

## 7. LESSONS LEARNT FROM CBNRM PROGRAMMES IN THE REGION

The CBNRM programmes described here: CAMPFIRE (Communal Areas Management Programme for Indigenous Resources) in Zimbabwe and CBNRM in Namibia are more development-focussed than the ICDPs that have formed the central focus of this study. CBNRM programmes can be perceived as a movement or process initiated nation-wide to allow a greater level of community control over natural resource use in rural areas, supported by enabling legislation. Conversely, ICDPs tend to be more 'project' based and are usually linked to a specific National Park or other protected area. Despite their differences important lessons can be learnt from CBNRM that are extremely relevant for ICDPs and their success.

### 7.1 CAMPFIRE

CAMPFIRE is often cited as the most successful CBNRM programme. However it has been suggested that the participation of women within the programme continues to be limited despite donor and central government requirements that women constitute an integral part of it (USAID, 1994a; Patel, 1998). Household revenues are distributed to household heads – mainly men – and men dominate positions of authority. As a result women are constantly marginalised both in involvement and from benefits resulting from the Programme (see Box 7.1; 7.2). This is despite the fact CAMPFIRE revenues are used most efficiently, resulting in expanded employment opportunities for the benefit of the *whole* community, where women have been actively involved (Patel, 1998).

#### Box 7.1 A Lack of Respect

*'As old women, we do not feel respected, so we fail to help solve problems. Rather than listen to us, leaders listen to young people who have been to school. Major problems that affect everyone in our community are addressed by only a few people who are friends of government workers and elected leaders'.*

Statement by Tonga elder.

CAMPFIRE literature claims that the programme faces constraints mainly because wildlife management has traditionally been male dominated (CAMPFIRE, undated). Indeed, the focus of CAMPFIRE on singular wildlife-related activities (trophy hunting) with singular goals (financial) sharply contrasts with the wider focus of natural resource management in which women play an integral role.

However, it is suggested that the problem lies deeper in the very structure of CAMPFIRE, which failed to actively involve rural communities in the planning and design process (Patel, 1998). In addition, where communities or households were involved, they were viewed as homogenous. As a result, the implementation process neglected the important and different socio-economic roles played by men and women within the patriarchal communities and at the household level in natural resource management. Such gender-blind programmes failed to capture an important part of ecologically sound, traditional resource management knowledge. Furthermore, development interventions perpetuated and strengthened traditional relations of patriarchy to the disadvantage of women (Nabane, 1995).

More recently the programme has tried to expand the activities to include those more related to women such as fuelwood, the collection of plants and mopane worms, and handicrafts. Indirect benefits have included the building of roads, which have increased marketing opportunities.

### **Box 7.2 Inequalities Faced Through CAMPFIRE**

Research in Masoka showed that due to CAMPFIRE, the village had experienced enhanced crop protection resulting from construction of an electric fence; increased employment opportunities; involvement in wildlife management; a village school and increased incomes. However, many of these benefits were experienced on an unequal basis, with women being disadvantaged in the majority of cases. For example, the electric fence meant that, on a daily basis, women experienced difficulty in accessing resources needed for food preparation, particularly firewood and water. Employment opportunities realised from the fence were almost exclusively a male domain: of 98 households interviewed, 32 men had jobs on the fence compared to only two women. Of the total CAMPFIRE-related jobs in the area, comprising nearly 80% of wage employment, only 3% of these were women. The CAMPFIRE wildlife committee was composed entirely of men, though the other committees did include both men and women. The grinding mill committee, originally supposed to be composed only of women, hired a man to be the secretary because the women members were illiterate. Women were clearly disadvantaged in both education and in training activities. Furthermore, income distribution from CAMPFIRE to the households was most likely to be controlled by men, whereas matters concerning agricultural activities, which previously dominated household income, were more traditionally a joint male-female decision.

(Nabane, 1995).

In addition other problems have been addressed. For example, at the beginning of the programme divorced women were not considered as heads of household and thus received no income from CAMPFIRE: this has since been resolved (Child and Peterson, 1991 in IIED, 1994). In many wards, all the Ward Wildlife Committees now have at least one female member. And, as Nabane (1995) suggests, though CAMPFIRE in Masoka (as described in Box 7.2) has gender-differentiated effects that seem to favour men rather than women, the Programme has created opportunities for women which were not previously available. In the future this should be used as a starting point to further enhance women's participation in CAMPFIRE activities.

#### **7.1.1 Lessons learnt**

- Supportive legislation and the influence of donors have been important factors in promoting gender equity. However, cultural and social constraints have prevented the full inclusion of women.
- A failure to understand women's views, needs and priorities has meant that some of the impacts of conservation protection have detrimentally affected women more than men. In addition, opportunities for women to contribute to, and benefit from, the CAMPFIRE programme have been missed.
- Traditionally the focus of the programme has been on CWM and big game, which has biased the elements of the programme towards men, marginalising and devaluing women's roles and relationships with other natural resources.
- It is suggested that the root causes of the problems that now exist in CAMPFIRE – a lack of decentralisation to the community level and inequitable distribution of costs and benefits – are founded in the very structure of CAMPFIRE. Firstly, it failed to actively involve rural communities in the planning and design process and secondly, where communities were involved, they were wrongly viewed as homogenous entities.
- Despite its difficulties and failures, CAMPFIRE has opened up opportunities for women that previously did not exist.

## **7.2 CBNRM AND CRM (COMMUNITY RESOURCE MONITORS) IN NAMIBIA**

In Namibia legislation provides opportunities for local communities to establish 'conservancies' that provide them with rights to use the resources within defined geographical boundaries and existing

law (see Appendix 1, Case Study 4, and Flintan, 2001a). An NGO: 'Integrated Rural Development for Nature Conservation' (IRDNC), with support from USAID, DFID and WWF, has initiated a CBNRM programme that supports community participation within the conservancy process.

The initial focus of CBNRM was an all-male Community Game Guards (CGG) programme. However, it was soon realised that women were being marginalised from participation and benefits. As a result attempts were made to involve women in the conservation of natural resources, particularly those resources that they used. After support was gained from tribal authorities, meetings were held with women to find out which resources were used by them and why. An initiative was then launched that employed women as Community Resource Monitors (CRMs). It was anticipated that this would give women the opportunity to access information and a forum for influencing decision-making. This would then evolve into the actual management of natural resources.

The CRM programme was initiated in 1994. Initially the women were employed to address problem animal concerns (in conjunction with the CGGs) as well as the natural resource management issues faced by women. However, it soon became clear that the primary roles of a CRM should be to organise communities and women's groups to better exploit natural resource management opportunities and to facilitate the flow of information between local users, decision-makers (at both local and regional levels) and the 'external' world, such as tourist companies and craft sellers.

Participatory techniques proved useful in the collection of information about who had tenure and use rights to the resources; what veld products were being used, by whom and why; the availability of markets; and the importance of the products to the household economy. The information was then used in the planning and continuing development of the project.

As the programme developed it aimed to raise the capacity of women in CBNRM activities rather than just promote gender balance and satisfy quotas for female participation within community organisations. It promoted the active participation of rural women in natural resource management by their appointment as facilitators within IRDNC and by encouraging conservancies to appoint women as CRMs or Community Activators (CAs). The diverse role of CRMs is described in Box 7.3.

### **7.2.1 Lessons learnt**

A number of important lessons can be learnt from the Namibian CBNRM Programme:

- Strong links between conservation and development have been promoted and achieved. In addition, women's rights to use resources have been linked with responsibilities to maintain and use those rights in a sustainable manner.
- The advice of an 'external' consultant on gender issues in the initial stages of the Project was useful. As a result there has been a clearer emphasis on mainstreaming gender issues. However, since this initial input there has been a lack of gender expertise within the organisation so that gender and women's issues have been addressed only when problems have arisen and in a somewhat haphazard way. With a more planned and structured addressing of such issues, some of problems that have arisen may have been avoided.
- The programme proved to be flexible enough to adapt to the different geographical and cultural contexts found. Change has not been forced but opportunities facilitated that provide space for women to initiate change if they wish to. The programme has exposed women to modern life skills, roles, responsibilities and functions without forcing them to take up such things against their will.

- Information flow was a vital and successful component achieved through the CRMs. As women became more drawn into the conservation processes they took on greater roles in and responsibilities for sustainable natural resource use.

### **Box 7.3. Community Resource Monitors (CRMs)**

In Namibia female CRMs have been supported as a part of the CBNRM programme. Their role has developed over the years and they are now involved in a wide range of activities in connection with natural resource management. These include:

- Forming, and working with, crafts groups as part of craft sales outlets.
- Monitoring use of resources used for crafts, food, building and medicines.
- Sourcing markets for products.
- Developing a resource inventory that can be identified and recorded.
- Mapping resources.
- Providing data and information on resources through ecological and social surveys.
- Planting and propagating gardens of priority resources under heavy use - such as palms - by enterprise related activities.
- Giving training in more sustainable harvesting and use of natural resources; craft quality control business techniques, and other capacity building.
- Developing social maps to aid conservancy formation and management.
- Liaising between community, committees, IRDNC, MET (Ministry of Environment and Tourism), professional hunters and other organisations & passing on information.
- Assisting with problem animal control.
- Promoting conservancy and conservation awareness.
- Assisting with conservancy applications.
- Assisting with benefit distribution.
- Assisting with conservancy membership registration.
- Assisting with committee formation.
- Assisting with drawing up a constitution.
- Discussing and helping with land use planning.
- Promoting AIDS awareness and family planning.
- Providing a link between women, community leaders and CBNRM partners so that their needs, views, perspectives and priorities can be voiced.
- Involving women in decision-making and ensuring that they are represented.

Flintan, 2001a [For more information see Appendix 1]

- Attitudes did not change immediately and it took time to convince users of the benefits of more sustainable harvesting practices, etc. In addition, for the CRMs, being employed and holding responsibilities was somewhat alien to them. Amongst some there was a lack of enthusiasm and commitment to work and many had difficulties communicating conservancy concepts and information with IRDNC management and outsiders. This was partly due to a lack of managerial capacity to provide enough guidance and supervision to CRMs, particularly in the initial stages.
- Time and resources were invested in finding solutions to the problems encountered and adaptations made to the Programme where possible and appropriate. The motivation and enthusiasm of the staff and key community individuals were vital for Project success.
- Community participation was a key component of the Programme and a variety of means were used to promote this, including community workshops, theatre and PRA. Women's problems were listened to and, where possible, addressed.
- Exchange visits were a particularly useful way of encouraging information flow, exchanging experiences and building up solidarity and cooperation between women's groups in different areas. However, between some women's groups, deep-seated prejudices and language barriers caused as yet irreconcilable conflicts.
- It is important for the success and sustainability of the Programme that CRMs are progressively integrated into the conservancies, who are given guidance on planning and directing the CRMs in carrying out their duties, dealing with disciplinary issues and paying salaries. However, once the CRMs have left the relative 'protection' of IRDNC and its direct support, they have found

themselves less valued and supported by the conservancies. Salaries have been reduced and it has been more difficult for them to influence resource management processes and practices.

- A well organised and supported handicraft programme has formed a central focus of the project. This has included a strict quality control process; a mix of tradition and modern techniques of production; the establishment of sustainable sources of primary products needed; 'ownership' of the programme by the CRMs and handicraft members; and an emphasis on sourcing and developing sustainable markets.
- The support of linkages between the different components of the programme has proved important. Sustainable use of resources has been combined with monitoring initiatives and income-generating activities such as handicrafts, thatch-grass collection and tourism. Many of the components have been built on traditional roles of women.
- An integrated and holistic approach has been taken, and shown to be of value.
- There are still a number of problems and constraints that compromise the success of the CRM Programme. These include a continuing male domination in societies and institutions; conflicts between local food security and commercial enterprises; the handing over of responsibility for CRMs to conservancies; continuing problems with elephants and other wildlife; and international and local ethnic conflicts.