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STRUCTURES WITHOUT PROCESSES: AN ANALYSIS OF THE INSTITUTIONAL DEFICIENCIES IN COMMUNITY BASED FOREST RESOURCE MANAGEMENT IN SEKE RESETTLEMENT SCHEME

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Abstract:

Community based natural resource management programmes had been adopted by many countries as a management approach that can bring better results in the sustainable resource management. This management regime represents a shift from centralised approaches which were previously employed. Zimbabwe is among the pioneers of this programme in the sub-Saharan Africa region. A lot has been done in an attempt to bring resource governance to the people. One of the projects that had registered remarkable success is the Communal Areas Management Programme for Indigenous Resources (CAMPFIRE). Many Rural District Councils are engaged in these projects; and nearly every council is running a CAMPFIRE project. However the same cannot be said of other conservation projects in rural and resettlement areas in the country. There is little success registered especially in the conservation of forest resources. Structures for community based natural resource management (CBNRM) are in place but there are defunct, which explains the uninvited resource degradation in rural areas. This paper seeks to delineate the factors underlying the structures' failure in delivery of effective democratisation of resource governance.

Introduction

Zimbabwean government has made great strides towards improving the governance of natural resources. Attempts have been made to implement the provisions of United Nations

Convention on Environment and Development (UNCED) especially by trying to involve local people in the management of resources. Community based natural resource programmes had been introduced throughout the country. The CAMPFIRE programme has been considered the flagship of community based natural resource management and has been developed and referred as a regional example with replications and transplantations into Zambia and South Africa. This success story has persuaded the Zimbabwean government try it in other conservation programmes such as forest conservation and pasture management. The major focus in these areas has been the creation of institutions that can manage resources in the framework of sustainability. Government and other quasi-government organisations have been trying to bring local people in the management of natural resources however with very little success due to a range of reasons. A lot need to be done so that effective community participation is achieved which will in turn bring about sustainable resource management. Beginning with a conceptual framework, this paper will go on to the experience with CBNRM projects in Zimbabwe and then give a detailed case study for Seke, a district in the Mashonaland East Province of the country.

The Research Problem

The government of Zimbabwe had been trying to implement the provisions of Kyoto Protocol's Agenda 21. All government and para-government institution had established structures for community based natural resource management. This was in-line with bringing resource governance as closed to the people as possible. What remains conspicuously missing are their functional processes. This had lead to continued resource degradation. The structures are there but there is no community based natural resource management. This paper tries to analyse the

institutional deficiencies that is hampering effective community based natural resource management.

Aim of the Study

The major aim of the study is to find out where institutions involved in community based forest resources are lacking.

Specific Objectives

- To find out institutions involved in forest resources management in Seke resettlement scheme
- To their community based forest resource management initiatives
- Highlight where these institutions are lacking for effective community based resource management.

A Conceptual Framework

Evolution of Community Based Natural Resource Management (CBNRM)

There has been an increased appreciation of the significance of local institutions in the management of resources. Local people are believed to possess vital knowledge on local environments, which can be very useful in resource management. CBNRM has gained considerable support world over in recent years with governments, multi-lateral development agencies, donors and non-governmental organizations promoting this resource management regime (IUCN, 1998). Natural Resource Management (NRM) through local communities has recently been widely advocated for as a solution to the perennial problem of environmental degradation, a problem bedevilling a number of rural areas worldwide. The notion is based on international debates on the role the indigenous institutions can play in natural resource

management. The issue of CBNRM was a culmination of the Kyoto Protocol's Agenda 21 where there was unanimous agreement on the vital role local communities and civic society can play in the management of natural resources (Haris and Makiko 2002). The conference adopted the formation of local agenda 21 plan at local level. This was thought to enhance sustainable environmental management. CBNRM can be loosely described as a creative process that relies on adoptive learning and action involving people and organizations that share and use a natural resource. It differs from traditional policies in that it works with local men and women, Matowanyika (1992). Due to its 'naturalness', it is therefore applicable in any part of the world, both developed and developing (Berger, 1993). Success stories of CBNRM have been reported in various countries through out the world.

There is amplified appreciation of the weight of CBNRM in creating livelihoods to millions of people especially in rural communities. More than 90% of World's 1.2 billion poor depend on forests resources for their livelihoods. One third of the world's population still depends on wood for fuel, which calls for concerted effort to conserve forest resources for future generations (World Bank, 2001). People derive a lot of benefits from forest resources, which form a very import part of their livelihoods. These benefits can be in the form of building poles, timber and charcoal. They can also venture into environmentally friendly income-generating projects; bee keeping, for example. They can also derive some non-monetary benefits such as ropes, fruits and medicine (Kajembe et.al 2003). CBNRM, while enhancing livelihoods behoves a great interest to environmental planners and policy-makers.

Principal Facets of CBNRM

CBNRM is founded on a number of facets and pillars that are to be explained in the forthcoming paragraphs.

a) Capacity building

According to Lewis (2000) an underlying pre-requisite for CBNRM is to organize communities to administer their natural resource conservation. This self-reliance and technical pro-efficiency requires communities to have skills to transform them into reliable resource management regimes for enterprise development based on the tenets of sustainable development. It calls for a need to establish co-management relationship between government and local communities where communities are at the centre of the management structure and the government coming in to support local initiatives. External assistance should come in to unlock unproductive power relationships so that they begin to bear fruit and local communities, which were previously disempowered, are recognized as resource management authorities with full privileges to benefits. Support rendered to local communities needs to be tenacious, long term and light-touch facilitating because there is need for time to learn from them and develop management strategies that best deliver results.

b) Communities Empowerment

Community empowerment is a precondition in the institution of CBNRM programmes. It can take place at various levels, individual, community, organisational and (even) at national levels. It is however empowerment of people at village level that gives the best results because this is the functional unit and if they are equipped with necessary skills there is a greater likelihood of successful resource management. They should be empowered to make decisions that are binding and have secure rights over their land. This entails rights to returns, allocate and

disposal of resources to the best advantage and to have authority in managing these resources. Local communities should be afforded chance to decide on resource management strategy that best suite them; this will create a sense of ownership of programmes which in turn fosters sustainable resource management.

Community empowerment should be associated with total devolution of responsibilities to local communities. The most appropriate devolution ensures that structures at village level are involved in project formation and designing. This results in formation of projects that are in the context of particular landscape and prevailing ecosystems. People enjoy the resultant face-face interaction; opportunities for cross linkages between communities are fostered. This allows for people/communities sharing ideas and cross-fertilising them for better conservation strategies. It also consents to networking, collaboration and sharing of information.

For empowerment to be successful there is also need for total participation, which should involve the beneficiaries of development initiatives. These are the people that should define development initiatives. This will result in identification of projects that directly have a bearing on their livelihoods. Empowerment is enhanced through training of local people, which should result in behaviour change, and building of their capacities to run development interventions. The major focus of the capacity building programmes should be building knowledge, skills and galvanise people's attitudes towards resource conservation. With these tenets in line, one would appreciate learning from the general experience of the developing world regarding CBNRM.

CBNRM: The Experience of Developing World

CBNRM has yielded positive results in many countries and it has evolved to be resource management regime that is popularly being adopted in several countries. Costa Rica was once

recognized as big sources of timber, firewood and cellulose with demand all over the world. This resulted in over exploitation of forests resources, which resulted in their fast deterioration. Timber forests declined 72% of the land in natural forests in 1956 to 49% in 1983 and 35% in 1994, (FRIS, undated). This dramatic loss of forests recently forced the government to shift its management policies towards Community Based Woodland/Forest Resource Conservation. The involvement of local people in woodland/forest resource conservation improved the efficiency of forest resource management, as the local people were equipped with the relevant skills and powers necessary for CBNRM. In the late 1990s Costa Rica was recognized internationally as a country that protects its forests.

CBNRM: Africa Regional Perspective

In Africa, resource management is not just a matter of preserving nature; it is a matter of survival (Mudimu 2001). A considerable number of rural people have livelihoods that depend largely on natural resources. There has been a great realisation of the need to strike a balance between present livelihood strategies and the needs of future generations. According to Berger (1993) African governments employ a top-down approach in natural resource management, which offers very little opportunity for consultation of local communities. They retain most of the decision-making responsibilities relegating the communities to just ‘implementers’ of programmes.

Therefore there is need to create management regime that can sustainably manage resources and local communities have been seen to the best placed institutions to carry out such an important job than any other distant corporate organization (Antonio 2000). CBNRM programmes are supposed to replace the government-centred management regimes, which have

long been proved to be ineffective to sustainably managing resources. Poor staff formation and inadequate financial resources are the chief constraints that handicapped these management regimes. As such, this has resulted in continued resource degradation in both protected and unprotected areas (Murombedzi 1999). Colonial governments were determined at obliterating traditional institutions responsible for resource management by fashioning their government-centred institutions. Murombedzi (1999) observes that such a set-up created an institutional vacuum in the communal areas as most of these institutions catered for alienated lands. From this, a colonial legacy is seen to be still haunting the continent. The adoption of the CBNRM approach is an important break out from the colonially engineered institutional approach to management of natural resources in rural regions.

In Senegal, CBNRM was practised since October 1994. The primary goal was to improve local people's incomes derived from exploitation of natural resources, in line with demands of sustainable natural resource management. The purpose was to increase local participation in the identification, planning, use and conservation of natural resources. Stakeholders included the government, local communities and non-governmental organisation such as USAID and SECID. The implementing agencies were the Senegalese Ministry of Environment and Protection of Nature, SECID, Virginia Polytechnic and State University. This project was viewed as a cutting edge in natural resource management that served as a model for effective decentralized and participatory natural resource management strategies throughout the region. It emphasised on transfer of needed technologies to the targeted populations especially in rural areas. The project recorded resounding success. Local leaderships were elected to form natural resource management committees. These were charged with the responsibility of developing, and

implementing Community based land use and management plans. These committees were composed of community leaders, farmer representatives, women and non-governmental organizations. There was also a capacity building programme in which Committee members were provided with extensive training in natural resource management, planning, leadership, communication and financial management. This created a favourable environment for CBNRM.

In Southern Africa most of the countries had adopted CBNRM programmes as a method of conserving their natural resources. In Zambia it started in the mid-1970s when government centred strategies were failing to control commercial poaching of wildlife. There was rapid decline in wildlife population in protected areas. For example Black Rhino decreased from 8000 in the early 1970s to less than 100 by mid 1980s and then disappeared soon after (Child and Clayton, 2001). There were little incentives for local communities to resist poaching because they benefited very little from wildlife management. The government retained all revenues from wildlife management projects such as hunting fee, park entrance and Safari earnings. CBNRM programmes brought the communities into the wildlife management through total devolution that gave local communities financial accountability and powers to implement new CBNRM policies to communities and it registered remarkable success. It managed to conserve elephant population threatened by commercial poaching

CBNRM: The Zimbabwean experience

Zimbabwe is one of the regional pioneers of CBNRM through the CAMPFIRE programme. It is currently concentrating on decentralizing the governance of natural resources and empowering local people. This is a fundamental and necessary step towards sustainable

management of natural resources. Prior to this, there were a lot of pieces of legislations that were responsible for management of environment. The main problem of these pieces of legislations was that they relied more on the government and its agencies sidelining the local communities in the management of environment. They also created institutional vacuum especially in the communal areas as they focused more on alienated lands (Murombedzi 1999). This resulted in uncontrolled environmental degradation first in the communal areas and then in the protected areas. These pieces of legislation also created a lot of problem, as there was no harmonization of their operations. The Environmental Management Act was later promulgated in 2003 to try and involve local communities in the management of natural resources and harmonise the seemingly disjointed pieces of legislation that were responsible for environmental management. It created space for local communities to be involved as stakeholders in the management of environment. It wanted to build up from the success story of CAMPFIRE programme where local communities were allowed to manage and profit from forest resources (Mohammed and Katerere, 1998).

According to Chambers (1992), Zimbabwe's CAMPFIRE could be enhanced by primarily by two major factors; increasing net economic benefits derived from natural resources and strengthening proprietorship over these resources. This leads to sustainable natural resource management. The major cause of environmental degradation is that people especially local communities do not have incentives to engage in wildlife management mainly because they are deriving virtually nothing from such ventures. In most cases government and its agencies retain most of the benefits, leaving local people with very little or nothing, takes all the benefits, (Bond 1998).

Rural District Councils (RDCs) according to Rural District Council Act (CAP 29:13) are supposed to establish environmental committees for intensive conservation. Their main mandate is to:

- (i) recommend to council measures for management and protection of environment in council area
- (i) recommend to council ways of implementing environmental measures which the council is authorized or require to under take
- (i) prepare and recommend to council local environmental plans required in terms of EMA
- (i) cooperate with the ministry in carrying out the objects and purpose of environmental Management Act.

They should produce environmental action plans for their areas. Under the Environmental Management Act, all authorities are required to draw Local Environmental Action Plans (LEAP) for the protection of the environment in their areas of jurisdiction. These LEAPs are supposed to be forums where locals participate in environmental management in anticipation of creation of institutions of sustainable resource management.

The Campfire Programs

CBNRM has already yielded positive results in Zimbabwe's communal lands with nearly all rural district councils having established structures for this programme. The Communal Areas Management Programme for Indigenous Resources (CAMPFIRE) has developed to be the flagship CBNRM in Zimbabwe and it is spreading its wings throughout the country. Its major aim is to strengthen the participation of local communities in management of natural resource.

This has been done through various training programmes for the local people. From a government perspective, one could say that despite the tremendous turmoil and negative publicity the country is receiving internationally this programme continues to yield tangible results.

CAMPFIRE membership has now expanded to 49 (of the 55) rural districts, representing almost the entirety of the country. This programme had earned a cumulative total of more than US\$20.1million. However while the figures gave an impressive impression at the national level, the situation at household level is very pathetic. The cut-above hunk of the revenue was chewed at national and sub-national level. About 80% of the revenue is absorbed and only 20% reach the communities involved (Bond 1998). This is the major contributor to the failure of CBNRM programmes in Zimbabwe.

CBNRM: The Way Forward in Generic Terms

There is need for a paradigm shift and adopt the new concepts of participatory approaches to resource governance. This would help in making informed decisions, which benefit the local people and enhance sustainable resource management. This view is now reflected in the World Bank bilateral aid documents, government development plans as well as other programmes of NGOs and Community Based Organizations (CBO).

A successful CBNRM initiative requires support from a variety of stakeholders. The governments, private and civic organization needs to join hands for the success of this programme. None of these entities can take it alone there is need for multi-stakeholder approach and support of each other for the success of this programme. The following case study will provide highlights to the experiences of CBNRM in Zimbabwe.

The Research Methodology

The study utilised a case study approach, which allowed a detailed investigation into the operational deficiencies of community based initiatives. Data was collected mainly using qualitative and quantitative methodologies. The qualitative methodologies used were the in-depth interviews using semi-structured interviews. Observations through transects walks were also carried out as ground truthing exercise. Interviews were done with key-informants that included officers from government institution, quasi-government institution and village heads. Questionnaire was the main quantitative data collection tool that was used and they were administered to villagers in the resettlement scheme. The data collected through the questionnaire was coded and analysed using SPSS and graphs and frequency tables were generated.

The Case Study of Ward 9 Seke Resettlement Scheme

Demographic Characteristics

A composite sample was interviewed which included both males (42%) and females (58%) and were of varying ages which ranged from slightly below 17 years to mid fifties reflecting a productive age group. There is a very high literacy level among farmers as shown by their educational levels. They had attained various educational levels ranging from primary level to tertiary. The majority of farmers had attained secondary (72%) and quite a significant number had gone only as far as primary level (24%). The level literacy among farmers gives a good ground for high rate of adoption of innovation as they can easily acquaint themselves with the new technology or innovation (Illbery 1985). Table 1 shows the educational levels of the farmers

in Seke resettlement scheme. The greatest majority of them have secondary school level of education, which probably reflects that their understanding of farming concepts.

Table 1: Farmers' Educational level

EDUCATIONAL LEVEL	PERCENTAGE (%)
No education	0
Primary Education	24
Secondary Education	72
Tertiary Education	4
Total	100

Source: Survey 2006

Land Ownership in the Ward

Land was allocated to different people, which include the landless people from Seke Communal areas (30%), war veterans (8%), and ex-detainees and the state still holds the vast remainder of land, as illustrated in table 2.

Table 2. Land ownership

Category of Beneficiary	Percentage
The landless	30
Ex-Detainees	3
War Veterans	8
State land	59
Total	100

Source: Survey 2006

The survey established that the farmers do not have any legal document that give them secure tenure apart from offer letters. These letters only indicate that one was offered a piece of land and does not give them any form of legality over the land. The insecurity is further increased by some of the statements issued by government officials to the effect that the beneficiaries are not supposed to construct permanent structures on these allocated pieces of land. The situation could

be improved if they could be offered leases of not less than ten years so that they are registered with the deeds office there by giving them a secure tenure. The government had muted giving farmers 99 year leases but the modalities are not yet clear. They say only for the A2 farmers will be eligible for this facility. The current form of tenure is therefore communal which encourages open access to forest resources, which in turn promotes resource degradation. The majority of land (59%) is state land, which again is a very insecure tenureship. Every body has access to that land and the utilization of resources in that piece of land is uncontrolled hence open to over exploitation and degradation. People from communal areas use that same land for grazing and harvesting of forest resources such as poles and firewood. This can be referred to as some sort of free-ridership in an artificially supposed-to-be-controlled zone.

Level of Environmental Awareness

A wide spectrum of farmers acknowledged the importance forest in their day-to-day lives. They derive various benefits the most important of which is economic. They are harvesting forest resources and selling them for their livelihoods. They also acknowledged that forests are sources of their fuel wood. A considerable number of farmers (24%) value forest for their aesthetic beauty that they give to their environment. The level of environmental awareness among farmers is fairly high, what therefore need to be done is to capitalize on these and come up a management strategy that takes into account the needs of these local farmers.

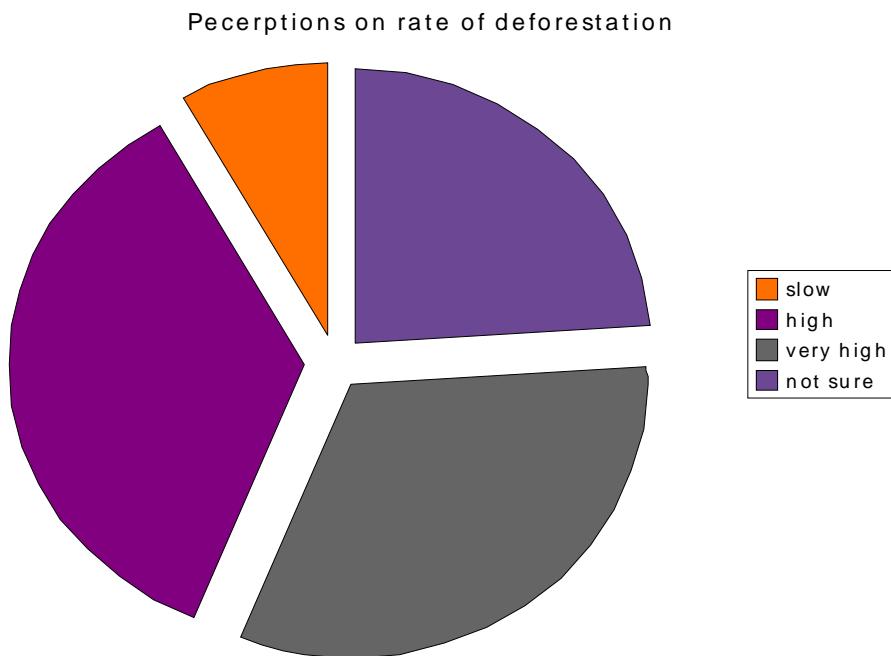
Important Observation

What needs to be crafted is the way of involving farmers in the management strategy especially empowering them to take full responsibility in the conservation of forest resources for continued realisation of these benefits. They need to teach about sustainable utilization of

resources. Most critical is an attempt to ensure sustainable resource utilization is giving the local people full proprietary rights over these resources so that they can be in a position to control access, utilization and benefits from these forest resources. There is also need for capacity building programme that should equip farmers with conflict management skills so that they are in a position to negotiate among competing users.

The farmers also acknowledged that already there are signs of deforestation setting-in in their area. Depending on individual appreciation of environmental issues there were different perceptions on the rate of deforestation in the area. The majority however concurred that the rate of deforestation is high (68%). A significant number of farmers (30%) consented that the rate of deforestation is unsustainably very high. This is in keeping with the field observation made during the transect walks. A lot of tree stumps were seen in the field showing rampant cutting down of trees. There was however no evidence preference of specific species as the cutting was indiscriminately done. A small portion of farmers (8%) mostly those still overwhelmed by the abundance of forest resources still believes that the rate of deforestation is still very slow. This group of farmers is the most ‘dangerous group’, as they still believe that they have not done any harm to the environment despite abundance of field evidence. These people are more likely to continue damaging the environment through indiscriminate cutting down of trees thereby further degrading the forest resources.

Fig 4.3 Classification of rate of deforestation in the area by farmers



Source: Survey 2006
Institutions for Forest Resource Conservation in Ward 9

There are various institutions responsible for environmental management that are at work in the area. These include government, para-government organisations and community institutions. Government institutions include the Ministry of Environment and Tourism with its Environmental Management Agency. This agency is a consolidation of the previously stand alone environmental acts which Natural resources Act (Chapter 20:13), Atmospheric Pollution Act (Chapter 20:03) Hazardous Substances and Articles Act (Chapter 15::05) and the Noxious Weeds Act (Chapter 19:07). The quasi-government institutions include the Rural district Council and the Forestry Commission which all have extension workers in the district. The communities are also partnering in these initiatives as they are also emerging to be an important institution in resource management.

The extension service is not reliable as their visits to people are very erratic. There is no regular interaction between them and the local communities. Most of the farmers (32%) say that they received extension services only once a month, while some (12%) went for a year without seeing extension workers. A sizeable number (28%) of farmers had never received extension services up to now. Table 2 shows the frequency of extension officer to various farmers.

Table 2: Frequency of Visits of Extension Workers to Farmers

Once in Weekly	24
Once in Monthly	32
Once in six month	4
Once in a Yearly	12
Never received	28
Total	100

Source: Survey 2006

The inadequate extension service can be a big hindrance to sustainable resource conservation, as farmers will be starved of the much-needed information on resource conservations.

The same is the situation with the local communities, their meetings are very erratic, as they do not hold regular meeting to discuss environmental issues. Some hold meeting weekly others month and some at least once a year. There is also as sizeable number that had never held a meeting to discuss environmental issues. In most meetings, they had a variety of issues on their agenda and environmental issues never took centre stage but are relegated as peripheral issues, which are usually discussed at the end of meetings thus diluting their importance.

Environmental Management Agency (EMA)

EMA is working to create local environmental action plans whose primary goal is to involve local people and empower them to manage their local environments. It had established extension offices at district level and the extension officers are supposed to visit each ward at

least five times a month. However due to some circumstances they had not been able to make such regular visits. As already highlighted above most people are going for even a year without seeing an extension worker. The ratio of officer to people is very big as one officer has to attend to 5 wards (as in Forestry Commission) and in some cases like in the Environment Management Agency, one officer take care of the whole district. The staff establishment therefore makes it difficult for them to effectively deliver their services.

Officials in EMA are the worst affected as they have a lot to cover but they have very small staff establishment. They need to take care of the duties previously under the various departments but they have no manpower. Their frequency of visits to the people is very low as at some time they can go for weeks without going out. The majority of farmers in Seke resettlement scheme (56%) had not received their services so far. Only 4% had managed to receive their services but their services are very erratic as at some time they can go for months before they are visited by the extension worker. Most of the visits are when there is conflict that draws their attention and in no case do they carry out visits to teach or to establish forestry conservation projects. The table 4 below shows the frequency of EMA Officials to farmers.

Table 4 Frequency of EMA Official to Farmers

<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Percentages</i>
Once a week	0
Once a month	4
Once in Six months	12
Once a year	28
Never received	56

<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Percentages</i>
Total	100

This was also reflected in the field as most of the farmers are not aware of the programmes that are run by EMA. Programmes such as Local Environmental Action Plans (LEAP), which are supposed to be run by local communities are not known by these farmers. Most of the farmers are not in light with the existence of local environmental plans. This is despite the fact that the Environmental Management Act became operational four years ago. This means that the extension services offered by EMA are not enough.

What seems to compound the problem is that there is no cooperation between the Rural District Council and EMA. There are allegations that the Rural District Councils are not aware of the structure and operations of these District Environmental Plans and Local Environmental Plans. This despite the fact that the Environmental Management Act provide for Rural District Councils to appoint environmental committees in consultation with the minister of Environment and Tourism. These committees have several responsibilities as already explained above.

The Forestry Commission (FC)

Forest commission is one of the quasi-government institutions involved in forest conservation whose responsibilities include among other things carrying out environmental awareness campaigns, reforestation programmes, holding workshops with local people on forestation programmes and also distribute reforestation literature. They have on their schedule programmes such as Tobacco Woodland Energy Programme (TWEPP) whose major aim is to plant trees so that the farmers will have wood fuel for curing their tobacco. They also have workshops on their schedules to try and sensitise farmers on environmental issues and encourage

them to conserve forests. However everything remains on paper and nothing is really taking place on the ground. There is nowhere in the district where aforestation programmes are taking place. Farmers have expressed willingness to venture into such projects especially those that promote indigenous trees but they do not have the resources to venture into such projects.

FC officers seem to be out of touch with what is happening on the ground. They still paint a picture that every thing is very well in the district, which is in sharp contrast with what was observed in the research during transect walks. There are already overwhelming signs of indiscriminate cutting down of trees throughout the resettlement scheme. Maybe this explains why they are not initiating corrective programmes or any awareness outreaches. They still maintain that farmers are doing everything possible to conserve the environment, which is contrary to what was observed on the ground as earlier mentioned. They claim that farmers are involved in aforestation project while in actual fact people are opposed to the initiated projects because they emphasise on exotic species rather than indigenous ones.

The Rural District Council (RDC)

The Rural District councils are responsible for management of all rural areas. In this case Seke Rural District Council have due legal jurisdiction over this ward 9. According to Rural District Act (CAP 29:13), Councils are supposed to make by-laws relating to the protection and management of natural resources. The Environmental Management Act (CAP 20:27), section 140 also outlines regulations forming guidelines within which rural district councils shall make environmental by-laws. They are supposed to draw District Environmental Action Plans (DEAP), which should be transplanted to Local Environmental Plans (LEAP). These are supposed to be the operative arm of DEAP. However, as alluded earlier, the local people are not aware of such

plans. What is conspicuously missing is the institutional linkages between the Environmental Management Agency and the Rural district Council because the RDC is not in picture of how they should be implementing these schemes. They do not know whether they are supposed to implement these schemes in partnership with ministry of environment and tourism or they are supposed to be funding them. This confusion has affected the implementation of these programmes at local level, mainly because the RDCs which are supposed to be the conduits for these programmes are not clear of how they should operate. The DEAP and LEAP programmes therefore remain policy frameworks without tangible results on the ground.

The Seke Rural District Council, in terms establishment of structure for community based natural resource management is the best placed institution to implement these programmes. It has structures that cascades to the village level. The structures are arranged in such a way that there is coordination from the district level to the village level. The structure were formed in respond to the Minister' directive of 1984 which advocated for participatory development planning. They are arranged in such a way that at the top, the district level, there is the District Development Committee. This is a committee made of elected councillors who are representatives of different wards. Just below the district development committee is the Ward Development Committee and this is made up of elected members from different villages. This committee is responsible for articulation of development issues in their respective ward. The lowest structure is the Village development Committee. These are development structure established at the village level and they are supposed to be the functional developmental unit because council resolutions are implemented. In all these structure there are committees that deal with environmental issues. What is conspicuously missing is their operation on the ground. There are no projects that are

operational throughout the district, which is contrary to the fine resolution made by the council as reflected in the council minutes. They show that there shall be environmental committees established at all level starting with the villages levels up to the district level. The present situation is that these committees are only present at the district council only and nothing was done at the lower levels.

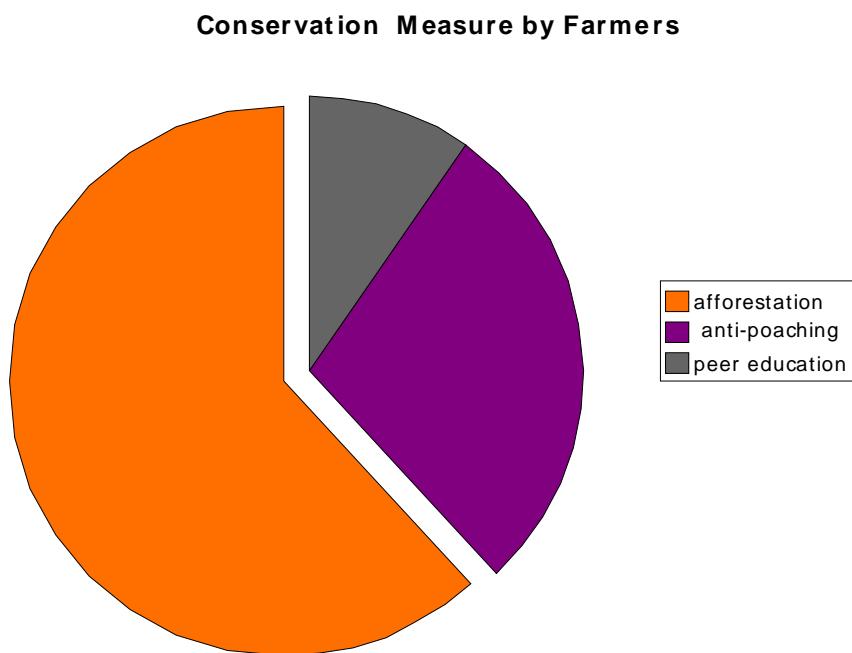
Local Community

Farmers are taking individual efforts to try and conserve the forest resources. They are involved in various activities which range from moral persuasion among peers to avoid rampant cutting down of trees, some are involved in afforestation activities. The afforestation projects not any thing to write home about because they are very small and most of the projects are home based as they are only involved in planting oh fruit trees. Nothing is done to restore the depleting indigenous forests. One attempt that was done to establish a gum plantation was aborted at its infant stage as the trees were destroyed by livestock. There situation was worsened by lack of management committee at the village level, this was supposed to see to it that these trees are protected. They left the management responsibility to everybody and the job was done by nobody and the project did not take off the ground.

Others had formed anti-poaching units to try and avoid poaching of firewood and animals. The anti-poaching units are just voluntary units with no legal mandate from either the villagers or the Rural District Council therefore does not have any legal recourse. The activities are not coordinated and do not have the much needed support from other organizations and institutions. The activities are not yielding any good as it was established that loads and loads of firewood are poached into Harare and Chitungwiza for sale. People from both the communal

areas and resettlement are also involved in poaching animals. Now some animal such as kudu and impala, which were previously abundant are no longer there either because they have migrated to other placed or they have been killed. The situation on the ground presents a rare opportunity for government and its para-organisation to come in and help. The framework is already there, what need to be done is to just come in with your external assistance to try and build them. Figure 2. shows the conservation activities that people are involved in.

Fig 4.4 Conservation measures by individual farmers



Source: survey

Challenges for Effective CBNRM in Ward 9

The farmers are faced with a number of challenges in their attempt to effectively conserve forest resources. The major constrain is that they are caught in a catch 22 situation, where they are supposed to make decision which can have a bearing both on their daily livelihood and resource conservation. The need for conservation is there but they also need a livelihood whose source is the environment. They do not have anywhere to fall back to for their livelihoods because of the widespread poverty hence they will resort to forest resources for firewood, building materials and other uses. If they had other alternative sources, say of firewood this could alleviate pressure on forest for firewood demand. The present situation does not offer any better hence forest degradation shall continue for some time.

The farmers also acknowledged that there are several other problems that are leading to forest degradation. These range from lack of cooperation from fellow farmers on conservation projects to lack knowledge on the importance of conservation. There is also a problem with poachers who come as far as Harare and Chitungwiza to poach firewood and other forest products such as thatching grass and poles.

The institutions that are in the district also have their own share of problems, which is hampering effective forest conservation. Due to the prevailing harsh economic conditions and the continued international isolation of this country, EMA and the Forestry Commission were not able to employ the needed extension workers. In some organizations such as Forestry Commission the donors who used to pump in huge sums of money towards conservation

programmes had since withdrawn their services in respond to demands by international community to isolate Zimbabwe. This had resulted in downsizing of workforce and abandoning of projects. At the moment there are no funds to venture into new project hence the new farmers had not benefited anything from their projects. There is also need for constant review of fines paid by offenders. The hyper inflationary environment currently being experienced in the country needs constant review of fines paid by offender because at some times the fines will be too small to deter farmers from undertaking illegal forest harvesting. Currently the fine is pegged at Z\$250 but one can fetch as high Z\$1 000 000.00 from a truck load of fire wood.

There is also lack of support in capacity building effort from other stakeholders like non-governmental organizations and the private sector. These linkages are very important to sustain these projects. Government alone does not have the capacity to run these projects so there is need to forge linkages with other stakeholder so that the projects are established on sustainable basis. These linkages are now very difficult to establish because of the harsh economic environment

Forest degradation can also be attributed to poaching by urban dwellers that come to Seke Rural areas to poach firewood for sell in the cities of Harare and Chitungwiza. The Rural District Council had been failing to arrest the situation because of poor office establishment. Its manpower could not cover the whole area and some villagers could connive with poachers to sell them their firewood. The Zimbabwe Republic Police had been consulted to help the situation but they had not been able to contain the situation.

Conclusions and Recommendation

The situation in Seke resettlement schemes is not conducive for effective community based natural resource management. The institutions involved in environmental management all

have provision for community based natural resource management but their functional units are not available. They all have space for community involvement in resource governance but these provisions mostly on paper and nothing on the ground. Their structures are not fully decentralised to allow communities participation. Most of the structures (the forest commission and EMA) are at district level and nothing was established at village or ward level, which is the most ideal situation for community participation.

The Rural district Council, Environmental Management Agency and forestry Commission need to establish structures closer to the people they are serving most ideally by establishing offices and sub-offices at ward or even village level. This will make them more accessible to the communities they are supposed to be serving. This will also keep them updated on the on goings in their areas of jurisdiction. Most importantly, bringing these institutions to these lower levels will allow for blending of expertise. The knowledge of the technical persons and that of the local people will be cross-fertilised for the better management of natural resources. Right now technical persons seem to be out of touch with the realities on the ground because what they were saying contradict what was seen in the field mainly on the issue of forest degradation.

There is also need to channel more resources into these institutions involved in resource management so that more workers can be employed to beef up the current establishment which seems to be overwhelmed by the amount of work. The situation where one officer is supposed to man the whole district does not auger well for community based resource governance. Altering the staff establishment will allow their officers to cover a small area, which will allow effective management the environmental issues.

The extension workers should also act policing agents, whose chief responsibility is to ensure that the provisions of environmental laws are enforced. This could be done in a persuasive way most ideally through education and awareness campaigns. The education process should allow space for indigenous environmental knowledge systems to input in natural resource management systems so that we create sustainable institutions. A cross fertilisation of indigenously and technical knowledge will enrich the indigenous knowledge systems and result in good governance of resources. They should also act as agents for capacity building programmes especially through imparting environmental consciousness among farmers, which is a very important asset in environmental conservation. If people are educated about the dangers of degrading environment they raise their awareness on these issues and appreciate conservation measures which will result in improved sustainable resource management.

There is also need for the various institutions involved in environmental management to forge linkages so that their operations compliment each other. This will also create environment where they are going to share information, which will result in cross-fertilisation of ideas and more importantly create opportunities for sustainable resource management. In these linkages, the local communities are very important stakeholder as they are the cardinal point in the turn around of resource management.

The situation in Seke is very interesting in that there is greater opportunity for creation of sustainable resource management, mainly because the local people are all aware of the impending environmental dangers and they are already doing something to address the situation. What remains to be done is taking advantage of these operating structures and come up with

support systems especially building the local peoples' capacity in managing common pool resources. There is need to build their capacity especially in conflict resolution by empowering local institutions so that they can make binding decision on access and utilization of resources. Local leadership such as chiefs and councillors should be empowered through either statutory instruments or legislative instruments to make decisions that determine this access and utilization of these resources.

There is also need to develop rural areas if efforts of community based natural resource management are to bear any fruits. Government programmes such as rural electrification should come handy as a way of reducing pressure on of forest resources for fuel. There is also need put effort to make the agrarian reform a success story so that people do not resort to forest resources for a livelihood. If people are involved in productive farming they will sustain themselves and desist from harvesting forest resources for sell. Also there is need for government to come up with laws that effectively control poaching of forest resources especially by banning trafficking of wood.

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