



# REDD+ LESSONS LEARNING NETWORKS AND INFORMATION SHARING PROJECT

**LESSONS LEARNED AND BEST PRACTICE FROM REDD+ PILOT  
PROJECTS**

**LESSONS AND BEST PRACTICE REPORT**

**IUCN –TANZANIA OFFICE  
12/9/2013**

# **LESSONS LEARNED AND BEST PRACTICE FROM REDD+ PILOT PROJECTS**

## **1. Background**

This study is based on research conducted by the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) as part of the project activity in the project “Strengthening REDD+ lessons learning networks and information management” funded by the Royal Norwegian Embassy in 2012-2013. In collaboration with the Tanzania National REDD+ Secretariat, IUCN organized the first field dialogues in the process of stimulating knowledge sharing and facilitating REDD+ pilot projects to work together on REDD+ issues. The four days field dialogue which took place from 4<sup>th</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup> March 2013 brought together representatives from REDD+ pilot projects (Mpingo Conservation and Development Initiative (MCDI), CARE – Zanzibar, Climate Change Impacts Adaptation and Mitigation Program (CCIAM), African Wildlife Foundation (AWF), Tanzania Forest Conservation Group (TFGC)/Mtandao wa Jamii wa Usimamizi wa Misitu Tanzania (MJUMITA)), CCIAM programme, National REDD+ Task Force members and local government stakeholders from respective districts councils and villages (i.e. Village leaders, and members of Forest Scout/patrol, Bee keepers, Environmental group, contact farmers). The dialogue took place at Kilosa (TFGC/MJUMITA project) and Kondoa (AWF- project) sites. In each project two villages were visited i.e. Chabima and Dodoma Isanga for Kilosa district as well as Mnenia and Mapinduzi villages in Kondoa district. The second field dialogue was organised at TATEDO REDD+ pilot project sites in Kahama and Shinyanga Districts as well as JGI Project site in Kigoma District from the 8<sup>th</sup> – 12<sup>th</sup> April, 2013. Villages visited include Manyada in Shinyanga District, Ngulu and Igundwa (Kahama District) and Ilagala in Kigoma. The event was attended by representatives from National REDD Task Force, National REDD Secretariat, Pilot Projects and their partners as well as selected communities.

### **1.1 Objective of the dialogue**

The objective of the dialogue was to capture/ documents lesson learnt and draw recommendations that was aimed to be shared in another meetings of the learning networks as part of information sharing. In addition, to document best practice from each REDD+ pilot project.

### **1.2 Methodology**

The study involved desk research and a field visit to Tanzania REDD+ pilot projects to assess lessons learned and the impact for REDD+ initiatives in Tanzania. Interview were conducted with Civil society leaders and local communities piloting projects in Kilosa-Morogoro region, Kondoa-Dodoma region, shinyanga and Kahama-Shinyanga district in Shinyanga region and Masito-ugalla-in Kigoma region. The research team also uses dialogue mode to extract more information from key informants such as representatives of village natural resources committee (VNRC),

Forest Monitors (FM), other forest community forest. The field event was organised into briefing meetings with REDD+ pilot, site visits to selected villages, focused group discussions with community representatives in selected villages as well as wrap meetings to agree on key REDD+ lessons and recommendations. Themes for discussion of lessons learnt included, governance, benefit sharing mechanism, gender, land tenure and ownership, capacity building, MRV (Monitoring, Reporting and Verification), activities to address drivers of deforestation and forest degradation and the exit strategy of pilot projects.

Purposeful selection of the best practice by the REDD+ pilot project was adopted as methodology to acquire best practices. Each of the represented organizations piloting REDD+, namely JGI - Jane Goodall Institute (Kigoma), TaTEDO – Tanzania Traditional Energy and Development Organization (Shinyanga), AWF - African Wildlife Foundation (Kondoa) and WCS - Wildlife Conservation Society (Mbeya) were requested to analyse a single practice that the project regards as a best practice then afterwards shared with the Learning Network for validation. IUCN prepared criteria for selecting best practice from field action then shared with the REDD+ pilot projects.

## **2 Lessons learned and recommendation**

### **2.2 Governance**

#### ***General Observation***

In most sites, implementing NGOs have successfully facilitated the development of Village Bylaws and CoFMAs to guide the implementation of REDD+ pilot activities that were approved by district councils though with delays in some project sites. The development of bylaws were followed by the provision of training on good governance to members of the Village Natural Resource Council and Village Government. In all forest communities, fines acquired from illegal forest activities as stipulated in bylaws were identified as a source of fund for conservation purposes. On the other hand, communities have been facilitated to form and register community Forest organisation CBOs to carry out the management of forest resources now and after the end of pilot REDD+ activities. A good example of these community organisations is TUMISHI (TaTEDO – Shinyanga), JUWAMA (JGI-Kigoma) and Joint Forest Management Association (AWF-Kollo-hill-Kondoa).

#### ***Lessons learned:***

- The development, approval and enforcement of village bylaws is of significance for the protection of forest resources and safeguarding the community's interests in forest resources. The administering of fines stipulated by bylaws deters illegal forest activities and raises funds that are used for conservation purposes including facilitating community members involved in conservation.
- Local Government support and political will is critical for the timely and effective implementation and sustainability of REDD+ activities by facilitating, approving and supporting the enforcement of Village bylaws and Community Forest Management Agreement (CoFMA) and also mainstreaming REDD+ activities.

- Community Forest Associations are more effective and well positioned for the management and protection of adjacent forest resources if they are well trained for those activities. This is because they are part of the community and are directly or indirectly benefited from forest resources thus they will feel a pinch resulting from the disappearance of forest resources.

### ***Recommendations***

- Increase awareness and enforcement of bylaws is needed to ensure transparency, accountability and commitment of communities towards effective implementation of bylaws. Eventually, this will result into the protection of forest resources and safeguarding the community's interests in forest resources.
- Support from District council and Shehia should be enhanced to facilitate the implementation of REDD+ activities that includes the approval and enforcement of bylaws and CoFMAs and also mainstreaming REDD+ activities in their development plans.
- Community Forest Associations should be respected, supported, and strengthened by the communities and district council and shehia in order to be well positioned for the management and protection of forest resources

## **2.3 Benefit sharing**

### ***General Observation***

While the government has not established REDD+ benefit sharing arrangements, REDD+ Piloting NGO's such as TaTEDO, TFCG/MJUMITA and JGI facilitated the development of benefit sharing models that varied across project sites and is basing on communities criteria to ensure that carbon incentive/trial payments are distributed equitably. The models described those eligible to receive the payments and how much they will get. The models were not fully restricted to the carbon payment criteria such as the issue of leakage and additionality since the trial payments were taken as a grant and not a real carbon payment. In communally owned forests, recipients of trial payments ranged from the village government to every community member (five members from each household including all elders and the handicapped) while in private forests such as Ngitilis, were received by Ngitili owners, village government and local guards unit. Meanwhile, the use of trial payments varied depending on communities preferences and priorities as reflected in the model. In some cases, an agreement was reached in the village meeting as to how the payments would be used. In many sites, communities had higher expectations for trial payments than the amount they received.

Inadequate and poor social service infrastructures (like schools, health centers, housing, and offices) and pending basic household needs in rural areas necessitate communities to prioritize REDD+ expenditure on development project aimed at improving people's wellbeing rather than investing directly in conservation. As a result, only a small proportion goes to conservation in form of allowances to forest monitors and local guards.

### ***Lessons learned***

- The role of communities in developing benefit sharing models promotes transparency and accountability leading to enhanced community support and participation in REDD+ undertakings. In order to ensure that communities continue being motivated through REDD incentives, these incentives should be substantial, equitable as well as be easily accessible and timely disbursed.
- The implementation of benefit sharing schemes in project sites has demonstrated that communities can collectively decide to use REDD+ funds in ways that benefit the wide community including women, children, elders and other vulnerable groups. As such, ensuring that REDD+ funds are equitably distributed, enhances household and community well being.
- Access to carbon benefits stimulates the recognition of the value of forests and sometimes catalyses boundary and ownership conflicts of forest resources. A good example is the boundary conflict emerged in Lindi TFCG/MJUMITA project site after carbon trial payment between a village implementing REDD+ project and a sub village within a village demanded to be recognized as a village so as to capture carbon incentive. Another example is the ownership conflicts of the general land between Kigoma district council officials and Masito-Ugalla communities (in Kigoma-Jane Goodall Institute REDD+ project site) emerged and was catalyzed after a carbon trial payment to the local communities.
- Clear guideline on cost and benefit sharing is vital in the Joint Forest Management (JFM) scheme as it promotes good forest governance. This was vividly in the AWF project site as they have taken effort to demarcate forest boundaries between one village and the other in Kollo-Hill forest as part of the joint forest Management activities. However still there is lack of clear guidelines on cost and benefit sharing of jointly managed forests.

### ***Recommendations***

- Develop rules and guidelines to ensure that the equitable distribution and use of trial payments are used for conservation. Using trial payments for conservation is a key to making communities realize that carbon trial REDD+ payments are not only grants but a reward for their conservation efforts. Therefore, beneficiaries have the ecological obligation to re-direct funds to conservation as a way of appreciating the value of forests and mainstreaming conservation activities at local level.
- The current ownership ambiguities threatening opportunities of the local communities to capture REDD+ benefits and provide opportunities for the government to claim General Land, and create uncertainty and insecurity of tenure for villagers. Many communities could lose control of large tracts of their land if immediate solution i.e. village land use plan is not in place and enforced. In addition, awareness on the need for customary right should be promoted and strengthened.

## **2.4 Gender**

### ***General Observation***

In all REDD+ piloting sites, women are participating in project activities through the village government, VNRCs or activity groups like forest monitoring, tree nursery, conservation farming, bee keeping, and production of energy efficient stoves. For example AWF project site, women formed a group known as 'FURAHA' which is engaged more in the nursery activities since there is a promising market of tree seedlings. AWF NGO buys seedlings from FURAHA group and provides free seedlings to the communities for planting. It was observed that during the carbon trial payments in TFCG/MJUMITA REDD+ project women were considered as custodian of children's funds which add security for family income generated via conservation of forest. The level of women's participation differs from one site to another depending on various factors like the nature of project activities, personal interests, criteria and anticipated benefits. For example some women at the AWF project participating in forest monitoring activities whereas in TaTEDO women are participating in baking activities using efficient cooking stoves and in JGI women participating in bee keeping activities.

### ***Lessons learned***

- Women participation, representation and access to information is important for women's interests and needs to be heard and addressed. REDD+ activities that addresses interests and needs of women it encourage them to engage as they contribute their knowledge, skills and experience in forest to the effectiveness of REDD.
- Providing women with the opportunity and responsibility of making decisions regarding REDD+ issues is important in securing their trust and ownership of REDD+. It also ensuring their interests, needs and rights are safeguarded. Gender equity has promoted women's access to REDD+ trial payments that resulted in the provision of broader social benefits. This is because women tend to contribute and use their resources including funds to meet family needs thus enhancing community well-being.

### ***Recommendation***

- Undertake capacity building to women is vital to provide them with skills and knowledge to participate adequately in REDD+ initiatives and decision making processes. In addition woman should be enabled to make informed decisions, access to knowledge and information on their roles and about REDD+.
- Agroforestry, clean energy and energy efficient technologies should be promoted to meet the needs of women for fuel-wood and pasture while building resilience to climate change.
- Promote and encourage the engagement of women in various roles in forestry and REDD+, including those traditionally viewed as "men's work" like long transect walks, tree measuring and forest patrols. This process will ensure that

women's values, knowledge and skills enrich the REDD+, help other women understand and comply with forest conservation laws and thus encourage them to play greater roles in forest management

## **2.5 Land and carbon tenure and ownership**

### ***General Observation***

NGOs facilitating the acquiring of community's land ownership through access of customary right and village land certificates as well as the development of Village Land Use Plans in order to strengthen the legal bases for community based forest management. For example TaTEDO, TFCG/MJUMITA, JGI and CARE are already facilitating communities to acquire customary rights of land that will make them legal occupants and give them powers to manage their land and secure REDD+ benefits. The development of VLUP is at various stages in different projects; however, most of the project fails to reach stage 5 and 6 which is the last stage in the development of VLUP. Irrespective of the value of VLUP in resolving land use conflicts within a village, still there is a loophole for boundary conflicts during preparation process of VLUP e.g. a case of boundary conflict in Lindi TFCG/MJUMITA and MCDI project sites was reported during field dialogue.

### ***Lessons learned***

- Tenure security is central to enhancing the the success of REDD+ as it provides ownership rights to land and forests and thus enhances access to REDD+ benefits. Land tenure insecurity is being addressed through resolving conflicts, demarcating village and forest boundaries, developing and implementing VLUPs as well as facilitaitng the access to customary rights and village land certificates to strengthen the legal basis for community-based forest management.
- Threats to Village Land in Tanzania" underlines the risk of ambiguous or contradictory laws and the necessity for legal conflict resolution. The country's Land Act and Village Land Act describe General Land quite differently. The Village Land Act does not include "unoccupied or unused village land" in its definition, while the Land Act does. Under the former, then, villagers could lose rights to REDD+ benefits on substantial portions of their communities'lands. Further, recognition of Village Land by government is inadequate, making it harder for villagers to define their claims. For example the land use conflict in Kigoma masito can be associated with this risk of contradictory laws that describe general land.

### ***Recommendations***

- Given that land tenure insecurity is a national problem in scope and addressing this requires better coordination of local and national efforts both public and private by proving customer rights to communities as a means to own, manage and conserve land and forests sustainably.

- The implementation of VLUPs should be promoted and strengthened through sensitization campaigns, conflict resolution and strong enforcement of Village and District/Shehia bylaws and land related national laws.

## **2.6 Capacity building**

### ***General Observation***

REDD+ piloting project NGOs have been undertaking awareness and sensitization campaigns to members of the village government, VNRC, community forest association and in some projects they even included staff from District Councils/Shehias. This was undertaken through training workshops, short courses, site visits, community radios and the dissemination of communication products. For example at the JGI, AWF projects, Forest Monitor groups received formal training i.e. Ballistics and military training, forest management, land use management, wildlife management, conservation education, range land ecology and management, at Pansansi Wildlife Training Institute (PWTI). On the other hand, some communities have been supported by tools such bicycles, boots, axes, opend data kit, gps, uniform, bee hives, efficient cooking stoves that will be used for carrying out conservation work now and after the exit of REDD+ pilot projects. Communication products such as flyers, posters were found in REDD+ piloting sites however, its distribution varies from one village to another.

### ***Lessons learned***

- Capacity building of VNRC and community forest associations has been found to strengthen community awareness and advocacy for forest resources protection and contributes to improved project performance and effective enforcement of bylaws. Communication products, community radios programmes and village art groups i.e. FURAHA singing group of AWF are sustaining awareness raising activities beyond training workshops.
- Towards sustained REDD+ efforts, targeting various strata of the communities including children both in and out of schools is critical as they are the best medium to share and spread conservation messages to the larger society but also are future and long term users and managers of forest resources.

### ***Recommendations***

- Withstanding the fact that Community Forest Associations are well positioned for the management and protection of adjacent forests and that they are part and parcel of implementing REDD+ in their areas, they should be strengthened technically and financially to continue with conservation of forests beyond REDD+.
- A full package of capacity building comprising of knowledge and tools should be widely promoted and implemented to strengthen the capacity of local communities and associations in undertaking REDD+ activities. On the other hand, REDD+ awareness materials should be harmonised to ensure that there is consistency of knowledge disseminated.



- Communication products, community radios programmes and local arts groups are key to sustaining awareness activities beyond training programmes since they are a long term programmes aimed to reach wider audience. In addition, learning events like site exchanges are important in providing hands on experience to communities involved in REDD activities.
- Extension Officers, given their work station, roles and experience with local communities, they are important entry points to trainers of trainers and so should be included capacity building activities (like training workshops, short courses) together with forest CBOs and VNRC.

## **2.7 Activities to address drivers of D&D**

### ***General Observation***

In project sites, NGOs are supporting communities to implement activities to address the drivers of D&D like bee keeping projects, conservation farming/ agroforestry, poultry keeping, energy efficient technologies, clean energy. Some projects had not allocated adequate funds for these activities and so are implementing them at a very small scale. Some of these activities such as agroforestry, beekeeping and conservation farming are being adopted by communities i.e. Kilosa, Kahama and Shinyanga, Masito-Ugalla and Kondoa communities. However, the pace of adopting energy saving stoves is not the same as fore mentioned activities due to various reasons such as relevancy of energy saving stoves to rural settings and culture barrier.

### ***Lessons learned***

- The success of activities to address the drivers of D&D depends on communities commitment in their implementation that is determined by how socially acceptable, cost effective and technically appropriate are these activities. Likewise, the adoption/uptake of these activities relies on the performance. There is an increase in number of community members adopting where there is a good result and communities are dropping out of activity groups that are performing poor.
- The uptake of activities to address the drivers of D&D is a gradual process that requires continuous awareness raising, sensitizations campaigns, site visits, follow ups as well as demonstrated positive results.

### ***Recommendations***

- Significant amounts of funds should be allocated for activities to address the drivers of D&D to ensure that these are adequately addressing the drivers. These activities should not be a fashion but aim at addressing a particular driver and should be guided by a feasibility study and gender strategy. Thus, NGOs, VNRC, community forest associations and District Council/Shehias should devote significant resources to ensure that the communities remain motivated in carrying forward REDD+ activities.

## **2.8 Monitoring, Reporting and Verification (MRV)**

### ***General Observation***

Communities at various levels have been involved in forest management activities including forest inventory, carbon measurement and forest monitoring and reporting in communal, general and private forests land. Most of these activities have been performed by Forest Monitors/ Forest Scouts or Local Guards. These are community groups that have received knowledge and skills and tools through capacity building measures. For example the FM's group at Masito Ugalla in JGI REDD+ pilot project has demonstrated their ability for carbon measurement, reporting and the use of different tools for carbon measurements. However, it has been observed that community's capacity to integrate fully carbon measurement procedures and carbon data analysis is limited thus create a loophole for ineffective participation in MRV process.

### ***Lessons learned***

- Participating in carbon measurement not only provides communities with understanding on how REDD+ payments are generated and what must be done to maintain the payments but also strengthens their position to understand the trade-offs of alternative forest uses and to negotiate with carbon professionals.
- Most of consultancy work on REDD+ in pilot projects has been contracted to foreign experts, as a result, data is managed and owned by those consultants abroad and can't be accessed timely whenever required.

### ***Recommendations***

- To fit with the Tanzanian context, a simplified, harmonized, participatory and user friendly methodology for carbon measurement and monitoring should be developed by local experts. Whereas local experts should be given priority in undertaking consultancies to ensure the ownership of MRV process, consultancy data including those collected by foreigners should be managed by relevant Government authorities to enhance ownership and ensure timely accessibility.
- Communities involvement in carbon measurement (including computing carbon stock) should be strengthened so as to provide them with a better understanding on carbon trade including negotiating with carbon professionals and clients.

## **2.9 Exit / Sustainability**

### ***General Observation***

REDD+ projects are being piloted by NGOs with varying levels of District government participation. In various project sites, staff from these institutions have been seconded to or are working closely with pilot REDD+ projects – a presence that has ensured they are part and parcel of the process of the project activities. Some District Councils are already exploring opportunities for sustaining and replicating REDD+ success in villages without pilot activities e.g. Kondoa District Council

In most project sites, NGOs piloting REDD+ facilitated the establishment of community forest associations, which together with VNRC, will carry on with REDD+ processes after the phasing out of pilot projects. These associations include MJUMITA networks (MJUMITA/TFCG - Kilosa), TUMISHI (TaTEDO – Shinyanga), JUWAMA (JGI-Kigoma) and JFMA (AWF-Kollo Hill-Kondoa). These associations together with the district government in most of the REDD+ pilot projects were identified to be an exit option for REDD+ piloting NGOs.

### ***Lessons learned***

- REDD cannot be implemented or sustained by the state, CSOs and private sector alone, but a collaboration of the three is critical to complementing efforts and mobilizing resources. During full-scale implementation of REDD+, a partnership with the private sector involved in verifying emission reductions and forestry and the forest sector, should be established and operationalized to mobilize resources as part of their corporate social and environmental responsibility if we are to achieve REDD.

### ***Recommendations***

- Withstanding their mandates and roles in the management of natural resources and the fact that REDD+ activities shall be handled back to them, District Councils and Shehias should be part and parcel of REDD+ planning and implementation and should be targeted in capacity building and financing opportunities. This is envisioned to increase the ownership and encourage the mainstreaming and replication of REDD+ activities and allow them to provide required technical backstopping to communities and grassroots forest organizations.

## **3. Best Practices**

### **3.1 Criteria for documenting Best Practices in REDD+Pilot Projects**

Each of the represented organizations piloting REDD+, namely JGI - Jane Goodall Institute (Kigoma), TaTEDO – Tanzania Traditional Energy and Development Organization (Shinyanga), AWF - African Wildlife Foundation (Kondoa) and WCS - Wildlife Conservation Society (Mbeya) shared one Best Practice from field action as requested by the Project. The criteria proposed by the LN project in analysing best practice from the pilot projects were as follows:

- Impact/Effectiveness - The practice has demonstrated impact, applicability and benefits to REDD+ initiative and well-being of communities with reference to outcomes / scientific evidence of the practice.
- Demonstrated Sustainability - The practice shows sustainable benefits and/or is sustainable within communities and between government authorities.
- Efficiency - The practice has demonstrated cost and resource efficiency
- Collaboration/Integration - The practice builds effective partnerships among various organizations, government authorities and private sector and integrates REDD+ with other Forest projects and issues.

- Objectives/Rationale - The practice addresses the objectives of the National REDD+ Strategy, strengthens forest institutions and builds capacity for government and community forest programs.
- Cultural acceptance – The practice is environmentally and socially acceptable and in Tanzania.
- Relevancy – The practice maintains or improves quality, is up to date and is replicable in various project setting.

### 3.2. Best Practice

Best practices from both AWF and WCS centred on activities to address the drivers of D&D. According to AWF, *Sustainable Agriculture* is a best strategy because it has demonstrated increase in crop yields (15 and 25 bags) per acre without increasing acreage leading to reduced deforestation, forest degradation and enhanced soil and water conservation practices. In the same line of activities to address the drivers, WCS singled out *Beekeeping Scheme that is supported by environmental education and good business plan* as a key best practice as it provides alternative source of income that is not directly associated with carbon payments and addresses forest management given the dependence of honey bees on flowers from the forest as a key source of food.

On the other hand, TaTEDO best practice fell on Governance - *Promotion and Use of bylaws for forest resources protection*, whereby it is viewed that the enforcement of bylaws using influential institution (local guards and sub village leaders) made the laws more important to the villagers and effective in protecting and managing their Ngitilis for REDD+. JGI's best practice focused on Benefit Sharing emphasizing on the *Use of performance based reward system*, an approach that institutes elements of competition for better performance on forest management at village and project level thus enhancing the integrity of forest resources.

CARE HIMA Project presented two best practices: a) Establishment & Implementation of benefit sharing mechanism and b) Strengthening community capacity in forest management. The HIMA benefit sharing mechanism demonstrated a great impact in term of changing communities attitudes towards conservation including increased awareness and understanding of REDD and its co-benefits. This has led to proposing to increase the size conservation area from the utilization zone, getting more stricter on conservation - resisting police and investors to use conservation areas; fighting to protect forest against charcoal makers.