

## Introduction to Chapter 2

In May or June 2020, when we invited one-time ACM practitioners/researchers to contribute to this book, we stressed that we were open to unusual responses. Chapter 2 is the most unusual of the responses that we received. There are several reasons that we like this chapter.

1. The story of the “imagined” farmer is not really imagined. It is a story developed in the course of an assessment of *ForLive* projects that involved listening to the farmer participants and how they had experienced ACM/PAR. The authors took these responses and pulled from them patterns that recurred. The broad outlines of these patterns are, from our experience, not atypical in other regions. They provide both information about South American conditions and about principles that can be, with care, generalized.
2. The story also shows the differences in responses when facilitation is done badly (at the beginning of the story) and how things improve with good facilitation (later in the story). These differences bring out issues of rapport, trust, local knowledge, gender differentiation and more – as these issues influence the successful accomplishment of locally determined goals.
3. The authors make clear the steps involved in conducting PAR correctly. This is valuable because, within the development and conservation worlds, there is a great deal of very superficial effort that is labelled “participatory” but does not meet the standards we feel are needed – standards that are made clear in this story. This is also valuable in laying the groundwork for the analyses to follow, providing a common understanding of what is being discussed (ACM/PAR), an understanding that might not otherwise exist (see Chapter 3 or Colfer et al. 2011).
4. I also see it as a reminder (or for neophytes an introduction) to the realities of rural, developing country forest lives – of the unconscious assumptions many practitioners and researchers make based on their own comfortable and convenient conditions.

## **References**

- Colfer, Carol J. Pierce, Etienne Andriamampandry, Stella Asaha, Emmanuel Lyimo, Endri Martini, Jean Laurent Pfund, and John Watts. 2011. "Participatory Action Research for Catalyzing Adaptive Management: Analysis of a 'Fits and Starts' Process." *Journal of Environmental Science and Engineering* 5 (1):28–43.