Can We Learn Our Way to Sustainable Management?

Adaptive Collaborative Management in Mafungautsi State Forest, Zimbabwe.

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Dedication

To my parents, my husband Simeon , my son Tafadzwa and my daughter Ndatenda,
with love.

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Acronyms and Abbreviations

ACM	Adaptive Collaborative Management
AREX	Agricultural Research and Extension
BSAC	British South Africa Company
CAMPFIRE	Communal Area Management Programme for Indigenous Resources
CBNRM	Community Based Natural Resource Management
CIDA	Canadian International Development Agency
CIFOR	Centre for International Forestry Research
CM	Collaborative Monitoring
DA	District Administrator
FC	Forestry Commission
FPU	Forestry Protection Unit
FTLRP	Fast Track Land Reform Programme
MDC	Movement for Democratic Change
MSC	Monitoring subcommittee
MYGEC	Ministry of Youth Gender and Employment Creation
NGO	Non Governmental Organisation
NRMC	Natural Resource Management Committee
PAR	Participatory Action Research
POSA	Public Order and Security Act
RDC	Rural District Council
RDDC	Rural District Development Committee
RMC	Resource Management Committee
RSP	Resource Sharing Project
UDI	Unilateral Declaration of Independence
USD	United States Dollar
VIDCO	Village Development Committee
WADCO	Ward Development Committee
WCS	World Conservation Strategy
WINDFALL	Wildlife Industries New Development for All
ZANU-PF	Zimbabwe African National Union – Patriotic Front
ZWD	Zimbabwe Dollar

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[1] the thesis also contributes to the IUFRO Task Force on Improving the Lives of People in Forests that is headed by Dr. Carol Colfer.

Thesis Summary

Following the failure of top-down centralised management approaches to natural resources, attention has shifted in the last two decades to participatory approaches. Unfortunately, participatory resource management projects have produced disappointing results. They have failed to meet the objectives of enhancing sustainable management of resources and of improving the well-being of local people.

These efforts have recently been criticized by environmental conservationists, who continue to believe that participation by local people has resulted in increased degradation and loss of biodiversity. Proponents of participation however take the option of reverting back to top-down management approaches as 'reinventing the square wheel' since top-down approaches have an even worse record in resource management. The proponents of participation, therefore, call for alternative approaches that combine improvements of both human well-being and the status of natural resources.

It is against this background - a conviction that community participation must be the way forward, despite a number of failed participatory initiatives - that the Center for International Forestry Research (CIFOR) initiated in 1999 a multi-country, multi-site Adaptive Collaborative Management (ACM) project. The starting point of the ACM approach is that sustainable resource management can only be achieved if local people participate in the utilisation and management of those resources. The approach makes use of various theories and concepts from several disciplines including complex systems theory, adaptive management, social learning, cooperation and competition, and theories of human interaction.

The ACM project was implemented in Mafungautsi in Zimbabwe forest by a multi-disciplinary team of researchers from 1999 to 2003, and aimed to strengthen an on-going Resource Sharing Project that began in 1994. This thesis documents and critically analyses the interventions facilitated by the ACM team and their outcomes. It also traces these outcomes to check if they were sustained or not, and why.

Evidence presented in Chapter 4 shows some of the complexities encountered in implementing the ACM approach. Several activities and processes were initiated simultaneously in the different sites. ACM researchers facilitated stakeholders to go use Participatory Action Research (PAR) processes to deal with their problems and learn from the impacts of their actions, they, too, had to learn by doing.

Through context studies the team realised a number of issues had to be addressed at the outset. The context studies revealed a range of issues to be addressed if stakeholders were effectively to participate in the PAR process. These included numerous conflicts among stakeholders at various levels, unequal distribution of power, misunderstandings, passiveness of local community members in issues related to the management of the forest, the fact that not all stakeholders in local communities were interested in all resources in the forest, and finally weak leadership skills among stakeholders.

The ACM team therefore developed several interventions to resolve conflicts and build stakeholder capacities before the PAR process could progress. These interventions included empowerment training workshops, conflict resolution workshops, training on leadership skills and finally the formation of the resource user groups. Implementing these interventions took considerable amounts of time.

PAR processes were later initiated with various resource user groups. Stakeholders at a range of scales, including resource user groups, resource management committees, and FC officers and researchers, were included in processes to develop visions and implement action plans. The process however was not so neat in all cases and some of the action plans were never implemented. Opportunities were created for stakeholders to share experiences, and learn together.

The team also facilitated the development of a collaborative monitoring system to help stakeholders learn about the impact of their actions. The process for doing this was time consuming since several relevant stakeholders had to participate in the process. The CM system was initially not welcomed by all resource users. Follow up studies showed that stakeholders in various RMC areas did not implement all the aspects of the CM system but chose only certain aspects. The development of a plot system in Gababe to monitor the quality of the grass resource as well as resolve problems related to favouritism in allocation of resource harvesting areas was an interesting outcome. The CM system however in some cases (like in the Batanai area) collapsed due to political factors at play.

The interventions by the ACM team resulted in some positive outcomes including the empowerment of local communities, some improvement in incomes obtained through value addition and seeking alternative markets, improvement in stakeholders' knowledge about their forest resources through their monitoring activities and the use of sustainable harvesting methods. However, a follow-up study four years after the project ended showed that these positive developments were not sustained.

The ACM team also aimed to influence resource management institutions and Chapter 5 traces how the Resource Management Committees (RMC) transformed over time. The chapter shows that the RMCs (especially the one in Gababe) over time, with capacity building on both the RMCs and local communities transformed into downwardly accountable and transparent organisations. The positive change was however short-lived, when the FC officer died. A follow up study four years later showed that, the RMCs were no longer accountable to their communities and several conflicts were now present among stakeholders. These were simply ignored.

In trying to understand why things turned out this way, I address one central question – to what extent was failure a result of misconceptualization and misapplication of the participatory approach, as distinct from being a product of the general rapidly declining socio-economic conditions in the country? Although from a superficial analysis one can conclude that wider events in the country finished off a beautiful initiative in its infancy, I argue that the initiative would have failed anyway even if the environment had not changed. I identify key factors that would have led to the failure of the project.

First, the overestimation of what the ACM team could do given the limited period and the complexity of the situation in Mafungautsi. Second, the ACM team did not address issues of power and its unequal distribution. Third, the ACM team did not facilitate the development of clear rules and their means of enforcement to support management activities. Fourth, the ACM team paid insufficient attention to the conflicting needs of local resource users, and finally, the team left the future work with an underfunded and understaffed organisation.

I conclude that if ACM and other learning-based participatory resource management initiatives are to succeed, they must empower the poor and marginalised and explicitly address issues of power and politics. Joint learning processes should not be taken as a panacea but must integrate elements from other disciplines such as political ecology. Such projects should also ensure that clear rules for management and use of resources are agreed upon as well as their means of enforcement.

Samenvatting van de thesis

Na het falen van de top-down en centraal georganiseerde benadering in het beheren van natuurlijke hulpbronnen verschoof de aandacht in de laatste twee decennia naar participatieve benaderingen. Ongelukkigerwijs hebben ook participatieve projecten ten aanzien van het beheer van hulpbronnen teleurstellende resultaten opgeleverd. Zij faalden in het halen van de doelstelling om duurzaam beheer van de hulpbronnen te versterken en het leven van de lokale bevolking te verbeteren.

Deze pogingen zijn recentelijk bekritiseerd door natuurbeschermers die er nog steeds vanuit gaan dat participatie van de lokale bevolking heeft geresulteerd in toenemende degradatie en verlies van biodiversiteit. Voorstanders van participatie beschouwen de optie om terug te keren naar de top-down beheersbenadering als "het opnieuw uitvinden van het vierkante wiel" want de top-down benaderingen hebben een nog slechtere staat van dienst in het beheer van hulpbronnen. De voorstanders van participatie roepen daarom op tot alternatieve benaderingen die het verbeteren van het leven van de mensen en de status van de natuurlijke hulpbronnen combineren.

Het is tegen deze achtergrond – de overtuiging dat gemeenschapsparticipatie de weg naar verbetering is, ondanks een aantal mislukte participatieve initiatieven – dat het Center for International Forestry Research (CIFOR) in 1999 een Adaptive Collaborative Management (ACM) project startte in verschillende landen en meerdere sites. Het startpunt in de ACM benadering is dat duurzaam beheer van hulpbronnen alleen bereikt kan worden als lokale bevolking participeert in het gebruik en beheer van die hulpbronnen. De benadering maakt gebruik van verschillende theorieën en concepten van verschillende disciplines zoals "complex systems theory", "adaptive management", "social learning", "cooperation" en "competition", en theorieën over menselijke interactie.

Het ACM project werd geïmplementeerd in Mafungautsi Forest in Zimbabwe door een multidisciplinair team van onderzoekers van 1999 tot 2003, een streefde er naar om een lopend Resource Sharing Project dat in 1994 begon te versterken. Deze thesis documenteert en analyseert op kritische wijze de interventies die door het ACM team

werden gefaciliteerd, en de uitkomsten daarvan. Het traceert ook of de uitkomsten duurzaam waren of niet, en waarom.

Bewijs dat gepresenteerd is in Hoofdstuk 4 laat een aantal van de moeilijkheden zien die werden ontmoet bij het implementeren van de ACM benadering. Verschillende activiteiten en processen werden tegelijkertijd gestart in drie verschillende "pilot" sites aan de rand van het beschermde bos: Batanai, Gababe en Ndarire. Terwijl de ACM onderzoekers de belanghebbenden faciliteerden in het gebruiken van Participatory Action Reserach (PAR) om hun problemen op te lossen en te leren van hun acties, moesten zij ook 'leren-door-te-doen'.

Door het uivoeren van "context studies" realiseerde het team zich dat een aantal kwesties vanaf het begin moesten worden aangepakt. De context studies toonden een reeks van kwesties die aangepakt zouden moeten worden om de belanghebbenden effectief te kunnen laten participeren in het Participatory Action Research (PAR) proces. Deze omvatten talrijke conflicten tussen belanghebbenden op verschillende niveaus, ongelijke verdeling van macht, misverstanden, passiviteit van leden van de lokale gemeenschap in kwesties van beheer van het bos, het feit dat niet alle belanghebbenden in de lokale gemeenschappen geïnteresseerd waren in alle hulpbronnen in het bos en tenslotte de zwakke leiderschapsvaardigheden bij de belanghebbenden.

Het ACM team ontwikkelde daarom verschillende interventies om conflicten op te lossen en de capaciteit van de belanghebbende de vormen voordat het PAR proces zijn voortgang kon hebben. Deze interventies omvatten "empowerment training workshops", "conflict resolution workshops", training in leiderschapsvaardigheden en tenslotte de vorming van "resource user groups". Daarnaast faciliteerden zij het functioneren van zogenaamde "Resource Management Committees" (RMCs), welke opgericht waren in het kader van het Resource Sharing Project. Het implementeren van deze interventies koste een aanzienlijke hoeveelheid tijd.

PAR processen werden later gestart met verschillende resource-user groepen. Belanghebbenden van verschillende niveaus, zoals de resource-user groepen, de resource-management comités, en de Forest Commision (FC) functionarissen en de onderzoekers, werden in het proces betrokken om de visies te ontwikkelen en de actieplannen te implementeren. Het proces was echter niet in alle gevallen zo simpel en sommige actieplannen werden nooit geïmplementeerd. Er werden gelegenheden gecreëerd voor de belanghebbenden om hun ervaringen te delen, en om samen te leren.

Het team faciliteerde ook de ontwikkeling van een "Collaborative Monitoring" (CM) systeem om de belanghebbenden te helpen in hun leren over de effecten van hun acties. Het proces om dit te doen was tijdsrovend omdat alle belanghebbenden in dit proces moesten participeren. Niet alle belanghebbenden verwelkomden het CM systeem. Vervolg studies toonden aan dat belanghebbenden in verschillende RMC gebieden areas niet alle aspecten van het CM system implementeerden maar er slechts bepaalde aspecten van selecteerden. De ontwikkeling van een "plot"-systeem in Gababe om de kwaliteit van het gras te monitoren en tegelijkertijd het probleem van voorkeursbehandeling in het toewijzen van oogstgebieden op te lossen, was een

interessante uitkomst. Het CM systeem stortte echter in sommige gevallen in elkaar (zoals in het Batanai gebied) door politieke factoren die in het spel waren.

De interventies van het ACM team resulteerden in enkele positieve uitkomsten en omvatten de "empowerment" van de lokale gemeenschappen, enige verbetering in de inkomens door de toegevoeging van waarde en het zoeken van alternatieve markten, verbetering in de kennis van de belanghebbenden over hun hulpbronnen in het bos door hun monitoring activiteiten en het gebruik van duurzame oogstmethoden. Echter, een vervolg studie nadat het project was afgelopen toonde aan dat deze positieve ontwikkelingen niet stand hielden.

Het ACM team ook probeerde de instituties die betrokken zijn in het beheren van hulpbronnen te beïnvloeden en hoofdstuk 5 zien hoe de "Resource Management Committees' (RMC) zich over de tijd transformeerden. Het hoofdstuk toont aan dat de RMCs (speciaal degene in Gababe), met het vormen van hun capaciteit, veranderden in organisaties die transparant waren en naar beneden toe rekenschap aflegden. De positieve veranderingen waren echter van korte duur: totdat de FC functionaris stierf. De vervolgstudie vier jaar later toont aan dat de RMCs niet langer naar hun gemeenschappen rekenschap aflegden en dat er veschillende conflicten speelden tussen de belanghebbenden die simpelweg werden genegeerd.

In een poging om te begrijpen waarom de zaken zo verkeerden stel ik één centrale vraag aan de orde – in welke mate was de mislukking een gevolg van een onjuiste conceptualisering en toepassing van de participatieve benadering, dit ter onderscheiding van mislukken als een gevolg van de algemene snelle neergang in sociaal-economische condities in het land. Alhoewel men van een oppervlakkige analyse zou kunnen concluderen dat de meer brede gebeurtenissen in het land een einde maakten aan een mooi initiatief dat zich in de kinderschoenen bevond, beweer ik dat het initiatief hoe dan ook mislukt zou zijn, zelfs als de omgeving niet zou zijn veranderd. Ik identificeer sleutelfactoren die tot het mislukken van het project hebben geleid. Ten eerste, de overschatting van wat het ACM team kon doen, gegeven de beperkte projectperiode en de moeilijkheid van de situatie in Mafungautsi. Ten tweede, het ACM team pakte de kwesties van macht en zijn ongelijke verdeling niet aan. Ten derde, het ACM team faciliteerde niet de ontwikkeling van duidelijke regels en de wijze van toepassing daarvan ter ondersteuning van de beheersactiviteiten. Ten vierde, het ACM team gaf onvoldoende aandacht aan de conflicterende noden van de lokale hulpbronnengebruikers, en tenslotte, het team liet het toekomstige werk over aan een ondergefinancierde en onderbezette organisatie.

Ik concludeer dat als ACM en andere op leren gebaseerde participatieve initiatieven van beheer van hulpbronnen succesvol willen zijn, zij de armen en gemarginaliseerden moeten "empoweren" en expliciet kwesties van macht en politiek aan de orde moeten stellen. Gezamenlijke leerprocessen moeten niet als een panacee worden geschouwd maar moeten elementen integreren van andere disciplines zoals politieke ecologie. Dergelijke projecten zouden ook moeten waarborgen dat duidelijke regels voor beheer en gebruik van hulpbronnen worden overeengekomen als ook de wijze waarop deze worden nageleefd.

Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1 Introduction

Following the failure of top-down centralised management approaches to conservation of natural resources, attention has shifted in the last two decades to participatory approaches. Participatory resource management projects, however, have produced disappointing results. They have failed to meet the combined objectives of enhancing sustainable resource management whilst simultaneously benefiting the poor (Kiss, 1990; Wells *et al.*, 1992; Franks and Worah, 2003; Emerton, 2001; Oates, 1995; Gibson and Marks, 1995; Barrette and Arcese, 1995; Alpert 1996; Hannah 1992). The efforts have therefore been criticized by conservationists, who consider participation by local people to result in increased degradation and biodiversity loss (Terborgh, 1999; Kramer and van Schaik, 1997, Oates, 1999). These critics call for stricter enforcement of protected area boundaries to safeguard biodiversity.

Although proponents of participation agree that findings by conservationists regarding the shortcomings of participatory approaches are well grounded, they find the overall argument incomplete since it largely ignores key aspects of the social and political processes that shape and are shaped by conservation interventions in specific contexts (Brechin *et al.*, 2002; Wilshusen *et al.,* 2002). Research by political ecologists has pointed to the fact that efforts to preserve 'nature' that overlook local systems of livelihood and socio-political organisation lead to degradation of resources and exacerbate resource management conflicts (Robbins, 1994; Anderson and Grove 1987; Richards, 1983). According to Wilshusen *et al.* (2002), reverting to top-down management approaches is like 'reinventing the square wheel' since top-down approaches have an even worse record in resource management situations.

Proponents of participation, therefore, call for alternative approaches that will result in improvements in both human well-being and the status of natural resources. The Adaptive Collaborative Management (ACM) approach developed and implemented in several countries in Africa, Asia and South America by the Center for International Forestry Research (CIFOR) was meant to meet this challenge, and is the subject of close examination and critical analysis in this thesis. The ACM approach was grounded in the working assumption that resource management efforts excluding local people dependent on natural resources is a recipe for potential disaster. This thesis will examine the validity of this assumption and how well, in practice, the ACM approach worked.

The ACM approach has its roots in ideas from several disciplines relating to complex system behaviour. These include adaptive management, social learning theory, and ideas by sociologists and others about the roots of human cooperation and competition. Because of the complex nature of natural resource management, the ACM approach aimed to facilitate collaboration among stakeholders in consciously learning together about the impacts of their management actions and adapting their practices accordingly. The ACM approach sought to encourage groups of people involved in managing natural resources to undertake Participatory Action Research (PAR), as a means to systematically and deliberately plan, implement and evaluate

their actions (Fisher and Jackson, 1998), and thus to learn together about the impact of their actions. 'Learning by doing' is therefore an important principle underlying the ACM approach, and valid for both implementing agents (like research teams) and participating stakeholders.

A growing body of literature, here dubbed the ACM series (Colfer, 2005a; Colfer, 2005b; Mandondo *et al.,* 2008, MacDougall *et al.,* 2008; Diaw *et al.*, 2009), tries to assess the outcomes in the various countries where the ACM approach was implemented. This thesis contributes to this literature by critically analysing the implementation and outcomes of the ACM approach in Mafungautsi State Forest, Gokwe South District, North-western Zimbabwe. However, the thesis also aims to take a step further, by following-up upon and assessing whether these outcomes were sustained or not after the project ended. The thesis is thus intended to contribute to wider critical debate on whether ACM or similar learning-based approaches are solutions for improving the status of natural resource management whilst simultaneously improving the lives of resource dependent communities. The track record of initiatives assumed to produce such 'win-win' outcomes has so far been patchy at best (Frost and Bond, 2006) and several commentators have begun to ask if such initiatives can at all produce lasting socio-economic development and/or conservation benefits (Logan and Moseley, 2002; Ferraro and Kiss, 2002; Barrett and Arcese, 1995). These authors - and other sceptical scholars, often writing from the perspective of political ecology - claim that such programmes fail because of their lack of engagement with issues of power and politics in the communities where they are implemented. Logan and Moseley (2002) for instance, claim that the Communal Area Programme for Indigenous Resources (CAMPFIRE – see Section 1.2.4 for more details) implemented in Zimbabwe to alleviate rural poverty and enhance sustainable management of wildlife resources failed because the programme was flawed in structure, and implementation significantly deviated from the programme's fundamental principles (see Box 1.1).

The remainder of this chapter presents the background to natural resource management approaches in Zimbabwe. It outlines the factors that influenced the development of natural resource management policies in Africa, and in Zimbabwe in particular. The ACM project is positioned within this broader field. Research objectives, research questions, methodology and analytical framework are also discussed. The chapter ends with an outline of the thesis.

1.2   Background

1.2.1 Recent history of natural resource conservation in Africa

Natural resource management history has been dominated by two discourses: conservation concerns and the global environmental crisis. These two issues have over time merged and become entangled. The environmental crisis in Africa has become a topical issue in recent years, especially in the developed world. Human lives, animal and plant species, natural habitats and soils are seen as being threatened in this continent to an extent never known before (Anderson and Grove, 1987). The African environmental crisis has become a common theme in both academic and popular culture in the Western world, and among the urbanised Africans, mainly (in

this last case) due to the important role played by Western media. In the past two decades environmentalism has flourished in most Western countries, resulting in increasingly loud calls for action over conservation. This has mainly been fed by new perceptions on the global ecological crisis and new convictions that society has become increasingly vulnerable to technological risks (Lowe, 1980). This essentially Western world perspective has resulted in global initiatives to save the planet. These include programmes to reduce human induced climate change, to halt tropical rain forest destruction and to limit the excessive use of fossil fuel. All are perceived as threatening global ecological sustainability.

The interest of industrialised countries to conserve wildlife and habitat in Africa has a long history, mainly based on the Western view of African environments. To Westerners, Africa offers pristine wild and natural environments no longer available in industrial countries, and this wilderness should therefore be preserved. To ecological fundamentalists, natural resource conservation is an end in itself and the main (and perhaps only) reason why natural resources should be preserved (Richards, 1992). In this reckoning, African environments are pictured as a kind of 'Eden' (Curtin, 1964; Graham 1973; Marnham, 1980), rather than as complex and changing environments with a multiplicity of functions (Anderson and Grove, 1987). For many Westerners, Africa offers wilderness environments and thus opportunities to rediscover a lost harmony between humans and the natural environment (Marx, 1964; Olwig and Olwig, 1980). This Edenic image of Africa influenced most conservation policies in colonial states, and has lived on into the post-colonial era, influencing independent governments in Africa to the extent that its adoption is a prerequisite to access the substantial flow of available funds for environmental management.

A reason for the dominance of external perspectives on the African environment relates to the complex infrastructures for information exchange developed under British and French colonial rule in Africa. These frameworks began to emerge in the immediate pre-colonial period, as the great European botanical gardens (such as Kew in England) began to develop global information networks (later linking scientists in the various colonies) through which environmental information could be systematically collected and collated on a global template (Grove, 1987a). Already, even in the colonial period, a link was made between the state of the environment in Africa and climate change (Grove, 1987a). Discussion and debate by a number of colonial scientists focused on information linking deforestation to rainfall reduction (Grove, 1987a). The influence of the European botanic gardens (and Darwinian Theory) was felt on debates about species prevalence, rarity, and extinctions, helping to shape, as Grove (1987b) has argued, the early environmentalism of the African colonies. The fact that Africans successfully ensured their own survival, and thereby the survival of African soils, animals and plants, was largely ignored in the major debates (Worthington, 1958; Darling, 1960; Richards, 1985). Colonial ideas on conservation went hand-in-hand with the belief that Africa was somehow the "Westerner's burden" and that the role of colonial conquest and subsequent rule was to save Africa from Africans.

It was in African colonial states that environmental conservationists first lobbied for governments to inhibit environmental changes they did not like (Grove, 1987b). Prescriptions for environmental management were put forward by Western experts as conservation panacea (Harrisson, 1984), without critical insight into their potential

impact on rural populations (Mair, 1984; Hill 1986). Many conservation policies pursued by colonial governments (often continued by post-colonial governments, with subsidies from former colonial powers) reflected the perspectives of Western experts. In Zimbabwe for instance, the 1948 Forestry Act developed during the colonial era was highly influenced by debates from conferences networking scientists and policy makers from throughout the Commonwealth (see Section 1.2.2), beginning with the idea that nature needed to be protected from burgeoning African populations.

More recently it has been argued by critics that the failure of Western conservation experts fully to understand the social and the ecological contexts in which they worked led to the development of policies within colonial states that, in the event, proved hazardous to human survival, and even to the existence of the natural environment it was intended to preserve (Timberlake, 1985; Redclift, 1984). Under colonial rule, a "fortress" conservation approach dominated thinking about management of natural resources, as it was believed that conservation could only be achieved through fences, barriers and force, needed to keep people and nature separate. In short the concept of protected areas dominated thinking about conservation.

Based on these policies, conservation projects were put in place that promoted protection (rather than management) of the natural environment, and incorporated harsh plans for the resettlement of communities living within areas identified as being under threat. Often this resulted in the formation of state-backed armed patrols – e.g. quasi-militia groups - to control (and prevent) local use of natural resources (Sharpe, 1998). Large tracts of land in rural Africa were converted into protected areas in which all human activity was prohibited.

Protected areas were managed by government forest or wildlife departments, on the basis of excluding human population. In official communications, local communities were blamed for the degradation of natural resources in protected areas, and in most cases they were forced to adopt conservation measures imposed from the top (Venema and van den Breemer, 1999). The exclusion of people from protected areas was the main aim of colonial conservation policies (Anderson and Grove, 1987). Such interventions had detrimental effects on the rural populations whose livelihoods directly depended on forest resources (Kaimowitz and Sheil, 2007).

To a largely peasant rural populace in Africa, ownership of land for settlement, and as a means of production, is vital for survival, and is at the core of local political agenda (Richards, 1983). Colonial conservation policies negated those local concerns, and yet (surprisingly) have often continued in place in post-colonial African states. The colonial Forestry Act in Zimbabwe is a clear (and paradoxical) example. Where colonial reservation of farm land for whites was quickly reversed, at least in theory (even though minor changes were achieved in practice until radical changes 20 years later) as seen by the various changes to the legislation related to land acquisition by the government of independent Zimbabwe (See Box 2.2, Chapter 2), the same regime has made only minor changes in the colonial forest management laws (see Section 1.2.2). This continuity helps explain the often highly negative attitudes towards conservation in many rural communities in Zimbabwe today.

The problem is in fact more general. Colonial powers lost direct control in Africa at independence, but have continued to maintain strong indirect influence over conservation (Smith 1980; Mazrui, 1980). Post-colonial governments have a genuine interest at stake in, for example, preserving natural forests, protecting of water catchments and biodiversity. So it is both a surprise and a puzzle to find that conservation efforts in Africa, today, are still driven to a large extent by a repudiated colonial "Edenic" model. It will be shown that moving to a more effective framework is not, in fact, easy, due to certain unresolved tensions between national and community political interests. This thesis will explore how far the ACM approach was (and could be) effective in addressing this latent politics of conservation in Zimbabwe.

1.2.2 Emergence of participatory forest management approaches

Exclusionary conservation policies increasingly result in local hostilities and conflicts. Conservation objectives are undermined by the fact that indigenous people living around protected areas continue to make illegal use of resources they consider essential for survival (Dzingirai and Breen, 2005; Pimbert and Pretty, 1995; Prabhu, 2003; Hasler, 1996; Duffy, 2000; Gibson, 1999). In many cases, indigenous groups have destroyed infrastructure put in place to protect natural resources (Murombedzi, 1994). In trying to protect natural resources, some governments have sought help from international organisations such as the World Wide Fund for Nature, including equipment to track and shoot poachers of wildlife resources. Even with such measures in place, many African protected areas have continued to degrade, 'leaving conscientious ecologists and practitioners… less doubtful that some other way of doing conservation was needed' (Dzingirai and Breen, 2005, p.2).

Several questions have been posed about the focus and disciplinary paradigms underlying conservation programmes, and conservationists have been forced to look beyond their own disciplines for solutions (Anderson and Grove, 1987; Sharpe, 1998). Debates have focused on possibilities to include social contexts within conservation project planning activities (Anderson and Grove, 1987). This has been the context within which participation by local communities as a way of enhancing effective conservation has surfaced in conservation debates. The arguments for participation have, in fact, become so commonly acknowledged that reference to participation is practically mandatory in environmental management project planning (Sharpe, 1998).

Thus, the past two decades have been witness to an increased pressure for developing countries to implement decentralised,[2] community-based natural resource management (CBNRM) approaches (Wilshusen *et al.*, 2002; Borinni-Feyerabend, 1996; Dzingirai and Breen, 2005; Leach, 2002). CBNRM projects have taken various forms, and a diversity of names has emerged, including joint forest management, co-

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[2]   Decentralisation has been recommended as a way to reduce inefficiency (Ostrom *et al.*, 1993). It is a process by which entrustments (including regulatory and decision making powers, responsibility for planning and implementation and administrative capacity) are transferred to local groups (Nemarundwe, 2003; Ostrom *et al.* 1993; Mandondo, 2000a; Agrawal and Gibson, 1999). There are two forms of decentralization (a) devolution – when entrustments are completely transferred to local groups and (b) deconcentration – in which entrustments are transferred to local groups that remain accountable to the central government.

management, collaborative management, and shared forest management. This organizational shift fits well with calls by proponents of participation to incorporate the views of local communities, where livelihoods depend on the resources in question. In a neo-liberal age, it is often argued that this element of local self-interest probably is the single most effective incentive for sustainable resource management. Proponents of the approach then seek to make local self-interest compatible with defined conservation objectives. This shift towards participation by local communities was incorporated into the World Conservation Strategy (WCS)[3] in 1980. In regard to Africa, this aimed to integrate rural development goals with conservation objectives, and to ensure the participation of local people (IUCN, 1980).

Three elements stand central to the approach:

- Participation as motivation. Beginning in the 1970s, several researchers (e.g. Chambers, 1974; Pitt, 1976) recommended use of participatory approaches to the management of resources on the assumption that it is only when local actors are involved in decision making that they become willing to make substantial investments of time and effort to ensure resources are managed sustainably (Cernea, 1985).
- Cost reduction. Proponents of participatory approaches believe that participation by local communities will result in economic and managerial efficiency. For example, administrative and managerial costs are reduced since communities stay in close proximity to resources.
- Use of local knowledge. Local knowledge and values are deemed to be invaluable in designing, planning, implementing and monitoring complex and detail-specific resource management projects (Murphree, 1993; Mohammed Katerere, 2001).

Many advocates for participatory approaches argue that taking local values and indigenous knowledge into account is the only way to achieve sustainable resource management. For those of this persuasion the following additional elements are considered important for enhancing sustainable resource management:

- Empowering local community members to participate in resource management activities. It is essential to devolve authority to the local level, so that in effect rights and responsibilities related to the management of resources are transferred to local resource users. Traditional forms of organisation and management can (indeed, should) be used as entry points for sustainable resource management. This is because traditional organisations are seen as effective (though often without real evidence – see Section 1.6.1), and there are doubts about the usefulness or possibility to set up and sustain new natural resource management structures (Hesseling, 1996; Holmberg, 1992).
- There is need to pay close attention to socio-economic variation among community members, and thus to take into account varying interests and

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[3]   The World Conservation Strategy (WCS) was commissioned by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) which, together with the World Wildlife Fund (WWF) provided the financial support for its preparation and contributed to the evolution of its basic themes and structure.

motivations among members of groups often quite strongly differentiated according to gender or wealth.

The approach has not been without its critics. First, even though the World Conservation Strategy (WCS) set the basis for participatory approaches, according to Anderson and Grove, (1987b), some of its underlying assumptions still remain disturbing. The strategy strongly emphasise that a conservation vision of society should predominate, and does not examine critically the social and political changes that might be necessary for conservation objectives to be achieved. The WCS advocates that entire societies ought to align with biosphere protection (Allen, 1980). Anderson and Grove (1987) see this as propaganda for global social manipulation towards environmental conservation that goes beyond even the most dramatic social engineering ambitions of colonial states in Africa after 1945. To these authors, this suggests that conservation initiatives are still driven by the need to meet objectives defined in the Western world, while only paying lip service to the social contexts within which the proposed management systems will operate (Anderson and Grove, 1987).

It is partly because of this unreconstructed ambition to impose a biologically-driven agenda that most participatory resource management initiatives are seen, by conservationists, as having failed to produce positive results. At issue is whether human welfare and development can be squared with conservation goals without redistribution of wealth on a global scale. In the absence of any such international commitment (seen recently in the failure of the Copenhagen conference on climate change) it is unsurprising to find that there has been increasing criticism of participatory management approaches by conservationists (Terborgh, 1999; Kramer and van Schaik, 1997).

Second a number of researchers have argued, for example, that proponents of participation 'romanticize' local cultures and ways of life, especially in assuming that a collective problem-solving culture exists. These critics point out that advocates of participation 'neglect the complex character and evolving nature of local communities' (Venema and van den Breemer, 1999:7), underestimate the presence of differences in local communities, pay little attention to understanding how collective action is organized to deal with resource management issues, and fail to appreciate how such action might be sustained (Meinzen-Dick *et al.*, 2004).

Third, it is feared that cooperation with development agencies will create a dependency syndrome in local communities, resulting in the collapse of participatory initiatives when outsiders pull out (Newmark and Hough, 2000; Kozanayi, 2005). Critics also allege that indigenous knowledge is idealised while at the same time Western science is down-graded or even regarded as irrelevant (Baland and Platteau, 1996; Matondi, 2001; Ribot, 1999; 1995). To some extent, this criticism is misplaced. Indigenous knowledge, apart from not being static, is also not complete. Rural people learn continuously and take up new ideas from various sources that become part of a new, enlarged indigenous knowledge (Richards, 1985; Agrawal, 1995; Wolf, 1982; Schneider, 1977; Wallerstein, 1974; 1979a; Eckholm, 1980).

A fourth major objection focuses concern on whether traditional institutions (see Section 1.6.1 for a definition of institutions) can act as entry points for initiating

sustainable resource management. Again, the charge is that proponents of participation tend to romanticise these institutions. In Africa, many traditional institutions were fatally weakened during the colonial era, and no longer command much respect from local communities (Richards, 1985; 1992; Baland and Platteau, 1996; Matondi, 2001; Ribot, 1999). Some were based on the exercise of despotic power, and induced only fear. Suggestions to revive them are often met with disdain or protest by (say) women or younger people, who bore (in the past) the brunt of punishments meted out by often unaccountable authorities. Lastly, the concept of participation is also seen as problematic because it slides too easily along a discursive continuum from tokenism to interactive participation (Pretty, 1995).

1.2.3 History of forestry policy making in Zimbabwe

Consistent with the history of resource conservation policies in Africa mentioned above, early forestry policy-making in colonial Rhodesia was highly influenced and informed by policies endorsed by the British Empire (now the Commonwealth) Forestry Association. The association acted as a knowledge centre through which the forestry departments in the British colonies accessed conservation arguments that influenced the policy formulation process (Matose, 2002). These policies were mainly intended to command and control forests in the colonies. This early policy took no account of the needs of the majority population. Policy formulation during the colonial period was mainly influenced by a number of debates held during the various imperial forest conferences endorsing strict conservation of forests based on law enforcement (Brown, 2003). This resulted in the demarcation of state forests to be managed in a top-down fashion by the government forestry department, the Forestry Commission. These debates included discussion of watershed conservation centred around scientific arguments about the relationships between climate, deforestation and hydrology.

Hydrology and climate were topical issues within the empire debates up to the 1940s, but their significance in the formulation of forestry policies diminished over time (Matose, 2002). However, ideas on the role of forests in watershed conservation continued to persist in forest policy formulation in Rhodesia and even in post-colonial Zimbabwe. These debates were centred on the belief that indigenous forests lay mainly on fragile Kalahari sands, and were susceptible to erosion. Later, sustainable timber yield came to greater prominence in colonial debates, due to the fact that some forests in commonwealth countries were rich in commercial timber species, and there was need to establish how best to sustain production from these commercially valuable assets. A resolution was made at the Empire Forestry conference of 1923 spelling out the need for sound management (Matose, 2002). All governments were urged to come up with management plans to ensure sustained yields of forest products. Forest and land policies during the colonial era, however, were deeply imbued with the desire to increase social and economic control of natural assets by colonial governments.

The independence of Zimbabwe (1980) and a changing international conservation climate created a window of opportunity for more people-friendly policy frameworks (Adams and Hulme, 2001). Zimbabwe became, in fact, a fore-runner in experimenting with community-based conservation programmes, of which CAMPFIRE (Communal Areas Management Programme for Indigenous Resources) is the most notable. In

congruence with these trends, the Forestry Commission also communicated a desire for more community-based forestry policies in Zimbabwe in the early 1980s, and expressed a willingness to change the law accordingly. However, the Forest Act was merely amended and its original provisions not fundamentally changed.

The Forestry Act gives authority to the Forestry Commission, to manage all state forests in the country. The first point under section 41 of the Forestry Act states that, unless authorised in terms of sub-sections (3) or (4) of section 44, no person shall cut, fell, injure or destroy any forest produce or remove any forest produce from any demarcated forest or protected private forest (Government of Zimbabwe, 1996). This led to the paradoxical situation that "whilst the FC advocates participation in forest resources management and benefit sharing by local people and communities, the legislative framework does not enable this to occur" (Nhira *et al.*, 1998, p. 43). The laws allow local people in communal areas to use forestry products for own use only, while commercial use still remains limited to private owners of large scale commercial farms. In addition, the decentralisation of authority meant to empower communities never really reached them, as the Rural District Councils (RDCs, the lowest level of local government) remained the "appropriate authority" to decide on natural resources (Campbell *et al.*, 2001).

As the above discussion suggests, policies crafted in the early years of the century in Zimbabwe, and mainly influenced by Western environmental concerns, largely ignored the needs of local communities. This resulted in conflicts, and threatened the ultimate failure of centralised natural resource management approaches. This threat triggered international debate from which people-centred approaches to resource management emerged.

1.2.4 Experiences with participatory forest management in Zimbabwe

In Zimbabwe, the first attempt to implementing participatory approaches to resource management began in 1984 with the Communal Areas Management Programme for Indigenous Resources CAMPFIRE (Bonger, 1999). The Department of National Parks and Wildlife Management was given the authority under the Parks and Wildlife Management Act of 1975 to manage wildlife within and outside national parks. The 1975 Act, however, mainly focused on commercial farming areas. It was amended in 1982, enabling the Minister of Environment and Tourism to devolve authority to manage wildlife resources in areas under their jurisdiction to Rural District Councils[4] and local communities under the CAMPFIRE programme. The CAMPFIRE programme had its origins in a tsetse-eradication programme in the Sebungwe Region,[5] in north-western Zimbabwe, comprising three districts namely Binga,

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[4] The Rural District Council is the overall responsible authority and custodian of all natural resources in each district. It falls under the Ministry of Local Government, Rural and Urban Development and has a Natural Resources Management Committee (NRMC) to coordinate all council activities on natural resources. The composition of the NRMC is determined by Section 36A of the District Councils Act. This allows the Minister of Natural Resources to determine the members and terms and conditions under which the committee can appoint sub-committees (Bonger, 1999). The NRMC also formulates and implements all by-laws on forests and natural resources (see Section 2.3.2 for more details)

[5] The Sebungwe Region is an area of approximately 40 000 km^2, constituting 10% of the country, in north western Zimbabwe, extending southward from Lake Kariba (Taylor, undated).

Northern Gokwe and Kariba. A major proportion of this region falls within agro-ecological regions IV and V, considered unsuitable for agriculture.[6]

The programme of tsetse eradication made the area habitable and resulted in thousands of people migrating into the area from the mid 1970s onwards (Murombedzi, 1994; Bonger, 1999). However, the settlers, who came from the densely populated Masvingo and Midlands provinces, were mostly looking for agricultural land. This raised fears that major changes to land use would threaten the protected areas, unless the settlers benefited in one way or another from the wildlife resources. To ensure that some of the benefits from wildlife resources devolved to the settlers a Wildlife Industries New Development for All (WINDFALL) Programme was formulated by the Ministry of Environment and Tourism, and implemented in 1978. The programme involved the return of revenue from culled elephants in the Chirisa Game Park (in Sebungwe region) to surrounding communities. The basic assumption behind the WINDFALL programme was that the human/wildlife conflicts would be reduced and attitudes towards conservation would be improved in affected areas if wildlife proceeds were returned to their sources of origin. In the programme, revenues accrued to the central treasury were transferred to the Rural District Councils (RDCs) to fund approved projects. There were, however, huge delays in the transfer of funds (Murphree, 1988) and only a small portion of the proceeds from safari hunting were returned to relevant districts, let alone to the originating communities (Murphree, 1990). Under the programme, meat from culls in the national parks adjacent to communal areas was also supposed to be made available to the inhabitants of those areas. However, because of the bureaucracy involved, very little meat found its way back to the local communities. Overall, the programme failed to halt the decline of wildlife in the game park (Murombedzi, 1994; Bonger, 1999).

Being aware of the deficiencies of the WINDFALL programme, and encouraged by the Zimbabwe Government's ideological and policy commitments to localised planning and implementation of development processes, the Department of Wildlife Management produced a new programme entitled Communal Area Management Programme for Indigenous Resources CAMPFIRE, (Murphree, 1990). Details of the new programme are found in Martin (1986). The programme's main assumption was that conservation is only possible when undertaken by 'relevant populations'[7] as an investment in a sustained programme of resource exploitation. The programme also assumed that financial benefits from wildlife management and utilisation would act as an incentive for communities to develop institutional mechanisms to manage wildlife resources in their areas. The programme aimed: to enhance voluntary participation of local communities in the management of wildlife resources and their conservation, whilst simultaneously benefiting from this initiative; introduce a system of ownership

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[6]   Zimbabwe has been divided into five natural regions (NR)/ agro-ecological zones: NRI receives 1050mm+ rainfall per annum with some rain in all months of the year; NRII receives 700-1050mm rainfall per annum with rainfall only in summer; NRIII receives 800-700mm per annum rainfall and is characterised by high temperatures, infrequent heavy rains and seasonal droughts; NRIV receives 450-600mm rainfall per annum and is characterised by high temperatures and seasonal droughts, and NRV receives less than 500mm rainfall per annum and this rain is erratic (Vincent and Thomas, 1962).

[7]   'Relevant populations are those who live within the micro-environments which sustain the natural resources concerned, who pay the price for their sustained maintenance, who must reap the benefits of this investment and who at the smallest viable operational level, have the collective capacity to manage these resources' (Murphree, 1990, p. 3)

and access rights to the wildlife resources in the game park (Nemarundwe, 2005); facilitate the setting up administrative and institutional structures for making the programme work (this involved granting of appropriate authority to rural district councils to allow them to take control over the management and utilisation of wildlife resources in their areas of jurisdiction); and provide assistance (both technical and financial) to communities to participate in the management and also realise economic benefits from their wildlife resources (Murombedzi, 1994).

The financial benefits might be utilised for: a) the development of community infrastructure such as boreholes, schools and roads; b) the training of local community members in problems of animal control in order to protect themselves against wild animals and c) crop protection measures (Murombedzi, 1992; Nabane, 1997).

In order to assist the RDC in their new responsibilities for management of wildlife resources, a CAMPFIRE collaborating group, consisting of seven organisations, was set up. This included the Department of National Parks and Wildlife Management, responsible for policy guidance and ecological monitoring and advisory services, the Ministry of Local Government and National Housing with responsibility over the RDCs, the Zimbabwe Trust, to provide institutional development support and funding for RDCs, the Centre for Applied Social Sciences, responsible for policy research and socio-economic expertise and monitoring support, the Africa Resources Trust, to provide information and links to international networks on issues related to international policy and regulations, and the CAMPFIRE Association, whose role was to coordinate all RDCs with appropriate authority for managing wildlife resources, and to represent their interests in a policy advocacy role (Moyo, 2000).

The system of ownership envisioned under the CAMPFIRE Programme involved the creation of natural resource co-operatives with rights and obligations similar to those of private ranch owners. The programme was considered impressive because of its bold response to problems produced by earlier policies and its sensitivity to socio-economic and ecological factors (Murphree, 1990). Even though it took a long time before the programme was operational (mainly because of the complexities in setting up the programme), in 1988, two districts (Guruve and Nyaminyami) were given authority to control wildlife resources in their areas. The district councils later set up their enterprises and entered into contracts with private organisations, receiving all revenues directly and distributing them at their discretion.

The RDCs were also responsible for 'problem animal control' (controlling animals that strayed out of the game park into the village to destroy crops or injure people), and for law enforcement and protection of wildlife resources in their areas of jurisdiction. The financial benefits, and increased meat consumption from culled animals increased the interest of local stakeholders in the programme. This resulted in the creation of numerous community wildlife management committees. At the peak of the CAMPFIRE programme, 37 districts had received appropriate authority to manage wildlife in their constituencies. However, only 23 districts functioned as intended and only 12 of these received regular income from hunting and ecotourism, amounting to USD20.3 Million accumulated between 1989 and 2001 (Frost and Bond, 2006). Of this amount, 49% was channelled back to the communities, representing 121.500 households (Khumalo, 2003). Because of these positive developments the CAMPFIRE programme was hailed as a success and received

international recognition as a good example of Community-Based Natural Resource management.

However, as time passed it became obvious that the programme had failed to live up to its expectations to conserve wildlife resources and improve lives of local people living on the margins of national parks (Murphree, 2000; Mandondo, 2001; Ribot, 1999; Matondi, 2001; Nemarundwe, 2003). A number of factors were identified as having led to this failure: a free-rider problem, as a result of unclear definition of beneficiary groups, lack of transparency by RDCs over the generated financial benefits and their use, and reluctance to devolve power to local communities by the RDCs. Reasons for the reluctance of the district level local government structures, the RDC, to devolve authority included continued bureaucracy in government departments (Murphree, 1993), the supply-led nature of the decentralisation process (Mandondo, 2001; Ribot, 1999; Matondi, 2001), and the existence of too many organisational structures in the communities (such as the CAMPFIRE Wildlife Management Committees, the Traditional Leadership Authorities, and the Village Development Committees), which made it difficult to identify the entity to which authority was to be devolved (Nemarundwe, 2005; 2003).

Following the implementation of CAMPFIRE which focused on big game in national parks, interest developed to see if the framework could be applied to other natural resources, such as forests. The Forestry Commission (FC), a government department under the Ministry of Environment and Tourism, decided to embark on co-management initiatives around reserved state forests[8] to deal with conflicts between local communities and the FC. A pilot Resource Sharing Project (RSP) was initiated in Mafungautsi State Forest, in Gokwe South District of Midlands Province, in 1994. The pilot project aimed to test joint management of the forest by the FC and local residents, as an alternative to complete state control. The experiences were meant to inform policy on the importance and feasibility of participatory approaches to the management of state forests.

The FC initiated the formation of fourteen Resource Management Committee (RMC)[9] areas in communities surrounding the forest. The RMCs were created to align with communities, and to act as entry points for the FC in the community. An RMC area covered between 3 and 10 villages. Each RMC consisted of 7 members: a chair, vice chair, secretary, vice secretary, treasurer and 2 ordinary committee members. These members were representatives of local communities in the different areas. The RMCs were supposed to help control resource-harvesting in the forest through issuing harvesting permits to community members, thereby at the same time generating income for local rural development. The joint management project went beyond the provisions of the current Forestry Act by allowing communities to harvest minor forest products. These included thatch grass (*Hyparrhenia femitina*), broom grass (*Aristida junciformis*), dead wood, mushrooms, fruits, mopane worms (edible caterpillars of the moth *Imbresia belina*) and use of pasture lands within the forest

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[8] State forests in Zimbabwe have over the years been solely managed by the Forestry Commission since they serve national interests – including commercial timber and wildlife protection, preservation of biodiversity, and protection of ecosystems and water catchments (Piearce and Gumbo, 1993)

[9] The 14 RMC areas and their locations around Mafungautsi State Forest are shown in Chapter 2 (Figure 2.5)

reserve. Major forest resources, such as timber and poles, remained outside the resource sharing agreement.

Through the Resource Sharing Project (RSP), the FC aimed to encourage local participation in forest resource management and benefit sharing, while devolving limited authority to the local level. In a study to assess the prospects for co-management of the Mafungautsi State Forest, Matose (2002) concluded that even after many years of participatory management in Mafungautsi, villagers and forestry staff still maintained fixed ideas about the forest. On one hand, due to entrenched discourses around watershed conservation and fragile ecosystems, the FC continued to deny local people access to forest land for cultivation and settlement. Local community members, on the other hand - particularly original settlers - viewed the forest symbolically as their homeland, to which they had rights to return to settle and farm (Matose, 2002). Community members also continued to access resources like timber that fell outside the RSP, and this resulted in continued degradation of the forest resource.

The background to the kind of initiative attempted in Mafungautsi is found in Indian forestry which in many ways acted as a model for the Mafungautsi Resource Sharing Project. In India, 95% of forest land is owned by the government (Matose, 2002) as a result of laws that converted private and communal lands to state lands, and resulted in the rights of local communities over land being eroded (Campbell, 1992; Nhira and Matose, 1996; Matose, 2002). The Indian government forest department's main objective in managing the forests was to maximize revenue while protecting the environment. Because of their exclusion from the management and utilisation of forests resources, communities living in the forest margins began to treat these forests as open-access resources,[10] leading to over-exploitation and degradation.

In the 1970s and 1980s, the Indian forest departments realised that they would never succeed to manage forests sustainably without participation of local communities. Officials from three states, Bengal, Gujarat and Huryana, therefore decided to involve local community members in management by creating Forest Protection Committees. These committees were supposed to represent local communities and were responsible for protecting degraded lands from illegal tree cutting, fires, overgrazing and encroachment (Matose, 2002). In return, local communities were supposed to benefit from accessing a wide range of non-timber forest products.

Because of success in these three pilot states, the Indian government enacted an order in 1990 asking all states to involve local communities in the management of forests lands, and non-governmental organisations (NGOs) were asked to become facilitators of the process. By 1992, nine states had passed regulations encouraging partnerships between local communities and forestry departments in management of forestry resources (Campbell, 1992). By 1998, 21 states had involved local people in the management of forestry resources (Sharma, 1998). Results from these joint management initiatives were uneven, however, and in some cases distinctly disappointing, for a number of reasons: inter/intra community disputes, unchanged attitudes and culture among forest department officials, the socio-economic and

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[10]   Under the open access regime, the resource in question is not taken as property and its use is open to all on a first come first served basis. Open access resources are subject to resource depletion (Moyo, 2000).

cultural values of the local communities, lack of statutory authority within local institutions, coverage of degraded forests only, and the donor-driven nature of some initiatives (Sharma, 1998).

As mentioned in the introductory section, because of some of the disappointing results from participatory resource management initiatives (such as those experiences in India and Zimbabwe), it is not surprising that there has been increasing criticism by conservationism who blame participation as leading to resource degradation. However, proponents of participation take reverting back to parks as re-inventing a square wheel that will never work (Wilshusen *et al*., 2002). They still see participation as a promising alternative and therefore call for more participatory approaches that produce positive outcomes.

It is against this background - a conviction that participatory resource management must be the way forward, but experience of a number of failed participatory initiatives - that the Center for International Forestry Research (CIFOR) initiated (in 1999) a multi-country, multi-site Adaptive Collaborative Management (ACM) research project. The ACM concept counts complex systems analysis, adaptive management and social learning theory, and theories relating to cooperation, competition, equity, development, human interaction and facilitation of change among its intellectual heritage (Diaw, *et al.* 2009). At the heart of the ACM approach are issues concerning what is needed to bring about cooperation among stakeholders in joint resource management situations, in the face of multiple interests and conflict. The ACM approach makes use of a literature on common property that has grown over the years to demonstrate alternatives to Hardin's tragedy of the commons thesis [i.e. that resources held in common are subject to degradation, since it is in no individual's interest to conserve an open-access assets, and free-riders cannot be excluded - (Hardin, 1968)]. As in this common property literature (Kayambazinthu *et al.,* 2003; Ostrom, 1986; 1990; Bromley and Cernea, 1989; Cleaver, 2000), ACM considers that when communities have regulatory systems [11] to check on individual interests, free riders can be controlled and common pool resources can be maintained.

The ACM approach acknowledges that natural resource management is complex and characterised by uncertainty and surprise. This is a consequence of multiple, non-linear interactions among the various components in eco-systems making predictions of precise outcomes impossible. Simple localised events can lead to the emergence of complex phenomena at macro levels not easily predicted from knowledge of lower level components and their interactions (Jiggins and Roling, 2000). The complexity is further increased by a multiplicity of stakeholders with different aims and interests. This makes planning and decision making processes difficult especially when resource users do not have complete knowledge about the impacts of the actions. Nevertheless, waiting and not doing anything is not an option; decisions must still be made and actions must be taken.

The ACM approach advises resource managers to prepare themselves to expect and deal with surprises, and to treat management activities as experiments. For the ACM approach, management of natural resources should always be experimental, with managers consciously learning from their implemented activities and their outcomes.

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[11]   Norms, rules and regulations that govern behaviour

This, according to the ACM approach, calls for resource managers to engage in Participatory Action Research (PAR) - a reflective process of progressive problem solving. In this process, resource managers identify their problem, list alternative solutions, select and implement solutions, monitor outcomes, reflect upon them and draw lessons from the outcomes of these actions (Selener, 1997). PAR is generally applied within social learning contexts, where multiple actors collectively arrive at joint problem definition and objectives, and then work collectively toward an agreed solution (Maarleveld and Dangbégnon, 1999; Pretty and Buck, 2002).

In Zimbabwe, the ACM project was implemented from 1999 to early 2003 in Mafungautsi State forest. This forest acted as a pilot joint management project between the FC with and local communities in 1994. The joint forest management programme was named the Resource Sharing Project (RSP). ACM was meant to strengthen the RSP project, which so far had been ineffective (Section 2.6, Chapter 2). Key partners in the implementation of the ACM project were CIFOR, the FC and local communities. The main aims of the ACM project were to add value to the RSP as well as gain more understanding on the usefulness of the ACM approach in joint forest management situations. Because of a belief in 'learning by doing' as a way to solve natural resource management problems, the ACM project was introduced as a PAR project.

The project aimed to facilitate a shift away from top-down prescriptions to encourage use of PAR for problem solving. However, participatory resource management approaches have recently been criticised for not living up to their expectations and producing patchy successes only. Critics point out that such programmes do not address issues of power and politics in the communities and the underlying their assumptions are still disturbing as they still promote Western conservation ideas whilst paying lip service to needs of local communities (Anderson and Grove, 1987). The approach (it is claimed) romanticises traditional institutions, assuming such institutions are suitable entry points for initiating sustainable resource management. This assumption underestimates the presence of socio-economic differences within communities and the degree to which traditional structures may serve the interests of an elite. In addition, dependency syndrome is sometimes fostered, and the initiative collapses when the facilitators pull out. Finally, it sometimes suggested that supporters of participatory approaches in conservation do not always fully appreciate the complexity of the natural resource management problems to be addressed. Assuming that ecosystem responses to human use are linear, predictable and controllable has been identified as a fundamental error in past resource management efforts (Folke, *et al.,* 2002). Empirical evidence has however shown that human and natural systems behave in non-linear ways that makes prediction of management outcomes using probability based approaches difficult and impossible (Folke, *et al.,* 2002). Uncertainty and surprise therefore requires a new way of doing things based on learning by doing approaches to problem solving (Jiggins and Roling, 2000). The aim of this thesis is to examine and resolve doubts of this kind, focusing in particular on the adequacy of learning-based approaches to the kind of situation encountered around the Mafungautsi forest.

1.3   Research Objectives

The main objective of this thesis is to make a critical assessment of the contribution of the ACM approach to the conservation of forests in Zimbabwe, and the improvement of lives of villagers living in communities on the forest margins.

1.3.1 Specific objectives

There are 3 specific objectives:
- To understand linkages between changing social and environmental conditions and power relations among stakeholders attempting joint resource management.
- To contribute to the understanding of implementation and outcomes of learning-based approaches in natural resource management and factors that influence the sustainability of outcomes of learning-based approaches.
- To understand the influence of institutions in outcomes of learning based resource management initiatives

1.4   The Research Questions

This thesis addresses the following questions and sub-questions:

1.   How was the learning-based approach implemented in Mafungautsi Forest and what were its outcomes?
- What steps were taken in implementing the ACM approach?
- Who was involved in doing what?
- What challenges were faced in implementing the ACM approach?
- What were the outcomes of the ACM approach and how did these come about?

2.   What conflicts or tensions emerged during and after the ACM project and how were they dealt with?

3.   Which institutional structures were put in place in the ACM project and how did these influence resource management activities and outcomes?

4.   Is the ACM approach an answer to the recent criticisms of participatory resource management?
- Did the ACM approach lead to improvements in the well-being of local community members and the status of the forest?
- If improvements were observed, were these sustained and what factors influenced the sustainability or lack of sustainability of outcomes of the ACM approach?

5.   What lessons can we learn from the Mafungautsi experiences in relation to learning based approaches?

1.5   Methodology

In this research, I revisit the action research project through a kind of reflexive technographic study, buttressed by concepts of political ecology and new institutionalism. There are several definitions of reflexivity in literature (Aamodt, 1991; Guillemin and Gillam, 2004; Mason, 1996; Hertz, 1997; Côté & Levine, 2002; Huberman and Miles, 1994), but they come all down to the same critical reflection of the researchers own position and views, and how this influences his/her interpretation of the research findings (Burr, 1995). Some definitions go further and relate reflexivity to the influence of the researcher on the researched situation and the participation of others, non-researchers in knowledge generation (Giddens, 1990; Bourdieu, 1992). Reflexivity consists of two processes: self reflection and identification of the researcher's feelings and pre-conceptions; and the ability to put aside these feelings and pre-conditions (Ahern, 1999). Huberman and Miles (1994) argue that sharing experiences and insights fully makes researchers accountable to readers. Reflexivity therefore helps to make qualitative research findings credible and objective by accounting for researcher's values, beliefs, knowledge and biases (Cutcliffe, 2003; Bourdieu, 1992).

The following two techniques can be used in reflexivity and account for oneself in the research. First, use of a reflexive journal to capture the researcher's mind process and philosophical position and the bases upon which decisions were made in the research process. This requires the researcher to spend time reflecting on his/ her thoughts and feelings about the issues being investigated (Lincoln and Guba, 1985). The researcher however, needs to note changes made to these thoughts and feelings during implementation of planned activities. A reflexive journal should include: daily plans for research activities; a dairy with personal reflections and methodologies chosen for implementing the research and reasons associated with the choice made. Second, making the researchers pre-suppositions explicit before starting the research work. Andrews *et al.* (1996), argue that researchers studying a certain phenomenon bring with them pre-suppositions and these need to be made explicit and should be tested out with empirical evidence from the study. This however requires one to be fully aware of him/ herself. However, as the 'Jo-Hari' window shows (Chapter 4, Part I), one can never fully know one's self and there is always a blind spot. This means that only a portion of our assumptions can be made explicit whilst the other potion remains outside of the researchers' consciousness (Cutcliffe, 2003).

I use reflexivity as a methodology to help me attain objectivity when looking back at the experiences of the ACM project in Mafungautsi Forest from 1999 up to 2007. In this research, I play two key roles, one of retelling the ACM project story as I was part of the implementing team in Zimbabwe and the second of being a PhD researcher critically reflecting on the ACM project and its outcomes. I therefore start by making explicit the assumptions that the researchers had before initiating the ACM research project (Chapter 3) as these influenced their methodologies in implementing the ACM approach in Mafungautsi. In this research, I also put my initial assumptions aside by adopting a new analytical framework (consisting of New Institutionalism and political ecology) to critically analyse the project and its outcomes.

In trying to distance myself from a project in which I was an actor, I take the step of trying to look at the ACM approach as a technology (i.e. as a way of making something), and specifically as a technology used to make changes in a resource

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sharing process. It was believed that with the ACM approach, local stakeholders would collaborate, jointly learn together to solve their natural resource management problems. In the thesis I trace the steps involved in this process of joint learning, and then assess the outcomes of this technology, asking whether they were positive or negative and whether they were sustained or not. I critically analyse why these outcomes were sustained or not. The first step in gaining a reflexive standpoint is to say something about my background as a project worker.

I joined the CIFOR's ACM project as a PAR researcher in January 2001 and worked for the project until 2003 when it ended. My terms of reference as an ACM team member included facilitating the implementation the ACM approach in the RSP, contributing to the further development of the ACM concept, conducting field work related to participatory resource management using PAR as the main methodology, writing field reports, analysing findings from the field work and preparing written output (such as scientific papers and manuals) for different audiences, and finally acting as a resource person in training workshops to equip forest extension officers with the ACM approach.

After the project ended in 2003, I became involved in another project to upscale the ACM approach. My terms of reference changed and my work now focused on capacity building for forestry officers in the selected districts with regard to the ACM approach, and monitoring progress in all the sites. I also acted as a chief editor for an ACMZim news newsletter that was put in place to act as a learning platform for the various officers in ACM up-scaling project. During this period (from 2004-6) I also conducted post-project fieldwork in Mafungautsi as part of my PhD studies. I did my final field work in 2007 when I was no longer working for CIFOR and was a full time PhD student.

Some of the data used in this thesis were generated during the action research process that I participated in, as a member of the Zimbabwe ACM team. This included information on how the ACM approach was implemented in Mafungautsi State Forest, the various processes facilitated, and their immediate outcomes. Besides using my own experiences in facilitating this process from 2001 to 2003, I also undertook complementary ethnographic research in the period 2004 - 2007. This ethnographic research partly served as triangulation for the action research findings, but also yielded additional information on what had happened in the area subsequently. I also examined the field reports that were produced during the ACM research period, and subjected them to a critical appraisal. I collected the bulk of the data in 2004 - 7 using a mix of methods including participant observation, secondary data analysis, focus group discussions, and questionnaire surveys.

To generate information on the profiles of the Resource Management Committees (RMCs) in Mafungautsi (including the ACM sites, at Gababe, Ndarire and Batanai), I conducted interviews in September 2004, guided by a checklist, with key informants. These key informants included RMC chairpersons, secretaries, and treasurers, and other people knowledgeable about RMC operations in Mafungautsi. I also interviewed the Forestry Commission (FC) programme officer for the Mafungautsi Resource Sharing Project, who gave a historical overview of all the RMCs around the state forest. I also attended to a number of important details, such as measuring

distances, in cases where the respondents did not know the distances from one place to the other.

For identifying the outcomes of the ACM approach, I analysed field notes taken in the period 1999 to 2005, and conducted focus group discussions and key informant interviews with villagers and the FC project staff in 2006 - 2007. Because of the deteriorating socio-economic-political environment in Zimbabwe, it was not practical to attempt a thorough ecological and socio-economic impact assessment of the study area. So much had changed in the general context, so fast, that it would be hard to quantitatively identify project impacts. An additional disturbing factor was the loss of a key figure, the FC officer, who unfortunately passed away in October 2005. The officer who took over in 2006 received limited training in the ACM approach and faced serious constraints in accessing basic resources as the situation in the country continued to worsen. Up to October 2007, when the new officer also sadly passed away, he had concentrated his efforts on a new drive to evict new settlers in the forest. With this background of flux, a thorough ecological survey to assess the status of the forest resource at the end of the project would have been a waste of time, as several parts of the forest had already been converted to agricultural fields by new settlers, who moved in and settled in forested land after the introduction of the Zimbabwe Fast Track Land Reform Programme in 2000. The number of settlers in the forest has continued to increase (Chapter 2). While no attempt is made to assess quantitatively the ecological impact of the ACM intervention after the project ended, I do attempt to assess and interpret provisional outcomes realised during the project period before the general situation became more unstable, as noted at the time and documented in project records.

1.6   Conceptual Orientation

Mafungautsi State forest, like other common property resources, faces a potential tragedy of the commons. However, a huge body of common property literature has demonstrated that this problem can be avoided if effective institutions (rules, norms and regulations) are put in place to regulate and control individual behaviour. The Mafungautsi forest resource continued to be degraded even after the introduction of the RSP, and up to the time when the ACM project was introduced in 1999, the RSP had produced disappointing results. In this thesis, it is imperative to analyse how the ACM project facilitated the setting up of institutional elements considered crucial for overcoming the tragedy of the commons problem. Several approaches to institutional analysis can be found in literature, and this study makes its own selection from among available new institutionalist options, to throw light upon the outcomes of the ACM project in Mafungautsi. New Institutionalism, however, has recently been criticised for failing to address issues of social difference and failing to incorporate political and contextual factors into its analysis. Because of this shortcoming, the present study will also make use of an analytical framework reflecting some ideas developed by geographers, anthropologists and others working under the banner of "political ecology", to try and probe some of the conflicted power relations involved in participation. These two elements in my analytical framework will now be discussed in more detail.

1.6.1 New institutionalism

There are different definitions of institutions in literature. Some researchers (Harriss, 1982; North 1990; Pretty and Ward, 2001) clearly differentiate institutions from organisations. Organisations in this case are taken as players or institutional structures with authority to ensure that agreed upon rules are adhered to (Pretty and Ward, 2001; North, 1990). Institutions are then defined as regulatory systems of formal rules, regulations, informal agreements and norms of behaviour and organisations (Harriss, 1982; North, 1990; Bromley, 1989; Cleaver, 2000). Other scholars however, see organizations as products of institutions and thus in some sense synonymous (Uphoff, 1986; Mukamuri, 2000). Uphoff (1986), for example, considers institutions (whether organisations or rules governing use) as complexes of norms and behaviour that persist over time by serving collectively valued purposes. For Douglas (1986), by contrast, the form of organization (e.g. hierarchy, markets, egalitarian-collective, etc) generates norms and 'collectively valued purposes'. In Douglas' approach, clash of institutional values is one of the problems to be explained and resolved by institutional analysis. Institutions have been seen as crucial in defining the context within resource management takes place (North, 1990; Ostrom, 1990; Murphree, 1993). In discussions of institutions in the literature, terms like 'traditional', 'customary' and 'indigenous' are frequently used to specify the type of institution or management system in place.

However, not all scholars using these terms attempt to qualify their meaning. When the term 'traditional' is used in connection with 'management' for instance, it is often taken to mean systems characterised by sustainable and equitable use of resources (Knudsen, 1995). In this case, the term 'traditional' has a connotation of being old, legitimate, equitable and well adapted to the resources and resource users in question. The terms 'customary' and 'indigenous' are also often not defined and used interchangeably. Indigenous institutions for instance, are taken to be old, local in origin and conducive to equity. There are dangers, however, in using such terms in an unqualified manner since they give a stamp of authenticity or legitimacy to local resource management arrangements that have actually changed a great deal over time, and which may be far from being equitable.

To understand natural resource use, an institutional analysis is an important step (Mukamuri *et al*., 2000). One example is the rational co-operation approach that argues resource users can economise on transaction costs. Proponents of his approach are inspired by work of rational choice New Institutionalists such as Ostrom (1990), and Bromley (1989). A second approach draws from Durkheimian tradition focuses on moral codes. There is often a focus on culturally-specific traditions and value systems. This approach emphasises the power of moral constraint in generating and maintaining collective resource management (Mukamuri *et al*., 2000), and views actors as being largely driven by social norms (Skott, 1986). The rational choice framework adopted by the (so called) New Institutionalism is adopted here, since I consider it useful to be able to apply a universal template to the task of assessing informal and customary norms. This is simply a heuristic move, to avoid becoming entrapped in arguments about culture, and cultural relativism. Rightly or wrongly, this was also the approach of the ACM, in that it supposed that the principles of social learning were shared across cultures. I apply a New Institutionalist orientation in seeking to understand the outcomes of resource use and management in Mafungautsi. Further details about this approach are given below.

The New Institutionalism argues that credible commitment combined with mutual monitoring, under the protection of certain institutional arrangements, can motivate individuals to become more engaged in the realisation of shared goals and visions (Ostrom, 1990). Under this approach, individual decision making is not only influenced by individual preferences and the optimisation of behaviour (as argued by many economists) but by institutional (i.e. group) preferences as well (Bates, 1995; Ostrom, 1990). Douglas (1986) goes so far as to suggest that when an institution is functioning well it takes over much of the thinking and decision making from individuals. According to the new institutionalism, credible commitments can be made when individuals are presented with rules meeting key criteria (Nemarundwe, 2003). These include clearly defined boundaries, congruence between allocation and access rules and local conditions, users able to modify rules, monitoring by accountable individuals, and graduated sanctions for non-compliance. Commitment by individuals is to follow the rules, so long as others adopt the same commitments and long term benefits to individuals and groups are greater than costs. The main argument of new institutionalism is that institutions provide mechanisms to enable individuals bound in groups to overcome "free-rider" problems (Ostrom, 1990; Acheson, 1989; Bates, 1995).

Unlike the neo-classical economists, who view the individual decision-maker as acting according to a *calculated* rationality, new institutionalism assumes that individuals acts according to a *bounded* rationality (not all preferences can be ranked). In situations where an individual decides to go against set rules, institutions play an important role in sanctioning such actions. A large number of empirical studies of common property resource management have been informed by New Institutionalist thinking (Bromley, 1992; McCay and Acheson, 1987; Ostrom, 1990). This body of literature has been termed "common property resource theory" (Steins, 1999). The theory suggests that individuals will collectively manage common property resources when benefits from the institutional set up (rules and means of enforcement) are limited to a small and stable community (McCay and Acheson, 1987; Ostrom, 1990). Ostrom goes further to explain that boundaries define the terms of exclusion, and these are monitored and enforced by institutional structures established to monitor resource use.

A common theme that can be distilled from the common property resource theory literature is the concern with the design principles underlying successful collective resource management, though there is debate about what 'successful' and 'not successful' means, and whose perceptions of success count (Ostrom, 1990; Nemarundwe, 2003). Design principles are elements or conditions that influence institutions in sustaining the common pool resources by gaining compliance of users to rules, across generations (Ostrom, 1990). Several design principles have been identified by Ostrom (1990). These include:

- Rules that clearly define who has rights to use a resource
- Congruence between the rules that assign benefits and costs
- Possibility to modify rules
- Monitoring and conformance
- Graduated sanctions
- Conflict resolution mechanisms using clearly defined rules

- Recognition of rules by external authorities
- Application of rules, both horizontally (across groups) and vertically (up and down hierarchical levels).

Ostrom (1990) suggests that long-term stable institutions have most or all of these features, but that fragile or failed institutions have fewer, or none.

In the common property literature (North, 1990; Harriss, 1982; Bromley, 1999) regulatory systems designed to coordinate individual and collective action in natural resource management are sometimes classified under three broad categories, namely formal laws, informal conventions and norms designed to coordinate and manage individual and collective actions. Common property theory and the design principles have influenced institutional reforms aimed at community-based natural resource management. Empirical evidence, however, suggests that an approach based on these design principles results in treating communities as homogenous entities, where there is, in fact, much diversity in both communities and environments (Moore, 1996; Campbell *et al.,* 2001), so that something more differentiated and flexible is needed.

The design principles have been recently critiqued by a number of development practitioners and researchers (Campbell *et al.,* 2001; Mandondo, 1997; Steins; 1999) in that they assume a single resource use, use a static rationality model, and assume that collective management outcomes are determined by pre-defined principles. Natural resources, such as woodlands, produce a range of products, and often require different rules and norms for their management. Attempts to apply design principles in an inflexible manner in such complex resource management situations seem bound to fail (Murphree, 1991). Also, even if the management of common property resources revolves around a single product, this is often a source of conflict, due to multiple uses and management systems in place. Design principles, as mentioned above, are also criticised for romanticising indigenous knowledge systems and "traditional" organizational capacity, whereas in fact both local knowledge and "traditional" governance have been shaped and modified by colonial governments, and are often now only shadows of their original form (Baland and Platteau, 1996; Matondi, 2001; Ribot, 1999; Richards, 1985; 1992). These criticisms amount to a substantial critique of the new institutional approach, in particular for its failure fully to incorporate political and contextual issues in analysis. It is for this reason that the present study will integrate a second element in the analytical framework for local resource use and management, the political ecology approach.

1.6.2 Political Ecology

Political ecology describes empirical research-based explorations to explain linkages in the condition and changes in social and environmental systems with explicit consideration of relations of power. The research is directed at finding causes, rather than describing symptoms of problems. Political ecological research reveals winners, losers, hidden costs and differential power that produce social and environmental outcomes (Robbins, 1994). Political ecology research focuses on key questions such as:

- What causes resource degradation?
- Who benefits and who loses from resource conservation efforts?

- What political movements have emerged in response to resource conservation efforts?

Political ecology is an emerging area of enquiry that cuts across disciplines and methodological approaches. There is a large body of literature tracing its roots (Paulson *et al.,* 2003; Peet and Watts, 1996; Neuman, 2005) which I only summarise briefly.

Political ecology scholars come from various academic disciplines including anthropology, biology, geography and political science. Though political ecology has a strong interdisciplinary emphasis, it 'grew' from two major theoretical disciplines, namely political economy[12] and ecology*[13]* (Greenberg and Park, 1994; Blaikie and Brookfield, 1987). The field of political ecology began as a reaction to human ecology as it was practiced in the 60s and early 70s (Vayda and Walters, 1999). The reaction was mainly due to the neglect of the political dimensions of the human-nature interactions. A largely functionalist human ecology treated human communities as homogenous and autonomous units. Political ecologists share the following assumptions that: a) environmental change and ecological conditions are a product of political processes; and b) costs and benefits associated with environmental change are distributed among actors unequally and this influences existing socio-economic inequalities, thereby influencing the power of actors in relation to each other (Robbins, 1994).

Political ecologists argue that human-nature relationships are influenced by politics to a large extent (Bryant and Bailey, 1997), and that politics is essentially about competition and conflict over scarce resources. Political ecology views relationships between the environment and society as mediated by a variety of cultural and social practices, systems and structures (Department of Geography, Lancaster University, 2005). By focusing on factors that shape relations of power among human groups, and enquiring into how these influence diverse aspects of environment, political ecology has challenged dominant interpretations of the causes of environmental degradation and contested prevalent prescriptions for solving such problems based on functionalist thinking, including systems modelling approaches (Paulson *et al.*, 2003). Political ecologists argue that programs for addressing natural resource conservation problems that do not address the contested, political underlying causes of resource management problems will not succeed. For political ecologists, environmental problems are a product of political interests and struggles and this understanding is essential for solving problems.

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[12]   ***Political economy*** originated from the work of the following 17th-19th century thinkers – Hobbes, Adam Smith, Malthus, David Ricardo and Karl Marx (Greenberg and Park, 1994). Originally, political economy was the study of conditions under which production was organised in the new capitalist states. Contemporary definitions of political economy refer to approaches for studying economic and political behaviours ranging from a combination of economics with other fields, to other studies that challenge the orthodox economic assumptions.

[13]   ***Ecology*** is the study of the interactions between organisms and their environment. The term ecology was coined by a German biologist Ernst Haeckel in 1986 (Greenberg and Park, 1994). Haeckel defined ecology as the comprehensive science of the relationship of the organisms to the environment (Worster, 1985). Haeckel's writings (and also those by another German writer, Humboldt) influenced people like Charles Darwin (Worster, 1985). Several key theoretical ideas in ecology today owe their formulation to Darwin's book entitled, '*The Origins of Species*'.

The CAMPFIRE programme, already mentioned, implemented in Zimbabwe in 1984 to alleviate poverty and conserve wild life, is a good instance of this failure to grapple with political issues. In their assessment, Logan and Moseley (2002) concluded that the programme had made limited progress towards its goal of poverty alleviation mainly because it avoided in both design and implementation the historical and political realities surrounding resource ownership in the Zimbabwe. They further identify three critical dimensions of this problem: the design criteria for community ownership of resources, the legal structure of resource ownership, i.e. the framework within which the programme sought to transfer state owned resources to communities and the administrative allocation of the resources (see Box 1.1).

Political ecologists reject the view that environmental degradation can be understood as a problem of system failure to be solved by scientific and technical fixes. Rather, they argue that environmental problems - especially those in developing countries - are a product of broader global political and economic forces (Bryant and Bailey, 1997). This requires radical change in local, regional and global political processes if environmental problems in the developing countries are to be dealt with (Bryant and Bailey, 1997). Political ecology argues that there is an ecology of politics[14] and a politics of ecology.

Ecology of politics refers to the role that natural resources play in shaping the nature of political and social institutions. This view takes ecosystems as active agents shaping human action. Ecological services and resources available at a given time and place, determine alternatives available to people. These alternatives then shape politics, economics and management strategies of the ecosystems (Peterson, 2000). The constraints that the ecosystems pose are, however, dynamic and variable due to a number of factors such as climate change, species migration, population fluctuation and the evolution of diseases. These ecological changes, whether independent of or influenced by human actions, alter the conflicts over the ecological resources and services as well as the management approaches that can be applied to model and manage ecosystems.

Politics of ecology refers to the role that hierarchies, privileges, status and power play in shaping natural resource-use patterns and define the fundamentals of what constitutes an environmental problem, who causes it and how it can be solved. This view takes as important: political forces that influence what and how people learn, and political processes through which certain problems (and not others) are designated as crises requiring concerted action and resolution (Peterson, 2000).

In this thesis, I make use of the political ecology framework to reflect upon my experience as an ACM practitioner in Mafungautsi. In particular, I use it to uncover issues of power and its distribution in Mafungautsi and how these influenced resource use and management outcomes and their sustainability.

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[14]   **Politics** – the practices and processes through which power, in its multiple forms is exerted and negotiated (Paulson *et al.*, 2003)

Box 1.1: **Why the CAMPFIRE Programme failed to achieve its objective of poverty alleviation, according to Logan and Moseley (2002)**

Design criteria for community ownership of resources: In Zimbabwe, the process of community empowerment is seen as a process of decentralisation. In the context of CAMPFIRE, community empowerment takes a narrow meaning of local communities taking full control over resources in terms of use rights, whilst the government takes the role of a facilitator and not decision maker. There are however significant questions surrounding the practicalities of implementing CAMPFIRE in a context where the definition of community has a variety of meanings. Rural communities are characterised by different ethnic groups, who have different rights to different types of resources under different situations. The notion of community is also time dependent and resource specific and it is therefore crucial for community to be self defined instead of imposing the definition from outside.

Legal structure of resource ownership: The CAMPFIRE poverty alleviation potential was handicapped by its avoidance of tenure issues. The programme's land tenure guidelines specify that resource ownership should be established on the basis of a 'communal property regime with strong tenurial rights (Murphree, 1997, p.7) in order to transfer decision making from the state to the community. This aims to redress decades of policies under which rural land was transferred to state ownership. However, despite the programme's initial acknowledgement of tenure as an important part of resource management, the government failed to implement significant land redistribution policies and to date the colonial resource ownership structure still remains in place, and land reform remains a highly contentious issue in the CAMPFIRE areas as well as the larger economy.

The administrative allocation of resources: The administrative structure of the CAMPFIRE programme is directly influenced by the legal structure upon which it was founded. The government has maintained legal authority over land, and this gives the state authority to act as the manager and overseer of community resources. Government control operates through a hierarchical administrative system comprising of Village Development Committees (VIDCOs)[15], Ward Development Committees (WADCOs) and District Development Committees consisting of elected chairpersons of WADCOS (the councillors) and district administrators appointed by the government (see Section 2.3.2, Chapter, 2 for more details). This administrative structure poses two key challenges for the CAMPFIRE programme's potential in empowering local communities: a) the flow of authority from the district to the villages gives the RDC control over ward and village decisions b) the final decision on whether a community can join the programme or not rests with the RDC and this deprives communities of their authority to decide whether or not to join the programme. In cases when a community is approved (communities do not decide to join but are approved by the RDC) to join the programme, all decisions concerning the wild life resource and safari companies are made by the RDCs. Overall, the CAMPFIRE's role in community empowerment is limited.

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[15] VIDCOs were created by the 1984 Prime Ministerial Directive to give a democratic orientation to the process of planning for local development. The VIDCO is the lowest unit of government administration, whose role is to identify needs of people in their villages and articulate them in the form of village development plans. These plans are presented to the WADCO. The WADCO draws its memberships from the chairpersons of the VIDCOs in the ward and is chaired by an elected councillor. It is responsible for consolidating the various VIDCO plans into a WARD development plan to be presented to the Rural District Development Committee

1.7   Organisation of the thesis

The current chapter has established the context for the research. The research problem, objectives, questions, methods and the analytical framework have been outlined. An outline of the following chapters and their main arguments now follows.

Chapter 2 situates the study in the broader Zimbabwean and then local context. The chapter is divided into two major sections. The first part presents the changing national socio-economic and political climate and the related challenges that the Zimbabwe ACM team faced in implementing the ACM approach in an unstable environment. The second part presents the local historical context and settlement history in Gokwe and around Mafungautsi State Forest, as well as the biophysical contexts, e.g. the vegetation and soils in the forest.

Chapter 3 outlines the details and assumptions of the ACM approach.   These assumptions were important in shaping activities implemented by the ACM researchers in Mafungautsi. The chapter highlights how the ACM approach was conceived by CIFOR researchers in Bogor, Indonesia, and conceptualised by the ACM researchers in Zimbabwe. It summarises the questions that the research team in Zimbabwe aimed to address and the impacts they hoped to achieve by using the ACM approach.

Chapter 4 describes and analyses how the Zimbabwe CIFOR team, using a participatory action and learning framework, implemented the ACM approach in the complex Mafungautsi environment. The chapter shows that using the ACM approach was easier on paper than in practice. Various interventions were needed to resolve conflicts and build stakeholder capacities even before the PAR process could be started. Setting the stage for PAR, and doing PAR in practice was complicated by issues of power. Some initial positive outcomes were realised, but these were gone four years later.

Chapter 5 focuses on the operations of the RMC in the two study sites, Gababe and Batanai. In addition to facilitating the PAR processes, the ACM team also aimed to influence the local level resource management institutional structures. The chapter shows how the functioning of the RMCs in two areas, Batanai and Gababe, were complicated by issues of power and its unequal distribution. The RMCs at the initial stage of the project evolved into transparent and downwardly accountable organisations, resulting in improvements in resource management at the local level. More improvements in the functioning of the RMCs were noticed in Gababe than in Batanai, a politically volatile area; operations of the Batanai RMC were in many ways hampered by politics in the area. However, even the improvements noted in Gababe, had disappeared in a follow up study four years later.

Chapter 6 synthesises the ACM experiences and findings. The chapter makes use of arguments from both new institutionalism and political ecology to probe the outcomes of the ACM approach. This leads to a discussion of possible reasons why outcomes of the ACM project were not sustained, and might not have been sustained, even if there had not been a more general crisis in Zimbabwe. I point to some issues that can be considered to be outcomes of design flaws in the project's ACM approach. I also discuss issues that I think should be addressed if learning-based approaches to natural resource management are to be re-organised to bring about lasting positive change.

The Mafungautsi Forest

A grass harvesting area in the forest

A broom grass resource user holding her
decorated brooms

Chapter 2: The Zimbabwe and Mafungautsi contexts

2.1 Introduction

The Adaptive Collaborative Research (ACM) project and its outcomes in Mafungautsi State Forest can best be approached by situating it in a broader national context, as well as within its specific local context. This comprises the socio-economic and political climate in the country and in Mafungautsi, as well as the forest's ecological status and environmental functions. Understanding context helps us uncover the underlying causes of natural resources problems so that they can be addressed. Resource management efforts that fail to address underlying causes are from a perspective of political ecology unlikely to succeed (Anderson and Grove, 1987; Bryant and Bailey, 1997; Chauveau and Richards 2008; Richards, 1983; 1996; Sharpe, 1998). Adequate contextualization requires international, regional and local issues to be inter-related. For instance, problems encountered at the local level may be a result of national policies, in turn, highly influenced by global economic and political forces. The context presented in this chapter helps prepare the ground for later analysis of how these issues were dealt with in the ACM project and how strategies chosen influenced the outcomes of the project.

2.2 Situating the study in the broader national context

Forest resources in Zimbabwe fall under categories linked to a land tenure system[16] put in place during the colonial era in Zimbabwe. These include state owned land, state owned land with customary control by traditional leaders and privately owned land (Table 2.1). During the colonial era, Native Reserves (today, Communal Areas) were set aside for native Zimbabweans who were forced to move from areas with high agricultural potential as these were re-assigned to white settlers.

The communal areas are typically remote, characterised by poor soil fertility and erratic rainfall, and considered unsuitable for colonial settlement. Land in communal areas is owned by the state. The Communal Lands Act of 1981 vests control over land in communal areas to the President, but devolves its administration to the Rural District Councils (RDCs). Traditional leaders, however, are responsible for ensuring that land in communal areas is used in line with existing national legislation (see section 2.2.1).

Land in agricultural high potential areas taken over from natives by the colonial government was at first given freely to whites working under the British South Africa Company (BSAC). Land for commercial farms was later sold cheap to encourage

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[16]   The land tenure categories however changed drastically after the Fast Track Land Reform Programme that was introduced in the year 2000 as land was taken over from the white commercial farmers and redistributed to landless Zimbabweans. The size of land under the new land tenure categories in the country are not yet known as studies to quantify the changes are still yet to be done

more white settlers to come to the colony. Legislation was also put in place to prevent natives from purchasing land in the areas designated for commercial farms.

Forests are found on both communal land, owned by the state, and on private land. Four categories can be distinguished (McNamara, 1993):

- *Forests and trees in communal areas*. These cover about 10 million hectares and provide households with construction timber and fuel wood. The quality of such forests, in terms of number of trees, varies from place to place, but mostly consists of a scattering of trees in cleared terrain. These forests are important sources of wild fruits and provide pasture for cattle in communal areas
- *Forests and trees in privately owned large-scale commercial farming areas*. These cover an area of about 7 million hectares, and function as an important habitat for wildlife
- *Forests on state land in protected areas*. These cover an area of about 6 million hectares. These forests consist of parks and protected areas vital for the country's tourism industry and make up about 5 million hectares. The remaining 1 million hectares consist of badly overexploited, but still commercially productive, forests. These forests are jointly operated by two organisations, the Department of National Parks and Wildlife and the Forestry Commission (McNamara, 1993).
- *Privately owned industrial forest plantations*. These cover a total of 110 000 ha and are of great commercial value, producing timber based products for the domestic market and export.

The focus of this thesis is on forests on state land, and these comprise 2.4 % of the total land area of Zimbabwe (Table 2.1). The state forests were created to protect them from destruction. The total of 21 forests in this category range in size from about 500 hectares (Ungwe Forest has a total of 567 hectares) to more than 144 000 hectares (the Gwaai Forest Reserve has a total of 144 230 hectares), (Mapedza, 2007). Most of these reserved forests are found in Matebeleland North and Midlands provinces and in predominantly drier areas. They are managed for various ends, including protection of watersheds, biodiversity conservation, and extraction of timber and other forest products. The management of state forests in Zimbabwe has been vested in the Forestry Commission (henceforth FC), a parastatal body under the Ministry of Environment and Tourism. The organogram for the FC is presented in Annex 2.1.

The FC was formed in 1954 (during the colonial period) subsequent to the passing of a Forestry Act in 1948 (Mapedza, 2007). Its main mandate remains to implement government strategy on forestry. This strategy sought to reserve rights to private land owners so ensure commercial utilization of forestry resources. The FC research branch was formed (also in 1954) to conduct silvicultural research geared to support management and exploitation of forest resources by the private land owners. Other roles of the FC included controlling and managing all state forests in the country, protecting private forests, controlling the cutting of timber resources in all areas, promoting forestation programmes in the country, regulating trade in forest produce, and finally creating an institutional framework to ensure these tasks were effectively carried out.

Current roles of the FC (Parliament of Zimbabwe, 2002) include:

- considering all questions and matters arising out of or relating to forestry policy and making reports and recommendations thereon to the Minister
- controlling, managing and exploiting State Forests and such other lands as may be acquired by the State for forestry purposes
- establishing, maintaining, improving and renewing exploitation of plantations and nurseries
- surveying forestry resources of the country
- advising and promoting forestry issues in the country
- conducting research and investigations into all matters pertaining to forests and forest products
- investigating matters relating to the use or occupation of the forest estate and making recommendations thereon to the president where it considers such use or occupation to be inconsistent with the Act
- carrying out activities as the Minister may specify as a service to the public on behalf of the State.

The mission statement of the current FC clearly states the role of the commission in supporting sustainable development, through conducting research and training programmes that promote forestry and forestry issues, promoting tree planting in the country, and investing in forest based industry and commerce (Forestry Comission, 1998). The FC is also responsible for formulating forestry policies in Zimbabwe.

The FC comprises not less than 3 and not more than 8 commissioners appointed by the Minister of Environment and Tourism after consultation with and directions from the state President (Parliament of Zimbabwe, 2002). Commissioners are appointed for periods not exceeding 3 years, and one of the commissioners is appointed chair of the Commission. In consultation with the Minister, a Chief Executive Officer (CEO) and a deputy are appointed. The CEO is responsible for supervising and managing the FC's staff activities, funds and property. The Commission is required to submit annual reports to the Minister of Environment and Tourism.

As regards policy, the FC top management presents any issue it wants addressed to the Minister of Environment and Tourism. To come up with a law, the Minister follows the procedure for law making in Zimbabwe. He/ she starts by presenting to cabinet a proposal to make a new law or to amend an existing law. Once the cabinet is satisfied that the proposal is in line with government policy, it gives the Minister a directive to prepare a draft bill to be presented and approved by the cabinet Committee in Legislation. Once the bill has been approved by the Cabinet, it is then published in the government Gazette for 14 days for the relevant stakeholders to see it before its introduction to Parliament. The bill then goes through several stages (Annex 2.2) in Parliament until it finally becomes a law (Parliament of Zimbabwe, 2006).

Since independence many laws have been enacted or amended to take account of the new political situation in the country. What is of current relevance is to note that, only cosmetic amendments were made to oppressive natural resource management legislations and this contradicts the spirit espoused during the liberation struggle to end systems of oppression (Mandondo, 2000). Although there is provision for new forestry laws to be developed, forestry policies in Zimbabwe were inherited from the

colonial period have more or less remained in place. This is surprising, given the strong link between forestry law and land law in Zimbabwe. Land laws favouring white settlers have been replaced (Box 2.1), but the forestry law remains in essence a colonial law. This has major consequences for conservation and participatory management of forest resources, as will be explored later. According to the Forestry Act, state forests are solely managed by the government forestry department and communities are excluded. This has been a source of many conflicts between communities living on the margins of state forests and the Forestry Commission.

2.2.1 Background to natural resource management in Zimbabwe

Governance of natural resources in Zimbabwe, of which the forests are part, falls under two separate and partly parallel regimes. These are traditional leadership authority structures and the local government structures. Local chiefs are the link, since they belong to the traditional leadership structures but are also members of Rural District Councils (in the local governance structure). This section presents two key aspects of this governance structure, and discusses how they came about, and their roles in the management of natural resources.

As mentioned above, Native Reserves were created in areas considered unsuitable for white settlement, and these were thus mainly in the drier and remoter areas of the country. In creating the reserves, the colonial regime (see next section) ignored the provisions of the British Order in Council to ensure that natives had enough land for crop production, watering and grazing. The new focus by the settlement company was geared towards attracting more Europeans to high potential areas (Rukuni, 2006), while the natives were forced on to marginal lands of much lower agricultural productivity due to poor natural soil fertility and erratic rainfall (Mehretu, 1994; Masiiwa and Chigejo, 2003). However, although racially-motivated land policies were in place, it took a long time before the natives were evicted from the white areas, mainly because of lack of space in the densely populated reserves (Rukuni, 2006). Because of high human and animal population densities on marginal lands, as well as their conversion from land suitable for extensive ranching to intensive cropping, there was rapid ecological degradation, characterized by soil erosion, degradation of forests and increased siltation of rivers (Whitlow, 1987).

Concerns over the management of natural resources in native reserves were first raised by a colonial government in the 1920s (Cliffe, 1988a; Ranger, 1985) that saw overpopulation, poor farming methods and overstocking as the major cause of problems (Beinart, 1984; Cliffe, 1988a; 1988b; Moyo and Skalness, 1990). Settlers had begun to experience environmental side effects from an unjust land division on the ecologically fragile lands to which the native population was being relegated (Murombedzi, 1994). To respond to these concerns, the colonial government started by enacting a Native Reserve Forest Produce Act of 1928 that restricted use of forest products to own use. This was followed by the passing of a Natural Resources Act of 1941, resulting in the formation of a Natural Resources Board with powers to compel farmers in native reserves to carry out conservation work. Such measures included the adoption of recommended methods of cultivation, limiting stock numbers, increasing cattle off-take, and imposing range-land management programmes. The implementation of the Act in the reserves was undertaken by the government extension services, which started servicing the reserves in the 1950s.

Several other items of legislations were also passed by the colonial government to try and address environmental concerns in the country, including the Forestry Act of 1948, the Parks and Wildlife Act of 1949, and finally the Parks and Wild Life Act of 1975. A summary of all the environmental management legislation passed during the colonial period is presented in Box 2.1 below:

Box 2.1:   Legislation passed for the management of natural resources during the colonial era.

1920s: First environmental concerns raised over natural resources in the native reserves.

1928: Native Reserves Forest Produce Act. This limited the use of forest products in the Native Reserves to 'own use'. The Act was replaced by the Communal Land Forest Produce Act of 1987. The new law only remeoved the racial reference but its provisions remained the same.

1930: The Land Apportionment Act. This made more land to be taken away from the natives.

1941: The Natural Resources Act was passed and led to the creation of the Natural Resource Board.

1948: The Forest Act was passed and led to the creation of the Forestry Commission. The Act was amended in 1982 and 1996. Despite these amendments, the Forest Act has remained more or less the same.

1950s: Extension workers were introduced to implement conservation measures. Natives were forced to implement conservation measures

1952: Native Land Husbandry Act. Introduced to improve conservation and agricultural productivity through enforcing conservation measures in the native reserves. This was later replaced by the Communal Lands Act of 1981.

1969: Tribal Trust Lands Act. This gave traditional leaders supervisory role in conservation.

1975: National Parks and Wildlife Act. Gave authority to private land owners to commercially utilise and benefit from their wild life resources. The Act was later amended in 1982 and became the legal basis for the Communal Areas Management Programme for Indigenous Resources programme.

Despite passing so many laws, environmental degradation continued, mainly because of the command and control approach used. This ignored local concerns, and culturally respected values and priorities were not taken into consideration in influencing policy formulation on reducing degradation (Chigwenya and Manatsa, 2007). The resultant resource management during the colonial era was characterised by lack of common vision, no community involvement in resource management, and conflict between the government and local communities (Katerere, 1999).

For example, the Natural Resources Act was implemented through coercion rather than persuasion. Being forced to implement conservation works, in addition to loss of land, was among reasons some peasants and young landless people felt impelled to join the second liberation struggle (the 2nd *Chimurenga*) that eventually led to the

collapse of the Rhodesian regime and dawn of an independent Zimbabwe (Sadomba, 2008). Management of resources during the colonial era was, therefore, characterised by skewed power relations, with communities being forced to implement conservation measures but with little or no power over these resources (Katerere, 1999). At independence in 1980, the government inherited the colonial government structures for natural resource management and rather surprisingly made only a minimum of changes, despite being swept to power by cadres anxious to restore African control over the land and natural resources of the country for which they had fought (Chingwenya and Manatsa, 2007; Sadomba, 2008).

Two key organisations play an important role in the management of natural resources in communal areas of Zimbabwe - namely local government structures and traditional authority structures (Figure 2.1). Local government structures are represented at the national level by the Ministry of Local Government, Rural and Urban Development., Rural District Councils operate at District level, and councillors, WADCOs and VIDCOs are found at the local community level. Traditional Authority structures are represented at the national level by the Chief's Council, while chiefs, headmen and village heads are the resident authorities in local communities. These two governance structures exist side-by-side in the communal areas of Zimbabwe. The background to these organisations and their roles in natural resource management are discussed separately below.

Fig 2.1: Organograms of natural resource governance structures in communal areas of Zimbabwe

Local Government Structures

Ministry of local Government, Rural and Urban Development (MLGRUD)

Provincial Administrator for Midlands Province

Gokwe South District

Gokwe South RDC with a Rural District Development Committee chaired by the District Administrator

Councillor for Mateta Ward Batanai area who chairs the WADCO

Mafa village VIDCO

Traditional Authority Structures

Representatives of Chiefs in the MLGRUD

Chief's Council

Gokwe South District

Chief Njelele in Gokwe South District

Headmen Ndlalambi of Batanai area

Mafa village head

Local government structures

Rural District Councils
At independence in 1980, the new Zimbabwe government inherited a dual local government system. This was a result of racial colonial policies, in which the Rural and District councils existed next to each other as local government structures at the district level. The Rural Councils served the interests of Africans in communal areas, while District Councils served white settlers in commercial farming areas. The two councils were later amalgamated in 1995 to form the Rural District Councils (RDCs) (Manyena, 2006). RDCs are chaired by Council Chairpersons. RDCs have Rural District Development Committees chaired by appointed District Administrators (who are representatives of the Ministry of Local Government Rural and Urban Development). The members of the RDCs are elected councillors representing rural communities in constituent wards, district heads of line ministries, the Rural District Council sub-committees, heads of national security agencies (army, police, national intelligence), council executives, chiefs and co-opted NGOs (Makumbe, 1998). The elected councillors chair the Ward Development Committees (WADCOs).

Effective decentralisation in terms of the formal governance framework in Zimbabwe ends at the level of the RDCs. For natural resource management, the Communal Lands Act of 1981 currently vests control over land in the President, but devolves administration to RDCs. The Rural District Councils Act of 1988 gives the RDCs authority to enact conservation and land-use planning by-laws. The legislative authority of Rural District Councils, however, is subsidiary to national statutes, and has to be consistent with such statutes. The Rural District Councils Act includes a schedule that clearly specifies the areas in which the Rural District Councils enjoy privileges to enact legally binding by-laws. The RDCs have an option of formulating their own new by-laws with the participation of local communities or to adopt model Communal Lands by-laws already developed (Mandondo, undated). Model by-laws provide for the preparation of land use plans in council areas, similar to those promoted by the state in the 1930s. Model by-laws are generally prescriptive, and community members did not participate in their formulation.

By-law formulation in Zimbabwe has a preparatory stage during which the need is identified, ideally by communities, who notify the Council through their representatives. A relevant standing committee of the council, e.g. the Natural Resources Committee, in the case of natural resource management - then examines the need for such by-laws by consulting experts. The Committee then makes recommendations to Council. By-law formulation takes a long time as higher-level provincial officials and the relevant cabinet Ministers should be involved in scrutinizing drafts before endorsing them. Local communities are later given time (about thirty days) to inspect the draft by-laws and, if necessary, lodge their complaints and objections. RDCs are therefore obliged to display the by-laws at Council offices for a specified period and also to publish them in newspapers so that communities can inspect them. After this, the RDC submits the proposed set of by-laws, proof of consultation in the form of a notice in the press, a list of objections received, minutes of council meetings where the by-laws were discussed, and the final council resolution. The Minister has powers to modify or amend the by-laws or recommend the Council to adopt model by-laws if those submitted are not substantially different from the model bye-laws (Mandondo, undated). The reason

this information is important in this thesis is that by-laws are one way of providing a set of rules and sanctions for community-based management of natural resources. As will be seen, it was an approach neglected by the project to be described later. Arguably participatory conservation needs sanctions as well as incentives, and lack of sanctions was a factor in the failures to be described.

VIDCOs and WADCOs
Village Development Committees (VIDCOs) and Ward Development Committees (WADCOs) were created by the 1984 Prime Ministerial directive, with an aim to make the local development planning process democratic. The VIDCO is the lowest unit of government administration, whose role is to identify needs of people in their villages and articulate them in the form of village development plans. These plans are presented to the WADCO. The WADCO draws its membership from the chairs of the VIDCOS in the ward, and is itself chaired by an elected councillor. It is responsible for consolidating the various VIDCO plans into a ward development plan. The ward development plans are forwarded to the Rural District Development Committee (RDDC), the planning body of the RDC, by councillors. Membership of the RDDC is highly restricted to bureaucrats and technocrats.

VIDCOs consist of a total of 100 households and a WADCO consist of six or more VIDCOs. The two institutions do not have clearly defined mandates and no communication strategies were put in place, to allow coordination, and to avoid conflict (Mandondo, 2000). The formation of the VIDCOs and WADCOs was seen by political commentators as being part of a process to disempower traditional authority and punish it for its role in supporting the colonial government (Makumbe, 1998; Dore, not dated).

Over time, the development structures in the communities have been infiltrated by national politics (Mandondo, 2000). For example, currently, it is generally the case that two positions in the VIDCOs and WADCOs, are reserved for ZANU-PF political party representatives. Also election of councillors is usually conducted along party lines, with elected councillors accountable to local party officials (Mandondo, 2000)

Traditional leadership authority
Traditional leaders are appointed, not elected, and normally hold office for life. Top of the hierarchy is a Chiefs' Council, whose functions include making recommendations to the Minister concerning the needs of the people in various areas in the country. The chiefs are responsible for various districts, followed by local headmen, and at the lowest level by village heads (Figure 2.1). During the colonial period, chiefs and headmen were identified as playing a key role in the native reserves and native commissioners were asked to monitor and advise them in the use of their (traditional) authority, in order to extend the control of the colonial government. Although the position of chiefs was hereditary, native commissioners were given authority to select and legitimise chiefs who advanced colonial interests (McGregor, 1991). Chiefs were thus (as in other parts of British colonial Africa) important elements in a system of colonial indirect rule, and this distanced them from their communities, local values and priorities. The colonial chiefs played various roles including collecting taxes on behalf of the colonial administration, controlling the allocation of land in the reserves, and presiding over land disputes (Mutizwa-Mangiza, 1985; McGregor 1991). During the colonial period, chiefs, headmen and

village heads played a prominent role in the governance of native areas (Mandondo, 2000), including governance of resources.

Control over natural resources during the colonial era was an important aspect of the political and economic subjugation of the natives (Mohamed-Katerere, undated). A racially inequitable natural resource management system emerged. Customary law[17] was used by the colonial regime to assert local control, and this resulted in the re-empowerment of traditional leadership structures, as they now served the interests of the colonial overlords. However, the presence of chiefs in the judiciary and administrative structures did not result in accurate recognition and implementation of local customs and practice. Instead, local customs became the means through which a traditional leadership bargained with the colonial state for power in their areas of jurisdiction, resulting in new or distorted customs. This resulted in two forms of customary law – the law recognised by formal State structures and custom as the "living law" of actual communities. Since communities change according to circumstances the two are not necessarily the same thing. A key caveat is that the state did not recognise custom as a source of law governing natural resource use (Mohamed-Katerere, undated).

Independence saw the disempowerment of traditional leadership because of their role in helping to perpetrate white rule. The new development structures - the Village Development Committees (VIDCOs) and Ward Development Committees (WADCOs) - were put in place by the new government as an intended substitute. The Communal Area Land Act passed in 1981 effectively took away the powers of chiefs in land allocation. The Act vested the land allocation powers in the president, and devolved administration of land allocation to the RDCs and the DA. Even though on paper, the RDC has the authority over the allocation of land in the communal areas, in practice, the traditional authorities continued to perform this role, deriving their powers from customary and territorial claims to their land (Mandondo, 2000).

Over time, however, there has been a re-empowerment of the traditional authority. A key step was the 1998 Traditional Leaders Act [Chapter 29:17]. Current chiefs in Zimbabwe are appointed by the president and are tasked to supervise headmen in their areas. Their other roles include promoting and upholding cultural values, overseeing collection of taxes by village heads on behalf of the RDC, ensuring land and natural resources use and allocation is line with the national legislation (Mandondo, 2000). This is in effect a return to the role of the chief during the colonial period.

The job has its benefits. In addition to earning a salary equivalent to that of a university graduate, chiefs also enjoy houses electrified under the rural electrification programme and access to a free government vehicle. Overall, the 1998 Traditional Leaders Act, 'effectively disenfranchised grassroots communities in its attempt to re-empower traditional leaders. It created a huge flow of top-down appointments serving only the interests of upward accountability: the president appoint the Minister of

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[17] The customary law of Zimbabwe refers to the customs and practices of native Zimbabweans (Saki and Chiware, 2007). These customs are definite, and where considered reasonable, are recognised by the state. For example, incestuous associations condemned by customary law are criminalised under the Sexual Offenses Act (Saki and Chiware, 2007); offenders are arrested and sentenced by the formal courts.

Local Government and National Housing and the chiefs; the chiefs in turn nominate the village headmen, whom the minister appoints; and the headmen nominate the village heads whom the chief appoints' (Mandondo, 2000, p.13).

However, even after independence, the management of natural resources is still the responsibility of state technical and managerial agencies, local government authorities, parliament and centralised ministries. Chiefs are, however, responsible for ensuring that natural resources are utilised in terms of the national natural resource management legislation in the country. Their specific roles include preventing over-grazing, indiscriminate cutting down of trees, illegal settlements and abuse of natural resources (Mohamed-Katerere, undated). The chiefs still do not have authority to make legally enforceable resource management rules. Natural resource management disputes at the formal legal level may, however, be determined according to customary law, only when the dispute is civil, both parties are African, and when it is consistent with national natural resource management laws (Mohamed-Katerere, undated).

Despite the lack of legal recognition of customary laws in the management of natural resources, several customary rules for governing common pool resource can be found in communal areas of Zimbabwe (Campbell *et al.*, 1998). Many of these rules are ineffective (Campbell *et al.*, 1998). There are, however, a few cases where cultural values and local knowledge systems still play an important role in the management of natural resources. In these cases, sanctions and complimentary monitoring and enforcement regimes still persist. The responsibility for ensuring that people abide by a set of rules lies with the Chief. But there is scepticism about whether such a system really works in practice, given the fact that the sanctions implemented have no legal basis (Mohamed-Katerere, undated).

As mentioned above, communal areas where these governance structures are located came about due to the colonial policies. The next section presents background on the colonial era and the creation of communal areas.

2.2.2 The land question and forests in Zimbabwe

Forest management in Zimbabwe takes place within a broader context of highly unequal distribution of better land, a major issue in the history of the country. As mentioned above, state forest reserves make up 2.4% of total land area in Zimbabwe and these are mostly within densely populated communal areas (Matose, 2002). The other land categories are the resettlement areas, the large scale commercial farming areas (LSCFA), the small scale commercial farming areas (SSCFA), the national parks and finally urban and state land. Table 2.1 shows the various land categories in the country (up to c. 1999.) and associated population densities. The picture changed after the introduction of the Fast Track Land Reform Programme in 2000. Land was forcefully taken away from white commercial farmers and redistributed among the landless people. This resulted in an increase in resettlement areas and a reduction in the large-scale commercial farms. Statistics on these changes are not yet available.

Table 2.1: **Land categories in Zimbabwe and population figures (Source: Matose, 2002)**

Ownership	Land Category	Area (km^2)	% of total area	Population	Density (people/ km$^{2)}$	% of total population
State with control of traditional leaders	Communal area	163,500	41.4	6,269,464	38.35	53.2
State with control of Traditional leaders	Resettlement land	36,000	8.0	295,152	8.20	2.5
Private	Large Scale Commercial Farming Areas	121,000	30.6	1,108,894	9.16	9.4
Private	Small Scale Commercial Farming Areas	14 000	3.5	289,184	20.66	2.5
State	National Parks Estate	47,000	12.1	-	-	-
State	State-forest land	9,400	2.4	-	-	-
State	Urban and state land	13,000	3.1	3,826,580	294.35	32.5
	Totals	**390,070**	**100**	**11,789,274**	**-**	**100**

The skewed distribution of population across the various categories is rooted in the colonial era (1890-1980). When the British South Africa Company (BSAC) was established in 1889, its main aim was mining. However, after failing to find major gold deposits, the company turned its focus to agriculture (Eicher *et al.,* 2006). In 1890, the BSCA was given authority to occupy land in the colony by the British government. The first decade of colonization was therefore characterized by the appropriation of land by the white settlers, and this triggered the first uprising by natives (the *1st Chimurenga war*) in 1896. In 1898, the British government enacted an Order in Council facilitating legal acquisition of land and requiring the creation of native reserves by the BSAC. This created a long-lasting dual agrarian structure (Rukuni, 2006). Worse was to follow with the passing of the Land Apportionment Act in 1930 that gave legal powers to the BSAC to acquire more land from native Zimbabweans. The laws passed during the colonial period to enable land acquisition by the settlers are summarized in Box 2.2.

This loss of land by the native Zimbabweans was among other factors motivating the liberation struggle from the late 1960s. In 1979, the British government became a broker in negotiations between the white settlers and the political representatives of an anti-settler liberation struggle in Zimbabwe. The negotiations resulted in the Lancaster House Agreement and a general election in 1980, won by Robert Mugabe, the leader of the Zimbabwe African National Patriotic Front (ZANU-PF).

In terms of seeking solutions to the land crisis in Zimbabwe, experiences from Kenya were influential. Just like Zimbabwe, Kenya also underwent a liberation struggle that was fuelled by land grievances (Lerbert, undated). In Kenya, the British government decided to redress the situation by buying out the white farmers. Britain made available 500 million British pounds for the Kenyan government to acquire land for resettlement. During the Lancaster House negations it was hoped that a similar solution could be found for the Zimbabwean case. Britain therefore agreed to contribute 75 million British pounds for the government to buy out the white farmers. At this same time, the United States of America also promised to contribute 500 million United States Dollars towards the land acquisition programme. There was however no formally binding procedure that supported these promises (Moyo, 2000). Because of the lack of legally binding procedures, the Zimbabwean government had only received a small part of the promised funding by the year 2000 (Moyo, 2000). The government was instead required to compensate the acquired land at market value and in foreign currency. This way of compensation based on full market value for land acquired had never happened anywhere else in the world where land reform had been successfully done (Moyo, 2000).

At independence in 1980, one of the promises by the new government was to give back land to the people, through resettlement. The independent government made several changes over time to the legislative environment to facilitate the acquisition of land for resettlement purposes. These changes are summarised in Box 2.2.

The first phase of its resettlement programme was launched in September 1980 with British financial assistance. Resettlement was seen as key to peace and stability. The programme also aimed to address issues of equity in the redistribution of land, with the long-term effect of ameliorating poverty among the rural populace (Masiiwa and Chigejo, 2003). The new government, however, was bound by 'sunset clauses' in the Lancaster House Agreement, which gave protection to white Zimbabweans during the first ten years of independence. These included the provisions that the new government would not compulsorily acquire land and that when required the government would pay adequate compensation for property on a 'willing buyer, willing seller' basis (Human Rights Watch, 2002).

During the first decade of independence (1980-1990), 40% of a target of eight million hectares was acquired, and 50,000 families were resettled on more than three million hectares of land (Centre for Housing Rights and Evictions, 2001). The government failed to meet its own target largely because it failed to get enough funding for farm purchases from the international community (United Nations, 2005). For instance, by 1996, 44 million British Pounds out of the total promised funds was given to the Zimbabwean government by the British government to fund resettlement (McGreal, 2002; Holman, 2000).

In 1990, the constraints in the Lancaster House agreement lapsed, and the Mugabe government took the opportunity to amend the provisions of the constitution relating to property rights. In 1992, a Land Acquisition Act was passed. This allowed compulsory acquisition of land for resettlement, subject to payment of fair compensation approved by a committee, using set guidelines. In 1994, a land tenure

commission[18] recommended that a land tax be introduced as the best way to achieve redistribution. However, this tax was never put in place. Even though new laws were passed to aid the redistribution process, the resettlement programme continued to slow down during the 1990s. At the end of the second decade after independence, less than one million hectares had been acquired for distribution and less than 20,000 families resettled (Centre for Housing Rights and Evictions, 2001).

At the end of Phase I of the resettlement programme in 1997, a total of 71,000 households had been resettled on about 3.5 million hectares of acquired land, and this failed to match the target set to resettle 162,000 people (Technical Committee of the Inter-Ministerial Committee on Resettlement and Rural Development and the National Economic Consultative Forum Land Reform Task Force, 1998). Of the total land acquired, 19% was classified as prime land while the rest was marginal land unsuitable for cultivation and agricultural production (Chitiyo, 2000). Despite this first phase of the resettlement program, population density in the communal areas continued to increase (Moyo, 2000) due to population growth. More than one million black Zimbabweans were still crowded on a total of 16 million hectares of poor land in the communal areas, while only 4500 commercial farmers (mostly white) controlled 11 million hectares of prime land.

As overcrowding intensified, due to pressure of population growth in communal areas, some people began to occupy land illegally during the 1980s and 1990s, but were removed by government security forces. However, around 1999, occupation of commercial farms began to take place on a much larger scale (Moyo, 2001; Chitiyo, 2000; Sadomba 2008), and this gave birth to the Fast Track Land Reform Programme (FTLRP), which was a departure from earlier attempts at systematic land reform (Masiiwa and Chigejo, 2003). A summary of legislation related to land acquisition in the post colonial period is presented in Box 2.2.

2.2.3 The Zimbabwe economic meltdown

In 1980, the new Zimbabwean government adopted a state-socialist approach to the economy that aimed to eradicate poverty. Because of government-driven improvements in health and education, there were remarkable improvements in the social welfare indicators in the first decade. Immunization programmes were expanded to cover most children less than five years of age and primary education was made free. However, the key macro-economic indicators remained stagnant during the 1980s. This was mainly because the new government inherited a Rhodesian economy 'suffer[ing] from a large fiscal deficit, low economic performance, high unemployment, price controls and a lack of foreign currency' (United Nations, 2005, p. 16).

The government of Ian Smith had made a Unilateral Declaration of Independence from Britain on the 11th of November 1965. Economic sanctions were imposed on the Rhodesian minority rule government (UDI) by the international community (Britain and the United Nations) during the 1970s, forcing the government to adopt a policy of

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[18] Known as the Rukuni Commission (named after its chair, Prof. Mandivamba Rukuni from the Agriculture Economics Department at the University of Zimbabwe).

Box 2.2: **Legislation related to land acquisition passed during the colonial and the post colonial periods (Sources: Moyo, 2000; Lerbert, Undated)**

Colonial Land Acquisition Laws

1889: The British south Africa Company (BSAC) established

1890: The BSCA given permission to colonise the country

1896: First uprising by the natives – the 1st *Chimurenga* war

1898: A law passed to allow the BSAC to create native reserves for the natives

1930: The Land Apportionment Act passed. This gave the BSCA more power to acquire land from the natives.

1965: Unilateral Declaration of Independence (UDI) by the Smith Government and sanctions were imposed against the country by the international community.

End of 1960s: Beginning of the second liberation war – 2nd Chimurenga war

Post Colonial Land Acquisition Laws

1979: The Constitution of Zimbabwe (this was developed during the Lancaster House negotiations). Under this legislation, compulsory acquisition of land was forbidden. Land was to be acquired on a willing seller- willing buyer principle in the coming 10 years, with funding from Britain.

1981: The Communal Lands Act shifted authority over land in native reserves from traditional rulers to local authorities and changed the designation from Tribal Trust Lands into communal areas

1981-1984: Land Acquisition Act (No. 21). This legislation enforced constitutional provision to land acquisition and stressed the need for payment of adequate compensation for acquired land

1985: Land Acquisition Act. This legislation was still in the spirit of the Lancaster House Agreement for acquiring land under the willing seller, willing buyer principle. This gave the government right to purchase excess land for redistribution the landless. The legislation introduced the offering of Certificate of 'No Present Interest' or 'Right of First of Refusal' by the government for any land being sold by commercial farmers. The government however faced problems due to lack of funding to purchase the targeted size of land for resettling the landless.

1990-1993: Constitutional Amendment (No. 11) Act No. 30 of 1990 and Constitution of Zimbabwe Amendment (No. 12) Act 4 of 1993. These legislations denied power of the court to declare unconstitutional, compensation decisions and allowed for compulsory land acquisition.

1992: Land Acquisition Act (Amendment to Section 10 of Chapter 20) was enacted to speed up the land reform process by removing the willing seller – willing buyer principle. The Act gave the government power to buy land compulsorily for redistribution and a fair compensation was to be paid for the land acquired. The land owners could challenge in court the price set by the acquiring authority and opposition by land owners increased during the

period 1992 – 1997. However, most of the acquired farms ended up in the hands of cabinet ministers, senior government officials and business men. Fewer landless people than planned were resettled during the 1990s. During this period, the government also listed a total of 1471 farms that it intended to buy compulsorily for redistribution. Land owners were given 30 days to submit written objections. The legislation also abolished the Rights of First Refusal to enable the compulsory acquisition of land

1998: The government published its policy framework that envisioned compulsory purchase of land owned by commercial farmers (both black and white), public corporations, churches, NGOs and multinational companies. In September 2008, the government called for a donor's conference to inform them of the new land reform programme and seek their assistance. 48 countries and international organizations that attended the conference unanimously endorsed the programme.

1999: The Commercial Farmers' Union offered to sell land for redistribution – but the landowners dragged their feet. In response, the National Constitutional Assembly together with other stakeholders drafted a new constitution that allowed for land to be compulsorily acquired from the landowners without any compensation. At this time, the opposition political party (MDC) was formed and campaigned for a 'No' vote for a new constitution that allowed land to be acquired by force from the white farmers. When the majority of people voted 'no' for the constitutional change, the ZANU-PF party used its majority vote in parliament to make an amendments to the constitution that allowed land to be acquired by force.

2000: Constitution of Zimbabwe Amendment (No 16) Act. This amendment freed the Zimbabwe government from paying compensation for land acquired for resettlement if it established a fund into which the former colonial power could deposit money to compensate for land acquired for resettlement. Under this amendment, the government is only required to pay compensation for improvements on the land. It also stipulates a number of factors to be used in determining compensation.

2000: Amendment to the Land Acquisition Act. This legislation freed the government from any obligation to pay for compensation for unimproved land. It also changed the procedures for compulsory acquisition of land and also removed the legal and administrative obstacles that led to successful litigation against compulsory acquisition of land in the past. This gave birth to the Fast Track Land Reform Programme (FTLRP) that was put in place in the same year.

import substitution. Also, in trying to create a pool of labour for the manufacturing and industrial sectors, the colonial government pursued policies that prevented black workers from owning land and becoming self-employed (van der Hoven *et al*., 1993; Marquette, 1997). This is a major reason why the manufacturing and industrial sectors in Zimbabwe accounted for the majority of formal employment in the country.

Production came to be dominated by domestic rather than foreign market concerns and the minority government imposed strict protection. This protection continued after independence, up to the late 1980s, and limited investment and export-led growth, in the manufacturing and other sectors (Kadenge *et al*. 1992; Davis and Rattso, 1996; World Bank, 1995; Marquette, 1997). A shift in focus by the new government then saw massive investment in the smallholder sector. The commercial agriculture sector, a major economic activity for the country, was by-passed (World Bank, 1995). During the 1980s, the new government borrowed heavily from the World Bank. Payments on debt consumed 37% of total export earnings by 1987. To compound the situation, smallholder farmers, having borrowed money from the

government, often defaulted on repayment, thereby worsening the government's financial situation (Human Rights Watch, 2002).

During the 1990s, under pressure from the World Bank and the IMF, the government launched the Economic Structural Adjustment Programme (ESAP) intended to jump-start a stalled economy by relaxing trade restrictions and also by reducing the public deficit (Marquette, 1997). In 1995, the then minister of finance promised that by the end of the year there would be a 25% cut in the civil service as well as abolition of labour restrictions, investment regulation, import restrictions and government subsidies (Bond and Manyanya, 2003; Andersson, 2002). The mid-1990s saw rapid privatization of parastatals providing telecommunications, electricity, water and transport, in order to meet World Bank demands.

Unfortunately, overall evaluation of the economic reform programme in Zimbabwe shows disappointing results, and its effectiveness as a macro-economic strategy still continues to be debated (Riddell, 1992; Mosley and Weeks, 1993; van der Hoven *et al.,* 1993; Mosley *et al.,* 1996; Addison, 1996; Davis and Rattso, 1996; Harvey, 1996; Husain and Feruqee, 1996; Lensink, 1996; Marquette, 1997; Bond and Manyanya, 2003; Andersson, 2002).

External factors may have influenced the outcome of the programme, such as the 1991-1992 drought. However, analysis of previous periods in the history of country suggests that weather is not the primary determinant of economic activity in Zimbabwe (Bond and Manyanya, 2003). The 1975-1978 period had very good rains, and yet this was a period of sustained economic crisis, while the late 1960s and 1970s was a period of severe drought and yet was a period of booming economic growth (Bond and Manyanya, 2003). After the economic structural adjustment programme, several companies in the manufacturing and industrial sector had to reduce activity and lay off workers. The decline in the formal sector contributed to the emergence of a large informal sector, as laid off workers struggled to survive. By 1997, the country was in a serious economic and political crisis.[19] Increased food and fuel prices led to urban strikes and political unrest.

In 1999, disgruntled by the declining economic conditions in the country, representatives of various interest groups (including labour, employers, capital and the Zimbabwe Congress of Trade Unions) formed an opposition political party, the Movement for Democratic Change (MDC). This posed a serious threat to the government, and perhaps its biggest challenge since its taking power in 1980. To disarm the threat the government then proposed a draft constitution that included provision for compulsory acquisition of land without compensation. This was rejected in a referendum in 2000 (United Nations, 2005; Human Rights Watch, 2002) as a result of the opposition party campaigning for a 'No' vote.

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[19]   Three other factors worsened the economic crisis in the country in the 1990s: a) increased tensions between the war veterans and the government over corrupt administration of compensation made necessary by the War Victims Compensation Act of 1993; this caused the President to offer a one-off package payment and a monthly pension to the war veterans but it was not clear where this money was to come from; b) damage to government finances caused by the sending of Zimbabwean soldiers to the Democratic Republic of Congo to fight in support of the government of Laurent Kabila, c) negative impact on commercial agriculture, the backbone of the economy, caused by spontaneous land invasions from 1999 (United Nations, 2005).

Now facing increased threat from the opposition MDC, the government revived its call for radical land redistribution to fulfil promises made at independence, and offering some degree of official sanction for the commercial farm occupations led by war veterans in 1999 (Sadomba, 2008). In July 2000 the government officially announced it was to embark on a new resettlement initiative, the Fast Track Land Reform Programme (FTLRP) aimed at acquiring 3,000 farms for resettlement purposes.

Even though the government claimed that the initiation of the FTLRP aimed to redress historical imbalances, hidden objectives were suspected (Human Rights Watch, 2002; United Nations, 2005). For example, the FTLRP helped to protect the interests of the ruling party in the face of increased competition from the opposition by providing a means to compensate regime loyalists. In February 2001, 2,706 farms were gazetted for compulsory acquisition by the government, covering a total of six million hectares (Ministry of Lands and Rural Resettlement, 2001a). In April, the programme aimed to acquire 8.3 million hectares from the large scale commercial farming sector for redistribution (Ministry of Lands and Rural Resettlement, 2001b). In October, the government announced that it would list 4558 farms for redistribution, covering a total of 8.3 million hectares. In February 2002, a total of 4874 farms covering 9.23 million hectares were listed for acquisition (United Nations Development Programme, 2002).

As already outlined, a process of economic decline had set in during the late 1990s. The government's economic policy framework from 1995 to 2000 was a reaction to the failed ESAP. The government made a proposal called the Zimbabwe Programme for Economic and Social Transformation (ZIMPREST) (Matondi and Munyuki-Hungwe, 2006). This failed to engage bilateral and multilateral agencies, however, and was not a success.

The Zimbabwe economy declined by a further 40% between 1998 - 2006. The unemployment rate rose to 80% (Hawkins, 2006). The national gross domestic product (GDP) fell by 5.1% in the year 2006. Zimbabwe had also become a world leader in inflation, with an annual rate of 1593% in 2006 (Hawkins, 2006; International Crisis Group, 2006). In April 2007, annual inflation had risen to 3700% and the prediction for May 2007 was 5300% (Makoshori, 2007). Production levels in all sectors fell drastically, resulting in thriving cross-border trade. Retailers began to receive the bulk of their goods from the cross-border traders following the collapse of most manufacturing industry in the country. The lack of basic commodities - particularly food - and the collapse of social services had adverse effects, especially on the poorest groups. Zimbabwe now had the lowest life expectancy rate in the world (37 years for males, and less than 34 years for females)[20]. It also had the third highest unemployment rate and the eighth highest death rate (International Crisis Group, 2007). Major causes of these deaths included malnutrition and HIV/AIDS (International Crisis Group, 2006; 2007).

To add to these problems, law and order slowly broke down from the 1990s, with the judiciary becoming politicized, and farm invasions and political violence going

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[20]   Life expectancy at birth for males in Zimbabwe was 60 years in 1990

unchecked. For instance, in March 2003, the opposition party, the MDC, organized a mass stay-away by workers in protest at declining economic and political conditions in the country. This stay-away was a success, and angered ruling party officials, resulting in violent attacks and the arrest of several MDC activists (Human Rights Watch, 2003). State sponsored violence has since continued to increase, with the uniformed police and army playing major parts in many attacks (Human Rights Watch, 2003). Also, increasing involvement by Zimbabwe National African Union Patriotic Front (ZANU-PF) militia contributed to a breakdown of law and order. These militia consisted of graduates from the National Training Centres (dubbed the Border Gezi National Training Centres, named after a late government minister and close ally of Robert Mugabe). In the 2000 parliamentary elections, Border Gezi[21] was in charge of recruiting and organizing groups of ZANU-PF young supporters into a militia. Gezi was two years later appointed Secretary for the Commissariat responsible for organizing the re-election of Robert Mugabe.

Many youths were forced to enroll at these centers after the government announced this as a prerequisite for getting an eventual job in the military, police or public universities. After graduation, these youth were deployed to different areas of the country where some became involved in violent acts. In some cases, they set up informal roadblocks, and monitored and violently harassed those suspected of being MDC supporters. They also ensured compliance with government gazetted price controls, which drove trade underground. These youth militia were also implicated in several acts of violence, torture, and property destruction in rural areas. (Human Rights Watch, 2003).

Because of a breakdown of law and order in the country, many NGOs and international organizations found it increasingly difficult to work in politically volatile localities, especially the rural areas. The situation in rural areas was made worse by the passing of restrictive legislation such as the Public Order and Security Act (POSA) put in place before the 2002 presidential elections to limit rights to freedom of expression. The POSA, for instance, prohibits speech acts that are likely to bring feelings of hostility towards state institutions and the president (Human Rights Watch, 2003). Under POSA, anyone organizing a public meeting is supposed to report to the police four days before the meeting to obtain clearance. POSA had a direct impact on activities to be later described in Batanai, one of the ACM research sites in Gokwe South District, since resource users were not allowed to hold public meetings (Chapter 4). These meetings were an essential part of the ACM strategy to create opportunities for resource users jointly to identify their problems, come up with agreed solutions, and implement them collectively.

Partly because of the breakdown of law and order and increasing poverty and suffering, many NGOs and international agencies changed their focus. Environmental management issues took second place as humanitarian aid took centre stage. Some organizations focusing on environmental management issues scaled down their operations. A pertinent instance is the CIFOR regional Office for Eastern and

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[21] Border Gezi was identified as a close ally of Robert Mugabe. But he was involved in a car accident and died in April 2001. Gezi was one of the few people who did not participate in the liberation war to be buried at the national heroes' acre. The ZANU-PF party justified his hero status by saying that he was the hero of the third '*Chimurenga*' that spearheaded the farm invasions towards the late 1990s.

Southern Africa in Harare, which was responsible for implementing the ACM approach in Mafungautsi. In fact, CIFOR stopped all activities after failing to secure donor funds to carry out further environmental research in Zimbabwe. The office is currently manned by one person for administrative purposes, and all research activities were shifted to other countries.

In the course of these developments, Zimbabwe has become a pariah state. Carrying out field research on forest management and benefit sharing in these deteriorating economic conditions was not easy. Gokwe South District (where the research sites are located) is a stronghold of the Ruling ZANU-PF party, and ACM researchers had to visit the ZANU-PF offices and also the office of the president every time they went to the field to explain about their work. The team did this to assure the two parties that they were only doing research and were not involved in politics. When organizing workshops in the research areas, the team had to invite representatives from these organizations to come to workshops to remove any suspicion concerning their activities. Failure to do this would have put both the project and personnel in danger. This probably also explains why the team failed fully to take account of local political dynamics in thinking about the range of participants to engage in action concerning participatory resource management (see subsequent chapters).

Because of inflation, and a 'parallel market' for foreign currency, it was difficult to quantify benefits, in US-Dollar terms, obtained by resources users from their activities. Numerous exchange rates exist for the US dollar (USD) against the Zimbabwe Dollar (ZWD): official figures (which up to the end of 2007 grossly overvalued the ZWD), various parallel market rates, the UN Rate, and those prevailing on the internet. For the sake of consistency and comparison, I have used average monthly rates from the following website: http://www.oanda.com/convert/fxhistory as these seem realistic estimates (Annex, 2.3). The different yearly average ZWD amounts equivalent to one USD (generated from the average monthly figures – see Annex 2.3) are presented in Table 2.2. The major issues from the socio-economic climate in the post colonial period are summarised in Box 2.3 below.

Table 2.2:   Yearly average figures: amount of Zimbabwe Dollar (ZWD) equivalent to 1 United States Dollar from 2001-2007 (Generated from monthly average figures in Annex 2.2)

Year	Amount of ZWD equivalent to I USD
2001	55.99
2002	57.21
2003	575.49
2004	4 489.57
2005	21 531.19
2006	144 912.52
2007	9 467 500.35

Box 2.3:   Major socio-economic and political issues in the post colonial period

1980: Zimbabwe became independent from British colonial rule. The new government inherited a crippled economy that had suffered from international sanctions imposed during the UDI period.

1990: The Economic Structural Adjustment Programme implemented by the government. This resulted in the privatisation of parastatals providing services such as electricity and water around the mid 1990s. The ESAP however brought several negative changes with several companies having downsized and laid off their workers.

1997: Beginning of the country's present economic and political crisis

1999: The formation of the Movement for Democratic Change opposition political party. During this period there was increased illegal occupation of large scale commercial farms led by war veterans.

2001- 2007: The manufacturing industry collapsed in the country, and unemployment rate and inflation rates have continued to increase with Zimbabwe being a world leader. Production in all sectors fell and there was a collapse of social services. There was lack of basic commodities in the country. There was political unrest and a general breakdown of law and order. Zimbabwe became a pariah state and environmental issues took a back stake as humanitarian issues took centre stage.

2.3   Mafungautsi reserve – forest and people

2.3.1 The Mafungautsi Forest

Mafungautsi State Forest lies in Gokwe South District, Midlands Province, north-western Zimbabwe (Figure 2.2). The greater part of the district lies in the agro-ecological region III[22], receiving 600-800mm rainfall per annum mainly concentrated in the season from November to March. This is higher than rainfall received by the rest of Gokwe District mainly in agro-ecological regions IV and V. Gokwe South District therefore has a higher potential for agriculture, and most people in this area look at forest land as a reservoir for future arable land, as their livelihoods are mainly based on agriculture. The forest derives its name from the Mafungautsi[23] Plateau on which it stands. This plateau lies at an attitude of 1100 - 1390m (Matose, 2002) and is flat, except where dissected by four rivers - Sengwa, Ngondoma, Mbumbusi and Lutope. The rivers drain into the Zambezi. The dam on the Zambezi, Lake Kariba (Fig. 2.2) is an important source of hydroelectric power for Zimbabwe.

Except for the small area occupied by small scale commercial farms on the southern-eastern edge (The Chemagora SSCFA, see Figure 2.5) the forest is entirely surrounded by densely[24] populated communal areas. When it was first demarcated as a state forest in 1953, it was 101,000 ha in size (Vermeulen, 1997). In 1972, the

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[22]   An explanation of the different agro-ecological regions in Zimbabwe is given in Chapter 1
[23]   Mafungautsi means 'a place that smokes' referring to the clouds that hang over the plateau due to its altitude in relation to the surrounding areas (Matose, 2002).
[24]   The population Density in Gokwe communal area ranges from 25 people per square kilometre to 50 people per square kilometre (Central Statistics Office, 1992).

northern part of the forest was reclassified as a communal area, and some parts of the southern part were degazetted when the forestry department failed to contain problems of squatters in the forest (Matose, 1997), leaving the area of the forest today at 82,100 ha. The forest makes up 17% of the district. The balance comprises 73% of communal farm land and 10% of land occupied by national parks and small-scale commercial farms.

The dominant soils in the forest are derived from Kalahari sands[25] up to 75m deep. These sandy soils have low clay and silt fractions (3% clay, 2% silt) and therefore cannot stabilise organic matter significantly (Zingore *et al*., 2005). They are therefore low in organic matter content, a crucial element for sustainable crop production by farmers oriented towards household food self-sufficiency, who sell little and have limited cash to buy fertilisers, and so mostly rely on nutrients mineralised from organic matter (Zingore *et al*., 2005). Zingore *et al*. (2005) found that soil organic matter in the Kalahari sands declines rapidly after cultivation and no meaningful crop production can be achieved after five to ten years of crop production without inputs of manure or fertilizer. The river valleys in Mafungautsi cut through the Kalahari Sands into Karoo Sandstones, thereby giving rise to varied soils. For example, soils found in valleys include colluvial deposits from the upper slopes; these tend to be deep, moderately well-drained loamy soils, and are highly favoured for agricultural purposes (Mudekwe, 2003).

Mafungautsi is the third largest indigenous[26] state forest after Gwaai (144 265 ha) and Ngamo Forests (102 900 ha), comprising dry miombo[27] forests. The forest is dominated by *Brachystegia spiciformis,* and *Julbernadia globiflora*. The forest also has a high proportion (about 25 % of all stems) of the Zimbabwe teak (*Baikiaea plurijuga*), a leguminous tree valuable for timber (Vermeulen, 1994). *Baikiaea plurijuga* is well adapted to the very deep, nutrient-poor Kalahari sands due to its very deep rooting system. Most of the large specimens of *Baikiaea plurijuga* were removed by selective logging between 1989-1992. A few other commercial timber species, such as *Pterocarpus angolensis*, are also found in the forest.

Grasslands in the forest occur only in river valleys where high water tables during the rains exclude the trees that are generally sensitive to water logging (Figure 2.3). Grass cover is low in the forests on the plateau where the deep-rooted trees out-compete grasses in accessing soil water. In general, human intervention and other disturbances have tended to change the structure and diversity of the forest (Childes and Walker, 1987; Vermeulen, 1994). These changes might be considered undesirable, but some can be manipulated to maintain the forest in a state most suited to fulfilling stakeholders' various needs. The forest is a source for several resources, including timber, thatch grass (*Hyparrhenia femitina*), broom grass (*Aristida junciformis*), honey, mushrooms, poles, herbs, tea leaves and firewood. Only a few wild animals

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[25]   'This is the most northerly extension of the Kalahari Sands geological surface in Zimbabwe (Vermeulen, 1994).

[26]   The Indigenous forests of Zimbabwe fall under three tenurial categories: forests in communal areas; forests in protected areas and state land and forests in large scale commercial farming areas (McNamara, 1993)

[27]   Miombo forest is the most extensive tropical seasonal forest and dry forest formation, covering substantial regions of south and central Africa (Campbell *et al.*, 1996; Frost 1996). The regions where Miombo forest is found receive more than 700mm of rainfall and are often characterised by nutrient poor soils.

Figure 2.2: Location of Mafungautsi Forest Reserve, and the case study sites
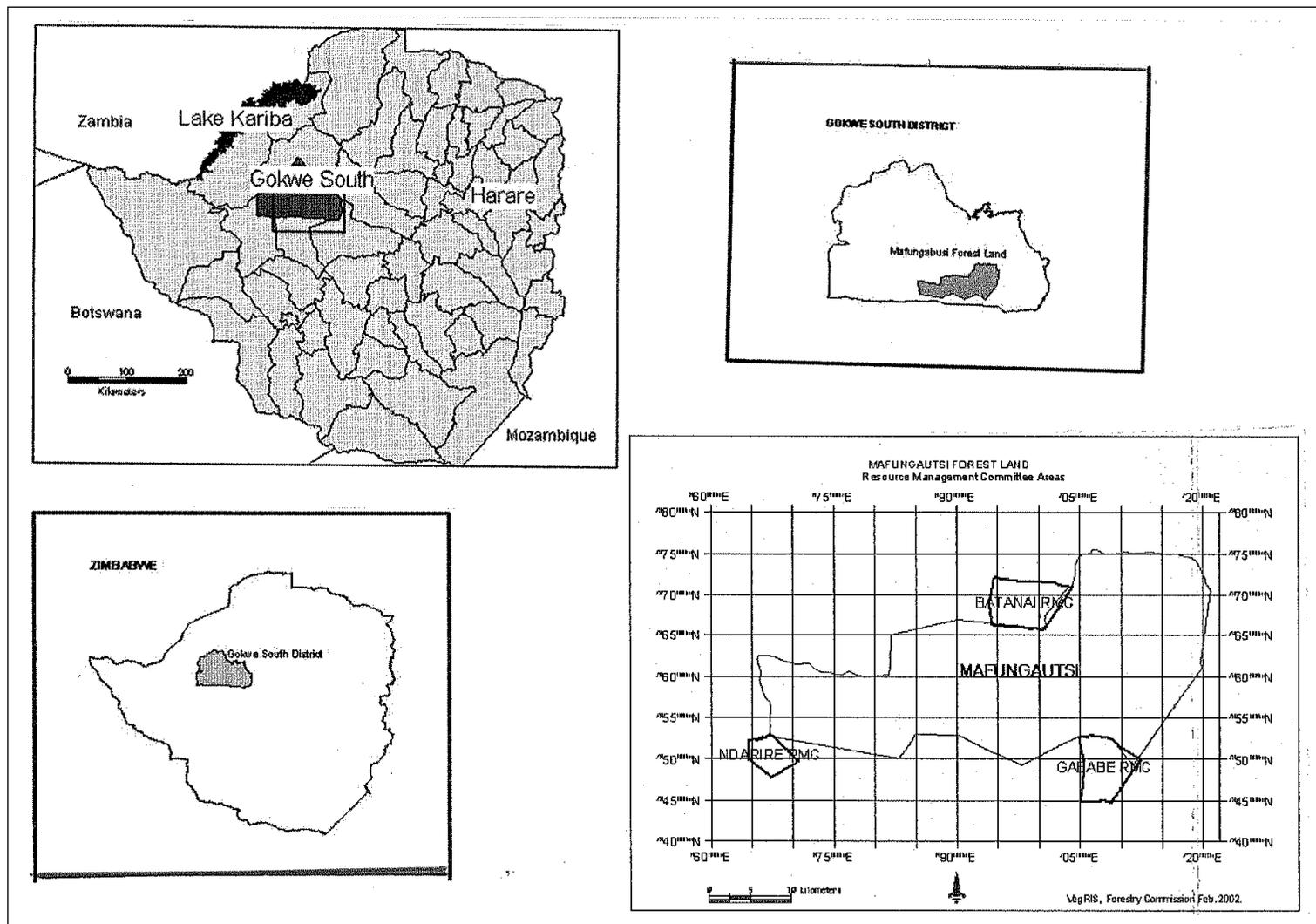
are found in the forest, however. These include: zebra, kudu, bush pig, warthog, reedbuck, bushbuck, buffalo, hare, hyena and duiker (Maturure *et al*., 1994)], Timber, poles and wild animals are not part of the resource sharing agreement.

Mafungautsi forest has over time been a landscape of contested values and meanings. To the government forestry department and other agencies involved in environmental management issues, it is a remnant of an original vegetation type associated with the Mafungautsi Plateau, and therefore needs to be preserved. The forest is also seen, by the forestry officers, as a water catchment area for the important rivers in the country, and this is one of the key reasons the forest was gazetted as a state forest. For the local community members, both the Shangwe indigenes (the early settlers) and immigrants, the forest represents a reservoir of future arable land, especially because of its numerous wetlands. For others, notably the early, the forest is an ancestral home, a place where they used to stay before it was claimed by the state.

2.3.2 The stakeholders in Mafungautsi

Stakeholders in the management of Mafungautsi State forest can be grouped in two - district level and local level stakeholders. District level stakeholders include the FC, Rural District Council (RDC), The District Administrator (DA), the Ministry of Youth Gender and Employment Creation (MYDGEC), the Department of Natural Resources (DNR), the Department of Agricultural Research and Extension Services (AREX), and district level political party structures. Except for AREX and the FC, none of the other district level stakeholders is actively involved in facilitating processes in communities.

Local level stakeholders include local leaders (chiefs, headmen, and village heads), members of local government structures [Village Development Committees (VIDCOs), Ward Development Committees (WADCOs) local councillors, political party structures[28], Resource Management Committees (RMC) (see Chapter 5) and agricultural extension agents. The roles of these stakeholders are presented in Table 2.3.

Comparable with other communal areas in Zimbabwe, several of the organisations listed above are found in communities surrounding Mafungautsi State Forest. These organisations play various roles in the management of natural resources (see Section, 2.2). Because many structures exist at village level, one has to make a decision on which structure to approach first, on entering a community. As we shall see later on, organising meetings though the traditional leadership structures in Batanai (one of the study sites), was not a good strategy as community members would not come. Batanai was a politically volatile area and a stronghold for the ruling ZANU-PF political party (next sections, and Chapter 4), and for any meeting to be a success, one had to organise it via the political structures.

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[28]   In Zimbabwe there are two major political parties, the ruling ZANU PF party and the Movement for Democratic Change (MDC) opposition party. These two parties have similar structures at district and communal levels. In communal areas, members of political parties hold the following positions both at the ward and village: ward/village chair; vice chair; ward secretary; vice secretary; treasurer; and committee members.

Figure 2.3: Mafungautsi land cover types[29]
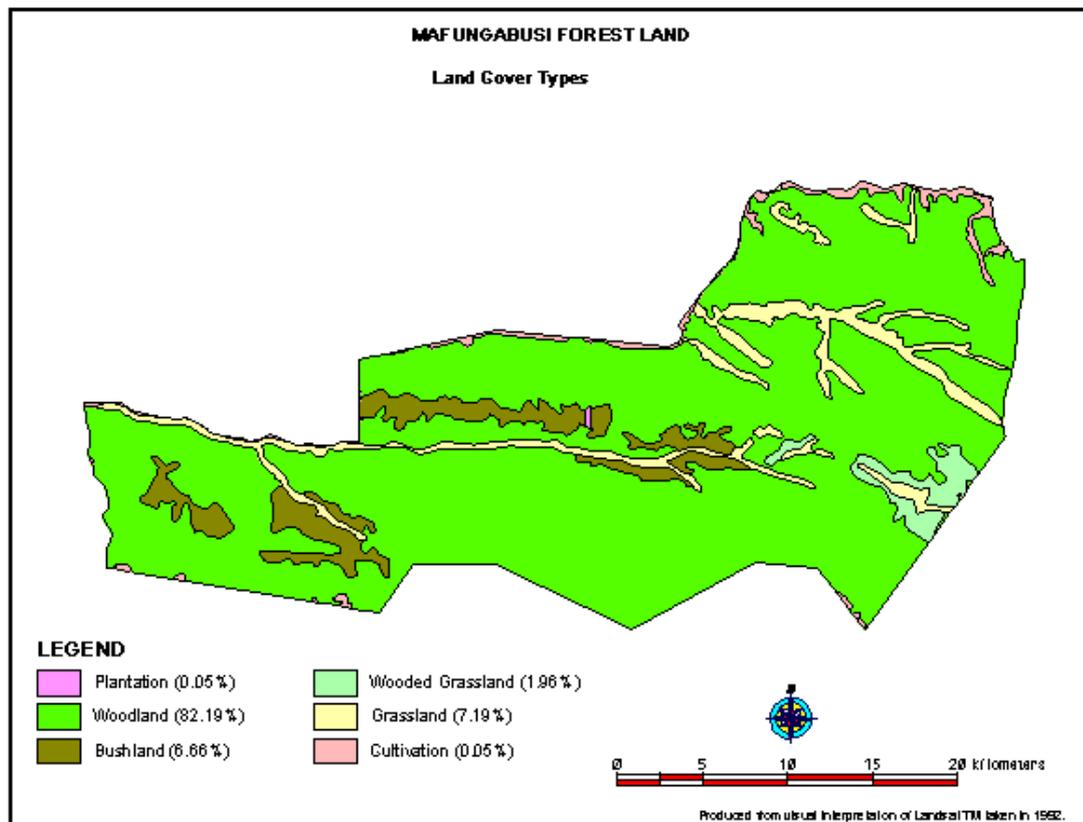
2.3.3 The People

Prior to the 1940s, Gokwe District in north-western Zimbabwe, (where this research was carried out was) was sparsely populated by 'Shangwe'[30] indigenes (Nyambara, 2001a, 2001b; Nyambara 2002; Worby, 1992; 1994; Alexander and McGregor, 1997; Alexander *et al*. 2000). The low population densities were mainly due to the presence of tsetse fly (a cause of both cattle disease and human sleeping sickness) and to the semi-arid condition of the area. Immigrants later came to the area once the tsetse fly problem was eradicated in 1940 and can roughly be classified into six categories.

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[29]   Grassland areas in Mafungautsi Forest are a result of seasonal flooding that prevents the establishment of trees.

[30]   Shangwe is derogatory, and the indigenous people do not like to be called by it as it denotes primitivism and backwardness. The indigenous people claim Rozvi origins and speak a Korekore dialect of Shona (Nyambara, 2002). They insist that the term 'Shangwe' refers to their area rather than who they are (Nyambara, 2002; Worby, 1994): most of Gokwe district is classified under Natural Regions III, (mostly suitable for semi-intensive farming) and IV (mostly suitable for semi-extensive farming) and the areas are relatively dry and prone to periodic droughts and severe drought spells. The word Shangwe seems to have some of the same connotations as the Shona word for drought and famine, *Shangwa*. *Shangwa* can also be used to describe a place that has harsh weather, making human settlement difficult (Nyambara, 2002). The early settlers, depending on where they came from before they settled in Gokwe, classify themselves as Ndebele, Shona or Korekore.

Table 2.3:   Stakeholders and their roles in Mafungautsi (Adapted from Matose, 2002).

Level	Stakeholder/ Organisation	Role in the management of the forest
District level stakehol ders	Forestry Commission	A state body specifically mandated to provide advice on, and control, management and exploitation of forest resources. The FC has regulatory roles as well as extension roles.
	Department of Agricultural Research and Extension (AREX)	Government department that carries out agricultural extension in communal areas. It is responsible for providing technical extension services to forest users and training e.g. on beekeeping.
	Department of Natural Resources	Secretariat to the Natural Resources Board, nationally their role is advisory, regulatory, and supervisory in relation to all natural resources.
	The Ministry of Youth, Gender and Employment Creation	Ministry that coordinates government activities on rural development activities. It is responsible for providing training to communities and RMCs on various issues including proposal writing. It is also responsible for monitoring community participation in development projects
	Rural District Council (RDC)	This is the local government authority. The RDC has a Rural District Development Committee (RDDC) that coordinates all council activities. It is responsible for formulating and implementing by-laws, and consolidating ward development plans into the district five-year plan.
	The District Administrator (DA)	The DA chairs the RDC RDDC and is an employee and representative of the Ministry of Local Government, Rural and Urban Development
Local level stakehol ders	Traditional leaders (Chiefs, Headmen and village heads)	They play a supportive role to the RMCs and also help in policing issues.
	The District Administrator's Office	Represents the Minister responsible local government at the district level
	Councillors	These are elected people who chair the WADCOs and are responsible for forwarding the ward development plans to the Rural District Council.
	Village Development Committees (VIDCOS) and Ward Development Committees (WADCOs)	VIDCOS were created by the 1984 Prime Ministerial Directive to give a democratic orientation to the process of planning for local development. The VIDCO is the lowest unit of government administration, whose role is to identify needs of people in their villages and articulate them in the form of village development plans. These plans are presented to the WADCO. The WADCO draws its memberships from the chairpersons of the VIDCOS in the ward and is chaired by an elected councillor. It is responsible for consolidating the various VIDCO plans into a WARD development plan to be presented to the Rural District Development Committee
	Resource	RMCs were formed on FC initiative to represent their

Management Committees (RMC)	communities and act as a link between the communities and the FC. Their main roles include issuing permits to resource harvesters, controlling and monitoring resource harvesting and keeping the community bank account
The resource users	These are local people who utilise forest resources as well as help in the management of the forest. Their participation is mainly through the RMC.

The first group consisted of families evicted from Rhodesdale farm[31] in 1953, together with their traditional leaders. This group was resettled in Gokwe by the colonial government (Nyambara 2001a; Worby 1994)[32] and consisted mainly of Shona speakers called Madheruka by the indigenes.[33] The second group of immigrants consisted of people from the southern parts of the country (Masvingo and Mberengwa) characterised by extreme land pressure and who migrated during the time of the guerrilla war of independence and settled in Gokwe where land was still available and cotton had become one of the major established crops. This second group migrated to Gokwe during the period 1960s to 1970s. Unlike the first group of immigrants, when people were forcibly settled in Gokwe, these immigrants settled voluntarily.

A third group of immigrants consisted mainly of labour migrants from neighbouring countries such as Malawi, Zambia and Mozambique who worked in mines and on commercial farms and wanted to establish rural homes. A fourth group was heterogeneous and included civil servants (teachers, tsetse control personnel, road workers, etc) posted to Gokwe and who then decided they wanted to settle permanently and petty traders attracted by prospects of acquiring land as an investment for commercial farming.

A fifth group came to Gokwe after the introduction of the Fast Track Land Reform in 2000. These immigrants came from a variety of places, and sought to settle especially in the forest areas, where they joined local people moving into the forest reserve to

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[31] Rhodesdale farm was owned by a British multinational corporation, Lonrho, but was later bought by the state, (after the Second World War). It was later divided into a number of separate farms and ranches to be allocated to European ex-servicemen (Nyambara, 2002).

[32] Their settlement in Gokwe coincided with the introduction of cotton to the area by the colonial government. The immigrants were quick to adopt the new crop while the indigenous people were reluctant. The immigrants, because of their connections elsewhere, looked down upon the indigenous people and labelled them backwards and primitive, as summed up the following statement.

Stereotypes of the primitiveness of the indigenous people pervaded almost every aspect of their lives: house styles, clothing, hygiene and gender relations. The stereotypes also touched on rituals, religion, belief, agricultural practices, cattle ownership, involvement in the market, accumulation, use of technology and consumption of manufactured commodities (Nyambara 2002, p. 291)

Perception of Shangwe as backward can be traced to the historical circumstances that placed their area on the margins of colonial world, because of remoteness (Worby, 1992; Nyambara, 2002). The Gokwe area was less accessible to colonial administration, and it was only around the 1950s - just before the immigrants were brought to Gokwe - that schools, boreholes and other facilities were introduced. Because of the late introduction of school, Shangwe people are not well educated are usually labelled as illiterate (Nyangani, 1971)

[33] According to Nyambara (2002), *Madheruka* is an onomatopoeic word intended to evoke the sound of the engines of lorries that brought the immigrants to Gokwe. Because the immigrants were from diverse backgrounds and lacked a shared history, the term *Madheruka* is not appropriate as an ethnic label. However, what the immigrants shared in common was their self-conscious progressive status, compared to the indigenes, and this became part of their self-identity.

reclaim ancestral lands. The 'Shangwe' indigenes once lived in the forest and were forced out in 1986, sometime after the forest was gazetted (see section entitled 'Settlement history in Mafungautsi' below). A sixth group arrived after an operation dubbed 'Operation *Murambatsvina*[34]' (*Murambatsvina* is a Shona word that can be broken into two words, *Muramba* that means 'who refuses' and tsvina that means filth/ dirt. *Murambatsvina* therefore literally means 'one who refuses dirt') in 2005 (International Crisis Group, 2005). This displaced many urban settlers with no title to the land on which their shanty housing stood. Many were hostile to the regime, which helps explain their displacement. Now homeless, they sought refuge in places like Gokwe. Table 2.4 summarizes the categories of immigrants settled in Gokwe and the period at which they came.

Table 2.4:   Types of immigrants who settled in Gokwe (adapted from Nyambara 2002)

Type of Immigrant	Voluntary/ forced settlement	Year of settlement in Gokwe
• Those evicted from Rhodesdale farm by colonial government	Forced	1953
• People coming from the southern parts of the country characterised by extreme land pressure and who migrated during the guerrilla war and settled in Gokwe	Voluntary	1960s-1970s
• Labour immigrants from neighbouring countries who worked in mines and commercial farms and wanted to settle permanently	Voluntary	On-going
• A more heterogeneous group comprising civil servants and petty capitalists	Voluntary	On-going
• Those who decided to settle in Gokwe after the introduction of the Fast Track Land Reform programme, especially in the forest area	Voluntary	2000-2008
• Those who decided to come and settle after Operation Murambatsvina resulted in many homeless urban settlers	Voluntary	2005-2006

Because of continued immigration into Gokwe, the area soon became overcrowded, and as in all communal areas in the country, there has been very little progress in tackling this problem. This was mainly because the government faced major challenges to fully to embark on the resettlement programme to reduce pressure in

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[34] The Zimbabwe government decided to embark on this operation with an aim to 'clean up cities' in the country. During the operation, bulldozers were used to flatten out structures that were identified as illegal jointly by the Zimbabwe army and the police forces. In some cases, residents were instructed to bring down their own structures and those who refused were beaten by the police (International Crisis Group, 2005; United Nations, 2005). By the 7th July 2005, 92,460 housing structures in 52 sites were destroyed and 133534 households were affected. A total of 700,000 people in cities in the country lost their homes whilst about 500,000 children were forced out of school or had their schooling programme interrupted. At least six people (four children and two adults) died due to prolonged exposure to cold as no alternative shelter was provided for the victims of the operation. In total, 18% of the Zimbabwean population (2.4 million people) was directly and indirectly affected by the operation. The speed at which the operation accelerated and worsened the economic crisis in Zimbabwe was described by the UN Special Envoy as 'not just a crisis, but a meltdown' (United Nations, 2005).

communal areas, and by 1985, although a scheme was devised for Gokwe, only 45 families from the entire district were resettled at the Model A[35] Copper Queen resettlement scheme in the north (Nyambara, 2001a). In 1997, 60,000 people out of a total population of 400,000 were on the waiting list for resettlement in Gokwe.

Over time, local conflicts over land have become increasingly common in Gokwe, involving different social fractions - immigrants and indigenes,[36] individual land claimants, young men and elders, squatters[37] and established villagers, villages versus village, and within families. Landlessness has increased, especially for young household heads and single women (widowed, separated, unmarried and divorced) (Nyambara, 2001a). A survey conducted by Nyambara (2001b) found that about 40 percent of young men in the sample were completely landless. This has been one of the major drivers of unauthorized land occupations in Gokwe, and in Mafungautsi forest in particular. But a big historical change needs to be noted. Before 1999, unauthorized occupation of land was not tolerated by the Zimbabwean government, and it often responded by using the police to evict squatters by force or through court prosecutions. If found guilty, squatters were fined or imprisoned and were asked to leave the land they occupied (Nyambara 2001a; 2001b). However, after the introduction of the FTLRP in 2000, scores of people in surrounding communities took this as an opportunity to move into and settle in the forest. Even now, people continue to move into the forest (further details on settlements after the FTLRP are presented in Chapter 4).

2.4   Settlement history in the forest

People living on the northern and southern edges of Mafungautsi forest have different histories, and have been affected differently by forest management policies in Mafungautsi. These distinct histories are presented in the following two sections.

2.4.1 Mafungautsi North

This is where Batanai, one of the study sites is located. Before the 1940s, some of the early settlers (the Shangwe indigenes) lived at Raji (now the Chemagora Small Scale Commercial Farming area, see Figure 2.5), located on the south eastern edge of Mafungautsi State forest. Around the 1940s, the residents at Raji were forced to move by the colonial government when the area was converted into a commercial farm, and they settled into what is now Mafungautsi Forest land. The displaced families joined

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[35]   This was a dominant resettlement model in the country. Settlers in the model A scheme were allocated individual 5-hectare-plots of arable land and there was provision of grazing areas in the scheme ranging from 20 hectares in NR **I** and **II** to 150-200 hectares in NR **V** (Alexander, 1994). Selection of the land reform beneficiaries under this model was based on a criteria that emphasised need and gave priority to refugees, displaced people and those with no or inadequate land for subsistence. Beneficiaries under the scheme were also supposed to be married or widowed, aged between 25-50 and not in formal employment (Kinsey, 2004). The government policy was to move individuals and their immediate families and not entire communities (Dekker, 2004)

[36]   Disputes between indigenes and immigrants were exacerbated by the complicated history of immigration into Gokwe since the 1950s.

[37]   Squatting by outsiders on grazing land is common in communal areas of Zimbabwe (Scoones and Wilson, 1989). The squatters usually seek local permission and make illegal payments. In the Gokwe area, squatters are usually brought in and allocated land illegally in grazing areas by village heads and are sustained for political reasons (Nyambara, 2001b).

others and settled at Bandakamwe area around the head waters of Lutope River in the eastern part of the forest (Figure 2.5). In 1954, the forest was gazetted as a state forest. However, up to 1963, the takeover of the forest by the FC had little effect on the lives of the forest dwellers, who continued to perform religious rituals and ceremonies in the forest, to ensure plentiful harvests as well as continued flow of water in rivers.

In 1963, the inhabitants of Bandakamwe were asked to move to the western part of the forest, to an area that became known as the Zanda Plateau. The FC recommended this area as suitable for settlement. The relationship between the FC and the forest residents was cordial, and residents helped the FC to put out forest fires without any payment. However, in the 1970s the FC began to issue rules and regulations to be followed by the residents. For example, large game hunting was prohibited. The FC officials also began to issue permits for people to harvest forest products. During the late 1970s, at the peak of the liberation war struggle, the FC employees stopped their forest service. Some families took this opportunity to move back to Bandakamwe, while others moved into the forest to settle. Movement into the forest and reclaiming of land by local people was based on the assumption that the war was being fought to regain access to land lost to the colonial government (Matose, 2002).

At independence, FC employees returned to work, and their first assignment was to evict settlers who had moved into the forest in 1981, and those who had moved back to Bandakamwe. The relationship between the FC and the forest residents remained cordial, even after the evictions and the reintroduction of the FC permit system for harvesting resources. However, things changed by 1983, due to the rise of dissident activities in the forest. These can be considered a by-product of inadequate or incomplete demobilization activities at the end of the war[38] (cf. Sadomba, 2007).

In 1985, dissidents in the forest set the FC camp and its equipment on fire (Matose, 2002). The burning of the FC camp, and rumours that forest residents were harbouring the dissidents, provoked the government to issue a three-month eviction

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[38] From the 1960s, many ordinary Zimbabwean people became engaged in the liberation war to get rid of the colonial government. The Rhodesian army was opposed by two insurgent groups, ZANLA and ZIPRA. ZANLA was the armed wing of the Zimbabwe African National Union (ZANU) party, and ZIPRA was the armed wing of the Zimbabwe African People Union (ZAPU) party (Catholic Commission for Justice and Peace and Legal Resources Foundation, 1999). The two parties (ZANU and ZAPU) competed with each other for territory and support during the war, and sometimes fought. Even though memberships were not initially based on ethnic affiliation, over time the two parties became somewhat ethnicised, since by-and-large they fought in different areas, and recruited from different ethnic groups. ZAPU recruited from among Ndebele speaking populations in Matebeleland, in the western part of the country, and ZANU recruited from among Shona speakers in the eastern part of the country. At Independence, the two parties were suspicious of each other, and this made it difficult to incorporate the armed wings into a single nationalist party. It was partly because of this that some people became disgruntled after independence. But the problems also came about because the new government failed to address issues of land equity after independence. There was a widespread impression among ordinary rural people that the war was waged to regain their land. The leaderships of the two movements, however, were more interested in wresting state power from the colonial regime. When the new government failed to act to redistribute as much land as was expected (largely because of constraints built into the Lancaster House agreements that ended the war) some rural elements turned against the government and became dissidents. In the present case, the dissidents were a small group of armed men, loyal to ZIPRA ideas. They were leaderless, and had no clear policy apart from staying alive and causing as much damage as possible (Catholic Commission for Justice and Peace and Legal Resources Foundation, 1999). The dissidents were mainly based in Matebeleland and Midlands provinces, and some of them found cover in Mafungautsi State Forest.

notice to the residents of the Zanda area in 1986. But before the eviction notice period had elapsed, the army came and set fire to structures belonging to forest residents. These residents then moved out of the forest to be accommodated in villages on the forest margins. When hostilities between the FC and local communities ended in 1987 most displaced residents were anxious to return to Zanda, but they were never invited back. The residents were now afraid to use their own initiative, as some of them had been evicted several times before. As a result, they continued to live on the fringes of their forest homeland, hoping that the FC would one day allow them access to forest land for cultivation and settlement (Matose, 2002). The introduction of the FTLRP in 2000 was, therefore, seen as an opportunity by some local people to reclaim land in Mafungautsi forest (more details about settlements in the forest after the FTLRP are provided in Chapter 4). This settlement history in Mafungautsi and forest management activities (including those presented in the next section) are summarised in Box 2.4.

Box 2.4: **Settlement history in Mafungautsi State Forest and Forest management practices from colonial to the post colonial period.**

Before 1940: sparsely populated because of the tsetse fly problem.

1940: Tsetse fly eradicated. People who were settled on the south eastern edge of the forest were forced to move away as this area was converted into a commercial farm. These people join residents at Bandakamwe, around the head waters of Lutope River in the eastern part of the forest.

1954: the forest area was demarcated and converted into a state forest to be managed by the forestry commission.

1963: Residents at Bandakamwe were forced to move to an area (Zanda Plateau) considered suitable for settlement in the western part of the forest.

1970s: Rules were issued by the Forestry Commission (FC) to be followed by forest residents. In the late 1970s, the FC stopped its services in the forest area because of the liberation war. New families moved in and settled in the forest during this period.

1981: The FC resumed its services and evicted those who had moved into the forest.

1985: Dissident activities in the forest. The dissidents set fire to the FC camp in the forest.

1986: All forest residents were forced to move out of the forest by the Zimbabwe army.

1994: The FC decided to initiate the Resource Sharing Project (RSP).

1999: Some families moved into the forest to settle following the wave of illegal settlements by war veterans on commercial farms.

2000: More families moved into the forest to settle after the formalisation of the Fast Track Land Reform Programme and these settlements continue to increase up to the present day.

2.4.2 Mafungautsi South

This is the where Gababe and Ndarire sites are located. This is the area where most of the Shona speaking immigrants evicted in 1953 from Rhodesdale were forced to settle. People from this area have a shorter history of interaction with forestry officers compared to those from the north. Before the immigrants came to settle, the area was surveyed by a group of technical officers including agriculturalists, health officers and economists. The group identified the best area for settlement, around Kana. After agreeing on the area suitable for the resettlement programme, infrastructure such as boreholes, dip tanks and roads were provided. The new immigrants were used to uncontrolled cultivation, rearing large herds of cattle and a relatively higher standard of living, when compared to the Shangwe indigenes.

It was only around 1970s that people in Mafungautsi South started experiencing the impact of the takeover of the forest by the FC. The FC officials started moving to the villages, announcing that it was now illegal to harvest certain resources, notably timber. The forest boundary was also demarcated. However, at the end of the liberation war, some people from this area, and others from outside the district, took the opportunity to settle the forest close to the Zanda area. The new settlers in the forest preferred growing crops along river valleys, as these were seen as fertile, and had reliable water supplies. For a few years from the late 70s until the FC finally started its work, the villagers from Mafungautsi South, and those squatting in the forest, had uncontrolled access to all forest resources. The new settlers at Zanda were evicted by the army in 1986, after the FC camp was burnt, an event that fostered suspicions forest residents were harbouring dissidents.

In 1989, some families with fields adjacent to the forest lost them when the FC re-drew the forest boundary, and illegal settlers in the forest were forced to move out. Some of the immigrants who were asked to move out of the forest actually had wonderful memories of the area where they came from, and when they were asked to move out of the forest, they preferred to be taken back to their original homelands – this was however no longer possible. In 1992, the relations of people in Mafungautsi South and the Forestry Commission worsened when the FC granted a logging company a concession to cut commercial timber. None of the benefits were shared with local communities, even though people with fields adjacent to the forest suffered crop losses due to damage during the logging sessions. When cutting down trees, the logging company drove their vehicles through people's fields, especially those that were adjacent to the forest, and some of the trees fell in the fields, damaging crops. Also around the 1990s, the FC introduced its Forest Protection Unit (FPU) responsible for patrolling the forest and arresting trespassers. People caught cutting down trees, or harvesting any other forest resource (e.g. firewood) were arrested and made to pay fines by the FPU members.

2.5   The study sites

Anticipating budgetary constraints, and reflecting on the likely intensive nature of the research, the ACM team focused on three out of fourteen RMC areas around the forest. These were Ndarire, Gababe and Batanai (see figure 2.2 for location). Not much information was available specifically focusing on the three study sites, and to get details about these and other RMC areas around Mafungautsi, I interviewed key

informants. These were mostly the RMC chairpersons, secretaries and treasurers knowledgeable about RMC operations in Mafungautsi. I also interviewed the Forestry Commission (FC) programme officer for the Mafungautsi Resource Sharing Program, and he gave me a historical overview of all the RMCs around the state forest. I also took measurements of distances between settlements and sites in cases where respondents did not accurately know distances. I also made use of participant observation to collect data. The key characteristics of the study sites are presented separately below and later summarised in Table 2.5.

Location and accessibility of the sites
Ndarire is located on the south-western margin of the forest, Gababe on the south-eastern margin and Batanai on the north-eastern margin (Figure 2.2). The Batanai area is about 15 km from the Gokwe South Business Centre and is easily accessible due to availability of transport in and out of the area. The Gababe area is located about 50 km from the Gokwe South Business Centre, and is poorly accessible. Gababe villagers walk about 30 km to the main road to get transport. The bus service in the area ceased at the beginning of the ACM research programme, due to poor road conditions. Consequently, Gababe has been neglected by development agencies. The Batanai area, by contrast, was frequently visited by numerous organisations, especially government departments. The Ndarire area is located furthest away (75 km) from the Gokwe Business Centre. The road connections to Ndarire, though a bit better than those of the Gababe area, were also in a poor state, making the area inaccessible during the rainy season. Because of the poor roads and long distance to Ndarire, the area was not frequently visited by development agents.

Composition by ethnicity and origin.
The dominant ethnic groups in Batanai and Gababe are the Ndebele (51% and 57% of the population respectively). The dominant group in Ndarire is the Shona, accounting for 77% of the total population (Table 2.5). Batanai has the greatest concentration of Shangwe indigenes (30% of the total population). Other groups (Tonga and people from neighbouring countries) constitute 1%, except in Gababe, where they account for 11% (Table 2.5).

Forest products and key challenges
Resource users in the study sites accessed a wide range of resources in the part of the forest they were responsible for managing. These included medicinal plants such as intolwane (*Elephantorriza goetzei)*, umvagazi (*Pterocarpus angolensis)*, and ikhalimela (*Dicoma anomala),* collected from various locations in the forest, wild fruits such as matohwe (*Azanza garckeana),* mazhumwi (*Strychnos cocculoides)*, matamba (*Strychnos spinosa)* and chakata (*Parinari curatellifolia*), wild vegetables, construction and roofing materials, firewood, natural honey collected from trees or holes in the ground, bush meat; thatch grass (*Hyparrhenia femitina*), broom grass, (*Aristida junciformis*), mushrooms, pasture, mopane worms (a source of protein and are considered a delicacy by many Zimbabweans) and wild tea leaves (common name in Eastern Highlands of Zimbabwe - Makoni tea from leaves of *Fadogia ancylantha*) (Matose, 2002).

However, unlike in Gababe and Batanai, resource users in Ndarire did not have grasses (thatch and broom) in the part of the forest they were managing. The closest area they could get the grasses was about 50 km away, managed by the FC, close to

the FC Camp (Figure 2.5), distant. Because of long distances and lack of transport, resource users in Ndarire utilised the grasses found in the wetlands in their communities. The resource users however, made illegal use of timber resources in the forest, since timber was not part of the resource sharing agreement.

In Batanai and Gababe, ACM activities mainly focused on enhancing sustainable management of key resources - grasses and honey - and on how to improve the lives of the forest-dependent people. In Ndarire, because it lacked grasses (a major resource under the resource sharing project) ACM activities mainly centred on lobbying for timber to be added to the RSP. Timber was an issue even in Batanai and Gababe, but the ACM team was reluctant to initiate processes that included resources outside the RSP; the team started by working with resource user groups on honey and grasses in the early stages, and it was only later, towards the end of the project, that they began to initiate lobbying processes in Ndarire for timber.

Political orientation
Politics is volatile issue in Batanai and Ndarire areas. Most people in these two sites support the ruling ZANU-PF party. In Gababe the majority support the government opposition party, the Movement for Democratic Change (MDC), probably because they have not benefited much from the ZANU-PF government, and were left out of development processes. Politicians were more active in Batanai, which complicated participatory forest work in the area. For instance, during the initial stages of the project research process, meetings were delayed by people having first to introduce themselves by chanting political slogans, and then by stating their positions in the ZANU-PF party.

Livelihood strategies
As already mentioned, parts of Gokwe District lie in agro-ecological regions III, IV and V and suffer from mid-season dry spells and high temperatures. The most viable agricultural activity for the district is animal production (Katerere *et al.*, 1993). Despite this, local communities still practice mixed farming (Vermeulen, 2000). People in Gokwe rely mainly on agriculture to make a living, and they grow both subsistence and cash crops, including maize, cotton, groundnuts, and raise cattle (Vermeulen *et al.*, 1996). The communities around Mafungautsi forest are dependent in part on the forest for subsistence. The forest provides a wide range of goods and services, as indicated above. A substantial number of community members benefit economically from the sale of forest products such as honey, thatch grass, broom grass and wild fruits. But a ranking exercise I undertook with key informants suggested that the forest was a less important source of income than agriculture. This is mainly because of the low commercial value of resources such as grasses. The specific livelihood strategies in the study sites and a summary of their characteristics are presented in Table 2.5.

Table 2.5: **Study sites – main features**

Profile	Batanai	Gababe	Ndarire
When was the first RMC put in place?	1996	1994	2002
Ethnic groups	Ndebele 51%, Shona 20%, Shangwe 28%, Other[39] 1%	Ndebele 57%, Shona 27%, Shangwe 5%, Other 11%	Ndebele 22%, Shona 77%, Other 1%
Distances from Gokwe South Business Centre by road	15km	50km	75km
Forest products accessed under the resource sharing project.	Thatch grass, broom grass, herbs, mushrooms, pasture, firewood, fruits, mopane worms and tea leaves	Thatch grass, broom grass, herbs, mushrooms, pastures, firewood, fruits, mopane worms and tea leaves	The portion of the forest that the people in this RMC manage does not have grass resources. The only available resources - timber and poles - were outside the resource sharing agreement.
Livelihood Strategies in their order of importance. This information was obtained through a ranking exercise with key informants	1. Cotton production 2. Gardening 3. Selling broom grass 4. Maize production 5. Selling of both wild and domestic fruits (like bananas and oranges) 6. Raising and selling livestock	1. Cotton and maize production [these two were ranked as equal in terms of income generation] 2. Gardening and selling reed mats 3. Selling broom, thatch grass and marijuana (*Cannabis sativa*) 4. Remittances from those working in towns 5. Selling both wild and domestic fruits (like bananas and oranges) 6. Raising and selling livestock	1. Cotton production 2. Gardening 3. Maize production 4. Beer Brewing 5. Selling gum tree products 6. Selling timber and carpentry
Key challenges that the ACM project aimed to address	How to enhance sustainable management of the forest, starting with management of key resources (thatch, broom and honey) and how to improve the lives of the forest dependent people.	How to enhance sustainable management of the forest, starting with management of key resources (thatch, broom and honey) and how to improve the lives of the forest dependent people? Activities focused on ensuring sustainable	How to enhance the sustainable management of the forest in situations where people are not allowed to harvest the main available resources? Activities were mainly centred on

[39] This includes the Tonga and immigrants from other countries (e.g. Malawi and Zambia)

Activities focused on ensuring sustainable harvesting of resources, value addition and improved marketing strategies	harvesting of resources, value addition and improved marketing strategies	lobbying processes to ensure that the timber resources were also added to the Resource Sharing Project.

2.6 Resource management approaches in the history of Mafungautsi Forest

Like all the other state forests in Zimbabwe, Mafungautsi forest was managed by the government forest department, the Forestry Commission (FC) from 1954 (when it was gazetted as a state forest). Due to the continued increase in the communal area population, state forests have increasingly become contested resources (Matose, 2002; Bradley and McNamara, 1993), with communities living on the forest margins demanding recognition of their traditional rights to forest land and other resources (Matose, 2002). While the state saw gazetted forests as production reserves, sources of revenue, areas of recreation and repositories for genetic material, local communities viewed the forests as their land, by custom, and as sources for subsistence, including tradable products, land for agriculture, and as places for cultural and spiritual fulfilment (Matose, 2002).

These differences in the perceived value of state forests – with government valuing timber and environmental services, but rural forest dwellers emphasising agrarian uses and heritage values, has been a major cause of conflict among the stakeholders responsible for managing the forests. But this stakeholder conflict is unavoidable. Excluding the surrounding communities from the forest management process actually provoked many conflicts between the FC and local users, and the condition of the forest continued to deteriorate as poaching of resources intensified. An issue addressed by the project was how to live with this conflict, and make it manageable

Because of the problems experienced in top-down management of state forests, the FC, with some funding from the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA), decided to embark on a pilot resource-sharing experiment in Mafungautsi forest in 1994. The CIDA proposal envisioned a diversified joint resource management initiative including eco-tourism, wildlife management activities and also forestry. Investments were made in building accommodation facilities in the forest, at a site known as FC Camp (Figure 2.4 shows one of the three accommodation facilities at the FC Camp; Figure 2.5 shows the location of the FC camp in the forest). However, these structures have yet to be used for eco-tourism. Instead, the FC Camp has been used for community functions and as venue for the annual pre-grass cutting workshops organised by the FC (Chapter 4, Part 111).

Although the wildlife proposal received support from Gokwe South Rural District Council (the body with authority to manage wildlife under the Communal Area Management Programme for Indigenous Resources) the proposal was opposed by lobby groups like including the Department of Agricultural Research and Extension. This was mainly because the area was considered highly suitable for animal

production and introducing wildlife into the forest would result in the spread of foot and mouth diseases (Mapedza and Mandondo, 2002)

The RSP aimed to invite communities to participate in the management of the forest as they were not involved. In return, the members of these communities would be allowed to benefit from forest resources. The pilot project went beyond the provisions of the existing Forestry Act by allowing communities to harvest minor products such as broom and thatch grass, mushrooms and firewood. The main aim of this resource-sharing activity was to enable the two major competing stakeholders jointly to manage the forest in a sustainable way, while at the same time benefiting from this joint management.

Figure 2.4:   A photo of one of the accommodation facilities at the FC Camp

In order to enhance community participation, the FC initiated the formation of Resource Management Committees (RMCs) to assist in managing resources by controlling their utilization though issuance of harvesting permits to community members. The RMCs formed included Chemwiro Masawi, Gababe, Gwehava, Rugare Tasununguka, Batanai, Sokwela, Kupfuma Ishungu-Chemusonde, Hlangano, Masichiri, Ndarire, Nyaje, Mateme, Tachi and Mapiwa. The locations of all RMC areas are shown on a map drawn by local community members in Mafungautsi during a participatory rural appraisal (PRA) exercise (Figure 2.5). The areas where each RMC area harvested its grass resources and the sizes of these areas are shown in a map generated using GIS in Figure 2.6.

Figure 2.5:   Map showing location of Mafungautsi RMC areas
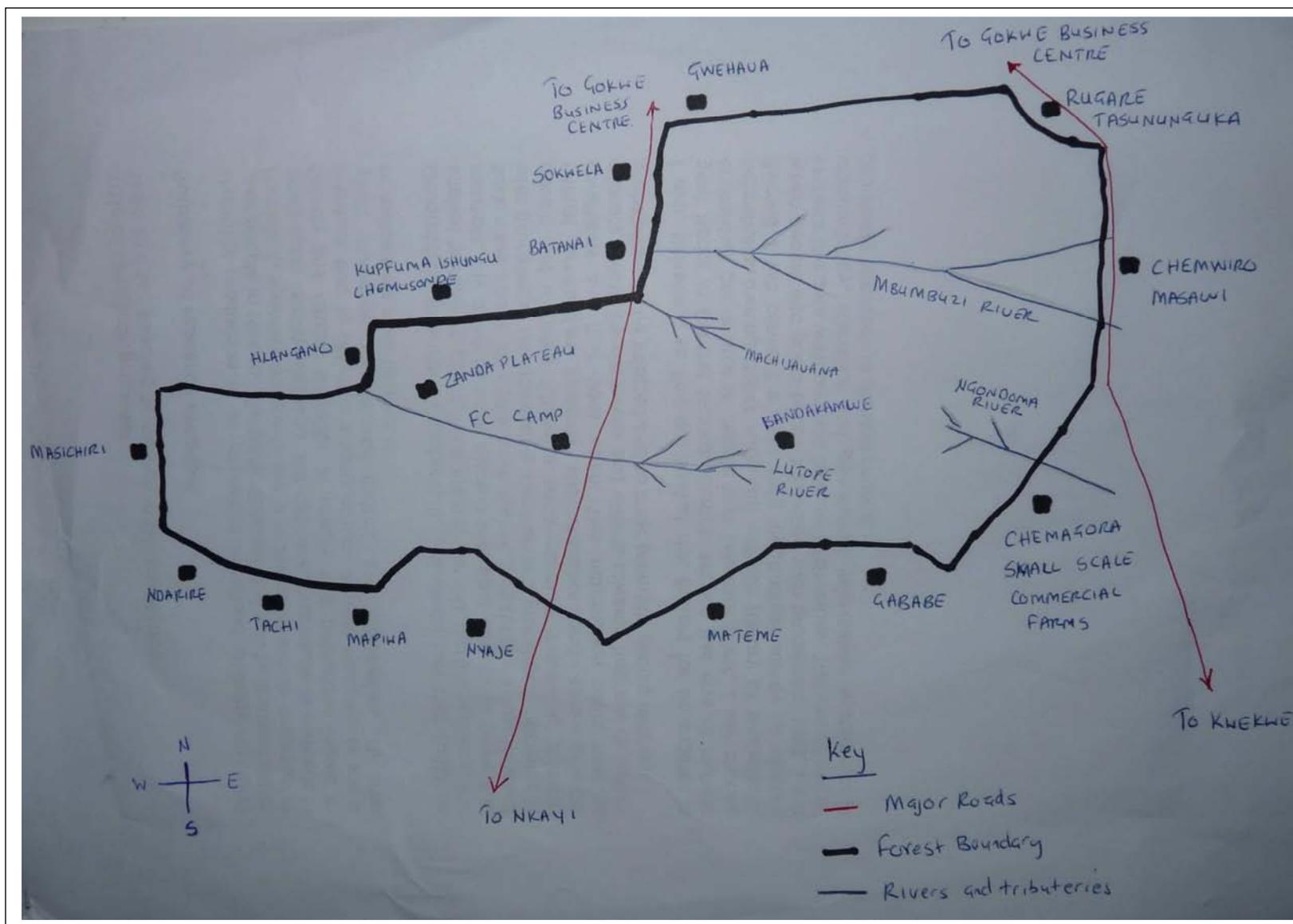
Figure 2.6: **Map showing exact location of the grass harvesting areas and their sizes developed using GIS.**

MAFUNGAUTSI FOREST SHOWING ALLOCATION OF VLEI RESOURCE EXTRACTION

Batanai RMC
97Ha
Broom Grass
Soluvilana Vlei

Gwehava RMC
165Ha
Broom Grass

Sokwela RMC
882Ha
Thatch and Broom Grass
Somatange2-Mbumbusi River

Rugare-Bomba RMC
191Ha
Thatch and Broom Grass
Somtanyelo-Mbumbusi

Rugare RMC
272Ha
Thatch and Broom Grass
Sikati-Mbumbusi Vleis

Hlangano RMC
152Ha
Thatch and Broom Grass
Lutope Vlei

Batanai RMC
215Ha
Broom Grass
Machijavana Vlei

Chemwiro-Masawi RMC
583Ha
Reeds and Broom Grass
Somatange1-Mbumbusi Vleis

Batanai RMC
39ha
Thatch Grass
Guyu Vlei

Lutope Lodge

Not Allocated
220Ha
Dried out by Overgrazing
No Thatch or Broom Grass Harvested

Kupfuma Ishungu RMC
167Ha
Reeds, Broom and Thatch Grass
Lutope Vlei

Gababe RMC
230Ha
Broom Grass
Lutope-Wadze Vleis

Chemwiro_Masawi RMC
506Ha
Thatch Grass
Ngondoma Vlei

Forest Protection Unit
554Ha
Thatch Grass
Lutope - Nyan'ombe Vleis

Gababe RMC
248Ha
Thatch Grass
Ngondoma Vlei

KEY

- Batanai
- Chemwiro-Masawi
- FPU
- Gababe
- Gwehava
- Hlangano
- Kupfuma Ishungu
- Not Allocated
- Rugare
- Rugare-Bomba
- Sokwela
- Forest Boundary

N

4   0   4 Kilometers

Map Produced by
T. Mutimukuru and K. Mhwandagara
June 2005

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2.7 Summary

This chapter has presented the context under which the ACM project was implemented in Zimbabwe. The following key issue has been identified. Forest management in Zimbabwe takes place against a background of forestry policy that largely reflects colonial ideas and does not allow the participation of local communities in management, and unequal land distribution inherited from the colonial era. State forests in Zimbabwe are surrounded by densely populated communal areas and have come under increasing pressure as local people move in and claim ancestral lands. Mafungautsi State Forest has a history of struggles over land, and like most state forests, has come increasingly under pressure from intensified resource use. Early settlers used to live in the forest before they were forced to move out in 1986. They then settled at the edges, hoping one day they would be allowed back to their ancestral lands. This however never happened.

Opportunity presented itself later, after the introduction of the FTLRP in 2000, and several people moved to settle in the forest. The capacity of the FC to respond declined due to the economic deterioration in the country. This decline in socio-economic conditions affected resource management activities both during and after the ACM project, as will be explored more fully in Chapter 4.

The present chapter has also brought to attention the two main institutions involved in the management of natural resources in communal areas in Zimbabwe, the Rural District Councils and the traditional leadership authority, and has highlighted the role that Mafungautsi State Forest plays in providing forest products to local communities, and in supplying vital environmental services, such as acting as a water catchment and protecting the fragile Kalahari sands from erosion. The Kalahari sands are susceptible to erosion when cultivated and are of inherently low soil fertility.

The chapter also noted the fact that Mafungautsi forest has been solely managed by the Forestry Commission since it was gazetted as a state forest in 1954. Because of the many problems resulting from the exclusion of local communities in the management of the forest resource and utilisation of the forest products the forestry department introduced a Resource Sharing Project in 1994. This project was funded by the Canadian International Development Agency. The project proposal aimed to involve local communities in wildlife management, eco-tourism and forest management. In practice, even though structures to support eco-tourism were put in place, the eco-tourism aspect was never implemented. The proposal for wildlife management in the forest was opposed by many stakeholders in an area considered suitable for livestock production, for fear that wildlife would bring diseases like foot and mouth. The project went beyond the provisions of the Forest Act in allowing local communities to benefit from some resources in the forest and participate in management. However, the forest continued to be degraded. This led to the introduction of the ACM project in 1999. The details of this project form the topic to be presented in the next chapter.

Harvested broom grass in a wetland in the forest before being ferried to the community

Thatch grass harvesters at the FC camp in the forest, before ferrying the grass to their homes

Thatch grass harvesters on their way home

Chapter 3: The Adaptive Collaborative Management Approach

3.1 Introduction

This chapter presents and discusses the Adaptive Collaborative Management (ACM) approach implemented in Zimbabwe from 1999 to 2003. It starts by tracing how the global ACM programme came about and how the ACM approach was conceptualised. This is important to understand the theoretical considerations guiding the ACM team and why they used an action research mode based on self learning and learning-by-doing to implement the project in Mafungautsi. The last part of the chapter describes the formation of the ACM Zimbabwe team, the roles of the team members, and their own capacity building processes.

3.2 Background of the ACM Research Project

In 1998, researchers at the head office for the Center for International Forestry Research (CIFOR) in Bogor, Indonesia, realised that two of their projects were heading in the same direction (Colfer, 2005a and Colfer, 2005b). The first group of researchers working on a 'Criteria and Indicators' (C&I) project realised, after a four-year research period, that the developed C&Is were insufficient to address problems faced by forest managers. They concluded that it was important not only to identify, but also to create, conditions for sustainable management. The second group of researchers, working on a 'Devolution and Livelihoods' project focused on naturally occurring adaptiveness of forest managers, also came to similar conclusions. They realised that both forest conditions and communities were continuously changing, thereby requiring communities to adapt continuously (Colfer, 2005a).

Based on research in Asian humid tropical forests, and comparative experience in Africa and South America, CIFOR researchers were convinced of the urgency to solve environmental and human problems related to sustainability. Influenced by the work of Terborgh (1999) and Wirkramasinghe (1994) they recognised a need to act quickly to halt environmental degradation and address increasing rural poverty and suffering. Researchers realised that there was scope for convergence of these two projects, and later formulated a new programme - Local People, Devolution and Adaptive Collaborative Management of Forests. It was under this new project that the ACM approach was conceptualised to address environmental and human problems while contributing to researchers' understanding of processes involved (Colfer, 2005a; and Colfer, 2005b).

ACM research was initiated through projects in 11 countries (Cameroon, Ghana, Zimbabwe, Malawi, Indonesia, Philippines, Nepal, Kyrgyzstan, Madagascar, Brazil and Bolivia). By 2002, research had expanded to thirty field work settings (Colfer 2005a). An ACM coordinating team with Research Programme Coordinator coordinated global research and synthesised main findings. In various countries ACM teams typically comprised a mix of ecologists, sociologists and economists. For each team, a leader was appointed and made responsible for coordinating and guiding the research in his/her own country.

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To facilitate learning among the different ACM teams, the ACM Research Programme Coordinator organised meetings to share experiences. An ACM newsletter was started for the same purpose.

3.2.1 Conceptualising the ACM approach

From the CIFOR researchers ACM was seen as drawing on a number of bodies of theory, including complex systems theory, adaptive management theory, social learning theory, ideas about equity in development, notions of cooperation and competition, models of human interaction and pragmatic processes of facilitating change (CIFOR, 2000; Diaw *et al.* 2009). The approach was also seen as embodying two main orientations:

- collaborative management, as applied in various fields of natural resource management. The collaborative management approach has made headway as a result of a growing consensus that without some basic agreements among affected parties about resource use sustainability would never be achieved, and degradation would continue
- adaptive management, seen as a way to address the complexity and uncertainty inherent in natural resource situations. The adaptive management approach is an iterative process providing regular analysis of progress towards established objectives and adjustment to changing circumstances. ACM also recognised traditional approaches. These are often informal, adaptive and collaborative ways of approaching management of forest resources, and have been in use for centuries. ACM aims to integrate these approaches where appropriate.

The CIFOR researchers initially defined ACM as a concept of natural resource management (NRM) and as a research program. ACM research in practice was supposed to help define the ACM approach more clearly. CIFOR researchers' initial definitions were as follows:

ACM as a vision and a concept of management
> In our vision, adaptive collaborative management is a means, or a combination of means, that can help achieve sustainable forest management. In this vision, the stakeholders confidently seek to anticipate the future based on improved abilities to learn, as a group and from their shared experiences. Their disposition to treat management as a series of experiments to be consciously observed, evaluated and acted upon to catalyze their ability to learn, to adjust and to improve the information, technical options, organizational forms, incentives and social institutions upon which successful management depends. Communication is strong across stakeholders and different interests are balanced through negotiation. There is a collective awareness of the impacts - actual or potential - of different management and resource use interventions, and a considerable ability to deal with surprise and conflicts and to strike a dynamic balance between the economic, ecological and social needs of the present with those of the future. Seen in that light, ACM is a concept or an ideal management system, which has built-in institutional mechanisms for accommodating multiple interests and for dealing with complexity and surprise through systematic experiential learning. (CIFOR, 2000 p. 9)

ACM as a family of research programs
> While of interest to forest stakeholders, managers and policy-makers, ACM is based on a scientific paradigm that sees local governance, participation or collaboration as the centrepiece of sustainable forest management, and hypothesizes that these will be better

realized through iterative processes of social learning among and between local stakeholders, policy-makers and other interest groups in society. ACM is thus part of an evolving family of research programs emphasizing various aspects of this complexity and relying on a broad range of approaches and methodologies. These include thematic research on community-based, collaborative management, devolution policies, local institutions and environmental governance, as well as methodological and philosophical inroads related to conflict management, pluralism, adaptive management, patrimonial mediation, criteria and indicators of SFM [Sustainable forest management], participatory rural appraisal or participatory action research. Within CIFOR itself, the "Adaptive Collaborative Management Program" is a broad umbrella for a dozen related research projects, which all contribute to the advancement of our knowledge of ACM systems, through various angles (devolution, C&I, institutional arrangements, landscape development, future scenarios, participatory action research) and using different methods (CIFOR, 2000, p. 9).

The definition of ACM was refined over time as research progressed in the different countries. Recently, ACM has been defined as a quality-adding approach whereby stakeholders interact, negotiate a vision for their resource, and consciously undergo shared-learning in developing and implementing their plans (Prabhu *et al.*, 2007; Prabhu and Matose, 2008; Colfer, 2005a; Colfer, 2005b; Hartanto *et al.*, 2003; and Kusumanto *et al.,* 2005). Implementation is jointly monitored, and outcomes are observed and reflected upon to generate lessons for next activities. Within ACM, management processes are influenced by conscious and deliberate lessons generated by stakeholders involved in joint learning processes (Prabhu *et al.*, 2007). ACM is characterised by conscious efforts among stakeholders to communicate, collaborate and seek opportunities for joint learning about the impacts of their actions (Colfer, 2005a).

It is believed that ACM leads to self improving systems of resource management based on improved flows of information, decision making following from experimentation, communication and negotiation among stakeholders, and learning among resource users that result in changes in management systems (Prabhu and Matose, 2008). ACM aims to 'strengthen and enhance processes of adaptation so that groups concerned have the capacity to adapt quickly and more appropriately to changes that confront them than through ad hoc trial and error' (Prabhu, 2003:12). In order to improve the adaptive capacity of groups in resource management, ACM focused on three main elements: (i) strengthening social and human assets of groups, (ii) enhancing shared/ social learning and adaptation by stakeholder groups through the creation of opportunities for them to share their knowledge and experiences, and to learn together and adapt, and (iii) broadening the knowledge base upon which decisions can be made by improving collaboration beyond immediate actors to include other key stakeholders by helping to identify who they are (Prabhu, 2003).

The overall ACM research programme formulated key questions, outcomes, key steps, hypothesis and assumptions (CIFOR, 2000; Colfer 2005b). The formulated key questions were:
- Can collaboration among stakeholders in forest management, enhanced by processes of conscious and deliberate social learning that results in conscious adaptation of management lead both to improved human well being and the maintenance of forest cover and diversity? If so, under what conditions?

- What approaches, centred on social learning and collaborative action among diverse stakeholders, can be used to encourage sustainable use and management of forest resources?
- In what ways do the processes and outcomes of ACM affect social, economic, political and ecological functioning and how does this feedback reinforce or weaken forest management?

It was envisioned that ACM would have the following outcomes:

Immediate Impacts

- Improvements in policy making processes: Strengthening of mechanisms and incentives for policy makers would make them to be more responsive to local community strengths and needs as managers; there would be improvements in avenues for information flow from local level to the policy process level.
- Improvements in local governance: e.g., improved transparency in how information is collected, communicated and used locally, development would be more flexible, (responsive), representative and resilient in local institutions.
- Improved collaborative and negotiation capacity: stakeholders can recognize and choose to act on opportunities to increase human well being (HWB) and forest condition via negotiation and collaborative action.
- Improved adaptive capacity: stakeholders are better able to develop management strategies that take into account both biophysical and social systems, they are better able to anticipate system responses to their management actions, and they are better and more rapidly able to interpret the impacts of their actions and adjust management in response.

End Impacts

- Empowerment & decision making: marginalised forest actors have a greater ability to act on their interests; forest stakeholders are enabled to think more critically and longer term regarding forest management
- Linking forest and human well-being: Better managed forests for both local people's well-being and conservation interests; livelihoods and livelihood strategies improve.

It was envisioned that the ACM programme would follow 3 key steps, each of them composed of different activities (Table 3.1). In that process, the research would test the following hypothesis (Cifor, 2000; Colfer, 2005b):

- Under conditions of uncertainty and multiple interests in common natural resources, collaborative processes of social learning lead to improvements in adaptive capacity, resulting in improvements in resource management and human well-being.
- Processes of social negotiation that enable collective planning and adaptation lead to more meaningful representation of strategic stakeholders, empowerment of local stakeholders and a more equitable sharing of the benefits of resource management.
- Collaborative monitoring arrangements strengthen processes of social learning and lead to improvements in forest management and human well being.
- Feedback loops between the local and higher levels of forest management and forest policy lead to improvements in forest management and human well being.

A number of assumptions formed the basis of ACM research (Cifor, 2000; Colfer, 2005b). These included:

- Forest dependent people are part of a complex and dynamic forest-human ecosystem that is constantly changing, making predictions impossible and surprises inevitable.
- Forest dependent people have the capacity to act, have agency and invaluable knowledge about their systems. It is therefore important for them to participate in the management of their natural resources.
- Resource management efforts that ignore the issue of equity are doomed to fail as inequity results in conflicts and violence. Most community based projects are high-jacked by the elite, with marginalised people ignored or playing a peripheral role in the project. Efforts therefore need to be put in empowering the marginalised groups so that they also play an active role in resource management. Social capital is an important precursor to collective action, and should therefore be enhanced.

3.2.2 Objectives and proposed steps of the ACM project in Zimbabwe

Using a handbook developed for ACM research highlighting issues discussed above, (CIFOR, 2000) the ACM researchers in Zimbabwe later developed their own understanding of the project they implemented. The objectives defined for the ACM research project in Zimbabwe were to facilitate the improvement of current management systems by forest managers at both local and national levels, and to facilitate the development of locally appropriate collaborative monitoring arrangements. The ACM team in Zimbabwe also formulated simplified steps for implementing the ACM project in the field: researcher identification, context study, stakeholder analysis and roles definition, site selection, context studies at local level, learning and training workshops with key partners at local level, development of strategic plans with identified community groups, implementation of actions and monitoring, reflection on actions and monitoring, and adjustment of actions. All these activities were supposed to be implemented during the three-year project plan from 1999 to early 2003. During the stakeholder analysis phase, it was hoped that the ACM researchers would try to identify different resource users in the communities and beyond, their interests, levels of power, their rights and responsibilities and nature of communication and information flow among them. After identifying the poor and marginalised, the team was supposed to encourage them to participate in the project activities. In trying to empower the poor and marginalised groups to participate in resource management activities, so as to avoid problems of elite

Table 3.1: Envisioned Steps in the ACM programme (Adapted from CIFOR, 2000)

Step	Main Activities	Specific Activities	Who?
1	Research Design	• Defining research questions • Defining research methods and other operational elements	ACM team at the head office at Bogor, Indonesia
2	Partnership Identification	• Build ownership of research by negotiating • and jointly developing research agendas • Build agreements on potential sites	ACM team at the head office at Bogor, Indonesia
	Joint Site Selection	• Establish and agree on site selection criteria • Formation of site selection team • Site visits	ACM team at the head office at Bogor, Indonesia
3	Regional and Global Research Development with key partners and personnel	• Research plan development • Methods development • Networking	ACM team at the head office at Bogor, Indonesia and ACM field based researchers (site-level)
	Start up activities	• Community immersion • Create interests and motivation on • community and other key stakeholders • Negotiate research agendas	ACM field based researchers (site-level)
	Background information gathering	• Stakeholder analysis • Histories of interventions in the area • Level of adaptiveness and collaborativeness • Forest conditions and socio-economic conditions of the people	ACM field based researchers (site-level)
	Learning cycle implementation	• Define actions and monitoring system • Conduct action and monitoring • Evaluation and reflection	ACM field team and separate groups/ stakeholders in the community
	Communication and sharing among different groups	• Share lessons learnt and strengthen feedbacks to wider groups	ACM field team and separate groups/ stakeholders in the community
	Observation Documentation and reporting	• Document and analyse the ACM process • Report to head office on regular basis (fortnightly, monthly, quarterly basis)	ACM field based researchers (site level)
	Continuous reflection and evaluation on the ACM processes following the PAR learning cycles		ACM field based researchers (site level) and ACM team at the head office in Bogor

Comparative analysis of ACM processes across countries and regions		ACM team at the head office in Bogor

capture, the ACM team, as we shall see in Chapter 4 organised an empowerment training workshop and marginalised groups were especially encourage to participate.

In addition to field activities, the ACM team had discovered from several research carried out in on forestry policy in the country (Bradley and McNamara, 1993; Thomas, 1993; Nhira *et al.*, 1998) that the existing forestry policy did not support community management of forests. The team also aimed to influence forestry policies so as to enhance the participation of local communities in the management of State Forests. The team developed several interventions to realise this objective, as we shall see in Chapter 4.

3.3   The Zimbabwe ACM team and its capacity building

3.3.1 The selection of Zimbabwe ACM team members

As noted, the multidisciplinary ACM-Zimbabwe team, included ecologists, sociologists and economists. The composition of the team changed over time, partly as a result of the changing socio-economic climate in the country, and partly in order to improve the gender balance of the team. The ACM coordinating team from Bogor started by recruiting one consultant, an ecologist, and then a sociologist (who was on secondment from the FC, and was appointed team leader). Later, a forester, an ecologist, a social scientist and an agriculturalist joined the team. Other team members were hired as consultants for shorter periods – e.g. an agricultural economist who moved in and out of the project. A student intern - a social forester - also joined the project, and finally a replacement sociologist joined when the ACM team leader left.

When the ecologist left consultants were hired to do some ecological work, but this was soon more or less abandoned as ecological variables proved to be much less sensitive to changes (given the nature of forest products harvested by the communities) than social variables. In early 2003, the ACM project ended and the ACM team stopped actively facilitating the ACM processes in the field. The team however, continued to offer backstopping support to the FC officer (who was now the main facilitator of the processes in the communities around the Mafungautsi forest), as well as monitoring developments in Mafungautsi. Throughout the research period (1999 - 2003) the team leader was responsible for steering the research process. The CIFOR global ACM Project Coordinator, one of the scientists who developed the ACM concept, was also based at the CIFOR Harare office and played an important role in the research process.

3.3.2 Roles of team members

The team members were offered contracts that specified their roles in the team, and they had to develop specific outputs from their work as described in their yearly performance contracts. These outputs had to address ACM research questions. Each team member had to take lead in writing one or more specific papers but (s) he could also co-author articles with the rest of the team. In preparing papers, lead authors were expected to develop concepts notes on the topics they were dealing with and present these to the rest of the team and then get feedback. In most cases, however, presentation of concepts notes generated little critical response, even though they helped to make the rest of the team aware of various issues and topics being covered, and what data needed to be collected.

Asking team members to choose topics they had an interest in made ACM work more exciting to team members. However, this also risked some crucial topics not being covered because they were not chosen by one of the team members. To encourage team members to finalise their papers, the team leader organised annual retreats in remote areas of the country with conducive environments for them to concentrate, give each other feedback, contribute critique, and finalise submissions. Over time, the ACM team members achieved several publications, including book chapters, journal articles, videos, policy briefs, and newsletters to share their experiences with the wider public. A sample of publications produced is presented in Box 3.1 below.

Before and after each field trip, team members met with the team-leader and the ACM project coordinator to discuss progress and reflect on findings. The team used the lessons learned to influence the next research steps, as well as to adjust their strategies. In other words the research team used reflective action learning cycles just as local community members involved in the research were expected to do. The ACM team members also organised in-house seminars for which they invited key people in topics to be discussed. During seminars, ACM team members presented findings and received comments and feedback.

Because of the different backgrounds of the team members, it was not easy to work together, especially during the field trips. This relates not only to the different disciplinary backgrounds, but also personal principles influenced individual decision making processes. For instance, an incident that happened at Batanai area illustrates this point (Box 3.2).

3.3.3 Capacity building for the ACM team members

To build their capacities in ACM, team members were given an ACM research handbook that described the conceptual underpinnings of the ACM approach, with guidelines on the various steps in implementing the approach, a suite of tools, and brief discussions on the various concepts (e.g. social learning, collaborative monitoring and participatory action research) related to the ACM approach. The guide was, however, presented as a 'work in progress'- a living document to be continuously updated. Team members were also encouraged to learn more about the various concepts through literature. On appointment, each member was asked to select his/her key area of interest, depending on background (e.g. PAR and social learning), take the lead on the topic and come up with concept notes

Box 3.1: **A list of publications produced by the Zimbabwe ACM team members**

Journal Articles

Büscher B. E., and Mutimukuru T., 2007.'Buzzing too far? The ideological echo of the global governance agenda on the local level: the case of the Mafungautsi Forest in Zimbabwe.' Development Southern Africa 24: 649-664.

Haggith M, Prabhu R., Colfer C, Ritchie B., Thomson A and Mudavanhu H., 2003. Infectious Ideas: Modelling the Diffusion of Ideas across Social Networks. Small-scale Forest Economics, Management and Policy 2: 225-239.

Haggith, M. Prabhu, R. Mudavanhu, H. Matose, F. Mutimukuru, T. Nyirenda, R & Standa-Gunda, W., 2003. The challenges of effective model scoping: A FLORES case study from the Mafungautsi Forest Margins, Zimbabwe. Journal of Small-Scale Forest Economics, Management and Policy 2: No 2, special issue.

Mendoza, G.A. Prabhu, R. Nyirenda, R. Standa-Gunda, W. Mutimukuru, T., 2003. A Community-driven Multi-criteria Approach to Developing Indicators of Sustainable Resource Management. Journal of Forest Policy 10: 1-21.

Prabhu R., Haggith M., Mudavanhu H., Muetzelfeldt R., Standa-Gunda W., and Vanclay J. K., 2003. ZimFlores: A Model to Advise Co-management of the Mafungautsi Forest in Zimbabwe. Small-scale Forest Economics, Management and Policy 2: 185-210.

Standa-Gunda, W., Mutimukuru, T., R. Nyirenda, and Haggith, M., 2003. Participatory modelling to enhance social learning, collective action and mobilization among users of the Mafungautsi forest, Zimbabwe. Journal of Small-Scale Forest Economics, Management and Policy, 2: No 2, special issue.

Mutimukuru T., Kozanayi W. and Nyirenda R, 2006. Catalysing collaborative monitoring processes in joint forest management situations. The Mafungautsi Forest Case, Zimbabwe. Journal of Society and Natural Resources, 9: 209 – 224.

Book Chapters

Mutimukuru T., Kozanayi W., and Nyirenda R., 2007. Initiating a Dynamic Process for Monitoring in Mafungautsi State Forest, Zimbabwe. In Guijt I., (2007), Negotiated Learning: Collaborative Monitoring in Resource Management. Resources for the Future (RFF), Washington DC, USA.

Mutimukuru, T., Nyirenda, R and Matose F., 2005. Learning amongst ourselves. Towards adaptiveness by stakeholders in forest management through social learning in Mafungautsi. In, Colfer, C., (eds.) 2005. The equitable forest. Diversity, Community and Resource Management. Resources for the Future, Washington DC, USA.

Mutimukuru-Maravanyika T., Prabhu R., Matose F., Nyirenda R., and Kozanayi W, 2008. In Mandondo A., Prabhu R., and Matose F., Copying Amidst Caos. Studies on adaptive collaborative management from Zimbabwe. Resources for the Future (RFF), Washington DC, USA.

Videos

ACM Team Zimbabwe, 2004. Learning by Doing. A video developed by the ACM team in Zimbabwe

Newsletters

Mutimukuru T., and Kozanayi W., (eds.), 2005. ACM News Zimbabwe. Keeping the momentum: Sustaining projects/processes when outside support has been withdrawn. Vol. 2: No. 2. A newsletter published by Mirror Publications for CIFOR Zimbabwe

Maravanyika T., and Kozanayi W., (eds.), 2006. ACM News Zimbabwe. Reflecting on the ACM Experiment: A synthesis of the experiences from the learning centres in

Zimbabwe. February 2006, Vol. 3 No. 1. A newsletter published by Sable Press for CIFOR Zimbabwe

Maravanyika T., and Kozanayi W., (eds.), 2006. ACM News Zimbabwe. Collaborative Work in Rural Landscapes. Learning from the Zimbabwean Experiences. December 2006, Vol. 3 No. 2. A newsletter published by Sable Press for CIFOR Zimbabwe

Mutimukuru T., and Kozanayi W., (eds.), 2004. ACM News Zimbabwe. Doing ACM in Mafungautsi: Lessons and challenges. February 2004, Vol. 1 No.1. A newsletter published by CIFOR Zimbabwe

Mutimukuru T., and Kozanayi W., (eds.), 2004. ACM News Zimbabwe. Expanding Horizons and Breaking through the status quo using ACM. August 2004, Vol. 1 No. 2. A newsletter published by Mirror Publications for CIFOR Zimbabwe

Mutimukuru T., and Kozanayi W., (eds.), 2005. ACM News Zimbabwe. Policy implications of using the ACM approach in forest management. February 2005, Vol. 2 No. 1. A newsletter published by Mirror Publications for CIFOR Zimbabwe

Box 3.2:   An example of problems encountered when working as a team

ACM team members usually started their field trips by visiting the community partners[40] in each of the research sites to get an overview of processes, developments, challenges and key activities taking place. One day during their visit at Batanai, they discovered that the community partner for Batanai, Mr Lizwe Sibanda, was very ill and suffering from malaria. Mr Sibanda was no longer able to speak and had spent the past few days in bed. As they were seated in Mr Sibanda's hut talking to his wife, the ecologists suddenly asked the social scientists what CIFOR's policy was concerning sick employees. He went on to say that there was no option but for the ACM team to take the community partner to hospital so that he could get treatment. The two social scientists were shocked by this proposition and they excused themselves from the hut so as to deliberate on this issue on their own. When outside, one of the social scientists told the ecologist that from their point of view this was not the right way to handle this issue – they argued that it was wrong to impose their decision on the family by telling them what to do. They however agreed that if the wife had asked for the teams' help to take her husband to the hospital, then they were willing to help. The ecologist was angry and accused the social scientists of not being sympathetic to the person who was helping them to do their work. He went on to say that even if there was no policy from CIFOR to pay for a community partner who was ill, he would pay the bills from his own pocket. The social scientists later convinced the ecologist that at least they should ask for the opinion of Mr Sibanda's wife on what she wanted to do about her husband's illness. When they went back into the hut, Mrs Sibanda told the team that her husband was already receiving treatment from a local traditional healer and that if after this treatment, he did not get well, then she would probably ask them to take him to hospital. When the team members came to visit the community partner a few days later to check how he was doing, they found him up and about, and he was back to his normal self.

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[40]   These were local community representatives, who helped the CIFOR researchers with data collection and lived in the research sites. The ACM team visited them, and the local community members for two week periods every one-two months.

addressing the following points: definition of the concept, how to operationalise the concept in practice, possible challenges that could be faced in implementing the concept and how outcomes from processes facilitated could be sustained. The concept notes were shared among the team members to get feedback and gain their support in the field. An example of a concept note on social learning developed by one of the ACM team members (the author of this thesis) is presented in Annex 3.1. It is, however, important to highlight that no concept note was developed for the concept of social capital, though it was taken by the ACM team members as an important pre-curser for collective action. This was because no team member took an initiative to do so.

With regard to capacity building, team members were also advised to identify relevant training courses for developing their capacities, and CIFOR paid for them to attend. Such training included a scientific writing workshop for CIFOR ACM team members from all countries, held in Bogor, Indonesia in November 2001, a presentation skills workshop attended by ACM team members in Harare in March 2002, the participatory monitoring and evaluation workshop that two ACM team members (including the author of this thesis) attended in Uganda in June 2001, and a modelling workshop attended by the economist and ecologists in Johannesburg in December 2000.

3.4   Reflection and Discussion

This section comments on key issues arising from the ACM background, and their implications for the ACM team and for the implementation of the project in Mafungautsi State Forest.

The ACM approach was not clearly defined when the project started. Although the ACM researchers did not have a clear understanding of the approach-in-development (and the various concepts identified as crucial under the ACM approach, such as social learning and social capital), they still went ahead and implemented activity in Mafungautsi. Study of the concept notes developed by the ACM team in Zimbabwe shows limited understanding by the team members. An example is the social learning concept note in Annex 3.1. Although the term social learning has become popular in the natural resource management literature, there are various definitions for the term, and what it means differs from one researcher to the other. Concepts like social learning, as laid out in the concept notes, were embraced by the team as solid, good and valuable, and their interpretation was not questioned.

In relation to social learning, for example, there is no common theoretical perspective and definition of learning (Parson and Clack, 1995) and different definitions of social learning are found in literature (see Box 3.3). Social learning scholars focus on individuals (Bandura, 1977) and groups, formal organisations and entire societies (Argyris and Schon, 1978; 1996; Senge, 1990, and Wenger, 1998, Woodhill and Roling, 1998), but views on what it means for learning to be 'social' differ. The biggest difference is that for some, social learning means learning by individuals in a social setting (e.g. copying others), while for others, it means learning by social aggregates (collective learning) (Parson and Clark, 1995; Wals, 2007).

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Box 3.3:   An example of the different definitions of social learning in literature

- Individual learning that is based on observation of others and their social interactions in a group (Bandura, 1977)
- An iterative and ongoing process that comprises several loops and enhances flexibility of socio-ecological systems and its ability to change. For social learning to take place there is need for capacity building among actors; awareness of stakeholders' different goals and perspectives, shared problem identification, understanding of stakeholders' interdependence, learning to work jointly, trust and the creation of formal and informal relationships (Parl-Wostl and Hare, 2004)
- Shared learning by interdependent stakeholders which acts as key for them to arrive at more desirable futures (Leeuwis and Pyburn 2002b).
- An approach and philosophy that focuses on participatory processes of social change. It involves critical self-reflection, development of multi-layered democratic processes, reflective capabilities of individuals and societies and the capacity for social movements to change political and economic frameworks for the better (Woodhill and Röling, 1998).
- a dynamic process that involves continuous sense-making of the world through perspectives based on concrete, experience-modified knowledge, beliefs and values, and a dynamic process of reflection and action by stakeholders through the experiences encountered by involvement with other people and the physical environment (Maarlveld and Dangbegnon, 1998).

Scholars who use the concept of social learning are thus at variance, but the ACM team did not further dig into these various conceptualisations. As we shall see later, the ACM team mostly focused on learning by groups (see chapter 4) and hence organised several learning platforms, such as meetings and workshops where resource users learned jointly. This strategy, although it was effective in solving problems faced by users of some resources (e.g. broom grass and thatch), was not so effective when it came to other resources like honey. Beekeeping projects were individual in nature and the beekeepers were not keen to share knowledge on beekeeping as this would bring more completion for honey production. An example is the Batanai beekeeper - an innovator who was not willing to share his knowledge with other beekeepers (Chapter 4). Although the ACM team took social learning as the condition necessary for enhancing sustainable management of resources and the improvement of lives of forest dependent people, no thorough investigation was done to find practical examples in which this model was successfully used. In some cases, however, the learning model has been found to have some shortcomings (Leeuwis, 2000). Leeuwis (2000) even suggests that for the learning models to be effective, they need to be embedded in well managed negotiation processes. Having a more critical analysis of the social learning concept would have helped the ACM team to realise that it had some weaknesses, and hence not take the usefulness of the concept for granted.

Looking at the social capital concept, it is interesting that although this was considered a crucial precondition for collective action by the ACM team (and many other researchers - Putnam *et al.*, 1993; Ostrom 1994, 2000; Dasgupta and Serageldin, 2000; Narayan and Pritchett, 1997), not much effort was put in trying to understand the concept. No concept note was developed by the ACM team members on social capital, mainly because no one decided to take the lead on the issue.

Although the concept of social capital has become increasingly popular in research and development work, especially in less developed countries, the term again has several definitions (See Box 3.4). From these various definitions we can see that a number of different notions are lumped up as social capital including mechanisms for generating social capital, outcomes of having social capital, and the type of social organisation through which social capital emerges (Portes, 1998). Some scholars believe that social capital is not embodied in individuals but in social relations, with benefits realised by individuals (Loury, 1977; Bourdieu, 1985; and Coleman 1988), while others view social capital as something that cannot be realised by individuals but is something intrinsic to individuals or groups (Putnam, 1993a; 1993b; 1995; 1996; and 2000). Even though so many definitions of social capital exist, it is important to note that all these definitions emphasize relations among people in a community. Some of the forms of social capital as proposed in the literature are instanced in Box 3.5.

Box 3.4:   Definitions of social capital

- sets of actions, outcomes and relationships – whatever allows people to act. Social capital is seen as having several entities with two common elements; (a) consists of some aspects of social structures and (b) they facilitate certain actions of actors within the society (Coleman, 1988; 1990).
- a set of norms, networks and organization through which people gain access to power and resources (Grootaert, 1998).
- the social structure that facilitates coordination and cooperation among people (Putnam *et al*., 1993).
- something that is central to economic development. There is prosperity where trust and social networks flourish (Putnam, 2000). This view rapidly influenced the incorporation of social capital in development work especially in the underdeveloped world (DeFilippis, 2001).
- the 'intra-community connections among individuals which form a catalytic network by which individual, group and community wide efforts are made more effective' (Dudley, 2004. p. 1)
- the internal social and cultural coherence of society, the norms and values that govern interactions among people and institutions in which they are embedded. It is the glue that holds societies together and is essential for economic growth and human well being (Serageldin, 1998).
- the measurable variables that create trust and cooperation in communities (Torsvik, 2000).
- the norms and networks that facilitate collective action in a community (Woolcock, 2001).
- goodwill, fellowship and sympathy among individuals and families that make up a social unit (Hanifan, 1916).
- features of local organisation that enable people to act collectively through the formulation and reinforcement of norms, common rules and sanctions (Pretty, 2003; Uphoff and Mijayaratna, 2000).

Box 3.5:   Forms of social capital

> (a) **civic** and **governmental** (institutional) social capital. Civic social capital refers to interconnections among individuals at community level whilst governmental social capital refers to connections among people at different levels in a hierarchy (Collier, 1998; and Torsvik, 2000).
> (b) **structural** and **cognitive** social capital. Structural social capital refers to the organization of the society, particularly the rules, roles, procedures and networks that make cooperation possible. Cognitive social capital refers to mental processes and resulting ideas (reinforced by culture and ideology) and specifically to norms, values, attitudes and beliefs that make people cooperate (Krishna and Uphoff, 1999; Uphoff, 2000).
> (c) **bonding** and **bridging social capital**. Bonding social capital refers to cohesion applicable to acquainted individuals within circles of reciprocal trust. Bridging social capital refers to the cohesion applicable to unacquainted strangers in a broader group and is important for building civil society (Daubon and Sanders, 2002).

Obtaining knowledge on these various forms or competing definitions of social capital, as we shall see in Chapter 6, would have been helpful to the ACM team later on. Because the ACM team did not put much thought in the social capital concept, most of their efforts focused on enhancing the cognitive form of social capital, whilst little was done to enhance the structural form of social capital. The cognitive forms of social capital include norms (e.g. trust and reciprocity), values (e.g. truthfulness), attitudes (e.g. solidarity) and beliefs (e.g. fairness) that influence people to cooperate and achieve joint solutions. The cognitive forms are 'individual in origin but usually reflect broader, shared symbols and meanings within the culture or sub-culture' (Uphoff and Wijayaratna, 2000, pp 1876). The structural forms of social capital include roles (for decision making, resource mobilization, communication and conflict resolution), rules, procedures and social networks that establish on-going patterns of social interactions (Uphoff and Wijayaratna, 2000). With the existence of these structural forms it is assumed to make it easier for people to engage in collective action, since they are presumed to lower transaction costs.

Nor is it to be assumed that all forms of social capital are good or useful. It is important to acknowledge situations when social capital is the fabric that underpins bad activities. Examples are Mafia-like organizations whose benefits are only for a small group. There are some cases where social capital was used to benefit specific ethnic groups whilst others suffered (Bates, 1999; Daubon and Saunders 2002; Pantoja, 1999). And there are cases where extreme levels of social capital are undesirable, as for instance, when 'excessive government intervention can destroy social capital, sometimes replacing it with governmental/ institutional social capital' (Dudley, 2004. p.4). The social capital concept has therefore been increasingly criticised (Edwards and Foley, 1997; Fine, 1998, 1999, 2001, 2002; Foley and Edwards, 1997; 1998; Galston, 1996; Portes, 1998; Portes and Landolt, 1996; Scudson 1996; Skocpol, 1996; and Harriss, 2001). Critics also include commentators in the media (Lemann, 1996; Pollitt, 1996) and activists (Bowles, 1999; Durlauf, 1999). The most comprehensive criticisms are to be found in two books by Fine (2001) and Harriss (2001). Key issues raised include the following:

- In defining social capital, various scholars lumped up a wide range of assets together as social capital, making the analysis of the concept difficult and helped 'generate a body of social capital research that, regardless of its quality (some of which was very high) …is unable to convey a coherent message about this thing called social capital' (Bebbington. 2002a, p.3).
- The term is used differently by different authors,
- The quantification of social capital has remained elusive.
- Some use the term not because of its conceptual logic but rather in the hope that this will make their work visible, especially among economists and organizations like the World Bank
- The term is taken as a panacea for all social problems
- Social capital is mostly viewed as good and the dark side of social capital is ignored.

If the ACM team had developed a better understanding of the downside of social capital they might have given more thought on how to intervene in situations replete with excessive governmental social capital, like the situation encountered in the Batanai area. As we shall see in Chapter 4, in Batanai, in cases where resource management activities contradicted the will of the local politicians, resource users preferred to serve their political masters instead. An example is a case in which the monitoring sub-committee chair burnt the Batanai grass area when the RMC members refused to hand over their money to local politicians (Chapter 4). Governmental social capital in this case acted against collective efforts to manage resources sustainably.

Also, because the ACM researchers decided to each work on their own issues of interest, no one chose to focus on issues of power and politics, and how the project was going to deal with these. It was therefore not surprising that the team in effect largely ignored these issues, as no clear strategy to challenge existing power relations that continued to marginalise the poor had been developed (see Chapter 4).

In retrospect, there are three assumptions embodied in the ACM approach at conceptualisation and these influenced both the implementation of the approach and its outcomes. First is the assumption that resource management efforts that ignore the issue of equity are doomed to fail. This was an assumption defined in the conceptualisation phase of the programme shaping ACM interventions, as we shall see in Chapter 4. The ACM team made efforts to empower marginalised groups to enable them actively to participate in resource management, in order to ensure that their views were taken into account in decision making processes. However, even though ACM researchers realised during the early stages of the project that there were struggles over the forest land ownership and use - see the section on context studies in Chapter 4 - they nevertheless decided to work with only those who supported the conservation initiative, and ignored those who wanted to claim their land from the forest. This posed problems that disturbed resource management activities later on, when those who wanted land got an opportunity to seize it after the formalisation of the Fast Track Land Reform Programme (Chapter 4).

Second was the assumption that all the planned project activities would be implemented in the given time-frame. At conceptualisation, it was assumed that by the time the ACM team was ready to leave the communities at the end of the project, all planned activities would have been conducted. This would have created a solid base upon which the remaining stakeholders would easily continue afterwards. However, implementation of the ACM processes took a huge amount of time, as we shall see later on in Chapter 4. Third, was the assumed superiority of the learning by doing approach in implementing PAR. For the ACM team, even though they had theoretical knowledge on PAR, they lacked practical experience. Capacity building on the various concepts was focused on using a self learning approach, not dissimilar to the development of theoretical understanding about the ACM approach (for example, learning through writing concept notes, i.e. on social learning). As we have seen from the above discussion on social learning and social capital, this way of learning on its own was not sufficient to generate full understanding of concepts. It would have been more useful if (in addition to the self learning approach) team members had been given formal training on these key ACM concepts.

3.5   Concluding remarks

This chapter has tried to show how the ACM approach was conceptualised at the global level and then at the national Zimbabwean level. This is the base on which the Zimbabwe ACM team implemented the project in Mafungautsi. As we shall see later in Chapter 4, because of the belief that natural resource management problems are complex and no solutions exist, the ACM project was implemented in a learning-by-doing mode – with both stakeholders in the study sites and ACM team members both learning as they implemented activities. The chapter has shown that at conceptualisation, the ACM concept was only loosely defined – and the approach was overloaded with various concepts from several research fields and approaches. The terms social learning and social capital were central and had serious implications for operationalizing the approach in practice. By paying all their attention to these concepts during implementation, there was a risk that of some crucial elements in joint resource management might be overlooked by the ACM team, especially given the limited project time frame (see Chapter 6); Efforts to operationalize the social learning approach (something that was popular and seemed relevant) took too much time, for example. The intensive focus on social learning by ACM team members distracted them from paying attention to other elements, such as the issue of power and the setting up of institutions to support resource management efforts (Chapter 6). Also, at conceptualisation, it was assumed that the three-year project time frame would be sufficient for the ACM team to implement its activities and set a solid base for those who would take over. Actual events in the field, however (as we shall see in Chapter 4) revealed that the time frame was too short, and the project ended before the Participatory Action Research process had fully taken root.

Resource users from Gababe RMC area discussing their vision for the forest during the Training for Transformation workshop
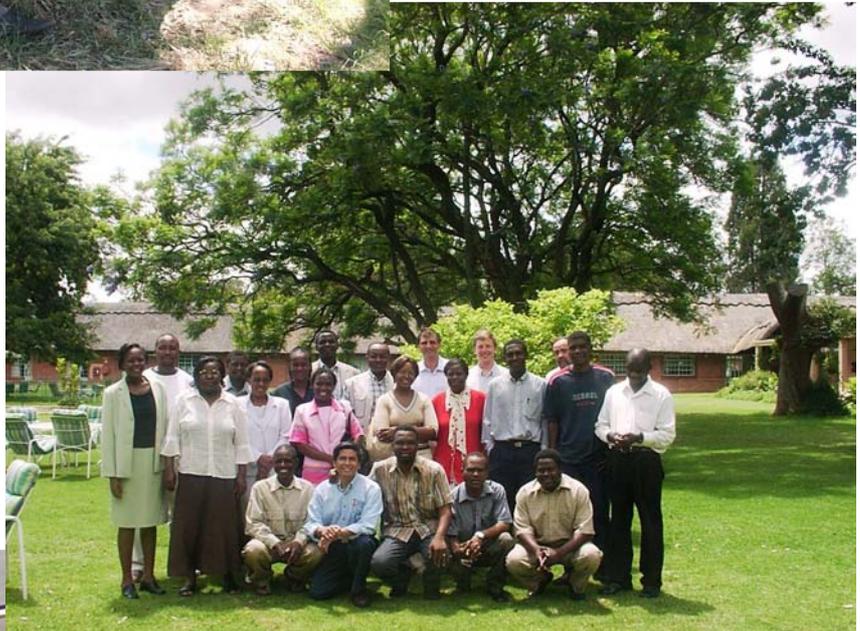
Participants of the December 2004 ACM training workshop and the ACM researchers in Harare

The late Mafungautsi RSP Coordinator receiving his certificate after attending the ACM training workshop in December 2004

Chapter 4: Implementing Adaptive Collaborative Management in Mafungautsi State Forest [41]

Scope

This chapter describes and analyses the implementation of the Adaptive Collaborative Management (ACM) project in Mafungautsi State Forest and its immediate outcomes. The operationalization of the ACM approach was shaped by the ACM team's understanding of the approach and its assumptions. Interventions by the ACM team in Mafungautsi aimed to address issues of inequality by deliberately targeting to work with marginalised groups, such as women and people from minority ethnic groups. Although the steps in implementing the ACM project largely followed those planned by the ACM Zimbabwe team at conceptualisation (Chapter 3), some additional activities were added when the ACM team encountered challenges unique to the Mafungautsi case.

Although the steps in implementation are presented separately in this chapter for analytical purposes, in practice, they did not take place in sequence; most took place simultaneously and were intertwined. The ACM project had a budget of about USD$400 000. Costs were about USD$100 000 for each of the first two years, and about USD$50 000 in subsequent years, including support of activities by the Forest Commission (FC) officer after the project ended. These mainly covered personnel, transportation and funding for workshops and other activities in three of fourteen Resource Management Committee (RMC) areas in the forest.

The present chapter is divided into three main parts. **Part I** presents the site selection process: the process of entry into the community, the selection of community partners and their capacity building process, contextual studies, ACM interventions (and their outcomes), and dealing with issues that came up during the contextual studies. **Part II** zooms in on the participatory action research process facilitated by ACM researchers with different resource users, the initiation and implementation of the collaborative monitoring process crucial for joint learning by resource users, and the ACM capacity building process for the FC, the agency that took over when the ACM project ended. **Part III** covers post-project developments: the joint learning processes facilitated by the FC officer, what happened after the FC officer died in 2005, and the developments in the forest after the introductions of the Fast Track Land Reform Programme (FTLRP). The chapter ends with a discussion and conclusion.

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[41] Some information in this chapter has been published in: Mutimukuru-Maravanyika T., Prabhu R., Matose F., Nyirenda R., and Kozanayi W., 2008. In Mandondo A., Prabhu R., and Matose F. (eds.). Copying Amidst Chaos. Studies on adaptive collaborative management from Zimbabwe. Resources for the Future (RFF), Washington DC, USA.

PART I: Preparing the ground

4.1 Selection of study area and specific study sites

Mafungautsi State Forest was selected for the ACM pilot project by officers from the Forestry Commission (FC) on the basis that it would provide incremental learning of value for joint forest management in Zimbabwe. The forest was a site of a pilot Resource Sharing Project (RSP) supported by the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) from 1994. This was initiated after lessons were learned from the Communal Area Management Programme for Indigenous Resources (CAMPFIRE).

The RSP had aimed to help two former adversaries, the State (as represented by the FC) and community members living in areas around the forest, manage the forest jointly. The FC had over the years managed the forest for water catchment purposes, bio-diversity conservation and protection of the high value timber species. The local communities, on the other hand, viewed the forest as land with arable and settlement potential and as source of a number of useful resources (Forestry Commission, 1997).

Although the aspirations of community members were gathered prior to implementation, some resources were excluded from the RSP and continued to be sources of conflict with forest authorities. Conflict management systems to reduce tensions between the two main stakeholders in Mafungautsi Forest were lacking. Instead, the project forged ahead with user communities for the least controversial or conflicted resources. Under the RSP, communities around the forest were divided into 14 Resource Management Committee (RMC) areas with each area given a certain portion of the forest to manage and a RMC to control the resource harvesting process. However, up to 1999, there was little progress in terms of collaboration between the FC and communities living around the forest. This situation offered the opportunity for the ACM project to generate relevant experiences and knowledge.

For entry into the study site ACM researchers began by promoting the development of mutual respect and trust among the various local stakeholders. The stakeholders included the local community members and district level officials with interests and mandates for forest management. The FC at Gokwe District Business Centre, as the mandated authority, became the first entry point through which a variety of other district level stakeholders involved in the Mafungautsi RSP were identified and contacted. The ACM team organised a meeting with about 15 people representing different district level institutions in late 2000 to identify communities to take part in the ACM research project. Participants included the officers from the Rural District Council (Chair of the Natural Resource Committee, the CAMPFIRE coordinator, the vice chair for the council), local councillors, an officer from the Department of Natural Resources, officers from the District Administrator's office, three traditional Chiefs and the FC officers (the Provincial Manager for the Midlands Province and the FC RSP Coordinator), an officer from the Ministry of Youth Development, Gender and Employment Creation and an officer from the Department of Agricultural Extension Services (Agritex).

Given the numerous communities around the forest, a selection of sites had to be made for the ACM research project. A site was described as a community working with a Resource Management Committee (RMC). An RMC could consist of one or several villages, depending on the size of the area. The ACM team initially proposed two sites, but participants proposed three sites, arguing that, judging by the number of RMCs already in operation, fourteen in total, two sites would not be representative enough. It was also reasoned that since all the RMCs were under three traditional chiefs[42] (i.e. Chiefs Njelele, Headman Ndhlalambi and Chief Chirima) it would be fair and appropriate to select a site in each of their respective areas. The RMC areas were selected by lottery. The District Administrator[43] was asked to select one RMC area from each of three boxes.

The selected sites were Gababe under Chief Njelele, Batanai under Headman Ndhlalambi, and Ndarire under Chief Chirima (Fig. 2.2). The Gababe area was one of the older, more remote sites, and participants seemed to agree that, as a result of its remoteness, the area was not doing well. The Batanai area was also one of the older RMC areas, accessible, and apparently prospering. Ndarire was an area where an RMC was still to be put in place.

After site selection, it was agreed that the councillors[44] and chiefs would notify the RMCs selected and also help introduce the ACM team to the respective communities. It was also agreed that the ACM team would be accompanied by the Rural District Council's (RDC) Wildlife Coordinator and the FC officer on the introductory trip. Unfortunately, immediately after the workshop, the FC officer excused herself from these planned site visits as she went on leave for the rest of the week. This was awkward for the ACM team, and seemed to fit a pattern, as later would show; the officer failed to turn up for scheduled meetings and presented excuses on many previous occasions.

4.2 Introducing the research to the study sites and selection of community partners

At the end of 2000, a small team, comprising of a CIFOR researcher, the FC officer, a RDC officer and the councillors responsible for the study sites, went to visit all selected communities, to consult with local leaders about introducing the project and identifying local level stakeholders. Consultations with the local leadership were followed by a series of meetings with community members in the three RMC areas to introduce the project. The process of introducing the ACM research project to the three sites and selecting community partners to work as research assistants for the researchers differed from place to place. Details of what happened during visits are provided below.

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[42]   The chiefs were considered in the selection criteria probably because they were present during this meeting

[43]   The DA represents the Minister responsible for local governance at the district level

[44]   Councillors are elected representatives chairing Ward Development Committees (WADCOs) and responsible for forwarding ward development plans to the Rural District Council (Chapter 2). They receive monthly allowances from the RDCs.

4.2.1 Introducing the ACM project to Batanai area and selection of the community partner

The first site to be visited was Batanai, during late 2000. The first port of call was the homestead of one of the village heads, Mr. Maf. The village head and his family were active participants of the RMC and his wife was a former treasurer of the Batanai RMC. The village-based forest promoter[45] had advised the ACM team to visit the village head's homestead first, as he thought they could help to inform the Batanai RMC of the team's presence as well as call for a general community meeting on their behalf. It was hoped that the RMC members would then inform the community about the ACM team's proposed meeting. However, the meeting that was arranged with the RMC through the village head did not take place, as the ACM team failed to turn up due to unforeseen circumstances, when one of the team members fell sick. A second meeting had to be organised.

The postponement of the first meeting was fortuitous, since the ACM team later learnt there was a low turnout. According to some community members, the village head's wife (Mrs Maf) had told them the meeting was mainly intended to select people to be employed by the project. Mrs Maf had begun to campaign for her daughter to be selected. The ACM team members also discovered that the meeting they had proposed implied attendance from all three villages in Batanai area. However, neither the village head (Maf) nor the RMC members had the authority to call such a big meeting. This authority lay with the headman (next in line after the chief). This was the main reason (according to some informants) there was low turnout at the first meeting. Also, it turned out that the local political leadership (See section 2.3.2, Chapter 2), including the councillor, were not informed, and others informed therefore decided not to attend. Meetings with outsiders on forest issues were always treated with suspicion and caution. If the local political leadership did not sanction the meetings, people would not attend, fearing to be labelled as sell-outs.

After becoming aware of these issues around the first meeting, the ACM team organised the second meeting through the local councillor and the headman. However, when the ACM team went to see Mr Mat, the councillor of the area (and also the ward chair for the ruling ZANU PF party), to ask him to take them to the headman, he told them that he was the new headman now. He claimed a government directive had been issued recently announcing him the new headman since the incumbent, Mr Ndhlalambi, was to be moved to another ward. This seemed to the ACM team to be strange, as headmen were part of the traditional leadership structure. Mr Mat claimed he had already assumed the duties of a headman, but was still waiting to be officially sworn in. This was a surprise to the team, as none of the people they consulted, including some village heads, had mentioned this development. The ACM team then asked the councillor to call for the meeting.

At the meeting, the ACM team explained the following things: how Batanai RMC was selected as an ACM research site, what the ACM project was, the research plan and related activities, and all other relevant information. Approximately 40 people attended this meeting, 35 men and 5 women. At least half of the men were youths.[46]

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[45]   These were selected members from each RMC who received allowances from the FC to promote forestry issues in the communities.

[46]   Also Mrs. Maf's daughter was present. She worked at that time in another research project that was undertaken by University of Zimbabwe's Centre for Applied Social Sciences (CASS).

Two of the five women were young. In addition, an official from the RDC, the village based forestry promoter, the FC's Mafungautsi RSP Coordinator and the local councillor were present. Headman Ndhlalambi, presumably soon to leave the area, was not invited and when some community members suggested that a vehicle be sent to collect him, the councillor quickly overruled the idea.

After introducing the aims of the research project, and the part that various stakeholders were supposed to play, community members asked several questions:

> Who will drive the research? Will the research be carried out by everyone in the community, as a group, or will there be an agent who moves around the households, asking questions to community members? If CIFOR is going to work with someone, as a representative of the community, will that person receive payment from CIFOR? Is there a possibility of CIFOR selecting one representative for each of the three villages? The research that CIFOR wants to undertake is not clear to us; it looks as if CIFOR is hiding something!

These questions were understandable in the context of the experiences of the Batanai community with previous research work on Mafungautsi. The people of Batanai had so far taken part in a number of research activities carried out by other institutions, including the FC's Forest Research Centre and two departments of the University of Zimbabwe (the Centre for Applied Social Sciences and the Institute of Environmental Studies). Most of these studies recruited one or two young persons from the community to work as research assistants. This explains why Mrs Maf and the Batanai people saw only an opportunity for employment when the CIFOR team came into their area.

Community partner selection
The ACM team left the process of selecting a community partner to the Batanai community members who came to the introductory meeting and helped them by giving them a list of the qualities required. These were someone who is honest, reliable, able to read and write, resident in the community for at least two years, trustworthy and either male or female.

Two weeks later the community had still not reached a consensus on the person to select. They told the ACM team there were several reasons. Firstly, the community failed to agree on someone to lead the selection process. The RMC left it to the village heads, whilst the village heads thought it was an RMC issue. Some community members mentioned that they felt it was CIFOR's responsibility to select a partner. The real reason, however, turned out to be the sensitivity of selecting someone for a job. In discussions with community members, the ACM team found out that there were several people who could potentially be selected as partners, and neither the RMC nor the village heads wanted fingers pointed at them for favouritism. Hence they were more comfortable with the CIFOR researchers doing the selection themselves.

This view was strengthened by the fact that previous researchers in the area had also selected local assistants on their own, using their own criteria. The ACM team then sought for a transparent selection method. Eventually the community members and the ACM researchers agreed to select the person randomly. All those who wanted to become the local partner had their names written down on a piece of paper thrown

into a hat. The first person selected by the ACM researcher, a Mr Lizwelabo Sibanda, became the local partner.

4.2.2 Introducing the ACM project to Gababe area and selection of the community partner

In the company of an official from the RDC and the local councillor, the ACM team met with Gababe RMC's vice chair, who was acting RMC chair for the area. The team asked him to call a meeting to introduce the ACM project to the community members and seek their consent to undertake the research.

The meeting at Gababe was well attended: eight of the ten village heads in the area were present, - 60 community members in all. Twenty participants were women, mostly elderly, but their participation in the meeting was very low. They sat silently throughout the meeting, and efforts to encourage them talk yielded nothing. Men always jumped in to speak on women's behalf. In addition to the ACM team, the local councillor and the village based forestry promoter were present.

Introducing the aim of the research project to the people of Gababe was not an easy task. Informal discussions with some local community members after the meeting showed that most people were suspicious that the ACM team members were actually staff of the FC, coming undercover, with a motive to shift the forest boundary closer to the villages, or to impose further restrictions on the resources that people could access from the forest.

Explanation of the ACM project generated more questions and suspicions among community members. They particularly wondered about the idea that they would have to undertake their own research, and would be equal partners with the ACM team, and the FC. Some were quick to point out that they could not undertake their own research, since they lacked knowledge to do so. Others asked how it would be possible for them to be equal partners with the FC when they had so little power over the forest, relative to the FC. The other questions or statements included:

> We don't understand what the CIFOR research wants to achieve? Why is it that members of the RMC are quiet, yet they are our leaders and they know our problems? We have problems of transport, to ferry thatch grass from the forest to our homes. CIFOR should come out into the open and be clear on its intentions

The area councillor tried to plead with the communities to accept what was being said, warning they might miss the good things that come with research. One middle-aged man asked for examples of where CIFOR had used the ACM approach in their work, and resulted in tangible benefits accruing to the people. That particular question caught the ACM researchers by surprise; ACM was still a relatively new concept and there were still no examples to refer to. Of the three research sites at Mafungautsi, the Gababe community was the most suspicious of CIFOR's intentions, probably due to its remote location and lack of outside contact. The FC's village based promoter was also present in the meeting and some of the community members directed their grievances directly at the FC.

Community partner selection

The process of selecting a local partner at Gababe was done entirely by the community itself. After the ACM team pointed out the desired qualities for the local partner, the community assigned the task to village heads and elders. Because of earlier experiences with the FC - few of its promises had been fulfilled – villagers were now cautious when anyone came to talk to them about the forest. They therefore put the selection of a local partner in the hands of trusted elders. The person they selected (Mr Jevas Sithuta), was a 46-year old man who had been very vocal in expressing the community's fears and expectations towards the ACM project. They chose someone who they knew would be more loyal and accountable to them than to the ACM team and CIFOR.

4.2.3 Introducing the ACM project to Ndarire area and selection of the community partner

The researchers' entry in the Ndarire community was different from the other two sites because there was no RMC at Ndarire. The ACM team organised the first meeting through a grinding mill operator (Mr Mandayaya) at Ndarire Business Centre. This meeting did not take place because of the ACM team's failure to show up, also because the team had to attend to some urgent matters that arose. Subsequent efforts to book a second meeting through the same person were futile; he felt betrayed by the researchers' failure to turn up without notification. He complained that this ruined his reputation and that community members had lost faith in him. The team later organised the second meeting through the local councillor who was based at Kana Mission, about two kilometres away. The councillor was happy that the ACM team had come to see him and to request him to organise the meeting. He told the team that he had heard about the first meeting, and several villagers had contacted him, asking if he knew anything about the meeting. When he told them that he did not, few people went to the first meeting. The ACM team later learnt that in Ndarire, people were afraid to attend meetings that were not called by the councillor for political reasons. The councillor agreed to organise the meeting and sent letters to all the village heads notifying them, and urging them to invite members of their villagers to attend.

Despite the assurance from the councillor, attendance at Ndarire was low, compared to the other two sites. This was attributed to lack of interest in forestry related issues. The FC officer explained she had previously postponed several meetings to elect a RMC because so few people showed up. But despite low attendance the meeting turned out to be fruitful. Community members were open about their concerns and were eager to see an RMC in place. They interpreted the coming of ACM to signify that more was to come, as far as formalising their relationship with the FC was concerned. The following questions of community members are illustrative of their fears and concerns:

> How do we know that you are not the FC that has come under cover? Our relationship with the FC has no free play, the environment is not conducive enough for us and FC to discuss and meet both our needs. We and the FC are always running away from each other; when we saw your vehicle, some of us ran away. We held a meeting sometime ago with the FC, and nothing came out of it, how is this meeting different from the one we had? Are benefits from Mafungautsi forest going to accrue to us, or people from elsewhere? Is your organisation related to the FC? Is the CIFOR research focused on the people only, or the people and FC?

Community partner selection
Unlike the other two sites, the process of community partner selection at Ndarire was straightforward. After the ACM researchers presented the required qualities for the individual they were looking for, the participants debated and agreed also to consider those who were not at the meeting. Three candidates were nominated, all three of them men, and the participants voted by a show of hands which candidate they preferred. Michael Thomas Chivanga, a young man, was selected. It is important to note that the ACM researchers had asked for a volunteer to assist as a rapporteur at the meeting, and this same young man had volunteered.

Some reflections
The entry experiences of the ACM team clearly show the complexity of local structure and dynamics. Proper procedures had to be followed and the right authorities had to call for meetings. In each of the sites, different issues played in the background, unknown to the ACM team. Suspicion towards FC officials, personal relations and power issues at the community level, and previous experiences with other projects played a role in these first encounters. In general, the ACM team learned that community members were often suspicious. In Ndarire and Batanai, politically volatile areas, political party personnel were the best option to call for the meeting. In Gababe lack of confidence in the FC was evident as a result of earlier unfulfilled promises. The community members in Gababe however, seemed quite united, but had less exposure to outside development agents. As a consequence, the ACM team had to react on the responses of the authority and adapt their action to the specific context. These experiences show that there is no blue print on how to enter communities. The outside group needs to be as well informed as possible about existing community structures to be flexible in implementation.

4.3   Training of the Community Partners

The three selected community partners became contact persons in the respective sites. They were also the facilitators of the ACM process, and served as process documenters when the ACM team was absent. The community partners had to sign contracts with CIFOR, and their contract form and terms of reference (TOR) are presented in Annex 4.1. The team trained the three community partners in skills and techniques for research work.[47] This included, for example, interviewing and listening skills, use of participatory rural appraisal techniques in data collection, facilitation skills, record keeping and use of reporting formats.

Choosing community representatives instead of working with the already established structures like the RMC, however, posed serious challenges to the institutionalization of processes. The team provided the community partners with a small monthly allowance. When the project and thus allowances ended these community partners stopped acting as facilitators. In regard to institutionalising learning processes, building on established structures such as the RMC might have offered better results.

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[47]   The community partners and some community members from the research sites were sufficiently empowered to also take part in participatory modelling as a way of exploring their visions/ideas and that this is reported more fully in Vanclay *et al*., 2006.

If RMC members had been trained, they might have continued to use their improved skills even when the research process had ended.

Culturally, in the study sites, women were not supposed to take active roles in public meetings, as this was seen as lack of morals. This explains why even though the researchers had encouraged communities in the study sites also to select women, the three chosen community partners were all men. This became problematic later since some user groups were all female. It became difficult for male community partners to work with women's groups because spouses were not comfortable with the arrangement. However, later, after empowerment training, and other interventions challenging these local norms and values, there was opportunity (when more women started to attend resource user group meetings – (see Table 4.2) for the ACM team to create a gender-balanced community partner team in each area. There would have been a chance to set up teams of one man and one woman. The ACM team members, at that time, having too much work to do, did not make use of this opportunity.

4.4   The context studies

Having introduced the ACM project, and in parallel with training the community partners, the ACM team carried out contextual studies. These studies aimed to understand key aspects of the local level situation. They were also an important opportunity for both researchers and communities to share information, and develop their views on current resource issues. The contextual studies had both ecological and socio-economic components. The ecological survey aimed to make an inventory of the resources and the quantities present in the forest (both of grass and trees). The survey also assessed the rate of tree cutting for either timber or harvesting of honey. The socio-economic survey identified organisations working in the study sites, the type and location of resource extraction activity, and the problems faced by communities in collecting and utilizing forest resources. The socio-economic survey was carried out using participatory rural appraisal (PRA) techniques. At least one PRA meeting was held at each of the three sites. The PRA techniques used are presented in Box 4.1. Except for the key informant interviews, these tools were used with groups.

Box 4.1:   The PRA techniques used during the contextual studies

- *Social/resource mapping* – to visualize existing social infrastructure, land use patterns, location of forest resources.
- *Linkage diagrams* – to find out the different sources of income that people were engaged in, and show their relative importance.
- *Ranking and scoring* – to find out people's preferences among forest products, and sources of income.
- *Seasonal c*alendars – to show how income sources and extraction of forest products varied from month to month.
- *Wealth ranking* – to find out the community's perception of and criteria for wealth.
- *Institutional mapping* – to identify and analyze the different stakeholders, organizations and groups of forest users in the community.
- *Historical trends* – to find out the community's perceptions on issues such as changes in resources availability, status of the forest, and their relationship with the FC. This tool was also used to understand the developments in Mafungautsi and what had happened in history.
- *Focus group discussions* – to discuss and analyze existing resource sharing arrangements.
- *Key informant interviews* – to discuss and analyze the composition in terms of gender, ethnicity, age, skills and history of the various social groupings in the community, including wealth ranking.

4.4.1 Key findings

An important finding from the context studies was the realisation that communities in Mafungautsi were not composed of homogenous groups of people, but contained several stakeholder groups with different interests, perceptions and views concerning the role and use of Mafungautsi Forest resources. Remarkable was the view of some community members who saw the forest as land for cultivation and settlement. The FC however viewed the forest as a fragile water catchment area that needed to be protected from human activity. It also emerged from the context study that several conflicts existed among stakeholders, especially between the local communities and the FC. It also came out clearly that local community members were passive when it came to resource management activities, and they felt they were poorly represented in the RSP. Some of the key findings are discussed separately below.

The different stakeholders in the communities around the forest. The ACM researchers found out that within the communities around Mafungautsi different stakeholder groups could be distinguished: the traditional leaders, the RMCs, the councillors, village development committees, the ward development committees, and various ethnic groups (Shangwe, Ndebele and Shona). While Shangwe were identified as a group distinct from Shona and Ndebele (the predominant ethnic groups in the area), the context studies showed that this was not a grouping based on ethnicity. Rather, as mentioned in Chapter 2, the term Shangwe referred to early settlers around Mafungautsi, and included Ndebele, Shona and people of Malawian/Mozambican and Zambian Origin. The word 'Shangwe' is a derogatory word in the Korekore dialect of Shona meaning "very poor people", and few people want to be called by that name. The earlier settlers were looked down upon by later settlers, and the term Shangwe may have been derived from the original settlers' basic lifestyle based on hunting and gathering. Getting this information at the beginning of the research was helpful to the

ACM researchers as this made them devise strategies to encourage the early settlers and the other marginalized groups to participate in the research process.

Passiveness by local communities with regard to the management of the forest resource. During initial discussions, community members in all three research sites highlighted the problems they faced in the RSP. This included numerous conflicts and the exclusion of some resources like timber from the project. It was apparent that they hoped that the ACM team would provide answers to these problems. The team felt that this evidenced a dependency syndrome: expecting and waiting until outsiders came to solve their problems. The team also found that women rarely participated in resource management meetings mainly for cultural reasons. Since the ACM project philosophy was based on action research, and required local communities to participate actively throughout the whole process, team members decided to come up with techniques to break through passiveness. These included a Training for Transformation (T-for-T) workshop, more details of which are provided in section 4.5 below.

Interest in different resources by community. The ACM researchers found out that some people had interests in one particular resource while others had interests in another. For instance, people interested in beekeeping might not be interested in harvesting thatch or broom grass. This information was important to the ACM team in planning interventions to facilitate adaptive management. Based on this information, the team decided not to work with the whole community, but to focus on 'resource user groups', which would be small and focused, thus (it was hoped) easier to work with.

Conflicts among stakeholders.
After the launch of the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) supported RSP in 1994, the FC created RMCs in the communities around the forest. The RMCs were supposed to act as a link between the FC and the communities. Their roles involved the administration of permits for resource users to harvest the minor forest products, monitoring the harvesting process, opening and keeping a community bank account to keep the money raised through the permit system, and finally advising the community on how the funds could be spent. The creation of these new committees, however, generated conflicts at the community level. RMCs were created in a top-down way through the FC's initiative, without consulting the communities (Mapedza and Mandondo, 2002) (see Section 5.1, Chapter 5). It was also not clear how these new committees would fit in the already existing institutional landscape. Communities were not clear on what the role of the RMC members was and hence most communities saw these committees as extended arms of the FC. This later was the cause of much tension. The RMCs themselves were made accountable to the FC only, and this ignored the already existing traditional leadership structures. This resulted in the conflicts between traditional authority and RMC members. For instance, when RMCs organised meetings, some heads and community members from some villages never attended.

Ecological findings
Detailed ecological reports (Mudavanhu, undated; Vermeulen, 2000) document the findings of the ecological surveys conducted by the ACM team members. The reports presents criteria and indicators for monitoring changes in the forest as well as baseline

data for the various resources found in the forest. The reports also list vegetation species in areas managed by the research sites, their location and abundance. Table 4.1 below itemizes forest cover types and the areas covered in the forest.

Table 4.1:   Results from the ecological surveys

Cover Type	Area in Ha	% Area
Plantation	41	0.05
Woodland	67698	82.19
Bush land	5487	6.66
Wooded Grassland	1617	1.96
Grassland	5919	7.19
Cultivation	1603	1.95
Total Forest Area	**82364**	**100**

The ecological surveys also showed that a large number of trees were being cut for honey harvesting and other purposes, and that the incidence of fires in the forest was also high (Mudavanhu, undated).

Reflection
The context studies helped ACM researchers to understand the existing resource exploitation situation so as to devise strategy on entry points and interventions. They also helped researchers to understand stakeholder differences, and dynamics in the communities and this was useful in selecting the groups to work with. The context studies, however, did not generate specific information for measuring both socio-economic and ecological changes in the ACM project. It would have been helpful, after the stakeholders came up with their ideas (Part III below) on indicators for change, if a baseline survey had been conducted on these specific socio-economic and ecological indicators. This would have made it easier to assess changes during and after the project.

4.4.2 Report back on context studies
Following on from the context studies, report-back sessions were organised with community members in the research sites. The main objectives of these sessions were to provide opportunities for (a) the researchers to present their findings, get feedback from the communities and validate their findings and (b) discuss the implications of the findings. In particular this last part would help the community members to reflect, learn and rethink their management options. The results of the survey were grouped under two broad categories. The first comprised biophysical findings, including the quantities of resources available in the forest, the rate of tree cutting for either timber or harvesting honey. The second consisted of socio-economic data, including organisations working with resource users, the type of resources extracted in the forest, and where they were found, as well as the problems faced by communities in collecting and utilizing forest resources.

Not only did the reflection sessions help the ACM team clear up some misinterpretations of findings, but it also benefited local resource users. For example, in the Batanai site (I will focus mostly on the Batanai feedback sessions, as interesting issues were raised after the session) the ACM team learnt that forest stumps were not only a result of tree cutting by timber poachers, but reflected past logging by timber

concessionaires. The presentation of data on the huge number of hollow trees (colonised by bees) cut for honey harvesting stirred up interesting discussions. Community members who attended the meeting were surprised to hear that they were losing so many trees from the forest due to honey harvesting. In the discussions that followed, people talked about how many years it took an indigenous tree to grow to maturity and what a loss it was if such a tree was cut just for the sake of harvesting honey. Some of these honey harvesters were said to use smoke from burning rubber tyres and this not only chased bees away but also killed them. As honey harvesting in the forest was illegal, harvesters were said to work in a hurry, and in some cases failed to completely put out their fires, resulting in several forest fires. After the feedback session, community members agreed to embark on beekeeping projects to try to reduce damage from honey harvesting in the forest.

When reporting the findings from the context studies the researchers avoided the land issue because of its high sensitivity. To their surprise however, people at Batanai RMC area brought it into the dialogue themselves, as they felt that this was a priority issue. The point was vehemently championed by members of the ruling political party who passionately chronicled the history of Mafungautsi, highlighting how people were forcibly evicted from Zanda Plateau[48] and other portions of Mafungautsi forest in 1986 (see Chapter 2). The group also stressed that some people had already moved back into the forest,[49] and they wanted the researchers to help them by facilitating processes to formalize their occupations. This notion seemed not to have the blessing of the majority of the community members, who after the meeting openly expressed their disagreement with the idea of formalising settlement in the forest. The ACM researchers, however, responded by saying that they felt that the land issue was beyond the scope of their research. They later decided to work with community members who were interested in managing resources in the forest. Working with this group, against the forest occupiers, contributed to negative perceptions of the ACM project by those supporting the land occupations.

4.5   Preparing the stage for PAR

Several training interventions were organised by the ACM team to prepare the stage for the PAR process, an essential component of the ACM approach. These trainings' were mainly geared towards key issues that arose from the context studies. They included the issue of passiveness by local communities, the conflicts that existed among stakeholders that would hinder collaboration, and the issue of poor leadership and representation by the RMC. The trainings were organised as workshops. When organising the empowerment training workshops, the conflict resolution workshops and leadership skills training for the local stakeholders, the ACM researchers ensured that all stakeholders in the RSP were represented. These were the district level partners such as the FC, the traditional leadership authority, the RMC members, representatives of various resource users (e.g. thatch grass, broom grass and honey),

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[48]   The Zanda plateau is one of the areas were people used to live in the forest before they were forced to move out of the forest.

[49]   At the time of the report back meeting, people constituting 7 villages had moved back into Zanda plateau, the FC and other government agencies also acknowledged this, but they had all done nothing about it due to the political nature of the issue.

women, representative from minority ethnic groups, the poor and the less poor. The training interventions are discussed separately below.

4.5.1 Empowerment training

The manner in which local communities had been involved in forest management in the past could explain passiveness, lack of confidence and the pessimistic view of the RSP. During the initial discussions, resource users in all the research sites could easily enumerate and elaborate on a multiplicity of problems faced in the RSP. They appeared, however, to lack the ability to think of solutions to these problems, either because they believed that solutions were beyond their scope or because they expected outsiders to solve their problems. Marginalised groups (notably women) were also passive participants in resource management meetings. In the ACM approach this was an undesirable situation and to stimulate their active participation, the ACM researchers organised an empowerment training workshop which they labelled Training for Transformation (T-for-T).

Background to Training for Transformation
The ACM team got the idea of the T-for-T workshop from its use by the Intermediate Technology Group (ITDG) in Chivi Ward 21 in Zimbabwe. In Chivi, ITDG discovered that T-for-T resulted in farmers demanding changes in the approach and attitudes of extension workers. It also stimulated farmers to carry out their own experiments as a means to solve their own problems. It also led to greater democratization of leadership and more transparent decision-making (ITDG, 1997). T-for-T was first developed in Kenya in 1974, and was later adapted to Zimbabwean conditions by Hope and Timmel (1995). T-for-T draws to some extent on Paulo Freire's pedagogy of the oppressed. Freire (1970) advocates that change should be driven by the people themselves rather than by outsiders. This idea provided the motivation to stimulate and build confidence among marginalized groups, and to encourage them to initiate a process of change (Freire, 1970). T-for-T emphasizes experiential learning, empowerment of local people to control their own destiny through active participation in their development, and the sharing of ideas and knowledge. It strengthens people's confidence through mottos such as "*nobody knows everything and nobody knows nothing*". The ACM team saw T-for-T as a suitable intervention approach to overcome inertia among forest users.

Objectives of the workshop
The ACM team took T-for-T as a forerunner of Participatory Action Research (PAR), and the team hoped that the workshop would enhance stakeholders' abilities to address their problems, as well as raise awareness on the importance of cooperation, especially in solving natural resource management problems. In the initial interactions with forest users, the ACM team had found that many of them had no capacity or confidence to deal with the problems they faced. For example the treasurer of Gababe RMC said: '*people need education and to be made aware of their capacities in managing resources if the RSP can proceed and succeed*'. The team also hoped that after the training, resource users would begin actively to participate in the RSP to improve their lives. The specific objectives of the workshop included the following:

- To challenge local stakeholders to realise that they had potential to solve their own problems instead of just waiting for outside help which in most cases never came.

- To assist stakeholders in exploring their views on resource sharing and development
- To make stakeholders analyse the root causes of the problems they faced in the RSP
- To assist participants in self organization
- To impart skills in improving leadership, openness, criticism, sharing information and reflection
- To impart skills in documentation and record keeping

Participants of the workshop
The ACM team organised a one-week T-for-T workshop facilitated by hired outside T-for-T experts. The workshop took place at Shingai Training Centre, at Gokwe Centre. A total of 43 participants attended the workshop: 7 people from Ndarire (all men), 15 people from Batanai area (11 men and 4 women), 14 people from Gababe (9 men and 5 women), the 2 workshop facilitators (the T-for-T Experts), 3 CIFOR researchers (1 woman and 2 men), the RSP Coordinator and the District Administrator for Gokwe South District (Table 4.2). Even though invitations were particularly extended to women (the team invited 5 men and 5 women from each site), only 9 out of the 15 attended the workshop. When invitations were sent out, women said they would participate. However, when the ACM team members went to pick up the participants they discovered that most of the women were no longer planning to come to the workshop. Reasons they gave were varied and included new commitments and the failure to find someone to take care of children. A lesson from this is that it is important to identify appropriate venues for both men and women to avoid disadvantaging a particular group. For instance, by holding the meeting in the village, more women would have been able to participate as they could have brought their children to the meeting in cases where they did not have anyone to take charge while they were away.

Workshop methodology and key issues addressed
The workshop facilitators developed a programme to challenge community members to be critical about their situation. They aimed to make the community members think of possibilities they had for improving their situation, instead of not doing anything about it. In the workshop facilitators made extensive use of visualisation techniques, games, stories and short plays (sketches) to help participants reflect on and challenge their 'mental models' of their contexts and behaviours.

Table 4.2:   Participants in the T-for-T workshop

Area/ Organisation	Men		Women		Total
	No	%	No	%	
Batanai Area	11	73.3	4	26.7	15
Gababe Area	9	64.3	5	35.7	14
Ndarire Area	7	100.0	0	0.0	7
CIFOR	2	66.7	1	33.3	3
District Administrator	1	100.0	0	0.0	1
Forestry Commission	0	0.0	1	100.0	1
The T for T experts	2	100.0	0	0.0	2
Total	**32**	73.2	**11**	26.8	**43**

The workshop started with an exercise in which stakeholders produced a vision for development in Mafungautsi. After this they critically analysed what hindered them to move towards the vision they had elaborated. The hindrances that participants identified were mostly related to 'others' and what they were not doing to enable their area to develop. They did not mention what they themselves could do in order to bring development to their area. This, according to the ACM team, showed that the communities had a 'dependency syndrome'. The facilitators then decided to address a number of key issues using 'codes': symbolic narratives that were supposed to have parallels with the participant's situation. These 'codes' were intended to bring out issues in a form that all could relate to, and which would trigger some discussion. The key issues the facilitators brought forward included:

- The importance of self-reliance illustrated by a sketch on the River Code (Box 4.2).
- The importance of effective communication among people, illustrated by the Story of Chief Jahana (see in Box 4.3).
- The importance of being critical about values and norms through the sharing of a story that demonstrates that education can either domesticate or liberate (Box 4.4).
- The importance of communication, feedback and cooperation among people if development is to take place (Box 4.5; Figure 4.1).

In the next part of the workshop program, the workshop facilitator introduced the participants to what is called 'Jo-Hari's Window'. This model aims to help people understand that they can grow in self-knowledge and that they can actively develop deeper trust in people they work with though sharing and giving feedback. Facilitators emphasised that feedback and communication were crucial, especially when multiple stakeholders are involved in collective action to achieve a common goal.

In the last part of the workshop participants were encouraged not to dismiss other people's views just because they were different from their own views. Rather, the facilitator stimulated them to try to understand why others had different views. They emphasised that people have different views depending on the angle from which they are looking at an issue. Two examples were used to symbolise this situation: a letter 'm' and a picture. Depending on the side one was seated people saw different things (see Figures 4.2 and 4.3).

At the beginning of the workshop, community members lacked confidence to discuss issues that concerned them. For example, when one participant was asked to give his views on what could be done to improve the lives of local people in the RSP he said, *'it's you who should tell us; you know everything. We do not know anything ourselves.'* However, as the workshop progressed, they opened up and began to discuss important issues with the FC officer on an equal footing.

Community report back meetings after the empowerment-training workshop
At the end of the workshop, participants came up with things to do after the workshop, as part of their action plans. They decided to give a report of the workshop to the rest of their community members. Participants from the three areas later organised community meetings where they presented their experiences in the workshop. These presentations generated discussions among the local community

members. In Batanai, women who never used to speak during meetings also presented their report of the workshop. An example was Mrs Nti who surprised many people by her articulate speech when narrating what happened during the workshop and what she had learned. Most of the workshop participants brought the workshop proceedings prepared by the ACM researchers to the report-back meeting and they shared these with those who had not attended the workshop. The photos and the illustrations (boxes 4.2, 4.3, 4.4 and 4.5 and figures 4.2 and 4.3 are extracts from the proceedings) raised interest as many people wanted to see them during feedback meeting in which ACM team members participated.

Outcomes of the empowerment training
The first thing that all the T-for-T workshop participants had done when they arrived at Shingai Training Centre in Gokwe[50] was to ask the ACM researchers how much they were going to be paid for attending the workshop since they had left behind other important things on their agenda. When the researchers heard this, they were surprised as they had not thought about this issue before. For them, this training meant to build community members' capacities and the researchers considered this an opportunity for capacity building for community members. The researchers decided to negotiate with their office in Harare to obtain money for paying the workshop participants. On the last day of the workshop when they were giving out the payments for attending the workshop, all community members from Batanai refused to be paid. They said that after they had gone through the workshop, they realised they had learnt so many things. These things

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[50]   Except for some members from Batanai who opted to walk to the training venue as they said they were nearer, we ferried all the workshop participants using the CIFOR vehicle

Box 4.2: **The River Code: A sketch to show the importance of being self-reliant**

This narrative has become very well known and much used throughout southern Africa. After telling this story, the narrator uses it to draw parallels with the situation of the listeners, usually community members participating in a change process. The story goes as follows:

In one communal area, there was an overflowing river in which only five rocks were still not completely covered. One man came to the river and looking at it he, realised that crossing without drowning was going to be difficult. He sat down thinking of ways to cross the river but he could think of none. Realising that he did not know how to cross the river, he just sat down and waited. While he was seated, a second man came along and he too failed to come up with an idea on how to cross the river, and he too sat down and waited. Whilst the two men were waiting, a third man came along. He looked at the river and he told the two men that he was able to help them cross the river. The first man, in disbelief, asked the third man how he was going to do this. The third man told him that he was very strong and he could carry him on his back. The first man agreed to this help. The third man indeed carried the first man who was scared to death. When the two were now in the middle of the river, the third man began to feel so tired he decided to leave the first man on a rock. However he decided to go back and get the second man. When he offered his help, he again told this second man that he would carry him on his back. The second man refused to be helped this way; instead, he asked the third man to teach him how he was crossing this furious river. The third man agreed to teach him how to cross the river. By the time they reached the second rock, the second man was now able to cross on his own and he continued on his own until he crossed the river. When the second and third men had crossed the river, they said good bye to the first man who was still stuck on the third rock still waiting for the third man to come and help him cross the river – unfortunately the third man was now too tired to help him. The water level however continued to rise and the first man drowned, as he could not help himself.

Discussion: What the three man represented in real life
During discussions, after the drama, workshop participants identified the kind of people the three men represented in real life:
1st Man: People who always relied on other people for everything, people who always live in fear as they feel they cannot help themselves, people who are lazy and do not want to try out things on their own and people who always want others to think on their behalf.
2nd Man: People who are willing to learn, people who put actions into practice and those who understand their problems and when they get help, learn how to solve them so that they can continue on their own when the helpers had left.
3rd Man: Donors, service providers or neighbours willing to help us.

Key lessons learned from the drama
The workshop participants identified the following as the lessons they had learnt from the drama:
-The best way for us to develop is to be taught to be self-reliant rather than being carried on the backs of others.
-Most people who want to help us by carrying us on their backs normally leave us before our problems are solved. It is therefore important to ask those who want to help us to teach us how to solve our problems by ourselves instead of carrying us on their backs.
-If people offer us help, we should be careful that when their help stops, we do not drown in water.

Box 4.3:   The Milk Code: a story to illustrate the importance of effective communication among people

This narrative goes as follows:

Chief Njelele told all his people to bring one litre of milk and pour it into a big container. Each one of them thought, 'Suppose I pour in one litre of water instead, what will happen? No one will notice!' So they all brought their 'milk' and poured it into the big container. Now the Chief later organised a big function and asked all the people to bring plates for the function. The chief thanked all the people and told them that he had organised this function so that they could all share food and eat together. He therefore encouraged each person to get his/her portion of *sadza* (the staple food in Zimbabwe – a thick porridge made from maize flour and water). After getting their maize porridge, people were supposed to go to the big container and get their portion of milk (this was the relish). When people took their portion of milk, they discovered that it was in actual fact water and not milk.

Discussion
During the discussions following the story, participants tried to analyse who was wrong in this case. Some said that the chief was wrong because of the following reasons:
- He did not tell the people why he needed the milk
- He did not monitor to check if people really brought milk and not something else
- He did not tell them what the milk was going to be used for

Others identified the people as being wrong because:
- They did not ask the chief why he needed the milk
- They cheated their chief by bringing water instead of milk
- They were not trustworthy

Key lessons from the story
The participants identified the following as the key lessons learned:
- People and their leaders need to be clear on objectives of their actions
- It is important for leaders and their people to communicate – in most cases, people are afraid to ask certain things to their leaders
- It is important to monitor implementation of actions. Without monitoring, people can bring water.

Box 4.4: **The Chicken Code: a story to illustrate the importance of being critical about our norms and values**

This last of three narratives used in the workshop to make people reflect goes as follows:

"Once upon a time there was a mother who used to remove thighs of a chicken before cooking it. She would later cook the thighs separately from the rest of the chicken. Her daughter grew up seeing this and after she got married, she also cooked chickens her mother's way. One day, her daughter asked why she was cooking chicken that way. The only answer the mother could give was: 'I saw my mother cooking chicken that way, but I have no idea why she did that.' When they visited their grandmother in the rural areas, the granddaughter asked her why she cooked chicken that way. The grandmother said, 'I just saw my mother doing it but I have no idea why she cooked it that way.' This continued for quite some generations and luckily, great grandmother was still alive and she explained that she used to cook chicken that way because her pots were so small that the whole chicken could not fit. She therefore devised a plan to cook the thighs separately from the whole chicken."

Lessons learned:
You must always ask the question 'why' and not just do as you are told without understanding why you are doing certain things.

Box 4.5: **The square game code: a game to illustrate the importance of cooperation among people**

The game of squares

Workshop participants were divided into groups of five. Each member was given an envelope with assorted pieces of paper. The facilitator explained that each member of the group was to make a square from the assorted pieces that he/she got. The facilitator explained that because the pieces were mixed up before giving them out to group members, there was a chance that pieces for completing one's square were given to others and vice versa. However, each group member was supposed to come up with squares of equal size but they were not supposed to speak to each other or ask for certain pieces from group members. However, if a group member wanted to assist others he was allowed to silently pass the pieces that he/she did not need to them. Members were allowed to only give out and receive pieces but not talk to each other. The success of the game depended on all members completing their tasks.

After a signal from the facilitator, the groups started the game. When the task was finished, the facilitator and the groups discussed the following questions:
- What helped or hindered the group in completing the task?
- How did you feel when you saw someone holding a piece of paper that could have helped you to complete your task?
-How did your members feel about the person who could not see the solution as quickly as others?

Lessons drawn from the game
Participants identified the following lessons:
- Sharing of knowledge is essential for development.
- Lack of communication hinders development
- Cooperation by community members is essential for development
- We should be open with one another if we want our community to be developed
- We all have different ideas and knowledge, and if we combine it, we will all be developed

Figure 4.1: **The Jo-Hari's Window**

	Known to self	Unknown to self
Known to others	What I know What others know (**Public person**)	What I don't know What others know (**Blind Spot**)
Unknown to Others	What I know What I do not know (**Private person**)	What I don't know What others don't know (**Mysterious person**)

Figure 4.2: **Participants discussing their perception on the letter "m":**

Figure 4.3: **Picture to illustrate that people can have different perceptions on the same issue**

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would change their lives and it was not necessary to be paid. The ACM researchers were again surprised, and even after negotiating with the Batanai members to take the payments, the latter all still flatly refused.

For the researchers, this was a humbling experience, also considering that some people from Batanai area had walked about 15 km to the workshop since they were nearer to Gokwe than the people from other areas. For the ACM team this demonstrated an immediate outcome of the T-for-T workshop: it had changed existing attitudes, norms and beliefs for the Batanai community members. However, a question that can be asked about this incident is: was the initial demand by the Batanai community members simply a lack of awareness/ knowledge on what the workshop was about? Probably yes, because the ACM team members did not give a thorough explanation of what the workshop was about when inviting the participants. Unlike community members from Gababe and Ndarire, the Batanai community members had over the years participated in many meetings and workshops organised by different research institutions in their area and most of this research was extractive in nature, according to community members. It was not, therefore, surprising Batanai community members came up with the idea of asking for payment. However, after attending the workshop, my own feeling was that the community members could tell the difference between this workshop and other workshops they had attended and they felt that indeed they had benefited in a new way from it. For the other sites, Gababe and Ndarire, they happily accepted the allowances. This might have been their first exposure to outside agencies and they were keen to get some payment to take home after attending the week-long workshop.

Following the T-for-T workshop women dominated meetings organised for thatch and broom grass resources in both Batanai and Gababe (Table 4.3). The percentage of women who attended workshops organised outside of their communities also increased. For example, 49% of workshop participants in the Criteria and Indicators workshop that was organised by the CIFOR researchers on the 30-31st of July 2001 at Shingai Training Centre at Gokwe South Business Centre (the same venue for the T-for-T workshop) were women.

Mrs Nti, a poor reserved and withdrawn woman in 2003 was elected a chair of two groups – a seed group and a recently formed garden group. With the garden group they got some books from the Swedish Cooperative and they met twice a week to read and share ideas on crop production. She also visited Shurugwi district to learn how they used the books for learning purposes. These visits did not influence resource management activities but show that some woman gained the power or confidence to aspire to resource management positions. When talking to Mrs Nti on why she suddenly held so many positions, she just said '*ndimi makandiita kuti ndidero. Zvakatanga nemi veCIFOR makandichenjedza*' – 'it started with you CIFOR people. Your workshops were an eye opener that made me to change and I am now clever'.

Table 4.3: **No. of women who attended resource management meetings and workshops.**

Date	Meeting/ workshop	Where	No of women	Total number people who attended	Percentage of women
16/07/01	Thatch visioning and action planning meeting	Batanai	16	27	59
30/07/01	The Criteria and Indicators workshop	Gokwe Business Centre	16	29	55
18/09/01	Thatch visioning and action planning meeting	Batanai	24	33	73
16/09/01	Broom grass action planning meeting	Batanai	21	23	91
28/08/02	Community general meeting	Batanai	10	27	37

Looking at the increase of women's' participation in meetings and workshops, it can be concluded that the T-for-T training had been effective in boosting women's empowerment. During the workshop, women participants obtained opportunities to speak without any disruption from men. There were unintended outcomes as well, however. Unknown to the CIFOR team, most of the workshop participants from Batanai became active supporters of the opposition political party. Some participants even became poling agents for the opposition during the 2002 presidential elections. When the researchers came to Batanai the next time, they first visited the people who had attended the T-for-T workshop. Local politicians, following these developments, began to view the T–for-T workshop participants as a threat and started regarding the researchers as advocates for the opposition party. This was dangerous, and to continue with their work, the researchers had to seek help from officials in the ZANU PF Gokwe South district. These officials explained to the local politicians that the researchers only did research and were not involved in politics. It was not easy for the local community members who became activists for the opposition party because they suffered at the hands of the ruling party members. For instance, the ACM community partner for Batanai at one time discovered that ruling party members were planning to beat him up for his new role in the opposition party and he had to run for his life. He called on the ACM team members when he arrived at Gokwe South Business Centre, but the team members, who were in Harare, could not help him. He later went back home when things had settled down. The fact that local politicians did not approve of the Batanai community partner made it difficult for the ACM team to work with him.

At Batanai, the political context made it increasingly difficult for the ACM team to conduct meetings, especially during the early stages of the research process. Each time they organised a meeting they were supposed to notify the local councillor and the ruling party political leaders in advance. Failure to do so would result in trouble. One day when the ACM team was organizing a meeting in Batanai with resource users, they had forgotten to notify some of the ZANU PF local leaders. One of the people they forgot to notify stopped the team's vehicle on the way to the venue of the meeting and explained that he was angry because he had heard a rumour that they

were organizing a meeting in the village and they had not informed him about it. The team had to apologise.

At meetings they organized in Batanai, it took considerable time to really get started because of elaborate introductions by some of the invited party people. They introduced themselves with their political titles, like ruling party chair, vice-chair, secretary, vice-secretary, and so on. During the meetings, anyone who wanted to speak had to chant the party slogan before and after saying something. This went on for several meetings. Later, the same people who used to chant the political slogans stopped doing so when they came to meetings and concentrated more on how to manage their forest resources more sustainably. In the view of the ACM team, these positive developments could at least partly be attributed to the T for T workshop.

Organising resource user group meetings became difficult in Batanai after meetings were banned (as everywhere else in the country) following the passage of the Public Order and Security Act[51] just before the 2002 presidential elections. One had to seek permission from the ruling party political leaders and the police to hold meetings. During this time, the ACM team had to invite officers from the central intelligence organisation (CIO) to attend and bless the meetings and workshops that they organised in communities and at Gokwe Business Centre. Failure to do so would have put the researchers in danger as meetings could easily be mistaken for political gatherings. The situation improved some time after the elections and meetings could again be organised. The ACM team, however, still continued to invite members of the CIO, especially to district level workshops just to be on the safe side.

4.5.2 Conflict Resolution Processes

After the T-for-T training, the ACM team organised several workshops and took advantage of other organised meetings (by the traditional leadership, the FC, or the RMCs in the research sites) to build the capacity of stakeholders for conflict resolution. In terms of process, the conflict resolution workshops (for instance the one organised in August 2002 at Lutope Camp, with participation of representatives from Gababe, Batanai, Ndarire and Nyaje RMC areas) started with presentations from resource persons, mostly hired conflict resolution experts. They made presentations on the importance of conflict resolution and the various methods that could be used to resolve conflicts. Participants were later asked to recall conflicts they had faced in the past, individually or in the RSP, and critically look at what mechanism they had used to deal with the conflicts and how effective they were. Later on, participants identified their current conflicts. Then, in the workshop, they tried to resolve these conflicts through facilitated negotiation: participants first had to agree on the status of the conflict, and the available alternatives, and then come up with jointly agreed solutions.

During the various workshops, several conflicts were identified among stakeholders in Mafungautsi and these can be classified as internal and external conflicts. Internal

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[51]   POSA limits peoples' rights to freedom of expression. The Act prohibits speech acts that are likely to bring feelings of hostility towards the state institutions and the president (Human Rights Watch, 2003). Under POSA, anyone organizing a public meeting is supposed to report to the police four days before the meeting for clearance on whether the meetings should take place.

conflicts were those among local-level stakeholders. Examples were (see also Chapter 5):

- *Resource boundaries*: Each resource management committee was allocated an area by the Forestry Commission where they could harvest resources such as broom and thatch grass. In most cases, however, the boundaries were not clear and this was a big problem in all RMC areas.
- *Resource theft within and between RMCs*: Some community members were said to steal resources from the forest to avoid paying the permit prices. It was also alleged that those who stole the resources used poor harvesting practices resulting in depletion of the valuable resource. For instance, thieves were blamed for digging instead of cutting broom grass, and this was regarded as a poor practice. In addition, it was alleged that members from other RMCs came and stole resources in areas outside their RMCs, and this resulted conflicts.
- *Fire management*: Some community members were accused of starting forest fires, especially those involved in honey harvesting. It was also alleged that community members without livestock (especially cattle), were responsible for starting fires, probably during hunting expeditions since they lost nothing when pastures burnt.
- *Lack of transparency by RMCs*: In various RMCs there were tensions in regard to the leadership. Community members accused the RMCs of lack of transparency. In some cases RMCs were said to issue permits, especially to outsiders, before the grass was ripe. In other cases, RMCs were said to misuse money raised in their areas and communities missed out.
- *RMC members and traditional leadership*: There were conflicts between traditional leaders and RMC members. It was said that traditional leaders were not supportive of RMC activities. For instance, in Batanai area, some village heads did not notify community members of meetings organised by their RMCs. The village members would, therefore, not come to meetings organized by the RMC. In such situations, it became very difficult for the RMC to operate without support of traditional leaders.
- *Incentives for the RMC members*: RMC members wanted to be paid for their work in controlling resource harvesting and raising money for the communities. However, most communities did not want to pay them and referred them to the FC since they said that the RMC was working for the FC, not the community. The FC, however, had made it clear that the RMCs were working for their respective communities, which were therefore responsible for rewarding them for their work. This resulted in tensions between people and their RMCs. In one case, the chairperson of one of the RMCs, Chemwiro Masawi, said that when his RMC appealed for people to pay them for their work, the people said *kana zvakukona rega, tinotsvaka vamwe*' (if you are fed up you can leave, we can always find someone to replace you').

External conflicts were those between the communities and the FC. Under these, different issues were identified. Already during the initial stages of the ACM project, the ACM team discovered conflicts between the FC (FC) and local communities. The ACM researchers could not go to the field in a FC vehicle, as they realised that any association with the FC resulted in non-cooperation from the communities. At first, the researchers had to meet separately with the FC and with the communities in order to find out about the existing conflicts and problems. It took about a year for the

relations among these stakeholders to improve. Later on, when relations were better, especially after application of the conflict resolution process, communities did not mind researchers arriving in a FC vehicle. External conflicts in Mafungautsi included:

- *Boundaries*: There were serious conflicts around the boundary of the forest, ever since the establishment of the forest as a conservation area. At one time, for instance in Nyaje RMC area, the FC, using their map, came and evicted some people they said were living in the forest. The people of Nyaje were very bitter about this because some lost their fields whilst others were forced to move out completely to areas far outside Mafungautsi. According to the people, the FC had encroached on their village in an attempt to increase the forest area. Similar stories were also narrated by community members in Gababe.
- *Fire management*: The FC accused communities of causing forest fires. Community members believed, however, that the FC started these fires to punish them by destroying pastures for their animals.
- *Resources communities were allowed to harvest:* The FC allowed the villagers to harvest only minor forest products such as grasses, mushrooms and herbs and not major products such as timber. This made villagers bitter: they also wanted to harvest the high value commercial timber found in the area. However, according to the FC, there were only a few ripe trees to harvest. According to the community members, however, the last time the FC harvested the commercial timber was in 1992, and ten years later there was now enough mature trees to permit harvesting again. Some RMC areas like Ndarire had no grasses in their area and, for them, harvesting timber was the only possible income generating activity from the forest
- *Perceptions on the role of the forest*: According to the FC, Mafungautsi forest was a water catchment area for four of the major rivers in Zimbabwe that drain into the Zambezi river, the major source of hydroelectricity in Zimbabwe. According to the FC, the forest was predominantly growing on very fragile sandy soil and hence needed to be protected in order to prevent siltation of the major rivers. For some community members, the forest was arable land, and they wanted to settle there.

Lessons learning during the conflict resolution processes
The conflict resolution processes were facilitated by the researchers and experts during the various types of workshops and meetings organised by FC, RMC and traditional leaders. In all cases, facilitation was crucial to cope with suspicions and help stakeholders open-up to others, to bring their conflicts out into the open, and to discuss, negotiate and resolve them. These discussions between stakeholders provided great learning opportunities. Some of the lessons from the conflict resolution workshop in August 2002 included:

Learning about causes of the forest fires by both sets of stakeholders
Through discussions in the various types of meetings, both stakeholders realized that they had some common concerns, such as wanting to protect the forest from fires. The FC blamed the communities for starting fires and not putting any mechanisms in place to make sure that those who started fires were punished. On the other hand, community members blamed the FC for starting these forest fires and burning valuable pastures for their animals. The community members said there was rumour that sometimes the FC started fires deliberately to open up fire breaks. The FC officer explained that the FC was at times involved in starting small fires, as part of their management strategy to prevent major fires from happening at a later date. According

to the FC officer, these fires were carefully controlled by FC duty officers. When the community members heard this explanation, they realized they had a wrong perception and had misunderstood the involvement of the FC in some of the forest fires. The FC, on its part, learnt from the dialogue why community members were not helping to control the fire outbreaks in the forest. In the end, both parties agreed on strategies to stop or control forest fires. The FC asked the RMC members to come up with plans to open up the fire breaks and organize awareness raising meetings on forest fires. At the end of the conflict resolution workshop in August 2002, the FC also promised to help the four RMCs at the conflict resolution workshops to organize such meetings and to conduct demonstrations in the village on fire fighting. The FC also offered to train people in bee-keeping and construction of beehives because this would reduce forest fires due to honey harvesting.

Communities learning about the status of timber
With regard to resources community members were allowed to harvest, villagers clearly expressed the desire to harvest timber and poles, and they wanted to know if the FC would allow them. The FC official said that they were not allowed to do so at present, but that some provisions might be made for the future. The FC official admitted that from their side they had not made an effort to really find out from the communities what everybody was interested in. This was a learning point on the part of the FC, as well the realization that different communities were interested in different type of resources. In some RMCs, people were more interested in grasses, while in other RMCs people were more interested in poles and timber. The position of the FC on this issue came as a great relief to the community members, and acted as a motivational factor.

In other discussions, community members indicated they also wanted to benefit from timber concessions offered by the FC to logging companies. This raised a lot of discussion and the FC said that the last time they gave licenses to logging companies was ten years ago. Recently no surveys had been carried out and it was therefore not clear how many trees were ready for harvesting. Community members said, however, that timber was available in the forest, and they needed to have access to it for making various furniture products like beds, cupboards and doors. After long discussions, the two stakeholders agreed to conduct jointly a timber assessment survey.

Communities learning about the areas for harvesting their resources
Community members from Nyaje were not clear on the areas where they could harvest grass. In the area allocated to them there was no grass. Hearing about this from community members, the FC then offered to divide the FC grass harvesting area and give a portion to Nyaje RMC. This came as a great relief to these villagers.

Lessons concerning ownership of the forest
Another conflictive issue concerned the ownership of the forest. The FC said that the forest belonged to the communities. This raised a lot of discussions. Community members alleged that the FC only said this because they needed help from the community. They said that when it came to timber harvesting, the FC normally said the forest belonged to the government. The FC officer had to do a lot of explaining in regard to this allegation. He said '*Isu ve Forestry takapiwa sango nehurumende kuti tirichengetedze kuti rigorambe riripo, asi harisi reduba. Asizve, hurumemde ndeyaani, hatisisu here vakaisarudza kuti itimirire. Saka, kana sango riri*

rehurumende, nderenyuwo zvakare' - 'The FC was given a mandate to protect the forest by our government. However, since the government was put in place by people, it means the forest belongs to the government as well as the people who elected that government'. With more explanation and clarification, there was learning among community members, who later confessed that this knowledge needed to be passed on to everyone, for all along they thought that the forest belonged to the FC and hence they did not really care about what happened to it. Now that they understood that it belonged to them, they saw it would be to their benefit to help manage it.

Learning by the FC on the feelings of local people on the evictions
In trying to discuss and resolve the conflict concerning eviction of community members from the forest by the FC, the official learnt that this touched on a very deep-rooted conflict. The community members clearly expressed their anger to the FC. Evictions had resulted in some people losing their fields completely, while others had had to move out of the area completely and resettle elsewhere. The community members who were present in the meeting admitted that they were not the right people to negotiate on this conflict; this was an issue that required discussions with the traditional leadership. The FC official also explained that the FC had been given a directive by the current government to evict people, and it was highly unlikely the government would change its policies. Both stakeholders ended up by agreeing that, even though this was a very crucial conflict, this was not the right platform to try and resolve it. Both parties now better understood each other's position. The community members realized why the FC had acted so cruelly, and the FC officer realised that this was a serious conflict that needed to be pursued by FC managers.

4.5.3 Training on Leadership Skills
The ACM team also organised trainings that especially focused on competencies for leadership. One of these workshops was organised immediately after the T-for-T and conflict resolution workshops. Others were organised when the ACM researchers felt the need. In addition to these trainings, ACM researchers made use of other community meetings and organised platforms such as the annual pre-grass cutting season workshops organised by the FC. The ACM team felt that leadership capacities were important for effective functioning of key institutions, namely, the RMC and the traditional leadership authority. Leadership training was based on the assumption that the sustainability of projects depends on the quality of both leaders and their followers. During the leadership training sessions, participants discussed the various roles of office bearers, how to organise meetings, the importance of coming up with an agenda before each organised meeting, issues of representation, accountability and transparency, need to hold democratic elections, and good leadership qualities.

4.5.4 Resource User Group Formation
From the context studies the ACM team already had learnt that not all community members were interested in forest issues. The ACM team therefore decided to form groups of people who shared an interest in a particular resource. These resource user groups were to ensure that specific resources were managed sustainably. In Batanai and Gababe, three different resource user groups were formed, focusing on thatch grass, broom grass and honey. These were the main resources for which harvesting was permitted under the resource sharing agreement. The ACM team invited community members in the study sites to join the resource user groups and made explicit that this was on a voluntary basis. One could join-in or drop out when one

wished. Resource users were also free to join any other group and could thus belong to more than one group, especially if the group meetings were not taking place at the same time. Members of the resource user groups had opportunities to share their experiences and learn from each other in order to avoid making mistakes that others already made. The ACM team was responsible, during the early stages, to facilitate the process for resource users to address their problems. Initially, a variety of people came to the resource user group meetings and participated in the early stages of the PAR process, maybe out of curiosity. Many dropped-out as time went on and only few persons participated in all the stages of the research.

The ACM team found it difficult to establish resource user groups in Ndarire because the area lacked resources which communities were allowed to harvest under the RSP, namely broom or thatch grass. The resource users in that area mainly harvested poles and timber in the forest, outside the resource sharing agreement, making the activity illegal. However, three months after the ACM team's visit to Ndarire RMC area, a self-initiated 'poles and timber' group was formed. Ndarire community members made this decision after learning about the broom and thatch grass resource user groups formed by the ACM team in Batanai and Gababe. This did not, of course, render harvesting of timber and poles legal. The poles and timber group members approached the ACM team for help in negotiating for the inclusion of timber as one of the resources communities could harvest under the RSP.

The formation of the resource user groups was not easy at the other sites. For instance, in Batanai, membership of the various resource user groups fluctuated, rendering such groups largely amorphous. This had implications for ownership of decisions, as well as commitment of members. In most cases new members had no idea what others had done before and why. On each occasion, older members had to update newcomers on situation and progress before they could effectively participate. Then socio-economic changes in the country impinged on the resource user groups, resulting in high fluxes in membership and a slow down in the process. For instance, because of economic hardship and intensive drought, community members - including some ACM community partners - migrated to neighbouring countries in search of better employment. Some of the people who left were key members of resource user groups, with important roles in the implementation of the developed action plans.

Later on, the user groups became smaller and easier to manage. Resource users who remained were excited, as this was the first time they had opportunities to work on their problems and jointly to come up with possible solutions. They also became aware, after the training sessions, that most problems they faced, such as degradation of resources, could not be solved by individuals, but needed joint action.

Part II: Participatory Action Research with resource user groups.

The Participatory Action Research (PAR) process the Adaptive Collaborative Management (ACM) team implemented with the resource user groups, and the efforts to set up collaborative monitoring of the status of the forest resources, is now described. These two were considered crucial elements in the ACM. It will be shown how, through facilitated interaction, community members and the FC officer developed mutual understanding, and how this resulted in joint activities better to manage forest resources.

4.6   The Participatory Action Research process

The earlier top-down management approach to the forest, and unfulfilled promises in the RSP, disillusioned many local community members. This meant for the ACM team that they required to find an innovative way to stimulate people to take an active part in dealing with their problems. Following the T-for-T (see 4.5.1) a next step was to use scenarios and visioning tools to stimulate creative ways of thinking and help stakeholders break out of established patterns of assessing situations (Wollenberg *et al.*, 2000).

Resource users were asked to describe their vision of how things ideally would look in two years time, and were explicitly asked to include the status of forest resources, the number of people harvesting resources, harvesting methods, availability of markets, prices of the resources (both permits and selling prices), revenue from resources, and finally, the rules and regulations for governing use of resources. Several such meetings were organised for the different resource user groups in each RMC in the period of 2001 to early 2002. A list of some of the meetings held in the three ACM sites from 2001 to 2002 is presented in Annex 4.2. The majority of these meetings were facilitated by CIFOR field researchers and community partners on behalf of CIFOR. From this list, it is clear that community members during the 2001-2002 period spent a lot of time in resource management meetings and workshops, and this raises a recurrent but unresolved question in participatory development – the opportunity cost of the time thus spent in "workshopping", and how and when to try to reduce it to a minimum.

In preparation for the visioning exercises, the ACM team carefully selected a small number of resource users and helped them develop a joint vision on resources, which they later presented to the rest of the user group. Presentations by two women from Batanai had strong impact. These two women had so far been withdrawn in meetings and were reserved in expressing their opinion. The presentation of their vision was so passionate that the other community members were surprised and impressed. They listened to an eloquent presentation of views by two people who hitherto had never contributed during public meetings. Besides stimulating the rest of the resource users to come up with their own vision, the presentations boosted the confidence of the two women and they continued to participate actively in most of the meetings that followed.

After developing and presenting vision statements resource users were asked by the ACM team to describe the current situation with regard to their resources. This showed how different the current status was, compared to the desired outcomes (Tables 4.4, 4.5, 4.6 and 4.7). Group members were thereafter asked to identify what they thought might hinder transition from the current situation to the envisioned situation. The resource user groups later came up with action plans to deal with possible hindrances they had identified. The groups later implemented these actions, and opportunities were created for them to reflect on lessons learned from the impact of these interventions. The lessons were later used in real decision-making processes. Detailed descriptions of four of the seven PAR processes are presented in the next sections: beekeepers in Batanai, broom grass users in Batanai, the timber group in Ndarire and beekeepers in Gababe.

4.6.1 PAR with the Batanai Beekeepers
With facilitation from ACM team, bee keepers in Batanai developed their vision for bee keeping (Table 4.4). The group was dominated by men.

Identification of possible hindrances in achieving the desired future situation
In a meeting in April 2001 where all members of the resource user group on bee keeping in Batanai were invited, the participants first described the current situation and their vision for their resource, The 43 bee keeping group members who attended the meeting then identified what they thought might hinder them from achieving their desired future. These included:
- Lack of places to put bee hives
- Too few modern hives with higher production
- Continued increase in the price of timber/planks for making beehives and lack of capital to buy them.
- Lack of knowledge on bee keeping and how to process honey
- Continued reliance on distant markets
- Small size of the local market

During a discussion that followed, the bee keepers took a critical look at some of the points. When looking at reasons why there was a lack of knowledge on bee keeping, the keepers said that there was not necessarily a lack of knowledge. They reckoned there was a lack of communication among them; several people in their area had received training on bee keeping but had not been willing to share their knowledge, as they felt it threatened the profitability of their bee keeping ventures.

Developing action plans
After identifying the hindrances to attain their desired future, the next step was to develop strategies or action plans to deal with these identified hindrances. Items that the group members included in their action plans were:
- Share experiences and learn from each other about bee keeping. Those with the knowledge on bee keeping should share with those who do not have.
- Those interested in bee keeping should have bee hives as soon as possible.
- Bee keepers group to have meetings once every month to plan on prices, markets and monitor progress on the development of the markets.
- Bee keepers to work closely with the RMC to promote bee keeping projects in the community.

Table 4.4: **Vision by the Batanai beekeepers resource user group.**

Indicator	Current situation (year 2001)	Vision of Bee Keeping (after two years – year 2003)
Number of people involved in bee keeping	Only a total of 30 households are harvesting honey and very few of them are women	At least 187 households involved in bee keeping
Knowledge and skills	Resource users have little knowledge on bee keeping	Resource users have considerable knowledge and skills for bee keeping
Bee keeping methods	Resource users are using all kinds of hives and some of these are not sustainable. The hives include Kenyan Top Bar (KTB) hives, wooden barrow, baskets, bees on trees Resource users harvest honey without protective clothing and some use smoke from burning tyres as a harvesting method, a method which kills bees	All resource users using the sustainable KTB hives and having protective clothing and using sustainable harvesting methods
Rules and regulations	None	Clear rules and regulations put in place for bee keeping and enforced stringently.
Processing	At the moment, people process their honey into a number of grades. These are A, B and C. A is best but little honey achieves this grade.	Resource users have skills to process and get the bulk of our honey as grade A
Markets	Markets are too far away: people travel to far places to sell their honey (more than 300 km). The local market is not developed.	A well developed local market to exist at Gokwe and no resource users travelling to far places to sell honey
Income	Z$17 000.00/annum (USD308.1/annum)	Z$40 000.00/annum (USD724.9/annum)[52]

- Bee keepers to start showing others that they are getting good incomes from bee keeping, to attract more people into bee keeping. The bee keepers believed that if the production of honey increased this would result in them securing a better market for the product.
- Increased cooperation in selling honey so as to be price-setters and not price-takers.

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[52] The June 2001 rate was 1USD=Zim$55.90 (Annex 2.3)

Implementation of action plans

Following the action planning, the ACM team helped the bee keepers in implementation. For instance, with regard to enhancing the sharing of knowledge among bee keepers, ACM team members organised meetings for the group. At one such meeting, the ACM team invited the RMC chair who shared his knowledge with the rest of the bee keepers. He had been trained on effective honey harvesting methods at a workshop facilitated by the FC some years earlier. He started narrating some of the do's and don'ts of honey harvesting. These included:

- Not to harvest honey when it is too cold for this kills the baby bees
- During the hot season honey must be harvested when in the cooler part of the day, since if it is too hot bees become angry and sting.
- A helper is needed when harvesting honey so that one person can hold the honey while the other is harvesting.
- Not to burn tyres to chase away bees when harvesting because this kills them. Cattle dung smoke is harmless.
- Not to make noise when harvesting honey.
- Not to beat the beehive when harvesting because this makes the bees angry.
- Not to harvest all the honey. Some has to be left for the bees.
- Not to mix cow and donkey dung when preparing smoke for harvesting since this makes the bees angry.
- If you make the bees angry, you must leave and come back later when they have settled down.
- There is a time for harvesting honey. You must not harvest honey at a time when there are small baby bees around. The bees will sting.

In the end, the man said that he had much more that he could tell them, but there was no time. So he offered to talk about it again some other time. During this meeting, when discussing the various methods of harvesting honey, another old man stood up and added to the discussion by saying:

> 'Now let me tell you the best way that I have used to harvest honey successfully, and you better listen attentively. For harvesting honey, you need to go there naked without wearing anything. You must not use perfumes, and you must take a bath before you go there. And, do not use perfumed soaps.'

Most of the people who were present laughed, maybe in disbelief when he talked about going to harvest honey naked. In any case, for the ACM team, it was an indicator of a new willingness to share, and the good atmosphere generated during the meeting.

There were, however, bee keepers who were not willing to share their knowledge. For instance, in the same meeting there was a man, Mr. M., who had about 110 beehives at his homestead. When the ACM team invited him to the bee keeping meeting, he sent message that if they did not come to pick him up, he would not come. When they heard the message, they sent their driver and vehicle. However, at the meeting Mr M. did not say a word. After the meeting ended, the ACM team dropped him at his homestead.

In terms of the other action plans, the bee keeping group however did not manage to meet as frequently as they had planned. This was mainly because the group was not progressing due to the fact that a number of members had left for gold panning. In their absence it was difficult for the remaining members to pass binding resolutions.

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In addition, some of the members lacked money to purchase planks from FC to make modern bee hives. Some bee keepers resorted to using traditional bee hives made from logs.

Outcomes of the PAR processes
Unfortunately, the ACM team could not carry out a study to see if the vision of the bee keepers group was realized or not in Batanai. Due to the increasing economic hardships in the country, most bee keepers in Batanai started to leave the area in 2002 (and others left after the ACM project had ended) to search for a living. Some went and panned illegally for gold while others went to neighbouring countries to look for employment. In August 2002, for instance, 24 men with ages ranging from 24 to 40 were reported to have left the area for South Africa to search for work, while 32 men aged between 23 and 40 were reported to have left for gold panning (illegal gold panning was regarded as a dangerous activity, Box 4.6 below). Movement out of the country was mainly influenced by increased hunger due to drought. As was the case all around the forest, community members in Batanai faced serious food shortage problems, and relied on wild fruits from the forest for survival. The arrival of the honey season also saw an increase in large trees being felled by honey collectors as a quick (and unsustainable) way to harvest honey.

Box 4.6:   The dangers of illegal gold panning

While ACM team members were waiting for a meeting with members of the Gwehava RMCs on the 18th of September 2002, several issues were discussed, including increasing hunger and illegal gold panning (*korokoza*). One man stated '*ukawana munhu anenge ari kukorokoza, munhu iyeye anenge atopindwa nemweya wakaipa. Kukorokoza, munhu unoita basa rako wakabata banga nekuti anytime unogona kuuya kuzopondwa kana wawana dombo.*'('People who participate in illegal gold panning inclined towards and susceptible to evil because they work holding weapons such as knives because the moment one finds the precious stone, he/she may be murdered by those who did not find anything'. He went on to say that seven copses had been brought to Gokwe mortuary of late from the gold mines. He went on to narrate a story of two young men who recently came back to their village with huge sums of money. One of them even burnt some of the money just to show off. However, a short while later they developed a strange disease similar to Parkinson's causing their bodies to shake [probably caused by mercury poisoning]. Upon enquiry, their father discovered that the two young men had stolen money from someone. The father then went to look for the person whose money had been stolen. When he found him, however, the man said that he was not responsible for causing the disease. It was then feared the young man would die as no cure had been found for their disease.

From the year 2003, onwards it became difficult to organise a meeting with the bee keepers to follow up on the group's progress. Sometimes only one member would show up for the meeting.

4.6.2 PAR with Batanai broom grass resource users
Another group engaged in action research was the broom grass group at Batanai. This group was dominated by female members. Collection of broom grass was the major activity at Batanai RMC. Table 4.5 summarizes the vision of the broom grass resource users and their assessment of the current situation. The vision was developed over a series of meetings organised in 2001.

Table 4.5   Current and future scenarios developed by the broom grass group at Batanai

Indicator	Current situation (2001)	Vision of the broom grass resource (in – 2003)
Number of people involved in broom grass	A small number is involved. For instance in Mafa village, only 15 out of 194 households are involved in harvesting broom grass. Those near the road are the ones involved.[53] Mostly women involved. Few men Children also involved.	At least 50-80% of the total households in the RMC area. Men and women should all be equally involved. With more people involved, we can all help each other.
Harvesting methods	Most people cut using sickles There are some who dig, though fewer.	Wish that all of us use the same harvesting method. All people harvesting by cutting. No one should be digging.
Markets	Sell at Gokwe, Bulawayo, Kadoma, Nemangwe, Sayi, Manoti, and Gweru and also to our neighbours.	Get a huge market close by like at Gokwe Business Centre
Rules and regulations	Digging is not allowed We pay Z$30.00/ day (USD0.54/ day)[54] for a permit. Permit prices go up every year, and it is difficult to cut all the broom you need in only one day.	Hope that permit price will match the number of days the permit will be valid for. We would like it to be Z$80.00/4 days (USD1.43/ 4days) All RMCs to have same rule on digging or cutting.
Incomes	Selling brooms is a reliable way of raising income. Currently get Z$15 000.00/ annum (USD268.34/ annum), from brooms.	Hope to get as much as Z$30 000.00/year (USD536.67/ annum).

After the visioning exercise, the broom grass resource users identified the following possible hindrances to attaining their vision

- Lack of cooperation among resource users in the use of the cutting method of harvesting
- Lack of cooperation across the RMC
- Failure to establish a local market for buyers of brooms from our area

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[53] i.e. the road that goes from Gokwe to Nkai (see Fig 2.5, Chapter 2).
[54] 1USD: Zim$55.90

During this discussion, resource users narrated how they had conducted an experiment before, together with the FC, to find the most sustainable method of harvesting the broom grass (Box 4.7).

Box 4.7:   The Machije Experiment

At the inception of the Resource-Sharing project in 1994, in an effort to enhance joint learning about sustainable methods of harvesting broom grass, community members in the Batanai RMC, on the initiative of the Forestry Commission, decided to conduct an experiment in Machije wetland (the area where Batanai RMC harvests broom grass). The experiment was conducted in two small plots staked out jointly by the broom grass resources users and the FC. In one of the plots, resource users harvested grass by digging. In the other plot they harvested the grass by cutting, using sickles. The stakeholders then monitored to see how the grass would grow in each of the plots. In the seasons that followed no new broom grass germinated in the plot where grass was harvested by digging. Instead, a new grass variety which could not be used for making brooms emerged. Stakeholders concluded that the best method for harvesting their grass without depleting it was cutting. For two years after the experiment, no one dug broom grass in Batanai RMC. However, after the two years, some people resumed digging despite the fact that they knew its adverse impact on the resource.

The ACM team realized that after this experiment there had been no planned opportunities for the participants to come together and discuss the undesirable change in the harvesting practices by resource users. The team therefore organized several meetings to identify and plan for possible improvements. During these meetings with broom grass resource users the team learned that several factors had contributed to the sudden change in harvesting methods. One of these factors was the continued market demand for 'dug brooms', i.e. brooms made from dug/ uprooted grass. In most places where people were selling their brooms, the customers wanted 'dug brooms' and they therefore were selling faster than 'cut brooms'. Customers alleged that uprooted brooms lasted longer than cut brooms because the grass did not loosen so easily. This resulted in many of the Batanai residents returning to the practice of digging the broom grass even though they knew the adverse effects of such practices. One woman from the Batanai RMC (who according to the wealth ranking exercise was considered very poor) explained her experiences at one of the meetings:

> "One day I went to Gokwe [Gokwe is about 15 km from Batanai] to sell my brooms - a scotch cart[55] load. When I arrived in Gokwe, all the customers rushed to see the brooms and all they were saying was, '*une magaro here*? *Une magaro here*?' [56] which means 'Are they dug brooms? Are they dug brooms?' Not even a single broom was bought when the people realised that I had cut brooms. I had to go back home all the way from Gokwe with all my brooms untouched. I was really pained from all the time and effort I had wasted." The woman just ended by shaking her head and saying, "*Ah, zvinorwadza veduwe*" meaning "Ah, it is very painful, I tell you."

Another woman had a similar experience which she also shared.

> "Last year, I also went to Gokwe with a scotch cart full of cut brooms and when I arrived, a group of customers asked me to bring my brooms since they wanted to buy them. I pushed my scotch cart to where the customers were standing and as they were

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[55]   A scotch cart is an animal drawn cart used for ferrying goods.
[56]   The literal translation for the phrase, '*une magaro*?' is 'does it have buttocks?'

looking at the brooms and putting aside the ones they wanted to purchase, another seller came by and started shouting that she had dug brooms. All the customers who were about to buy my brooms threw them back into the scotch cart and rushed to the newly arrived seller. We actually had a big fight, me and the newly arrived seller, ending up at Gokwe police station. I presented my case to the police and told them that the other woman was selling illegal brooms, since they were dug and not cut, and this was not allowed in our RMC. The police dismissed the case and said that there was no such law written down. I finally left the police station angry and disappointed."

After hearing these experiences, broom-grass collectors decided to come up with strategies to ensure that their resource was used in a more sustainable manner. These included the following:

- Everyone, including those who were not present at this meeting, should tell the RMC members whenever they see someone digging broom grass. The RMC members cannot do their duty single-handed, because they are sometimes too busy to monitor activities in the forest. Moreover, according to the community members, the RMC members are not paid, unlike the Forestry Commission Forest Protection Unit who could therefore devote most of their time to arresting people who transgressed. The RMC members had to work in their own fields as well, in order to survive.

- Instead of giving a permit before harvesting grass, it was suggested that it would be better if people would pay after harvesting. This would enable the RMC members to inspect and check if the grass was harvested by cutting or digging. The Batanai resource users, however, thought that there would be a risk that people might harvest and disappear before paying for their permits.

- In order to deal with the problem of the market preference for 'dug brooms', resource users suggested four options: (1) All broom grass harvesters (within and outside the Batanai RMC) to cooperate and only provide cut brooms. This would force consumers to buy cut brooms since these would be the only ones available on the market; (2) RMCs to negotiate with the Gokwe Rural District Council for a law to prohibit the sale of dug brooms. This would then force all broom grass collectors to cut instead of dig the grass; (3) Broom grass harvesters to come up with new bundling methods that could make the cut grass brooms more beautiful and last longer. This would make customers prefer buying the cut brooms. (4) A suggestion was made for resource users to advertise their brooms so that customers would come to Batanai instead of the Batanai sellers taking the brooms elsewhere. This would give more opportunity for the RMC to inspect and check if all the sold brooms are cut brooms and not dug brooms.

- To deal with the problem of other RMCs around Mafungautsi harvesting by digging instead of cutting, the participants suggested that a "look and learn" workshop would be organized in which they would share their experiences from the other RMCs to come and learn from the Machije experiment. They could visit the plots in the forest and see for themselves. One of the Batanai community members would explain how the experiment was conducted and what the findings were on the digging vs. the cutting of broom grass.

In April 2002 the broom grass group organised a 'learning' workshop, together with the FC officer, with an aim to learn about new ways of bundling cut brooms. The local women who were knowledgeable on the alternative bundling method showed the others how they bundled their brooms and the resource users and the FC officer

agreed to jointly market the newly bundled brooms. The FC officer took the brooms to the annual Provincial Agricultural Show in August 2002. Eight out of the thirty-two decoratively bundled brooms were sold at a price of Zim$50/ broom (USD 0.88/broom). This was Zim$42 (USD0.74) more per broom than undecorated brooms. The remaining twenty-four brooms were sold at the FC office for the same higher price. The production of the decorated brooms is much more time consuming, compared to the conventional bundling method: it takes 20-30 minutes more to make a decorated broom. People therefore felt that the decorated brooms were being sold at a fair price. Undecorated cut brooms (which were bundled using the conventional method) were selling at Zim$8/ broom (USD 0.14/ broom) at Gokwe Centre.

In addition, the Batanai women started teaming-up to go and sell their brooms in faraway places. Some of these women would not have managed to do this alone as their husbands did not allow them to travel to such far places unaccompanied (probably afraid that venturing too far would tempt them to be promiscuous).

Outcomes of the PAR processes
Broom grass resource users developed a new decorative bundling method that helped to encourage the use of sustainable harvesting methods for the broom grass. Sale of the decorated brooms helped resource users to increase their incomes. For instance, an interview on 17/07/02 with Mrs Siwela, a broom grass resource user from Batanai area ACM research, discovered that she had decided to adopt the new bundling method being promoted in the area. Mrs Siwela said that the decorated brooms were selling fast and at a higher price [Zim$50 (0.88 USD) each) compared to undecorated brooms selling at lower prices (Zim$8 (0.14 USD). Mrs Siwela also revealed that, together with her neighbour, she had begun to travel to faraway places (like Mbungu) to sell their brooms, and the income generated from the sale of the brooms had helped her to survive the drought in 2002.

4.6.3 PAR with the Ndarire Timber Group
With the facilitation of the ACM team members, the Ndarire timber group also developed a vision for their timber resources in the forest (Table 4.6). Participants listed some of the challenges anticipated in realisation of their visions:
- Mukwa trees may get exhausted very fast if the level of harvesting is not monitored and regulated
- If a lucrative market is found, more people will join the timber industry and this will create competition for the market and inputs, i.e. the timber
- The FC may refuse to add timber to the list of permitted resources for communities to harvest under the resource sharing agreement. This will require a tremendous change in the RSP as currently timber logging is not part of this agreement. In the past however, when the timber was still abundant, the FC used to give logging concessions to big companies.
- All the timber will be extracted if more concessions are awarded to external companies.

As possible solutions they came up with the following suggestions:
- For timber loggers to form a group to co-ordinate logging activities,
- Initiate a dialogue between the FC and the current (illegal) timber loggers

- Regular facilitation by outside organisations such as CIFOR. Without such facilitation, it was not possible for them to progress further on their own.

The members of the timber resource user group in Ndarire noted that a lot of timber was harvested by people from Nkayi - a neighbouring district outside the RSP area. They came up with activities to curb the poaching of the timber by these outsiders. One of these included asking FC officials to support them in reducing timber poaching as well as to help them with the development of sustainable harvesting methods.

In response, the FC, with financial support from CIFOR, organised a look-and-learn tour in which various stakeholders (two FC officers, the Provincial Forest Extension Manager for Midlands Province, and representatives from 5 RMC areas around Mafungautsi Forest) visited a Nyagadza Project in Chipinge, Manicaland Province. This place is about 450 km away from Gokwe, in the south-eastern part of the country. The project involved communities managing an indigenous woodlot and sharing benefits from it. The trip aimed to expose the Mafungautsi community members to a number of value adding processes (e.g. through carpentry) implemented by communities in Chipinge, as well as to help them learn how other communities managed and used natural resources collectively. This was an important learning experience for both the FC and communities from Mafungautsi concerning what kinds of systems might be implemented to ameliorate conflict over timber harvesting. In the carpentry project, the communities in Chipinge were manufacturing furniture from the timber they harvested from the indigenous woodlot, including beds, chairs and cupboards. The community also had a monitoring system to check how many trees were harvested to ensure sustainability.

After this trip, the three FC officers administered a questionnaire to establish among other things the number of harvesters in the community, their qualifications, tools and skills, and the volume of timber they harvested per given season. A second survey followed to quantify the amount of timber in the forest and to find out about the feasibility of timber harvesting by communities in Mafungautsi, following the Nyagadza model. The discussions that followed these surveys were envisioned by the FC as a way to reshape forest policy for Mafungautsi and other state forests in Zimbabwe.

Table 4.6: **The timber status and vision developed by Ndarire timber group (meetings held on 21/04/02 and 24/04/02)**

Indicator	Current status (year 2001)	Vision for Timber (2003)
Number of people involved in trading of hard wood products such as Mukwa (*Pterocarpus angolensis*).	About 15% of the households in Ndarire use Mukwa for construction purposes, 10% use it for carpentry. Only 5 % of carpenters (10% of the total Ndarire population) are experts in making Mukwa products e.g. chairs, doors	An ideal situation would be a reasonable number of players in the timber industry. All stakeholders should be able to work together to ensure that Mukwa is not overexploited. However, participants foresaw the number of people dealing in Mukwa wood increasing in the near future due to increasing levels of unemployment in the country. The majority of the new players will be timber harvesters and plank makers. A small number will be 'experts'/carpenters because carpentry skills take time to be perfected.
Rules	- it is illegal to cut live trees especially Mukwa. - Farmers from surrounding communal areas are not allowed into the forest with dogs, axes and fire lighting accessories. These rules are however not reinforced as the FC hardly moves around the forest	We need rules allow local community members from areas surrounding the forest to benefit from the forest resources – we also want to exclude those from outside of the RSP area Timber harvesters should be allowed to collect Mukwa from the forest. FC can set aside some days in the year when harvesters are allowed to collect Mukwa logs from the forest - for easy monitoring. For instance, harvesters can be allowed to harvest an agreed number of poles or timber per given time. Harvesters should be allowed to harvest only dead Mukwa and mature live trees and leave the coppices to grow. There is need for a committee to monitor the harvesting methods and rates to ensure that the Mukwa tree is not overexploited. Other FC rules (e.g. no causing of veld fires), should be enforced to ensure that the forest is not destroyed by unscrupulous people.
Methods of harvesting timber	"Only ripe timber is harvested". In most cases the minimum width of timber that is harvested is 2 metres. People harvest both wet timber and dead wood. Axes and bow saws are used to	Same as today. Use of heavy machines will deplete the tree resources at a fast rate.

	harvest the timber. Once harvested the logs are transported to the homesteads using ox or donkey drawn carts.	
Processing methods	Slicing planks from the logs using two men rip saws. Before the logs are sliced they are marked into small planks using a stained thread. On average a log can produce 7 to 12 planks. Once sliced, the planks can be made into different items by carpenters.	We hope to use electrified machines e.g. saws, which will reduce the amount of wasted wood as the tools we are currently using are crude and waste a lot of wood when we process the logs.
Selling prices	Timber can be sold as unprocessed logs, planks or as finished products e.g. chairs, doors etc. Prices differ from one producer to another, the differences being partly due to the level of desperation of the trader. An unprocessed log fetches between Zim$200 (3.49 USD) and Zim$700 (12.21 USD). However one timber cutter claimed that if he is desperate for money he can sell a log for as little as Zim$50! Planks cost between Zim$50 (0.87 USD) and Zim$150 (2.62 USD) each, depending on the width of the plank.	Selling price of logs should be increased so that people reduce the number of trees they harvest to get reasonable incomes. On average, two years from now a log should sell at a minimum of Zim$500 (8.72 USD). Carpenters can improve on the quality of products they make and then charge high prices so that those who supply the planks and logs will also increase the selling price for the logs and planks respectively. "Some people in towns are selling a room divider for more than Zim$55 000 (959.36 USD). A carpenter uses about 4 big planks to make such a room divider. If local carpenters can make such top quality products and get so much money, it means log suppliers can sell logs at more than Zim$1000 (17.44USD) each!"
Markets	• Timber is sold: • locally to carpenters who make different items such as coffins, doors and chairs: locals also use Mukwa wood to construct roofs for classrooms and their own houses. • to local schools that teach carpentry) • to Kana Mission (about 5 km away), there is a thriving carpentry industry there	Finished products can be sold in big towns where they fetch high prices. Unprocessed timber is too bulky and expensive to transport.

	• to towns such as Bulawayo. However, very little timber goes there due to transport costs and the high risk of being caught by FC with the timber.	
Income levels from timber	• Those who are still amateurs in the timber industry get low incomes from their products mainly because their products are of a poor quality. On average a log seller can harvest 40 logs per year. If the logs are selling at Zim$300 (5.23 USD) per log, this gives an annual income of Zim$12 000 (209.31 USD). An amateur carpenter can earn an average of Zim$90 000 (1.569.86 USD) per year while an experienced carpenter (who produces top quality products), can earn up to Zim$150 000 (2.616.43 USD). These are gross incomes as some of the carpenters employ other people who assist them.	"If markets improve, we can potentially earn millions of dollars. Those who harvest logs can earn up to Zim$120 000 (2.093.15 USD) per year while 'experts'/carpenters can earn more than half a million dollars each (8721.44 USD).
Resource base	Mukwa is now scarce. At the rate at which we are harvesting the timber, it is highly likely that a few years from now there will not be any trees left. As one man explained, to get Mukwa in the forest, one has to do thorough research. You may not even get Mukwa after searching for it the whole day". Informants reported that both young and old Mukwa is now scarce in the forest. The carpenters cut mature trees while other people cut the young trees for use as roofing poles	To have as many Mukwa trees as possible so that we remain in business. It was suggested that all the people who use Mukwa should establish woodlots of Mukwa to replenish Mukwa which is being harvested. Some participants suggested that there should be a local committee that monitors and regulates the amount of timber that is harvested from the forest. Such a committee can liaise with the FC so that the locals can also benefit from the external timber loggers who get concessions from the FC.

4.6.4 PAR with Beekeepers in Gababe

In meetings the ACM team organised with the Gababe bee keepers group, participants reflected on the situation and produced a vision for the bee keeping and honey production in their area (Table 4.7). In terms of obstacles, they identified the following:
- If we fail to raise the required funds to purchase timber we cannot have any good hives.
- If termites continue attacking our hives we will not have as many bees.
- If we fail to have a market.
- If we fail to gain more knowledge on harvesting and grading.

The group then identified activities to cope with these obstacles
- Organize look-and-learn visits to those who are experts in bee keeping.
- Find and set up markets and a market place in Gababe where honey could be sold.
- Look for a suitable place in Gababe where all bee keepers can put up their hives.
- Come up with a strategy for acquiring more and better hives.

Based on the activities they developed an action plan (Table 4.8). The group agreed that the first action to be undertaken was to try to revive the lapsed committee. The bee keepers unanimously agreed that it would not be wise to set up a new committee and plan what to do without first reflecting on the reasons why the old committee failed. Some members of the old committee were present during this meeting and they gave their views on why the committee had failed.

During discussions that followed it became clear one reason the old committee had stopped functioning was because of the role of a local shop owner, the chair of the old RMC committee. Bee keepers in Gababe had become suspicious of him when he started buying honey from them, which he later sold in Bulawayo, in Matebeleland Province. The bee keepers felt that he was exploiting them by buying from them at low prices and later selling at higher prices in Bulawayo. Instead they expected him to link them directly with markets in Bulawayo, so they could also benefit from higher prices there. However when the shop owner was asked to speak, he left everyone dumbfounded by his immense knowledge on marketing and processing honey. He even lamented how the people of Gababe where losing opportunities to make money, by not venturing into bee keeping seriously. He told the bee keepers that the market for honey was not a problem, as there was a huge market for Mafungautsi honey in Bulawayo where he normally sold. He went on to say that most buyers preferred Mafungautsi Forest honey as it was thick, unlike the honey from gum trees which was watery. He then went on to advise that they needed neat packaging to attract buyers if they wanted to attain good prices. With this speech villagers' suspicion turned into a realization that perhaps he was needed to realise the group vision.

Table 4.7: The beekeeping vision at Gababe

Indicator	Current situation (2001)	The bee keeping vision (in two years from now)
Number of people involved in bee keeping	About a quarter of the households are involved in bee keeping	More households and people involved, so that we can have a market for our honey. Markets come when there are large quantities.
Knowledge and skills	Those involved have very little knowledge	More knowledge on trapping bees, bee keeping, harvesting and processing.
Bee keeping methods	Three types of hives; clay pots, tins, wooden barrows. Some people cut down hollow trees in order to make the wooden hives. Smoke the bees with cow dung, or grass. Others use cold water to strike and pacify the bees.	Use of the Kenyan Top bar and basket hive. Still maintain the clay hive.
Processing	Only separate the wax from the honey. Mostly grades A and B honey are produced. Need more skills in processing.	Use methods of processing that give good quality honey.
Markets	Selling at Raji, Venice mine, Gokwe, Harare, and to buyers from other places.	Markets to be closer to us.
Prices	Sell for Zim$25 (0.44 USD) per bottle in the neighbourhood.	Get higher and more rewarding prices.
Rules and regulations	None	Effective rules to stop the cutting down of hollow trees for honey harvesting
Incomes	Zim$90 (1.57 USD) - 300 (5.23 USD) per annum raised from sales in the neighbourhood, and $1600 (27.91 USD) per annum in Harare.	After two years honey should be raising Zim$5000 (87.21USD) per annum from selling at all markets.

Table 4.8   The action plan as developed by beekeepers at Gababe

Activity	Tasks	Who is responsible	Date	Indicators
Activity 1. Organizing look and learn visit	*Task 1.* Gather information on possible sites that can be visited. *Task 2.* Raise funds or organize transport to visit the selected sites i.e. if the places to be visited are far away. *Task 3.* Selecting those who will go on the tour	*Task 1.* Mr. L. Mabutho, and FC. *Task 2.* Treasurer of the group, Mr. Pilot Sibanda. *Task 3.* All members of the user group.	*Task 1* By mid to end of May. *Task 2* By June *Task 3* By June	*All Tasks* Change in behaviour, e.g. new and better ways of harvesting, processing and marketing of honey. Report back before end of May. Report back workshop after the tour.
Activity 2. Finding a place to put up bee hives	*Task 1.* Consulting and seeking land from kraal heads. *Task 2.* Fencing the area.	*Task 1.* Mr. Albert Moyo Sithutha. *Task 2.* All user group members.	*Task 1.* By the 5th of May 2002. *Task 2.* As soon as land is found.	*Task 1.* Report back meeting on 5th of May 2002. *Task 2.* Fenced area with bee hives.
Activity 3. How to get beehives or material to make KTB type of bee hives.	*Task 1.* Consulting the FC	*Task1.* RMC chair.	*Task 1.* 29 April 2002 meet FC. 5 May 2002 report back to rest of group.	*Task 1.* Minutes of report back meeting on 5th of May. Group members having KTB hives made from planks that are lying idle at the treasurer's place.
Activity 4. Looking for more lucrative markets.	*Task 1* Survey on buying prices being offered by different buyers. *Task 2* Buying calendar of potential buyers. *Task 3* Identify potential buyers and what they offer.	*Task 1.* Jevas Sithutha (Production manager)	*Task 1* By June	*Task 1.* All honey is bought. Honey is purchased at higher price than the current price. Honey sells fast, e.g. 20 buckets (20L) sold over 2 days.

Although the bee keeping group members came up with the vision for the resource and also an action plan to realise their vision, the ACM project ended before they had implemented the plan. One possible reason was lack of commitment by the group members, some of whom also left the area as the economic climate deteriorated in the country. One other possible reason they lacked commitment was that bee keeping was an individual venture and bee keepers were not willing to share information or risk increased competition from others. The bee keepers in Gababe therefore continued to work individually to understand and solve their problems. For the other resources, however, resource users collaborated to try to solve problems, as these were common resource found in the forest. After harvesting their grass, the broom grass group resource users, for example, organized a meeting to try to market their products in Bulawayo. However, they had a problem of transport, and came together to negotiate for cheaper rates with a local transport provider. The group even went a step further by asking the CIFOR community partner to negotiate the prices on their behalf. This was successful, and they managed to send their brooms to the Bulawayo market.

4.7   Initiating and implementing collaborative monitoring processes

The ACM team, like other researchers (Frost and Mandondo 1999), believed that adaptive management required a functioning monitoring and resource information system to enable resource managers to assess the condition of their environment, the status of key resources and the effect of their management processes. The team believed that such a monitoring system in multi-stakeholder situations had to be collaborative in nature for it to enhance joint learning processes. When several stakeholders participated in the monitoring process, it was termed collaborative monitoring (CM). CM therefore played a central role in the ACM approach, and helped stakeholders to generate information required to check whether they were moving towards attaining their goals (Guijt, 2007). In essence, CM involves stakeholders periodically and repeatedly observing appropriate parameters to determine the effects of certain management strategies and policies to the status of their resource and their well-being (Bosch *et al*, 1996). The information being collected should be systematically recorded to keep track of the progress made towards objectives on a regular basis. CM promotes self-reliance in decision-making and problem solving by stakeholders, by encouraging them to go beyond data collection to reflection and analysis. This enables them to take action and adapt management strategies.

In order to understand the existing monitoring arrangements, so as to build on them, the ACM team conducted a qualitative survey, in August 2002, using semi-structured interviews, and focus group discussions, in Batanai and Gababe. Ndarire was left out of the survey as timber harvesting was still an illegal activity. The survey revealed that different stakeholders, i.e. the FC, RMC, individual resource users and traditional leaders, were monitoring different things according to their interests without necessarily sharing that information with other stakeholders. The challenge when initiating collaborative monitoring (CM) processes was to go beyond individual monitoring arrangements and come up with collaborative efforts that were conscious, deliberate and systematic at higher levels. In multi-stakeholder situations, this was assumed essential for collective

action. At the RMC level, the monitoring processes focused on (a) tracking the income generated through giving out permits to resource users to harvest forest products, (b) the incidence of fire outbreaks and lastly (c) the incidence of thefts.

The RMCs were involved in monitoring resource harvesting because it was part of their terms of reference, set up by the FC. Individual resource users also monitored things in their own way, such as the quantities of resources (thatch grass, broom grass, honey) they harvested each season from the forest and the income generated thereby. The traditional leaders were also monitoring and controlling resource harvesting in their communities, and arresting people who indiscriminately cut down trees, using powers under the Traditional Leaders Act. There was, however, no systematic documentation of information by either the traditional leaders or the RMC. Nor had RMCs created opportunities for various stakeholders to share ideas and information from their monitoring activities such as meetings and workshops. Once every year, at the annual pre-grass cutting season workshop, the RMCs presented the results of their monitoring over the preceding year. However, it was only the RMC members and the FC that attended these meetings. The forms on which the RMCs recorded their information were in English, and even though these forms were kept in the communities, they were not accessible because of the language barrier.

Based on the findings from the survey the ACM team developed a concept note on how Collaborative Monitoring (CM) could be facilitated in order to build on the already existing monitoring processes. Issues addressed included the definition of CM and the steps to be taken to initiate CM. CM was defined as a process that involves resource managers and users in collaboratively and periodically recording and keeping track of both ecological and human well-being. In this CM system, platforms (opportunities that were created for people to interact) for sharing, reflecting upon, and learning from the monitoring results were crucial to inform decision-making processes. The ACM team proposed the newly formed monitoring subcommittees (MSC) to take a pivotal role in creating and operating these platforms.

The ACM team discussed the concept note with the FC officer to get his views and comments. This discussion helped the team to understand the FC officer's perception of the nature and purpose of monitoring. According to him, monitoring was associated with tracking the ecological condition of the forests through patrolling, a policing function similar to that of Forest Protection Unit (FPU), the policing arm of the FC. The FPU was mainly meant to arrest people who violated the Forest Act, and this had been one of the major causes of conflicts between local communities and the FC in the RSP. To avoid unnecessary conflicts, the ACM team negotiated a definition of CM that focused on generating information for key-decision making processes, and not only focused on policing. The FC officer accepted this version of CM. The fact that the ACM research project was a joint undertaking between the FC and the Centre for International Forestry Research (CIFOR) may have helped in making it easy for the FC officer to be flexible and accept the definition. The FC top management supported the implementation of ACM approach in Mafungautsi, mainly because this was also a pilot co-management

initiative for them and they were willing to try out new approaches to learn more about the usefulness of people-centred approaches in the management of state forests.

CM was later discussed at meetings with RMC members, traditional leaders (who until then, had openly complained that they had been sidelined in the RSP), the MSCs and the various resource user groups in Batanai and Gababe. These discussions confirmed the ACM team's fears that all the local stakeholders, except the members of the MSC, were against the idea of CM, as they took monitoring to mean policing and arresting. MSC members were for the idea, it seemed to the ACM team, because they associated the activity with gaining the power to arrest people and also to access the free permits members of RMCs were entitled to, to harvest thatch and broom grass resources. Once again the ACM team negotiated the meaning of CM, and finally agreed that monitoring should not only involve policing but should be beneficial to resource users as well.

Discussions with the various stakeholders generated information on who should participate in the CM system, their roles, and what kinds of platforms could be put in place to enhance information sharing among stakeholders. Examples of platforms that were suggested included feedback meetings, general community meetings and workshops. The ACM team later presented the results of the various discussions to the community meetings (the FC officer was also present) to get their views and comments. During these meetings, stakeholders adopted both the proposed CM definition and proposed suggestion that the MSC could play a leading role in creating platforms for reflection and learning.

At these meetings stakeholders also came up with a draft terms of reference for the MSC that clearly specified their roles and how they should relate to other stakeholders. It was also agreed that all stakeholders should continue monitoring activities and outcomes deemed relevant to them, for instance broom grass resource users could monitor things concerning the broom grass resource. The resource users were asked to notify the other stakeholders about what exactly they had chosen to monitor to avoid duplication. What the various stakeholders chose to monitor is presented in Box 4.8. For each RMC area, a MSC was put in place and consisted of seven members, chair, vice chair, secretary, vice secretary, treasurer and two ordinary members. In most areas, there were more young men in the MSC, as their role involved a lot of work in the forest.

It was the responsibility of the MSCs to organize platforms for stakeholders to meet and share their monitoring findings. One of the limitations of this monitoring process was the fact that there were no indicators established. As a consequence it was also impossible to develop clear methods for monitoring the resources. The ACM team hoped that the local stakeholders would use their local knowledge to monitor resources, and that during the information sharing, stakeholders would describe the method they used to come up with their findings. This would be the basis to develop a monitoring method.

Box 4.8: **What stakeholders from Batanai agreed to monitor in the Mafungautsi Forest (during a meeting held 28August 2002**

Resource users
The resource user groups indicated that they were willing to play a role in the monitoring of the status of the particular resource they were interested in. They would particularly look at the impact of harvesting methods on the resource base. They also wanted to track their benefit from the forest resources and the way these benefits improved well-being.

The MSC
The roles of the MSCs in CM were clearly articulated in the TOR, developed in a participatory manner by all stakeholders (Box 4.9). The monitoring committee would coordinate monitoring activities of different user groups. There were also ideas about enhancing the interaction between RMCs. At Batanai RMC for example, the MSC had already established close contacts with an adjacent MSC of Sokwela RMC. Previously there had been allegations that broom grass collectors from Batanai were stealing the grass from Sokwela RMC. The people from Sokwela RMC alleged that the "poachers' were using improper harvesting methods, resulting in their resource being depleted. The poachers, mostly women, would evade detection by Sokwela RMC members by harvesting the grass at unusual times. When apprehended with improperly harvested grass by members of the Batanai RMC, the women would argue that they bought it from Sokwela RMC. To deal with the problem of trans RMC "poachers" the monitoring committees for the two RMCs decided to work together, so that apprehended culprits would be sent to their respective RMC for prosecution.

The Resource Management Committee
In the CM process, the RMC would still retain its role of issuing permits to harvesters and monitoring the quantities harvested. It would also be responsible for handling the information from the MSC and presenting it to a proposed RMC board to oversee the operations of all the RMCs around Mafungautsi. A proposal was made for this information to be aggregated and presented at an annual meeting with the FC. The information would be discussed and reflected upon to come up with action plans for the future direction of the resource-sharing project in general. The RMC would also assume a policing role. The MSC would report to the RMC, if they found people who broke the rules. The RMC would then hand over such culprits to the traditional leaders, who had authority under the Traditional Leaders Act to fine them. If the traditional leaders came across cases they thought were beyond their control, they would then hand them over to the FC.

Traditional leaders
In the CM process, traditional leaders would be responsible for encouraging their communities to use the forest resource in a sustainable manner. They would also support RMC activities, including the organisation of meetings.. The traditional leaders also would have a role in the policing component (see section on the RMC). The traditional leaders, through their aides, would also enforce traditional rules and cultural practices related to natural resources management.

The Forestry Commission
The Forest Protection Unit (FPU) of the FC had from the start had been involved in patrolling the forest and arresting people who broke the forest laws. This had been an important reason for the poor relations between local people and the FC. The FC officer for Mafungautsi explained that the Forest Act stipulates that there should be forest guards in any state forest, and they would, therefore, continue to patrol the forest. In the meeting where the TOR for the MSC were

discussed, some people commented that if the roles of the FPU and the monitoring committee were not be clearly defined, there was a potential for conflict and duplication of effort. The official agreed and suggested that the best way to solve this problem would be to make the FPU concentrate on areas outside those demarcated to individual RMCs. If the FPU wants to know something from the RMC areas, they would contact and discuss this with the MSC in that area.

Researchers
Researchers would be involved in carrying out research supposed to meet stakeholders' needs and inform decision-making processes. These findings should be presented and reflected upon by the stakeholders in their various meetings.

Towards the end of their project, the ACM team organised a workshop with representatives from all thirteen RMCs in Mafungautsi to finalise the terms of reference on the monitoring activities and to update members from RMCs that did not participate in the initial process. At that workshop, the ACM team asked members from Batanai and Gababe RMCs to present the process that they went through and the findings from the discussions with the various stakeholders on CM, including the definition of CM, the roles of the various stakeholders in the CM process and the draft terms of reference for the MSCs. The participants at this workshop agreed to adopt the proposed definition and roles of stakeholders in the CM for their areas as well. They went one step further and finalised the terms of reference for the MSC, as these had been drafted up by the ACM team based on earlier meetings (Box 4.9). In the discussion after the presentation of the Batanai and Gababe RMCs, members from the other RMCs said they were convinced that CM was important for the proper management of their resources and they promised to adopt (or adapt) it for their own RMCs.

Setting up collaborative monitoring processes was time consuming because several stakeholders participated at each stage in their development.

Implementing the Collaborative Monitoring System
Although the ACM project came to an end in early 2003, before the collaborative monitoring system was implemented, the ACM researchers were able to observe some of what happened during the follow up research work. In most of the RMCs CM activities were implemented. The following two cases show how through the sharing of their findings from monitoring, stakeholders jointly learned and engaged in collective action more sustainably to manage their resources.

Just after the CM system was put in place, at Batanai, the MSC generated important information on the amount and quality of available grass before the grass harvesting season started. The MSC gave reports on the amount and quality of grass available in the forest to resource users. They also indicated the area in which grass harvesting was to take place. When the grass was finished, they identified other areas and reported on the quality and availability of the grass to resource harvesters.

Box 4.9:   Terms of reference for the MSC

The MSC was tasked to work in the forest, in the community and also outside the community. These tasks included:

In the forest

To observe and look out for forest fires, and notify the RMC if there was a fire, people who cut wet trees (and poles) and report them to the RMC, poaching of wild animals, broom grass, domestic animals, snares, and theft of livestock. Some cattle rustlers were said to steal cattle and pen them in the forest while they looked out for markets. The committee would therefore patrol in the forest to check for such thieves, protecting the forest from fire by checking if the fire protection lines were maintained. It was said that if the committee discovered fire breaks that were not maintained, they could notify the RMC, who would then take the appropriate action. MSCs were also required to make sure that neighbouring RMCs did not harvest resources beyond their boundaries and; check if RMC members were not stealing resources or fraudulently giving out permits to people from outside their area before the set time for harvesting resources.

In the community

To investigate if people involved in any project are benefiting from it, to check if projects are doing what they planned to do and to check if the project sub-committee was working well towards the attainment of the group's vision. It was stated that there was need to monitor projects so that advice could be given if there were problems and also to learn lessons so that they could be shared with the larger community, to link up all the other subcommittees with the main RMC committee, to make sure that the money raised through payment of fines when someone is caught by the MSC goes into the RMC account; and to show those who do not know the various areas where resources could be harvested, and to advise the RMC and the other subcommittees on areas where resources could be found.

Outside the community

The committee should have a relationship with other similar committees in other RMC areas and visit them in order to find out about how they manage their resources and to check the quantities of specified resources they have. If there was a shortage of a certain resource in their area then RMCs could approach the FC to ask to expand their harvest to those areas with an abundance. If they find people from other RMCs not abiding by the agreed rules they should hand over such culprits to their respective RMCs.

Reporting structure, frequency of feedback meetings & records

The ACM team recommended community members to select literate people in the MSCs. These people would be able comprehensively to document results of the monitoring exercises, take a lead in organising opportunities for various stakeholders to share their monitoring results and to learn together. They argued that monitoring without written reports would not be adequate because people would want information on what things were happening in their area. It would also need to be spelled-out who needs the above data, and how often they had to be presented with it. It was also important to come up with an agreed recording format for the information to be collected.

Reporting structure when people who break rules and are caught by the subcommittee

Stakeholders suggested that the MSC should work under the RMC. According to them, the MSC should have no direct link with FC; all issues should be sent to the RMC which would hand over cases they cannot deal with to the traditional leadership authority. If the traditional leaders failed to deal with some cases, they would hand them over to the FC. However, stakeholders said that

the FC should feel free to talk to the MSC any time. If the RMC was being implicated in a report, the MSC could directly report to the kraal heads. According to the stakeholders, the MSC should also arrest offenders from outside their RMC and refer the person to his/her RMC committee for prosecution.

In implementing the CM system, several problems were faced in Batanai area in particular. First, the RMC did not get support from the village heads. For instance, if RMC members caught someone harvesting resources without a permit and took the culprit to the village heads, he/she was not punished. This encouraged more people not to pay their permit fees. Second, implementation of the CM system was difficult due to political problems. The RMC chair said that the ward councillor came to ask the RMC to donate money and sponsor some ward soccer matches. He said that the committee refused to do so since it said the money was not for the ward but for the development of their area. The next time the RMC went to harvest resources after refusing to hand over money to the councillor they discovered that the whole grass portion had been burnt. It was alleged that the MSC chair, who belonged to the same party as the councillor, went and burnt the grass portion after a party meeting with the councillor.

At Gababe RMC area, a monitoring system had been put in place by the end of 2003. Roles of the MSC included checking if resource users were using good harvesting methods, getting resource user's problems and taking them to the RMC, looking for poachers of small game, looking out for those who cut wet trees, looking out for forest fires (the biggest problem in 2003) and issuing permits for harvesting resources. It was said that the MSC carried out patrols in the forest throughout the year. There were problems each time the RMC had meetings in the village as some people took it as a chance to steal resources from the forest and start fires. The MSC, therefore, changed its strategy and each time an RMC meeting was organized in the village, they did not attend, but continued patrols in the forest.

The Gababe area MSC also divided the grass harvesting area into several equal plots to monitor quantities harvested in each plot. This also helped to solve a major problem that broom grass resource users were facing, and had complained to the MSC about. Users complained that RMC members allocated the areas with the best (tall) grass to themselves, friends and relatives, and gave poor (short) quality grass to other users. With the plot system in place a user would get some plots with poor/ shorter grass as well as those with good/ longer grass.

Also in Gababe, following several reports and complaints by communities on the embezzlement of funds by some RMC members, the FC and the communities decided to monitor RMC activities. Communities demanded the RMC regularly report to their constituents rather than just reporting upwards to the FC. The FC provided basic stationery to selected RMCs (including other RMCs that were not part of the research) so that they could write and submit monthly reports on what they had done. This resulted in the RMC transforming itself into a more transparent and downwardly accountable institution.

Follow-up on implementation of the CM system in Chemwiro Masawi, a neighbouring RMC to Gababe, revealed that the system was fully implemented by the end of 2003. The MSC was responsible for: (1) patrolling the forest and checking for forest fires, especially during peak fire season, (2) checking if the grasses were growing well in the different blocks of the grass harvesting area (the area was divided into blocks for monitoring purposes), (3) looking out for people who cut down wet trees in the forest and poachers of game. The system, according to the RMC members, was working well. However, one village head who was present during the meeting said that community members complained that there was too much control by RMC members when they harvested resources. Community members said that RMC members followed them everywhere when they were harvesting resources and they did not like it.

Several other platforms for sharing the monitoring results were created. These were principally locally organised community meetings and workshops organised and facilitated by the FC. An example was the pre-grass-cutting workshop, which has now become an annual activity on the FC calendar. It was organised before the start of the grass-cutting season and was meant to give an opportunity to RMC members to reflect on their work and share experiences in order to learn together. A range of issues were discussed during these workshops, like the incentives for the RMC, financial report backs, and reports on sustainable harvesting practices used, possible projects that could be funded using RMC funds, and problems and challenges faced by the various RMCs. During the 2004 pre-grass cutting workshop one RMC member shared with the rest of the workshop participants the monitoring results of his RMC on thatch grass. He told participants that he had realized that if you cut the grass and you leave it for a few days all the seeds drop off and germinate into new grass, and this boosts the next year's grass yield. Most RMCs present said they would try out the new way of harvesting thatch grass in the next season.

Outcomes of collaborative monitoring
Discussions with the MSC chair for Batanai area in September 2002 revealed that the subcommittee had already started monitoring conditions in the forest, even though their TOR had not yet been finalised. The chair, and another member of the MSC said that they recently made several patrols around the resource area under the "jurisdiction" of Batanai RMC. The two reported that from their trips around the forest they saw and learnt that there are fewer problems in the forest when compared to previous years. They said that there were no major fire outbreaks, cutting down of trees was reduced, and fewer snares were set in the forest. There have been pockets of fire outbreaks, possibly caused by honey collectors, but these were put out before spreading further.

Reflection
From the above discussion of the CM system and how it was implemented, it is clear that the developed CM system was too complicated, and different RMCs adopted some but not all the elements proposed in the TOR of the MSC. Although MSC helped to generate useful information for resource users, their roles were still largely to do with patrolling and policing, a reason why the resource users in Chemwiro Masawi, a neighbouring

RMC to Gababe complained. Instead of putting more effort to push their ideas of CM, the ACM team, with benefit of hindsight, might have been more flexible, perhaps focusing more on the role of raising awareness of the importance of CM for learning. They should, however, have asked the various RMC areas to come up with their own ideas for CM. This might have generated a more innovative and simpler CM system.

Part III: Post ACM project developments

Introduction

The ACM team members took the lead in facilitating the ACM approach in Mafungautsi from the year 2000 to 2003. The FC officers (both the first officer, Mrs Gutura, who was later transferred to another area - Chegutu - in 2001, and the officer who took over, Mr Mutasa) participated in most of the organised meetings and workshops, and the CIFOR researchers shared with the officers highlights and insights from the meetings he did not attend. This helped the officers to learn by observing the ACM team facilitating the various processes. When the project ended in 2003, the CIFOR researchers handed over the overall facilitation of the process to the second Mafungautsi Resource Sharing Project (RSP) Coordinator.

The team did not pull out of the area drastically, but gradually, offering considerable back-up support initially and gradually reducing it as time went by, and as the FC officer became more confident in organising and facilitating the learning processes on his own. As part of the exit strategy from Mafungautsi the ACM team organised five training workshops in which the Mafungautsi RSP Coordinator (and several personnel at different levels, including the FC top management and personnel from the Forestry College of Zimbabwe) attended (Table 4.9). The workshops aimed at equipping FC officers with facilitation skills and good knowledge of the ACM approach, and CIFOR researchers acted as resource persons during the workshops. The FC officer remained actively involved in the processes after the ACM team had pulled out of the area to become - eventually - observers of the process (Mutimukuru and Kozanayi, 2005b).

The FC officer continued to receive financial back up from CIFOR (part of the funding came from the ACM up-scaling grant received from CIDA) because, due to the declining economic conditions in the country, he had no access to other financial resources. In September 2003, for instance, the officer faced problems of transport and fuel, and these made it difficult for him to visit communities frequently. The FC officer had further problems when his vehicle was involved in an accident, and he could no longer visit communities. When ACM researchers asked him to join their trip to Gababe, he refused, saying that communities will not take him seriously because the last time he had failed to meet his promise to come back to the village and sort out some issues they agreed upon. The FC officer died in October 2005, and the new officer had little knowledge of the ACM approach (he only attended a half day ACM training workshop in June 2006) The new incumbent had a different focus, on forest management, and concentrated his efforts on eviction of new forest settlers. Unfortunately, the new officer also died in (October 2007) before having an opportunity to interact with resource users in the study sites.

Table 4.9:   **ACM training workshops organised for FC officers at various levels**

Workshop	When	Who participated
Kwekwe	June 2003 (2 ½ days)	9 Forestry Extension Officers (FEOs) including the Mafungautsi Project coordinator 2 Provincial Forestry Extension Managers (PFEMs)
Kadoma	12-15 October 2003	2 PFEMS 9FEOs including the Mafungautsi Project Coordinator Principal, Forestry College of Zimbabwe Monitoring and Evaluation Officer, FC head office
Masvingo	28-29 June 2004	8FEOs including the Mafungautsi Project coordinator 5 PFEMS Principal, Forestry College of Zimbabwe
Harare-Gokwe	6-15 December 2004	2 Lecturers from the Forestry College of Zimbabwe 8 FEOs (including the Mafungautsi Project Coordinator)
Harare	13 June 2006 – Half day	General manager FC Deputy General Manager Extension Deputy General Manager Research Division Operations manager Accountant CONEX Division 2 (PFEMS) 2 FEOs (Mudzi and Kwekwe)

4.8 Participatory Action Research processes after the CIFOR Project

4.8.1 PAR after facilitation by CIFOR researchers (late 2003-2007)

Joint learning processes at the resource user group level stopped after the ACM project ended in all sites, partly because the community partners, who used to receive an allowance from CIFOR, stopped facilitating them. Because of continued economic decline and increasing hunger and poverty in the country some community partners left for neighbouring countries in search of work. For instance in September 2003 the community partner for Batanai left the area to search for employment in Botswana. The FC officer had limited resources and chose to focus on the learning processes at a much higher level. These included look and learn tours, pre-grass cutting workshops and discussion meetings. These are described below.

Look-and-learn tours

The FC officer organised several look-and-learn tours for both the FC officers and the local communities (members of RMCs and traditional leaders) to learn from resource management experiences from other areas. Examples of such tours include look-and-learn tours to Kana area CAMPFIRE project and the Chemwiro Masawi RMC area. The Kana CAMPFIRE tour was organised by the FC officer in April 2004. The FC officer took stakeholders in Mafungautsi to a CAMPFIRE Project in Kana, a communal area neighbouring Mafungautsi State Forest. Participants in this tour included representatives from five RMC areas, including the research sites, and the two FC officers. During the tour the Mafungautsi stakeholders learned about the CAMPFIRE program and the way the communities managed natural resources in this project. The host communities were also interested in learning about bee keeping and this resulted in an intense discussion. The second tour was organised by the FC officer in August 2004. Members of four RMCs, namely, Gwehava, Gababe, Sokwela and Batanai, travelled with the FC to Chemwiro Masawi, to familiarise themselves with their constitution and terms of reference, since all of them were newly elected to office. They were elected by communities and were supposed to be in office for two years, after which they were supposed to organise new elections according to the RMC constitution developed by the FC. The RMC members also had an opportunity during this trip to get to know each other and exchange experiences.

Pre-grass cutting workshops and discussion meetings

After the ACM team left the RSP coordinator continued to organise the yearly pre-grass cutting workshops for members of RMCs, to reflect on the previous season, share experiences and engage in joint learning. The FC also invited representatives from other projects such as CAMPFIRE, to the pre-grass cutting workshops to share their experiences in dealing with some of the challenges faced. Other pertinent issues discussed in the pre-grass-cutting workshops were related to the socio-economic and political developments in the country, and how these affected resource management activities in Mafungautsi.

The FC officer also organised meetings for the RMC members to discuss the problems encountered in the RSP, possible solutions and the way forward in the project. All these meetings were useful for sharing of experiences among the district and local level stakeholders.

4.8.2 PAR after the death of the FC officer

After the FC officer had passed away all organized joint learning processes stopped at all levels In. 2007 community members in both Batanai and Gababe said that there were now several problems and conflicts in the RCM area related to resource management activities, and these were not being dealt with by anyone. However, in Gababe, discussions with local community members revealed that they had managed to initiate processes to solve other problems faced in their community. For instance, since 2005, several organisations were working in the area. When I asked how these organizations came into their area, community members said that in the meetings and workshops that were organized by the ACM team they had met with several key stakeholders, including their member of parliament (MP) who they did not know before. He had never been to their area before. Because they now knew him, they had approached him and their Chief. They had asked them if it would be possible for them to get a resident agricultural extension officer, as the one who serviced their area was too far away at Nyaje RMC area. They also asked if he could help them source funds and facilitate the building up of a clinic in their area, as the nearest one was too far. They also mentioned that they would welcome the services of the Zimbabwe Republic Police (ZRP) as they had serious problems with delinquent youth, as well as numerous thefts. They also solicited for development projects, as they did not have any.

The MP, who belonged to the ruling ZANU-PF political party, was happy to link up with the Gababe people, and he organised for them to get an agricultural extension officer, who lodged at the primary school. The MP also approached two non-governmental organisations, AFRICARE and CONCERN, already working in Gokwe, and asked them to also include Gababe as one of their beneficiary areas. The two organisations agreed to work in Gababe.[57] Through the facilitation of the MP, the people from Gababe RMC were now getting the services of a mobile clinic once every month. They also received a resident policeman stationed in the area from late 2005 to August 2007. The policeman was later removed by the MP, after the 2005 parliamentary elections. The people from Gababe voted for the opposition party and this did not please the ZANU-PF MP. He was angry, and although he won as the MP for the area, he organised a meeting with the Gababe people and told them that '*maida kundibvisa pachigaro manje ndakubvisa mapurisa angu. Ndoda kuona kuti MDC yamakavotera ichakuitirira chii, asi ndinoziva kuti hapana nekuti haisi mugovernment iri kutonga*' - 'you wanted to remove me from power, now I will remove my police from your area. I want to see if the MDC you voted

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[57] CONCERN started working in Gababe in 2005 and gives people maize grain, cooking oil, beans and porridge. About 90% of people in the RMC benefit from this project, yearly. AFRICARE works with people who were left out of the Concern project. The organization gives people seed, peanut butter pressing machines, oil pressing machine, and cooking oil. They also teach people how to process soya beans and prepare it into various foods (milk, bread). This group is led by Mr Lamerk Mabuto, a former member of the beekeeping resource user group.

for will now help you. I am however sure the MDC will not help you as it is not part of the ruling government'.

4.8.3 New settlements in the forest after the introduction of the Fast Track Land Reform Programme (FTLRP)

Soon after the Fast Track Land Reform Programme (FTLRP) was introduced in the year 2000, some local people (calling themselves war veterans) pioneered the settlement at Zanda Plateau within the Mafungautsi forest, saying they were reclaiming land taken when the forest was converted to a state forest in 1954, under British colonial rule. Soon after they went into the forest there were several reports of poaching of wildlife, as well as rampant tree cutting by settlers, as they cleared land to make way for homesteads, fields and gardens. The new settlers cleared the designated resource collection area of Kupfuma Ishungu RMC area, (Map, Fig. 2.6, Chapter 2). Community members estimated that in 2002 about 75 families had settled in the forest. Other community members were angry about this development, complaining they had taken care of the forest ever since, and their management efforts were about to be wasted. The Kupfuma Ishungu RMC completely stopped functioning as the new settlers arrived and settled in the forest areas where they used to harvest resources. It is important to mention that when the RMC stopped functioning, no alternative resource management systems were put in place.

By 2004, there were about 200 households at Zanda Plateau, occupying a forest area that stretched for 16km.[58] The settlers had cleared trees for a road that connected the new area with an existing main road. They encountered a problem when the road reached the FC Camp (Figure 2.5, Chapter 2) and the FC officer rejected the settlers' request to let their road pass through the camp. According to the FC officer, the number of people who resided in the forest changed with time – increasing towards the agricultural season, but decreasing thereafter. Some of the residents were there only temporary and went back to their original homes in the communities for security reasons since the settlements were not yet legalised. Mr G., the former chair of the MSC in the Batanai area, was also a temporary settler in the forest. When asked about the area of land cleared by settlers for agricultural purposes, he said '*vanhu vanongotema kusvika panoperera simba ravo*' - 'there are no rules being followed when clearing the land for agricultural purposes; people just clear areas as big as they have energy to do so'. Mr G. later indicated that he himself had so far cleared 30 acres and that many people had cleared similar pieces of land.

The forest settlements were a major issue in the pre-grass cutting workshop in April 2004. This annual event was organized by the FC and members from all the RMCs around Mafungautsi area met there to discuss the various issues and to set prices for the harvesting permits and the various forest products. Part of the minutes of this meeting taken by the ACM team members are presented in Box 4.10.

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[58] Entry in the area for exact measurements were too risky in 2004 and thereafter.

Box 4.10: **From the minutes of the pre-grass cutting workshop held on 6-7April 2004 at Lutope Camp**

A group consisting of members from Rugare Tasungunuka and Chemusonde RMC areas was asked about the issue of the forest settlers and how they thought this situation should be resolved. Their main recommendations were that the settlers should be removed immediately. They felt that the new settlers were now monopolising the forest resources, and were making harvesting of resources difficult for those living in the communities. The forest settlers were even asking villagers from communities surrounding the forest to pay them for harvesting resources; they claimed that the resources were now in their private agricultural fields and therefore belonged to them. The members of the two RMC considered that the forest residents should be barred from using any of the forest resources, as these are a common property belonging to all the villagers in Chemusonde and Kupfuma Ishungu RMC area.

In the discussions that followed, the FC officer highlighted that the first recommendation was not easy to implement. He also said that a land committee being chaired by Mr. John Nkomo[59] had been set up and was looking into this issue. The officer however, went on to say that at a recent ruling party meeting it was highlighted that these settlers would be removed and resettled elsewhere, as the government would not de-gazette any forest areas. One RMC member from Sokwela, who was also a village head, later told participants at the workshop that so far he had had a lot of pressure from his RMC area, as they also wanted to go and settle in the forest. He said that he had told them that those who 'invaded' the forest were not there to stay and were going to be removed soon. In his opinion, the whole forest could disappear if these settlers were not removed in the coming two years, because those outside the forest were watching and waiting for an opportunity to move in as well. The workshop participants later agreed that the Council Chair and the District Administrator, who were also participants of the workshop, should take this as a priority and remind the governor of their province about the potential threat that the new settlers posed to the existence of the forest.

An issue of forest clearings by villagers from the Rugare Tasungunuka RMC area was also discussed in the same workshop. Villagers of this RMC were said to have cleared a large area in the forest for agricultural fields. It was agreed that this would be dealt with separately as there were no settlers in the forest but only fields. Suggestions were that the responsible authorities (the FC and other departments) should meet with the communities and try to map out a way forward. The events in Rugare Tasungunuka had sparked debates in other communities and RMC members had started negotiating with the FC to get agricultural fields in the forest as well. The chair of Chemwiro Masawi's RMC (a RMC neighbouring Rugare Tasungunuka – see Figure 2.5, Chapter 2) said that their RMC area was aware of the events happening in Rugare Tasungunuka but that they did not agree with this unlawful acquisition of land for agricultural purposes. Their RMC was trying by all means to prevent this from happening in their area, but they wanted to acquire land legally in the forest to set up an agricultural project to create employment for the youth, so that they could grow crops and sell them at a market, since their RMC was close to the road.

Mr Makore an officer of the FC's Forestry Protection Unit reported in October 2007 that about 600 families now lived in the forest. The number of settlers had continued to increase and in addition to the Zanda Plateau, there were new settlers in the Bhandakamwe, Ngondoma and Mbumbuzi areas. The new settlements at Ndondoma and

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[59] He was the chair of the land committee set up by the Zimbabwean Government to preside over land redistribution

Mbumbuzi disturbed grass harvesting in the nearby Gababe area, and also in the Chemwiro Masawi RMC and Batanai areas. As more people continued to move into new areas, in September 2006, the FC Provincial Forest Extension Manager (PFEM) for Midlands Province and officers from various other district level organizations organized a meeting with the new settlers at Bhandakamwe, Mbumbuzi and Ngondoma areas, and told them to move out. Those who did not move were arrested and taken to the police.

Chief Nj., however, called the police and told them that the arrested people had not committed any crime as they had settled in his area. The people were later released. It was alleged that Chief Nj. also had his own field in the forest that forest residents worked on without pay[60]. It was said that the Chief only brought seed and then came back to collect the harvest at the end of the season. The forest settlers were said to be getting good harvests and were practicing shifting cultivation. It was estimated that each settler had on average cleared a total of 50 acres. When asked why the new settlers had such huge fields and were practicing shifting cultivation in the forest one of the forest residents explained that it was because the soils were very poor and without fertilizers they had to move to new plots to get reasonable yields.

New settlers in the forest were a mixed group of people from different backgrounds and political affiliations. They included the early settlers, the later settlers and also people from outside the Mafungautsi RSP area. One settler in the forest, an immigrant who settled in the Gokwe area after independence, discussed with CIFOR researchers about his stay in the forest, and said that before moving into the forest he resided in Ndhlalambi Ward 2 area around Mafungautsi Forest. He moved into the forest because he had only a small field and could not grow enough food for his family. However, when the Fast Track Land Reform Programme started, he went to Mvuma in Midlands Province, where he had been told there were farms for occupation. He stayed on three different farms only to be chased away from each farm by the powerful people in the area. He realized that he was not making any progress, and when the squatters invaded Mafungautsi he decided to come back home. He went on to say that, '*ndakati regai ndibatane nevaridzi venzvimbo ino veChishangwe. Vaiti varikudzokera kumatongo avo.*' – 'I then decided to join the original settlers of in Mafungautsi, the Shangwe people, who moved in the forest to reclaim their ancestral land'. He went on to say that although he was not highly educated, he was a very good farmer and all he wanted in life was just to farm. This is the main reason why he moved into the forest area, to obtain land for agricultural purposes. But he also said that if the government found land somewhere for him to settle, he was willing to leave the forest area. He also commented on his political affiliation and confessed that he was not interested in politics. He went on to say, '*ini ndinongotevera hurumende iri kutonga, chero Smith akadzoka akati ndini ndava kutonga handinei nazvo ini chandinongoda chete kurima nekuzvishandira*'- 'I respect the government of the day. Even if Smith [The head of the former white settler regime] was to come back and tell me that the he is now the new president, I will respect him. All I want is to farm and work for my family'.

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[60] The District Administrator for Gokwe South District was also said to have a field in the forest and normally hired workers to work on it and was only seen in forest during harvest time, presumably to collect the harvest.

In a separate discussion with other settlers in the Forest, Mrs. Mpofu, she told the ACM researchers that she was a war veteran who originally came from Jahana area of Gokwe District. The ACM research team gave her a lift from Lutope Forest Camp to Gokwe Business Centre. On the journey she shared with the ACM team the micro politics and power dynamics of the squatter movement in the forest (see Box 4.11). The main reason why she left Jahana was that her arable land was not enough for her family. Before she settled at Zanda, she was staying at Gokwe centre, where she bought three residential stands, which she was currently developing. In 2003, she came to know about the 'scramble for land' at Zanda Plateau through some forest settlers who supplied her with groundnuts that she processed into peanut butter.

From 2002 onwards the settlements continued to increase, and in some cases affected resource management activities in the forest, initially for RMC areas outside of the ACM project, (like Kupfuma Ishungu), and later on the ACM research sites as well. The new settlers invaded areas where the RMCs were supposed to manage the forest. When carrying out their patrols in the forest the RMC would surely feel threatened. One member of the Gababe RMC, a member of the MSC responsible for spearheading monitoring activities and carrying out patrols in the forest, said that after his encounter with the new settlers in the forest, he became very scared of going back to do patrols. He said:

> One day when I was patrolling the forest, I came across a group of the new settlers and I thought they were poachers. I told them that I was an RMC member and that poaching was not allowed in this forest. Upon hearing this, the settlers were angry and each person picked up all kinds of weapons (axes, hoes, etc) and they told me that if I wanted to live I should leave immediately. I was so scared, and I dropped to my knees and started clapping my hands, as I did not know what to do. The war veterans then told me to stand up and go home and never to come back to their area again.

A member of the Batanai RMC revealed that some people were not happy about the events in the forest. There were no rules and regulations governing use of resources and people were just cutting down trees in a greedy way. In his opinion, the FC and the DA should support the move by local community members who had settled in the forest and work with the local councilor to bring back order into the forest. He said that there was a reason why people moved into those areas: these people used to live in the forest and were asked to move out of the forest during the war and now they were claiming their land back. According to the RMC member, the way forward now was for the FC to come up with strict rules in terms of what these settlers should or should not do, as well as come up with a limit on how much land a person could clear. He went on to say that most people cleared vast pieces of land and most of these were underutilized.

Box 4.11:   From an interview with Mrs. Mpofu from Zanda (18 July 2004)

"The settlers from Zanda told me there was abundant land in the forest and anyone who wanted land was welcome. They said the government had blessed the occupation of the forest by the people who were evicted from there during the dissident era. They said that since some of the people who had been evicted had either passed away or moved to other areas, other people like me could also settle in the forest since there was a lot of land. Therefore, in October 2003, I came to the forest and cleared a field. I built a makeshift house, because most the time I was at Gokwe centre where I am busy constructing my three houses. This year I am expecting three tonnes of maize and several bags of groundnuts from my plot in the forest. My only intention is to grow crops and raise enough money to finish my houses at Gokwe.

The impression I got from those who were already in the forest when I settled there was that the government was aware that peasants had occupied part of the forest. I was also told that the government had ceded the invaded area to the peasants who were living in the forest. Recently, I started facing problems with the leadership in the forest. There are three types of leaders in the forest - namely kraalheads, the ward coordinator and the ruling party officers. The kraalheads used to allocate the land, but now the ward coordinator is playing a very active role. New settlers are asked to pay Zim$100 000 (18.82 USD) to the ward coordinator so that the land seeker's 'application' can be processed. I have heard that yesterday two people paid Zim$100 000 (18.82 USD) each to the ward coordinator to get permission to settle in the forest. The money is shared with the kraalheads. I was also irked by weekly contributions of Zim$5000 (0.94 USD) per farmer, which the ward coordinator says '*ndeyekuronga kuti mugare muno*' (it is for us to arrange for you to stay in the forest). They say the money will be given to Chief Ne. so that the chief fights for the invaders when the government tries to evict them from the forest. Everyone is expected to pay all the money the leadership asks for. If you refuse or fail to pay, you are labelled a traitor. We hold endless meetings in the forest where people are asked to pay more and more money, but no one knows where the money goes. We are also expected to attend several meetings they hold at Nyaradza Business Centre, which is far away from the forest. I once told them that I could not attend all the meetings at Nyaradza because I have problems with my legs and they said each day I fail to attend a meeting, I should pay a fine of Zim$2000 (0.38 USD) 'to pay those who would have gone to listen on your behalf'. Recently FPUs from the FC came and addressed us. They said they wanted to know if more people had settled in the forest, in addition to the ones who were counted at the height of the farm invasions. From the FPUs' talk, I picked that the government is planning to evict us from the forest. At one of the routine meetings I asked that since we were going to be evicted by the government there was no need for us to keep on paying 'protection levies'. I also suggested that since we were inevitably going to be evicted we were supposed to stop chopping down trees. The local leadership did not like what I said. In particular, the ward coordinator said that I was influencing other settlers to revolt against him. He does not want to hear anyone who says that the settlers will be evicted. However, some kraalheads supported me, especially on the issue of weekly contribution. I was summoned to a tribunal where I was strongly reprimanded, but I refused to withdraw my statements. I vowed that I was never going to pay any money because I had just realized that all the settlers in the forest were illegal. They also said I was selling them out to the FC because I sometimes visit the FC camp at Lutope where my sister works. However, I told them that being a settler in the forest does not stop me from visiting my sister at the FC. I am now fed up with the politics in the forest and I have decided to move out. I only told a few friends about this. If the leadership knows about it now, they might harass me or even burn my produce. The other problem is that the people in the forest do not want to develop their families. All they want is to gamble and drink beer. Every weekend there is a beer party where animals are slaughtered. If you are a settler, you are expected

to also brew beer. If you do not, they ask you to pay something so that they can 'quench their thirst'. *'Manje zvinangwa zvakasiyana. Ini ndirikufunga zvekupedza kuvaka dzimba dzangu paGokwe umwe arikuti deno ndawana mari ndimwe doro, hapana chatingaronga kana takasiyana seizvi'* (meaning "we have different objectives, mine is to finish building my houses at Gokwe and yet some want to raise money for drinking beer – with these different objectives it is difficult to work together"). I am leaving the forest as soon as I finish transporting all my produce to Gokwe. I have realised that the government is very clear on the land issue; they are saying if there are any people who are occupying a piece of land they were not given, such people should move out. Soon the government will come and chase them away. I do not want to be chased away like a thief. Those settlers want to fight with the government, but they will not win. The government is very powerful. Whether one fought in the war or not, if the government wants to evict them it will do it easily.

4.8.4 Developments in the Forestry Policy Arena

One of the objectives of the ACM project in Zimbabwe was to influence forestry policy formulation at the national level. To influence national level policy formulation, the ACM team implemented a number of interventions including writing and presenting policy briefs to policy makers including the FC, organising look and learn tours for policy makers to field sites, and organising international conferences to enhance their learning on which policies work. For example, the Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Environment and Tourism attended a workshop in Indonesia where she met with other policy makers and had the opportunity to share experiences. The ACM researchers also organized policy round table discussions for policy makers on emerging findings from the field, and invited them to participate in ACM training workshops. For example, the FC top management was invited to a half day training workshop in June 2006. The ACM team also organised regular update meetings with the FC top management where they briefed them about the ACM activities and findings. It is also important to note that the first ACM team leader, joined CIFOR on secondment from the FC. This was also to ensure that the FC researchers took an active part in the research process. The strategy was to use results from the field to influence the national forestry policy formulation process. It however took quite a while before these positive outcomes were seen in Mafungautsi, and little had been done to influence national policies when the project ended. However, some funds were secured later on for an up-scaling phase of the ACM approach, and part of the money was used to continue working on influencing policies.

With time, small positive outcomes began to surface with regard to the national forestry policy making process. The FC management decided to up-scale the research to seven other provinces in the country with one district participating as an ACM Learning Centre – officers from these districts also participated in the various ACM training workshops. This was made possible by funding from the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA.) This up-scaling phase gave birth to the ACMZim News newsletter that acted as a platform for the various officers in the different districts to learn from shared experiences. With up-scaling, the FC wanted to test the ACM approach further, on the contents under which positive outcomes could be realised. Experiences from the ACM centres were, however, supposed to generate concrete lessons to influence forestry policy in Zimbabwe.

4.9   Discussion and Conclusions

The ACM team found a range of conflicts in the Mafungautsi forest during and after the implementation of the project. Whilst efforts were made to deal with some of these conflicts, others were not recognized, or were ignored, in one case (increasing poverty) because this was an externality beyond the team's scope. In Table 4.10 an attempt is made to analyze the different conflicts according to their type and outcome. This then indicates where the ACM approach was more and where it was less successful.

At the initial stages of the ACM project, the ACM team tried to identify existing conflicts. This was because the team considered that PAR, a key element of the ACM approach, required participation of all stakeholders. The empowerment training and conflict resolution helped to clear misconceptions, and address other simple conflicts, such as tensions over definitions of roles and boundaries, that can be considered as consequences of lack of communication between stakeholders. A good example is the misunderstandings around the initiation of forest fires (see Table 4.10; 4.5.2). By making the FC and community members each present and discuss their view on the situation, the ACM team supported the stakeholders to come up with a joint plan around fire management. In time the increased interaction and communication among stakeholders resulted in improved relations and genuine collaboration in the PAR process. Participation by local communities in the management of the forest also improved. The ACM interventions also seemed successful in reducing tensions that found their origin in lack of knowledge. However, although most of these communication-related conflicts were resolved during the ACM project, they later re-emerged after the death of the FC officer who took over facilitation when the ACM project ended.

Although local communities had developed interest in the management of the forest resources during the ACM project, they were aware that, legal ownership of the forest rested with the government through the FC. However, the FC officer, through the ACM project, became interested in the idea of involving the local people in forest conservation. His effort genuinely to involve communities in resource management (e.g. by encouraging them to generate their own solutions to problems) created some hope for a change in the legal framework to enable better access to resources as the officer represented the institution responsible for forestry policy formulation in Zimbabwe. However, when the ACM team pulled out and the FC officer died, the framework for local resource use and management efforts disappeared, and no facilitating legal framework was ever put in place. Community members lost hope and lacked the zeal to manage the forest that did not belong to them. The forest again became an open access resource in which individual interests (e.g. personal gain) overtook collective management objectives once again.

There were also unresolved contradictions in the project itself. These included, logically, those in which the ACM team was powerless to address, e.g. those related to increasing poverty, and lack of means of enforcement for agreed rules. They also included complex and deep rooted problems relating to forest land and resource ownership reflecting varied

historical backgrounds and politicized power structures; not addressed by the ACM approach. The lack of legal framework provided, in a period of strong political dynamics, an unregulated playing field in which conflicts – earlier regulated by the presence of the ACM team and the FC commissioner - re-emerged. This confirms the obvious but important point that some types of local level constraints require involvement of higher level stakeholders to create enabling environments (e.g. Giller, *et al.,* 2008). Social learning alone cannot suffice.

Table 4.10: Conflicts that arose in Mafungautsi and how they were addressed

Nature of conflict/ tension	Example	How was it dealt with?	Was the conflict or tension resolved?
Between the FC and local communities			
Ownership and rights of use of forest land and resource	Different perceptions on the value of the forest - communities saw it as land for settlement and the FC saw it as a water catchment area to be preserved. When the national political situation was favourable, some community members moved in and settled (4.4.2; 4.8.3).	The ACM team helped build capacities of community members who supported the conservation objective in doing PAR process so that they could tackle the issue on their own.	No.
	Communities were not allowed to use timber. Although they were jointly managing the forest together with the FC (4.5.2).	The ACM team facilitated discussions between Ndarire poles and timber group and the FC to negotiate the inclusion of timber in the RSP agreement.	No.
Lack of legal framework	Although local communities were participating in the RSP, the existing Forest Act did not support their participation (4.8.4)	The ACM team initiated interventions to create awareness with policy makers.	No. with the ACM project, community members gained support from the FC officer and ACM team.
Lack of communication /Misconceptions	Stakeholders accused each other of starting forest fires (4.5.2).	ACM team facilitated conflict resolution processes that improved communication among stakeholders	Yes.
	After forceful evictions from the forest, communities now viewed the forest as owned by the government/ FC, yet they were being asked to manage it under the RSP (4.5.2).	The ACM team organised a conflict resolution process. The FC officer explained that if the forest belonged to the government, then it belonged to them as well.	Yes.
	Some local community members ran away when they saw the FC vehicle and did not want to work with the ACM researchers they worked with the FC (4.2.2; 4.2.3).	The ACM team organised workshops to build FC capacity to use the ACM approach and to engage in conflict resolution processes.	Yes.
Among community members			
Lack of communication	RMC members not reporting to the community members. Community members became suspicions that RMC members were embezzling community funds (see section 4.5.2).	ACM team organised capacity building workshops for RMC and local community members on the importance of accountability and transparency. Communities put pressure on the RMCs to be accountable.	Yes, especially in Gababe. However, this deteriorated after the FC officer died
	Local community members were not informed about their roles in the project leading to conflict (4.4.1).	ACM team involved stakeholders in discussions to clarify roles.	Yes.
Lack of knowledge	Some members of the Batanai beekeeping group did not have knowledge on beekeeping, honey harvesting and processing (4.6.1); Some Batanai broom grass resource users did not know the new bundling method to promote sustainable harvesting (4.6.2)	The ACM team, FC officer and local communities organised opportunities for sharing experiences, knowledge and to learn from each other.	Yes. However, it was difficult to make the innovators share their knowledge with others.
Increasing poverty	Resource user group members moved out of the area in search of a living, making it difficult to implement their action plans (4.6.1);	Nothing.	No.

	Community partners crucial in facilitating learning processes migrated out of the area to earn a living after the ACM project (4.8.1)	Nothing.	No, the ACM project had ended.
Greed/ Personal gain	Community members stealing resources from the forest and using unsustainable harvesting practices. For instance cutting hollow trees and using fire to harvest honey (4.2.1)	Collaborative monitoring implemented	Yes. But the problems re-emerged after the FC officer died.
	The elite trying to get personal benefits from the ACM project. e.g. The case of wife of a Batanai village head campaigning for her daughter to be elected as a community partner.	The ACM team targeted and encouraged members from marginalised groups to actively participate (4.5.1; 4.6).	Yes.
	Gababe RMC members favouring relatives and friends in allocating grass harvesting portions (4.7)	Conflict resolution facilitated by the RMC. They came up with a plot system to reduce favouritism.	Yes.
Lack of communication/Misconceptions	Community members were afraid to attend meetings not authorised by local political leaders fearing these would be mistaken for political meetings(4.2.1; 4.2.3); ACM team had difficulty to conduct meetings in Batanai during early stages of the project as local politicians were suspicious of their work (4.5.1).	The ACM team (after some mistakes) organised the introductory meetings through local politicians and continued to pay them courtesy calls during field visits.	Yes.
Differentiated interests/capacities	Local politicians in Batanai wanted to use the RMC money to fund a ruling political party function (see section 4.7)	Nothing.	No.
	Women did not actively participate in resource management due to cultural reasons (4.2.2)	The ACM team encouraged marginalised groups to participate in empowerment training workshop to build their confidence and challenge existing norms and values.	Yes.
	Community members not interested and disillusioned by resource management issues (4.5.1).	ACM team used visioning as a tool to stimulate interest.	Yes.
	Community members lacked confidence in themselves and looked to outsiders to solve their problems (4.5.1).	The ACM team organised empowerment training workshops for community members.	Yes.
	ACM team had difficulty to work with community members with interests in different resources .	The ACM team facilitated the formation of resource user groups to focus on resources of interest.	Yes.
Between ACM-RMCs and other RMCs			
Lack of legal framework	The Batanai woman who reported a seller of unsustainably harvested brooms to the police was not helped as there was no law on broom grass harvesting methods (4.6.2).	Nothing.	No.
Lack of communication	Unclear boundaries of resource harvesting areas (4.5.2).	Discussions and negotiations during the ACM facilitated conflict resolution process.	Yes.
Within the Forestry Commission			
Lack of resources	The FC officer lacked basic resources to do his work after the ACM project.	The ACM team provided the FC officer with financial support the first two years after the project ended.	Partly. The support was inadequate and ended.

Resource users from Batanai area during a discussion and learning session

Broom grass resource users from Batanai area holding their newly decorated brooms

A Gababe beekeeper with his beehives

Chapter 5:   Tracking the Resource Management Committees

5.1   Introduction

In addition to participatory action research (PAR) activities facilitated in Mafungautsi Forest (Chapter 4), the Adaptive Collaborative Management (ACM) team aimed to improve the local governance institutions in Mafungautsi. As already mentioned in Chapter 1, no single definition exists for the term institution. Some researchers define institutions as regulatory systems of formal rules, regulations, informal agreements and norms of behaviour and organisations (Harriss, 1982; North, 1990; Bromley, 1989; Cleaver, 2000). Others define institutions as organisations, and others yet again take institutions as synonymous with organisations (Uphoff, 1986; Mukamuri, 2000). Institutions and governance structures have been argued as crucial in defining the context within resource management takes place (North, 1990; Ostrom, 1990, Murphree, 1993).

The ACM team focused on the key resource management institutions, the Resource Management Committees (RMC). The RMCs were created by the FC to act on behalf of the communities, help with controlling of resource harvesting and provide a link between the communities and the FC. Their main tasks were to administer permits for local community members to harvest non-timber forest products, given that communities were now allowed to extract resources from the forest under the Resource Sharing Project (RSP), to monitor the harvesting process, to open and keep community bank accounts where the money raised through the permit system was to be kept, and to advise the community on how the funds could be utilised.

The RMCs in Mafungautsi comprised seven members, namely chair, vice chair, secretary, vice-secretary, treasurer and two committee members. Instead of creating new organisations for managing resource in the RSP, or focusing on local traditional institutions, the ACM team decided to focus on the Resource Management Committees created by the Forestry Commission (FC) at the inception of the RSP. The ACM team aimed to transform the new RMCs into representative and downwardly accounting structures.

Several studies have shown that enhancing local organisational development in resource management situations leads to widespread improvements in the lives of rural communities through better mobilisation and management of their resources (Krishna *et al.,* 1997; Ribot, 1999; 2001). Ribot (1999; 2001) showed that local level organisations which are downwardly accountable make a strong contribution towards positive social, ecological and environmental outcomes. On the other hand, organisations that are only upwardly accountable have been found to fail in the task of building trust among stakeholders in joint management initiatives, and as a result are often unable to resolve conflicts between, for example, forestry departments (representing the state) and local communities (Berkes, 2002).

To try and initiate change in the characteristics and functioning of RMCs, the ACM team ensured that RMC members participated in the empowerment training, capacity building processes, conflict resolution processes, and training in leadership skills, and

understood the importance of transparency and accountability (Section 4.5, Chapter 4, for more details).

This chapter traces the operations and performance of the RMCs in Gababe and Batanai areas from the pre-ACM project period to the time the project ended, and onwards up to 2007. It critically analyses the performance of the RMCs over time and discusses factors influencing changes in their performance. The chapter begins with a general summary of RMC operations in Mafungautsi, including the period before the ACM project was introduced, since this early period is well documented in the literature (Mapedza and Mandondo, 2002; Mapedza, 2002). This is followed by the separate presentation on the operations of two RMCs in Gababe and Batanai areas from 2002 - 2007. The RMC at Ndarire area was left out as it was not yet operational when fieldwork for this study ended in 2007. This is followed by a discussion on the changes in RMC operations, and the challenges faced by the RMCs in the various areas.

5.2 RMC operations around Mafungautsi before the ACM project

The creation of the RMCs was the Forestry Commission's way of operationalising the concepts of ownership and participation. However, the communities around Mafungautsi were never consulted on this arrangement and it was not clear how the new committees would fit into the already complex local institutional landscape (Mapedza and Mandondo, 2002). The first RMCs put in place in most areas consisted of committees of powerful people in the community. In Batanai area for instance, the first RMC was put in place in 1996 and comprised the Chief's secretary as chair, the Chief's assessor as vice chair, the councillor for the area as secretary, an ordinary community member as vice secretary, a headman as treasurer, and finally the VIDCO chair and the VIDCO secretary served as ordinary committee members (Mapedza and Mandondo, 2002). This RMC was dissolved after an audit by the FC officer who saw that the RMC was not performing well.

A new RMC was put in place in 1997. The FC officer now asked three village heads in Batanai to nominate seven people to act as members of the RMC. Local community members were later asked to vote on who would take up which positions (Mapedza and Mandondo, 2002). The new RMC was all male, apart from one powerful woman, a wife of a village head in the area. Most members were members of the Ndebele ethnic group. The new RMC chair was a member of a School Development Committee and a member of the ruling Mafa Clan; the ordinary two committee members belonged to the ruling clan and the vice chair was a headman. This RMC was in still in place, with fewer active members, when the ACM project started in 1999.

In Gababe, the first RMC (from 1997) comprised seven members. However, upon the advice of the FC officer, 12 other people were co-opted to assist with the work. Most new members were women, and some of them were added to the committee without their knowledge. All the new members later dropped out of the committee as they were not clear on their terms of reference and there were no incentives for them to work. When the ACM project started, the RMC in Gababe was all male.

The way the RMCs were formed led to many problems. Selection procedure for members was one difficulty. In one case the FC officer (a woman later transferred to Chegutu in 2001), who often excused herself from joining field activities organised by the ACM team (Section 4.1, Chapter 4), sent word that seven people from a specific community should come and see her, and those who came were selected as the RMC committee (Mapedza and Mandondo, 2002). People who went to see the officer were those who could afford the bus fares to travel from their areas to Gokwe Business Centre, where the FC office was located. In other cases, the officer asked the traditional leadership authority to make nominates. The FC officer also advocated for those who were literate to be selected. This discriminated against the original settlers, who had less schooling (Section 2.3.3, Chapter 2).

Because of the way the RMCs were put together communities were unclear about their roles, and saw the committees as an extended arm of the FC. This generated a lot of tension. The RMCs themselves were accountable only to the FC, and they paid scant to the existing traditional leadership authority structures, for instance. This, in turn, resulted in un-addressed conflicts between traditional authorities and RMC members. For instance, some village heads and their community members failed to attend meetings organised by the Batanai RMC as they regarded the committee as having no authority to make such arrangements.

Upon election RMCs were handed the RMC constitution, developed by the FC in collaboration with the Ministry of Youth, Gender and Employment Creation. Regardless of the low literacy rate in Gokwe area, the RMC constitution was in English, and still had not been translated into vernacular languages up to the time the ACM project was initiated. The average literacy rate for Gokwe was low, with only 39% of the people having received formal education in 1992 (Central Statistics Office, 1992).

The constitution gave the RMCs authority to exercise all powers necessary to achieve community objectives. It also gave the RMCs powers to make decisions, but these decisions were subject to approval by the FC officer, who had power to reject them. For instance, RMCs were asked by the FC to open bank accounts in order to deposit money raised through issuing permits to resource harvesters. The FC officer however, was a signatory to the account and the communities could not withdraw the money without approval from him/ her. Although the money was said to belong to communities, and that they could use it for their own needs, the FC only approved use of the funds on forestry related projects and activities.

When the ACM project was initiated, several conflicts were identified among stakeholders (Chapter 4, Part I), and these quarrels hindered collaboration over joint management of the forest. Degradation of the resource was inevitable. To try and transform the RMCs into transparent and downwardly accountable institutions, the ACM team came up with interventions (mentioned above) to help shape the organisations   directly (through training) and indirectly (though building the capacities of community members to demand accountability).

From 1999 to early 2002 ACM researchers concentrated efforts on introducing the ACM project to communities and facilitating interventions to deal with key with issues arising from the context studies. Little attention was paid to documenting the

functioning of the RMC during this period. It was only in April 2002 that the team began to document the performance of the RMCs in the study sites. The ACM project, however ended in early in 2003, and the FC officer played an important part in supporting the RMCs during this period. He assisted them to resolve conflicts, and to produce reports on their work, encouraging them to continue being accountable and transparent to their constituencies. Unfortunately, the FC officer died in October 2005. A new officer, with little knowledge of the ACM approach, was appointed in January 2006. He focused on evicting squatters from the forest, and had yet to begin interacting with RMCs in the study sites, when he also unfortunately passed away in October 2007. The next section presents the characteristics of the RMCs and their performance over time, starting with the RMC in Gababe area.

5.3 Operations of the Resource Management Committees from 1999-2007

5.3.1 The Gababe Resource Management Committee

In 2002

As at April 2002, there was no woman on the Gababe RMC committee. The RMC was led by an acting chair (the elected chair had died several years back) and only four other members out of seven were actively participating. The other members refused to work for free. At a general community meeting organised by the ACM team on the 19th of April 2002, community members highlighted many problems faced in their area and said nothing was being done to solve them. These problems included:

- Community members having to travel long distances to harvest grasses because they lived far from the forest. The RMC refused to let them stay in the forest because they found it difficult to monitor the harvesting 24 hours a day.
- Lack of transparency in the way RMC members allocated areas to community members for harvesting of grass. Some women claimed that the RMC members gave the best portions to friends and relatives and everyone else got poor portions.
- The RMC did not organise meetings with local communities to update them on progress made in terms of resource management. According to one woman, the RMC only convened meetings when they wanted to get money from resource users.
- Lack of transport for grass from the forest to the market.
- Absence of any established market for broom grass.

After becoming aware of these numerous problems, as encountered by Gababe and other RMCs in Mafungautsi, the ACM team, together with the FC, organised a Leadership Training and Management of Finances workshop in April 2002 at the FC Camp in the forest. All RMC members (including the sub-committee and traditional leadership authority representatives) attended from areas around the forest.

One issue that was raised there was the lack of incentives. RMC members complained that they were not paid for their work. This generated a heated discussion with the RMC members explaining that without any payment there was no incentive to be part

of the RMC. The FC officer responded by saying that it was not the duty of the FC to pay the RMCs and it was up to the communities to pay as a way of thanking them for their effort. Some RMC members reported that community members in their areas did not want to pay.

Three months later, in July, the community members reported that the RMC secretary had left the area to go to the Venice Mine to pan (illegally) for gold. This was about 95 kilometres away from Gokwe and he had left none of the RMC financial records. It was alleged that he had embezzled money raised from permits issued over the previous year. The village heads who came to the meeting where this was reported, had not been informed about the situation previously. Community members were bitter and wanted the whole RMC to be dissolved.

During this same meeting, the FC officer suggested the creation of sub-committees for different products, i.e. thatch grass, broom grass and honey, and for monitoring the status of the forest resources. This would reduce the workload of the RMC and help it work more effectively. The community members agreed with this suggestion. In selecting the sub-committees, community members were clear that they did not want anyone from the old RMC to be a part of the sub-committees as they would 'contaminate' the new committees. Like the RMC, the sub-committees had seven members (chair, vice-chair, secretary, vice-secretary, treasurer and two committee members) and were tasked with ensuring forest resources were managed sustainably. The monitoring sub-committee (MSC) was responsible for monitoring forest resources and arranging meetings for the various stakeholders involved in monitoring, so they could share their results and learn from each other (Section 4.7, Chapter 4).

Another general community meeting was organised by the ACM team at Gababe RMC area on the 19th of September 2002, after the formation of the various sub-committees, at which community members again expressed bitterness about the RMC. They asserted that the RMC committee was not transparent and was stealing resources and money raised through permits. One community member reported that more than 200 bundles of thatch grass belonging to the RMC[61] had been stolen from the forest. Other community members claimed that the RMC members were responsible for stealing the grass. The issue of the RMC secretary who left for gold panning and was alleged to have embezzled funds came up again. The other RMC committee members had not come to the meeting, possibly because they feared facing allegations of corruption. The RMC chair attended, but remained silent when these issues were raised.

The community members brought up these allegations but there were no consequences. The RMC became increasingly bogged down by organisational problems. Committee members were sceptical about the role of the sub-committees, suspecting that the latter were meant to usurp them. There were allegations from community members that some grass fires during the season were caused by disgruntled members of the RMC, retaliating for the "tactful thinning" of their responsibilities by the FC through the creation of the sub-committees. Community members claimed that the RMC chair was too soft and lacked authority and that

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[61] Resource users could pay in either cash or in kind (e.g. with harvested bundles of grass) or harvesting permits. Once the grass was sold, the money should have been deposited in the community bank account by the RMC members

people were spending more time wrestling for power than pursuing tangible developmental goals. The alleged embezzlement by the RMC secretary was still a bone of contention. The chair had still not organised a meeting to ask the secretary to account for the money raised from the permits issued in the previous grass cutting season and community members remained angry about this.

Later on, the Forestry Commission officer responsible for the area organised a stakeholder workshop at FC Camp, and it became clear that the Gababe RMC continued to face serious organisational problems. There was no communication among the RMC committee members. No financial report was presented by the Gababe RMC representatives because the secretary had left and the chair and treasurer were unaware of how much money there was in the RMC account. Given the number of training workshops that the RMC members had attended to learn about the importance of accountability and transparency, it is difficult to understand why the Gababe RMC members failed to present their financial reports. In fact, this might lead the analyst to the conclusion that training alone is not the answer to dishonesty. Definite checks and balances and sanctions are also needed. This is a point to which I return in Chapter 6.

By September 2002, hunger was widespread in Gokwe area because of the 2002 drought period. Discussions between the ACM researchers and the FC officer ended in the conclusion that that in fact people were starving. Many people were heavily dependent on wild forest fruits, such as Chakata (*Parinari curatelifolia*) and Matohwe (*Azanza garckeana*). According to the FC officer, there was a scramble going on for these fruits in the forest, involving both people and animals (wild and domestic). He also had noted that in some cases, people cooked and ate unripe fruit, because they had nothing else to eat. Gababe RMC area was reported to have experienced the highest incidences of forest fires at this time. ACM researchers found out from resources users that the villagers suspected the fires were caused by vindictive members of the RMC committee. There is no way to be certain that this was true, but the very fact that ordinary villagers were capable of suspecting leading members of the community of committing vindictive acts at such a difficult time is in itself a reflection on intra-community tensions and divisions.

2003-2005

Towards the end of 2003 the relations between the sub-committees and the main RMC improved, due to conflict resolution processes employed by the RMC, and the resulting improved communication. They were now carrying out joint patrols to check if people were stealing resources. Women also participated in the patrols, but since they were afraid to move in the forest on their own, RMC members made sure that men accompanied them, or asked them to patrol areas close to where people were harvesting resources. Community members also agreed to pay the RMC members in kind – each RMC member was allocated an area from which they could freely harvest grass.

Yet, in a discussion with the Gababe resource users and the RMC in September 2003, it was obvious that the RMC still faced a number of problems:

- Community members continued to mistrust RMC members. They alleged that some RMC members harvested resources before the stipulated time, while others took larger portions than they had been allocated. One RMC member

described his experience in the following terms: *Ko ndakazoita zvekukara ndikazvipa zinzvimbo zihombe rekucheka uswa. RMC yakamboda kundidzinga asi pavakaita meeting nevanhu vanochecka uswa musango, vanhu vakati ndisadzingwa asi kuti ndidimbure nzvimbo yangu yekucheka mutsvairo iite diki*' - 'I took a bigger portion greedily and the RMC members wanted to expel me for that. However, they organised a meeting with the broom grass resource users in the forest to find out what they thought about their decision. The resource users did not want me to be expelled but said I should reduce my grass cutting area instead'.

- RMC members reported that they needed help from the FC to create fire breaks and to identify nearby markets for resource users to avoid the need for people to travel to distant towns such as Bulawayo in order to sell their produce.
- The MSC members complained that since they were doing the same work as the main RMC, they should also be allocated similar portions for harvesting. The RMC organised a meeting with forest resource users and it was agreed that the MSC members should get similar incentives for their work.
- The RMC members ran out of permit books for poles and planks and wanted the FC to provide them.
- Because of the rise in permit prices, some local community members were now opting to harvest grasses from the neighbouring small-scale commercial (SSCF) farms rather than from their own areas in the forest. This resulted in loss of revenue for the RMC.
- Community members blamed the RMC chair for not organising community meetings where issues affecting the management of forest resources could be discussed and clarified. They suggested replacing the existing RMC committee with a more vibrant one.

At the end of the meeting the FC officer gave some advice to the RMC members on how they could solve some of their problems.

In March 2004, discussions with a member of the Gababe RMC revealed that there were serious conflicts between the main RMC and the sub-committees. He also reported that people were cutting fresh trees at an alarming rate because they were aware of the RMC problems. The RMC member said that if the FC officer did not come to help them solve the current problems, more trees would continue to be felled.

When the ACM team revisited the area in July 2004 (the ACM project had already ended, but the team was still offering backstopping support to the FC offer) they found that a new RMC had been elected in April, just before the yearly pre-grass-cutting season workshop.[62] According to the RMC constitution, when a new committee is elected, two members from the old committee should remain for continuity. However, in this case the community members removed all the old committee members as they were afraid that these would corrupt the new committee. The FC officer had been present during the elections and he respected this decision.

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[62]   Such workshops became a common feature of the FC calendar (see Section 4.8.1, Chapter 4).

After the new committee was elected there was increased illegal cutting of live trees[63], especially for timber. The new RMC was not able to stop people from cutting down these trees and asked four members from the old committee to help them. In addition, the ACM team learned from the community partner that a conflict had developed between some former RMC members and the new committee over grass harvesting. Some of the new RMC members had reserved good grass portions for themselves. When members of the old RMC discovered this, they went to harvest grass from the area with good grass that had been reserved by the new RMC members, with axes slung on their hips, to threaten any member of the new committee who wanted to resist. To resolve this conflict, the new RMC members sought help from the Forestry Commission's Forest Protection Unit (FPU).[64] Some traditional leaders also took the case to the chief, but it had already been amicably solved by the FPU and individuals concerned.

After discussion, community members said they were happy about the way the new committee handled the RMC finances in 2004. However they were less happy that the RMC had opened the grass cutting season later than usual (on the 10th of June), as most people had been busy in the fields with (unusually good) crop harvests.

The tracing study in 2005, two years later after the ACM project ended, showed several positive developments around the functioning of the RMC. Community participation had improved (RMC members were now asking for input from resource users before making decisions) in decision-making processes and the RMC was generating more money from allocating permits. The key issues discussed during the general meeting in May 2005 are presented in Box 5.1 below (these are notes taken by an ACM team member, the author):

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[63] An explanation for the increased cutting of trees was that in 2004 people in Gababe had bumper harvests of maize which gave rise to a demand for new grain storage bins (*Ngarani*). Several new and renovated grain bins were seen by the ACM team in the community.

[64] This is the FC's armed unit, mainly involved in patrolling the forest and arresting poachers and other offenders. The FPU members are permanently based in the forest and stay at the Lutope Camp in Mafungautsi Forest. They report to and take their orders from the Mafungautsi Project Coordinator.

Box 5.1:   Notes on the general meeting held at Gababe area in May 2005

RMC report on their performance in 2004[65]
When reviewing their performance in 2004, the vice chair of the RMC mentioned that they could not come up with a comprehensive report because all the financial records had been sent to the FC office for auditing, and had not yet been returned. The FC officer apologised and said that he had audited the books a long time ago but forgot to return them.

The RMC reported that they had worked well in 2004. In total the RMC issued 350 permits for broom grass at Zim$500.00 (USD 0.10) each. They also issued about 100 permits for thatch grass. The RMC issued relatively few permits for thatch grass because they had started to harvest the grass in July instead of June. By this time, a lot of grass had been poached by other people and cattle had also trampled on the grass rendering it unmarketable. The RMC managed to generate about Zim$1million (USD 192.32), from permits issued for the harvesting of broom and thatch grass. This was the largest amount of money recorded so far for Gababe and was more than the neighbouring RMC Chemwiro Masawi had collected - which used to be the RMC that generated the most income). About Zim$200,000 (USD 38.46) was used to purchase receipt books and to pay the bus fare of the people who went to Gokwe to submit financial reports to the FC. Cash in hand was therefore about Zim$800,000 (USD 153.85). The RMC performed better than it had in previous years and better than the other RMCs before. The FC officer commended the RMC for submitting a comprehensive financial report. He advised the RMC to always report to the community and all leaders in the area to give them an update of their performance. He also advised them not to wait for big community meetings organised by the traditional leaders but to also organise meetings themselves to update local stakeholders on their work and finances to avoid suspicions of embezzlement.

Unfortunately the money raised by the RMC was not deposited in the RMC's savings account. The reason given by the RMC was that the RMC was afraid that if the money was deposited in a savings account for a protracted period, it was going to incur service charges from the bank. The FC officer and other local participants at the meeting advised the RMC to keep it in the bank as it was safer than keeping the money at someone's home where there was risk of the money being utilised for other reasons when the person was confronted by financial problems.

Problems mentioned in the meeting:
1. The area allocated by the FC to the RMC for harvesting broom grass was said to be small. Community members claimed that they could harvest all the broom grass in their area in less than five days.
2. Theft of thatch grass before the official opening of the harvesting season.
3. Theft of cattle in the forest, allegedly by cattle rustlers from Nkai district.

Proposed project:
The RMC proposed that the money raised in 2004 be used towards the construction of a local clinic.

Communication with stakeholders
The RMC chair reported that the RMC had failed to meet with the general community members save for the pre-grass harvesting meeting. However the committee had met on its own several times to deliberate on its progress. The RMC rarely met with traditional leaders. It was agreed that the RMC should meet more often with community members throughout the year and not just before the grass harvesting season which seemed to be the only time when it

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[65]   In May 2004, 1USD = 5199.76 Zim$ (Annex 2.3)

appeared to be active. It was suggested that the committee should be actively involved in the management of forest resources throughout the year and that the RMC should also monitor other resources like timber and grazing for cattle.

After the presentation by the RMC chair, there was a discussion on what the community members were going to do to stop people from outside the RSP area from accessing resources in the forest. For instance, people from Nkai, a neighbouring community were said to be grazing their animals in the forest, yet they were not part of the RSP. The issue of incentives or rewards for RMC members was also discussed and community members continued to complain that the RMC members were allocating themselves portions with the best grass. At the end of this discussion the FC officer, advised the RMC members that before they rewarded themselves they must seek permission and approval from the other community members. He also explained the community that it was important for them to reward the RMC members as they were making a lot of sacrifices during their work.

After the meeting, community members and key informants commented that despite some problems the current RMC was performing well. Some of the reasons for positive changes mentioned were:
1. There was now cooperation among members of the RMC.
2. Unlike the old committee, the new one did not practice favouritism when allocating portions.
3. The new committee had a strong and committed MSC.
4. The committee had a good leader who was well educated and understood all the financial transactions.
5. New committee members were transparent and knew what was going on.
6. The new committee worked well with the traditional leaders. Some of the leaders who had previously not participated in the project, because of their location in areas furthest from the forest, were now participating in resource management meetings. Traditional leaders had also approached the RMC members to ask if the RMC funds could be used for the clinic project. After the presentation of this proposal by the RMC vice chair at the general meeting, community members agreed that this could be a good use of their money. This was the first serious attempt by the RMC members in Gababe to utilise their money to the benefit of the community.

When an ACM team member (the author) returned to the Mafungautsi Forest in December 2005, she learned that the FC officer had died in October 2005 and had not yet been replaced. Despite this loss, the RMC of the Gababe area continued with its work and organised meetings with the local community members and the village heads to decide how to use RMC money. The village heads, however, abandoned the idea of building a clinic as this required a larger sum of money than was available. Instead, they agreed on building a house for one of the teachers at Gababe Primary School. The RMC purchased 15 bags of cement used to build a two-roomed flat. Local community members were asked to come and mould bricks at the school and the builder was paid from the RMC money. All the community members commended the RMC for working well on this project.

After 2005
A year later, in December 2006, the community members commented that after the death of the FC officer, no other FC officer had visited their area and community members did not know that a new officer had been appointed to take over the role of the Mafungautsi Project Coordinator. In 2006, the RMC members stopped organising meetings with community as well as their own meetings. Some community members blamed the FC for lack of follow–up; the RMC no longer had anyone to monitor their

work or to audit their books. The only time RMC members had met with local communities was in May 2006 when they wanted to announce the harvesting prices, just before the harvesting period. In 2006, the FC had not organise the annual pre-grass cutting workshop that once gave the RMCs around the forest an opportunity to meet, share experiences and set the grass harvesting prices. The Gababe RMC therefore had set its own prices and, according to the former ACM community partner, the RMC was now making decisions on permit prices without collaborating with resource users and other RMCs.

After the 2006 grass cutting season the RMC failed to give feedback to local people on their work and finances. Community members tried to organise the meeting for the RMC members to present their finances, but each time they did so, the RMC members failed to show up. When RMC members attended a meeting organised in the area by their Chief for another purpose, community members asked them to make a report of their financial status, but they came up with various excuses. Community members then began to suspect that the RMC members were embezzling community funds. They also complained that RMC members had not been polite during the grass harvesting period, and that again RMC members gave themselves bigger portions with the best grass while other resource users had to be content with smaller portions with poor grass. They now wanted the RMC to be dissolved. Additional to this, in a meeting with the ACM team member, the community members highlighted a series of problems they faced in 2006, pointing to increased pressure on resources and invasion by outsiders:

- Increased cutting down of trees,
- Increased poaching of game, especially zebras. The poachers only took the skins and left the meat. When faced with this evidence, the RMC members approached the FC Forest Protection Unit (FPU). The FPU advised them not to interfere with these poachers as they were ill equipped to do so. The FPU also said that the FC no longer had transport to patrol the forest,
- An increase in forest fires, mainly because of increase in poaching of game, and the failure to open up fire breaks.[66] The FC used to take the lead in the making fire breaks, but after the death of Mr Mutasa, the FC stopped performing this role,
- The RMC lost one of its grass cutting areas, Ngondoma, to new settlers (Figure 2.6). They now only harvested from their other grass harvesting area, Wadze (Figure, 2.6). The number of settlers at Ngondoma continued to increase. Squatters also invaded the grass cutting area for Chemwiro Masawi, the neighbouring RMC.
- The MSC was no longer functional.

In the following year (2007) the RMC opened the grass harvesting period in June instead of May. One RMC member said that many people were angry about this decision. He also said that he had decided to go and harvest thatch grass without a permit because they opened the grass cutting season late. Unfortunately, he was caught by another RMC member, and he was asked to pay a fine of Z$ 2 million (USD 7.84[67]). He had to sell his pigeons to pay the fine.

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[66] Fire breaks are lines that are opened up in the forest by clearing trees for purpose of stopping fires from spreading. The fire breaks can be used as roads/ paths by people

[67] In June 2007, the exchange rate was 1USD = Zim$255.000.23 (Annex 2.3)

The first RMC meeting was in June 2007, just before the grass cutting season. It turned out to be the only meeting in 2007. During this meeting, the RMC set the permit prices, but community members refused to pay the permits saying that RMC members had embezzled community funds in 2006 and they did not want to give them their money again. Without consulting the other RMC members, Mr Piyangane, one of the RMC members, and another community member, went to report the conflict and seek help from the FPU. The FPU came later and took over the issuing of permits. However, to issue the harvesting permits, the FPU staff had to walk several kilometres from the FC Camp (also known as Lutope Lodge) in the forest to the Wadze wetland (Figure 2.6, Chapter 2) and as a result of that they did not come every day. In their absence, the RMC members issued the harvesting permits and handed over the money to the FPU staff when they did manage to come. Again community members were not happy and accused the RMC members of embezzling community funds. One former RMC member, Mai Carrington, said that one day she paid Z$600,000 (USD 2.35) for permission to harvest broom grass for 6 days with her son. She only got a receipt for Z$50,000 (USD 0.20) from the RMC member in charge. When she asked why he did not write the full amount, the RMC member told her that they had shortages of the permit books and instead of giving her twelve receipts for Z$50, 000 (USD 0.20) each, he decided to save paper. Mai Carrington said that she did not argue with him but was sure that he stole that money.

By the end of 2007 most of the problems encountered by the RMC in 2006 were still unresolved. Community members continued to complain that RMC members treated them badly, favouring themselves with the largest portions of good grass harvesting areas, and that there was no accountability for use of money from the permits.

5.3.2 The Batanai Resource Management Committee

In 2002

As in the Gababe case study, the ACM team members only started to document the functioning of the Batanai RMC from in April 2002 onwards. The political situation made working in Batanai RMC area difficult, both for the RMC and the ACM team members. Except for the few positive developments during the early stages of the ACM project, there was little change in the functioning of the Batanai RMC during and after the ACM project. Its performance was poor during the ACM project period, and worsened when a ZANU-PF supporting RMC was put in place later. The details of the performance of the Batanai RMC are presented below.

The Batanai RMC installed in 1997 was still in power in early 2002. The committee consisted of six men and one woman. Discussions with community members revealed that the RMC made decisions without any input from the rank-and-file. For example, the RMC was given some modern (Kenyan-Top-Beehives – KTB) beehives by the FC officer to promote bee-keeping projects in their area. The RMC was asked by the FC to give the beehives as a loan to community members who would pay the RMC with a portion of the honey harvested, in order to generate funds for the RMC. Community members said that the RMC took the beehives for themselves, friends and relatives. One community member said that he went to one of the RMC members to request for

a beehive, but discovered the RMC member was already using all the remaining hives.

When visited by the ACM team in April 2002, the RMC chair explained that the committee was having difficulties because it was understaffed. The lady member had resigned, another member had died, the vice chair refused to come for work and the secretary had left for Gokwe Business Centre to pursue building studies. As a result the chair said he had recruited temporary staff to help with the issuing of permits and monitoring the harvesting process during the peak grass harvesting period. He also explained that the RMC was not getting support from the village heads, who refused to attend meetings organised by the RMC. The traditional leaders had said that the RMC was below them in the hierarchy and did not have authority to call them to meetings. The village heads said they needed a formal invitation from the FC for them to attend forestry related meetings. When the ACM team asked Mr. Maf, the village head of Mafa Village, why he did not attend meetings organised by RMC members he claimed that most of them were members of the opposition political party and he did not want to be associated with the opposition. The RMC members denied this allegation. RMC members said that they also found it difficult to organise meetings with resource users after the passing of the Public Oder Security Act. Permission was needed from the police to hold meetings (Section 2.2.3, Chapter 2). As a result no meetings were held during this period.

In August 2002, the situation in Batanai had not improved. Community members told the ACM team that earlier promises made by the RMC members to resolve the group's problems had not yet been fulfilled. Many local residents, mostly young men between 19 and 40, had left the area due to economic difficulties and drought. Twelve community members were said to have left for South Africa to look for employment, and another 32 had left to pan gold at the Venice Mine.

However, by the end of 2002, the RMC had organised seven meetings. Five were with resource users and focused on grass-cutting methods. Two meetings were organised in collaboration with the FC, one of which was a report-back meeting for feedback on what happened with the brooms that were taken to the Provincial Agricultural Show. At a meeting with RMC members and resource users in Batanai, the ACM team heard they were facing the following problems:
- The RMC lacked support from traditional leaders.
    - The broom grass users were stealing grass from their neighbouring RMC in Sokwela, creating ill will and reducing the opportunity for RMCs to generate income through giving out permits.
    - Some resource users were refusing to pay for permits taken on credit.
    - The arrival of the honey production season saw an increase in large hollow trees being felled by honey collectors who used them to make traditional beehives.
At this meeting, local community members asked the RMC members to improve their record keeping and iron out their problems with traditional leaders, as these leaders could help them to be effective.

2003 to 2005

In further meetings in September 2003 the ACM team discovered that the woman who had resigned from the RMC was a strong supporter of the ruling party and she had informed participants at a ZANU-PF fund raising meeting that the RMC had some money lying idle. After the meeting, the ZANU-PF chair and ward councillor went to see the RMC treasurer and had asked him to hand over the RMC funds to the ZANU-PF party to sponsor some party activity. The treasurer told him that the money was in a bank account and he would not release it until the RMC had arranged a meeting with the community to ask if the money could be used for this purpose.[68] The ZANU-PF chair interpreted this as a refusal to hand over the money. The following week members of the RMC went to the forest and discovered that their grass area had been burnt. It was alleged that the chair of the MSC, and a strong ZANU-PF supporter, had taken the lead in burning the grass area as a way of punishing the RMC members (see Section 4.7, Chapter 4).

Discussions with Batanai RMC members showed that most of the problems raised in the previous meeting still persisted in September 2003:
- The village heads were still not supportive of RMC work and they refused to help resolve cases that the RMC brought to them.
- Some committee members did not report for duty because there were no incentives. Only three RMC members were active, and this made it difficult to monitor harvesting activities effectively.
- Some resource users were not paying for harvesting permits and took advantage of an understaffed RMC.
- The RMC had difficulty in securing the harvested grass given as payment in kind due to lack of transport.
- There were problems with poaching of broom grass, and some people harvested the grass before the stipulated harvesting dates. One member of the RMC accused the ruling Sibanda family in Mafa village of being the major culprits, disobeying agreed rules and harvesting grass before it was ripe

In March 2004, an ACM team member visited Batanai to find that the RMC had not organised any meetings in the previous months. RMC members, as well as other community members, had been busy with their crops and attending to livestock. The MSC was no longer functional and the bee-keeping group was almost defunct. Many bee keepers had left for gold panning while the few who remained were busy in their crop fields. There were still only three active members of the RMC: chair, treasurer and vice secretary. Most RMC and sub-committee members came to harvest free grass but took no interest in controlling harvesting.

Also in March 2004, another joint meeting between Batanai and Sokwela RMCs, was organised by local politicians, and the treasurer for Batanai RMC[69] had an opportunity

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[68] At this time, the first FC officer (a woman) left the project and a new officer, Mr Mutasa, took over. The new officer allowed local communities to make their own decisions on the use of community funds. Communities could use the money for things like paying school fees for orphans and supporting social functions in their communities.

[69] The treasurer was a pensioner who spent much of his time in Bulawayo where he worked as a policeman. In community workshops, he proved to be someone who consistently wanted the truth to be told.

to report on the work of his RMC. He started by narrating the story of the attempt by the ward councillor and ZANU-PF party to wrestle RMC money from him. He explained that he had refused to hand over the money, as the RMC needed to consult with the local community members first. The councillor, present at this meeting, was annoyed by this bold stance and interjected by saying: *"Old man do you know that you are an immigrant to this area? You do not even deserve to be in that committee. How did you get that post? I strongly suspect you bribed someone"*. He continued to threaten all the members of the RMC who were present, saying, "*you have to work well and cooperate with us, otherwise we will start to investigate your political background to see if you support the correct party*".

The councillor went on to suggest that a new committee should be set up. Most local community members from Batanai were present and the FC officer agreed with this proposal Elections for the new RMC were organised by the FC officer on the 20th of March 2004. Candidates included local community members, local politicians and traditional leaders. When the ACM team asked how the elections were conducted, most community members said that there had been heavy political influence on the outcome – local politicians had vigorously campaigned for ruling party cadres to be elected. Community members were happy that the treasurer, Mr Ndlovu, had been retained as they saw him as an honest and transparent man. They said that the rest of the new RMC committee now consisted of politically motivated people. The new chair was much older than the previous chair, and - a war veteran - he was a strong supporter of the ruling party.

In May 2005, ACM team members discovered that the former community partner for Batanai area was alleged to have participated in the 2005 parliamentary elections as a polling agent for the opposition political party. The allegations were raised by a wife of a village head and an active member of the ruling party. Because of these allegations, the ACM team found it difficult to work with the community partner.

After 2005
When returning to the area in 2006 for a monitoring visit, the present author discovered that all members of the current RMC were involved in the work, in stark contrast to the past. Community members explained that it was because committee members were allowed to harvest the grass for free. The permit prices were now substantially higher and most people could not afford to pay for them.

After the 2006 grass cutting season the RMC did not organise a general meeting to give feedback on their work and finances. The RMC worked closely with some village heads in their area, especially in a school building project that communities had decided to focus on with the RMC money. RMC members met frequently with the village heads to decide on how many inputs to purchase, and they agreed to start by constructing toilets for the school. Towards the end of 2006 they managed to purchase cement and built the foundations for 10 toilets. Community members from all the villages in Batanai were asked to volunteer their labour to help with this, although they had not had an opportunity to participate in the decision making. The RMC members did not update community members on their work.

Communication was also poor among the RMC members themselves. For instance, the RMC secretary did not know how much the cement cost. There were rumours that some members of the RMC were embezzling funds. Community members and the RMC treasurer identified the problems they faced:

- Poor communication among RMC members and lack of transparency and accountability concerning their work and finances towards local community members as well as among themselves. This made community members suspicious that RMC members were misusing funds
- The RMC was ineffective, as it only worked during the grass harvesting period. During this period all RMC members worked, but only a few members monitored the harvesting of firewood at other times of the year According to the community members the RMC chair had little interest in resource management activities. He had several jobs, (as member of the neighbourhood watch police, as a builder and as an active member in the ZANU PF party) and did not have time for the RMC work
- More generally, for all RMC members, it was sometimes difficult to meet as everybody was busy struggling to survive.
- High transaction costs – RMC members who had travelled to purchase building materials for the school project had spent a large amount of money on transportation and food
- Lack of learning opportunities for community members who had previously participated in several learning workshops during the ACM project
- Lack of support from the FC. For instance, Mr Ndlovu, the RMC treasurer, complained that he was doing too much work on his own and this was straining him as he was now old. He said that when he faced problems in the RMC, he normally sought help from the FC. Unfortunately, as mentioned in Chapter 4, each time he saw the FC vehicle and tried to stop it, the driver did not stop the vehicle (because the new officer did not know him). He was now worried that the forest would decline. Too many forest fires broke out, mainly because the fire breaks were not maintained after the death of the FC officer
- Increased cutting down of live trees, with nothing done about it by the RMC.

There were also disturbances in resource management activities when new settlers from other areas moved into the grass harvesting area. After realizing that nothing was being done about the new settlers in the forest (who continued to increase in number) some members of the Batanai RMC decided to open up new fields in the forest at the Mbumbuzi, even though no one moved in to stay there, while others also opened fields at Zanda Plateau, affecting the grass harvesting areas for Kupfuma Ishungu RMC area (Figure 2.5, Chapter 2).

At Mbumbuzi, one of the grass areas for Batanai RMC, Batanai RMC members started by clearing about 3 acres each. This happened when the new FC officer, had just taken up his post. He decided to start working on this issue. Specifically he was trying to prevent the cutting down of trees to clear land for agriculture. In September 2006 he organised a meeting with community members in Batanai area. The FC general manager and the Zimbabwe Republic Police were also present during the meeting to discuss the issue. At the meeting officials identified the man allegedly responsible for organising these illegal clearances. He was arrested, and nearly injured

himself jumping out of a moving police truck. After this arrest no new areas were cleared for agricultural fields at Mbumbuzi.

The Batanai RMC met just once with community members in 2007, just before the grass cutting season. After the 2007 grass harvesting period, the RMC decided to give 32 bundles of thatch grass to the headman Ndlalambi as a gift (this was the tradition when the RSP project started in 1997 and RMC members decided to revive it). They also donated 80 bundles of thatch grass to be used for the construction of a shelter to be used as a classroom at the nearby local school. However, the problems of the previous year remained unresolved.

5.4   Discussion and Reflection

In addition to existing natural resource governance structures in local communities (namely local government and traditional authority structures, Section 2.2.1, Chapter 2), the FC decided to form another institution, the RMCs. The reason why the FC decided to do this was because traditional leadership authority had been disempowered when the country gained independence in 1980, due to their role in promoting the colonial government (see Chapter 2). New local government structures, the Village Development Committees and the Ward Development Committees were put in place in communal areas of Zimbabwe. The role of these institutions (including management of natural resources) was not fully clarified, however, and this brought about conflict between the new and traditional institutions.

When the ACM project was initiated in 1999 the traditional authority had just been re-empowered through the Traditional Leaders Act of 1998 (see Chapter 2). Although the ACM team members also invited representatives of the traditional leadership authority to also participate in the capacity building activity and the subsequent Participatory Action Research (PAR) processes, the team continued to focus more on the RMCs as the legitimate institutions for managing resources in the forest. This is evident in the continuous interaction with RMC members documented above. Each time they visited the study sites the ACM team members visited members of the RMC to find out about their work, and their problems, and also to advise them on solutions.

The RMCs derived their resource management powers and authority from the FC, a custodian of state forests according to the existing Forestry Act. The ACM team, however, paid courtesy calls on traditional leaders each time they went to the field. This shows that the ACM team, in trying to achieve its objectives, was careful not to bring any radical changes to the situation at hand. The team did this in the spirit of building on to what already existed to promote the RSP. Those seeking to work with traditional authority structures, however, have also to been advised to be careful as there is danger of them not being as equitable or as legitimate in local eyes as they are often portrayed (Knudsen, 1995). In fact, many traditional institutions in Africa, including the traditional authority structures in Zimbabwe (see Section 2.2.1, Chapter 2), have lost local legitimacy as a result of collaboration with colonial and post-colonial regimes (Richards, 1985, 1992).

Since it is not obvious that resource management could have been immediately placed in the hands of a weakened if recently revived traditional system of governance it is an important analytical task to track how the newer institution, the RMCs, performed

over time, and how this performance influenced resource management outcomes. The first part of this section discusses the functioning of the RMCs before the introduction of the ACM project, followed by a discussion on how the RMCs functioned after the introduction of the ACM project, and the extent to which they were transformed by this experience.

The Functioning of the RMCs before 1999
Inaugural RMCs, as the empirical evidence above shows, were hi-jacked by male-dominated elites. Women and marginalised groups rarely if ever participated in RMCs. This exclusion was, in part, deliberate. For example, the FC officer advocated that only educated people should be selected as members. Early settlers, with poor educational backgrounds, had no chance to participate, even though they may have had an especial closeness and need of the natural resources to be preserved. Elite RMC members lacked solidarity with these social classes, and used their power to benefit themselves and their kind. Batanai RMC was a clear example. Given improved bee hives committee members used these hives themselves, rather than supervising their distribution among community rank-and-file.

The RMCs during this time were mainly accountable to the FC officer and not to their constituencies, and were therefore seen as an arm of the FC. The FC remained a powerful actor, and community members continued to lack real power. The FC officer had powers to approve or not approve decisions made by local communities and even though money generated through the permit system was said to belong to the communities, the FC officer was signatory to the account, and had to approve any withdrawals. This shows the paternalistic nature of the FC at that time. Even though on paper the FC and local communities were jointly managing the forest, only RMC members participated, while other local community members experienced "business as usual".

Old conflicts among stakeholders continued unabated. Evidence of these tensions between communities and the FC became apparent in commentary by community members when the team introduced the ACM research in the sites (Chapter 4, Part I). There were also struggles between the RMCs and traditional leadership authorities, and between RMCs and local community members. Because of these conflicts, stakeholders failed to fully collaborate in managing forest natural resources that in effect became an open access facility, prone to the 'tragedy of the commons'. Forest degradation continued unabated.

The functioning of RMCs after the introduction of the ACM project up to 2007
The two case studies presented above show contrasting fortunes in the experience of two different RMCs. The Gababe RMC, performed badly during the initial stages of the ACM project, but over time transformed into a downwardly accountable institution. For instance, in 2004 and 2005, the RMC performed well and local community members were satisfied with its performance. The RMC continued to do well, even after the untimely death of the local FC Officer. However, this success was short-lived and major shortcomings of accountability became apparent both to the communities and to the FC. In Batanai, the performance of the RMC remained generally poor (with some minor improvements during the early stages of the ACM project), because here the RMC was constrained by strong political influences in the

area. These political factors undermined much of the training and capacity building of the RMC.

The following key issues will be discussed separately to assess the performance of the RMCs over time: accountability and transparency of the RMCs, conflict resolution problem solving, decision making by RMCs and community members in their areas.

Accountability and transparency of Resource Management Committees
During the early part of the ACM project, the performance of RMCs continued as it was in the period before the project. However over time, some changes began to be observed. For instance, the Gababe RMC transformed into a downwardly accountable institution. This RMC had never before reported to the community and was accused of embezzling community funds. Financial records disappeared. The reorganised RMC was more transparent, and began to report about its work and finances. Community members were happy with this changed approach.

Participation by local community members and RMCs in decision making processes
During the ACM project period, the situation with decision making remained similar to the situation before the introduction of the ACM project. However, improvements were observed later. For example RMC members in Gababe, who previously made decisions without involving community members, asked resource users their opinion about an RMC member who gave himself a bigger portion of grass than agreed upon (section 5.2.1). Also, RMC members began to make autonomous decisions on how to use their money, favouring local community activities. In Gababe, community members in electing their next RMC, made the decision not to retain two members from the old committee, as spelt out in the RMC constitution, because they wanted a fresh start.

However, throughout the ACM project period, the FC still continued to make the bigger decisions on what resources were to be included and excluded from the Resource Sharing Project (RSP). In short, the policy framework never changed. Land, in particular, remained outside any resource sharing agreement, and nothing was (or perhaps could be) done during the ACM project period to change this.

Gains were short-term. For instance, participation of community members in decision making in the transformed Gababe RMC deteriorated from 2006, after the death of the FC officer. RMC members turned a deaf ear to community wishes and resisted attempts to account for their work or report on funds. In Batanai participation of local community members in electing their RMC members was limited, and local politicians influenced outcomes.

Conflict resolution and problem solving
Batanai RMC continued to be conflict ridden during and after the ACM project. Nevertheless, a few improvements could be seen. For instance, unlike in previous years when the RMC failed to organise meetings with resource users, in 2002 the RMC organised 5 such meetings. In Gababe RMC however, over time RMC members managed to resolve conflicts and solve some of the problems they encountered, sometimes on their own, and at other times with assistance from the FC (including the Forest Protection Unit). For example, the conflict between the RMC and its

subcommittees was successfully resolved in 2004 with assistance from the FC. When the FC died, however, the RMCs ignored new conflicts in the study sites, even though they were aware of the importance of resolving conflicts in resource management.

Performance of RMCs and resource management outcomes

Empirical evidence above shows that when RMC committees were not performing well there was increased cutting down of trees, poaching of game and forest fires. This is supported by events before and after the ACM project. For example, when there were conflicts between the new and RMC members in 2003, Gababe RMC experienced its highest incidences of forest fires. Also when there were conflicts between the Gababe RMC and its sub-committees in 2004, fresh trees in the forest were cut down at an alarming rate. This was also experienced in the Batanai area as well.

Factors that influenced performance of RMCs

A number of factors can be distilled from the empirical evidence presented above as influences over the performance of RMC. These include:

The presence of a supportive partner, the FC

With support from the FC officer, the Gababe RMC's performance improved, even after the ACM project had ended. However, when the FC officer died, an important process driver disappeared. In the absence of support from the FC, frustration and conflict all too readily returned. Transparency and accountability became empty words, and community members failed to make their RMCs accountable and transparent.

Incentives for RMC work

Incentives for RMC members to work continued to be a topical issue at all times. Even though RMC members were allowed to harvest resources for free, as payment of their work, the issue continued to come up over and over again showing that the free grass was inadequate. This partly explains, if it does not justify, the embezzling of community funds by RMCs, and this embezzlement resulted in heightened conflict.

Rules and means of enforcement

Although the RMC constitution clearly stipulated that RMC members were supposed to organise regular meetings with their communities and give them reports of their work and finances, RMCs did not meet this requirement, especially in Gababe after the FC officer died. Even though rules were in place as part of the RMC constitution, there was no means to enforce them.

Power and its distribution

Power struggles between stakeholders in Mafungautsi were detrimental to resource management activities. For instance, traditional leaders in Batanai questioned the legitimacy of the new institution when it tried to call meetings, and hence some village heads and their community members did not come to meetings organised by the RMC in their areas. Also the fact that the FC remained the most powerful actor, and local community members remained at all times conscious of their relative powerlessness, resulted in some deployment by community members whose needs were not met by the RSP of Scott's (1985) 'weapons of the weak'.

Capacity building for RMC members and their community members
The performance of the RMCs improved after the advent of the ACM project, and this can partly be attributed to the capacity building interventions of the ACM project. Community members in Gababe, for instance, began to put pressure for their RMCs to be accountable to them after participating in the various ACM interventions.

5.5   Conclusion

This chapter has traced the operations of the RMCs in the two study sites. Several factors influenced the performance of RMC, including presence of a supportive partner at all times, a need for incentives as a means to get RMC members to carry out their duties, the drafting of suitable rules, and availability of a means of enforcing them.   Except for some initial minor changes, performance of the Batanai RMC remained generally poor, even after interventions by the ACM team, because of interference from politically powerful people in the area. The Gababe RMC, however, transformed into a downwardly accountable institution after a new RMC was put in place. The training of members in administration and accounting apparently bore fruit, and helped RMC take its functions seriously. The new committee showed commitment and transparency. When RMCs were not functioning well, the problems and conflicts experienced resulted in degradation of the forest resources, as seen, for example, in increased cutting down of trees and a greater number of fire incidents. When RMCs functioned well, fewer conflicts were observed, and sustainable resource use and management practices were applied. Follow up work showed, however, that no amount of investment in training and capacity building could withstand the pressures generated by severe drought and economic collapse. Building robust collective natural resource management institutions in the midst of an economic storm proved too great a challenge for the ACM approach.

New settlements in the forest

A new field in the forest

Clearing the trees in the forest by new
settlers to pave way for new settlements

Chapter 6:   General Discussion and Conclusions.

6.1   Introduction

This thesis has presented and critically analysed the implementation and outcomes of the ACM approach in Mafungautsi State Forest, Zimbabwe. The thesis began with a detailed account of how the ACM team – of which I was part – worked under deteriorating socio-economic and political conditions in Zimbabwe, to facilitate processes intended to improve resource management, and livelihoods of forest-dependent communities. The thesis offered a critical account of the intervention, based on participant experience but also incorporated findings from a follow-up study undertaken to track developments in Mafungautsi over a period of four years after the ACM project ended. This follow up study drew ideas from the fields of "new institutionalism" and political ecology.

A key finding was that improvements on how people interacted and dealt with the use of forest resources induced by the ACM project were not sustained. In concluding the thesis I will now ask to what extent these negative outcomes were endemic to the ACM approach, as distinct from being consequences of a general rapid decline in socio-economic conditions in the country. This decline doubtless contributed to the failure to sustain the initial promising outcomes. But the project also created difficulties for itself through misconceptions and misapplication. I now pinpoint some of these problems in project design and approach implicated in the lack of sustainability. I conclude that participatory approaches to forest conservation in Africa are still worth trying, but only if a new approach gives more weight to issues of political dynamics and power relations.

6.2   Outcomes of the ACM project

The ACM project intervention (1999 - 2003) in Mafungautsi forest was meant to support an ongoing project, the Resource Sharing Project (RSP) – begun 1994 - which had so far not been very successful. The ACM project indeed resulted in some improvements in the RSP (Chapters 4 and 5). First, community members benefited from capacity building (e.g. the Training for Transformation workshop). Otherwise marginalised community members, especially women, gained confidence to engage in participatory action research processes to deal with some of the problems faced in the project. Some of these positive changes can be summarized as follows:

- Community members discussed and resolved hidden conflicts. For instance, even though there was joint management of the forest on paper, this did not work out in practice. The FC continued with its command and control management. At the outset the tension was so great that the team could not go to the communities in a Forestry Commission vehicle. After some intervention this changed and relations between the communities improved; they began to work together to try and solve some of their problems (Chapter 4, Part II).
- This resulted in the emergence of genuine partnerships, and stakeholders began to respect the contribution of the other partners in resolving resource management problems. For instance, villagers were encouraged by the

- Forestry Commission officer to develop local solutions to problems they faced in managing forest resources (e.g. a new bundling method for the brooms).
- Before ACM, only the Resource Management Committee (RMC) members participated in management of resources, but now, ordinary community members, participated in resource user groups, and helped to impose management sanctions. An instance of this was when one Gababe RMC member allocated himself a bigger portion of free grass than agreed, and the RMC wanted to expel him, but the ordinary members decided it would be better to reduce his share, but not expel him.
- Community members also succeeded to put pressure on their RMCs to be downwardly accountable (Chapter 5). This was particularly noticeable in Gababe. In Batanai, however, powerful people aligned with the ruling political party increasingly obstructed the functioning of the RMC.
- Community members also implemented collaborative action to solve problems. In Batanai area, for instance, broom grass resource users developed a new bundling method, and took steps to promote this sustainable harvesting technique (Chapter 4).

Second, this greater involvement of ordinary villagers in the management process then had impact on incomes through value addition and identification of alternative markets for products. For example, in Batanai the newly bundled and decorated brooms sold at higher prices – even though making them took more time. Women broom grass resource users in Batanai began to team up to expand their market by selling brooms in faraway places with no broom grass. Teaming up specifically helped those women who were not allowed by their husbands to travel to such far places on their own. Third, stakeholders adopted and promoted use of sustainable practices. Beekeepers, for example, began seriously to consider trying to prevent cutting down of hollow trees and forest fires. Although there was no study to quantify the impact of these activities, it appears that stakeholders improved their knowledge of forest resources through their own monitoring activities. Resource users in Batanai, for instance, benefited from knowledge shared by the monitoring sub-committee on the areas, amounts, location and quality of grass resources. These positive changes are evidence that capacity building and participatory action research did generate learning and supported collective action, as intended in the ACM approach, even if a drawback was the high transaction costs associated with time spent in meetings, discussions, reflection sessions and workshops.

However, a follow up study four years after the project had ended showed that these improvements were not sustained. The following negative changes were observed during this second study. First, the status of the forest had deteriorated due to the increase in the number of new settlers in the forest. The new settlers had cleared forest areas both for settlement and for agricultural fields (Chapter 4). Resource management activities, e.g. the monitoring of resource harvesting processes, poaching and incidence of fire, stopped in areas where the new settlers had settled, and no alternative resource management activities were initiated in the forest. The new settlers privatised resources in the areas where they settled by staking-out and fencing-off their plots, and members from communities outside of the forest area could no longer access forest resources freely. The new settlers set fees for extraction of resources like broom grass from the staked-out fields. In the forest area that the

ACM research sites were managing, there was increased cutting down of live trees and poaching of wild game.

This happened after the death of the FC officer responsible for the project, since RMCs no longer received support. The FC Forest Protection Unit, the first point of contact for assistance, lacked transport or resources to pursue any issues. The succeeding officer focused on trying to evict the new settlers in the foest, but also died two years later. RMC efforts to engage with him in resource management, in Batanai area, for instance, proved to no avail, as the officer did not know the RMC members and therefore he did not stop when they tried to hail his vehicle. Resource users in Gababe were not even aware that a new officer had been appointed, even up to the time when he passed away.

Second, the Participatory Action Research (PAR) process initiated by the ACM project for resource user groups, stopped immediately after the ACM project ended. PAR was implemented as a way for tackling complex resource management problems where there were no ready-made answers available. The PAR processes halted, at least in part, because the ACM community partners organising the resource user meetings stopped facilitation due to lack of incentives. During the ACM project, the ACM community partners received monthly allowances for their work and after the project ended in 2003 some community partners became involved in cross-border trading to earn a living.

The FC officer, crucial in PAR activities by resource user groups, took over facilitation of the joint leaning processes when the CIFOR project ended, but lacked the basic resources to operate at the level of the resource user groups and facilitate learning processes. He did, however, manage to continue facilitating experience sharing and joint learning processes across RMCs for two years after the ACM project stopped with financial support from CIFOR (Chapter 4). These learning processes ended when he died, since his successor had a new focus and only received brief training on the ACM approach (a half day ACM training workshop in June 2006) even though he had not been exposed to similar approaches before.

Third, the functioning of RMCs deteriorated over time as a result of lack of input from the FC officer (Chapter 5). In Gababe area RMC performance initially continued to improve after the ACM project ended, but RMC members stopped being accountable to communities on their activities after the death of the FC officer. This resulted in communities becoming suspicious that RMC members were embezzling community funds. Several conflicts among the stakeholders broke out, and these were left unaddressed when the resource management activities and joint learning processes stopped (Chapter 5).

Clearly, then, the positive outcomes of the ACM project proved unsustainable. So what went wrong, and could these problems have been foreseen? This question is the focus of the next section.

6.3   Why positive outcomes were not sustained

There are several reasons why the improvements achieved in the ACM project period were not sustained. First, it is now clear that in the conceptualisation phase, both in

Bogor (Indonesia) and in Zimbabwe, there was overestimation of what an ACM team might achieve in practice as far as implementing the ACM approach was concerned. As seen in Chapter 4, Part I, a considerable amount of time and effort was spent setting the stage (through various interventions on capacity building and conflict resolution, for instance), for the PAR processes to take off, but the actual running in phase was too short. In effect, the project ended when resource users were just beginning to implement their action plans and before the crucial collaborative monitoring system was implemented.

The CIFOR researchers based their ACM approach on the belief that stakeholders could over time learn from their experiences how to best manage and use resources jointly. Indeed, some learning did happen, but the time frame was too limited. Learning processes for multiple stakeholders require longer time frames. In effect, what is learnt needs to become embedded within local thinking, and even become part of local "tradition". But additionally, solutions were needed to the myriad tensions and divisions affecting communities as preconditions for genuine joint learning to take place, and resolving these problems took up a huge part of the three-year ACM project time frame. Even after the three year project, some bigger conflicts still remained unresolved (even unaddressed – notably, what to do about the new settlers in the forest). The project, thus, badly underestimated time needed to resolve tensions and build a platform of trust among partners. When the project ended, the road ahead was still unclear.

Second, although contextual studies and initial project experience indicated the complexity of issues of power and politics associated with in the research sites, the ACM team did little to respond to this understanding, apart from engaging in some capacity building with marginalised groups to address issues of power and its unequal distribution. People not interested in the forest resources were deliberately left out. The ACM team chose not to focus on issues of power within rural society more generally, as they saw this as something beyond its scope. The team assumed that building the capacity of interested stakeholders, marginalised groups and women through Training for Transformation would break the apparent passiveness of the marginalised and prepare them to step up and 'participate' in resource management activities effectively. In its interventions, the team did not explicitly aim to locate and engage with existing sources of power in rural communities (e.g. traditional chiefs and ritual experts), but work around them. As a result, the team never evolved a clear strategy of engagement with the wider rural society and its influential power brokers (Chapter 3).

The situation with regard to state power was equally unsatisfactory, but for a different reason. Even at the outset, the team was quite aware of the highly unequal distribution of power between the two major stakeholders in the resource management process - local communities and the Forestry Commission. The problem was more a failure to think through the implications of this inequality. The FC held all the cards. Its legal authority to manage a state forest derived from the existing Forest Act. As seen in Chapter 1, this act was inherited from a colonial regime highly influenced by Western ideas on conservation largely ignoring the needs of local communities. Despite several changes made to legislation related to land acquisition by the new Zimbabwe government after independence, very little was done to try and change legislation related to forestry (Chapter 2). Local communities thus had no legal

authority to manage the forest reserve. Early settlers had lost their homes and sources of livelihood to a law that denied access to resources they had once accessed in the forest. The project went ahead to implement a participatory resource management scheme without proper thought to the "elephant in the room" (i.e. a law that made local community members criminals in their own back gardens). The colonial Forestry Act had resulted in several conflicts between the local communities and the Forestry Commission as communities continued to access forest resources illegally.

When faced with these problems, the FC initiated the Resource Sharing Project (RSP) to allow communities to benefit from minor non-timber forest products. Yet the ACM project was implemented in Mafungautsi against the background of an old colonial forestry law, and little was done to change it, even though the project aimed to address the needs of local community members. Initiating the process for reform of the Forest Act ought perhaps to have been a precondition for the implementation of the project. This would have helped to create a wider enabling environment for communities to participate in the management of state forests, as well as give them legal power to do so. As Mapedza and Mandondo (2002) rightly point out, without meaningful legal power over the resources they were supposed to manage, local communities felt cheated, since at any time it suited, the FC could revert to its old management system under a new name.

Nor did the project pay proper attention to evidence of communal strife in the area. Even though contextual studies revealed historical struggles over land between local communities and the FC, the team did not see much scope to address this issue. The prevailing assumption of ACM team members was these structural conflicts could be placed in abeyance. Their hope was that through implementing the Participatory Action Research (PAR) process and learning together to solve their problems local stakeholders in Mafungautsi would eventually gain the confidence to tackle the bigger land issue in the area. This is to assume (or imply) that "participation" is such a powerful good that it can serve as a counter-balance on sovereign power. To say the least, there is no real evidence, anywhere, that it enjoys such potent features.

In consequence, of this unwarranted faith in the power of participation the ACM team placed too much emphasis on facilitating the passage of stakeholders through the PAR process, in the hope that reform of attitudes alone would reshape actions. This is a reflection of a basic assumption underlying the ACM approach that joint learning from the PAR processes by stakeholders was a key ingredient to make resource management problems resolvable.

But it is also relevant to mention the overall political context, and the highly charged atmosphere over land reform. Perhaps this helps account for the decision that researchers took to work only with community members with a direct interest in helping to conserve forest resources. Members of the wider community – whether they were villagers or local politicians – were left out of the project, even though they sought to claim forest land. In effect, by opting to work only with those directly 'for' conservation, the ACM team was exempted from becoming involved in issues of power around land ownership, a position that might have placed project staff in the political firing line.

Belief in the power of participation to resolve the land issue seems in retrospect only wishful thinking. Several researchers (Logan and Moseley, 2002; Chauveau and Richards 2008; Kaimowitz and Shell, 2007) have suggested that resource management initiatives will not succeed even in their most limited conservation aims if they shy away from analysis and resolution of fundamental societal conflicts.

In Mafungautsi, various stakeholders (including local politicians and some early settlers) make claims to forest land based on their historical backgrounds and rights. Although these claims are not legally recognised under the existing Forest Act, they cannot be held at bay on a legal pretext (Mohamed-Katerere, undated). Talking to all parties involved in local land issues was therefore a crucial aspect of project activity. Whether local agreements could have then been accommodated by the FC within the existing Forest Act is perhaps doubtful, but that would then indicate that the project should either have withdrawn or begun to initiate action for reform at a higher level.

When faced with similar circumstances, the ACM team in Cameroon facilitated platforms for stakeholders to discuss the underlying causes of land problems. Local people lost their land when the Ottotomo forest reserve was established in 1930. Over time, there was increasing shortage of land due to increase in population, and this resulted in conflicts between the local communities and reserve managers, as people encroached in the forest to farm. After discussions facilitated by the ACM team, involving the forestry department, the stakeholders finally agreed to come up with a new land use plan for the area. This included the creation of a buffer zone within the forest to provide additional farm land to local communities (Jum, 2003; Jum *et al.*, 2009). Agro-forestry activities were also allowed within the zone and the forestry department provided the new agro-forestry management skills required. Institutional structures were also put in place to support the implementation of agreements, and those who did not abide by the rules were reported and arrested (Jum *et al.*, 2009).

This might provide a model for similar action in Zimbabwe. It is thus frustrating to learn that in Cameroon the ACM project closed down in about the same time as the project in Zimbabwe, and that follow up studies are yet to be carried out. However, it is pertinent to add that the productive capacities of the forests in question are quite different. The Mafungautsi forest is characterised by infertile sandy soils prone to rapid erosion (Zingore *et al.*, 2005). The soils in Ottotomo forest are fertile and suitable for agricultural production.

Within the local communities themselves, it was clear from the early stages of the ACM project that there was unequal distribution of power among stakeholders in the local communities and the ACM team also did little to challenge the existing power relations. For instance, RMCs that were put in place in a mostly top-down way by the FC and were still in existence when the project was initiated. Membership comprised representatives of the local elite, mostly male. In Batanai, for instance, except for one powerful woman (a wife of a village head) all positions on the RMC were held by men (Chapter 5). Again, the RMC was filled with powerful people: the chair, vice chair and secretary were the chief's secretary, the chiefs' assessor and the councillor respectively. The treasurer of the RMC was the headmen and ordinary members of the RMC were members of the VIDCO.

Also the FC advocated for people who could read and write to be elected to RMC positions. Thus, no illiterates took part. This excluded the early settlers who mainly belonged to this group without education (Chapter 2). Instead of challenging the unequal distribution of power among stakeholders, the ACM team did very little apart of capacity building processes to empower marginalised groups to participate in resource management. It was assumed that with capacity building marginalised groups would feel empowered to become members of the RMCs. There was no emphasis on structural constraints – e.g. insisting on committee quotas for early settlers, or organizing adult education to overcome the illiteracy constraint.

In Batanai however, participation by women improved. For instance, one poor woman managed to be elected to a number of committees not related to resource management (Chapter 5). But when opportunity for RMC members arose to elect new members, and perhaps change the balance of power by including the poor people in the important resource management institution, political factors influenced the selection process. Politically powerful people were elected to take over as new members of the RMC, with the chair being a powerful member of the ruling ZANU-PF political party.

The ACM team, therefore, did not do much to challenge existing power relations and the unequal distribution of power in these communities. This resulted in conflicts that threatened resource management activities. The poor employed what Scott (1985) terms 'weapons of the weak' to meet their objectives. Some continued harvesting resources outside the Resource Sharing Project agreement, while others quietly moved into the forest to reclaim ancestral lands.

This blind spot in the ACM approach is disturbing given the fact that the failure to engage with issues of power and politics has been one of the strongest criticisms of participatory approaches (Cooke and Kothari, 2001). In effect, the ACM team took participation to be a technical method of organising project work rather than a methodology to empower poor and marginalised groups (Carmen, 1996; Cleaver, 1999; Rahman, 1995). In an assessment intended to answer some the above criticisms of participatory development Hickey and Mohan (2005) found that successful participatory development initiatives were those that explicitly aimed to focus on issues of power and politics and challenge existing power relations, rather than simply work around them for service delivery.

Thus it is now easy to see that steps ought to have been taken to facilitate negotiations between the more powerful stakeholder, the FC, and local communities, to open up a space for these communities to participate legally in the management of their forest. Such negotiations might have resulted in, for instance, stakeholders reshaping the RSP to ensure win-win distribution of benefits across a wider set of groups. To challenge existing power relations, the ACM team could have done more to lobby for RMC positions to be reserved for under-represented groups, including women and illiterate early settlers.

Third, and related to the above point about the failure to perceive that an unreformed Forest Act was a constraint on project aims, insufficient attention was paid by the ACM team to the conflicting and different needs of local community members. Poverty, need (and perhaps also some greed), and the ever-present problem of land

shortage undermined whatever scope individual actors might otherwise have had to cooperate, or show generosity to other groups.

Like the Resource Sharing Project (RSP), the ACM project continued to focus on low quality resources like broom and thatch grasses. Even with value added, resources like broom grass sold at low prices, thereby not generating meaningful income for the resource users. A different approach should have been considered. Bearing in mind the low value of thatching grass, it might have made sense to improve thatching skills among resource uses, to encourage some, at least, to not only sell grass but to work as skilled thatchers. A similar approach might have been taken with the beekeepers – e.g. training them to generate more income through making products such as candles and body oil.

Other skills (like for instance, marketing skills) might have been equally important. The ACM team initiated processes in Ndarire (where grasses are not found in the part of the forest they were managing) to lobby for high value timber to be included to the resource sharing agreement. The ACM project however, ended before much was done. The inclusion of high value resources such as timber in the RSP agreement could have significantly contributed to poverty alleviation by giving local communities a better stake in the timber trade.

The intrinsic value of the forest as watershed might also have been brought into the equation (Chapter 2). The forest represents a public good as a watershed and negotiations might have been pursued with relevant government departments for communities to be compensated for their work in preserving it. Mafungautsi Forest is a source of major rivers that drain into the Zambezi River, where the Kariba Dam is important for generating hydro-electricity for the country. Local communities helping to take care of the forest had electricity neither in their homes nor any form of compensation for their work in ensuring a good supply of electricity elsewhere. Compensation would give them a direct stake in the wider economy and its success, while also helping local land users to understand the need to preserve the environmental services provided by the forest.

A RSP proposal sent to the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) to promote eco-tourism in the area (Chapter 2) might also have been pursued. Facilities (such as the FC camp) might have been upgraded for eco-tourism purposes (Chapter 2).

The ACM project had little interest in any such options. In effect, it was focused on "improving" participation at the expense of thinking about poverty alleviation more broadly, despite a basic aim to improve the lives of local communities in areas surrounding the forest. Increasing levels of poverty and hunger saw local community members (some of whom were crucial in resource management activities) migrating and participating in dangerous and illegal gold panning activities, as well as going to neighbouring countries in search of employment. Addressing local needs has been identified as crucial in conservation work. Kaimowitz and Sheil (2007) clearly point out: '…conservation can and should address broader, more diversified and more democratically defined goals, and should recognise and address the needs and aspirations of local people: especially the poor and vulnerable (p. 572).' The ACM team fell short of these ideals.

Fourth, the ACM team, when dealing with the issue of institutions, concentrated effort on influencing the RMCs to become transparent and downwardly accountable institutions. Instead of initiating a new organisation, or working with the traditional authority structures, the ACM team decided to build on the RMCs put in place by the FC at the start of the RSP. With conflict resolution and capacity building, these reformed organisations, especially in Gababe, became more downwardly accountable (Chapter 5). The changes were not sustained, however, and the RMCs deteriorated rapidly after the death of the FC officer. Even though a constitution clearly stipulated how RMCs were supposed to function, including accountability to their constituencies, no means to enforce constitutional rules was in place. Furthermore, the constitution was not translated into vernacular languages, restricting knowledge of it to those capable of reading a document in English.

The ACM team neglected best practice guidelines in this area. The issue of rules and regulations has been clearly identified by a growing body of body of literature (Ostrom, 1990; Bromley and Cernea, 1989; Cleaver, 2000; Kayambazintu *et al.*, 2003) as important in determining the success or failure of participatory initiatives.

Although resource users were clear that it was important for effective rules to be in place for managing various resources, not much was done to enable them to come up with clear rules or to enforce them. The ACM researchers focused their efforts on trying to influence norms, values, attitudes and beliefs through the Participatory Action Research (PAR) and joint learning processes. The aim here was to stimulate people to cooperate and undertake joint actions. By going through the PAR process, the ACM team focused on changing local beliefs about the use and management of the forest resources. For instance, when the ACM team facilitated a meeting for resource users in the Batanai area to reflect on the Machije experiment on the broom grass digging, their main hope was that resource users would remind each other of lessons learned. The main aim was behaviour change, e.g. to start using sustainable methods for harvesting broom grass.

It might have been better to focus on creating a set of effective rules and to work towards their enforcement. A woman from Batanai demonstrated that the rules they had agreed on were not known by outside support agencies – e.g. the police. The project might at this point have focused not so much on internalizing behaviour change but on getting locally agreed management rules turned into local government by-laws. This would have implied some intensive work with e.g. The Rural District Council, as the entity to suggest such by-laws and to pass them on for higher approval. With by-laws in place, communities could then have used the police and other law enforcement agents to sanction those not following such agreed bye-laws.

The ACM team, however, simply left the issue of by-laws untouched and assumed that the FC officer would take over the process later on. With no effective regulatory systems in place, the forest became in effect an open access resource. In the absence of any sanctions on outside offenders the degradation of the forest was, thus, a foregone conclusion, given the increasing levels of poverty and need in Mafungautsi, and the country at large.

Finally, the ACM team left future work in the hands of the FC, thinking that the way ahead was clear and straightforward. This placed too much burden on the role of the FC officer to maintain an enforcement structure to ensure that the RMCs continued to be downwardly accountable to their communities, while at the same time the same officer was also the crucial factor in up-scaling the ACM approach to the other RMC areas around the forest. This was an overestimation of what the FC officer could possibly achieve on his own resources once the project ended. The team failed properly to assess how an understaffed and underfunded organisation with personnel earning meagre salaries, hardly sufficient for survival, would manage alone.

To expect the FC officer to be able to scale-up the use of the ACM approach to the remaining 11 sites around the forest was a particularly gross miscalculation, given that the multi-disciplinary ACM team already knew how much it had had to invest in establishing activities in only 2-3 places in three years. Even though the FC officer was keen to apply the approach in the other RMC areas, he would not have been able to do so without commensurate human support and funding assistance. These were simply not forthcoming. The ACM team used a substantial budget during the project period to kick start the PAR processes. An even larger budget would therefore have been required to engage the remaining forest-edge communities in similar processes.

Although on first assessment it might seem that wider events in the country finished off a beautiful initiative in its infancy, the five points above are sufficient to suggest that the positive ACM outcomes would have been unsustainable, even in the absence of the subsequent crisis in Zimbabwe. If learning-based participatory forestry management is to have a future in very poor countries it is clear that it has to incorporate strong doses of political realism, based on a more thorough understanding of the political economy of resource alienation. It also needs to address an institutional issue. Specifically, it needs to take regulation seriously and find effective rules and means of enforcing these rules, rather than rely on vague notions of human goodness and behaviour modification. Furthermore, participatory resource management needs to be supported by adequate longer-term financial provision and human resources. The following section elaborates on what might need to be taken into account if learning-based participatory approaches are to be reorganized to bring about positive lasting changes to the status of resources and lives of local communities involved in managing those resources.

6.4 Strategic considerations to ensure positive results in participatory resource management initiatives

The ACM approach was developed as a response to criticism of participatory resource management initiatives from conservationists who blamed participation of local communities for exacerbating resource degradation. After reading this thesis, the reader might be tempted to think the conservationist critics were right, and quickly dismiss the learning-based approach. This is a normal reaction to any failure. There is, however, a risk of throwing the baby out together with the bath water. For me, the learning-based approaches are still being developed, and have potential to help us avoid the square-wheel paradigm, i.e. reinventing an old approach that was as big a failure as the present one (Wilshusen *et al.* 2002). To improve the learning-based paradigm some conceptual enlargement is now needed. The following issues seem to be salient.

To start with, learning-based participatory resource management projects must be given sufficiently long time frames, especially when outside facilitating agents are involved. Long time frames will enable facilitators to set up a solid base with more chance of enduring success when they finally pull out. There is also need for adequate long-term financing (covering both pilot and continuation phases). This should also be coupled with appropriate investments in human resources. The learning-based approach to participation is both labour and skill-intensive. Teams that facilitate the participatory resource management processes need to be multi-disciplinary and include expertise from the fields of political ecology and new institutionalism. Teams should consist of members with both analytical and facilitation skills, as both aspects are crucial.

Following the entry process into the community, in-depth contextual studies (as presented in Chapter 2, for instance), should be conducted to generate understanding of the local situation, uncover underlying causes of resource management problems, and (crucially) generate understanding of the political power dynamics that are at play in the relevant communities. Participatory resource management initiatives must also be ready to challenge existing power relations where these are clearly reproducing poverty and marginalising important stakeholders. Facilitators of learning based-approaches for instance, in developing countries should be aware that resource management problems are deeply rooted in colonial policies that remained unreformed when countries like Zimbabwe became independent. Conservation aims cannot be sustainably attained through perpetuating injustices. Facilitators in learning-based approaches will, thus, at times need to work with, or even challenge, governments in lobbying for essential legal reforms and the realization of basic human rights. Without these changes, resource management efforts will continue to perpetuate past command-and-control management, resulting in continued conflict among stakeholders and deterioration of resources.

Facilitators also need to be aware that issues of politics and power are inherent in local communities. When there is unequal distribution of power, schemes for participatory management of resources are likely to be captured by local elites, while marginalised groups will continue to be sidelined. Interventions to challenge existing power relationship at the local community level may be needed, therefore, as part of the participatory approach.

Learning-based resource management will also have to pay more attention to wider strategies of poverty alleviation. Conservation requires a win-win situation among local stakeholders. This may require lobbying for high value resources to be included in resource sharing agreements, or paying attention to skill levels and value-added resource transformation processes. The approach may need to be varied where high value resources are not present but a natural resource provides important public goods or environmental services. In such cases, the learning-based approach must also include learning how to lobby effectively for communities to be compensated for their custodial role. Only when all this has been done, is it appropriate for resource users to go through the PAR processes, to learn about the co-management of an enlarged "pot" of benefits.

All the above could have been included in a scenario for the Mafungautsi forest - namely, change in policies to support participation of local communities in resource management, change in structures that keep marginalised groups in unfavourable situations and continued poverty. In situations where policies already support participation by local communities in the management of resources, there is need to ensure that authority and decision making powers are truly transferred to the grass roots. In the case of the Zimbabwe Communal Area Management Programme for Indigenous Resources (CAMPFIRE), policies that support the participation of local communities have been put in place, but management authority and decision making powers have not been effectively devolved. The devolution of powers ends at the Rural District Council (RDC) level and this has led to the failure of resource management efforts.

Facilitators of learning-based resource management initiatives however need to be aware that going through the above mentioned steps is bound to take a long time, especially when it involves attempts to address marginality resulting from existing power relations. It is naïve to think that a three or five year learning-based project can generate sustainable changes. When evaluating similar participatory resource management initiatives in Africa, other researchers (Kiss, 1990; Hannah, 1992; Wells *et al.*, 1992) also came to a similar conclusion that a 3-5year project was too short to bring meaningful changes. This has implications for the way project time frames are set up, and donors need to be flexible especially when dealing with learning-based participatory resource management projects. Unfortunately, there are no obvious short cuts, if alternatives to the idea of parks and protected land are to be found. The lesson of this thesis is that skipping the initial steps, and rushing to initiate PAR research interventions, as in the ACM project, results only in superficial and not long-lasting positive change.

Wrapping up

The ACM team pulled out after having used a substantial budget to facilitate PAR activities in three of the fourteen Resource Management Committee (RMC) areas in Mafungautsi forest. Subsequent developments show that the most difficult part was still to be tackled when the team left. The ACM team was, in fact, learning fast, realising the complexity of its task, and if the process had been continued, some useful reforms might have been achieved. But for this to happen, the rather inward looking belief that stakeholders would cooperate solely via the stimulus of mutual learning would have had to be abandoned in favour of some more realistic appreciation of the messy, conflicted nature of local political processes. Part of the required standpoint would be a realisation that the Mafungautsi Forest and the people living in and around it did not constitute a world apart, but were merely small cogs in the wheels of a larger historical and regional system of colonial and neo-colonial land acquisition and resource extraction. This larger and a much contested picture is the inescapable starting point for understanding forest land dynamics in Zimbabwe. The notion that somehow the forest is or can be a quiet corner in a largely traditional world of African cooperation has to be abandoned in favour of a picture in which strong competing regional cross-currents are given full analytical due. In short, it is in a combination of perspectives from participation, new institutionalism and political ecology that the way forward will be found.

6.5 Concluding remarks: a personal reflection

As a participant in a learning-based resource management project what did I learn from this experience? One thing I am now conscious of is the danger of generalizing from a sample of one. Unfortunately, I have only the Mafungautsi forest case study to shed light on possibilities of moving towards sustainability in forest management. What the team was trying to do was not easy (dealing with so many issues and concepts at the same time), as my account has demonstrated. During the project period we all shared a strong belief that we were indeed on the right path, as can be seen from the multiple publications we generated concerning activities around the Mafungautsi forest (Chapter 3). These publications, to our knowledge, were well received at the time, and the approach was applauded. But looking at adverse developments four years after the project ended, I now wonder if it was at all worth the effort. A question that the reader can ask after reading this thesis is, 'can sustainable management be <u>learnt</u>?' We know from other studies that parks and protected areas do not lead to successful conservation of natural resources (Hayes, 2006; Wilshusen *et al.*, 2002; Borrini-Feyerabend, 2002). If we want to avoid falling back on an ineffective paradigm of enforced protection we have to recognise that politics and power are inherently part of the interaction between humans and nature, as Robbins (1994) claims. 'Participation' and 'learning'-based approaches have their place in preparing people to play their part, but implementing such approaches should not prevent us from looking at contextual realities. One could argue that the Zimbabwe situation is an extreme case demonstrating how politics and poverty can totally disrupt conservation efforts. However, the issues of poverty, power and politics described in this thesis are not unique to Zimbabwe, but present in all developing countries. What we definitely can learn from the Zimbabwe case is how systematically to reflect on learning-based conservation initiatives, in a wider comparative framework of experiences. This means that work is now needed to "locate" the case here described in its broader field. This thesis has tried to locate the participatory learning-based approach in a wider intellectual landscape, including perspectives from new institutionalism and political ecology. It would now be useful to follow up on similar initiatives in the other countries where the ACM approach was implemented. This would also help to check the outcomes of the learning approach in stable socio-economic and political environment and whether these outcomes were sustained or not, to throw further, comparative light on why the outcomes of the learning based approach were not sustained in the rapidly deteriorating socio-economic and political environment in Zimbabwe. I have here outlined reasons for thinking that there were internal, conceptual problems with the learning-based approach, but equally I have argued that giving more analytical scope to power, politics and institutions does not invalidate a learning-based orientation in conservation, but will strengthen it and make it more effective. This way, advocates of participation in development will avoid making the same mistakes repeatedly.

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Annexes

Annex 2.1.   The Forestry Commission Organogram (Source: Forestry Commission, 2004)
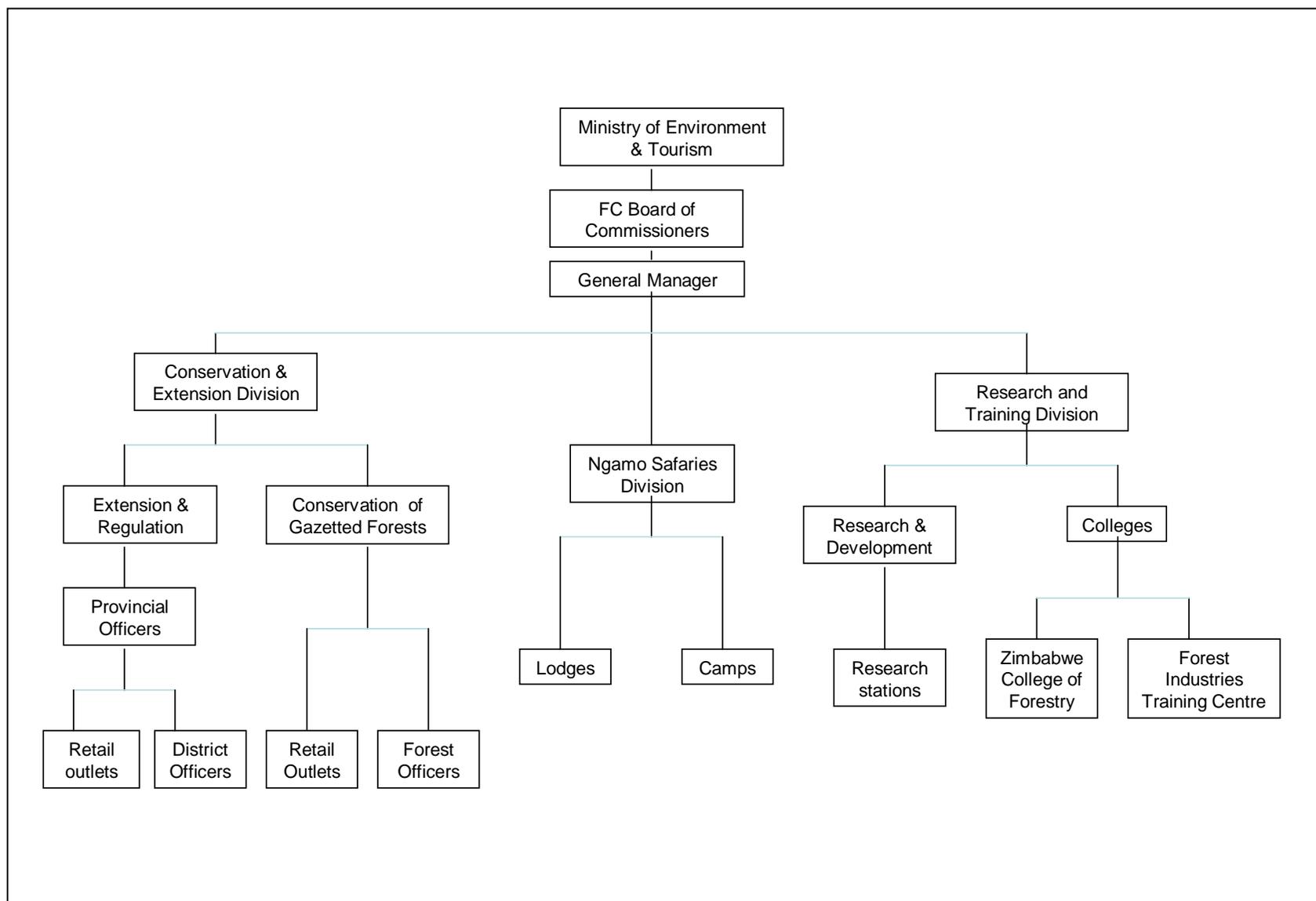
Annex 2.2: **The stages that a bill goes through in parliament before it becomes a law**
(Source: Parliament of Zimbabwe, 2006)

- After being gazetted, the bill is referred to a Portfolio Committee that shadows the responsible ministry. The committee then consults the public to get their input on the bill. The Committee then prepares a report.

- *First reading*: After giving a written notice on his/her intention to present a bill, the Minister introduces the bill to the House of Assembly by reading its title. The bill is then referred to the Parliament Legal Committee (PLC) to determine if the Bill, when enacted will contravene the Declarations of rights or section of the Constitution (constitutional bills are not referred to the PLC).

- *Second reading*: After reports by the PLC and recommendations have been taken into consideration, the bill is set for second reading. At this stage, the Minister presents the principles of the bill and these are debated upon. Amendments are then suggested and these are placed at the Order Paper.

- *Committee Stage*. At this stage the parliament resolves itself into a Committee and presents the bill to the Senate – the Chair of the committee takes over and the Speaker steps down. The Bill is considered clause by clause and any amendments made are debated.

- *Report stage*. The Speaker resumes his/her role as Chair and the chair of the Committee reports the bill with or without amendments. If reported with amendments, the bill is referred to the PLC for consideration to formally adopt the recommendations. If the report is given without amendments, it is set for a third reading.

- *Third reading*. For an ordinary bill (and not a constitutional bill), a simple majority of members present is sufficient to pass the bill. After this, the bill is transmitted to the other House of Parliament.

- *Transmission to and passage in the Other house*. Once the bill has been passed in the house where it originated, it is transmitted to the other house and set for a second reading. The bill goes through the same stages as mention above. If the other house adopts the amendments to the Bill, it is referred back to the house of origin for concurrence.

- *Presidential Assent*. Once a bill has been duly passed by the Parliament in terms of the Constitution and Standing Orders and is authenticated by the Clerk of Parliament, it is presented to the Head of State for assent. The President then returns the copy of the Act with his signature and Public Seal.

- *Enrolment of the Act*. After the President's assent, the Clerk of Parliament makes the authenticated copy of the Act to be enrolled on the record in the office of the registrar of high Court.

Annex 2.3[70]: Zimbabwe Dollars (ZWD) equivalent to 1 United State Dollar (USD) from 2001 to 2007 (Source: http://www.oanda.com/convert/fxhistory**)**

Month	Year						
	2001	**2002**	**2003**	**2004**	**2005**	**2006**	**2007**
January	55.19	57.37	57.09	819.02	5,516.73	91,621.13	259,000.13
February	55.14	57.36	56.84	1,023.23	5,500.40	98,920.45	259,000.24
March	55.14	57.38	56.86	4,077.18	5,500.40	99,322.75	259,000.09
April	55.18	57.33	208.62	4,470.30	5,780.40	99,258.17	258,000.72
May	55.17	57.28	813.92	5,199.76	6,561.72	101,270.19	257,000.85
June	55.90	57.23	814.47	5,327.84	9,092.96	101,227.16	255,000.23
July	55.97	57.08	814.44	5,314.58	11,145.30	101,292.00	255,000.12
August	56.04	57.13	820.37	5,440.04	18,701.26	10,037.10	255,000.00
September	56.25	57.14	816.04	5,498.97	24,293.37	259,000.57	19,518,000.95
October	57.32	57.08	817.71	5,421.86	27,264.17	259,000.43	30,685,000.23
November	57.26	57.07	814.22	5,616.19	62,161.39	259,000.13	30,653,000.08
December	57.33	57.05	815.26	5,665.85	76,856.13	259,000.17	30,697,000.59

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[70] The Zimbabwe reserve bank governor knocked off three zeros from the currency to help consumers deal with transactions rendered incomprehensible through hyperinflation. This was effected from the 1st of August 2006. The true numbers were used when constructing the graph.

Annex 3.1:   The Social Learning Concept note

Title: Demystifying the concept of social learning by T. Mutimukuru, Jan 2001

Introduction
Adaptive Collaborative Management comprises three broad processes namely, stakeholder interactions and relations, communication and learning among stakeholders, and joint or collective action that result in changes or adjustments to management of forest resources. The new management strategies impact on benefits derived from the forests and also the quality of the forest resource. This paper will only focus on one of the three processes, learning among stakeholders (social learning), and tries to answer the following question: What is social learning and how can it be traced in practice? It is divided into five different sections. The next section presents a definition of social learning. This is followed by a discussion on what facilitating social learning entails. Section 4 later on discusses how social learning can be traced in real life. The fifth section discusses a very crucial question on how the social learning process can be sustained.

Defining Social Learning
Several types of learning can be identified in literature and these include:

Experiential learning - implies learning from experience

Action Learning – represents an advance of experiential learning. According to King (2000), "social learning aims to provide effective means of obtaining real solutions to real problems in real life situations" (pp). It involves a process of experiential learning and is the underlying principle for action research. It allows learners to use what they learn to tackle the most priority problems under actual work conditions. This type of learning has multitude benefits. Learners do not only gain self-understanding and skills, but also uncover the real reasons underlying the existing problem.

Participatory/Collaborative/ Social Learning. Several definitions of social learning have been identified in literature. Some researchers define social learning as an approach and philosophy, which focuses on participation processes of social change. It involves: critical self-reflection, development of multi-layered democratic processes, reflective capabilities of individuals and societies and the capacity for social movements to change political and economic frameworks for the better (Woodhill and Roling 1998). Others define social learning as: a conscientisation process (Friere, 1974), a process of experiential learning (Kolb, 1984), a dynamic process which involves continuous sense making of the world through the perspectives or frames of references based on concrete, experience-modified knowledge, beliefs, values (Dangbegnon, 1998), and finally, a dynamic process of adaptation and action by the stakeholders through the experiences encountered by involvement with other people and the physical environment. According to Morren and Wilson, 1990, social learning is much more than memorising facts and acquiring intellectual understanding and is an adaptive process, which includes the ability to act as well as understand and attribute meanings. Social learning depends on all sorts of preconditions, which have to be created and strategically negotiated in advance, and involves gaining understanding about other stakeholders' perceptions, goals and interests. It is also based upon consensus

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building through cooperation by group members (Panitz, 1996). Interaction among stakeholders is very important because it shows alternative ways of getting things done and is most fruitful when people are able to be non-judgmental, entering into dialogue and not dismissing views from other people because they are different, but they should try to identify the assumptions made and learn from them.

Social learning involves a number of steps and these are (Maarleveld, et al., 1997):

- Shared problem definition
- Shared sense of mutual interdependency
- Shared social construction of the hard system in question
- Shared perception of the causes of the problem including agreed ways of looking at intractable social impasses
- Reflective learning about how others see oneself
- Shared perspective on the nature of the solution, both in terms of hard and soft changes
- Collective resource mobilization
- Establishing leadership and organization for action

Defining Social Learning in the Mafungautsi context

The various definitions for social learning have been the basis for defining social learning in the context of Mafungautsi, where social learning is defined as: a dynamic process of adaptation and action by a group of stakeholders, who are continuously interacting, communicating, and reflecting upon their experiences and coming up with lessons to influence future decision making processes. The social learning process starts with many problems being identified by stakeholders sharing a common resource. Through facilitation, stakeholders critically analyses the various problems and finally come up with a shared problem definition. This is followed by identification of each stakeholder's interest in being involved in the process. With the multiple interests, a sense of interdependency has to be cultivated among these stakeholders in order for them to realize that each stakeholder cannot solve the problem single handedly and requires input from the other stakeholders. Stakeholders then seek the various ways of solving the problem at hand. Through discussions on their experiences and negotiations, stakeholders come up with a solution(s) that ensures that they all benefit. Leadership structures are then put in place to spearhead implementation of the desired solution. Stakeholders later on reflect on the solution and discuss if it managed to solve their problem or not. All these steps are similar to those of the learning cycle presented in Figure 1.

But what do stakeholders learn about?

Decision-making process in Natural Resource management is a learning process. Stakeholders learn about the consequences (rewards or punishments) of their actions. It is more rewarding for stakeholders to find their own solutions than for someone to impose solutions on them. Stakeholders also learn from the experiences, goals and interests of others through sharing and communicating with each other.

Facilitating Social Learning: What does it entail?

Social learning involves learning by doing and this type of learning has a number of characteristics:

- It cannot be wholly planned and prescribed in advance because the scope of what people will actually learn is not known. However, facilitators can have some guidelines on possible things which participants could learn
- it does not happen once and for all and people will continue to learn and build upon what they have learnt previously. There are a number of steps that are involved in this type of learning. Participants might start with some experiences they already have or they can have an activity. After the activity, participants can then discuss, review and reflect upon it and later draw up some conclusions. The conclusion is useful in future for decision-making processes. All these steps form a learning cycle which is represented in Figure 1, below

Figure 1[71]: The Learning cycle
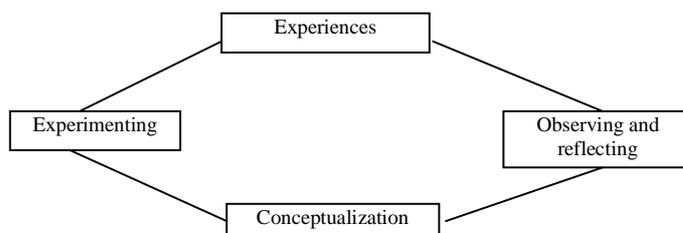
Facilitating social learning involves (Roling and Jiggins 1998)

Stimulating group learning processes through fostering discussion, engaging in exercises and creating learning experiences. It is important to realize that, in resource management situations, learning can take place without any assistance from outside. However, facilitators can help by stimulating and complementing the learning process. They can do this through:

- Use of visualisation techniques to fasten the results so that stakeholders can see them quickly.
- Fostering discovery learning by not answering farmers' questions on the bases of one's experiences, but using the questions as opportunities for discovery learning through experimentation
- Replacing reliance on farmer's own capacity to anticipate and enhance desirable natural processes.

It is important for facilitators to realise that, Facilitating social learning is very complex, requires a lot of skills in a variety of areas and understanding of the learners' previous experiences and expectations, acknowledging that humans are intentional beings and their involvement in learning, reactions and what they learn cannot always be predicted or anticipated (King 2000).

In order to facilitate conflict resolution, negotiation and learning processes, facilitators require the following competencies; (i) they must have a mandate to do so, (ii) should have knowledge

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[71] Source: George B. and William C., 1995.

on how to facilitate, (iii) should have facilitation skills, (iv) should have authority, (v) should be willing to facilitate and lastly, (vi) should be trustworthy.

Methodology for Tracing Social Learning
Having defined what social learning is and how it can be facilitated, it is crucial to look at how this learning can be evaluated. The important questions therefore are: How do we know that social learning has taken place? Can social learning be measured?

Two broad methodologies namely, quantitative and qualitative, have been identified in literature for measuring social learning.

Qualitative Methods
This focuses on stakeholder's perceptions on the social learning process. Stakeholder's who have been jointly involved in collective management of resources can be asked after a period of time to critically reflect on the whole process and assess the level of social learning. A qualitative in-depth study can be carried out with groups of stakeholders, in for instance, a focus group discussion. A checklist can be used to guide such a discussion with the various stakeholders. An example of such a checklist is given below

> **A checklist to Measure Social learning: Questions that could be discussed**
> - Who learned?
> - What was learned?
> - What counts as learning?
> - What specific things did they learn?
> - How did they learn them?
> - Did the learning make them change their agricultural practices, forest resource management techniques or the way they perceive certain issues?
> - What factors hindered or enhanced the social learning process?

Other qualitative techniques that can be used include:
Participant observation - the researcher observes the changes taking place throughout the whole learning process including: livelihood strategies, agricultural practices and how they change over time. Through this technique, the researcher can also measure how much knowledge stakeholders use in practice.

Personal evaluation forms – stakeholders can be asked to complete self-evaluation forms (the questions to be asked could be similar to those in the above checklist). Stakeholders can be asked to give their perceptions on whether they think they learned new facts, skills, arguments, new insights and perspectives by participating in a social learning exercise. They can also explain what these lessons are and how this changed their behaviour.

Quantitative Methods
This involves quantifying the changes taking place over time due to the social learning process. An oral/ practical test can be administered to a group of stakeholders to determine the level of understanding of a certain principle. The oral test that involves a stakeholder explaining how

something can be made. For instance, in the case of bee keeping, a stakeholder who claims to have learnt about how to make a beehive can be asked to explain such a process. In the practical test, the stakeholder can be given all the materials needed to make a hive, and he/she can be asked to make the beehive in the presents of the evaluator.

A quantitative survey can also be used to find out people' practices before and after a social learning process and these two can be compared to see if any changes took place. Changes that could take place could be reductions/ additions to amount of resource harvested, and amount of resources allocated for each enterprise.

There are not many techniques used in literature to measure social learning quantitatively, and the ACM project may also contribute to that.

Benefits and challenges for participating in social learning
Our hypotheses for the benefits and challenges of social learning are given below.

Benefits
- We hypothesis that stakeholders will benefit as follows:
- The social learning systems will create a platform for communication and enhancement of understanding of social and biophysical systems which integrates different knowledge systems or ways of knowing.
- The collaborative nature of learning enhances an in-depth understanding of the forest and social systems which enables greater reflective and anticipatory understanding of changes to the system and thus greater potential for rapid adaptation.
- It also enhances better understanding of problems faced by the community, and help stakeholders to understand how each one of them view the problem, and why that is so. With such understanding, stakeholders together jointly re-define the problem in order to incorporate each other's views. With a re-defined problem, stakeholders can jointly come up with better solutions that are sustainable. Knowing each other's perception of the problem and interests is therefore an important element gained through social learning. An example to illustrate this point is as follows:

> If a problem is encountered in managing a natural resource, it is important that each stakeholder explains how he/she perceives this problem. For instance FC might mention the excessive cutting down of trees, while forest users mention prohibition of cutting down of trees as their biggest problem. Without these two stakeholders negotiating, the FC's solution to the problem would be to increase the number of people in the Forest Protection Unit (FPU) so that they can arrest more people who cut trees illegally. At the same time, forest users might decide to go and cut trees during the night so that they are not caught by the FPU. In this case, solutions that are taken by both stakeholders are not sustainable since each stakeholder is operating individually. However, with social learning, both parties learn about each other's definition of the problem and interests and through discussions might agree to define their problem and try to deal with it. Through negotiations, stakeholders then agree on quantities to be harvested by the forest users and how those who default will be punished. In this case, forest users also get involved in controlling and managing quantities they harvest thereby ensuring sustainable management.

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- Social learning also helps stakeholders to benefit from other's experiences so that they do not re-invent the wheel. As stakeholders go through their activities, they benefit through the experience of those who have undergone similar activities

Challenges
- Unwillingness of people to share their ideas/ innovations with others. Some stakeholders/ individuals are still not very much willing to share their activities with everyone else – i.e. they want to keep their innovations/ or ideas to themselves. Some stakeholders/ individuals could be shy to air out their own opinions, perceptions and views because they think others will not listen or take them into consideration
- Different learning styles for stakeholders. Individuals have different learning styles and this can complicate the learning process
- Power relations. Sometimes people tend to follow suggestion from people who they think are powerful and might disregard suggestions or ideas from the marginalized/ poor people.
- Lack of understanding of what social learning entails. Stakeholders might fail to learn because of lack of understanding of what social learning entails. This might result in stakeholders having no motivation to be involved in the social learning exercise.
- Unclear learning objectives. With unclear learning objectives it is very difficult for stakeholders to learn together.
- Lack of motivation for involvement in social learning. Some stakeholders are very innovative and are always ahead in whatever they do. They might fail to see the benefits in being involved in the social learning processes.
- Different education levels. Some stakeholders, because they are highly educated learn very fast, while others take a long time to understand what is happening.

How can the social learning process be sustained?
According to a study carried out in Australia by King (2000), three factors are important for sustaining social learning processes and these are: funding, facilitation and keeping learning going. According to the interviews conducted, funding enabled additional and enhanced learning opportunities to occur both within the group and the wider community. This is made possible through exchange visits, organized trips, competitions, only to mention a few. Concerning facilitation, the interviewees expressed the need to have a facilitator in the social learning processes. In most cases, stakeholders are not willing to take up that leading role and lack of facilitation was said to hinder learning. On the issue of learning, group members expressed their motivation to stay in a group, "to learn".

Stakeholders therefore need to be empowered with such facilitating and monitoring and evaluation skills, if the social learning process is to be made sustainable. One way of making stakeholders to have more control on sourcing funds for organizing such things as exchange visits, they need to be empowered through training such as the Training for Transformation.

Tracing social learning in Mafungautsi
The most crucial question now is, how are we going to trace social learning in Mafungautsi? To kick off, we will start by discussing the sources of information for the stakeholders on various subjects they consider important in their lives. It would be important to come up with a general

inventory of lesson learnt so far from the information obtained. Afterwards, the stakeholders can identify their information gaps, and may later come up with strategies of getting this information and from who. Table 1 can be used to generate such information.

Table 1: Information gaps and how this information will be obtained

Important subject	Sources of information in order of their importance	General lessons learnt so far from the information obtained	Information gaps – (information they think they are lacking)	From who do they intent to get this information
Agriculture Crops Livestock...	1 2 3…			
Forest Management strategies Growing trees…	1 2 3…			
Business Entrepreneurial skills – setting up a viable business Budgeting…	1 2			
Leadership skills How to be a good leader	1 2 3			

Strategies for filling the information gaps

- "Look and learn" visits. Together with the ACM researchers, stakeholders can organize such a visit, which will be followed up to find out the lessons learnt and how this has affected stakeholder's behaviour.
- Experiments can be carried out by groups or individual farmers. Results of such experiments can be shared among groups of stakeholders and such lessons can also be traced. For example, in an effort to encourage farmers to grow trees in the forest, different groups of farmers could be involved in experiments to propagate different indigenous tree species, with the aim of finding out under what conditions (soil type, amount of water etc) can maximum germination of each species be achieved. After the experiments, the different groups of stakeholders could share their results.
- Collaborative monitoring and evaluation can also generate very important information.
- Training workshops – Capacity-building workshops can be organized. Examples of such workshops include those focusing on: training for transformation and entrepreneurial skills.
- Sharing experiences among stakeholders. Sharing can be facilitated through organized group meetings, field days and the look and learn tours described above. Organized group meetings help certain issues to be discussed in a more systematic way, unlike in informal meetings were some aspects are not explored.

- A community newsletter. This could provide a platform for stakeholders to share their experiences and learn from each other. A small editorial team needs to be set up in this case, which will be responsible for editing articles that people submit. The newsletter, for instance could be for all people in the community who are interested in getting updates of what is happening in the community. These can be translated versions into vernacular languages for those who do not understand English.

Community partners will therefore play a very important role in documenting in detail, all the processes taking place in the community after such interventions.

Both qualitative measures and quantitative measures (as discussed in section 1.4) will be used to measure social learning.

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Annex 4.1:   The Community partner contract form and Terms of Reference

An agreement between

CIFOR ACM Zimbabwe Project, Batanai/ Gababe/ Ndarire area and Mr/Ms/Mrs………….

1. Mr/Ms/Mrs……………….. has been recruited by the Batanai/ Gababe/ Ndarire community and CIFOR ACM Zimbabwe Project as their Community Partner for their area for a contract period of 3 months, commencing on the 1st of October 2000, and thus ending on 31st December 2000.

2. The gross monthly salary of the employee, payable monthly by the CIFOR ACM project is Z$3000.00. Mr/ Ms/Mrs…… undertakes to perform to the best of his/her abilities all duties that are required of him/her, as specified in (task description),

Name:
…………………………………………………………………………………………..

Signed:
…………………………………………………………………………………………

Date:
…………………………………………………………………………………………

Signed:
…………………………………………………………………………………………
ACM Team Leader

Date:
…………………………………………………………………………………………

Signed:
…………………………………………………………………………………………
On behalf of Batanai/ Gababe/ Ndarire RMC

Date:
…………………………………………………………………………………………

Terms of Refference for Community partners

Research on adaptive collaborative management around Mafungautsi forest will be undertaken using the Participatory Action Research (PAR) approach. In this approach, communities or forest users with the facilitation of local Community partners will undertake the research, and the research team using PAR cycles of Reflection, Planning, Action, Observation, Feedback and Learning. Through the tasks below the Community partner will play a central role in enabling communities or forest users undertake the research. The community partner is primarily accountable to the community or forest users and not to the CIFOR ACM Zimbabwe Project.

Tasks:

1. Facilitate the undertaking of participatory research (PAR) by local communities and/or forest user groups.

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2. Undertake regular and detailed recording of the processes and outcomes of actions being undertaken by communities as they carry out their participatory research. The recording will be undertaken in a prescribed manner that is understandable to the communities and conforms to their culture and skills. Reports to be submitted fortnightly.
3. Facilitate PAR in your villages through discussions, planning, analysis, reflection, and learning by communities.
4. Represent both CIFOR's ACM team and the community at the local level and possibly above the local level.
5. Liaise with level stakeholders including those from elsewhere on matters relating to PAR in your area.
6. Contribute to timely preparation of reports on behalf of the community to the ACM team.
7. Be involved in monitoring, and facilitate monitoring of research progress by communities.
8. Carry out other duties as might be required by the CIFOR ACM team.

Annex 4.2:   Some of the meetings organised in the research sites between 2001-2002

Date of Meeting	Who organised meeting	With who?	Agenda
28/05 – 2/06 01	CIFOR researchers	Community members from Batanai, Gababe and Ndarire FC	• Training for Transformation workshop • Conflict resolution workshop
26/6/01	FC	Training workshop on bee keeping; honey production, processing and marketing	• Ndarire Community members
16/07/01	CIFOR researchers	Batanai Thatch group	• Visioning and action planning
30/07/01	CIFOR researchers	Resource users from Gababe, Ndarire, Batanai and the FC	• Criteria and Indicators workshop
23/8/01	Development Levy Finance Committee	Gababe community members	• Levy payment and collection • Prioritising areas of need to be developed by levies generated
29/8/01	ZANU (PF) Party Chairman	Gababe Community members	• Selection of ward co-ordinator and acting ward councillor • Informing the community about money set aside by government for project development in rural areas
2/09/01	Community Partner	Resource users in Ndarire	• Report back on broom grass modelling seminar held in Harare
2/9/01	RMC	Batanai resource users	• Sharing beehives among villages in the RMC • Selling price of old stock grass
4/9/01	RMC	Batanai resource users	• Follow up of the above: deliberate on how beehives could be shared
11/9/01	Community partner	Batanai resource users	• Dead wood and firewood collection
16/9/01	CIFOR researchers	Gababe Beekeeping group	• Context study on bee keeping in the area
	CIFOR researchers	Batanai broom grass resource users	• action planning meeting
17/9/01	CIFOR researchers	Gababe broom grass collectors	• Visioning with broom grass collectors
18/9/01	CIFOR researchers	Batanai Broom grass resource users	• Scenario building with broom grass collectors
	CIFOR researchers	Batanai Thatch grass resource users	• Visioning and action planning
20/9/01	Village heads	Ndarire community members	• Allocation of a single bee hive (donated to the community by FC)
30/9/01	Community partner	Gababe beekeeping group	• History of the bee keeping project '

			Kancane kancane's version)
2/10/01	Community partner	Batanai resource Users	• Continuation of the scenario building process-identifying possible constraints
5/10/01	Community partner	Batanai resource users	• How to enhance high honey production in the community
8/10/01	RMC chairperson	Batanai Community members	• Nesto's resignation and its implication on how the community can withdraw money from its bank account (Nesto was one of the three signatories for the account) • Outstanding fees for permits • Remuneration for the RMC for their contribution for the year
10/10/01	Community Partner	Gababe broom grass collectors	• Action planning
21/10/01	Community Partner	Gababe community members	• Election of new and 'effective' RMC to replace the existing one
4/11/01	Mr. Mabhiza-a war veteran	Batanai Community members	• Settlement in Mafungautsi state forest by some of the farmers living adjacent to the forest
15/11/01	Community partner	Batanai Resource users	• Illegal harvesting of resources from the forest
16/12/01	RMC chairperson	Batanai Resource users	• Outstanding fees for permits to harvest thatch and broom grass • Selection of new committee
3/02/02	Village heads	Ndarire community members	• Reminder on the need to protect fruit and other traditionally important trees in the community
	RMC	Gababe community members	• Report back workshop by the RMC after the pre grass cutting workshop at Lutope camp :mainly on the increase of permits to harvest thatch and broom grass
5/5/02	Local partner	Gababe local community members	• Land offered to the group to keep bee hives by kraalheads to Sithutha
14/5/02	RMC	Gababe resource users	• New and equitable Resource allocation mechanism
17/04/02	FC (CIFOR team were invited to attend)	Settlers in the forest	• Discuss the Forest activities and encourage the new settlers to take good care of the forest
21/04/02	CIFOR researchers	Ndarire timber group	• To introduce the research to the area and do a visioning exercise with the group
23/04/02	CIFOR researchers	Members of the Batanai RMC	• To find out about the history of the RMC and progress to date
	CIFOR researchers	Batanai Broom grass resource users	• Harvesting and marketing of broom grass

			• Monitoring system
25/04/02	CIFOR researchers	Batanai Broom grass collectors	• Action planning with members of the broom grass collectors
28/04/02	CIFOR researchers	Ndarire Timber group	• To finish the visioning exercise and do action planning
19/04/02	CIFOR researchers	Broom grass collectors Gababe	• Continue with the visioning exercise that was started in September 2001
25/0402	CIFOR researchers	Gababe Beekeeping group	• Come up with action plans and indicators for monitoring progress
2/05/02	Community partner, and RMC	Batanai area	• Election of new committee • Feed back by the RMC on issues raised at the pre grass cutting meeting at Lutope: increase in license fees for broom and thatch grass
15/5/02	CIFOR researchers	Batanai Beekeeping group	• Action planning with bee keeping group
23/5/02	Community partner	Batanai Broom grass resource users	• Report back by Mabhena on FC commission response to the group's request to be invited for agricultural shows • Social learning on how to decorate brooms (value adding)
2/06/02	Beekeeping sub-committee	Gababe beekeepers	• Report meeting by members of the Bee keeping group, subsequent to an earlier Action planning meeting
6/6/02	CIFOR researchers	Batanai Resource users	• Field visit by African ACM team • Shared learning on methods of weaving brooms
	CIFOR researchers	Gababe Resource Users	• Field visit by African ACM team
16/6/02	RMC	Batanai resource users	• Extension of areas the RMC is harvesting broom and thatch grass
17/6/02	Agritex	Batanai Community members	• Gum tree planting • Soil conservation • Master Farmer training course
25/6/02	Agritex	Batanai Community members	• Training on citrus production
	Agritex	Batanai Community members	• Training in crop husbandry practices, notably crop rotation
12/07/02	CIFOR researchers	Batanai beekeepers	• To find out if the developed action plan was being implemented
		Ndarire Timber harvesters	• Action planning
13/07/02	FC – CIFOR researchers also attend	Gababe resource users	• To select the RMC sub-committees
15/07/02	FC – CIFOR researchers	Batanai resource users	• To select the RMC sub-committees

		were invited to attend	
19/07/02	CIFOR researchers	Batanai resource users	• Reorganise RMC • Make sub-committees for the following: Thatch, broom, projects (outside the forest), monitoring and beekeeping. • Present the FC program for the coming months • Present CIFOR's program in the coming months
21/07/02	CIFOR researchers	Ndarire timber harvesters	• Follow up on the action plan
23/7/02	FC – CIFOR researchers were invited to attend	All RMC members from Mafungautsi Forest	• Short course on income generating projects-by FC and the Min. Of Gender, Youth and Employment Creation
22/08/02	CIFOR researchers	FC officer	• Discussion with the FC officer on the CM concept note
22/08/02	CIFOR researchers	Batanai MSC, the RMC, members of thatch and other ordinary community members	• To discuss their views on monitoring
25/08/02	CIFOR researchers	Batanai broom and thatch grass resource users	• To get their perceptions of CM
	CIFOR researchers	Meeting with the chair person of Sokwela RMC	• Key informant interview to find out about his views on monitoring
26/08/02	CIFOR researchers	FC officer	• To present findings from resource users and RMCS and key informant interviews on CM
28/08/02	CIFOR researchers	Batanai all stakeholder	• To present the proposed CM system and ask participants to come up with TOR for the MSC
19/09/02	CIFOR researchers	Gababe all stakeholder meeting	• Come up with TOR for MSC

Completed Training and Supervision Plan: Tendayi Mutimukuru-Maravanyika

Description	Department/ Institute	Dates	Credits
I. Orientation			
CERES introductory course	CERES, Utrecht	March – April 2003	5
CERES presentation tutorials	CERES, Utrecht	March – April 2003	5
Writing Grant Proposals	WGS, Wageningen University	November 2009	2
Literature review and proposal writing	Wageningen University	Jan. 2003 – July 2003	6
II. Research Methods and Techniques			
Facilitating Change in Up-Scaling of participatory approaches: Building Personal Mastery and Organisational Capacities	PAU, Wageningen University, Boxmeer	10-18 Oct. 2002	3
Learning in PAU: Linking Participation with personal development – competence development in Participatory Approaches and up-scaling	PAU, Wageningen University, Baarlo	1-4 Nov. 2003	3
Sharing experiences on/of PhD research on participatory approaches and up-scaling	PAU, Wageningen University, Malindi, Kenya	13-18 June 2004	2
Learning in PAU: Support to analysis and write-up of PhD research	PAU, Wageningen University, Jinja, Uganda	24-28 Jan. 2006	2
III Seminars and workshop Presentations			
'Enhancing Social learning in Joint forest management situations: Experiences from Mafungautsi State Forest, North-Western Zimbabwe'	TAD Advanced Seminars, Wageningen University	2007- 2010	4
'Understanding the contribution of the Adaptive Collaborative Management (ACM) extension approach in joint forest management situations. The Mafungautsi State Forest case, Zimbabwe'			
'Can We Learn Our Way to Sustainable Management? Adaptive Collaborative Management in Mafungautsi State Forest, Zimbabwe			
'Enhancing local organisational capacity in resource co-management situations. Experiences from Mafungautsi State Forest, Zimbabwe'	CERES, Utrecht University	26th of June 2007	6
'Participatory Action Research Experiences in Zimbabwe'	IDRC, Nigeria	6 May 2008	2
'Participatory Action Research. Sharing experiences from Zimbabwe'	Melkassa Agricultural Research Centre, Ethiopia	29June – 3July 2009	2
'Experiences and challenges of doing Participatory Action Research in Mafunagusi State Forest, Zimbabwe'	Adama, Ethiopia	15 – 20 Nov. 2009	2
Total			**44**

Biography

Tendayi Mutimukuru-Maravanyika was born in Buhera, Manicaland Province, in Zimbabwe. She graduated with a BSc. Agricultural Honours degree (with a specialisation in Agricultural Economics) in 1998 from the University of Zimbabwe. She also holds an MSc. degree in Management of Agriculture Knowledge Systems (MAKS) from Wageningen University. Tendayi has worked for the Department of Agricultural Economics and Extension at the University of Zimbabwe and the Centre for International Forestry Research's (CIFOR) Adaptive Collaborative Management (ACM) Project. Her work at CIFOR involved extensive use of participatory action research for solving complex natural resource management problems. During her tenure at CIFOR, Tendayi produced several publications including journal articles, book chapters, newsletters and contributed to the development of a learning-by-doing Adaptive Collaborative Management (ACM) video. Tendayi was the chief editor of CIFOR's bi-annual newsletter - ACMZim News, an experience-sharing-and-learning platform for forestry extension officers from various ACM learning centres in Zimbabwe. Currently Tendayi is a participatory action research mentor for grantees of the International Development Research Centre under the Climate Change Adaptation for Africa (CCAA) project. Tendayi's research interests include community-based natural resource management, adaptive management, participatory action research and climate change and adaption.

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