



Sustainable livelihoods in recreation forest communities: A case study from Cambodia

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Introduction

Recreation forests enhance human well-being and environmental health by supporting physical and mental health, biodiversity, and sustainable tourism.

Management challenges involve balancing ecological conservation with socio-economic development and integrating conservation with local and recreational needs.

Evolution of recreational forestry includes adapting community forestry to incorporate recreational uses alongside traditional resource management (Figure 1).

Objective of the research: Investigate factors influencing community engagement in governing Cambodia's recreation forests for livelihoods.



Figure 1. Recreational Forest Ou Kladek.

Methods

Operationalization Matrix: Analyzed factors like economic benefits and social contexts affecting community engagement in Cambodian recreation forests.

Data Collection: Used focus groups, interviews, surveys, and participatory activities to gather comprehensive insights.

Site Selection: Chose Ou Kladek, Prey Kbal Bey, and Changkran Roy from the PaFF project (Partnership for Forestry and Fisheries Communities), all with over two years of forest management experience in Kampong Thom and Siem Reap.

Data Analysis: Employed thematic, quantitative, and participatory game evaluations to assess governance, perceptions, and practical challenges.

Results

Institutional Context

Management Effectiveness: Changkran Roy excels with 80% satisfaction in decision-making and organization, surpassing 70% in Prey Kbal Bey and lower scores in Ou Khladek (Figure 2).

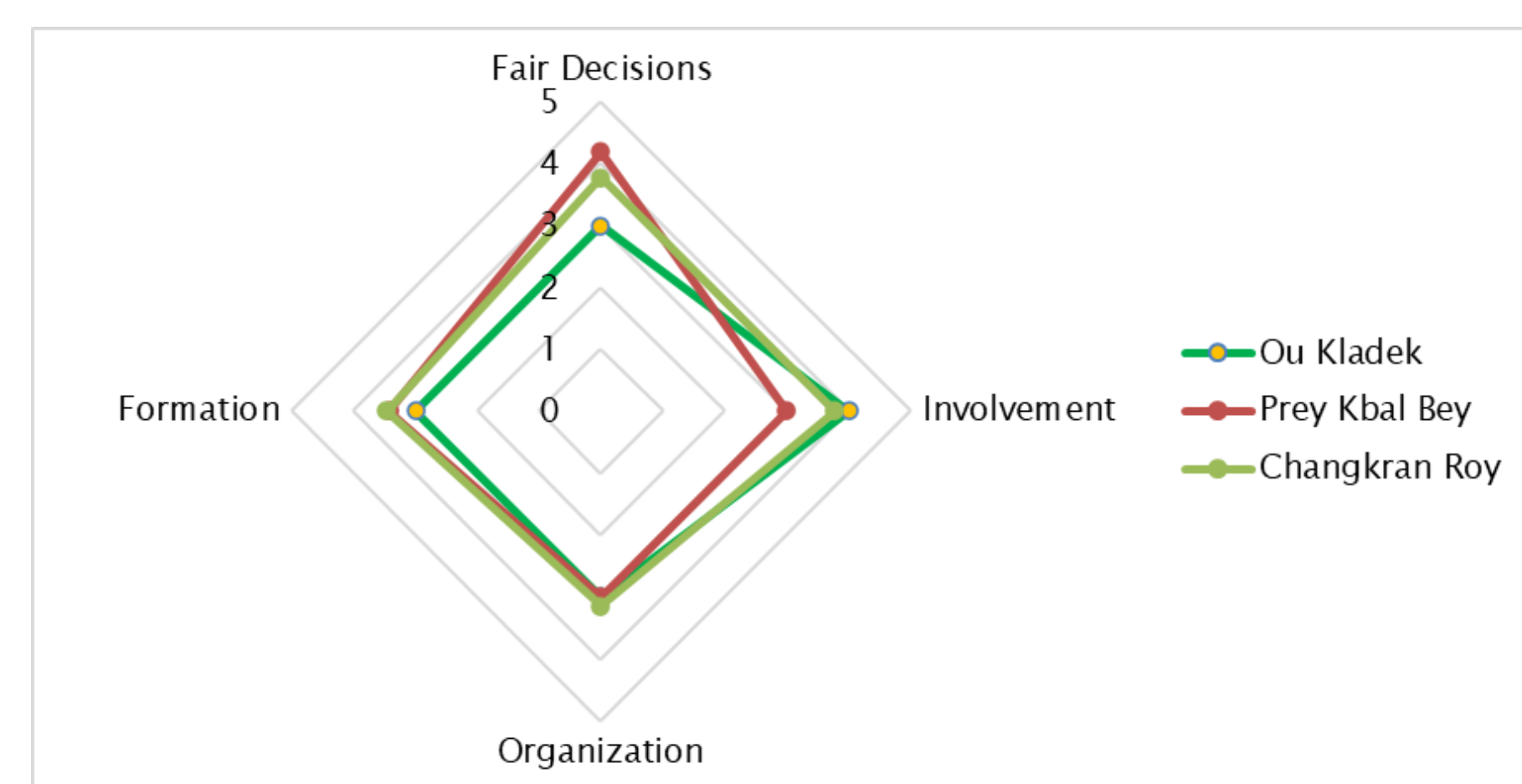


Figure 2. Forest committee assessment.

Policy Implementation: Changkran Roy achieves high policy enforcement and effective community education, unlike Ou Khladek's inconsistent policies and Prey Kbal Bey's fragmented outreach.

Sociocultural Context

Demographic Impact: Ou Khladek has 77% male residents and 69% farmers, affecting its management focus, while Prey Kbal Bey and Changkran Roy feature more balanced gender distributions and diverse occupations (Figure 3).

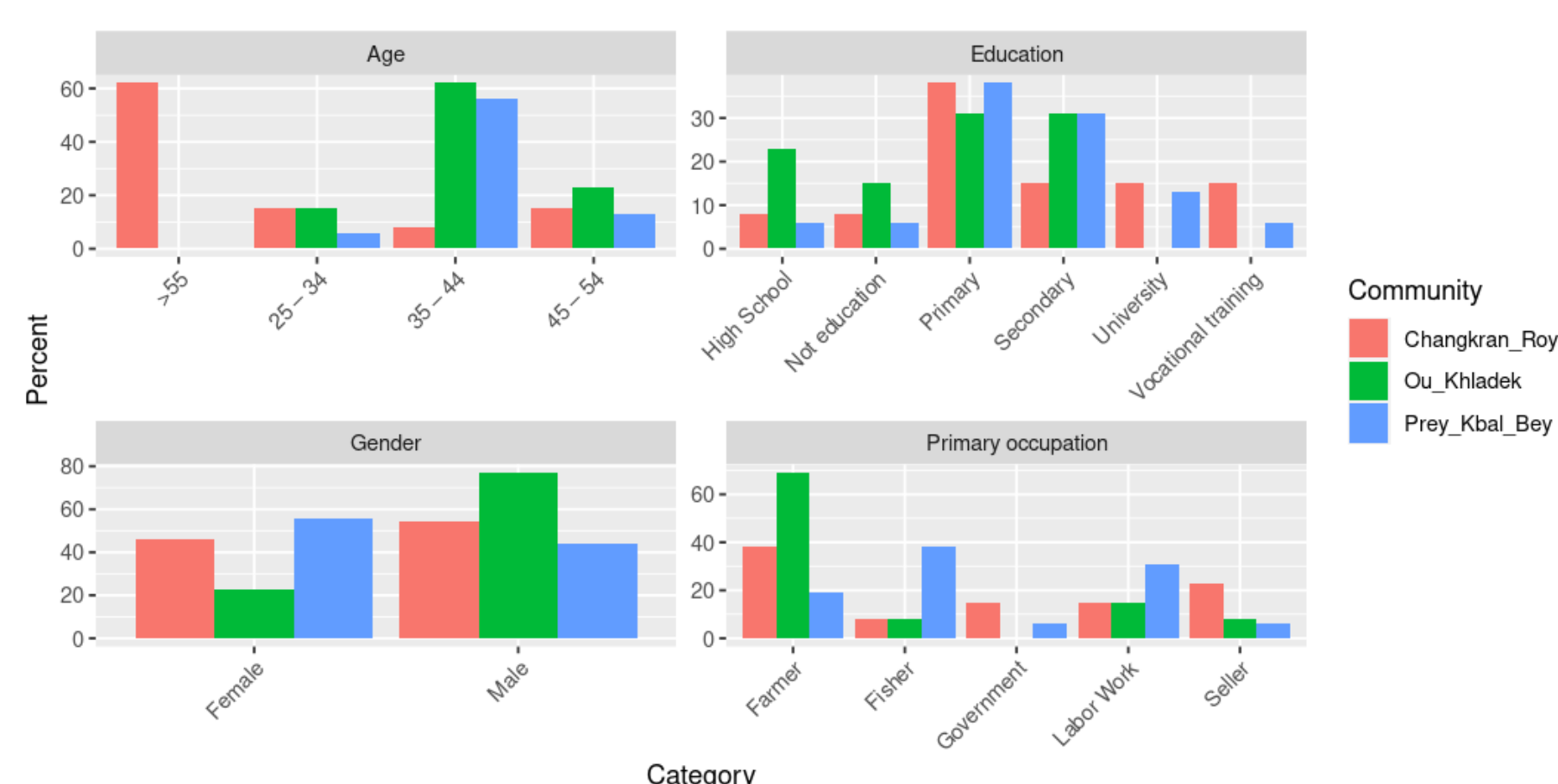


Figure 3. Demographic and Economic Overview.

Economic viability and sustainability

Value Chain Success: Changkran Roy excels with comprehensive infrastructure and diverse activities, while Ou Khladek and Prey Kbal Bey show varied levels of development and community engagement (Figure 4).

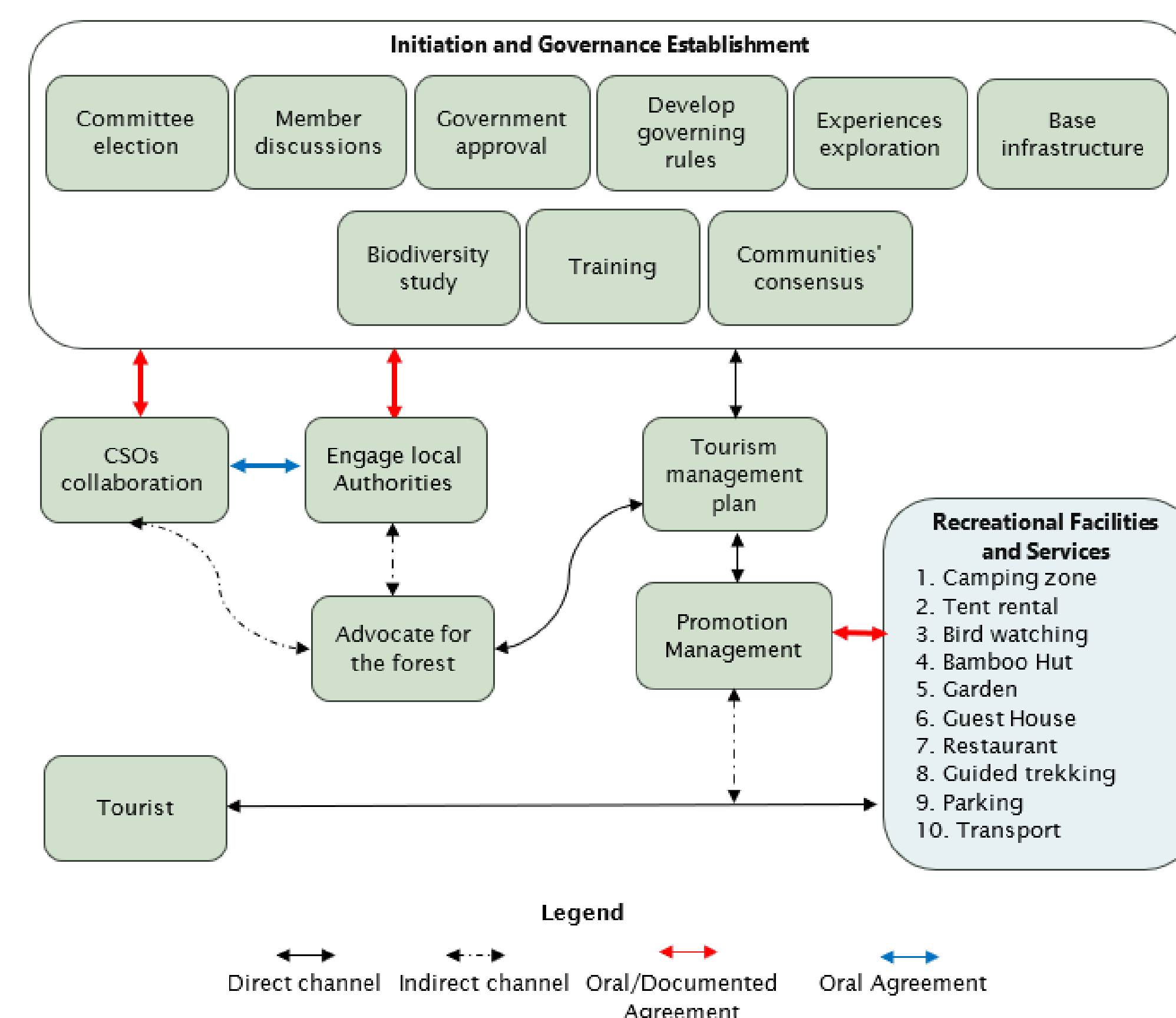


Figure 4. Changkran Roy's Recreation Forest Value Chain.

Stakeholder Dynamics: Changkran Roy has effective resource management but limited community input, Ou Khladek excels in community engagement but struggles with policy implementation, and Prey Kbal Bey leverages CSO partnerships but needs better educational resources.

SWOT Insights: Changkran Roy has effective resource management but limited community input, Ou Khladek excels in community engagement but struggles with policy implementation, and Prey Kbal Bey leverages CSO partnerships but needs better educational resources (Figure 5).

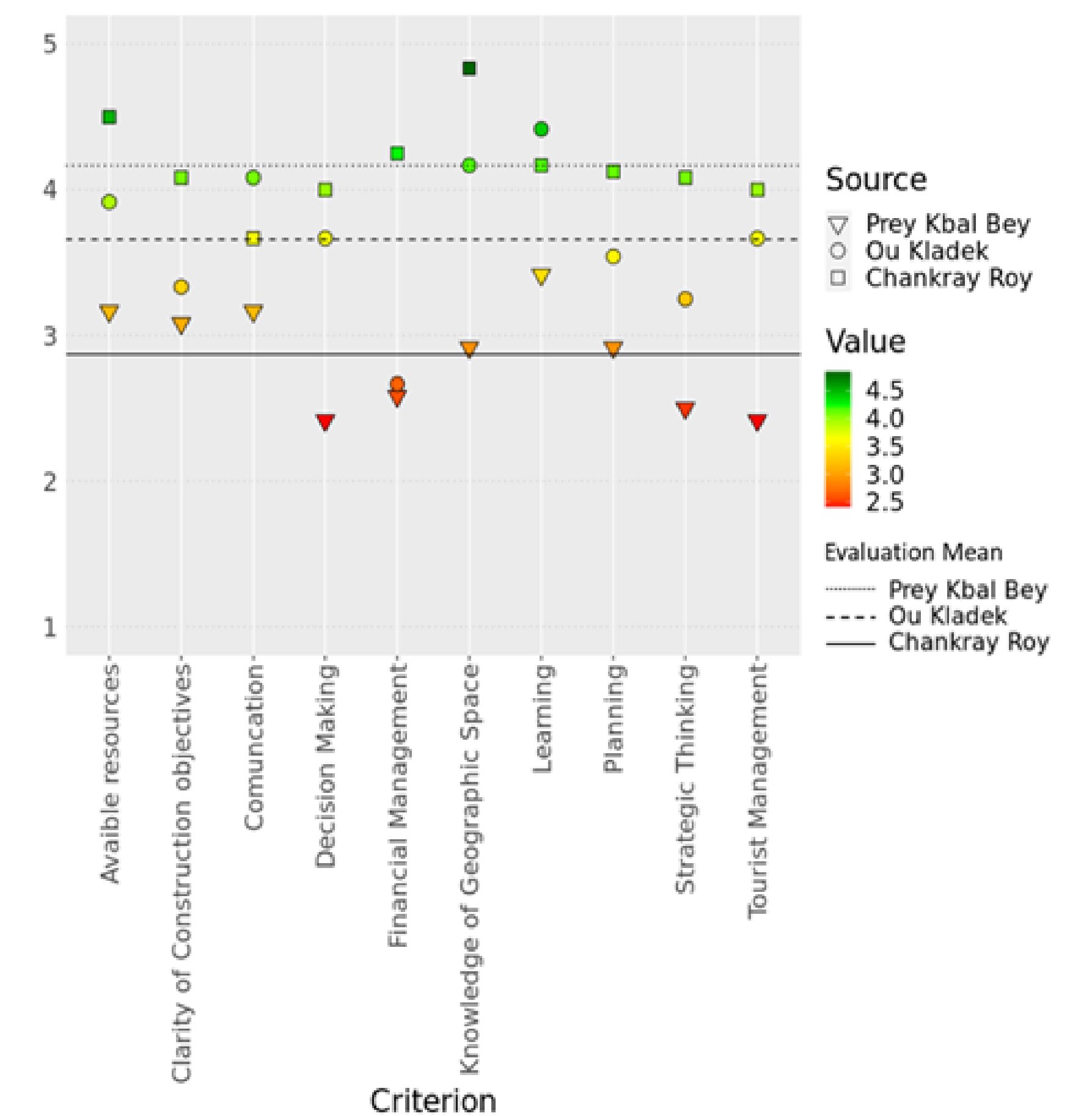


Figure 5. Comparative analysis of participatory game evaluation.

Conclusion

Strengthen Institutions: Improve forest management through targeted capacity-building initiatives.

Community Engagement: Deepen involvement and service delivery with training and workshops.

Promote Sustainable Agriculture: Encourage agroforestry, permaculture, and home farming to balance conservation and provide food.

Foster Collaboration: Strengthen partnerships with CSOs and stakeholders for better resource support.