

Sustaining Livelihoods In Southern Africa

Issue: 14

September 2004

Theme: Community-Based Management (CBM)

Contents of this issue:

What is CBM? Case studies from SA and Uganda

Learnings about the requirements for CBM

Useful References and Internet Resources SL Activities

Editor's notes

This month's edition draws on emerging work to highlight what is needed around Community-Based Management. It is written by Lerato Matlakala, who leads on the CBM practice in Khanya, and the Uganda case study is provided by Fiona Nunan and Jim Scullion of the Integrated Lake Management Project, and Rhoda Tumwebaze and Joyce Nyeko of the Department of Fisheries Resources, Uganda. This issue draws on a range of work around empowering communities to develop a concept for CBM which we are developing in practice with our partners. We would like to use this newsletter to provoke a debate on the topic, to help us and our partners to refine the approach. Please send your thoughts to lerato@khanya-mrc.co.za.

What does community-based management include?

Research by Khanya on "Institutional Support for Sustainable Livelihoods In Southern Africa" in 2000 showed that if a real difference is to be made to alleviating poverty then it is critical that poor people are actively involved in managing their own development and that their preferred outcomes are recognised by organisations providing services and by those designing projects and programmes

Community-based management (CBM) signifies an approach to reducing poverty that promotes action by communities, puts them in control of development interventions and at the centre of making decisions about their social, economic and cultural wellbeing. It builds on long experience of community participation, but goes further in denoting significant powers of decision-making, control and ownership

over facilities and resources by communities themselves.

Community-based management is an emerging approach, not a formula and seeks to make the best use of resources available within the community with support from government agencies, NGOs, the private sector, and other communities. The approach could involve communities:

- Actively discussing their issues as a community, challenges and ways forward, rather than development just “happening to them”;
- In some cases taking this forward to more formal planning such as community-based planning, analysing their situation, deciding on priorities, and planning for those;
- Communities allocating their own resources (time, money, transport etc) to support their own development, voluntarism, eg people serving on school governing bodies, acting as voluntary community-based workers;
- Communities supporting each other, eg through local support programmes for youth, or the unemployed;
- Communities managing projects and activities to support their own community, through formal legal structures such as community trusts, or informal through support activities (eg providing meals for elderly);
- Communities actively raising and managing funds to support their priorities;
- Communities educating themselves on issues which affect them, eg on HIV/AIDS etc;
- Communities taking responsibility to deal with anti-social activity, eg reporting crime, controlling vandalism etc.

CBM It puts people in charge of their own development in a flexible partnership with supporting agencies. Partnership allows for sharing responsibilities between supporting agencies, government and communities. The division of responsibilities between these partners can vary considerably, but should be agreed upon in advance so all know what is expected of them.

How does CBM relate to the sustainable livelihoods principles?

The approach is centered around the following 6 sustainable livelihoods principles which are discussed in more detail in SLSA edition 1. These are:

- ***People-centred***: sustainable poverty elimination will be achieved only if external support focuses on what matters to people, understands the differences between groups of people and works with them in a way that is congruent with their current livelihood strategies, social environment and ability to adapt.
- ***Multi-level***: poverty elimination is an enormous challenge that will only be overcome by working at multiple levels, ensuring that micro-level activity informs the development of policy and an effective enabling environment, and that macro-level structures and processes support people to build upon their

own strengths.

- **Conducted in partnership:** with both the public and private sectors (including NGOs and CBOs)
- **Sustainable:** there are four key dimensions to sustainability – economic, institutional, social and environmental sustainability. All are important – a balance must be found between them
- **Dynamic:** external support must recognise the dynamic nature of livelihood strategies, respond flexibly to changes in people’s situation, and develop longer-term commitments
- **Commitment to poverty eradication:** SL approaches can be applied to work with any stakeholder group, but implicit in the use of these principles by many organisations is that activities should be designed to maximise livelihood benefits for the poor.

Community management can contribute towards furthering local development in the following ways:

- Greater responsiveness to community needs.
- Maximising the use of available community strengths
- Promote more affordable and efficient services
- Creation of local income generation/job opportunities.
- Capacity-building/development of skills: the training of people from the community will enrich the skills base of the community.
- Recognition and strengthening local organisational capacities for management
- Promoting community empowerment/self-reliance.

Some case studies are included below. Additional examples can be seen from the Newsletter No 2 on Community-Based Planning, and No 9 on Community-Based Workers. There is information on both of these topics at <http://www.khanya-mrc.co.za/>.

Case study 1 - Creating a politically enabling environment for community participation and management in South Africa

Participation of local communities and community organization in local government affairs is strongly encouraged and promoted in South Africa, and enshrined in the country’s laws and policies. Chapter 7, section 152 of the **Constitution** states that the objects of local government are, among others, "*to provide democratic and accountable government for local communities*" and "*to encourage the involvement of communities and community organisations in the matters of local government.*" It is the duty of municipalities to ensure effective participation of the citizens and communities in the matters of local government.

These basic constitutional requirements are elaborated in the **Municipal Systems**

Act 2000 that contains a chapter on public participation. This states that “a municipal council, within the municipality’s financial and administrative capacity and having regard to practical considerations, has the duty to, amongst other things, encourage the involvement of the local community and to consult the local community about:

- the level, quality, range and impact of municipal services provided by the municipality, either directly or through another service provider; and
- the available options for service delivery.”

The Act further imposes on a municipality’s administration the duty to:

- be responsive to the needs of the local community;
- establish clear relationships, and facilitate co-operation and communication, between it and the local community;
- give members of the local community full and accurate information about the level and standard of municipal services they are entitled to receive; and
- inform the local community how the municipality is managed, of the costs involved and the persons in charge.

A municipality must further develop a culture of municipal governance that complements formal representative government with a system of participatory governance, and must for this purpose:

- “encourage, and create conditions for, the local community to participate in the affairs of the municipality, and
- contribute to building the capacity of the local community to enable it to participate in the affairs of the municipality.”

Case study 2 - Example of Tisane village, a water services provider supported by Mvula Trust in South Africa

For over three years the people of the Tisane village, 100km south of Pietersburg, have enjoyed the benefits of a community-based, implemented and managed water supply scheme. The Tisane project has demonstrated that it can fulfil the following vital water service provider (WSP) functions – tariff collection, consumer liaison and organisation and management. In terms of tariff collection the project has reinforced the principle that localised systems can be very effective. Each standpipe has a tap leader who is responsible for collecting tariffs from users of that tap. The tariffs collected are then handed to the village water committee (VWC). Water costs have been kept at a minimum – around R14 (approx US\$2) per household per month. During the evaluation Mvula found that there was a 100% cost recovery, with a compliance rate of over 95%. The tap leaders are also responsible for supporting the needs to organise and manage around operation of their taps. If there is a minor breakdown the users are responsible for fixing the problem. The village water committee is responsible for sorting out major breakdowns e.g. fixing the pump. Once a problem is identified at tap level the tap co-ordinator immediately reports this to the committee. This system has led to a greater sense of ownership of water collection points and less "down-time" on services.

Although more work has to be done in terms of formalising the Tisane Water Committee as the WSP, the committee has clearly shown that it has the capacity to run the scheme on a day-to-day basis. However proper infrastructure (e.g. offices), formal project management skills and administrative systems need to be put in place. The legal status of the committee also needs to be formalised. (The committee must adopt a legal identity such as a Voluntary Association, Trust or Section 21 Company.)

Case study 3 - Improving livelihoods through fisheries co-management in Uganda: the formation of Beach Management Units and lake management organisations

Capture fisheries play a significant role in poverty reduction and economic growth in Uganda, but fish resources are vulnerable to overuse or misuse and are threatened. An innovative approach to fisheries management is being implemented in Uganda with key roles for fisheries communities in the co-management of resources upon which their livelihoods depend. Uganda has delegated legal powers for fisheries planning and management from the centre to community organisations called Beach Management Units (BMUs). The formation of BMUs is backed by a legal instrument, the Fish (Beach Management) Rules, 2003, giving legal power to a network of 500-700 community based organisations containing all fisheries stakeholders in Uganda. The BMU statute is accompanied by national guidelines on establishing and operating BMUs. These guidelines, developed by a range of stakeholders, are designed to promote principles of equity, poverty reduction and gender equality within fisheries co-management. BMUs have a legal mandate to raise revenue from daily fisheries activities to support their operating costs.

A BMU is a community organisation charged with the responsibility for fisheries resource management in partnership with local and central government. Everyone at a fish landing site who is directly involved in fisheries must register with a BMU, and membership is free. The whole of the BMU must meet at least quarterly through BMU Assembly meetings. The BMU Assembly holds democratic elections, guided by the BMU guidelines, to form a BMU Committee. The BMU Guidelines set out the required composition of a committee, which must include 30% of members from boat crew stakeholders, who are generally the poorer stakeholders within fisheries. Wherever possible, a BMU must include 30% women, and, where this is not possible, efforts must be made to increase the involvement of women in decision-making and management.

The communities have many areas of control over how a BMU operates, exercised through democratic elections, the requirement of Assembly approval for plans, budgets and key decisions (e.g. raising funds through fees) and capacity building to enable effective participation.

Whilst BMUs have only recently been formed, and not yet on all lakes, numerous benefits are expected to come from their effective operation. Benefits are expected not only in terms of improved management of lake resources, but also in terms of improved livelihoods, particularly of the poor. The livelihood benefits include:

- Improved and sustained fish yields as a result of effective management measures, with BMUs involved in fisheries planning, information collection, licensing and enforcement.
- The percentage allocations to boat crew and women in BMU committees target

the poorer groups in fishing communities, to ensure their voice is heard in decision-making and their livelihoods improved through increased access to the fishery.

- Through the drafting of beach development and fisheries management plans, BMUs will be in a better position to promote their planning priorities to local government, through the recently rolled-out community based planning approach.
- BMUs will attract development interventions, by providing an entry point to fisheries communities. Their potential role as an entry point for HIV/AIDS interventions has already been recognised by the Department of Fisheries Resources which has established a HIV/AIDS Taskforce and by other recent studies. A wide range of non-fisheries development interventions can be channelled directly to the BMU or through local government to BMUs.
- Through forming associations of BMUs, or foundations of lake-wide management organisations, that also involve all riparian local governments, communities can engage in wider, more holistic, poverty-focused development planning. Two of these have already been formed and their remit is broader than that of BMUs to include environmental management and encourage sustainable socio-economic development. Through such organisations BMUs will be able to effectively associate with one another and government to manage highly mobile and shared natural resources. .

Some learnings about the requirements for CBM to be realised

- **Community need powers of decision-making:** to empower a community it is necessary to devolve decision-making, so the community takes responsibility. Such devolution is not about abdicating responsibilities by the centre, but recognising that effective development can only be achieved by liberating the creative energy of the people, but that this requires the capacity to act, to learn from successes as well as failures, and for this to happen, the authority to take decisions. For this reason the community-based planning advocates a sum available to communities to take forward their plans, over which they can make decisions;
- **Community need to have legitimate authority:** for the community to have decision-making powers they must have structures with legitimate authority, such as ward committees in South Africa, or the BMUs in Uganda. In the water committee case study, a legal basis is now being sought. In this way they can have a clear span of control, and are able to take responsibility;
- **Community access to external support (private or public) to supplement local management capacity.** Communities, through their structures and institutions, must be capacitated to take on management and decision-making roles. It takes time to build the required decision-making and management capacity, and there may be a need for awareness raising and motivation to enable communities to evaluate for themselves the responsibilities they wish to take on. The devolution of decision-making should only occur when there is a support process to allow them to learn-by-doing. Without these pre requisites being met, devolution of responsibilities will only set communities up to fail.

· **Skills:** while we talk of community, often success come down to the ability of individuals to contribute to the organisation of the community and its ability to get the things done that it wants to achieve. These can be technical skills, management skills, organisational skills, mobilisation skills. The more skills (group or individual) that a community or organization can obtain and use, the more empowered that community or organisation is likely to be.

· **Strong leadership** – Strong community leadership, or the continuous involvement of a charismatic individual, helps to maintain community interest and commitment. Leadership may come from many sources: individuals, community groups, churches, agencies, governments, and business. There are different styles of leadership and preferred ways of participating: formal or informal; verbal or written; as individuals or through spokespeople (such as elders, church leaders). It is important to acknowledge and build on the differences that exist within the community, and that through recognising these differences, people can find commonalities and shared goals to work towards.

· **Building community cohesion** Community cohesion is an important factor in the success of community management. It is important that the process of working with the community strengthens community solidarity, recognising and accounting for divisions within the community.

· **Transparency and accountability.** Information is power. Transparency is built on the free flow of information. It is important to empower communities with access to information, and the confidence to acquire information they need. This is essential for processes and institutions to be accountable, with enough information for communities to understand and monitor them.

Key references

1. Joseph De Gabriele (2002): **Improving community based management of boreholes: A case-study from Malawi,**
2. G, Chilima, B, Nkhoma, G, Chavhula, W, Mulwafu , **Community based management approach in the management of water resources by different Organisations in the Lake Chilwa Basin, Malawi.**
3. Anton Simanowitz, **Community Management**, 23rd WEDC Conference, Durban, South Africa, 1997
4. L. Coirole, K. McLean, M. Mokoli, A. Ryan, M. Williams (2001): **Community-based rural development: reducing poverty from the ground up**
5. International Water and Sanitation Centre, **Community management today: The role of communities in the management of improved water supply systems**, Occasional Paper 20, June 1993.
6. World Bank (1994): **World Bank sourcebook on participation**, Washington DC: World Bank.
7. DFR (2003): **Guidelines for Beach Management Units in Uganda**, Department of Fisheries Resources. Ministry of Agriculture Animal Industry and Fisheries, Entebbe, Uganda

8. Bishop-Sambrook, C. and N. Tanzarn (2004): **The Susceptibility and Vulnerability of Small-scale Fishing Communities to HIV/AIDS in Uganda**, Sector project supported by Policy Advice for Sustainable Fisheries, Deutsche Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit (GTZ) GmbH, Rome: FAO HIV/AIDS Programme.

Useful internet resources

Partnership Online. A guide for community activists and professionals seeking to involve people in social, economic and environmental projects and programmes,

www.partnerships.org.uk/guide/frame.htm

Eldis, www.eldis.org/cf/search

GTZ: Support for decentralisation measures, www.gtzsfdm.org.id/lib-pa-doc-on-dec.htm

US Department of Agriculture: Community empowerment toolbox, www.ezec.gov/toolbox

FAO: Fieldtools for participation www.fao.org/participation/lessonslearned.htm

Logolink: Learning Initiative on citizen participation and local governance www.ids.ac.uk/logolink/index.htm

Worldbank, www.worldbank.org/participation/participation.htm

Upcoming SL-related activities/programmes

1. Khanya is running a training course in Sustainable Livelihoods Approaches from 28-30 September in Johannesburg, and on facilitation and communication in October in Bloemfontein. For further details contact lebo@khanya-mrc.co.za.
2. A national workshop on community-based workers will be held in Lesotho in September. For details contact PJ Leretholi, CARESA-Lesotho pleretholi@care.org.ls.
3. A participatory Environmental Programme is being undertaken in Tanzania and is producing a newsletter. If you are interested please contact Charles Erhardt at cehrhart@tfcg.or.tz
4. A conference will be held in Manchester UK on "Social Protection for Chronic Poverty - Risk, Needs, and Rights, Protecting What? How?". It is being organised by the Institute for Development Policy and Management, University of Manchester, from 23-24 February 2005. Contact debra.whitehead@man.ac.uk.

Future topics

Future topics will include 'orphans and vulnerable children (OVCs)'. We welcome feedback, ideas and contributions for other topics.

Past editions

These are available at <http://www.khanya-mrc.co.za/>.

1. 1 May 2001 The Sustainable Livelihoods Approach
2. July 2001 Community-based-planning
3. Sept 2001 Corporate Citizenship
4. Dec 2001 Rights-based approach to development
5. March 2002 Social capital and sustainable livelihoods
6. June 2002 HIV/AIDS and sustainable livelihoods
7. Sept 2002 Local Economic Development and sustainable livelihoods
8. Feb 2003 Institutional support for sustainable livelihoods
9. April 2003 Community-based Workers as a model for pro-poor
service delivery
10. June 2003 Community-Based Natural Resources Management
11. Oct 2003 Sustainable Livelihoods and Gender
12. Feb 2004 Sustainable Livelihoods and Small Scale Mining
13. June 2004 Learnings about the Sustainable Livelihoods Approach

Sustaining Livelihoods in Southern Africa is an initiative of Khanya-managing rural change, and CARE. The temporary editor is Ian Goldman and he can be contacted at goldman@khanya-mrc.co.za, tel +27 51 430 0712. Fiona Nunan, Jim Scullion, Rhoda Tumwebaze and Joyce Nyeko can be contacted through fionanunan@infocom.co.ug or jscullion@infocom.co.ug Previous newsletters are available at the Khanya website, <http://www.khanya-mrc.co.za/>. We welcome contributions, of events, relevant documents, comments etc.