



Forests and Livelihoods: Assessment, Research, and Engagement (FLARE) Network

## Liberia Game - Manual

**The game is intended to explore how community members make decisions about using forests. We are not trying to influence their behavior. For this reason, please do not advise players about how to make decisions. We do not mean to teach anything but instead we are trying to learn about how they make decisions in real life.**

- Record HH numbers of all the participants. They will bring their letters which will contain their hhids. After getting consent to their participation, please be sure to record their names and HHIDs in the table (If possible, you will get the names and associated household IDs from Roland – please make sure that you write down them correctly on the tablet).
- Do not let participants discuss the game unless it is during a break where communication is being used as an intervention. While one of you are with each of the participants, the other enumerator should make sure that they do not talk to each other
- Do not help participants make their decisions, or we will not learn from them.
- You will play the game 6 times with up to 5 rounds per game.
- Each tree card is worth 1 Liberian dollar.
- To make it easiest, line up the cards in 6 rows of 10 to start, then you can easily see how many trees need to be added between rounds by counting the number of complete rows and adding that number of trees.

### Script for Game:

**CONSENT** We would like to spend the next 4 hours explaining an activity and then participating in it. The activity is designed to be similar to the management decisions your community makes about natural resources, like forests and grazing lands. Your participation is important for this research and will help us all better understand natural resource use. Your participation in the activity is voluntary, you may leave the activity at any time. At the end of the activity, you will receive an amount of money based on your answers. If you choose to leave early or stop the activity you will not receive this money.

Do you wish to participate in the activity? [only proceed with participants who answer yes]

Thank you all for agreeing to stay and participate in the activity. The activity is designed to present a situation in which the group will need to make decisions about how to use the trees in a forested area. We will repeat the activity a few times just as real-life decisions about using trees are repeated over harvest seasons and years.

Each time we play each of you will individually make a decision about how many trees you will take from the imaginary forest. You can harvest a maximum of 5 trees and a minimum of 0 trees in each round of the activity. However, it will change depending on the remaining number of trees in the forest. Between rounds the forest grows in size. For each set of 10 trees left after everyone has taken the number of trees they select, two new trees are added for the next round.

In each round of the activity everyone will wait outside the room and you will each enter one at a time. You will individually decide the number of trees you would like to cut down (by tipping down the card). The other participants will not know how many you select. Each participant will select trees from the entire available forest in each round. You are not allowed to talk to each other unless being told otherwise.

Let's walk through an example. I am a participant with two other participants and we have 60 trees in the forest.

I make my decision in private, I collect the number of trees I want to harvest, say I choose to harvest 5 trees, collect them, two more participants also choose to harvest 5 trees. Then there are 45 trees left after that round. So, 8 trees are added to the forest, 2 for each set of 10 tree remaining ( $45/10 = 4.5$ , 4 (round 4.5 down to the nearest integer)\*2 = 8). We then repeat a few rounds of the activity. [[ demonstrate ]] The forest cannot grow to more than 160 trees. If the forest size drops to below 45 trees, fewer trees are available to harvest. [[show table of trees ]]. If the forest drops to below 10 trees it stops growing and if it drops to below 8 trees no more tree can be harvested.

Let's do a few practice rounds. They will not count for earning money, but are just to get us used to the game.

To begin playing, we all leave the game area. We'll randomly choose who goes first. There should be no conversations or statements while we're playing and no attempts to influence other players' decisions.

### **Practice Round**

The forest starts with 60 trees, the initial number of trees allowed to be harvested per person is 5. Use the table to determine the number of trees at the beginning of each selection.

Now that we have practiced we will start the game.

### **Open Access Round**

The forest starts with 60 trees, the initial number of trees allowed to be harvested per person is 5. Use the table to determine the number of trees at the beginning of each selection.

### **Shock Round**

There has been a sudden shock to the forests, now the starting forest size is only 30 trees. The forest starts with 30 trees, the initial number of trees allowed to be harvested per person is 4 now. Use the table to determine the number of trees at the beginning of each selection.

## Interventions

**Treatment 1. Communication:** allow the group to talk about their resource decisions (give them 5 mins to freely talk about their harvest decisions), they should still select their number of trees in private. After the 5-minute talk (they are allowed to talk only when all participants are present), they play the game as normal (they are not allowed to talk anymore). The forest starts with 60 trees, the initial number of trees allowed to be harvested per person is 5. Use the table to determine the number of trees at the beginning of each selection.

**Treatment 2. Communication and Information:** In this round, read aloud the poster but do not answer questions or explain it in anyway. Also, allow the group to talk about their resource decisions as in the previous round, they should still select their number of trees in private. Also, After this play the game as normal. The forest starts with 60 trees, the initial number of trees allowed to be harvested per person is 5. Use the table to determine the number of trees at the beginning of each selection.

**Treatment 3. Communication and Information, and Facilitation:**

In this round, now explain the poster and facilitate a discussion about the content, answering any questions about the content. Allow the group to talk about their resource decisions, they should still select their number of trees in private. After this play the game as normal. The forest starts with 60 trees, the initial number of trees allowed to be harvested per person is 5. Use the table to determine the number of trees at the beginning of each selection.

## Shock Round

There has been a sudden shock to the forests, now the starting forest size is only 30 trees. The forest starts with 30 trees, the initial number of trees allowed to be harvested per person is 4 now. Use the table to determine the number of trees at the beginning of each selection.

| Total Current Number of Trees | Maximum Trees Allowed per person |
|-------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| 45-90                         | 5                                |
| 25-44                         | 4                                |
| 16-24                         | 3                                |
| 12-15                         | 2                                |
| 8-11                          | 1                                |
| 0-7                           | 0                                |

## Open Access Game Practice Round

Open Access Game

## Shock Game

## Treatment 1. Communication

## Treatment 2. Communication and Information

### Treatment 3. Communication and Information, and Facilitation

## Shock Game