REDD+ piloting in Tanzania: The village as an arena for defining and defending local and national interests

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ABSTRACT

Tanzania is among countries earmarked for piloting REDD+ activities in order to inform the global community through lessons learned for sustainable implementation of this programme. This study was carried out to assess the REDD+ piloting process in Tanzania with reference to the village as an arena for defining and defending local and national interests. Social interface approach was used for data collection. The study revealed ambiguity in forest tenure security as a major constraint in the implementation of REDD+. Among the actors in the process, NGOs were found to serve as power brokers between state agencies and local communities. The governance structures at village level play a key role in regulating forest use and implementation of any project. Since communities have a higher trust on their village governments, the villages remain core area for protecting interests of REDD+ and conservation initiatives in the country. Similarly, clear and secure land tenure and forest user rights are critical ingredients for the success of REDD+ initiatives.

Keywords: REDD+; Village, Safeguards, Power Struggles, Tanzania

INTRODUCTION

Continuing loss of forest cover in developing countries, especially in the tropics, has become an increasing concern to researchers and policy makers (Barbier and Burgess 2001; López and Galinato 2005; Alix-Garcia 2007). This concern is a reasonable reflection of the multiple benefits of tropical forests such as their support to human livelihoods, carbon sequestration, and biodiversity conservation. According to IPCC report of 2011 cited in URT (2012), deforestation and forest degradation are the cause of around 17 – 20% of greenhouse gas emissions which are responsible for global warming. It is therefore not surprising that the international community has found it necessary to focus on reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation.

Since the 13th UNFCC Conference of Parties (COP 13), REDD+, in all its facets has been embraced with a flavour rarely witnessed in environmental or academic circles. Currently, there appears to be a consensus that the issue of deforestation and forest degradation must be addressed as a low cost option to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, greenhouse gas concentrations and increase in temperature to acceptable levels (IUCN 2016).

As one of the countries with a high rate of deforestation and forest degradation, Tanzania contributes high CO_2 emissions per annum of 126 million tonnes CO_2 emissions per year (78 million tonnes through deforestation and of about 48 million tonnes forest degradation) (Zahabu 2008). The country has therefore decided to embark upon a national REDD+ programme to manage its forests sustainably while responding to poverty reduction and sustainable development

needs. Similarly, REDD+ issues are being mainstreamed into national development planning through the National REDD+ strategy (URT 2012).

Tanzania has been privileged to be among the countries earmarked for piloting REDD+ activities in order to inform the UNFCCC global process on designing and implementing REDD+ (URT 2012). Since April 2009, the country has been piloting REDD+ with support from the Government of the Kingdom of Norway under a Climate Change Partnership focusing on reduced emissions from deforestation and forest degradation. The Government of the Kingdom of Norway has granted 100 million NOK (US$ 80 million) to support National REDD+ Strategy development, REDD+ Piloting, Research and Capacity Building (including the Programme on Climate Change Impacts, Adaptation and Mitigation (CCIAM), Investments in National Forest Monitoring and Assessment (NAFORMA), Empowering Communities through Training on Participatory Forest Management, REDD+ and Climate Change Initiatives (ECOPRC), Private Sector Engagement, and Establishment of a National REDD+ Trust Fund and Carbon Monitoring Centre.

Tanzania has also received US$ 4.28 million from UN-REDD Programme for implementation of RDD+ activities. This is a collaborative partnership between three UN Agencies namely Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO); the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP); and the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) (UN-REDD 2009). The country has also received support of about US$ 5 million from the Government of Finland and US$ 3.5 million from the German Climate Change Initiative (Burgess *et al.,* 2010).

Tanzania is well placed to participate in piloting and implementing REDD+ because the country has a total of 48.1 million ha of forestland (MNRT 2015). The report further shows that Tanzania mainland has 3.3 billion m^3 of wood whereby 97% of this is from trees of natural origin and 3% from planted trees. The average volume of wood is 37.9 m^3 /ha across all land cover types, varying from 1 m^3 /ha in open grasslands to 171 m^3 /ha in humid montane forests (MNRT 2015). National REDD+ piloting is taking place in village land forests, government forest reserves (both local authority and national) and forests in the general land. Despite this variation in land tenure, the village is the main arena for the REDD+ process. Therefore, this study was carried out to assess the REDD+ piloting process in Tanzania with reference to the village as an arena for defining and defending local and national interests.

METHODOLOGY

Study areas

The study was conducted in four National REDD+ pilot projects in Kilosa District under the Tanzania Forest Conservation Group (TFCG) in collaboration with the Tanzania Community Forest Conservation Network (MJUMITA), Kondoa District under the African Wildlife Foundation (AWF), Rungwe District under the Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS), and Kigoma district under the Jane Goodall Institute (JGI). Figure 1 shows REDD+ pilot projects and their implementing organisations in Tanzania including the ones studied in this work whilst Table 1 shows villages involved in the pilot projects in Kilosa, Kondoa, Rungwe, and Kigoma Districts.

The unit of analysis in the study was a village in the selected project pilot areas. The villages were selected through simple random sampling after clustering the pilot areas where a total of 20 villages were selected for the study as shown in Table 1.

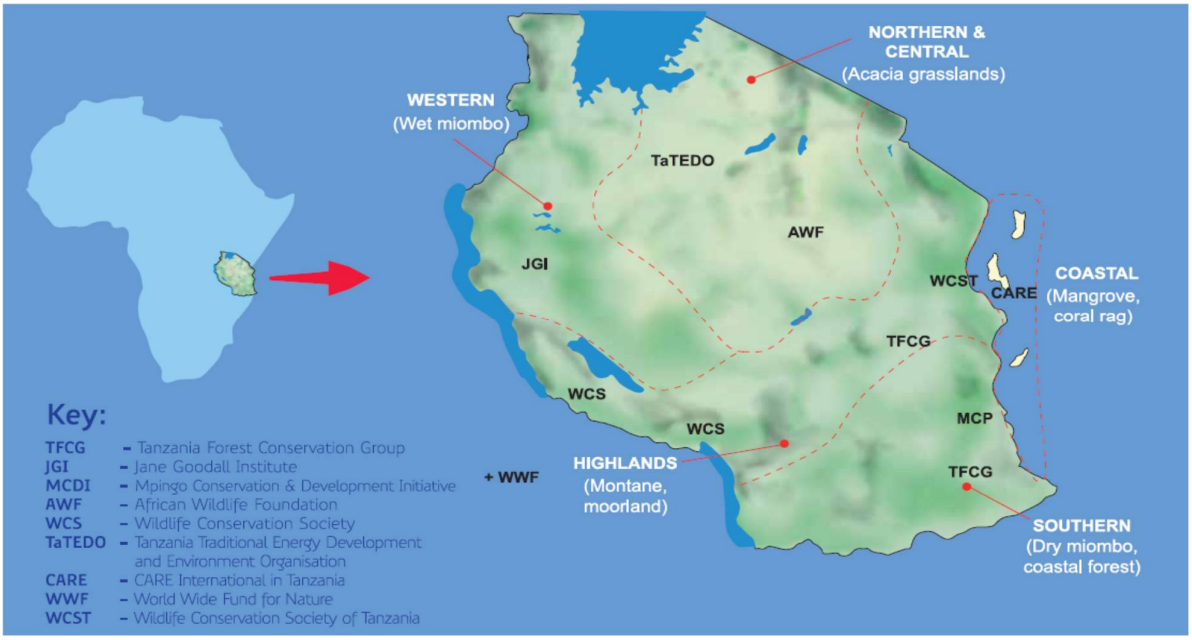

Figure 1: National REDD+ Pilot Projects in Tanzania (Source: URT 2012)

Table 1. Pilot Project villages and sample sizes

District	Responsible NGO	Number of villages participating in REDD+	Sample villages
Rungwe	Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS)	23	5
Kondoa	African Wildlife Foundation (AWF)	21	5
Kilosa	Tanzania Forest Conservation Group (TFCG) and Tanzania Forest Conservation Network (MJUMITA)	15	5
Kigoma	Jane Goodall Institute (JGI)	7	5
	TOTAL	66	20

Data Collection Methods

The study used social interface (Long 1998; Fadeyv 2009) approach as both a methodological device for studying negotiations and power struggles between different life-worlds (state versus local communities) as well as a means of understanding the social meanings of the REDD+ implementation process. Through this approach, it was possible to deconstruct project interventions in the study areas to the level of actor actions (i.e. social interface situations).

Social interface situations are critical points at which not only policies are applied but at which they are "transformed" through acquiring social meanings that were not set out in the original policy statements. The general notion of social interface conjures up an image of two surfaces coming into contact. The concept implies some kind of face-to-face encounter between units representing different interests and backed by different resources. The interacting parties are often differentiated in terms of power (Long 1989 in Kajembe 1994).

The approach was complimented by focus group discussions and participant observation as well as literature review.

The data were subjected to both content and structural-functional analyses. According to Stemler (2001), content analysis is a systematic and replicable technique for compressing many words of text into fewer content categories based on explicit rules of coding. This helped the researchers to ascertain values and attitudes of the respondents.

The data were also subjected to structural – functional analysis for the purpose of explaining social facts by the way in which they were related to each other within the social system and by the manner in which they related to the physical surroundings. Through structural – functional analysis, the researchers were able to distinguish between manifest and latent functions of different actors. Manifest functions are consequences which are intended and recognized by the actors in the systems while latent functions are consequences neither intended nor recognized (Kajembe 1994).

RESULTS

The dilemma underlying the REDD+ process in Tanzania

When one assesses the REDD+ process in Tanzania, the overall results are far from impressive. Specifically, the poor participation of local government, token payments for carbon sequestration, ambiguous sharing of funds for trial payments for REDD+ activities among the local communities; decisions by village governments on how to use the trial payments without involving village assemblies and contested forest reserve boundaries are some of the cases in point.

The pilot projects have been analysed in this study as arenas for negotiations as well as arenas for power struggles. This perspective has given an interesting insight into what is going on in reality in the pilot areas with the village as a battle ground. The results to this dilemma are reported in the following results sections and thereafter discussed in the discussion section.

Land tenure and forest user rights as metaphors for defining and defending local and national interests in REDD+

Land tenure is one of the principal factors affecting the ways in which forest resources are managed and the manner in which benefits are shared. In this study it is revealed that, land tenure insecurity has clearly been shown in the REDD+ pilot project in Kigoma where the state (Kigoma District Council) as a collaborator to Jane Goodall Institute (JGI) is in boundary conflict with some villagers in Songambele Village. This has also been experienced in Kolo Hills, Kondoa District. For example, in Mitaati Village, AWF failed to undertake land use plans because of intra-conflicts between farmers and livestock keepers.

Furthermore, ambiguity in forest tenure security has been observed as a major constraint in the implementation of REDD+ interventions in some pilot projects studied. In the Rungwe district pilot for example, REDD+ is implemented in a nature forest reserve (strictly reserved). This is a typical regime which has been adopted from the colonial era whereby forest governance is vested under state control, and thus alienation of access and ownership rights of the local people who previously owned the resources. This has caused contested interests between the state and the local communities, and with still unanswered question as who will own the carbon credit payments; local communities or the state?

Although WCS is trying to downplay the component of compensation to the local communities in Rungwe District, it was learned during the fieldwork that local communities are informed through various sources that REDD+ in a way means “payments for foregone opportunities”. This might have serious negative

implications in the future if WCS sticks to the "don't pay" approach as they may lose trust among the communities. This is due to the fact that village representatives have been following up the matter informally with the Rungwe District authorities. On the other hand, if payments will be affected during the pilot project and cease thereafter, the future of conservation may be even bleaker.

However, trial payments have been done in Kilosa pilot project under TFCG at a tune of TZS 99,648,950.00 (USD 62,280) as Table 2 shows and to Kigoma District as presented in Table 3.

Table 2. Payments to villages in Kilosa District REDD+ Pilot project

S/N	Village	TZS	USD
1	Nyali	29,415,100.00	18,384.43
2	Chabima	23,216,778.00	14,510.48
3	Kisongwe	16,788,750.00	10,493.00
4	Dodoma-Isanga	13,291,922.00	8,307.45
5	Ibingu	10,030,750.00	6,269.22
6	Lunenzi	6,905,650.00	4,316.03
	Total	99,648,950.00	62,280.60

Note: 1 USD= TZS 2,000.00

Table 3. Payments to villages in Kigoma District REDD+ pilot project

S/N	**Village**	**TZS**	**USD**
1	Karago	30,400,000.00	19,000.00
2	Kirando	27,200,000.00	17,000.00
3	Sigunga	22,400,000.00	14,000.00
4	Songambele	19,200,000.00	12,000.00
5	Lyabusende	17,600,000.00	11,000.00
6	Sunuka	14,400,000.00	9,000.00
7	Ilagala	12,800,000.00	8,000.00
8	Overhead costs	16,000,000.00	10,000.00
	Total	**160,000,000.00**	**100,000.00**

Note: 1 USD = TZS 2000.00

So far, just like the case of Rungwe project, no trial payments have been done in Kondoa District REDD+ pilot project under AWF. Discussions with the project management indicated that there is a willingness to pay. It was interesting to note that where the trial payments have been effected, (Kilosa and Kigoma), the forests were under village land (common property regime) whilst where trial payments have not yet been effected (Rungwe and Kondoa), the forests are under state regime.

The seemingly slowness to effect trial payments in Kondoa District can be attributed to the same reasons raised for the Rungwe case. However, one would also see the willingness to pay in Kondoa unlike in Rungwe with "don't pay approach" plausibly attributed to the fact that although Kolo Hill Forest Reserve in Kondoa is under state regime, it is currently managed through Joint Forest Management (JFM) in which local communities are regarded as legitimate and moral stakeholders because their interests affect and are affected by the management regime. In other words, local communities participate actively in the management. In Rungwe on the other hand, the nature forest reserve is managed

through classical forest management approach whereby local communities have rather passive participation.

The "Triangle" of actors underlying REDD+ implementation in Tanzania

The study showed that there are three key actors in the REDD+ pilot projects namely Local Communities, Non-governmental Organizations (Non-State Organizations),and State Agencies (Central and Local Governments) (Figure 2).

This "triangle" of relationships constituted the social arena marking out the actual *locale* of REDD+ implementation in the pilot projects or what is called a *dialectic web of power struggles*. The web refers to the totality of social processes and power struggles within which the actors attempt to establish "common ground" for defining and defending their interests.

The intention in this study was to open windows into these social realities and decode how strategic actions and interactions of these actors shape the outcomes of REDD+ implementation in the pilot projects. This is a highly complex web, whereby actors meet each other, test out their practical experiences, evolve interdependencies for survival and develop various types of relationships based upon their vested interests.

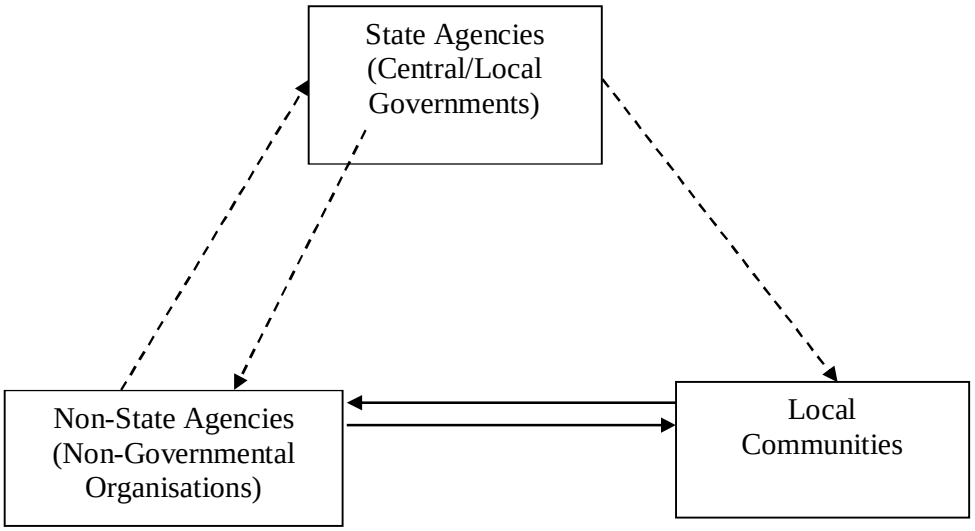

Figure 2. Triangle of actors underlying REDD+ implementation in Tanzania

Key: ——→ Strong relationships

- - - - - - - - → Weak relationships

It should be noted that the actors are backed by different types of power and institutions. In order to understand REDD+ issues in national and local contexts, one needs to understand the way in which different types of power are exercised by different actors (i.e. State Agencies; Non-Governmental Organisations or Non-state Agencies; and Local Communities) in the pursuit of their interests. There are three categories of power namely Institutional, Structural, and Strategic that different stakeholders under REDD+ arrangement can assume at one time (Table 4). Power or lack of it lies at the heart of the process through which REDD strategic networks open and close and different actors are either pulled in or excluded from the loci of decision making.

Table 4. REDD+ actors and their presumed powers

Actors	Presumed powers
State (Central and Local Governments)	Institutional and Structural or Domination Power
Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) (Non- State Organisations)	• Institutional and Strategic Power • Acts as Power Brokers between the State and Local Communities
Local Communities (Village councils) – "Battle ground" of REDD+	Structural and Strategic Power.

Power as observed in the study areas is exercised by a variety of means including the rule of law, (which awards certain groups rights over others); coercion by virtue of police muscle; political pressure; superior knowledge; economic manipulations, or through sheer persuasion.

REDD+ Safeguards for ensuring a win-win scenario between conservation and community livelihoods

Safeguards for ensuring a win-win scenario between conservation and community livelihoods were also assessed in this study. Our findings in Kigoma REDD+ pilot project indicated that there are risks related to forest condition; community livelihoods; and governance. Among the risks identified was the presence of landless people caused by REDD+ intervention. In Songambele Village for example about 45% of the village population was landless and thus there is an urgent need to safeguard these people. The risk of landlessness has also been observed in Kilosa pilot area. This means that the concept of safeguard in Tanzania need to go hand in hand with scaling up of REDD+ activities.

DISCUSSION

What are the main reasons that REDD+ is not as successful as expected and can even have disastrous results? According to Dusseldorp (1990) in Kajembe (1994), the whole successful planned development in the sense that outcomes predicted have been realized within the time span indicated and with the means allocated, is only possible when the following four pre-requisites are fulfilled:

(i) There must be a general agreement among all actors involved on the consistency of the objectives;

(ii) There is knowledge of the functioning of all relevant processes and their interrelationships, as well as the ways in which they can be manipulated;

(iii) There is power and means needed to manipulate these processes. The simple definition of power is "ability to get what one wants, usually at the expense of the interests of others (Dugan 2003 in MNRT/UN-REDD 2012); and

(iv) There is a political will to use the power, and the means available. Political institutions are arenas for contending social forces as well as collections of standards, operating procedures and structures that define and defend interests (Jordan and O'Riordan undated).

These pre-requisites are not external conditions outside the reach of the REDD+ process. When it comes to planning and implementation of projects that are based on well known, often physical processes (like building of houses or bridges), these pre-requisites are in most cases realized. But when it comes to people – oriented

projects like REDD+ projects, the pre-requisites will never be completely fulfilled.

The general experience is that people – oriented projects seldom follow the course that is indicated in the plans. This means that it will never be possible for individuals or governments to create via planned development, exactly the future they had in mind. But should this lead to a conclusion that we have to return to "muddling through" approach and that government efforts at least in the field of planned development should be stopped? The answer is obviously no! So planned development no matter how imperfect it may be, the disastrous outcomes of the development will sometimes remain with us for at least the foreseeable future (Kajembe 1994). Therefore, REDD+ pilot projects are necessary devils because in this form it is possible to bring forward lessons for future actions.

Land tenure is one of the principal factors affecting the ways in which forest resources are managed and the manner in which benefits are shared (Kajembe *et al.* 2012); and this is one factor which is influencing the functions of REDD+ projects in the country . The legal basis for land tenure in Tanzania is derived from two basic laws that were passed in 1999 namely the Land Act No. 4 of 1999 (URT 1999a) and the Village Land Act No. 5 of 1999 (URT 1999b) which state that all land in the country is public whereby the President holds it in trust for all citizens. The President delegates power to designate, adjudicate and modify land tenure status to the Commissioner for Lands.

According to the Land Act No. 4 of 1999, land is defined as the surface of the earth and earth below the surface and all things naturally growing on the land as well as land covered by water. Trees are regarded by law as fixtures on the land surface (URT 2009). The interconnection makes carbon property rights to correspond closely with land tenure (Kajembe *et al.*, 2012).

In addition to the two Land Acts,, traditional land tenure systems operate in parallel with the formal system (Zahabu *et al.* 2009). People may have informal user rights that are sometimes viewed locally as comparable to property. Hence, there is a lot of tenure insecurity. Studies (e.g. Lane, 1995; Walsh, 2008; Goldman, Mwijage *et al.* 2011; Komu 2012) have shown that this may result in a number of environmental problems including unsustainability in development and thence REDD+ activities. Broegaard (2005) argues that tenure security is vital in determining people investment behaviour. Lack of clear land tenure and forest user rights may become a critical barrier for REDD+ initiatives and success (Harvey 2010). This issue is magnified by the fact that land is a major asset for households in all the studied pilot areas.

Besides, land tenure systems have implications in the management of forest resources (Njuki *et. al.* 2004). The nature of property rights over forests and their economic value have been identified as major causes of deforestation in several developing countries (Ligon and Narain 1999; Dolisca, *et. al.* 2007; de Oliveira 2008). Generally speaking, there is no strong consensus on the type of tenure that would yield greater security or efficiency in forest resource management in Tanzania, but it seems to be accepted that unclear and disputed tenure is not conducive for efficiency and sustainability of forest management (Zahabu *et al.* 2009).

Power relations are key issues that were also analysed in this study that needs a thorough discussion on how they influence REDD+ development in Tanzania. As Dugan (2003 in MNRT/UNREDD 2012)

argues power is the ability to define what is important in social life. Power is social construct that only materializes in the interaction of people. Therefore, power is relative; it characterizes relationships between actors. It is not a fixed characteristic of an actor, thus it cannot be said that one actor (individual or organization) has certain absolute "amount" of power.

Institutional power refers to more or less systematized, regulated mode of power that go beyond spontaneous exercise of power over others (Ostrom 1990). It usually refers to mandates given by law. Structural or Domination power is stable, hierarchical, fixed and difficult to reverse, (Ostrom 2005; Hagedorn 2007). Structural or domination power refers to those asymmetrical power relations where the subordinate actors have little room for manoeuvre because their margin of liberty is extremely limited. This type of power is widespread in most traditional institutions. Strategic power signifies capacity to structure possible fields of action of others. This can take many forms including ideological manipulation, rational argumentation or economic ability (Mbeyale 2009). Strategic power can be perceived in many daily interactions between actors and is mostly derived from one's endowments and entitlements.

Institutions defined as rules of the game (Lukes 2007) underlie the concept of power. Institutions "enable" the exercise of power by identifying what is socially possible or acceptable in a society. Using the concept of climate change as a point of reference, it attempts to portray how institutions permeate the politics of climate change as a social and environmental problem and in devising solutions over what factors are needed to alter societies so they can deal more effectively with the delivery of regulations and behaviour desired to reduce global warming. Without institutional arrangements no society could survive as a "collective entity (Ostrom 1990).

The concept of climate change was created by institutional alignment of scientific enquiry (Jordan and O'Riordan undated). But the human response also chased the scientific findings by establishing an inter-national trans–scientific panel, and generating an international political and legal agreement – the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) to justify and enforce "common" action. This is a good example of institutional perspective at work.

Safeguards as policy framework through which REDD+ operates are also analysed hence deserving a thorough discussion to understand their roles in the study area. While REDD is an entirely voluntary action under paragraph 70 of the Cancun Agreement, the language used in paragraph 69 makes clear that once a country agrees to undertake REDD activities on its own accord, implementation has to be in accordance with the guidance and safeguards laid out in the annex 1 of the Cancun decision (Kant *et al.*, 2011).

Although the need for safeguards was apparent in all the pilot projects studied, the study showed that the concept has been institutionalized only in the REDD+ pilot in under the Jane Goodall Institute (JGI) in Kigoma District (FORCONSULT 2013). The ultimate goal of instituting safeguards was to ensure that the project achieve a win-win scenario between conservation and community livelihoods.

REDD+ safeguards are broadly understood as policies, programmes, activities and measures that are designed to protect against undesirable outcomes in specific projects and programmes. They aim to address both direct and indirect impacts on communities and ecosystems, by identifying, analysing and ultimately

working to manage risks and opportunities (Kant *et al.*, 2011).

It is anticipated that if designed and implemented properly, safeguards can help REDD+ provide multiple benefits. Safeguards are important when dealing with REDD+ projects in Tanzania because issues such as land and carbon rights, equitable benefits sharing, governance, gender mainstreaming, and sustainable management of forest resources biodiversity conservation, enhancement of livelihoods, can be taken into account.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

Negotiations and power struggles between state versus local communities in the selected four National REDD+ projects in the districts studied are depicted by this study to exist where non-state agencies are acting as a power brokers between the state and the local players, the communities participating in REDD+ implementation. The study pointed out categorically that the National REDD+ pilot projects are in a dilemma just like other people-oriented projects which seldom follow the course that was indicated in their plans. However, it should be noted that although the project concept has some inherent flaws, still is a necessary devil because in this form it is possible to bring forward lessons for future actions. For positive outcomes of the REDD+, the understanding of the social meanings of the implementation process is necessary.

Similarly, the study identified the need for clear and secure land tenure and forest user rights as critical ingredients for a successful REDD+ initiatives. The way the issue of compensation in relation to state forests is treated as exemplified by the Rungwe case under WCS may be important for the legitimacy of REDD+ both nationally and internationally. Tanzania needs to urgently start the process of how to handle compensation issues in protected forests under state management regime. Actually, the Rungwe Nature Forest Reserve should be used as a "test case" for how REDD+ process in protected areas could be designed to ensure a win-win scenario between conservation and community livelihoods. Currently, there is no strategy in place in the country concerning how income from carbon credits from state owned forests should be distributed so as to trickle down to the communities surrounding the forests.

The study underscored the need to understand the "triangle" of actors made up by State Agencies (Central and Local Governments); Non-State Agencies (Non-Governmental Organizations); and Local Communities. This "triangle" of actors constitutes the social arena marking out the actual *locale* of REDD+ implementation in Tanzania and therefore for successful implementation of REDD+ programmes in the country decision makers should consider this established relationship. Lastly, the importance of REDD+ safeguards for ensuring a win-win scenario between conservation and community livelihoods is emphasized.

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villages in Kilosa, Kondoa, Rungwe and Kigoma districts.

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