

Final Technical Report

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Project Title

**Community involvement in forest management:
An analysis of key opportunities and constraints to
the responsible involvement of communities and rural
people in forest management
in Eastern and Southern Africa**

Project Leaders and Lead Institution

Simon Rietbergen, Forest Conservation Programme Officer World Conservation Union 28 rue Mauverney CH-1196 Gland, Switzerland tel. +41 22 999 0258 fax +41 22 999 0025 spr@hq.iucn.org - http://iucn.org/	Edmund Barrow, Coordinator, Forest Conservation and Social Policy IUCN, Eastern African Regional Office, P.O.Box 68200, Nairobi, Kenya Tel: 254-2-890605-12 Fax: 254-2-890615, 890407 email: egb@iucnearo.org
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Executive Summary

The purpose of the four reviews undertaken was to identify and understand the key opportunities, problems and constraints to the responsible involvement of communities in forest management activities, in order to learn lessons from practise, use such lessons to inform and influence the policy arena.

Four theme reviews were produced with the following titles:

1. Land, People and Forests in Eastern and Southern Africa at the beginning of the 21st century. The impact of land relations on the role of communities in forest future.
2. Economic Aspects of Community Involvement in Sustainable Forest Management in Eastern and Southern Africa.
3. Community Involvement in Forest Management in Eastern and Southern Africa. Analysis of Policies and Institutions.
4. Whose Power? Whose Responsibilities? An Analysis of Stakeholders in Community Involvement in Forest Management in Eastern and Southern Africa.

In addition one training workshop was carried out, and attended by 55 participants from 14 countries in the eastern and southern Africa, and a report of that workshop was produced

The four theme reviews have detailed policy briefs and summaries, and they all highlight the following broad issues:

- The importance that forests and forest products play in the livelihoods of rural people;
- The range and variety of ways be which communities and rural people negotiate for these rights to forests and forest products;
- An evolving integration of these community issues into forest policy in the region, and, but less so in legislation; and
- A concern that government authorities are not moving as fast they could in this process, as they are broadly concerned with loss of power in such devolution.

The detailed findings, in the form of the four policy briefs, and the summary action points from the Regional workshop are to be found in the individual reviews and in the annexes to this report.

Background

The Eastern and Southern Africa regions include the following countries: Kenya, Uganda, Tanzania, Sudan, Eritrea, Ethiopia and Somaliland, Malawi, Zambia, Zimbabwe, Mozambique, Botswana, Namibia and South Africa. The primary target institutions of this research work is those government authorities who are engaged with forest and natural forest management. These will include the national forest departments, and in some cases wildlife authorities. In addition the information generated will be of use to regional authorities such as the Intergovernmental Agency for Development (IGAD), East African Corporation (EAC) and the Southern African Development Community (SADC). Further the findings will be relevant to a wide range of ongoing and planned for activities in the field of community involvement in forest management.

Project Purpose

The purpose of the reviews is to identify and understand the key opportunities, problems and constraints to the responsible involvement of communities in forest management activities, in order to learn lessons from practise, use such lessons to inform and influence the policy arena. This will help in the identification of constraints which might be alleviated or eliminated through further research and thus provide a basis for future poverty elimination in community forestry interventions. The major outputs of this research work will be four theme reviews:

1. Land, People and Forests in Eastern and Southern Africa at the beginning of the 21st century. The impact of land relations on the role of communities in forest future.
2. Economic Aspects of Community Involvement in Sustainable Forest Management in Eastern and Southern Africa.

3. Community Involvement in Forest Management in Eastern and Southern Africa. Analysis of Policies and Institutions.
4. Whose Power? Whose Responsibilities? An Analysis of Stakeholders in Community Involvement in Forest Management in Eastern and Southern Africa.

Research Activities

This project was not about carrying out primary research, rather it was aimed at reviewing the current status of community involvement in forest management in eastern and southern Africa. This was carried out based on the authors experience with the subject matter in the different countries, and the published and unpublished literature that could be found. In addition a regional workshop was carried out on community involvement in forest management.

The four theme reviews provide a detailed presentation and analysis of some of the key issues facing community involvement in forest management in the two regions. These reviews are well illustrated with practical case studies and examples from within the two regions which help show precedent for the practical implementation of these more enabling policies. The lessons from the study will inform and influence existing practise as well as evolving policy, for instance in Kenya where the forest policy is in a state of evolution.

Outputs

Four reviews of community involvement in forest management have been produced for Eastern and Southern Africa, one each focusing on Tenure, Economics, Policy, Stakeholder and Power Relations (Table 1). Because of some savings, we have been able to print 1,000 copies of each of the reviews published to date. The printing of the remaining two reviews will be funded from this grant and from the Ford Foundation. The reviews have been widely distributed within the region, and the project has an address list of over 400 addresses mainly from within the region but also more widely. They have both been well received and reviewed, and we have had many demands for the publications from outside the region. In addition the CIFOR website POLEX has featured a summary of the Tenure review, and we are assured that the other 3 reviews will also be featured in POLEX.

A regional training workshop was held in Uganda in 2000 for 55 participants from 14 countries of the eastern and southern African region. A report has been produced and distributed to the participants, with additional copies being sent to key institutions in the region.

Table 1: Summary of Publications from the Research work

Reference	Citation Details
Book	Alden-Wily, L. and Mbaya S. (2001). <i>Land, People and Forests in Eastern and Southern Africa at the beginning of the 21st Century: The Impact of Land Relations on the Role of Communities in Forest Future</i> . IUCN-The World Conservation Union, Nairobi., 313 pages
Book	Mogaka, H., Simons, G., Turpie, J., Emerton, L. and Karanja. F. (2001) <i>Economic Aspects of Community Involvement in Sustainable Forest Management in Eastern and Southern Africa</i> . IUCN-The World Conservation Union, Nairobi. 151 pages
Book	Barrow E., Clarke J., Grundy I., Kamugisha Jones R., and Tessema Y. (2002): <i>Whose Power? Whose Responsibilities? An Analysis of Stakeholders in Community Involvement in Forest Management in Eastern and Southern Africa</i> . Nairobi, IUCN-EARO, 150 pages
Book	Kigenyi F., Gondo P. and J. Mugabe (2002): <i>Community Involvement in Forest Management in Eastern and Southern Africa. Analysis of Policies and Institutions</i> . Nairobi, IUCN-EARO, 90 pages
Workshop Report	IUCN- the World Conservation Union (2001) <i>Regional Workshop on Community Involvement in Forest Management in Eastern and Southern Africa</i> . IUCN-The World Conservation Union, Nairobi. 112 pages

An annotated bibliography has been produced as a separate product (and funded from a separate source). This will be published in due course. IUCN has received some additional funding to enable 3,000 CDs to be produced which will focus on community involvement in forest management. These CDs will contain the four reviews, the annotated bibliography, workshop report and then as many case studies and practical examples of community involvement in forest management as the CD can hold. The CD will be widely distributed in the region and further a field.

Contribution of Outputs

These reviews have helped to highlight the current status of the knowledge with respect to community involvement in forest management in the two regions of Africa. This comes at a critical time when the countries are preparing for WSSD, and donors are increasingly focusing on poverty reduction. The reviews demonstrate the importance of forest options as a component for, in particular rural livelihoods to help reduce poverty. Many practical case studies are highlighted which demonstrate that rural people are capable and do manage trees and forests in a sustainable manner, provided the incentives are right (rights of access, responsibilities for management, economic).

In eastern Africa for example these reviews have been used as a basis for discussion with heads of forest agency to assist them in arguing more forcefully in budgetary allocations for forestry. The reviews have helped demonstrate that precedents set in one country can influence policy in another.

However the real benefit of these reviews will be seen in the coming years. Through IUCN's various policy forums in the regions (for example with regional bodies such as SADC, EAC, IGAD, as well as national policy development processes) the findings from these will continue to be used to advocate for a more responsible involvement of rural people and community in forest management in the region.

Some of the findings from this work have already been picked up on. For example the joint IUCN/WWF partnership has worked on forest landscape restoration, at least initially, Ethiopia, Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda. The focus of forest landscape restoration is more than simply restoring trees, but restoring the wider goods and services which forest offer. This has an important livelihood component.

Annex 1: Policy Brief from the Review on Land, People and Forests in Eastern and Southern Africa at the beginning of the 21st century. The impact of land relations on the role of communities in forest future.

The way in which forest land is owned, directly influences the status of the forest, its condition and the way in which it is managed. Ownership also determines the parameters of the relationship of forest-local communities with the forest.

In general, where local tenure has been revoked in favour of state tenure (such as in reserves) or where local tenure has been undermined through weak support in state law, local forest custodianship is undermined. Conversely, the greater the security of local forest tenure, the stronger the interest and will of the community towards its security.

Secure forest ownership may be viewed as the most powerful stake a community may hold in forest future and the pivot upon which their involvement in forest future may be most profoundly and securely based. It provides a stable platform upon which the community may develop a regime of sustainable and sustained management. Where arrangements of community custodianship amount to virtual ownership, they may have the same effect. This may be achieved through acknowledging or designating the community as the management authority.

There has been a tendency in policy-making to pay inadequate attention to the tenurial foundation of forest future and to assume that local interests in forests are restricted to issues of immediate use and benefit, and to structure participation around this. Considering their custodial interests ignored or downgraded to user rights only, this approach runs the risk of being self-fulfilling with the main concern of the community being to secure the only stake they are being offered, access rights or a share in benefits being gained by other parties from the forest.

The state loses the opportunity to devolve management to the extent needed to be effective and lasting, and communities lose the opportunity to root their forest-livelihood interests more profoundly and soundly. Especially where forest revenue sharing is the basis of participation, transformation of the management regime may be minimal and local investment in forest future may be unstable. Nor do user-centred arrangements readily apply to those forests in most need of more localised and sustained protection and management, forests which are too degraded, or too valuable in their catchment functions or biodiversity, to sustain the product extraction upon which access rights or benefit-sharing may be premised.

Matters of land ownership are under a great deal of change at this time in the region. This is being realised mainly in new national land policies and new laws regulating the way in which land may be held and secured. A critical sphere of impact is upon rural communities, and especially those who hold their land in customary or other informal and locally regulated ways.

Widespread failure in state law to give legal weight to customary tenure and to the customary capacity of those regimes to support the ownership of properties in common, may be identified as the single most influential factor in the relationship of people to forests this past century. Had state law recognised common properties as group-owned private estates, the foundation for locally-based forest management would have been nurtured and become a viable regime for retaining and sustaining forest in its own right.

It is new provision for just such a capacity that marks a dramatic turning point in the history of forest management at the turn of the century. A trend is underway which now makes customary rights in land legal tender and directly includes the right of people to own land in common. Through this communities in several states are finding their tenure over local forest commons secured. As private property this renders these estates less vulnerable to appropriation and to the dominance of individualising forces, prompting subdivision of forest and other local common property.

At the same time, and being driven by similar democratising forces, forest strategies and legislation are themselves under reform, including new consideration of the role of civil society in forest future. In a growing number of countries, the capacity for communities to retain (and

in some cases re-secure) local forest as private property is encouraged and constructs for this provided, mainly in the form of Community Forests.

Policy-making implications

The implications of these developments for policy-makers are considerable. Among the more general:

- The commonality of concerns and processes among countries in the region is such that a great deal may be learnt from each other; cross-country exchanges will prove increasingly useful.
- Questions as to in whom, and at what level of society, forest guardianship is vested, need closer attention in policy-making in order to more genuinely and positively transform the way in which forests are secured and sustained over the longer-term.
- The opportunities beginning to be afforded modern forest management through land reform are considerable, and should be taken advantage of. In turn, as a main sector dealing directly with natural resources of both local and national import, new strategic thinking in forestry has a lot to offer land policy makers, and an important role to play in implementing new frameworks for integrated tenure and resource management.
- For changes in land and forest relations to be successful, both spheres need to give attention to issues of community-level formation. This includes support for the emergence of communities as identifiable institutions and with legal personality, able to be endowed with meaningful powers of (resource) management. In 2000, 'community' shows potential for emerging as one of the most important new constructs through which society and its resources may be more successfully governed. Processes which look to communities as custodians over local forests represent an important new avenue for this development.

Annex 2: Policy Brief from the Review on Economic Aspects of Community Involvement in Sustainable Forest Management in Eastern and Southern Africa.

This study investigates the extent to which communities have been provided with economic incentives to become involved in sustainable forest management in Eastern and Southern Africa. The study has a number of clear findings:

- If communities are to be willing, and economically able, to involve themselves in sustainable forest management they must receive greater economic benefits from conserving forests than from degrading them. Sustainable forest management must tangibly improve local economic welfare, and generate local economic benefits to sufficient levels and in appropriate forms to counterbalance the opportunity costs incurred by sustainable forest management.
- There is generally little recognition by either economic or forest sector decision-makers and planners of the high economic value of forest resources for communities, or the potentially high local economic costs of sustainable forest management.
- The contribution of the forest sector to national economies is generally underestimated as a result of the emphasis on formal wood-based industries and omission of consideration of the value of non-timber products and functions.
- Because the forest sector has such a low recorded value throughout all the countries studied, it has been accorded little priority in economic policies and development strategies. In many cases, economic policies in Eastern and Southern Africa have actually provided economic disincentives to communities in sustainable forest management.
- Macroeconomic policies have influenced community involvement in sustainable forest. A positive influence has been as a result of the national trends towards decentralisation, privatisation and devolution of the role of public sector, which have a greater degree of participation in forest use and management. Economic liberalisation has dismantled many of the price and market distortions that have traditionally discriminated against forests as a land use. However, many of these positive influences have been counterbalanced by a series of economic crises and conditions that have undermined local livelihoods and contributed to forest degradation and loss.
- Sectoral economic policies largely omit forestry concerns, and tend to place emphasis on activities which have the potential to lead to the unsustainable exploitation, clearance and degradation of forest species and areas. Many sectoral economic activities benefit from, use or degrade forest goods and services at low or zero cost. Sectoral economic instruments have sometimes acted as perverse incentives against community involvement in sustainable forest management – for example unsupportive systems of land and resource tenure, and subsidies to resource or land-degrading activities.
- Policies in environment and natural resources sectors pay little attention to economic considerations, including the need to make conservation profitable to communities, the need to raise finance and funds, and the need to counterbalance disincentives and perverse incentives provided by macroeconomic and sectoral economic policies.
- National forest policies have moved away from a focus on strict protection and commercial production to approaches geared towards using forest resources in pursuit of sustainable development goals, and to the economic benefit of local communities. In line with this shifting focus, four main types of economic measures have been deployed in Eastern and Southern Africa in support of community involvement in forest management: benefit-sharing, the development of forest-based markets and enterprises, the promotion of local alternatives to forest-based sources of income and subsistence, and direct payments to community members.
- Despite a much greater emphasis on “community-based” approaches to forest management, there are few instances where this has actually managed to counterbalance the local-level opportunity costs associated with forests or to generate

substantive economic benefits of a sufficient quality or quantity to compete on economic terms with the unsustainable use of forest land and resources.

Conclusions

Two overriding conclusions arise from the study:

- Broader economic conditions in Eastern and Southern Africa are generally unsupportive of community involvement in sustainable forest management
- Economic concerns have been dealt with inadequately in most community-based approaches to forest management in Eastern and Southern Africa.

Recommendations

The study also highlights a number of policy recommendations.

Most importantly, the omission of economic considerations from both forestry and economic policy, planning and practice has resulted in a situation where, in many parts of Eastern and Southern Africa, sustainable forest management is not economically attractive to communities. There is an urgent need to provide economic incentives for communities to become involved in sustainable forest management, including:

- Ensuring that the full economic value of forests is appreciated, and reflected in both economic and forestry decision-making, paying particular to economic costs and benefits that accrue at the community-level;
- Identifying, and dismantling, the economic disincentives and perverse incentives that macroeconomic and sectoral economic policies provide and that hinder community involvement in sustainable forest management; and
- Developing and testing economic incentive measures within the context of on-going attempts at community-based forest management, which generate tangible benefits in forms and at levels that are at least equal to compensate for the economic costs that accrue to communities.

Annex 3: Policy Brief from the Review on Community Involvement in Forest Management in Eastern and Southern Africa. Analysis of Policies and Institutions.

Policy frameworks in natural resources management have developed since pre-colonial time and have had strong influence on natural resources conservation and management. In this document the influence of policy on natural resources management focusing on forestry is examined especially as it relates to community involvement in Eastern and Southern Africa.

The pre-colonial period was characterized by an absence of written records, and was dominated by traditional or customary resource management practices which varied from place to place, depending on social organization. In general, authority was vested in traditional leaders who were responsible for resource allocation especially land and forests. They were also responsible for declaration of protected or sacred forests for spiritual and cultural purposes. This worked well in an era of small populations and limited demand. Customary policies had clear norms and regulations and created a sense of ownership among the local communities. Restrictions guided the way forest resources were used, developed, and recovered after harvesting. Through these practices elaborate indigenous systems evolved which were able to sustain the forest, and meet peoples' tree and forest related needs.

The colonial period created policies controlled by central government, in the interest of the state/nation, that were meant to control what was interpreted as destructive activities by local people, and was also aimed at providing resources for the timber industry in the colonies. The human element and the social-economic importance of forests to local communities was ignored. As a result the policies so developed introduced a "command and control" system, and created a centralized management. Local people were alienated from forest resources whilst local institutions and management practices were disrupted and undermined. The most significant element was the imposition of land and natural resources use policies and regulations that were alien to the local populations.

Post independence policy continued with the colonial thrust and were seen as an instrument for achieving state control over land, the forest and forest based resources as well as socio-economic development, with some emphasizing even more exclusion of people from public forests. The reluctance of governments to develop policies to allow communities in forest land is a major constraint linked to the broad issue of land tenure and resources management. Subsequent policy changes tended to progressively place greater emphasis on economic extraction while also recognizing environmental services. The policies were broadly focused on production and protection. Where the policies spelt out the need to promote community involvement, they were not backed up by legislation as the process of legislative reviews lagged behind or was not even undertaken, despite there being an evolving body of evidence from practice highlighting that communities can and do manage forests on a sustainable basis.

While the forest policy has been blamed for failing to halt degradation and deforestation, policies outside forestry have tended to have greater impact on forestry. These include, among others, land tenure, tax-credit and pricing, resettlement, development, agricultural, decentralization, public service restructuring and, energy. Not only have they both direct and indirect impacts, their effects have been exacerbated by poor coordination of activities between these sectors and forestry. In fact most of these policies have largely ignored forestry issues altogether.

Most significant changes in policy and legislation have taken place in the last ten years. There is a general shift that is common to the policies, and that is the strong emphasis to a focus on the role and importance of local communities and other stakeholders in forest management. This change has arisen from recognition of failure of central governments to stop or reverse continued loss of forest resources or prevent their degradation. It has also evolved as a result of lessons from practice.

At the international level there has been growing interest and support for creating enabling policy and legal frameworks to enhance community participation in natural resources

management, especially forests through various international instruments and initiatives. These include the Convention on Biological Diversity, the Forest Principles generated by UNCED, Agenda 21, United Nations' Framework Convention on Climate Change, The Convention to Combat Desertification and others. Countries of Eastern and Southern Africa are signatories to these conventions. Unfortunately such policy evolution at all levels has not always been well informed by local practice. In many areas local practice on community involvement in forest management has evolved further and faster, and so needs to better inform policy evolution which tends to be more centrally, and even donor driven.

The most common features of the new policies concerning community involvement in all countries of Eastern and Southern Africa include an:

- **Absence of coherence in policy:** There is tension between central government control and the aspiration to involve local community in forest management;
- **Add-on approach:** most countries are just starting to accommodate community involvement as an add on to their on-going activities outside existing policies;
- **Mismatch between policy and legislation:** In most countries in the region policies contain more specific provisions concerning community involvement while legislation is silent; and that
- Most of policies do not clarify the specific conditions and areas appropriate for CIFM.

A number of factors were found to limit effective policy to promote CIFM and these include:

- Absence of political will and support to reform;
- Legal and Institutional rigidities and weakness;
- Resource inadequacies; and
- Poorly articulated demand for policy reform and implementation.

Several factors were found to be essential for policy to work, including:

- Adequate finances to translate policy into action;
- Proper administrative structures with sufficient human resources to administer policy;
- Supportive legislation;
- Established avenues for coordination with other sectors whose policies impact on forestry;
- Creation of partnerships among the various stakeholders to share roles and responsibilities; and
- Capacity building of local institutions.

While there is definite change in policy in the region to accommodate local community interests, top down planning and implementation still remain prevalent, while bottom up approaches in many cases remain relegated to forest policy documents. There is still need for strong commitment on side of government. It has been demonstrated in a number of cases where policy provides for community involvement that sustainable forest management is possible and contributes to both forest health and continued provision of goods and services to local people. There are still a number of factors that need to be understood to enable successful implementation of CIFM requiring some research and these include success factors for CIFM.

Conclusions:

1. Current policy, laws and management institutions have marginalized local communities and not sufficiently addressed their involvement in forest management.
2. Policy in the region, with some notable exceptions, continues to be generally unsupportive, and legal provisions have yet to be adequately dealt with in community based approaches to forestry management.
3. In the last ten years, major steps have been made to address CIFM, as it has been demonstrated that local communities are vital partners for sustainable forest management, yet this practice has yet to be adequately articulated in policy and legislation.

4. Although major steps have been taken to integrate community concerns in the policy, legal and institutional arrangement, there still exist gaps in terms of steps to be taken for full implementation.
5. The lack of implementation has management implications from both forestry and policy, planning and practice which has resulted in a situation where, in many parts of the region, sustainable forest management is not possible.
6. Forestry and other related management agencies are no longer the sole source of objective management and planning for forestry. A lot of other sectors exist that impact on forestry especially those which have the potential to conflict with community involvement in forest management.

Recommendations:

1. Identify and address contradictions and gaps in national policies, laws and regulations that concern or otherwise negatively impact on local communities.
2. Review and revise current policies and laws to recognize local peoples' forest and land use rights and to protect traditional use rights and institutions.
3. Reform policy and planning processes to enhance participation of communities and other stakeholders in policy formation at all levels.
4. Power disparity between actors is a major constraint to genuine local community participation in forest management. Therefore legal frameworks and instruments need to be developed to empower local communities for effective participation in forest and tree resources management.
5. Encourage NGOs' and community based organizations to collaborate in supporting effective policies that incorporate local participation.
6. Provide training in conflict management and resolution for all relevant actors to strengthen institutional capacity to support conflict resolution processes.
7. Ensure that information regarding relevant policy is both accessible and understandable in local contexts.

Annex 4: Policy Brief from the Review on Whose Power? Whose Responsibilities? An Analysis of Stakeholders in Community Involvement in Forest Management in Eastern and Southern Africa.

This review explores forest conservation from the perspective of rural people and other key stakeholders. A loose focus is placed on natural or indigenous trees. The purpose is to identify and understand the key issues relating to power, and the responsible involvement of communities in forest management, in order to learn lessons, and inform and influence policy. This helps explore the opportunities as to how forest options can contribute to the reduction of poverty, and identify areas needing further research. Combining a focus on securing livelihoods with community negotiating and decision making processes enables us to analyse inter- and intra- community power structures and relations at a community level.

Findings

1. A long history of exclusion and expropriation has alienated many rural people from their forest resources, resulting in increased degradation and encroachment, as centralised management systems were not able to take over these management responsibilities simply through enforcement.
2. With an increased focus on participation and decentralisation, rural people and communities can negotiate for their rights to and responsibilities for forest resources, both within, and outside reserved forests.
3. Decentralised arrangements are being tested from collaborative or joint forest management, to re-gazetting forests from National to Local Forest Reserves, to the devolution of ownership to local communities.
4. Isolation has generally assisted in the conservation of natural forests, particularly in the dry lands where rich patch areas are critical to overall natural resource management, and the management of risk.
5. Community based approaches test the willingness of Governments to devolve power, and there is still a reluctance to really devolve power, despite the pressures from decentralisation trends.
6. Security of tenure needs to be supported by incentive measures and realistic market based pricing structures, so that private people can responsibly manage and benefit from forest options on their lands.
7. Different stakeholders may have different interests in the same resource. While the negotiating and decision making is important, but it is "who decides" that determines the rights to trees or products thereof.
8. Gender considerations may be easier to understand than other equity issues. Women are often excluded from decision-making even though they often have a greater dependency on forest products for subsistence and livelihood security, while men's interests are often more cash based.
9. Intra community complexities are characteristic of many communities, and need to be understood so that the less powerful groups are not further marginalised.
10. Commercialisation of subsistence use is an important driver in natural resource use, and one that often results in over exploitation. Some commercialisation pressures are internal, but many are externally driven, and may over ride, or ignore community mechanisms to conserve natural resources.
11. Resource use rights and controls, and how they shape intra-community stakes, is mediated through customary and local level institutions, including the rules, rights, and authority structures for administration.
12. Resource users and communities need the power to exclude other users, so that resources can be used sustainably. This also requires the power to sanction.
13. Understanding community power and decision making dynamics is crucial to understanding institutional complexities. This determines the basis for successful and equitable management of trees and forests. Local level institutions for resource management have been surprisingly resilient and are widespread throughout the region. They may be obvious or hidden, and may or may not be linked to formal administrative institutions and organisations. However, many of these institutions' legitimacy has not been formalised.

14. Value is more than the direct use or economic value that a certain resource or forest area might have, as cultural and sacred values, for example, are important to people and communities.
15. Robust monitoring and adaptive management measures are needed, as, in the rush for more community involvement and resource user benefits, less attention has been devoted to what is sustainable.
16. While the process of alienation of land rights happened swiftly, reversing the process appears to be much more complex. Forest authorities have been reluctant to lose power, and retain the belief, sometimes with justification, that rural people are not able to manage their natural resources on a sustainable basis.
17. The rights to benefits from forest resources have to be closely linked to responsibilities for management. But these rights are not the same for different stakeholder groups, nor are they spread equally within a community.

Conclusions

1. The nature of interests and stakeholders within communities is highly diverse and dynamic, a reflection of diverse and dynamic resource endowments and changing livelihood strategies. Understanding these complex factors, which underpin the use of forest resources is important.
2. Despite the trends to promote local community involvement, little real transfer of power has taken place, except in certain cases. Government, as the dominant land owner, remains the dominant stakeholder, and there has often been a reluctance to truly implement decentralised policies, except at the level of rhetoric.
3. National land, forest and natural resources policies and legislation of successive governments have reduced local people's stake in forest resources, whilst raising the stakes of private land owners, commercial loggers, fuelwood merchants, and the State.
4. Secure property rights are fundamental to effective community involvement in forest management. In most countries in the region, communities have second class land rights, and the real challenge is to upgrade these into more secure forms of property rights.
5. A greater understanding of intra-community stakes and interests, together with the institutions that mediate these interests is required, particularly for resources that are important to the poor and marginalised groups, and in particular those used to meet contingencies.
6. Forest products form important components of rural strategies to tide people over seasonal gaps between harvests, to cope with drought or other emergencies. These contingency uses are not adequately understood or acknowledged, nor are they integrated into land use planning and policy.
7. This study documents the use of existing local institutions for improved tree and forest management, rather than replacing them, and demonstrate that such groups can take on their rights and responsibilities.
8. As communities increasingly take responsibility for their natural resources, the politicisation of natural resource management increases, and local elites will vie for an increased stake.
9. If not responsibly addressed, the poor and marginalised groups that a project is designed to benefit, may not be part of the process, and may be further marginalised, because such groups are often not involved in decision making.
10. Commercial interests can force what might have been sustainable subsistence use into unsustainable commercial exploitation.

Policy Recommendations

1. There is a range of conditions that support community involvement in forest management, including strong clear policy and legislative support; benefit flows which are significant and important; rights to forests and forest resources being clearly linked to management responsibilities, and that negotiated agreements are clear, internalised, and have local resource user ownership.
2. There is need for secure property rights, including the existence of boundaries, and clear membership criteria so as to create management and use incentives to conserve, and there needs to be a way to protect the wider interests of society in the case of unscrupulous operators.

3. The tenure reform processes being undertaken need to contribute to transforming the situation on communal lands by providing local residents with legally enforceable rights, especially against outsiders.
4. Defining the appropriate institution, and ensuring local ownership so that that resource users are not marginalised is vital. However, if not analysed properly, the "real" managers may lose power to either administrative structures or outsiders.
5. New and innovative forest management arrangements are necessary, if the continued degradation and conversion of forest land is to be averted. Securing community rights to trees and forest products is one route to the greater participation of civil society in natural resource management.
6. A "deconcentration" of Government power to lower levels, while being administratively expedient, may usurp or down play the importance of local institutions. A clear understanding of these institutions would enable a greater synergy between decentralised Government institutions, and existing customary ones.
7. Governments, custodians of public well being need to maintain a conscious vigilance on commercialisation and a liberalised economic environment. They may need to intervene with affirmative action, especially where commercialisation and liberalisation push the livelihoods of rural people to the periphery.
8. Increasingly the multiplicity of goods, services and values, and the variety of interests from different resource users and groups is being recognised as vital for sustainable use. This argues for a shift from preservation to sustainable use, and decentralised management. Conservation authorities need to adopt a strong community and resource user focus, while other institutions need to recognise the value forest management as a livelihood strategy, and national planners need to promote conservation as part of national planning and accounting.
9. There is a great potential to strengthen local institutions. An important challenge facing these evolving institutions is to work with, and transform existing power relations within communities to promote greater equity and accountability, which then become part of "improved" management.
10. Forest conservation has to have an important niche role for rural livelihoods and land use in the future, for example to meet contingencies, to mitigate risk and improve resilience, and to provide goods and services that other forms of land use cannot.
11. Rural people, especially the poorer and marginalised must be able to successfully negotiate for their rights and responsibilities for their natural resources and trees.

Annex 5: Summary Action Points and Recommendations from the Regional Workshop

Introduction

IUCN, the World Conservation Union, Eastern and Southern African Offices held a four day training course on **Community Involvement in Forest Management (CIFM)** for selected participants from the Eastern and Southern African Regions. This course was funded by DFID through NRI and the Forestry Research Programme. The basis for the course was the product of four reviews identifying and understanding the key opportunities, problems and constraints to the responsible involvement of communities in forest management activities, in order to learn lessons from practise, use such lessons to inform and influence the policy arena. The major outputs of this research work is the four theme reviews, which are:

1. The importance of tenure of land and resources in community involvement in forest management;
2. Economic and financial incentives for responsible involvement of communities in forest management;
3. Analysis of policies and institutional arrangements for enhanced community involvement in forest management; and
4. Whose stake in forest management? - the role of gender and other stakeholder groups in community involvement in forest management.

The underlying theme to the four reviews is based on natural capital, for instance the different forest types and non timber forest product systems which are an important part of the diverse ecosystems that the two regions display. The workshop had the following objectives:

1. Present and discuss the findings of the reviews;
2. Identify critical areas and issues which either hinder or support community involvement in forest management in Eastern and Southern Africa so that forest management can increasingly support livelihood objectives as well as securing the natural capital;
3. Identify practices in forest management that contribute effectively to poverty alleviation;
4. Identify practical and implementable recommendations and the actions necessary for such implementation; and
5. Identify ways in which the findings of this work can inform and influence existing economic, policy and institutional processes particularly within the forestry sector, but also more widely at both national and regional levels.

The four day workshop was held in Kampala, Uganda, in June 2000. Fifty five participants attended from Sudan, Somaliland, Ethiopia, Uganda, Kenya, Tanzania, Zambia, Malawi, Mozambique, Zimbabwe, Botswana, Namibia, Angola, and South Africa. Representation came from those working in this field within government authorities, NGO's and community based organisations, as well as from national institutions working with policy development and economic planning.

Summaries of the four theme papers were presented and formed the basis for discussion. These four reviews are in the process of being finalised and will be published by IUCN, however the summaries form part of the workshop proceedings. Based on plenary and focused group discussions centring on a range of key questions, a lot of practical experience and information was shared in the context of adult experiential learning. The following four sections summarises some of the main action points, recommendations, and comment from the four main sessions.

One result of this workshop will be to initiate a regional working group on community involvement in forest management, which will also relate to the IUCN Global Working Group on Community Involvement in Forest Management.

Session 1: Stakeholders and Community Involvement in Forest Management

Some Lessons: It is clear that communities and resource users have been able to organize and regulate themselves. There are many examples of where this has happened. Indeed community perceptions change when they feel they own, or at least have responsibilities for

forests and their benefits. This implies that communities should be responsible for, or manage, or own their own forests.

However, for this to happen, they have to have the power devolved to them. As well as being a legislative and policy issue, communities need to be part of planning and decision making processes. Such community empowerment is important otherwise open access may result, especially if government cannot adequately manage or control. It is encouraging to see that the state is gradually opening up to the practise of community ownership of forest land. From a historic context of state-community enmity and often hostility, relationship building with local, and often very suspicious communities is crucial so as to build that trust.

For communities to increasingly take on these management and ownership responsibilities community capacity is needed so that they start to ask for that increased role. Local structures, institutions and organisations need to be strengthened so that rural people can better manage their natural resources. But there is no prescriptive recipe and each particular forest and communities involved will have their own combination of unique features which need to be built in, though there will be many similar issues to address and processes to undergo.

Such community focused work promotes a stronger sense of ownership of forests and natural resources. But this needs to be linked to real benefits, whether at the household and subsistence level, or in the market place. Such market oriented management is likely to increase the benefit flows and so the responsibility for sustainable management

At one level many, often less informed, state that such community involvement in forest management is "easy". This ignores the social complexities which most communities demonstrate of, for instance who are the decision makers, who are the forest users, is their fair representation on committees? All interest groups need to be represented. In some cases this might not happen, where the relatively "powerless" and "hidden" groups for example the landless, women, are not properly involved.

The notions of participation and community involvement has strong donor and NGO support, but there is a danger of such initiatives as being donor driven, not donor supported and community or state driven.

Some Suggestions to improve the situation: Secure land and resource tenure are fundamental to responsible community involvement. If this is not possible to secure, as in the case of collaborative management then community rights and responsibilities need to be secure. This implies the need for mechanisms for cost and benefit sharing being agreed upon which are commensurate with the commitment required. However, There is still reluctance, for many reasons, to devolve real rights and responsibilities to communities. This has to change and demonstrated examples of CIFM will help in this change, There are a range of implementation strategies for stakeholder involvement including capacity building, empowerment of communities, political will, locally based conservation plans, use of culturally and traditionally accepted approaches and practices.

Policy implications: Many existing policies need to be strengthened and revised to fill the gaps called for, so that policies and legislative frameworks reflect community needs and priorities. But this requires capacity building and institutional strengthening at all levels. This is not simply a matter of revising forest policies and legislation's, though such revision is of fundamental importance, but has to relate to integration, co-ordination and harmonisation with other sectoral and national policies.

Outsiders, State and Community lands: At a community level there are a range of outside and state influences. Local communities are often powerless to stop powerful outsiders, and strong commercial interests such as logging and unsustainable forest exploitation and land expropriation. This is all exacerbated by tenure uncertainty and interference with social arrangements. On the more positive aspect, governments can, and some are starting to create positive policies and laws in this field. Many NGO's are now working in this area in terms of funding, implementation, capacity building and networking. But the challenge is how

to strengthen insiders capacity to deal with outsiders. This not only requires policy and legal review but also the political will and advocacy. It also means that local and customary structures and authorities need to be strengthened. For this to happen communities have to have clear rights and responsibilities, including tenure, and equitable costs and benefits.

Some Observation on Intra-Community Considerations In Forestry And Natural Resource Management

- It is difficult to isolate intra-community stakes from those of external stakeholders;
- Intra-communal stakes vary with forest resource ownership;
- CIFM empowers communities to identify the real problems regarding their relationship with forests;
- As more rights are bequeathed to communities, the latter's perceptions of forest management change and forest extension seems to get easier;
- Endowing all members of communities with rights irrespective of social class and status creates equity;
- CIFM can be hijacked by the powerful within communities due to vested and parochial interests, to the disadvantage of majority;
- The disadvantaged position women have had in society is also reflected in their relationship with forests;
- The structure and dynamics in a given community determine the nature, direction and magnitude of the stakes that individual households have in forest resources; and
- Traditional forest management creates disadvantaged and advantaged members of given communities, with the disadvantaged characterised by insecurity of tenure, limited access to forest resources and being receivers of decisions in whose making they do not participate.

Session 2: Tenure and Community Involvement in Forest Management

There are a range of problems and weaknesses associated with tenure and community involvement in forest management, from the fact that many people are unaware of their rights and obligations to inadequate representation at community levels. This is exacerbated in that many people have limited power in terms of decision making and are prone to political interference at all levels. Within communities there may well be lack of democracy and equity, where women are especially affected, which will often result in internal conflict. This is often a result of community power being concentrated in the hands of a few people. Some traditional legal systems can mitigate against certain groups, for instance women. However current land registration favours the family head, and the benefits may not be felt by the wider family. Overlaying these issues, is the larger issue of land scarcity in the context of growing populations which further complexes an already complex situation.

Many actions were suggested by the groups mostly centring on support to devolution of power and authority to the local level, which would be complimented by a strengthening of existing local institutional structures through capacity building, training and awareness. This would also assist communities to establish more equitable social structures.

Clearly it is important to build on and consider the weaknesses and opportunities of existing community structures and institutions including resource user groups, traditional authorities, elected village committees, bye laws which need to be recognised in law, and the registration of user groups. Ultimately such structures need to be strong and robust so that can sue and be sued, engage in partnerships, develop own policies and laws, and can contribute to community management. Underpinning this are a range of issues relating to democratisation in the context of traditional authorities and their relationship with political structures, of decentralisation leading to viable local political structures, and of broad gender and equity.

Local level capacity building would appear to be the key issue to empower local communities to take greater control over the land and resources, combined with appropriate legislation. Communities need to be able to manage their lands, both from the administrative, productive and environmental contexts. Conflict management and resolution mechanisms are important in this. Other areas of capacity building relate to monitoring and evaluation, duration and awareness on the benefits of sustainable management, forging partnerships with NGO's and Government departments, research into appropriate approaches and methodologies e.g.

conflict resolution, community management, sustainable harvesting, and the identification of appropriate sustainable business areas and livelihood opportunities.

Two key question areas were identified, but not resolved:

- Is community ownership sustainable? Should it be promoted in the context of a growing population but a finite resource? and
- Is it feasible to expect local communities to manage forests of national interest – individual vs. local vs. national and international interests?

Summary Synthesis

The main conclusion appeared to be that much work needs to be done to help communities use opportunities from legal education of their rights and opportunities, including in the community to help it operate on a group basis and as a partner with government and other parties, and to assist it draft realistic management plans forest management. Communities need to gain legal powers to exercise good forest management.

Tenure issues are critical and wider democratising processes are helping give local communities a higher role in society. Factors that strengthen a community are important to understand and can include visible organisation, capacity to act, and capacity to regulate. But a lot more needs to be done to encourage community development. It will be best to work with existing organisations and develop from these, rather than create entirely new institutions, and it is important to recognise the role and potential powers of traditional forms of organisation in particular. But democratising processes may contradict existing norms and set-ups and care has to be taken not to unnecessarily disrupt these.

Community revenue is important and needs to be promoted, but the agencies needed to do this are uneven and need developing. Broadly there are 3 approaches:

- Village councils (elected) – Tanzania, and lesson development in Sudan, Uganda.
- Traditional authorities – but often without real place or power (Zambia, Zimbabwe).
- State representatives posted to local level. – Kenya, Mozambique.

In addition the following levels have a role to play in promoting accessible community revenue:

- Central government – for policy and law so as to implement, for good governance, and to represent people and to promote community tenure;
- CBO and NGO's – to facilitate; and
- Community itself – to act, to be self reliant, to organise and to take on powers.

In general revenue accrual is important but not necessarily the most important factor. Decision making power is always the most important factor. The greater the decision making power of a community, the greater its role and commitment to forest management.

In some cases ownership of the forest is not necessary for effective community management. Being designated as the manager for a significant period can be adequate, while others favour co-management regimes. Ultimately ownership of the forest was recognised as a very basic stake holding that could:

- Change the attitudes of the community to the forest;
- Change forest department - people relations for the better, so that a community looks to a forestry department as technical adviser;
- Enable community to exclude secondary users and reserve the most important access to themselves;
- Promote active involvement;
- Centre responsibility clearly at the local level, and make it clear as to where the key authority is;
- Is an incentive to forest conservation; and

- Allows communities to adopt longer-term frames for the use of the forest, which lessens the drive to use (and over-use), for example enable a community to decide to close degraded areas which they might not do if they did not own the forest.

Session 3: Economics and Community Involvement in Forest Management

There are a range of shortcomings and needs so that communities can be responsible for more of the economic values that forest management has the opportunity to contribute. Many of these shortcomings are related to unwillingness to devolve such accrual mechanisms to the local level, and create an enabling framework. Some of these shortcomings include:

- The removal of bureaucracy from benefit-sharing arrangements, and top down policy approaches;
- To raise awareness of the market value of resources to communities;
- To understand needs and priorities of communities so as to direct efforts in the right way;
- To monitor arrangements carefully and base efforts on careful (and participatory) resource inventory;
- That additional technical support is often needed;
- To improve local value added and access to markets;
- The need for domestication of products, on-farm regeneration of resources;
- The need for diversified approaches, rather than reliance on single approach or resource;
- The lack of adequate capacity and empowerment at community level;
- Lack of integrated policy approaches, the lack of integration between sectors, and a sectoral bias; and
- Lack of co-ordination between the economic instruments used by different sectors, and their effects (e.g. price reforms in energy sector and impacts on forests).

There are a range of conditions required so that rural people and communities can trap the economic value from forest management in a sustainable manner. These include:

- Community property rights, and institutional commitment, so that land and resource tenure is clarified, assured, and made secure;
- Calculation of the costs of communities participating in management and utilisation;
- Capacity building at all levels, and reduction in levels of donor dependency for these arrangements;
- Scientific knowledge of products and markets;
- Collaboration and co-ordination between sectors, technical specialists (especially between environmental and marketing people);
- Many policies present perverse incentives which, by encouraging particular activities and sectors, impact negatively on forests;
- Better public awareness, and adequate research and extension.

To achieve this a range of activities need to be undertaken at various levels, including:

- The need for a holistic approach that includes all sectors and stakeholders in defining problems, setting solutions and reforming policies. This relates to the need for greater empowerment of communities;
- The need for better information generation, dissemination and sharing, and networking at both horizontal and vertical levels;
- Socio-cultural constraints to policy reforms being implemented and enforced need to be better understood and addressed; and
- No strategy or incentive can be implemented in isolation, there is a need mutually supportive packages of incentives.

Session 4: Policy and Community Involvement in Forest Management

There are a range of pre-requisites which are needed if policies that support community involvement in forest management are to work, and these include:

- Consultation with all stakeholders with special attention to local communities before policy formulation i.e. participatory policy formulation;

- After formulation, the policy is interpreted to community leaders and then to local community;
- Policy implementers should be committed to let the policy work. Such policy implementers need to have a wide knowledge of communities - their norms, culture, tradition etc.;
- Policy should be supported by legislation, and be in a clear and understandable form to everybody, for example in Tanzania, policies are translated into Kiswahili;
- Policy should emphasise all values of forests so that the communities appreciate forests, and that forest products and services are well defined;
- Policy should not be in contradiction with other existing policies;
- Need to understand the social and cultural realities and norms on the ground in the context of policy; and
- Tenure regimes that promote community forest management is a crucial underlying factor.

In terms of who should be involved in policy formulation, some felt that this was primarily the responsibility of government, while others argued for a much wider civil society involvement. It is clear that the range of government ministries, departments and institutions have a very important role to play. It is equally clear that policy developed in isolation from those who will be affected is not likely to have real ownership. Therefore it is important that the range of stakeholders in such policy development needs to be clearly understood and consulted with, in policy development in this field. At the community level, the range of local institutions, both formal and informal, for example traditional authorities needs to be involved. In many cases NGO's, CBO's and donors, as well as research organisations will be involved in policy debate. Ultimately, though policy for community involvement in forest management has to have ownership at the local level where the policy will be implemented.

It was recognised that responsible policy formulation is not easy and requires time. Too often policy has been centrally or externally determined. It is clear that such participatory policy formulation requires a range of tools to be used including consultations and negotiations, at all levels, and through representation; research into specific areas of attention; use of participatory approaches; and the need for networking and information sharing.

There are a range of key policy research questions related to community involvement in forest management, including:

- What are the needs of communities with respect to community involvement in forest management?
- Why is there so little co-ordination within and between different policy instruments?
- How do other legal arrangements affect current forest practises?
- Why is there a gap between policy and implementation?
- Are existing institutions transformed? If not how can it be done to implement policy on community involvement in forest management?
- What are the roles and responsibilities of the State *vis a vis* local communities in forest management? - How much should each contribute, and what is the nature of the contribution?
- How can policy & legislation be better harmonised?
- How can capacity building and institutional development better change the mind sets of institutions.
- How can forest products be better valued and understood?
- What is the best process by which policy can best be implemented at the local level?