

FGLG-Malawi

Progress report 2012



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NARRATIVE REPORT FOR JULY 2011 TO DECEMBER 2012 FOR FGLG MALAWI

Narrative reports

Progress with activities

Main activity	Progress
Output 1: Forest rights and small forest enterprise - policy reforms, investment decisions and institutional arrangements in favour of secure forest rights and small forest enterprise.	
Activity 1.1 Create and take opportunities to legalise the clan management systems that can help to empower community forest management, rather than alternative structures externally imposed. The idea here is to submit a proposal to the FAO that scales up the early experiences in Ntcheu and Zomba co management of forest reserves. The team will also try to counter the environmentalist programme led by the Malawi Environmental Endowment Trust to introduce armed guards into Forest Reserves.	FGLG Malawi has expanded its work from Mtanda Hill to Dzonzi –Mvai Catchment area in the same district. So far a rapid assessment of the catchment needs, stakeholders' analysis and priorities has been done. Meetings with the Ntcheu District Executive Committee and the Central Region Water Board have also been done. The District Forestry Officer is taking lead in the action. The work here will focus on improving governance of the catchment to ensure equitable utilisation of water and forest resources originating from the catchment. FGLG has also participated in national tree planting exercises by planting 12000 trees in Wenya in Chitipa District, Ntanda and Kamuzuveni village in the Mpira Dam Catchment area in Ntcheu district. The objective is to scale up the clan management system that was innovated in Ntcheu District.
Activity 1.2 The team will host a workshop with the Zomba communities that have signed co-management agreements with the intention of (i) creating a network of CBFM facilitators at community level that can spread knowledge on how to achieve co-management agreements (ii) work with those communities to assess what process of consultation and what content they would like to see installed in any review of the National Forest Programme, and (iii) discuss why sustainable charcoal production has not featured in signed co-management agreements and how it could do so in	The activities that FGLG implemented focussed on Viphyia Plantations, which has similar challenges as the Zomba Mountai forest plantation. The FGLG had visited the Viphay plantations and prepared a report to advise the Forest Department on how better to manage cooperatives that are working in the plantations. The meeting briefed members of the Department of Forestry on the findings regarding the activities of timber cooperatives operating on the Viphyia Plantations especially in Lusangazi and Nthungwa Forest Plantations. Departmental members were asked to comment on the findings. Seven senior members of the Department including the Deputy Director attended the meeting. The main outcome is that government agreed to review the procedure

the future. As part of this work a checklist of principles and criteria on best practice in consultation during policy reviews will be developed as a policy brief (POLICY BRIEF 4) and used by the FGLG team.	for issuing licences and management of cooperatives and requested FGLG to help with capacity building of cooperatives which has now been incorporated in this year annual workplan. The team did not produce a policy brief as planned on best practice in consultation processes but instead developed the consultation report for the Malawi NFP-Facility process.
Activity 1.3 Look for and secure additional funding to continue the development of small forest enterprise in Malawi linked to the Forest Connect alliance—building on the 28 community level facilitators of the Market Analysis and Development methodology who were trained last year. The team will share with FAO this work-plan to assess the best way forward.	Worked with IIED to generate ideas on how to mobilise additional funding for forest-based enterprises. This resulted in a small grant to look in more depth at trees-on-farm enterprises – focusing on the Janeemo project. FGLG members also worked with the Department of Forestry to support development of small-scale operators in Chikangawa so that they could be exporting timber outside Malawi and realise benefits that motivate to invest more in plantation management.
Output 2: Legitimate forest products - strategies to improve legality of forest products, institutionalise citizen engagement and contribute to broader forest governance improvement.	
Activity 2.1 Strengthen multi-stakeholder engagement, transparency and accountability – including advocacy allies at high level - to commit government towards an option for sustainable charcoal production, developing implementation plans, and making it work in the field. An immediate priority is to evaluate the new Government of Malawi Biomass Energy Strategy (stimulated and drawing on 'Charcoal the Reality') to assess whether this provides new leverage to pursue sustainable and legal charcoal production. . In addition the team will begin to explore how, with the Ministry of Energy, a vision of biomass energy could be developed that provides opportunities for enhancing Malawi's energy security and creates opportunities for rural electrification.	Individual members of the FGLG Malawi have been working with the Forestry Department and Environmental Affairs Department on how to incorporate sustainable charcoal production in government policies. Dialogue with the Ministry of Energy has been ongoing. Important donor programmes are already adopting sustainable charcoal production in their programmes. One FGLG member Robert Kafakoma is involved in assessing and developing case studies for the Renewable Energy Technologies in Malawi under the Malawi Renewable Energy Project.
Activity 2.2 Facilitate the spread of legal licensing of charcoal by supporting, monitoring and documenting pilot projects in Zomba and elsewhere. An attempt will be made to find funding to develop sustainable charcoal production (through UNDP).	No progress to report. This could not have been done without the support of the EU project which has just started again to implement its phase 2. The UNDP funding is still in pipeline but it will start off. Charcoal initiatives have been put on hold due to poor governance of the country.

Activity 2.3 Build government, citizen and civil society attempts such as buyers groups or procurement policies for only buying sustainable license charcoal to create demand-side drivers of improved decision making in the forest sector. The FGLG team will also work with the UNDP funded project to develop fuelwood and charcoal sustainably from Neem	No progress to report. Linked to 2.2
Activity 2.4 Work with IIED to revise the STUDY 4 completed in 2009 on the state of timber trading in Malawi (focusing on the Vipha plantation) so as to produce it in published form to continue to improve the information on forest resources in the public domain and catalyse follow up initiatives	This study was revised and completed and is on IIED website see http://pubs.iied.org/pdfs/G03138.pdf . It has had considerable traction within Malawi, causing the Government initially to ban exports and then resulting in a process in which the government set up a committee to audit the timber trade in Chikangawa in Malawi, and introduced a high timber export tax to deter illegal timber exports.
Output 3: Pro-poor climate change mitigation and adaptation through forestry. Initiatives to combat climate change through action in the forest sector contribute to pro	
Activity 3.1 Explore and review existing programmes and studies on REDD in Malawi, plus studies on adaptation to climate change and commission a climate change study (STUDY 6) that complements other REDD work so as to provide a foundation of work in Malawi in formats compatible with R-PIN and R-PP formats and those of the UN REDD Programme	While the study that was designed was not commissioned, this was in part because FGLG helped to catalyse a broader in-country process that will help develop REDD planning. Work on developing a REDD strategy is on-going and the FGLG is working together with the Department of Forestry to develop that strategy. In addition, FGLG worked together with Forestry Department to meet NORAD for possible financial support. Financial support has been released to the NORAD funded Climate Change Programme being implemented by LEAD (Chancellor College, FRIM and World Fish Centre). A task force has been formed with leadership from Forestry Department to spearhead the process. The FD now has technical support from Japan and EU to assist with the development of thinking and practice on carbon financing and those involved will join the task force to fast track the development of the REDD strategy in Malawi. FGLG is a lead member in the TASK team.
Activity 3.2 Help ensure REDD strategies focus on areas where local property rights and institutional capability can be effectively combined with good forestry practice – and with manageable risks and transaction costs – by producing a policy briefing paper (POLICY BRIEFING 5) based on the above report to show how good forest	As part of the process of developing REDD thinking in Malawi FGLG members played a leading role in an MRV workshop 23-24 June 2011 and helped synthesise thinking on why Malawi needs REDD and what a REDD strategy might do for the country (see http://pubs.iied.org/pdfs/G03131.pdf)

governance can help mitigate and adapt to climate change and engage with new payment frameworks.	
Activity 3.4 Support better national decision-making about biofuel development strategies in the context of developments in securing rights, legality development and climate mitigation forestry – by distilling the findings of separately funded IIED-Malawi work on biofuels into a briefing paper for forest sector discussions.	A bio-fuels report was drafted by Bunda College consultants and has been edited by IIED. A policy brief has also been developed. The work has been incorporated within a biofuels project which is being implemented by Bunda College by the expert who conducted our study. A national dissemination forum was also organised.
Output 4: Trans-national learning and preparedness. Understanding improved in international networks and processes about effective action for improved social justice in forestry.	
Activity 4.1 Conduct national learning events and take part in international learning events and country exchanges and promote online forums, social networks, policy portals and wiki-technology to benefit from wider trans-national network	FGLG has conducted a number of local meetings to spread learning and share information about forest governance issues in the country (Titles and dates to be added). FGLG also contributed to the development of a government and civil society position on climate change which was presented during the COP 17 in Durban. FGLG has also participated in a number of meetings including Civil Society Climate Change Network forums and Africa Land Forums. FGLG supported training on REDD of one member from Mzuzu University, Mr. Bennet Mataya, and participation at a REDD dissemination workshop for two CURE staff members, Mr. Christopher Mwambene and Clifford Mwale.
Activity 4.3 Develop a sustained engagement of the Forest Management Board (including the newly developed Forest Management and Development fund) and revive the annual National Forestry Governance Forum with high level advocacy allies that are linked to FGLG and can make use of new tools, policy briefs, news and advocacy materials online and in hard copy aimed at influencing debates and policy developments in favour of social justice in forestry	The FGLG also undertook a National Consultation Process to Resuscitate the Malawi National Forestry Programme Forum. The work was done by CURE. The objectives were to undertake a review of the terms of reference for and composition of the NFP Forum and Forest Management Board including its strengths, weaknesses, threats and opportunities and reasons that lead to its collapse; - Explore financing options for the sustainability of the operations of the NFP Forum and the Forest Management Board; - Explore and harmonise linkages between the NFP Forum and Forest Management Board on one hand and the National Council on the Environment on the other; - Develop a strategy and implementation plan that could lead to the resuscitation the NFP Forum and the Forestry Management Board; - Present the strategy and implementation plan that could lead to the resuscitation the NFP

	Forum and the Forestry Management Board for validation at a stakeholders workshop. The activity was co-financed by FAO-NFP Facility and will be completed / published shortly.
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Forest governance developments

Malawi is passing through a period of unprecedented macro-economic and political governance shocks. Economic shocks include the shortage of forex, which has resulted in multiple problems including shortage of fuel, medical supplies in public hospitals and general decline in delivery of public services, including forest management services. Political governance issues facing the country include: government passing retrogressive and dictatorial legislation, which have included a number of constitutional amendments that restrict the enjoyment of rights by Malawians, the expulsion of the British High Commissioner to Malawi, threatening of civil society leaders who demand accountability and good governance, the closure of Chancellor College as a result of their fight for academic freedom¹, cancellation of local government elections, which scheduled for this year and many other issues. These developments have led to frustration amongst the public and on July 20, 2011, Malawi witnessed unprecedented nationwide public demonstrations against government organised by the civil society organisations in Malawi. About 20 people were shot dead by the Malawi Police. As result of the poor governance of the country, development partners such as the US, British and German Governments have suspended development assistance to Malawi. In addition, the IMF has not renewed its programme with Malawi. The implications on FGLG Malawi are a much more limited participation in FGLG by some of our members, loss of potential partners, such as the Chancellor College and also difficulties for civil society to engage with Government due to lack of trust between the two. For this reason it has been difficult to pursue controversial topics such as the legalisation and formalisation of the charcoal industry as charcoal is a big political issue in Malawi due to high participation of politicians in the industry.

Impacts

Members of the FGLG are becoming increasingly aware of the importance of building synergies with other multilateral programs such as those supported by FAO-NFP Facility. Recently two members, Christopher Mwambene and Bennet Mataya, attended a training of trainers (ToT) conflict management course organised by the FAO with a view to mobilise resources and conduct a broader course for forestry practitioners at national level employing the skills attained at the course.

FGLG inputs are being made at national level climate change processes. The FGLG has lobbied Government through the Department of Environmental Affairs to incorporate CSOs in climate debates. In addition, it has lobbied the Department to provide feedback to CSO on deliberations of the COP 17 that was held in Durban, hence making CSO and FGLG members more aware of international climate change processes.

Overall the main impact the FGLG created was that it contributed to more recognition of the forestry sector by isolating issues that have now been included in the revised Malawi growth and Development Strategy. We had a meeting and wrote a letter to the Government and hand delivered to the former Minister of Economic Planning and Development, who had met Bright Sibale and asked for FGLG to submit forestry issues during the time Government was developing the Malawi Growth and Development Strategy II.

¹ In January this year, a political science lecturer was arrested for comparing the Arab Spring to the situation in Malawi. Since then the University of Malawi has been closed because lecturers are demanding their academic freedom.

Lessons – a summary of any lessons learned

Impacts take long to show and within the forest governance sector, no one player can attribute impacts to one player. For example there are many people working on climate related issues – and it is difficult to attribute particular progress to FGLG – despite our assertion that our impact has been strong.

Overall political governance is key to forest governance. As the country is passing through turbulent political and economic governance challenges, forest governance is becoming more problematic as well.

Implications for the work ahead

FGLG members are becoming increasingly involved in climate related debates and national processes

FGLG members belonging to civil society organisations are very afraid of doing their work because of poor relationship with government.

Members of FGLG from the University will not be free to write about governance issues for fear of political reprisals.

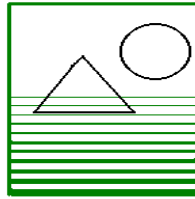
List of publications, letters, media pieces etc

The following documents have been produced (available attachments include below)

- Policy brief on 'Channelling REDD+ finance toward sustainable rural livelihoods in Malawi'
- Policy brief on community-based management of forest resources
- Report of a National Consultation Process to Resuscitate the Malawi National Forestry Programme Forum, by Christophe Mwambene, FGLG Malawi
- A rapid assessment of Governance Challenges and Stakeholder Analysis of Dzonzi Mvai Catchment Area in Ntcheu by Robert Kafakoma and Bright Sibale



Network for Learning
and Innovation



Training Support
Programme for
Community Based
Natural Resources
Management in
Malawi



Thursday, January 13, 2011

The Principal Secretary
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Dear Sir,

**DEVELOPMENT OF THE NEW MALAWI GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY:
INPUTS FROM THE MALAWI FOREST GOVERNANCE LEARNING GROUP**

I am writing this letter as a representative of the Forest Governance Learning Group (Malawi Chapter). The Forest Governance Learning Group is multinational programme operating in 10 countries in Africa and Asia and is facilitated by the International Institute of Environment in the United Kingdom. In Malawi the Group has a membership of about 50 local forest governance experts. The FGLG is an informal alliance that connects those marginalized from forest governance to those controlling it, and to help both do things better.

We are writing to contribute to the new Malawi Forest Governance Learning Group. We present the following issues and recommendation for Government consideration in the new development policy, particularly in the environment and natural resources sector.

Issue Number 1. Undervaluation of ecosystem services and climate change

There is undervaluation of services that forests and trees provide to the economy of the country. Some of the services include water regulation, soil erosion control, air pollution control, habitats for various species of wildlife etc. Yaron et al (2010) noted that the forestry sector makes an additional contribution of 4.3% to the country's GDP up from the official figure of 1.8% of the GDP. Similarly, the cost for unsustainable use of forests cost the country 11% of the GDP over the official figure of 2.4% of the GDP.

There are a lot of individuals, companies who are benefiting from the ecosystems services and yet the people who are managing them are not fully realizing the benefits. Community groups and other stakeholders have lost interest to manage their forest resources sustainably resulting in overexploitation of the resources. This has impacts beyond ecosystem services and touches on climate change issues.

Recommendation for the new MGDS:

Develop and disseminate information education and communication (IEC) materials to raise awareness about ecosystem management and linkages with climate change effects, mitigation and adaption. Invest resources in measurement and evaluation of the contribution of ecosystems services on poverty reduction and economic growth.

Issues Number 2: Forestry Based Small and Medium Enterprises

There is inequitable distribution of the aggregate value of FBSMEs against the primary producers. This result in the primary producers not benefiting from their enterprises and yet the intermediate buyers, wholesalers, exporters get the almost full value of the final products. In most cases this is so because there is little or no value addition. Additionally, this also arises from lack of information in terms of markets.

Recommendation for the new MGDS:

Government and all players to develop and promote sustainable forest based small and medium enterprises using the OVOP concept and the provision of micro-financing services.

- Encourage micro-financing institutions to support FBSMEs
- Strengthen value addition of FBSMEs
- Provide market information to producers and consumers.

Some of the potential enterprises include

- Sustainable charcoal production
- Fruit processing
- Cane furniture
- Traditional medicine

Issues Number 3: Institution reform of forest administration

We recommend an independent and more holistic institutional restructuring process to enable the forestry sector contribute more effectively to economic growth and be in line with new developments in the forest sector. These developments include issues of

- Public private partnerships, including privatisation
- Participatory forestry management
- Decentralization of forest administration
- Climate change issues

Recommendation for the new MGDS:

- Review the role of Forest Department and identify institutions options that promote the 4 areas above.

- Strengthen district public structures to enable efficient forest administration i.e. improve on enabling processes in administration and management of forest resources other than just enforcement.
- Promote the PPPs at national and district level.
- Speed up the forest decentralization process.
- Review the NFP and develop a forest sector plan.

Issues Number 4: Financing the forest sector

Financing in the sector over the years has declined which has affected the performance of the coordinating Department has suffered a lot. For example the Viphya Plantations alone required close K220, 000,000 to run its operations in 2010 but the Department received K67,000,000.

Recommendation for the new MGDS:

- Government should increase funding to strengthen the administration of the forest sector.
- Government should encourage PPPs as a way of increasing funding in forest sector.
- Government should encourage capacity building of community groups to sustainably manage their forest resources.

On behalf of the Malawi FGLG, I would like to thank you for extending civil society organizations to contribute to the development of the new MGDS.

Bright Sibale

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