

Chapter Seven

External donors and community-based management of Mgori Forest, Tanzania: What happens when the donors leave?

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Abstract

Rapid forest degradation and the inability of the government to police the forest prompted Tanzania to attempt community-based forest management. In this chapter I describe initiatives to set up village-based management institutions among several villages around the Mgori forest. I focus on the roles played by villagers, foresters, international donor agencies and expatriate advisors. External funders and advisors have provided crucial resources, including transportation and communication assistance, influence in convincing higher levels of government to lend support and third party facilitation to help foresters gain the trust of villagers. To achieve the sustainability of collaborative management efforts once expatriate donors and advisors withdraw, there will need to be more capacity building for Tanzanian foresters and local villagers, better technical and policy support from all levels of government and a system of funding for local institutions derived from the sharing of benefits from forest and wildlife management.

INTRODUCTION

Collaborative management of forests has been receiving increasing attention in recent years, because governments cannot afford to police forests, and because many foresters have taken up a participatory approach as people living near forests have demanded a larger role in forest management (Joshi 1998). Collaboration can be very complex, however, and there is much to learn about how to encourage collaboration among different groups interested in forests. Many people now writing on the subject mention the key roles of convenors and facilitators in helping different groups manage resources collaboratively (Ramirez 1999; Röling and Jiggins 1998; Grimble *et al.* 1995; Margoluis and Salafsky 1998; Borrini-Feyerabend 1997). Convenors and facilitators can play a crucial role in helping to identify who should be involved in collaboration (Grimble *et al.* 1995; Gilmour and Fisher 1997), in helping to build trust among different groups (Asanga, this volume), in levelling the playing field among groups (Ramirez 1999), and in calling groups together to discuss issues (Grimble *et al.* 1995; Ramirez 1999). Facilitators can also help groups to develop shared definitions of problems, plans for action, standards of evaluation and approaches to problem solving (Ramirez 1999; Röling and Jiggins 1998). The roles of convenors and facilitators can therefore be extremely important where many different groups have strong interests in the forest and where the potential for misunderstanding and conflict is high.

In many cases, however, it seems to be taken for granted that highly skilled, third party convenors and facilitators are available and can be paid for. This may not be true in many parts of the world, including most of Tanzania. Many of the processes needed take 10 to 20 years to achieve some stability (Ingles *et al.* 1998). It is therefore necessary to take a close look at exactly what roles these people play and to make plans for filling those roles if funds are short and external help is not available. In this chapter, I suggest where some of the key problems are and ways to address them.

The Mgori Forest in Tanzania was being severely degraded through improper management when it was under government control. Now, with the country's first ever attempt at collaborative forest management, the area of the forest is increasing and flora and fauna are flourishing. The five villages located on the Mgori Forest perimeter protect and manage parts of the forest as Village Forest Reserves in collaboration with local authorities and international advisors. Through trial and error, all parties to this effort, including myself as a participating forest officer, have gained

experience in organising participatory activities. This project can act as an important baseline and model for other developments in the management of natural resources in Tanzania (Wily 1996).

This collaborative approach, however, is not yet institutionalised in Tanzania, which still lacks sufficient money and people skilled in facilitation and technical matters to carry on the work effectively. There are also many government officials who are not yet fully aware of the advantages of this approach, and external assistance may still be needed to convince them of the benefits. In this chapter, I examine the role of donors, expatriate advisors and government foresters in facilitating the development of community forestry in Mgori. I also discuss some of the difficulties faced by local institutions preparing to facilitate community forestry development when donors and expatriate advisors eventually leave, and how these might be overcome. I examine how communities and foresters can prepare to cover costs, develop the necessary technical and facilitation skills, assure follow-up and pressure government for support of community forestry.

BACKGROUND

The Mgori Forest is about 40 000 ha of *miombo*¹ woodland, lying on the Great Rift Valley escarpment in the northeast corner of Singida District, Tanzania (see Figure 7.1). Annual rainfall ranges from 700–1000 mm and occurs from November to March. Soils are sandy to sandy loam. The forest has valuable tree species such as *Pterocarpus angolensis*, *Azelia quenzensis* and *Dalbergia melanoxylon*. Forty-three per cent of the Mgori Forest has been categorised as forest, although it is only of medium to low density and rarely even reaches 20 m in height. The remainder is thicket, scrub or bush of about 8–10 m in height with *Combretum*, *Terminalia* and *Acacia* species dominant. Wildlife is abundant in Mgori Forest, but suffers from overhunting. Many species of animals are present, including the rare ground pangolin. Native residents are farmers cultivating maize, sorghum, finger millet and beans. Beekeeping is also widely practised. Many farmers keep livestock, but the area is infested with tsetse flies, so the numbers are not large. Five years ago, this forest was becoming severely degraded through clearing for charcoal burning, shifting cultivation, overexploitation of timber tree species and illegal hunting of both small and big game. Today, it is a relatively healthy forest that villagers value highly.

Figure 7.1 Location of Mgori Forest in Singida regions (Tanzania)

The conflict between the government and the villagers began when the government was planning to make the forest a government reserve. Survey and inventory teams preparing a 10 m cut-line (to demarcate the intended government forest reserve) met with rejection in the field, as the villagers feared losing the forest-based goods and services that they had been enjoying for some time. Villagers valued the forest and feared that if the government took it, there would be tighter rules and conditions on their use of the forest. The villagers complained through their leaders—the councillors to the Chairman of the Council and the District Commissioner—about losing their land. Legally, only one-third of the forest fell within the areas recognised as their respective villages. Two-thirds was considered open public land, but still the local people felt it belonged to them. The villagers struggled to get from the forest whatsoever was available for use before the government could take it. Thus, the forest was heavily degraded. It was obvious that the process of gazetting this

forest could not work if the two parties could not come to compromise. The government halted the process pending further investigation of how the problem could be solved.

Two field technical advisors² from an external agency were called in to try to find a solution, assisted by the Regional District and Divisional Forest Officer. The consultants found that the government was unable to manage the forest together with other scattered forest reserves, as it did not have enough staff, funds and other inputs. The only solution was to involve the communities in forest management. The critical questions remained of who could do what, and how?

This chapter focuses on three stakeholder groups and their roles in the process of developing the community management programme: villagers, government officials (local and central) and expatriate donors and advisors. The villagers live near the forest and use it for many things, including daily necessities. The government wants to manage the forest for protection. The donor, working through the consulting agency it hired, hopes to facilitate negotiation between various stakeholders, and provides technical and financial support for sustainable development. I show below how these stakeholders were brought together and then worked together with the assistance of convenors. I show how these third parties have also played a critical role in negotiations. I then ask how Tanzanian institutions can begin to take on the convening role to accomplish these multiple functions.

THE PROCESS OF BRINGING STAKEHOLDERS TOGETHER

At Mgori Forest, the donors and their expatriate advisors helped significantly in bringing the three main stakeholders on how to reduce or manage conflict among villagers, and between villagers and the government. The first task was to visit all the five villages that shared the boundaries with the intended government forest reserve, namely Pohama, Ngimu, Unyampana, Mughunga and Nduamghanga (see Figure 7.1). The aim was to discuss whether they were willing and able to take on the responsibility of looking after the forest. All the villages agreed. The process was good for the villagers as it was the first time they had ever been consulted. All the meetings were well attended by the required stakeholders—villagers, District/Divisional Forest Officer and the expert technical advisor.

Only the expatriate advisors could do this work at first because the villagers did not trust the government foresters. The history of tension between villagers and government, and the poor management of the forest prior to the start of the project, meant that an outside third party—in this case, the expatriate advisors—was needed. The process was also costly. Several meetings with each village were required for villagers to understand the concept. This involved very high travel and communication expenses. The donor covered all these costs. The presence of the Divisional Forest Officer was also important as he was the only forester living close to the community and was able to show that the government was serious about the consultation underway. He also acted as a watchdog when things went wrong from the villagers' side.

ESTABLISHING SHARED DECISION MAKING

Once the donors, advisors and foresters had established some trust with the villagers, a number of other processes were undertaken to help the stakeholders work together to manage the Mgori Forest. Each process addressed specific problems of community forest management and each demanded inputs of time, skills or financial support from donors, expatriate advisors and government foresters. These processes are discussed briefly below.

Formation of Village Forest Committees

The villagers formed Village Forest Committees (VFCs) of about six to twelve members, including an elder who knows the forest very well and a woman to take on gender issues. It was important to have a committee that could be responsible for this new form of forest management as villagers had never been consulted on forestry matters before, and this degree of protection or technical forestry had not previously been undertaken under their traditional authority. The donor supported the committees by providing funding for nearly all their activities. Advisors and the Divisional Forest Officers together helped to design the committees, as well as to specify the roles of committee members and how they should report to the village government. Initially, the advisors and the foresters helped to run the meetings, though the villagers now run them on their own.

Demarcation of the village forest reserves

The villagers, after agreeing with their neighbours, marked the boundaries between their village forest reserves using paint on trees and rocks (Figure 7.2). This was important because each village could be responsible for a known, specific area and could be accountable for that area to the Divisional Forest Officer. Later the government surveyors came back and marked boundaries with permanent beacons. These beacons give the villagers a sense of secure ownership and the legal and political basis to protect something that is known as ‘our village forest’. The villagers respect these border marks and there are no conflicts over them. Donors provided the funds to cover costs of beacon installation (including transport, night allowances, map drawing and applying for title deeds), which were very high. Expatriate advisors and the Divisional Forest Officer provided guidance on all technical issues on village entitlements, and went to the District Land Office to speed up map preparation.

Figure 7.2 Boundary marker between two villages - Nduamughanga and Mughunga



Preparation of Village Forest Management Plans and bylaws

The donor and the Forest Department staff sat together with the villagers and prepared the Village Forest Management Plans (VFMPs) that will guide them in their daily work in managing their forest reserves. At first, the emphasis of the VFMPs was on protection, as villagers already had abundant resources around their homesteads. However, the VFMP also indicates that villagers can harvest some products from reserves under the guidance of technical officers. The management plans describe the village forest reserve location and boundaries with neighbouring villages. They also describe the way villagers have zoned their forest, e.g., for the collection of dry wood, fruits, poles or timber, or for hanging beehives. The VFMP also states where to report an offender who has been caught, delineates the fines to be imposed and outlines cooperation with the District Council and other villages. In addition, the VFMP states the reason for protecting the forest. Again, donors supported all costs (for five two-day meetings with villagers, documentation and translation, and distribution of the plans). The advisors and the government forester helped define what should be in the management plan to assure protection and sustainability. These advisors also helped present the plan to the District Council, assuring speedy approval. Now, villagers can draw up plans on their own, in consultation with the forester.

Opening bank accounts

All five villages have opened Village Forest Banking Accounts to store a percentage of the fines imposed on offenders, after a part has been given to the patrolmen. It was important to establish the accounts to ensure transparency, so that the villagers would not suspect that the committee members were pocketing the money for their own use. Here, the donor did not support the villagers because they had already accumulated some money from the fines. Nor did the expatriate advisors play a significant role. Instead, the Divisional Forest Officer helped to guide them to the Treasury (the local authority) for endorsement, then later to the bank. As a government officer, he also signed forms and cards to certify that he knew the villagers and the programme they were working with. The drawing and depositing of money is done by the villagers themselves. No village has withdrawn money yet, because the amounts saved are still small, ranging from US\$50 to US\$150. Since the number of offences has declined over time, these sums are not growing either. For now at least, the funds cannot support the Mgori Forest management activities on their own.

Formation of a Mgori Forest Coordinating Committee

The villagers themselves formed the Mgori Forest Coordinating Committee to coordinate the activities of the five villages in matters relating to forestry. The Committee consists of members from each village, has about 25 members in total and is chaired by a local councillor. A representative from the District Council also attends. Usually the Committee meets once every three months (Figure 7.3). Many problems are resolved at this meeting, such as dealing with forest dwellers or corrupt Village Forest Committees. The Committee also organises field visits to collect the information necessary to make joint decisions on managing the Mgori Forest. The Divisional Forest Officer calls for the meetings and the advisors to date have played no significant role. The donor has, however, provided funds for the meetings and the technical advisors receive the reports of progress and problems regarding Mgori Forest management. Donor funds are especially important for providing transport, as many members are old and cannot walk 40 km or more back to their respective villages. Donors also provide stationery for keeping minutes and a small per diem for meal allowances. The proceedings from the meeting are sent to the District Council for action and information.

Figure 7.3 Mgori Forest coordinating committee meeting, including project technical advisor



Monitoring the condition of the forest

Monitoring is essential for planning sustainable management (Margoluis and Salafsky 1998) and helps villagers to know how much can be harvested of any forest product without causing damage to the forest. Monitoring can, however, be costly and technically complicated. Support for villagers near the Mgori forest to monitor the forest was provided by donors, expatriate advisors and government foresters: the donor helped to fund much of the monitoring that has taken place so far, including data processing and analysis. The advisors helped to design the monitoring plan and gave guidance on interpreting and using the results for the management of the Mgori Forest and its villages. For example, advisors helped develop plans for a felling coup in two villages to try to generate income to support other management activities. The Divisional Forest Officer provided technical support in the field to implement the monitoring programme. Villagers would have had difficulty in undertaking these tasks without the help of donors and government foresters.

Three forms of monitoring have been undertaken in Mgori Forest: sample plots, patrols and fire management.

Sample plots

In February 1996, the central government and the donor sent an inventory team to set up 17 visible sample plots, and, for each one of these, four blind sampling locations for monitoring changes in, for example, growth or damage. This type of monitoring is highly technical and experienced technicians were required. The government facilitated the operation by sending the inventory team, while the donor covered the costs. Villagers helped nevertheless to number trees and install metal reference tags. They also assisted the inventory group in giving traditional names and uses for unidentified species, so that they could easily be found in the checklist. For the future, there are plans to involve the villagers more fully in monitoring operations that they are capable of carrying out. Villagers and foresters participated in the analysis of the findings together. After data processing at the headquarters, the information is sent to the District and to the Divisional Forester. The forester provides a simple translation and sends it to the villagers to inform them of what has been done. Some seem to understand, some do not, though those who understand share the information with their fellow villagers. From the first round of analysis of data from the plots, the villagers concluded that

their efforts at patrolling these areas were working, as only one tree was cut over the three-year monitoring period.

Patrols

Villagers appointed patrolmen to patrol the village forest reserves (Figure 7.4). At first, 166 were appointed, but some were dropped along the way due to their inefficiency. Now there are about 100 patrolmen. Some villages also felt that there was no need to have so many, as the number of offences decreased sharply once daily patrols began. Due to the forest's extent, the villagers adopted at their Village Forest Committee meetings a process of concentrating on sensitive areas with timber, water for wildlife and beehives. The decision to change the patrolling regime came after the patrolmen experienced difficulties in covering large areas of their respective Village Forest Reserve—some of which were not attractive to offenders. The Committee secretaries organised the patrols. Advisors have helped devise forms for recording information on wildlife and forest resources. To encourage the patrolmen to do their work, they are exempted from village development activities such as road construction and school

Figure 7.4 Local patrolmen with their traditional weapons



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building and other contributions to the village. The donor has provided money for boots, caps, raincoats and antsnake bite kits for the patrols, but the District has blocked the distribution of these provisions for reasons that are not clear. The patrolmen also get support for upkeep from the fines obtained, though this source has decreased significantly as offenders are no longer going to the forest as before. Now villages are looking for other sources of support for the patrolmen. Villagers are considering a small tax on forest produce obtained in the Mgori Forest. For now, they have not given up patrolling, as most of them are beekeepers and need to inspect their beehives for theft or honey anyway.

Fire management

Fires damage the forest every dry season. Most of these fires start outside the Mgori Forest in the neighbouring Hanang and Kondoa districts, which do not practice this type of collaborative forest management. After several discussions at the Village Forest Committee and Mgori Forest Coordinating Committee levels, the latter decided to initiate early burning before the grasses become dry. This decision was supported by the expatriate advisors who consulted other experts in Zimbabwe and Zambia concerning fire prevention in miombo woodlands. Fire setting is planned at Village Forest Committee meetings and the patrolmen and some Committee members actually set the fires. Fires are set from April to June. After that anyone setting a fire is an offender and is liable for fines. This system has worked and the forest is no longer being damaged by fire (see Box 7.1).

In sum, villagers can be trained to monitor some aspects of forest management, such as beekeeping. Such training has not yet been organised. For other aspects of management, such as fire control, villagers may need assistance from technical advisers such as government foresters. How these will be arranged when the donor and expatriate advisors leave is not yet clear.

PROBLEM SOLVING FOR INSTITUTIONS - LEARNING BY EXPERIENCE

Foresters, expatriate advisors and donors have played crucial roles in facilitating problem solving negotiations among villagers themselves, and between villagers and government.

Box 7.1 Improving fire management in Mgori Forest

In 1995, the Mgori Forest Coordinating Committee brought members of the individual Village Forest Committees together and all agreed that fire was a serious problem. Uncontrolled fires had damaged forests and beehives and scared wildlife, and had even spread to crops in some years. It was agreed that burning would be banned to avoid these problems. In the first year of the ban, we managed to put fire under control within the Mgori Forest. Grasses grew tall and biomass accumulated. During 1996, however, fires from the neighbouring districts spread to the Mgori Forest and burnt all of it, including big trees.

The individual VFCs all submitted reports that fire had damaged their forest. First, the MFCC thought of going to neighbours to ask them to stop their burning. But that would not work because fire could be started by anybody, such as traditional hunters, who are difficult to trace. The villagers also considered digging a fire line. That was rejected because it was too tough a job. In the miombo, such a line would have to be very wide and demand lots of hard work, and hunters and others could still jump the line and start fires inside the line and would be difficult to trace. Therefore, they decided that fires in miombo cannot be stopped; they can only be planned for. The VFC members discussed the tradition of setting small fires for harvesting beehives that reduced the amount of fuel in the forest and kept fires small.

Villagers were setting their small fires without organisation. With the MFCC, the villagers could coordinate their small fires and make sure they did not get out of control. The MFCC therefore decided that fires should be started two months before the grasses start to dry, in April and May. Fires should be set by the VFCs and their patrolmen. Anybody else starting fires in April and May would be liable for punishment. Anyone, even VFC patrolmen, starting fires after May would be liable for fines from the VFC.

Initial attempts started small. The next year, 1997, each VFC burned along its boundary within the forest, to make sure to control fires within Mgori. The two villages bordering other districts also burned on the border with those districts to keep fire from outside from spreading to Mgori. They also burned small patches of grasses within VFC areas to reduce the risk of fire. This procedure is followed the same way each year and has worked thus far.

Monitoring by patrolmen and in the sample plots indicated that small trees were reviving after the bad burn of 1996. Patrolmen also found wildlife concentrated in areas with grasses sprouting from early burns. They also found that elephants had more grass from early burning, so they did not disturb crops so much.

Box 7.1 *Continued*

To be sure, the MFCC asked Dr. Liz Wily, one of the technical advisors, to check with her colleagues about the value of early, controlled burning. Liz suggested that only VFC and patrolmen set the fires to keep it properly managed. At an MFCC meeting, the VFC representatives themselves suggested that all those inspecting or harvesting beehives should report to the secretary of the VFC for a permit (even those who come from other villages), and second, should carry a matchbox rather than other sources of fire. They also should make sure that after the work is done, all fires are extinguished. Dr. Wily's suggestions thus reinforced decisions already reached by the MFCC.

Donors have provided the funds needed to support such negotiations, and advisors have offered skills and experience in dealing with institutional problems. Government foresters, expatriate advisors and donors have acted as watchdogs over villagers and other government officials, quickly stepping in to address inefficiency or corruption in any of the forest management institutions. Donors and expatriate advisors, in particular, often have used access to higher-level government officials to solve problems more quickly than other groups could. In contrast, the government forester was critical for follow-up, as donors and their advisors did not stay in the villages. Descriptions of some of the specific problems addressed follow.

Corruption and inefficiency

There were several incidences of corruption and inefficiency that the villagers needed to resolve. In one case, a local councillor was allowing shifting cultivators from neighbouring districts to operate illegally in the reserve. The Mgori Forest Coordinating Committee appointed a team to inspect these issues in the field after receiving reports from different individuals that cultivation was underway. The team included the Divisional Forest Officer, District Forest Officer, District Game Officer and a District Council representative. They found that the offenders included a powerful man that the VFC was afraid to report on. Through the Coordinating Committee, supported by the Regional Commissioner, the VFC was dissolved and a new one elected by the villagers. The new VFC is working well. The field visit and the meetings were funded by the donor, but organised by the forester.

There were also cases of inefficiency on the part of VFC members in two villages. Several meetings were called by the Coordinating Committee to warn them, but there was no change. Finally, the Divisional Forest Officer went, together with the expatriate advisors, to the District Executive Director who, through another official, dismissed these members. Some of these cases can be tackled by villagers themselves through monthly VFC meetings, Coordinating Committee meetings and other informal discussions. Some of the crucial issues, however, need external assistance. Without donor pressure, for example, it would have been difficult to change the VFC.

Finance

Finance has not yet been much of a problem, due in part to the fact that the Divisional Forest Officer helped the VFC set up the Village Forest Banking Accounts and regularly inspects the books for those accounts. The role of the officer assured transparency in all financial matters. The VFC also is required to report accounts to the Village Government and to the Village Assembly. The fact that the officer is considered an honest third party, and one who is in turn watched by the donor, gives villagers confidence that the books are in order and that the Committee members are working for everyone and not for their own benefit.

Slowness of the District Council in passing the management plans and bylaws

Each management plan was developed by the villagers with help from the donors, expatriate advisors and foresters. With the help of the donors and advisors, the first plan was approved quickly. After working under the first plan for 18 months, the villagers found they needed a change, based on discussions in their regular VFC meetings. Fines for violations under the first plan were not high enough to cover the damage or to punish leaders who abused their position by committing offences. The revised plans have been prepared and sent to the District, but have not been approved. The villagers are now making rules without legal backing and run the risk of outsiders violating their plans without fear of punishment. Foresters, donors and advisors need to continue to put pressure on the District to approve the new plan.

Institutional support from the Department of Forestry

Initially, there was very little support for the Mgori Forest initiative from the then Director of Forestry, who railed against what he called ‘wrong, new-fangled foreign notions’ and who wanted to keep the forest for foresters (Msitu Newsletter, December, 1995). In addition, the laws and policies governing forestry dated from the colonial era in the 1950s, and though they did not expressly forbid people’s participation, they also did not expressly allow it. The Project was thus started without any workable official policy. Shortly thereafter, a new Director was appointed who quickly came to the field. This was a key moment in the Project, as the Director was able to see directly the state of the forest and observe the management activities of the villagers. He gave the villagers the go-ahead for their management activities. The new Director also called a meeting of all Regional Forest Officers to discuss with them a need to change the forest policy. At the time of writing, the first draft of a new forest policy has been prepared and is under review, and is expected to receive parliamentary approval. The Mgori Forest initiative would not have gone to the extent it has without a Director who was willing to meet with and listen to villagers, and make decisions according to what he learned in the field.

Game policy

Both Regional and District Game Officers were also very supportive of the Mgori initiative, after a meeting with donors, advisors and the Division Forest Officer. The reserve was initially an area for public hunting, but the officers stopped issuing permits for hunting in this area to support the Mgori initiative. The project is now working with the Game Officers to develop a game policy that will benefit villagers through ecotourism. Currently, policies benefit central government and leave local people empty-handed. The expatriate advisors helped assure the cooperation of the Game Officers by visiting with them, explaining the programme and asking for their support. They were probably more successful than the Divisional Forest Officer would have been acting alone. Donors, advisors and district officers are also needed to help the villagers influence government policy in Dar Es Salaam, encourage the Game Department to provide more assistance with more scientific monitoring of wildlife and help advertise locally and internationally the Mgori Forest as a place for ecotourism.

Boundary issues

Initially, many boundary conflicts occurred among the five villages. These were resolved in meetings among VFCs, facilitated by donors, advisors and the Divisional Forest Officer. Now, however, there are new boundary conflicts with neighbouring districts, Hanang and Kondoa. No cut lines mark the Mgori boundaries with these two districts, thus there is confusion about where the boundaries lie. These boundaries are the responsibility of the respective District Commissioners, yet two District Commissioners have come and gone without resolving the problem. The matter has since been taken to the Regional Commissioner and there have already been exchange visits for fact finding between the districts by the District Commissioners and surveyors.

Traditional hunters

The donor facilitated transport for Mgori Forest villagers to travel to neighbouring districts to talk with the elders of hunting peoples. The Divisional Forest Officer then organised a meeting with the elders and helped to convince them to stop traditional hunters from coming to the Mgori Forest. The hunters listened as the forest was now under the villagers' management. The donors and expatriate advisors had no significant role in this activity.

To resolve the institutional issues above, it was necessary to involve villagers in discussions with other stakeholders, to have transparent processes so that villagers could build confidence in their advisors and their plans, and to have access to and support from higher levels of government. Funding was essential to support these activities. Foresters played an important role in keeping an eye on how the plans were working in practice.

The forester should be able to continue his work after the donor and advisors leave, now that he has experience. The villagers have also gained experience in forest management, and can solve many technical and institutional problems themselves. The question remains, how will the remaining roles of the donors and expatriate advisors be filled? Who will guide the process, who will solve the more complex technical and institutional problems with which villagers are unfamiliar, and who will be able to pressure government to support the Mgori Forest programme with new services and

policies? How will management tasks be funded? At this point, the forester and the villagers are not ready to take on these tasks.

CONCLUSIONS: WHAT IS NEEDED BEFORE THE DONOR AND EXPATRIATE ADVISORS LEAVE

This chapter has shown that the role of facilitating collaborative forest management in the Mgori Forest is complex, and shared by several institutions. Facilitation can be costly and time-consuming. It requires certain skills and needs the support of government officials. I now examine what needs to happen for Tanzanians to pick up the facilitation tasks previously carried out by donors and expatriate advisors, and how they can deal with the issues of costs, skills and obtaining government support for collaborative forest management on their own. On the basis of my own involvement in the project and analysis of stakeholders' roles, it is my conclusion that stakeholders in the Mgori Forest can take five steps to assume responsibility for conducting the facilitation role.

First, there should be capacity building for forestry staff so that they can take up the work of involving the communities in managing their resources once the donors and advisors leave. Already the advisor working for Mgori, Liz Wily, has initiated a forum, consisting of a team of experienced foresters who have been working with the communities in the management of the forests (see Box 7.2). Funds are, however, provided by Orgut Consulting AB. The Director of Forestry is aware of the initiative and has given it the go-ahead. A change in the syllabus at various forestry teaching institutions to include a participatory approach is also needed. This could be started now while the donors and the advisors are present so that they may assist and advise the Forestry Department.

Second, local authorities should give support to villagers and their bylaws. The local authorities must encourage villagers in their tiresome work by playing their part in approving management plans and bylaws. These important documents are used as a compass to guide proper management and implementation of the work and as the legal basis for enforcement.

Third, government support should be secured for local ownership of land. The new Land Law Act of 1998 clearly states that villages will manage all the land belonging to

Box 7.2 Establishing a forum for community-based forest management in Tanzania

By the year 2000, the government expects about 9000 Village Forest Reserves to be operational. The new forest policy and the new land act of 1998 give villagers the right to identify and manage natural resources for village development (Wily 1999). There is a need for experienced foresters to assist with this kind of community-based management.

To date, there has been little effort to train Tanzanian foresters to take up many of the facilitation roles needed to make Village Forest Reserves work. The forestry institutes train in traditional forestry: the syllabus takes no account of the new demands on foresters made by community-based forest management. Donors occasionally train foresters. For example, this author benefited from a donor-sponsored visit to study community-based forestry in Chiang Mai, Thailand. However, this is an expensive way to provide training and is unlikely to be available to a large number of foresters. How then can a large number of foresters learn about community-based management, and refresh that learning on a regular basis, so that they can work more effectively in the field?

In June of 1999, the first meeting of the Forum for Community-based Forest Management in Tanzania was held in Arusha. With the help of the Director of Forestry, Orgut Consulting and Dr. Liz Wily, the Forum brought together 13 foresters involved in implementing community-based management across the country. This meeting is meant to be the first of an ongoing series of meetings, with the next one scheduled for September. The purpose of the Forum is to create a platform on which experienced foresters can discuss problems and successes in implementing community-based management. Foresters learn how to play a facilitation role by sharing experiences with one another. They document their experiences in a book of guidelines that outlines techniques and strategies for dealing with problems faced in community-based management. This book includes a step-by-step outline of how to get started. For example, it presents discussions on how to build trust with villagers, how to set up Village Forest Committees, how to organise field visits with villagers to determine boundaries, how to prepare Village Forest Management Plans with villagers, and how to deal with conflicts among villagers and government officials, among other things. The guidelines are open-ended, however, and will be revised as new problems, and new approaches to solving them, arise. The Forum also is an opportunity for foresters to influence policy. The Forum has been approved by the Director of Forestry and he is planning to attend the regular Forum meetings. Foresters can influence the Director by exposing him to field

Box 7.2 *Continued*

experiences. The Forum is more effective than individual reports from the field because it involves face to face communication and the opportunity to interact with many foresters at once. The Forum can also be more efficient because it is possible to get immediate responses to questions or requests. The Forum is currently in an introductory phase. One donor has recognised its importance and has agreed to finance the Forum. But for how long? And what will happen once the donor leaves? At that time, the Director of Forestry will have to find another way to support the Forum. As the Forum is an efficient way to train foresters in practical field work, the government should consider supporting the Forum itself. The Forum already has addressed how foresters can take up two roles that have been filled thus far by expatriate advisors. First, the Forum helps Tanzanian foresters develop skills and share experiences that help villagers set up committees, develop monitoring plans and pursue other activities necessary for collaborative forest management. Second, because the Forum is a recognisable entity, foresters will have more power to implement community-based management without interference from politicians and traditional foresters. The Forum, therefore, offers a concrete opportunity for the government and its foresters to make a positive impact on the growth of community-based forest management around the country, independent of external assistance.

them, which includes forests, in a sustainable way. This Act now gives the villagers a chance to plan and develop their resources without fear that they will be taken by government, provided they fulfil the conditions of the Act, particularly the surveying of village lands. So villagers can now confidently invest their time and energy in developing their land.

Fourth, there is a need for more in-country technical support, especially for monitoring. The Mgori Forest case is meant to be a model of sustainable utilisation of forest resources, and this involves some technically sophisticated monitoring. Proper monitoring of forests and wildlife could also help the villagers benefit financially, by indicating how much of a valuable resource can be harvested. This could lead the villagers to greater self-reliance in their management, so that they would not depend on donor funding. Now is a good time to use the presence of the donor and expatriate advisors to train local villagers to carry on the monitoring so that they can manage and facilitate more sophisticated monitoring by forestry and game officials.

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Fifth, there is a need for a system that ensures that the benefits of forestry and wildlife management from the Mgori Forest go to the villagers and the local authorities. This would again lead to greater self-reliance on the part of villagers and the local authorities managing Mgori. If the donors leave before such a system is in place, the Mgori programme will not be able to continue for lack of funds.

If the stakeholders can make these changes before the donors and advisors leave, the outlook for collaborative forest management at Mgori Forest will be bright. Villagers would be able to take up more of the tasks of funding their own management activities. Together with local foresters, they would be able to solve more of the complex technical and institutional problems faced at Mgori. They would have a stronger legal basis for pressuring the government to provide them with the services and policies they need to continue. The roles that outside facilitators have played will be replaced by new forms of collaboration. This evolution in the role of facilitation is likely to occur elsewhere where new initiatives occur. The ability of the facilitation functions to be taken on by others, however, and the flexibility of the collaborators to do this will be the keys to assuring the long-term sustainability of these initiatives.

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ENDNOTES

¹ *Miombo* is a colloquial term used to describe dry forests south of the equator in Africa, usually dominated by the genera *Brachystegia*, *Julbernardia* or *Isobertia*. The importance of *miombo* for forest product use and wildlife is increasingly recognized. Refer to Campbell (1996).

² Dr. Liz Wily, an international development consultant based in Nairobi, Kenya, and Mr. Håkan Sjöholm, a natural forest management advisor based in Dar Es Salaam, Tanzania, have acted from the outset as the main facilitators of these developments on behalf of Orgut Consulting AB. This Swedish-based consulting group has been providing technical assistance to natural resources and land management programs in Tanzania on behalf of the Swedish International Development Agency (SIDA) and in conjunction with the Tanzanian Government.

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