



TOOL 8

SEASONAL CALENDAR



Sunset in Gazi Bay, the location of the Mikoko Pamoja project, Kenya.
Credit: Association of Coastal Ecosystem Services / Mikoko Pamoja.



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SEASONAL CALENDAR

What is the **purpose** of seasonal calendar?

- To chart the annual season of natural resources and agricultural activities of local people (different stakeholders).
- To assist with project planning to ensure that interventions are timed to be most effective.

Plan Vivo Carbon Standard (PV Climate) **requirement?**

Recommended for all types of project, but especially for those projects involving smallholder farming and agroforestry.

When to use this tool?

- During the early stages of project planning, especially during PDD preparation.

Why is this tool required?

A seasonal calendar is a simple but valuable participatory tool for working with rural, agricultural based communities because participants are able to provide a lot of information based on their own direct experiences. It is used to find out more about the natural resource based livelihoods of participating households, to identify traditional resource use patterns, systems and pressures over a typical year and document the flow of products (especially food) over the year. More specifically, it can be used to find out the seasons where people have labour available for carrying out project activities and attending project meetings.

Who should participate?

A mixed group including both men and women involved in smallholder farming or natural resource management of various kinds in the village should participate. Make sure that all the key stakeholder groups are represented. It is particularly useful to have similar numbers of men and women present during this tool.

How to use the tool?

- Choose a place flat enough to work on, and large enough for all to see. Explain to the group the purpose of this exercise.
- If you have enough participants present, form 2 smaller groups - one for men and another for women.
- With a stick to ask each group to draw a line across the top of the work area to represent one year. Then hand over the stick and ask people to mark when their natural resource based activities over the year take place i.e. during which months. Men should record the activities they carry out and women should record the activities they carry out.
- When discussing forest use, lay out samples of different types of forest products in a column along one side of the calendar (or use cards with pictures) to show how the forest is used during different seasons e.g. firewood collection, NTFP collection, hunting, fruit and berry collection, timber harvesting etc.
- Ask participants to divide up their year in any way they choose. It may help to start with seasons – possibly the rainy season first, and then moving on to the other seasons, depending on how they divide their year. Work with a calendar that people understand. Lay out items such as stones or seeds to represent the seasons.
- Draw lines to complete the grid as shown in the example (below) and mark on the grid which products are collected or which activities take place during each season.
- Discuss each product or activity one at a time to avoid confusion. Use seeds, stones or other objects to show the relative availability of each product indicating low and high yield periods.
- After describing availability of products, draw or put other objects in the grid to show the general workload of men and women during different seasons. They can show peak labour demand periods for different types of products such as fodder, fuel, food, cash crops and raw materials.
- Finally, facilitate a discussion on the grid which has been produced. Ask questions for more information, bearing in mind the objectives of the exercise.
- Highlight the times when labour is available by season, food or product availability by season, and any conflicts or complementarities between forestry, agriculture, livestock and any other natural resource management activities.
- When it is finished, make a sketch of the charts and later take photographs or make copies. Use pictures rather than words and numbers to make it easier for everyone to understand.

