the upstream factors because of significant influence that higher-level institutions wield on institutional reforms and policy change in rural zones in developing countries.

Questions that require attention include: How can projects and governments create stepwise processes of building access qualifications for the poorest of the poor? What kinds of programs or policies can help rework the meaning of gender or caste or age hierarchies, the patterns of access through particular families or particular social relations to governing authorities, the criteria for licensing and permitting producers, such that the poor might have a more equal chance at attaining the resources and means they need to produce and market forest products for their own profit? This is an area ripe for in-depth research.
6.3 Bibliography


APPENDIX A

ACTIVITY CALENDARS

The activity calendars chart out the main activities of different groups of people in the sample of villages surveyed for this method of data collection. The information was gathered during focus group styled discussion and served to provide background data about the rural communities.
### Calendar 2012-2013: Koar, Women (married)

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Main Activities</th>
<th>May</th>
<th>June</th>
<th>July</th>
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<th>Apr</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Charcoal Production</strong></td>
<td>ON</td>
<td>Since 12th March</td>
<td>To submit request to obtain micro-credit loan ON</td>
<td>Obtaining the loan</td>
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<td>ON</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>Clearing of the fields</td>
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<td></td>
<td>2011- youths started to make charcoal. In 2010, they accompanied the <em>surghas</em> to learn</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Revenues from Charcoal</strong></td>
<td>The youngners working in charcoal gain 2-3 times more than in agriculture</td>
<td>Women with means can afford the docs to work and membership to the micro-credit (costing 10,000 cfa francs and caution of 2,500 cfa)</td>
<td>professionalism</td>
<td>Carnbonizati on: -40,000 -32,000 (they expect to make 1 truck of charcoal this year, produced 300 and 260 bags in 2012)</td>
<td>On the spot sale, but couldn’t make a truck load</td>
<td>Charcoal sent to Dakar</td>
<td>Charcoal sent to Dakar</td>
<td>150,000 cfa for 1 year To be repaid in 2 installment s 75,000 cfa to be repaid after 3 months and the rest after 6 months and 10, 00 cfa interest</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Agriculture</strong></td>
<td>Sowing millet</td>
<td>Cultivation of corn, peanuts, rice</td>
<td>Harvesting of corn</td>
<td>Surveillance Corn harvesting, peanut harvesting</td>
<td>Stripping (flailing) of peanuts</td>
<td></td>
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<td><strong>Revenues from Agriculture</strong></td>
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<td>Main Activities</td>
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<tr>
<td>Availability of food</td>
<td>Decline</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Crisis</td>
<td>Little food</td>
<td>No millet, corn in the granary</td>
<td>There is more food after the harvest</td>
<td>Abundance</td>
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<tr>
<td>Market Gardening</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Pepper, potatoes, cabbage, onions, lettuce, eggplants, carrots</td>
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<tr>
<td>Revenues from Market gardening</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>lettuce</td>
<td>Pepper, eggplants</td>
<td>Onions, Cabbage, potatoes</td>
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<tr>
<td>Health Expenditure</td>
<td>HIGH</td>
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<td>Accessibility</td>
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<td>Zone inaccessible</td>
<td>Zone inaccessible</td>
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## Calendar 2012-2013: Koar, Men

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<tr>
<th><strong>Main Activities</strong></th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Charcoal Production</strong></td>
<td>ON</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Revenues from Charcoal</strong></td>
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<td>End of production season, so revenues are maximum</td>
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<tr>
<td>Only for those having charcoal near big roads</td>
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<td>Beginning of production season</td>
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<tr>
<td>Shortage of charcoal on the market so they can sell their products at a higher price</td>
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<td><strong>Agriculture</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>clearing</td>
<td>sowing</td>
<td>Cultivation</td>
<td>Harvest</td>
<td>End of harvesting</td>
<td>Transportation of millet leaves, hay</td>
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<td><strong>Revenues from Agriculture</strong></td>
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<td>Hunger gap, lean season between two harvests. 50% of people buy cereals</td>
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<td>Quantity depends on family size and on the capacity to cultivate.</td>
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<td>Only women do it during the dry season. Men do it during the rainy season</td>
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<td>Health expenditures are highest during the rainy season (malaria, diarrhea, flu, stomach infections)</td>
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## Calendar 2012: Madina (Missirah), Men

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<td>They need to pay carts to transport the charcoal out</td>
<td>Least amount of profit 1000 CFA francs/bag</td>
<td>Rainy season 1000 CFA francs/bag</td>
<td>Rainy season so difficult to transport charcoal</td>
<td>‘Winter’ in Dakar</td>
<td>1500-2500 CFA francs (big bag)</td>
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<td>Sowing Weeding until mid-August</td>
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<td>Starts to decline</td>
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### Calendar 2012: Gorel Bocar, Village chief and other village men

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<td>Parceling with forestry services</td>
<td>training</td>
<td>Wood-cutting and carbonization</td>
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<td>Small tasks</td>
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## Calendar 2012-2013: Koar, Young unmarried Women

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<td><strong>Domestic Chores</strong></td>
<td>Drawing water from the well for cooking, grinding millet, sweeping the floor, doing the laundry</td>
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<td><strong>Agriculture</strong></td>
<td>Preparing the seeds (peanuts)</td>
<td>millet</td>
<td>peanuts</td>
<td>gourds</td>
<td>cultivation</td>
<td>harvesting</td>
<td>Stripping the grains</td>
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<td><strong>Revenues from Agriculture</strong></td>
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<td></td>
<td>Buying clothes, shoes, earrings, rings, necklaces, preparations for wedding</td>
<td>Sale of products in Koar and Kothiary</td>
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<td><strong>Availability of food</strong></td>
<td>Continues to decline</td>
<td>Depends on the number of people in the family. Significant decline</td>
<td>Harvest starts</td>
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<td>Charcoal Production</td>
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<td>Wood-cutting</td>
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<td>Wood-cutting</td>
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<td>More revenue from charcoal because of the cold weather in Dakar.</td>
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<td>Availability of food</td>
<td>Begins to decline</td>
<td>Very little food</td>
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<td>Harvesting of millet and peanuts</td>
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<td>Harvest and sale of products</td>
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<td>Abundance and sale of products</td>
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APPENDIX B

INTERVIEW GUIDES

Interview guide for elected local government officials

“Representatives” of local communities were interviewed so as to assess their skills and abilities to make informed decisions regarding decentralization and surrounding policy-driven external interventions. Their responses about how they execute ‘representing’ were matched against the responses and interests of local communities interviewed. Additional prompts were be used with great care not to lead the interviewee towards any particular response.

Election of officials and nature of powers

1. How many candidates usually run for local government elections (rural council)?
2. People with what types of background (professional, academic, social, ethnic, political) are most often seen to be running for elections at the local level?
3. Who are those who are most likely to get elected?
4. How are the candidates to the elections chosen?
5. What are your responsibilities/ duties as an elected official?
Recognition

1. What does your work consist of?

2. What specific set of powers do you legally exercise over forests?

3. What can you do with those powers?

4. What are the most important forestry decisions you make?

5. How important is forestry decision-making compared to decisions you have to make about the other various sectors? What portion of your time is devoted to forests? What portion to other areas—which ones?

6. What decisions have you made with respect to forest resources in the past or are in the process of making?

7. How did you make each decision?

8. What was your role in the decision-making process?

9. What influences this decision-making?

10. To whom were your decisions important? Did they like your decisions? How did they respond? Did they say anything about how you should decide before or after you made your decision?

11. To what extent would you say you have discretionary powers (freedom for using powers)?

12. Regarding which aspects do you have discretionary powers? What kinds of freedom do you have and regarding which aspects?

13. Which of powers transferred to you can be considered as secured rights?
14. Apart from the local community, towards whom else do you have to be accountable / to whom else are you answerable?

15. Which of the powers transferred to you are privileges and can be removed by higher-level institutions? What are the duties you perform that can be taken away by, for instance, the forestry services? How and why would they do that? Please give examples.

16. Do you have complete control over the funds allotted to your institution or to what extent do you have control over managing the funds?

17. What are the discretionary powers you have specifically related to the funds transferred to you?

18. Do you have freedom to do what you want or are there earmarks or mandates from higher-level institutions regarding forest management?

**Funding**

1. What are the sources of funding for the institution? Taxes, fees, donations, funds transferred from the state?

2. What is the proportion of funding from each source?

3. What are the external (extra-national) sources of funding?

4. How are the funds managed? Who manages the funds with respect to forestry resources?

5. Can you describe how the money is collected, how it flows through the system?

6. How much freedom do you have over funds received from each source?
7. What are the possibilities of raising additional revenues at a local scale?

**Accountability relations and mechanisms and responsiveness**

1. How do you learn about what local people need or want?
2. How do people make their forest-related requests to you? Do they come to talk to you? Do they write to you?
3. What demands do they make around forestry?
4. Could you describe how you/ your institution respond/s to the people’s demands? Could you tell me this by giving me examples of how you responded to local community’s demands concerning forest resources?
5. Could you give examples whereby you were unable to respond to people’s requests/ demands although you wanted to?
6. How did they react when you/ your institution could not respond to their demands? What did they do?
7. What actions or decisions did you take following their reaction to your inability to respond to their demands?
8. How did the local people react when you/ your institution were/ was able to respond to the local people’s demands? What did they do?
9. What do you think they can do, but have not yet done so, if you are unresponsive/ responsive?
10. How do people communicate their demands and concerns regarding forests to you?
11. How do you communicate back to them when needed?
12. Can you describe the orders or instructions you receive from other institutions? Please specify which source-institution for each instruction/order.

13. Which institutions is your institution answerable to regarding the powers transferred to you?

14. How are elected local officials/ local institution (your institution) are negatively sanctioned by higher-level institutions? Can you describe the negative sanctions (punitive/ corrective)?

15. When are negative sanctions applied? Are they formal/ informal?

16. Can you tell me about the instances whereby any such negative sanctions have been applied in the past?

17. How did you and your predecessors react to such negative sanctions?

18. How are elected local officials/ local institution (your institution) are positively sanctioned/ rewarded by higher-level institutions? Can you describe the positive sanctions?

19. When are formal and informal positive sanctions applied?

20. Can you tell me about the instances whereby any such positive sanctions have been applied in the past?

21. How did you and your predecessors react to such positive sanctions?

22. Are there institutions/ people that were averse to the decisions you took or any of your practices? Which ones?

23. How do they express/manifest their disapproval? Do they take any actions against you?

24. Is your institution rewarded for the actions accomplished/ action taken? When? How?
25. What are the rewards?

Additional questions

27. Have you ever observed any of these being exercised or function with respect to forest resources?

28. How effective have they been in helping people make their demands and you responding to their needs?

- Referenda
- Legal recourse through courts
- Third party monitoring by media
- NGOs
- Independently elected controllers
- Public reporting requirements for governments
- Performance awards
- Taxation
- Central government oversight of local government?

29. How were the institutions involved in the examples that you just described established?

30. What are the factors that affect the people resorting to those institutions?

31. How has each of the following contributed towards the local community having more influence on your role as their representative?

- Literacy rate
- embeddedness of leaders in their community
- belief systems of leaders and their communities
- civic dedication and pride of leaders
- widespread participation
- social movements
- threats of social unrest and resistance

**Representation**

1. What does your work as a representative of the local communities consist of?
2. How do people communicate with you?
3. Who are those who communicate with you: make their concerns known, participate in decision-making activities?
4. What are the concerns that people have about forests?
5. How do you get to know about them? Did people report anything to you? Was it an observation?
6. To what extent do you think you are responsive to the people who come to you with concerns regarding forest resources?
7. Who are those people who are most active is seeking your help/advice regarding forest resources?
8. What are the hindrances to representing all the different groups of people you are supposed to represent?
9. What does your institution do to include marginal and poor populations in the decision-making processes?
10. What are the mechanisms set-up to allow the participation of such groups of people in decision-making as well as in inclusion in the distribution of any benefits?

11. How do members of local community participate in decisions you make, actions you take regarding forestry resources?

12. Who are the people who are most likely to participate? Who are those who usually participate?

13. How do you make people participate in decision-making or actions related to forest resources?

Interview guide for members of the local community

These questions were asked to members of the local community, at the rural study sites, to obtain an insight about the degree to which people expect or feel their priorities have been fulfilled through the local institutions chosen and recognized to manage forests. Attention was paid to community members’ knowledge of their rights and functions in forest management before and after program implementation as well as the degree to which they trust and feel represented through their rural council president in comparison to the other institutions available to them.

Participation in PROGEDE and Wula Nafaa

1. How do you use the forests?
   a. What do you look for in the forests?
   b. What do you do in the forests?
   c. Where in the forests?
d. Are there any conflicts over forest use?

e. Are there any forest resources to which you cannot have access? Why?

f. Are there problems of any sort with forest use?

2. Who else uses the forests?

   a. Who are they?

   b. What for?

   c. When?

   d. What do they do with what they extract from the forests?

   e. What are your opinions about their activities?

3. What does the government or forest service go about managing the forest?

4. What is the role of the rural council? What does it actually do?

5. What do you think can they (rural council) do or should be doing? Why?

6. To what extent are you satisfied about how (i) the government (ii) the rural council are dealing with forest management?

7. What are your concerns related to the forests?

8. What are you concerns with respect to the implementation of PROGEDE and Wula Nafaa?

9. Do you know anybody who participates in PROGEDE/ Wula Nafaa? (If answer is ‘NO’, skip to ‘Accountability’ section) Who are they? (yourself/ family member/ neighbor/ friend/relative)?

10. How do you/they participate in PROGEDE/Wula Nafaa? What is your/their role or status of membership?
11. Why are you/they participating in PROGEDE/WF?
   a. What are you/they expecting out of their participation in the project?
   b. What led you/them to participate in the projects?
   c. Are the reasons for sustained/continued participation in the project different from initial reasons for participation? Have they changed?
   d. Why have they changed?

12. Have the expectations about the projects been met?

13. Which ones have been met and which ones have not been met?

14. Why do you think PROGEDE/WF have been not been able to meet your expectations or what do you think made it possible for them to meet your expectations?

Accountability

1. Can you please describe instances when you have not been satisfied with the local government’s performance, as in, them not being able to respond to your demands regarding forest resources?
2. What did you do when they could not respond?
3. Did you complain about it? To whom and how? Did anybody take any action with respect to your complaints?
4. If you did not complain, why didn’t you do so?
5. If you didn’t take any other action regarding lack of responsiveness, why did you do so?
6. Are there any ways to negatively sanction your local representatives that you have not yet used?
7. What do you think you can do when your representatives do not respond adequately to your demands?

8. What did the local government do with regards to your reaction to their unresponsiveness?

9. How do you ‘reward’ the local government when they respond to your demands adequately?

**Participation**

1. Which decision-making processes related to forest management are you involved in?

2. Describe those processes and the actors involved?

3. What was your status or title as participant?

4. To what extent do you think that your participation is effective? Your voice is heard and taken into consideration and results in the kind of benefits you expected?

5. How do projects involve you?

6. Do they ask your opinions? Do they listen to your opinions when you give them?

**Representation**

7. How are the people/ you represented at the local level?

8. How do you make your concerns about the forests heard?

9. Whom do you go to if you have a problem/ concern or an idea to express concerning forest issues?

10. Who takes what you say into consideration?

11. How well are your needs and aspirations acted upon?
Responsiveness

1. Do you get what you have asked for pertaining to forest resources from your representatives?

2. To what extent were the authorities responsive? When are the representatives most responsive? When do you think your needs and aspirations are most likely to be taken into consideration and acted upon?

3. About what are they responsive (the types of demands to which they are most responsive, mediumly responsive, least responsive)?

4. If you had to compare, which institutions are more responsive to your requests concerning forest resources?

5. Who do you go to when you have problems?

6. Do you ever go to the RC? PRC? Can they do anything?

7. Which institution/s serve/s your interests regarding forestry resources?

8. Which institution/s serve/s the interests of the community as a whole (overlooking aspects of status, income, ethnicity, political allegiance)?

9. With whom do you usually team up (members of the local community) with when you need to get your needs heard and acted upon?
Interview guide for project officials

This interview guide is for project officials:

- USAID and PROGEDE officials
- The implementers of the projects:
  (i) the employees of the US based contractor, International Resources Group (IRG) who implement Wula Nafa

The purpose of these questions was to go to the very heart of the analytical objectives of this project, investigating the narratives driving institutional choices of higher-level institutions. The answers to these questions contributed to the analysis of framings about power and participation/representation in the forestry sector, at the same time bringing to the surface the strategies forestry programs implemented in the study sites use to challenge unequal relationships. Fathoming the types of ‘skills’ such as the understanding of the democratization process, the necessity for fair representation among government and non-governmental and international organization enabled the hemming in the ideological positioning of those who make the things happen.

Variables:
- criteria for choosing institutions
- past performance of different types of institutions
- perception of institution(s) chosen
- perception of institution(s) not chosen
Who makes the institutional choice?

1. What is your role in the institution you work for?

2. What are the aims of your organization by implementing this project?

3. What are the factors does your organization take into consideration while choosing institutions they seek to work with (in general)?

4. What are the reasons for choosing the local institutions your project is currently working with?

5. Who are those involved into making the decision of choosing which institutions to work with (in general and in Senegal for this particular project)?

6. The share and type of involvement of actors in the higher-level institutions:
   (i) Who participates in the decision making-process?
   (ii) At what stage of the decision-making process?
   (iii) Regarding what aspect in choosing the institutions?

7. How do you perceive the process of how local institutions are chosen and recognized?

8. What are the aspects you strongly concur with and believe to be the forte of the project?

9. What do you disagree with? What do you think could benefit from change?

10. How do you think those changes could be brought about?

11. Who needs to act to bring about those changes?

12. How does your role and work shape the choice of local institutions made?
What influences the choice?

1. What are the criteria for choosing the institutions currently working for PROGEDE/Wula Nafaa?

2. Why was the representative local government not recognized?

3. Identifying the current intervention style of the donor agencies.
   i) What are the discourses held by the organization that you work for?
   ii) Is there anything that you would conceive differently?

4. What kind of objectives does the institution you work for favor? Objectives that favor the procedural matters of democracy or the instrumental objectives?

5. Could you please tell me about the long-term implications of the choice of institutions for:
   (i) Justice: do the institutions you chose allow for broad-based involvement of local people?
   (ii) The formation of citizenship: do the chosen institutions encourage the enfranchisement of the local people into citizens
   (iii) Sustainability: Are long-term stability and sustainability possible?
   (iv) Scaling-up and replicability: to what extent do you think the same process of the choice can be replicated elsewhere in Senegal?

Representation, Participation and Pluralism

1. Could you tell me what democracy stands for you? How did you come to such a conceptualization of democracy?

2. What do you understand ‘participation’ to consist of?
3. How do you think it can be made to happen?
4. How do you design participation in your projects?
5. What do you understand ‘representation’ to consist of?
6. How do you think it can be made to happen?
7. How do you design participation in your projects?
8. According to you, which types of institution(s) would best serve the democratic and representation needs of local communities?
9. Why do donors and governments select institutions such as user groups that are given the same powers as and function in parallel to elected local governments?
10. Do any of the institutions set up through your project compete with the elected local government concerning the management of forest resources?
11. Which powers are similar and which powers are dissimilar between the competing institutions and the elected local government?
12. To what extent do the non-representative institutions possessing similar powers as the elected local government undermine representative authorities or strengthen them?
13. What variety of institutions does the local community members have regarding institutions can represent them?
14. Which group wants what kind of representation?
15. Who gets what kind of representation through which institution(s)?
16. How are the non-representative institutions accountable to representative authorities when they are given public decision-making powers?
Questionnaire for ‘Studying-Up’

Number of years in current post:

Brief description of duties:

Highest academic qualification:

Gender:

Age:

1. How would you define what ‘democracy’ (We would like to hear about your definition based on your training and work/personal experience)?

2. Natural resource management projects often use a participatory approach. How would you define ‘participation’?

3. What are the factors influencing the participation of local people in projects?

4. What do you think are the factors taken into consideration when choices are made regarding who should get what power?

5. Why do you think it is important to have a gender strategy in the implementation of the project? YES NO

6. Do you think that a specific gender strategy is necessary in the implement the overall project? YES NO
7. Is the fact that the project supports women-specific activities enough to consider it gender sensitive? YES NO

8. Which of the following descriptions best fits the role of core agencies in Senegal in the formulation of policy regarding forest resources?

(a) many new policies originate from the higher level core agencies.

(b) some new policies originate inside the higher level agencies and they are important "filters" for policy ideas that come from political parties, private elites and the executive, often reshaping these ideas in the process.

(c) they rarely initiate new policies, but are important in turning policies that originate in the political arena into programs that can be implemented.

(d) they rarely initiate new policies because many of the new economic policies originate outside of the country (e.g. with the World Bank, the USAID or other international donors) and the local economic agencies mainly have the role of implementing them.

(e) Other

3. What prospects for promotion can someone who enters one of these agencies (e.g. through a higher civil service examination) early in his/her career reasonably expect?

(Note: Assuming that there are at least a half dozen steps or levels between an entry-level position and the head of the agency, how would you characterize the possibilities for moving up in the agency? More than one may apply.)
(a) in most cases, he/she will move up one or two levels but no more.

(b) in most cases, he/she will move up three or four levels, but unlikely to reach the level just below political appointees.

(c) if performance is superior, moving up several levels to the level just below political appointees is not an unreasonable expectation.

(d) in at least a few cases, could expect to move up several levels within the civil service and then move up to the very top of the agency on the basis of political appointments.

9. Thinking about Senegal’s case, which ones of the following would you say occur(s) today?

(a) When recruiting public sector employees, the skills and merits of the applicants decide who gets the job.

(b) When recruiting public sector employees, the political connections of the applicants decide who gets the job.

(c) Public sector employees are hired via a formal examination system.

(d) The top political leadership hires and fires senior public officials.

(e) Senior public officials are recruited from within the ranks of the public sector.

(f) Once one is recruited as a public sector employee, one stays a public sector employee for the rest of one’s career.

(g) Firms that provide the most favorable kickbacks to senior officials are awarded public procurement contracts in favor of firms making the lowest bid.
(h) When deciding how to implement policies in individual cases, public sector employees treat some groups in society unfairly.

(j) When granting licenses to start up private firms, public sector employees favor applicants with which they have strong personal contacts.

(k) Senior officials have salaries that are comparable with the salaries of private sector managers with roughly similar training and responsibilities.

(l) The salaries of public sector employees are linked to appraisals of their performance.

(m) When found guilty of misconduct, public sector employees are reprimanded by proper bureaucratic mechanisms.

(n) Women are proportionally represented among public sector employees.

(o) Key ethnic and religious groups in society are proportionally represented among public sector employees.

(k) Public sector employees risk severe negative consequences if they pass on information about abuses of public power to the media.

(l) Government documents and records are open to public access.

(m) Abuses of power within the public sector are likely to be exposed in the media.

10. Could you please indicate three points that you consider fundamental for the good implementation of forestry-related projects.

A

B

C
Questionnaire for households *(carrés)* in villages of the Rural Communities

Serial No.:

1. What is the total number of people in this household?

2. What is the total number of household members who are involved in forest-based activities?

3. How many persons from this household are involved in the charcoal sector?

4. How many persons from this household are involved in the agriculture? Specify what crops?

5. How many persons from this household are involved in other activities? Specify what activities

6. What do you/household member do with the revenues earned from charcoal?
   i) buying food
   ii) buying animals
   iii) buying equipment, agricultural tools
   iv) Other uses
   (Additional)
   v) buying motorbikes
   vi) spend it on marriage
7. Who is the authority first contacted regarding forest issues/problems?
   (i) What has been the reaction of the first authority contacted?

8. Who is the second authority contacted regarding forest issues/problems?
   (i) What has been the reaction of the second authority contacted?

9. Who is the third authority contacted regarding forest issues/problems?
   (i) What has been the reaction of the third authority contacted?

10. Do you participate in meetings?

11. Are you active during those meetings?

12. Are there ‘migrants’ in this household?
   (i) What country have they migrated to?

13. Type of house: