

**Study of the lessons learnt from  
UTUMI project  
in Lindi region**

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## Acronyms

CBFM	Community Based Forest Management
DFO	District Forest Officer
ESP	Environment Support Programme
FBD	Forest and Beekeeping Division
JFM	Joint Forest Management
PFM	Participatory Forest Management
UTUMI	Utunzaji wa Misitu (Woodland and Forest Management)
VNRC	Village Natural Resources Committee

## **Executive Summary**

### **1. Introduction**

*The UTUMI project was a PFM project based in Southeast Tanzania. It began in 2001 and was implemented in Kilwa and Lindi Rural districts, with funding from the Danish Environment Support Programme (ESP). The objective of UTUMI was 'improved management and biodiversity conservation of the forests and woodlands of Lindi region through sustainable village based land use practices contributing to improving the livelihood of rural communities'. The project facilitated the development of Joint Forest Management plans in the forest reserves and Community Based Forest Management plans in public woodlands in both districts. Although originally designed to continue for 15-20 years, Danida decided instead to put resources into assisting implementation of the PFM component of the National Forest Programme. Therefore this study has been done, to feed experiences into the national PFM programme.*

### **2. Methodology**

*The study began with a literature review. The field work was carried out in Kilwa and Lindi districts, visiting JFM and CBFM villages. We held discussions with a range of people to elicit a variety of experiences, and observed exchange visits taking place. We also spoke to officers at district headquarters, and cross checked our findings with project staff.*

### **3. UTUMI experiences**

*The findings of the study are presented here first as observations of UTUMI's experiences in the field, then as a series of lessons and best practices.*

#### **3.1 Time**

*PFM takes a long time. UTUMI went at the pace of the community which took much longer than expected. But the project is clear that it would have been much less effective if they had hurried the process. For this reason, many planned activities were not implemented within the time frame of the project, therefore lessons cannot be drawn from them.*

#### **3.2 First steps**

##### Initial approach

*PFM at the moment is not likely to be demanded, since it is not a priority for communities. UTUMI went to villages and explained PFM in detail in public meetings, then asked the community whether they were interested. UTUMI also decided that choosing villages on the basis of studies would take too long, so district staff selected the pilot villages based on their own knowledge. Once enough people in surrounding villages have heard about PFM and if they judge it to be of benefit for their village, they will also demand it.*

##### Motivation

*Initially all villages wanted to take part in project activities, especially because they felt they would start to receive benefits from the forest. At first there were some misunderstandings about the intentions of the project, but these were later cleared up.*

##### Multi-disciplinary approach

*It is good to use a range of disciplines when starting PFM, since it involves little actual technical forestry. If only foresters are involved, they could miss some crucial social aspects. Other areas of expertise are also needed. In UTUMI, there was a multidisciplinary District Working Team in each district.*

#### **3.3 Awareness**

*Many public meetings were held, but still some people were not aware of what the project was doing, or have misunderstood the process. But most people knew something about the project and knew that an area of forest had been identified for management, and those who were closely involved had an impressive*

knowledge. In JFM villages, all communities have to attain the same level of knowledge, otherwise the process won't work.

#### Reluctance to share information

There is the expectation that when training is given to a small group of people, they will return to their villages and share what they have learnt with their fellow villagers, but this isn't always the case. Withholding knowledge from others in the village creates a climate of suspicion.

#### Accountability and transparency

If there is valuable produce in the forests, then there is scope for corruption, which may pervade the whole system. It is very difficult to see how this can be reversed. People involved in corruption may be reluctant for others to know about new regulations. So far, there is no system of people being able to hold their leaders to account and demand transparency.

### **3.4 They can do it**

#### Involving the community

People understood the PFM process very well. It took a lot of commitment, perseverance and time to train them in new skills, but as a result UTUMI didn't need to bring in outsiders for most activities.

#### Ownership

People feel very strong ownership of their new forests. VNRCs were confident they could manage their forests, and keep outsiders out, and knew how they were going to dispose of their forest products. Ordinary people in some villages were not so clear who the forest belonged to. The concept of ownership is closely connected with the desire to protect the forest. The process of the inventory assisted in the feeling of ownership of the forest, since people did it themselves.

#### Gender

Under this section we talk about the way women and men have been involved in the PFM activities, and the differences in the way they have been able to access these activities. In general, men are better informed, but we found many women who were well informed. But in most villages, women were less aware than men about PFM activities. Women are well represented on the VNRCs, but even so, they still may not be equally included in VNRC duties. Some men said that women don't have the commitment and enthusiasm to take part, and district staff agreed, but it seems more likely to be a question of time and priorities for women.

#### Available human resources

The natural resources departments in both districts are severely short staffed, so UTUMI used local experts wherever possible, and will use experienced VNRC members when starting in new villages.

### **3.5 Benefits**

#### Income generating activities

People are waiting for benefits from their forests, but since the management plans are not ready, nothing has yet happened. UTUMI recognised that some villages weren't going to get immediate benefits from the forests, so the project provided alternative sources of income. But this wasn't started up early enough. Items were given to people in Kilwa, but this approach had serious drawbacks, e.g. those who didn't get anything were resentful, and many of those who did haven't started to use them. In Lindi, credit was provided, and this was a better system, with the possibility of more people benefiting in the long run. But the credit was supplied without enough expertise.

#### Marketing

Marketing is an important element of income generation – if there is no accessible market, then people will not be able to sell their produce. Most people rely on small existing local markets.

### **3.6 Institutional issues**

#### Institutions

*UTUMI has ensured that VNRCs work closely with the village governments, and that each knows the other's roles, therefore there is minimal conflict so far. UTUMI also made sure that they were aware of what other projects were doing.*

#### Change of attitude

*At first government foresters didn't believe that local people could look after their own forests, but now they have changed their attitude and have seen that PFM is more practical. But the VNRCs may take over the policing role of the foresters, or may take over all the benefits.*

#### Support and follow up

*For something new like PFM, close support and follow up is essential to develop communities' capacity.*

#### Conflict

*Conflict is not necessarily a bad thing, is usually inevitable and often marks a stage in transition, but it needs to be dealt with using the appropriate body. It is important that conflict resolution bodies exist and that people know who to turn to in the event of conflict.*

#### Village boundaries

*In several cases, the set aside forests were identified but when it came to clear the boundaries, it was realised that they were on another village's land, which led to conflict.*

### **3. Lessons learnt and best practices**

- Time - establishing a sustainable form of PFM takes a long time, if people are to be involved closely. If the process is hurried it will not be so effective or sustainable
- Initial approach – people won't demand PFM if they don't know about it, so it has to be introduced. If people like it and there are benefits, then it will be demanded in other places. Restricting the initial approach to discussions about forestry helps to avoid building up expectations. People's motives for wanting PFM vary.
- Awareness - it takes much longer and more effort than expected to raise awareness of something new. Information may also be deliberately withheld by e.g. VNRCs. Incentive is needed to ensure seminar participants pass on information to their communities. Corruption is connected to awareness. It is very difficult to root out corruption if it pervades the whole system. If people are ignorant, it is easier for illegal activities to be carried on. The more people who demand transparency from their leaders, the more difficult it is to carry on with illegal activities. Therefore a system of transparency and accountability needs to be established
- Involve people - the UTUMI experience shows that involving people is more effective than bringing in outsiders to carry out tasks such as the forest inventory. Ownership is increased and more knowledge leads to better management. Even illiterate people have their strategies for learning things, so needn't be excluded. And more effort is needed to make sure that women are actively involved in PFM. District staff need to be sensitised in practical gender issues.
- Follow up - where PFM is new, close follow up is necessary.
- Make use of available human resources - it makes sense to use all human resources available. Many disciplines need to be involved, also experts in the villages, in technical PFM skills and income generating activities.
- Income generation and marketing - providing recompense, especially when benefits from the PFM forest are limited or not available for some years, is a good plan, but it has to be done so that the maximum number of people benefit. Giving items to individuals doesn't work well. Loans work better, but there are many factors involved in setting up a credit system. Marketing is crucial and involves quality control and the ability to supply the market. If there is no market, there is little point producing a marketable product.

- *Institutions* – some conflict is inevitable, often with new institutions and village governments, so the village governments need to be involved in PFM. Village boundaries should be identified before choosing the forest for PFM. Effective channels for conflict resolution should be known.

#### **5. Areas where no lessons have yet been learnt**

*It is still too early to draw many lessons from the UTUMI project since progress has been slow and the project only lasted for three years. Some of the planned activities have not yet been implemented, so no lessons can be drawn:*

- *Management of the forest according to the management plan*
- *Sharing of the benefits from the forests*
- *Acquiring land titles for the forests*
- *Resolving conflicts which may occur as a result of the management of the forests*
- *Monitoring forest utilisation under the management plan*
- *The role of LGR in PFM, since it hasn't yet started in Lindi.*
- *In this area forests are huge. There is no experience of what PFM would be like if the forests available to communities were small and degraded.*

#### **6. Constraints which will affect future district based PFM**

*There are differences between a project and a district based PFM. UTUMI had many resources, including transport, therefore is unreplicable. There will now be more villages using fewer resources. Therefore it is necessary to use locally based people where possible instead of costly district staff. But in districts where there has been no PFM, this isn't possible so more investment is needed for the initial stages. The FBD has not yet clarified the sharing of JFM benefits, which has affected the drawing up of management plans.*

*Some criteria for PFM success include:*

- *a strong commitment at district level to make it succeed.*
- *a strong commitment at village level is also necessary, to carry on the process much more themselves.*
- *the more forest available, the more likely PFM is to succeed. It is not clear from the UTUMI experiences how PFM works when the area of forest is not sufficient for people's needs.*

## **1. Introduction**

The UTUMI project (Utunzaji wa Misitu, or Woodland and Forest Management) was a participatory forest management project (PFM) based in Southeast Tanzania. It began in 2001 and was implemented in two districts, Kilwa and Lindi Rural, with funding from the Danish Environment Support Programme (ESP). After an extension of six months, UTUMI closed in June 2004.

The development objective of UTUMI was 'improved management and biodiversity conservation of the forests and woodlands of Lindi region through sustainable village based land use practices contributing to improving the livelihood of rural communities'. Activities were focussed on four pilot sites, two in Lindi district and two in Kilwa, with one woodland area and one forest reserve in each of the districts. The project aimed to facilitate the development of Joint Forest Management (JFM) plans in the forest reserves and Community Based Forest Management (CBFM) plans in the public woodlands. At the same time, while implementing the management plans, it was increasing the capacity of district councils to support long term participatory forest management in Lindi region.

UTUMI originally had a projected life span of 15-20 years. But after it had been initiated, Danida made the decision to cease funding individual projects like UTUMI and instead to put its resources into strengthening existing structures to implement the National Forest Programme, establishing in particular a Participatory Forest Management (PFM) component.

For this reason, this study was carried out, in order to seek and document lessons learnt from the pilot PFM activities and to draw out best practices which can be transferred to the national PFM programme. The objective of the study was 'to document the best practices and to understand the underlying constraints to successful community based forest management in Lindi region'.

The study was carried out by Kate Forrester Kibuga and Issae Madundo. The report is divided into six sections. After the introduction comes a description of the methodology of the study. Then the findings are presented in the form of experiences of the UTUMI project. These experiences are then joined together in the next section to produce a list of lessons learnt and best practices. The following section briefly lists the areas where no lessons have yet been learnt, as a result of the short time span. The final section examines some constraints which will affect the implementation of PFM in other districts in the country. The Terms of Reference of the study can be found in Appendix 1.

## **2. Methodology**

The definition of lessons learnt given in the Participatory Forest Management 'A Report on Lessons Learnt' is 'an approach or activity that has either worked well for a time and has been successful in stimulating favourable changes in the participatory management of Tanzania's forests, or has been seen to work badly under certain conditions and discarded as inappropriate'. The process of drawing out lessons learnt from the UTUMI project began with a review of the literature, particularly the lessons learnt documents from the MEMA project (which the two consultants also participated in) and the overall PFM lessons learnt report, as well as the UTUMI documents.

The fieldwork was carried out in June. Two weeks were spent in Lindi region talking to people and visiting villages, first in Kilwa district and then in Lindi. We ensured that in each district we visited



villages involved in CBFM and JFM, thus in Kilwa we visited two CBFM villages and two JFM villages, while in Lindi we visited one of each. Within each village, we talked to a range of people to elicit a variety of views and experiences. We spoke to members of the village government, to members of the Village Natural Resource Committees (VNRC), and to groups of ordinary men and women. We generally spoke to the ordinary men and women in separate groups, since men and women often have different experiences and opinions about the same process, and it is easier, particularly for women, to express their views in groups of their own sex. The format used was casual discussion, often sitting under a tree or on a verandah, the interviewers following a basic checklist but prepared to deviate from it if something interesting came up. Whilst in the villages we were able to visit some of the forests in question with VNRC members, and on two occasions we spent some time with exchange visits, observing the dynamics between villagers from two different areas.

We also held interviews at the district headquarters with the District Forestry Officers, the District and Regional Project Managers and members of the District Working Teams. We were accompanied throughout by the Senior Advisor of UTUMI with whom we were able to cross check information we had heard in the villages and district and who filled us in on the background of the project. However, when we were conducting our discussions he left us to ourselves.

The schedule of field work can be found in Appendix 2.

### **3. UTUMI experiences**

The findings of the study are presented here first as observations of UTUMI's experiences in the field, then in the following section the points are brought together into a series of lessons and best practices.

#### **3.1 Time**

PFM takes a long time. UTUMI went at the pace at which the community was able to absorb, learn and carry out PFM activities, and this took much longer than expected. The concept of PFM has first to be understood then absorbed before people can begin to make decisions. Then there are new techniques for members of the VNRC to learn. If there are conflicts it takes time to resolve them. Activities also have to fit in with the calendar of the community, e.g. in Lindi people tend to move away to live on their shambas for 3 or 4 months at a time and it is not possible for them to stay in the village to carry on with forestry activities. But the project is clear that it would have been much less effective if they had hurried the activities, e.g. by outsourcing some of the activities to consultants rather than facilitating the communities to do them themselves.

For this reason, there are many lessons still to be learnt from the UTUMI project, since much that was planned in the project document has not yet been carried out, or even started, e.g. the implementation of the management plans, the sharing of the benefits, monitoring.

#### **3.2 First steps**

##### Initial approach

PFM, especially when it is first introduced in a district, is not likely to be demanded, since forestry is not often a key priority for village communities, and since people are not aware of the existence of such a concept. If a broad PRA is done, then the community are likely to prioritise something

like a school or a dispensary, both of which are beyond the scope of a PFM project. In the case of UTUMI, the project went to villages and explained the PFM system in detail in public meetings, then asked the community whether they were interested in participating in PFM activities. Of course, all were, for one reason or another.....

It was planned that the selection of the initial villages would be made on the basis of several studies, e.g. biodiversity studies, a socio-economic study. But it was recognised that the studies would take a long time to undertake, and it would be a better use of time to make an immediate start, basing village selection on the knowledge of local district staff. Therefore the foresters made the initial selection of villages according to which they thought would be best for a pilot PFM – criteria used in the selection included remote villages where there was no forester and a high level of illegal harvesting.

Once enough people in surrounding villages have heard about PFM or have observed the process, if they judge it to be of benefit for their village, they will also demand it, and thus the demand driven process will begin. In the case of UTUMI, for example, two villages have already made a formal demand to the Lindi office to be included in the next round of PFM activities, and more have expressed interest.

#### Motivation

When the project initially approached the pilot communities, none refused to take part in project activities. A variety of reasons was given for wanting to take part, e.g. protecting their own forest for future generations, protecting the forest from outsiders, gaining ownership of the forest, receiving benefits from the forest, but it is most likely that the latter reason is the strongest. At first in some of the CBFM areas, when people hadn't yet understood clearly about the intentions of the project, some villages identified their PFM area far away from the village, on the assumption that it was to be taken over by the district or bought by a European. When they understood more clearly, they then realised that they should have set aside a forest nearer to the community.

#### Multi-disciplinary approach

It is good to use a range of disciplines when embarking on PFM, since it involves comparatively little actual technical forestry. If only foresters are involved, they are likely to miss some social aspects which could be crucial. Other areas of expertise required are social mobilisation, group and committee formation, gender sensitisation, credit groups, training in a variety of income generating activities, etc. In addition a multi-disciplinary team can better respond quickly to community needs and problems. In UTUMI, there was a District Working Team in each district, consisting of e.g. agriculture, game, CD, forestry, fisheries officers. The multi-disciplinary approach also solves the problem of having too few forestry staff, which has been the case in the UTUMI areas.

### **3.3 Awareness**

The project and district staff, and the village governments and VNRCs emphasised that public meetings had been held from the very beginning of the project and everyone was aware of project activities and plans for the forest. However, we met people who had little awareness of what was going on in their forests. This was particularly the case with women but also applies to men. Some people didn't know that a management plan was being written, or its contents, others hadn't heard about the formation of groups at the time when loans or items were being given out. In Nndawa a group of men said that people in the more distant subvillages who often don't manage to attend

meetings are still unaware of the PFM activities. Others have misunderstood the process – a group of men from Kikole (CBFM village) said 'We haven't understood even though we want to understand' and went on to explain how UTUMI had come to turn their forest into a government reserve for the district to come and harvest.

However, most people did know something about the project activities and were aware that an area of forest had been identified for management. Those who had been involved directly in PFM activities, such as the forest inventory and writing the management plan, had an impressive knowledge of the whole process. They also knew exactly what was in their forests. And since the VNRC members and local experts had been involved so closely throughout, many other people in the community were aware of what had been going on simply through seeing what they were doing, and discussing the process with them.

The district team in Lindi emphasised that in the JFM villages, which involve several villages looking after one forest, all the communities have to attain the same level of awareness - if one village hasn't understood the process, then they can hold the whole process back, or impede the management of the forest.

#### Reluctance to share information

The expectation at project level is that when training is given to a small group of people, they will return to their villages and share what they have learnt with their fellow villagers. This, however, is not always the case. People often like to keep what they have learnt to themselves, possibly as a form of power over others. A group of women in Kikole said that if they ask VNRC members what they are doing, they are rebuffed with answers such as 'what's it to do with you? You're not a committee member.' And the district staff in Kilwa have observed that so far when VNRC members have been on exchange visits, they have kept what they have seen to themselves. This may create bad feelings between ordinary village people and the VNRC, as suspicions may be aroused about what they are up to, and what sort of benefits they may be gaining.

#### Accountability and transparency

If there is valuable produce in the forests, e.g. valuable timber species, then there is scope for corruption. The corruption may pervade the whole system, from district down to village level. It is very difficult to see how this situation can be reversed. Murky details were revealed in some villages - men in Kikole commented that UTUMI has brought in a new way for their leaders to enrich themselves. 'If you give the village chairman 20,000TSh, he'll sell off the whole forest!' they cried. People involved in the corruption may be reluctant for everyone else to know about the new regulations, therefore it is in their interest to keep people in ignorance and not to spread information around. So far, there is no system of people being able to hold their leaders to account and demand transparency about what they are doing.

### **3.4 They can do it**

#### Involving the community

The District Working Team in Lindi said that they didn't expect people to be able to understand the process and the new techniques so well. It took a lot of commitment, perseverance and time on the part of district and project staff to train them, in such skills as the resource assessment techniques, calculations, analysis and compilation of data, the putting together of a management plan, but they

grasped it and can now put their new skills into practice. UTUMI found that there is no need to bring in outsiders for most of the activities which needed to be done as part of the PFM process.

The district teams in both districts emphasised that it was important that those elected onto the VNRC should at least be able to read and write. They said it has been difficult to train people who are illiterate and it is particularly difficult when it comes to writing the management plan. In an area of the country where education has not been perceived as a priority, this would automatically exclude a large number of people, particularly women, from taking part in the VNRCs. This may only be the typical prejudice on the part of educated people against uneducated people, assuming that they are not capable of learning new skills.

### Ownership

People feel very strong ownership of their new forests, and particularly of the products within them. VNRCs were very clear about what they owned and how they were going to go about selling the products, what price they would charge for the more valuable products and how much of the proceeds would go to the districts and central government. They were also very confident that they could manage these forests because of the plans which have been drawn up, and were sure that they could repel any outsiders who had not followed the correct channels and who wanted to log their forests illegally. Ordinary people in some villages were not so clear who the forest really belonged to, thinking it might be the project since they had been working so hard on it. A group of women in Kikole said 'It's UTUMI's forest for now, but when the project closes we think it might become our forest'. Only in one village were ordinary people doubtful over whether their village government and VNRC could be trusted not to take bribes and go against the management plan.

The concept of ownership is closely connected with the desire to protect the forest. Women in Nndawa said 'There are very few valuable trees left in our forest. They were all stolen long ago. The forest wasn't ours, so we had no reason to guard it. But now that it's ours we'll guard it' Another woman pointed out laughing 'There's no point stealing from ourselves!'

The process of the inventory assisted in the feeling of ownership of the forest. People did it themselves, and local experts, often traditional healers, both male and female, were brought in to identify the trees. Women in Nndawa felt that it was important that the trees were written down with their local names that everyone in the community knows.

### Gender

Under this section we talk about the way women and men have been involved in the PFM activities, and the differences in the way they have been able to access these activities. In general, men have greater access to information therefore they tend to be better informed than women about new things which have come to their villages. However, we also found many women who knew a lot about what was happening in their forests - in Nndawa a group of women had an impressive knowledge of the PFM activities – one woman quoted the new forest policy at us, and the others were very well informed. And in a discussion during an exchange visit between VNRCs in Ruhatwe, many women were putting questions to the group.

However, in most villages, women were less aware than men about the project/PFM activities. Some women said that they weren't able to attend public meetings where information about PFM was given out because they were working on their shambas, although their husbands went to the meetings, while others were kept at home by family responsibilities. Even those women who knew

a lot about the activities which had already been carried out were vague about the management plans. In Nndawa a group of four women told us that the management plan had been presented at a public meeting, but none of them was able to tell us anything about it. It turned out that out of the four, only one had been there, and she had forgotten what had been said. Of the others, one had been confined to her home having just had a baby, one had been nursing a sick relative and one had been working on the shamba. This is typical – women often say that they do go to meetings nowadays, but on individual occasions they are often constrained by their role in the family, as mothers and carers, and may therefore miss crucial meetings where important information is presented. A group of eight women in Kikole said that only one of them had heard about the group formation, and she had received a beehive. The rest hadn't heard and had not received anything. And in Mvuleni women complained that there had been well paid work clearing the forest boundaries, but their husbands hadn't told them because they wanted the money for themselves and their friends. Even the woman on the VNRC hadn't known about the clearing.

Men in general told us that nowadays they have no problem in letting their wives take part in community activities, and some women also insist that this is now the case. And indeed we found that women were well represented on the VNRCs, and in some villages there were actually more women than men on the committee. However, we heard of examples where women were elected on to the VNRC then subsequently their husbands refused to let them take part and they had to withdraw. In Kikole we heard from a group of women who said that they had been working on their shambas when the information about the group formation and distribution of items had been presented. They claimed that their husbands had kept this information from them on purpose, since they were afraid that if their wives joined a group they would be out of the home for too much time.

But having equal numbers of women and men on the VNRCs doesn't mean that the gender issue has been solved. In Mvuleni we spoke to a woman on the VNRC who was very vague about UTUMI activities, suggesting that although she had been elected onto the committee, she was not taking part in all their activities. The VNRC woman did take part in the inventory, but only for two days out of the three weeks – the rest of the time she was in the village preparing the food for when those doing the inventory came back from the forest – again being consigned to the standard female role and losing out on active participation in PFM activities.

In Mvuleni a group of men told us that membership of the 20 strong joint village JFM committee had fallen to only 11, mainly because 'women don't have the commitment and enthusiasm that men do' so they had withdrawn from the committee. Another man added - 'Men are the ones who do the thinking, not women'. It is more likely, however, that women either don't have the time to undertake such time consuming activities, often in another village far from their homes, or they have realised that the benefits are not likely to make up for the time and effort put in. District staff were also prepared to agree with the Mvuleni men, perhaps without considering in detail the social implications of women taking part in such time consuming activities.

#### Available human resources

In both Lindi and Kilwa districts the natural resources department is severely short staffed. This is also likely to be the case in other districts. UTUMI made some attempts to redress this problem in a variety of ways. There are many people at village level with expertise in a variety of areas. In the UTUMI villages, as well as the VNRC carrying out their activities, *wadau* (local experts) were also involved, e.g. in order to identify tree species and their uses during the inventory. And when

starting PFM activities in new villages, UTUMI has already begun to use members of experienced VNRCs to introduce new VNRC members to their roles and responsibilities.

### **3.5 Benefits**

#### Income generating activities

'We never thought we could earn income from our forest', said men from Nndawa, 'but now UTUMI has taught us that we can'. Many people are waiting eagerly for the benefits to start to flow from their forests, but since the management plans have not yet begun implementation, nothing has yet happened in this area.

UTUMI recognised that in some villages there were not going to be immediate benefits to be gained from the forests, especially where communities have decided to close their forest for a few years to give it a chance to recover from previous harvesting. This is especially the case in the JFM coastal forests where there aren't many valuable timber species to start with. So the project decided to seek ways of adding value to the forests by introducing activities to provide alternative sources of income. In Kilwa this took the form of items given to members of the community to start them up in forest related businesses, e.g. modern bee-hives, materials for mat weaving, carpentry tools, etc. In Lindi, sums of money were given to villages to start up a revolving fund which could then be loaned out to groups.

There were flaws in both approaches, although the concept was reasonable. Firstly, neither system was started early enough so that the benefits would be established by the time the forest management started – people have only just recently received either the items or the money to start the loans. In Kilwa, the items were offered to groups, often on a first come first served basis. It seems that, as is usual, the more entrepreneurial elements in the communities grabbed at the opportunities, but many of them had not yet started to use them, suggesting that they had not felt a great need for that item but had demanded it because it was on offer, e.g. one woman told us that she was using her bee-hive as an extra chair in her living room. Most VNRCs we spoke to had each received a bee hive three months previously, but in one village they hadn't yet started to use them, because they didn't have wire to hang them up with and were waiting for the project to bring it. In another village they had started using the hives but were waiting for the project to bring them the right clothing and equipment to harvest the honey, and if this equipment was not forthcoming then they'd have to abandon the hives, while in another village they had hung up the hives but complained that bees were not colonising them and they didn't know what to do about it. Other people in the villages were bitter, complaining that they hadn't received anything, and there was no possibility of them receiving anything now that the project was closing.

In Lindi the idea of the credit groups was better, since there is the possibility of more people benefiting in the long run. In Nndawa women talked about those who had taken loans, mostly to expand their very small businesses, e.g. those who had just sold dagaa (small fish) now sell soap and onions and tobacco. Nndawa men said that one person has taken the loan, and he now loans that money out to other people in smaller quantities at a higher interest rate. Women in Mvuleni said that they hadn't even thought about taking a loan, because they were afraid they wouldn't be able to pay it back. But if they saw how other people got on, they would be more prepared to try. In other villages people said that the loans came at a time of hunger, so the money was used for food, and now there were problems of paying it back. However, it seems that the scheme was implemented without sufficient expertise, relying mostly on the project accountant. Only later did

UTUMI bring in an organisation (VICOBA) who were more experienced in setting up a system of loans.

### Marketing

Marketing is also an important element of income generation – if there is no accessible market, then people will not be able to sell their produce. The people we spoke to in the villages were all confident that they would be able to sell their products, but most were relying on the existing market within their own villages, which, if production becomes more substantial, would soon be saturated. Women in Mvuleni said that they would have difficulties marketing anything that couldn't be sold in the village, since they are at the end of a long road going nowhere, so no-one passes, unlike the villages on the main Lindi road.

## **3.6 Institutional issues**

### Institutions

UTUMI has ensured that project activities and the VNRCs work closely with the village governments. As a result, at this stage in the process it seems that their roles of most village governments and VNRCs are harmonised, there is minimal conflict and each knows what the other is doing. In Somanga Simu the VNRC explained that they have an advisory or supervisory role, while the village government makes the decisions, e.g. about how many trees to cut down. Their roles are also spelt out clearly in the management plan, which will also contribute to avoiding conflict. In Kikole the village government was thrown out as a result of conflicts over the illegal harvesting of timber from the forests.

UTUMI also made sure that they were aware of what other projects were doing, e.g. in the case of the Mangrove Management Project whose objectives are similar to those of UTUMI, and streamlined activities where appropriate. Thus in the village where MMT work, there is only one VNRC, who deal with both forests and mangroves, and also training sessions were arranged jointly.

### Change of attitude

Although at first government foresters didn't believe that local people could look after their own forests, it seems that it has not been difficult for them to change their attitude and to embrace PFM concepts once they started working on it – most have seen the sense of the new regulations and have realised that there is no way district staff can police the vast areas of forest in Lindi, therefore it is better to have the community involved. However a new danger may be that the VNRCs take over the policing role of the foresters, and thus for ordinary people the situation will be much the same. There is also the danger in this situation that any benefits flowing from the forests will be hijacked by a small group of people. In Mvuleni a group of women told us that they are now scared to go into the forest because the VNRC will catch them, and they are afraid of this.

### Support and follow up

For something new like PFM, close support and follow up is essential. UTUMI spent a lot of time supporting the VNRC while they were preparing and writing their management plan, and in this way have clearly developed the capacity of people in the communities.

### Conflict

Conflict is not necessarily a bad thing, is usually inevitable and it often marks a stage in the transition from one system to another while everything is settling down, but it needs to be dealt

with using the appropriate body so that it is resolved properly. UTUMI thought that they could resolve conflicts that arose in the villages, and especially between villages. But some were so serious that it took more muscle than UTUMI possessed, and in the end district staff with authority and influence had to be called in. JFM forests have a ward committee, one of whose roles is to resolve conflicts if they arise, especially disputes between villages. It is important that conflict resolution bodies exist and that people know who to turn to in the event of conflict, e.g. the VNRC in Somanga Simu told us that they would first discuss a problem with the village government, then if that failed, they would move on to the ward committee, which the ward councillor and the ward executive officer sit on, and if that fails they call on the district.

#### Village boundaries

In several cases, the set aside forests were identified but when it came to clear the boundaries, it was realised that they were on another village's land, which led to conflict. This is a very likely scenario – very few villages in Tanzania have been surveyed, e.g. out of the 92 villages in Kilwa district, only two have been officially surveyed.

### **4. Lessons learnt and best practices**

In this section, lessons are drawn out from the UTUMI experiences and best practices are extrapolated from these lessons. The lessons and best practices can then feed into the national PFM programme.

#### **4.1 Time**

Establishing a sustainable form of PFM takes a long time. The time consuming factor is the close involvement of people in every step of the process. If the process is hurried and people are not fully involved, it will not be so effective and is not likely to be sustainable. It is also important to advise the community how long the process will take, in order that expectations of immediate action or benefits are not aroused.

#### **4.2 Initial approach**

If no such thing as PFM exists in a district, people will not demand it, therefore it has to be introduced in the initial villages in a brazenly top down way. But once the first villages have started on it, then if it is clear that there are benefits to the community, other villages will demand it. If no benefits are apparent, then it is not likely that demand will be stimulated. However, people have a variety of powerful motives for wanting to set aside or manage forests which are not necessarily those of the implementing agency (e.g. conservation of biodiversity). These motives will influence the way people will operate in relation to their forest.

Many projects start activities with a very general PRA type introduction, discussing priorities with communities. However this may build up expectations within the community. Restricting the initial approach to discussions about forestry helps to avoid building up expectations for alternatives beyond the scope of the implementing agency.

#### **4.3 Awareness**

Although project/district staff and village people involved in PFM may feel that they have held enough meetings and explained the process fully to enough people in the community, it takes much longer and more effort than expected to raise awareness in order that everyone understands. People in distant subvillages may not come to village meetings, and people on the margins of society may



also remain unaware of what is going on in their village. And just because the project has supplied e.g. the VNRC or the village government with information doesn't necessarily mean that the information will be spread amongst the community. It may even be deliberately withheld. Some sort of system needs to be instituted to ensure that people who have attended seminars return to their villages and call a meeting to explain what they have learnt. A format for such meetings could even be included in the seminars.

Connected to the spreading of awareness, is the issue of corruption (e.g. the selling off of valuable timber trees illegally) which is very difficult to root out if it pervades the whole system. It is not necessarily in everyone's interests for the whole community to know about the new forest management laws. If people are ignorant, it is easier for illegal activities to be carried on unimpeded. The more people who know about the system and who demand transparency from their leaders, the more difficult it is to carry on with illegal activities. Therefore establishing a system of transparency and accountability is possibly the only way to ensure that malpractices don't take place – the village government or VNRC may not be willing to conduct their activities in a transparent way, but if the community as a whole realises that they have the power to hold their leaders accountable and to prevent abuses to their forest, then it is more difficult for a few people to engage in illegal activities. Many people don't know what is going on and are not aware that they have a crucial part to play in the system, e.g. people didn't feel they had the power to vote out their VNRC. When the implementation of the management plans begins, it will be even more important that people are informed of the income and expenditure of the forests, who they have given permission to to harvest logs, and what the VNRC and village government are doing in the forests, in order to avoid misuse of the funds gained from the forests. This fits in with the Local Government Reform process, although this hasn't started yet in these districts, and its strategy of '*uwazi*' and '*ukweli*' (transparency) by which every government office from village upwards is required to publicise its income and expenditure for all in the community to see.

#### **4.4 Involve people**

It appears from the UTUMI experience that making an effort to involve people as much as possible in the PFM process is much more effective than bringing in outsiders to carry out tasks such as the forest inventory. A point which came out very strongly was that greater involvement of people in the PFM processes increases their feeling of ownership over the forest and thus they are likely to feel more of a stake in its management. And more knowledge of the processes involved in forest management is also likely to lead to better management of the resource.

More positive effort is needed to make sure that women are actively involved in PFM. District staff need to be sensitised in practical gender issues – theory is not enough. And just because there may be women on district working teams doesn't mean that they necessarily understand the difficulties women in villages face or that gender inequalities will automatically be dealt with – on the contrary, professional women may be more critical of village women's apparent lack of enthusiasm to take part in activities, and dismiss them as lazy or beyond hope.

District staff complained that the level of education of many people in the villages was very low so only those who could read and write should be on the VNRCs. However, people who are illiterate have their own strategies for learning new skills and perhaps the district staff should be prepared to adapt their teaching methods to suit those whose methods of learning are different.

#### **4.5 Follow up**

Where PFM is new, close follow up is necessary, partly to make sure the people in the villages are on the right track and activities are being implemented properly, and partly to keep motivation and enthusiasm going and advising people when they run into difficulties – otherwise they are likely to become disheartened and drop the activity as a result. Both the PFM process and the income generating activities need to be followed up and supported.

#### **4.6. Make use of available human resources**

It makes practical and financial sense to make use of all human resources possible, not just to rely on government foresters. PFM is not only about forestry, therefore a range of disciplines can be involved right from the beginning and throughout the process, depending on who is available. Although UTUMI worked with a multi-disciplinary district team, it is not necessary to rely entirely on district staff. There are also 'experts' at division, ward and village level who can be called upon. There may not be a divisional level forester, but there is likely to be a divisional or ward agricultural officer, who could take some sort of supervisory or follow up role. In other projects in the country, the position of village based animal health worker or village based health worker have been established with considerable success in order to ensure a certain basic level of expertise in villages in the absence of government experts. Such possibilities could be sought within PFM, calling on the expertise of those from established PFM villages who already know how to do a forest inventory, set up a VNRC or draw up a management plan. In addition, local experts could be identified for some of the income generating activities, especially bee keeping which has huge potential for expansion, but where many people seem to have run into difficulties. Under UTUMI VNRC members were paid government allowances if they travelled from their villages. Most village people would be happy with far less. Special rates could be set for such situations.

#### **4.7 Income generation and marketing**

Providing some sort of recompense, especially when benefits from the PFM forest are limited or not available for some years, is a good plan, but the way of doing it has to be initiated carefully, with the necessary expertise, in order that the maximum number of people benefit. The system needs to be started off early enough so that benefits start to come in as soon as possible.

Giving items to individuals, even if they are in groups, does not seem to be the answer since it is not always the right people who receive the items, and the rest of the community is left out. Some sort of a system of loans works better and is more likely to benefit more people. However, the necessary expertise should be used when setting up such a system. UTUMI mostly used the project accountant to deal with this. However, just as PFM is not only forestry, so a loans system is not only money - there is much more to setting up a revolving fund loans system than just money. Experience in other areas has shown that credit groups work better when they are started with members' savings which the implementing agency can then add to, rather than purely an injection of cash from outside. The statistics for repayment are also higher when the money involved belongs mostly to the community. And it is also advisable to give out loans to expand existing small businesses, rather than to start off new businesses which have a high probability of failing.

Introducing income generating activities is relatively simple, but marketing is a crucial element which involves a variety of skills and is often overlooked. Some products need a certain level of quality, e.g. honey needs to be processed to remove bits, and shouldn't have a smoky taste, mats need to be of a saleable quality, vegetables should be fresh and fit for market. People also need to be taught how to supply their market reliably. It is important to put people in touch with a market –

e.g. the DFO in Lindi told us of a trader who came from Dar es Salaam looking to buy substantial quantities of honey. There is little incentive for people to produce items for sale if they are not going to be able to sell them, and it may even make them bitter, indirectly, with the whole PFM process, having built up their expectations then dashed them again.

#### **4.8 Institutions**

There are several institutional issues which need to be addressed in the context of PFM. In a new system like PFM some sort of conflict will be almost inevitable. Often this arises between the village government and the VNRC, when the village government becomes resentful of the new powers exercised by the VNRC. It is therefore important to involve the village governments from the outset, and harmonise their roles within the management plans, otherwise it is likely that the village governments will be isolated from the process and wreck it as a result. Similarly, before even beginning the process of setting aside a forest for CBFM, village boundaries should be identified clearly and beyond doubt, in order to avoid conflict later. If conflict does arise, then those involved in PFM should be aware of most effective channels for conflict resolution.

#### **5. Areas where no lessons have yet been learnt**

It is still too early to draw many lessons from the UTUMI project since progress has necessarily been very slow and the project only continued for three years. Some lessons seem clear, but may in the long run not be as valid as they initially seemed. When the transition from project to PFM programme occurs, other lessons will come out. There are some areas in which no lessons can be drawn from UTUMI at this stage because some of the planned activities have not yet been implemented:

- Management of the forest according to the management plan
- Sharing of the benefits from the forests
- Acquiring land titles for the forests
- Resolving conflicts which may occur as a result of the management of the forests
- Monitoring forest utilisation under the management plan
- The role of LGR in PFM, since it hasn't yet started in Lindi.
- Villages in this area have huge forests within their boundaries. In most cases it seems that setting aside a forest has not affected people's lives, because either they never used that area of forest since it was far from their homes, or there is another area of forest which they can just as easily use. In areas where there are limited areas of forests, closing off a large area of forest could have a devastating effect on people who rely on that forest for their livelihoods. These people are often the ones who exist on the margins of society and who are not voted onto village governments or VNRCs, and who may not even be made aware of the new regulations. However, this doesn't appear to have happened in the UTUMI area. There is thus no lesson to be drawn about how PFM would work in a village where forests were small or badly degraded and needed to regenerate. This is crucial.

#### **6. Constraints which will affect future district based PFM**

There are several significant differences between a project and a district based PFM. The most obvious one, of course, is that of resources – basically PFM UTUMI style is unreplicable. In the present scheme of things it seems that there will be more villages using fewer resources. UTUMI had enough resources to ensure that a team of district staff could remain in the field for days at a time while facilitating the various steps of the PFM process. The question of transport is also a problem – UTUMI had cars which they used whenever they needed them. Although some of the UTUMI cars will be handed over to the districts, there is no guarantee that they will always be

available for PFM activities, even if there are the resources in the PFM budget to cover all the transport needs.

For this reason, it is necessary to identify and use locally based people as much as possible. While a multi-disciplinary district team is a fine concept, with a smaller resource base it will not be possible to continue with it. One member of staff from the district could supervise a team of locally based experts wherever possible. If possible, a ward or divisional agricultural officer could be brought into the process to supervise the local experts. Local people working in a smaller area will also be more able to use bicycles to reach other villages, thus cutting transport costs. However, in district where there has been no PFM at all, this will not be possible, since that reservoir of local experts will not exist. A great deal more investment will be required for the initial stages.

Another constraint which has affected UTUMI in their composition of the management plans has been the lack of clarification by the FBD of the sharing of JFM benefits. For the moment people in the villages are going on with their management plans without a directive from the FBD.

Some criteria for PFM success include:

- a strong commitment at district level to make it succeed. There are ways of doing things if people really want to do them, but it is very easy to sit back and give up, complaining of lack of resources. The Kilwa district team told us - 'no-one will listen to us if we don't come with a nice car and lots of money'.
- a strong commitment at village level is also necessary – given that the district won't have the resources to be present in the villages as they were during the project, the village needs to have the motivation to carry on the process much more themselves.
- the more forest available, the more likely PFM is to succeed, since closing off an area of forest when there are alternative sources of forest products won't hurt anyone's livelihood. It is not clear from the UTUMI experiences how PFM works when the area of forest is not sufficient for people's needs.
- local people available to take part in PFM, e.g. an agricultural officer to supervise when the district staff are not around, a local beekeeper to teach others how to keep bees, VNRC members who can travel to other villages to assist with the various steps in the process

## **Appendix 1: Terms of Reference**

### **TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR STUDY OF THE LESSONS LEARNED FROM THE UTUMI PROJECT IN LINDI REGION**

#### **Background:**

Tanzania is rich in various natural resources, including forests and woodlands. Recent estimates are 38 mill hectares, which is more than 40% of the country's land. However, Lindi Region is one the regions with most forest and woodlands in Tanzania and also a low population density.

The Government of Tanzania have a vision of reducing the poverty in the country, a poverty that is especially found in Lindi Region. The vast forests and woodlands in the Region has the potential to be a major resource to provide not only consumption and income generation for the households, but also increased revenue for the Districts and the Region in order to facilitate general development.

The Government of Tanzania has a National Forest Policy (from 1998) which allows for local communities and other stakeholders to be involved in forest management – Joint Forest Management (JFM) for forest reserves and Community Based Forest Management (CBFM) for forest on village land. The village Based Forest and Woodland Management in Lindi Region (Utunzaji wa Misisitu – in short: UTUMI) started in Lindi and Kilwa District in January 2001 in cooperation with the district councils with funding from Danida. It is the intention that the UTUMI project, considered as a pilot project, after a first phase of 3 years will be mainstreamed into a new National PFM component.

#### **Objectives:**

To document the best practices and to understand the underlying constraints to successful community based forest management in Lindi Region.

#### **Outputs:**

The following outputs are expected from the review:

- A debriefing note to be discussed with stakeholders in Lindi Region, before the study team departs from Lindi, and with representatives of FBD and The Embassy, upon return to Dar-es-Salaam.
- A lessons learned report with major findings and analyses, which uses the expected objectives, outputs and planned activities from the UTUMI Project Document's LFA as a point of departure, and that summarizes project achievements in the form of a best practices list.

#### **Scope of Work:**

- Review the relevant UTUMI Project documentation
- Review documentation of relevance from other locations, including the MEMA Project lessons learnt and the PFM - Report on Lessons Learnt of November 2003.

- Assess the extent to which UTUMI's LFA objectives and outputs have been achieved, what impact have they had and to what extent have the original risks and assumptions held true.
- Conduct interviews at village, ward, district and regional levels.
- Assess the impact of capacity building activities on institutions and staff at Village, District and Regional levels.
- Describe any variations in activities and outputs that have been made to UTUMI's LFA and assess the validity and consequence of such variations to the project objectives.
- Consult with relevant resource persons including the Regional Project Manager, the Senior Technical Advisor and the Kilwa Project Manager.

### **Method of Work.**

- Field work to be undertaken for at least 10 working days in a sufficient number of villages and in the 2 District towns, Lindi and Kilwa Masoko, in Lindi Region.
- Debriefing at the end of fieldwork, in both Lindi and Dar-es-Salaam.

### **Timing**

The study will begin in Dar-es-Salaam on Monday, 14 June 2004 and will be implemented over a 3 weeks period.

- 3 days in Dar-es-Salaam for a briefing meeting at the Royal Danish Embassy and literature review and other preparations.
- At least 10 working days fieldwork, including debriefing.
- 1 day in Dar-es-Salaam, after departing Lindi, for a debriefing meeting to be held at the Royal Danish Embassy.
- 1 week report writing.
- 5 copies of a draft report not later than 2 weeks after finishing the fieldwork.
- 5 copies of final report delivered to Danida not later than 1 week after receiving comments from the stakeholders.

### **Composition of team:**

The Team Leader is Kate Forrester Kibuga, M.Sc. in Environmental Forestry, with extensive experience from Rural Development projects throughout Tanzania. Kate Forrester Kibuga will work in close cooperation with Issae Madundo, background in socio-economic development work, including participatory planning and management.

### **Available documentation:**

UTUMI project document, May 2000  
 PFM component document, October 2002  
 MEMA Lessons Learned Report, October 2003  
 UTUMI Review Report, June 2003  
 UTUMI – MEMA Assessment of PFM Readiness Report  
 Review of the Revenue Collection System for Forest Products, March 2004  
 A Report on Lessons Learnt for the NFP (Korongo, Nov. 2003)  
 UTUMI Biodiversity Surveys, December 2002  
 UTUMI Socio-economic studies reports, December 2002  
 Biological diversity survey of Mbarawala and Ruawa in Lindi, April 2004

## Appendix 2: Schedule of field work

Date	Location	Activity
14 <sup>th</sup> June		Travel to Dar es Salaam
15 <sup>th</sup> June	Dar es Salaam	Meeting at Danish Embassy with Programme Officer Preparation and document review
16 <sup>th</sup> June	Kilwa	Travel to Kilwa Meeting with District Project Manager and Regional Technical Advisor Planning of fieldwork
17 <sup>th</sup> June	Ruhatwe (CBFM)  Kikole (CBFM)	Discussion with VNRC Sat in VNRC exchange visit meeting Meetings with small groups of men and women in the village Meeting with VNRC Meeting with Village Government Meeting with a group of men Meeting with a group of women
18 <sup>th</sup> June	Kilwa	Courtesy call to DED Meeting with DNRO Meeting with DFO and District Project Manager Meeting with District Working Team (CDO, Game Officer, Forestry Officer, Agricultural Officer) Meeting with Mangrove Management Project officers
19 <sup>th</sup> June	Somanga Simu (JFM)  Marandego (JFM)	Meeting with VNRC Meeting with Village Government Meeting with group of women Meeting with group of men Visit to forest Meeting with VNRC Meeting with Village Government Meeting with group of women Meeting with group of men
20 <sup>th</sup> June	Kilwa/Lindi	Meeting with DFO and District Project Manager Travel to Lindi Meeting with Regional Project Manager Planning of fieldwork
21 <sup>st</sup> June	Lindi Nndawa (CBFM)	Courtesy calls to RAS, DED, DNRO Meeting with women – VNRC members, local forest experts and ordinary village women Meeting with men – VNRC members, local forest experts and ordinary village men Visit to CBFM forest
22 <sup>nd</sup> June	Lindi Dimba JFM area Mvuleni	Interview with Regional Project Manager Visit to Dimba forest in Maloo Meeting with group of women Meeting with group of men Meeting with JFM committee
23 <sup>rd</sup> June	Lindi	Interview with District Working Team Compilation of debriefing note
24 <sup>th</sup> June	Lindi	Debriefing with Lindi UTUMI team Travel to Dar es Salaam
25 <sup>th</sup> June	Dar es Salaam	Debriefing at Danish Embassy/FBD
26 <sup>th</sup> June		Travel to Iringa