

Benefit Sharing between Government and Local Community from the Exploitation of Natural Resources

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Abstract The research was conducted in the community of Nacoja, Mozambique through a case study aiming to analyse economic benefit sharing from natural resources exploration between the Government of Mozambique and the local community in promoting community development. The studied community livelihood is based on agriculture and services provided by both the flora and fauna, the main source of protein is bush meat and energy and medical plants are provided by the forest. Some forests also play a spiritual role as it is there where the “Gods” abide. Mozambique is one of the poorest countries in the world, it was rated with the third lowest Human Development Index in 2013 by the United Nations. Although the policy of benefit sharing was implemented in 2005 through the Ministerial Decree 93/2005 of 4 May, there is not much knowledge about its effect on rural development. This work is an attempt to fill in this gap. The research was based on fieldwork and semi-structured interviews were applied to nine respondents. The community of Nacoja received a total amount of about \$ 3,115.00 in the years of 2009 and 2010. The money was used to purchase, set up and cover maintenance expenses of a milling machine that benefited about 800 inhabitants. Due to mechanical failure and need to invest on other projects, the milling machine was sold in 2014. With the money from the sale of the milling machine, the community managed to upgrade two water boreholes that benefit about 1200 inhabitants in the village. The policy of benefit sharing is an excellent opportunity to promote community development. But it needs to be complemented with other actions, such as the training of Management Committees on matters of management of the community fund and its alignment with rural development strategies.

Keywords Natural Resources, Benefit Sharing, Community Development

1. Introduction

It is estimated that about 80% of Mozambican population lives in rural area and their livelihood is based on agriculture and the services provided by the forest – grass and timber for construction, firewood as the main source of energy, medicinal plants, bush meat as main protein source, sacred forest for spiritual purposes.

Mozambique was classified the third country with the lowest Human Development Index (HDI) in the world in 2012 by United Nations out of 187 countries assessed (PNUD, 2013, p. 149).

The country has a population estimated about 23 million inhabitants and Cabo Delgado province has 2.226.545 inhabitants. Life expectancy in this province is at 48.2 years old. Illiteracy is above 65%. People with access to proper drinking water in Cabo Delgado province is at 29.8% and only 3.3% of Cabo Delgado population have access to electricity (INE, 2010).

The majority of the Mozambican population livelihood is dependent on natural resources, because of that it is crucial to understand how the exploitation of such resources would affect the welfare of the rural communities, especially the benefit sharing between the government and local people from such exploitation.

2. Methodology

The research was conducted in northern Mozambique, in the Province of Cabo Delgado, district of Ancuabe, in Nacoja village. The village has a total population of about 1200 inhabitants. There is only one primary school, there is not a clinic facility in the village, there are only two water boreholes and two private milling machines in the village. There is not electricity in Nacoja.



Source: Guia Geográfico de África, available at: <http://www.africa-turismo.com/mapas/mocambique.htm>

Adaptation: the author (2014)

Figure 1. Map of Mozambique, location of Cabo Delgado Province

Relevant legal documents that govern the exploration of natural resources with focus on fauna and flora were reviewed and also reports and researches on rural development were reviewed prior to field research.

A total number of nine people were interviewed through semi-structured interviews, five members of Natural Resources Management Committee (NRMC) of Nacoja, two advisors at community level and also government officers at provincial level from Cabo Delgado Provincial Directorate of Agriculture – the government entity that deals with benefit sharing. The questions addressed to the respondents aimed to learn about the amount of money delivered to the entitled communities, delivery mechanisms, number of community management committees already set up and the application of the community funds to improve the life standards of the communities. The table below summarizes the stage of delivery of the 20% throughout the country between 2005 and 2011.

Table 1. The table below summarizes the stage of delivery of the 20% throughout the country between 2005 and 2011.

| Province | N° of benefited communities | Organized communities 2005 – 2011 | N° of organized communities , 2011 | N° of communities that received the 20%, 2005 – 2011 | N° of communities that received the 20% 2011 | Delivered sums (\$), 2011 | Delivered sums (\$), 2005– 2011 |
|------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------------|------------------------------------|--|--|---------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Maputo | 43 | 41 | 0 | 28 | 28 | 35.804,03 | 35.804,03 |
| Gaza | 97 | 59 | 12 | 47 | 0 | 0 | 5.300 |
| Inhambane | 132 | 88 | 20 | 55 | 38 | 20.455,4 | 155.184,2 |
| Sofala | 92 | 22 | 0 | 43 | SI | NI | 690.988,7 |
| Manica | 98 | 75 | 13 | 75 | 20 | 26.961,97 | 242.989,5 |
| Tete | 55 | 69 | 0 | 69 | 39 | 154.514,6 | 529.237,2 |
| Zambézia | 118 | 125 | 0 | 127 | 0 | 13.707,97 | 936.268,4 |
| Nampula | 168 | 321 | 0 | 321 | 47 | 29.154,1 | 265.673 |
| C. Delgado | 215 | 72 | 0 | 72 | 0 | 145.397,6 | 577.304,8 |
| Niassa | 71 | 24 | 0 | 24 | 0 | 0 | 24862,17 |
| Total | 1.089 | 896 | 45 | 861 | 172 | 425995,6 | 3,463,612.00 |

Source: MINAG (2012, p. 40).

NI – no information

3. Results and Discussion

Nacoja's NRMC consists of 11 members, the Decree 93/2005 of 4 May states that each beneficiary community should be represented by a management committee consisting of at least 10 members, men and women. Two influential figures, namely the chief of the village and the chiefs of the two residential areas that comprise the village, these play the role of advisors. The entity of advisor is not predicted in the legal regulation that governs the benefit sharing. Arce & Long (1992, p. 214) highlight that in situations of *interface*¹ of rural development, a central question is the way that a policy is implemented and usually at the same time transformed.

The only two women in Nacoja's management committee were not able to say what exactly their role was. They were requested to join it just to comply with Decree 93/2005 of 4 May. That is clear from speech below of one of the women.

"I was invited to join the management committee, they said they wanted some women to be part of it. That's all I can tell. The men should be able to give you further information regarding the committee."

Nacoja's NRMC rarely meets to discuss. During the reaserch it was found that the last time the committee had held a meeting was more than a year ago. The committee usually holds meetings when the 20% is transferred by the government for the community, to discuss its application. This community natural resources management committee gets the 20% that is entitled to via a bank account based in Pemba, the capital city of Cabo Delgado Province, which is about 140 km away from the village.

The community of Nacoja benefited only two times from the community fund (20%) since the implementation of the benefit sharing policy was implemented by the Mozambican government in 2005. The first time was in 2009, the equivalent amount of \$3,115. 00 and the second time was in 2012, the equivalent amount of \$1,200. 00. In the years that the community did not benefit from the 20% it was because no natural exploration was done in the village.

The community showed a great concern regarding the real figure represented by the "20%", as they reported not to be able calculate the real amount of money they are entitled to from the percentage.

"We are concerned about the 20%. The government says we are entitled to 20% of the revenues from the exploration of natural resources, but we are never told how much the 20% represent. For example, there is a timber company operating in the village, we still do not know how much the government is going to share with us" (speech of a community representative).

The first community fund received in 2009 was used to purchase, set up and cover maintenance expenses of a milling machine that benefited about 800 inhabitants. This was the first milling machine in the village, that was used to grind mainly cereals: maize and millet, the main sources of carbohydrates for the local communities in Nacoja. Before, women used to travel about four hours on foot carrying the cereals over their heads to reach the nearest village where they could grind them. They would return their village in the next two days, not only because of the long distances but also long queues they would face there. Due to mechanical failure and need to invest on other relevant projects, the milling machine was sold in 2014. With the money from the sale of the milling, it was possible to upgrade two water boreholes that benefit about 1200 inhabitants in the village. In 2014 milling machine was not top priority as there are two private

1 "Interface" in the concept of Arce & Long (1992, p. 214) as one that carries the idea of some kind of face to face contact of individuals with different interests, resources and power.

milling machines operating in the village, but water supply was critical. The money received in 2010 by Nacoja community was used to cover maintenance expenses of the milling machine.

4. Conclusion and Recommendation

The policy of economic benefit sharing between the government and local communities from the exploration of natural resources offers a great opportunity to foster community development. As seen in the community of Nacoja, with a modest sum of about \$3,115.00, the community of 800 inhabitants was able to buy their first milling machine in the village and to drastically improve their lives. But the benefit sharing policy needs to be complemented with other actions, mainly the training of Community Management Committees of Natural Resources on relevant matters such as management of the 20%. A special attention needs to be given to women to ensure their effective participation in the Management Committee. The community funds need to be aligned with the government rural development strategies, plans and projects.

Ten years after the implementation of the Decree 93/2005 of 4 May that governs the economic benefit sharing between the Government and local communities there's a need for the Government of Mozambique to conduct a comprehensive survey in order to improve this policy so as to meet the main purpose for which it was created. The 20% can work as an alternative fund for rural development as the reality has shown that it is common place the local communities to use this fund to co-participate in government social projects as evidenced in Nacoja's water supply project.

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