

Environmental Governance: a Crucial Linkage between Poverty Reduction, Natural Resource Use, and Institutional Reforms

Natural resources are the source of livelihoods for the majority of people in Tanzania. The ways in which resources are used is a governance issue determined by the functioning of laws and policies. In what ways can we improve environmental governance to lead to poverty reduction?

Tanzania, home to over 400 mammal and 1,000 bird species and a wide range of insects, reptiles and fish is one of the most biologically rich habitats in the world. It is also home to a population that depends on these natural resources for their livelihoods; and for building materials, fuel, water, food and medicine.

But environmental degradation, poverty and inadequate institutional and legal frameworks have threatened to destroy the very resources Tanzanians depend on for survival.

The Environment is Crucial

Biodiversity to rural Tanzanians is the foundation of human sustenance and prosperity.

- 75% of the population lives in rural areas.
- For 63% of adults (76% in rural areas) in 2002, environmental use was the main economic activity for livelihoods – agriculture, pastoralism, fisheries, forests, mining and wildlife.
- Over 90% of Tanzanians rely on wood and other vegetation for their domestic energy supplies.
- Water is needed for drinking, agriculture, livestock and energy.
- Good health is dependent on safe water, sanitation, safe solid waste disposal and lack of pollution.

In describing their own poverty, the poor often highlight the crucial role of the environment to their well-being and ability to control their lives.

Vulnerability

Poor communities are most at risk from environmental disasters -

- Floods and landslides e.g. El Nino in 1998.
- Drought e.g. 2003 in Northern Tanzania.
- Pollution.
- Crop pests.
- Land Degradation.

Pollution

The poor are most vulnerable to pollution -

- Indoor air pollution from lamps, candles, charcoal and kerosene stoves.
- Solid and liquid waste in streams and rivers.
- Vehicle pollution, especially the effect of lead on children.
- Hazardous wastes.
- Agrochemicals.

Conflict

Access to and control and use of natural resources are triggers for conflict.

- Between user groups -
 - Mining vs. timber.
 - Agriculturalists vs. pastoralists.
 - Farming vs. forestry.
 - Tourism vs. pastoralism.
- Essential for survival
 - Access to water and firewood.



Photo: Lorelee Hyde

Pastoralists are marginalised due to lack of access to and control and use of communal land.

Frameworks for Governance

As industrialisation, urbanisation and the use of resources increases, the need for managing resources prudently becomes vital. One tool for doing this is the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA). Recently, Hakikazi collaborated with Arusha Environment Committee to organise training on EIA. Facilitators came from the National Environment Council of Tanzania.

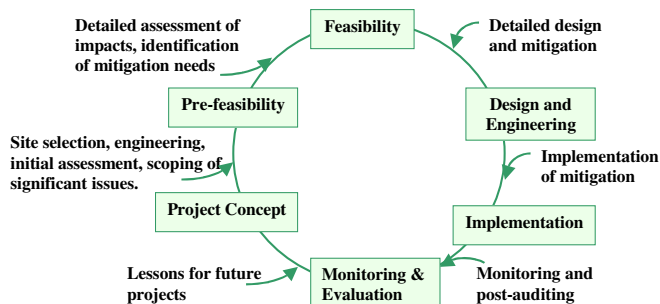
The purpose of an EIA is to ensure that a development proposal, activities and programmes are environmentally sound and sustainable. An EIA is used to -

- Predict environmental effects.
- Evaluate alternative courses of action.
- Consider all issues - environment, social and economic.
- Identify solutions to minimise environmental impact.

“Access and control over resources is the major governance issue, especially for rural people, and it is the bread and butter issue on which democracy must deliver.”

USAID, 2002

EIA Cycle



Main Considerations of EIA

- Human health and safety.
- Flora, fauna, ecosystems and biodiversity.
- Soil, water, air, climate and landscape.
- Use of land, natural resources and raw materials.
- Protected areas and sites of special significance.
- Heritage, recreation and amenity assets.
- Livelihoods, lifestyle and well-being of communities.

EIA includes all Stakeholders

- These are groups which are directly affected or influenced by the project -
- Local people
 - Government
 - NGOs
 - Research & Academia
 - Donors
 - General public

An EIA measures impact significance.

Ecological Impacts

- Reduction in species diversity.
- Habitat depletion or fragmentation.
- Threatened, rare and endangered species.
- Impairment of ecological functions e.g. disruption of food chains.

Social Impacts

- Human health and safety.
- Decline in important resources.
- Loss of valued areas.
- Displacement of people.
- Disruption of communities.
- Demands on services and infrastructure.

History of EIA in Tanzania

The first major EIA was in 1980 for the Stiegeler's Gorge Power and Flood Control Project. Since then a number of studies have been done, guided mainly by donor agencies. There are problems that constrain the development of EIA -

- Inappropriate District Level set-up to support the process.
- Inadequate awareness.
- Inadequate technical, human and financial resources.
- Inadequate stakeholder involvement.
- Limited environmental standards.
- Unreliable data and information.



Forest in the Usambaras. An EIA is essential to measure the impact of any project that has ecological and social impacts.

Photo: Loralee Hyde

Monitoring a Project

Once a project is approved following a EIA, implementation begins. Monitoring starts when the project implementation commences.

The overall objective of monitoring is to determine what actually occurs to the environment after the project is started. The monitoring is the responsibility of the developer, the District Authority and other stakeholders.

Monitoring involves planning of the monitoring programme; collection of samples; interpretation of data; and reporting of data. For example, the monitoring of an industrial project may involve reporting on solid and liquid waste produced; and any increases in diseases and adverse health conditions.

Poverty Reduction Strategy (PRS)

The first Poverty Reduction Strategy in 2000 did not adequately address the environment. The First Progress Report in 2001 introduced environment as an emerging issue with two indicators: participation of local communities in management of wildlife and forests; and the mean distance to firewood. There were no targets.

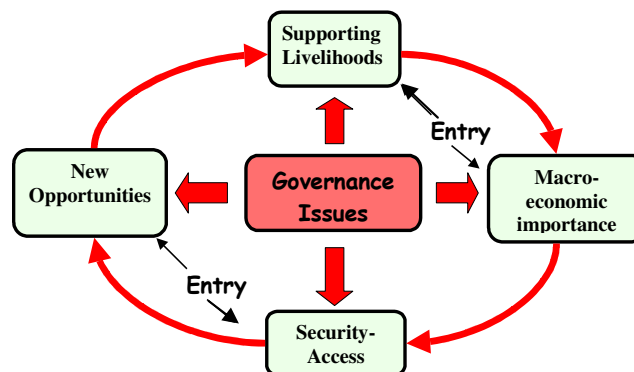
Key Challenges are -

- Ensuring environment is fully integrated in PRS II.
- Developing meaningful and measurable poverty-environmental targets and indicators e.g. time taken/ distance travelled to collect water and firewood; prevalence of respiratory infections; over-fishing; deforestation.
- Monitoring those indicators.

The Entry Points for Environmental Governance

Livelihoods are tied to natural resources. New opportunities are created through non-agricultural activities e.g. tourism, mining. Macro-economic importance (economic growth) is driven by such sectors. Security through **ACCESS** and **CONTROL** in supporting livelihoods and reducing vulnerability to shocks and stress is paramount.

Livelihoods and Security as Entry Points



What does Hakikazi Catalyst Plan to do to Improve Environmental Governance?

- Focus on three critical issues: the right to access; the right to use; and the right to manage natural resources.
- Advocate for integrating poverty-environment issues and meaningful and measurable indicators into PRS II.
- Increase awareness in communities of Governance Frameworks such as EIA and PRS.
- Advocate for transparency and accountability.
- Empower civil society, in particular poor and marginalised groups, by building capacity to participate in formation of natural resources laws and in environmental governance.
- Advocate for increased involvement of all stakeholders.
- Monitor and assess poverty-environment indicators.

You are invited as an individual or as a group to respond to the comments in this Information Bulletin . Send your responses to Hakikazi Catalyst, P O Box 781, Arusha or email hakikazi@cybernet.co.tz