

Considering the Capacity of Community Forestry in Cameroon

A Thesis

Presented to the Faculty of the Graduate School

of Cornell University

in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of
Master of Professional Studies in Agriculture and Life Sciences
Field of Global Development

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August 2020

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ABSTRACT

This concept paper examines the extent to which the Community Forestry sector in Cameroon can help achieve national REDD+ objectives and what aspects of the Community Forestry Program need to be improved in order to do so. Sections one and two begin with an introduction of the Community Forestry Program in Cameroon and a discussion of its history and development. The third section outlines the conceptual framework of this study with a review of pertinent gray literature and academic articles concerning community forestry, good governance and institutional capacity building. Section four provides an analysis of current problems impacting the Community Forestry sector and provides suggestions for improvements. Section five presents the concept of a parastatal organization designed to oversee capacity development of the forestry sector. Finally, this paper concludes with ideas for potential synergies between Community Forestry outputs and national climate change goals.

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Randell Mengel has always had an interest in international issues and global dynamics that affect all societies. After earning his Bachelor of Arts in Global Studies at George Mason University in 2010, his interest in capacity building for local communities and organizations led to his service in the Peace Corps. He served fourteen-months as a small enterprise development volunteer in the Mopti region of Mali, before civil conflict led to the suspension of Peace Corps-Mali and the evacuation of all volunteers. Later, he returned to Peace Corps as a Peace Corps Response natural resources management specialist, working with the World Wildlife Fund for Nature in Campo-Ma'an National Park, Cameroon. Randell's experiences as a technical advisor developing strategic initiatives for food-security, eco-tourism, alternative-income generating activities and sustainable tropical agricultural were the impetus behind his enrollment in Cornell University's College of Agriculture & Life Sciences. Graduating in August, 2020, Mengel will have successfully earned his Master of Professional Studies in Agriculture & Life Sciences in the field of Global Development.

*As with all that I do, this work is dedicated to my loving parents,
Lambertine and Gordon MENGEL.*

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The following individuals provided in-depth feedback and delivered encouragement along the way, my sincerest gratitude.

Dr. Lori Leonard, College of Agriculture & Life Sciences

Dr. Norman Uphoff, College of Agriculture & Life Sciences

Dr. Mark Conostas, Dyson College of Business

Dr. Siba Grovogui, Africana Studies

Francois Kossi Tsimi, Association for the Development of Campo (PDCAM)

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

CFs	Community Forests
CIFOR	Center for International Research
COP	Conference of Parties
FAO	United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization
IPCC	Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change
MINEPDED	Ministry of Environment, Protection of Nature and Sustainable Development
MINFOF	Ministry of Forestry and Wildlife
NGOs	Non-Governmental Organizations
PROFOR	Program on Forests and the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization
REDD+	Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation and the role of Conservation, Sustainable Management of Forests and Enhancement of Forest Carbon Stocks in Developing Countries
RPP	Readiness Preparation Plan
NAPA	National Adaptation Plan of Action
SMPs	Simple Management Plans
UNDP	United Nations Development Program
UNEP	United Nations Environment Program
UNESCAP	United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific
UNFCCC	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change

I. Introduction

The Community Forestry Program, overseen by the Ministry of Forestry and Wildlife, began in 1994 after Cameroon reformed its forestry laws. The original goal of the program was to devolve management of forests to local communities who would be motivated to enhance forest conservation and use forest resources for income-generating activities, thus contributing to poverty alleviation in rural communities. Although the law established a legal framework for local management of forests, community forestry groups suffer from a lack of institutional capacity-building processes and poor governance.

The propensity for conflicts within Community Forestry groups is rising while illegal logging, corruption and the threat of climate change is increasing (Mutoni, 2009). According to the UN Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), climate change is predicted to further negatively impact rural communities across the tropics, inevitably affecting local community livelihoods and sustainable forest management practices in Cameroon. At the 19th Conference of the Parties (COP) to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) in 2013, the government of Cameroon formalized its commitment to the role of conservation and a participatory approach to the sustainable management of forests by agreeing to advancing the implementation of Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation in Developing Countries (REDD+).

According to the UNFCCC, “the expected outcomes of REDD+ include the dissemination of sustainable agricultural practices and rewards for landholders adopting such practices, financed by carbon markets or dedicated international funds” (REDD+ on the Ground, 2020). Furthermore, the UNFCCC’s framework for assessing REDD+ countries states that “REDD+ activities must effectively reduce deforestation and/or forest degradation over a clearly defined land area and [to] enhance understanding of the direct and indirect causes of deforestation and forest degradation while complying with principles of good governance” in order to receive donor funds (2020). As a result, in 2013, Cameroon created secretariat under the Ministry of Environment, Protection of Nature and Sustainable Development (MINEPDED) to establish criteria for REDD+ pilot initiatives in Cameroon.

This study provides suggestions for the Government of Cameroon, more specifically, the Ministry of Forestry and Wildlife which oversees Cameroon’s Community Forestry Program, and the Ministry of Environment, Protection of Nature and Sustainable Development which oversees REDD+ strategy development, to understand challenges inhibiting the promises of the country’s Community Forestry Program and its effectiveness as a potential local delivery mechanism for implementing REDD+ in Cameroon.

As issues of poor governance and weak institutional capacity are reinforcing rural poverty and undermining the sustainable management of Community Forests in Cameroon, this paper posits that such challenges will prohibit the effective implementation of REDD+ by Community Forestry groups in Cameroon. Potential solutions to improving structural issues of the program, must be addressed before

Cameroon's Community Forestry Program can be an effective mechanism for implementing REDD+ pilot projects in Cameroon.

II. **Background**

Located in Central Africa, Cameroon is one of six countries overlaid by the Congo Basin rainforest. About 45% of Cameroon's territory is covered by dense tropical forest, constituting about 22 million hectares (MINEPDED, 2017). According to the 2018 national census the population of Cameroon is 25 million, 43% of whom make up the country's rural population. Predominantly subsistence farmers, Cameroon's rural population relies on local small-holder agricultural production and the sustainable management and extraction of forest resources. In 1994, Community Forestry emerged in Cameroon as part of a policy reform process aimed at enabling better and more efficient participation of rural people in forest management (Piabuo et al. 2018).

By Presidential decree, Cameroon became the first country in Central Africa to promote community forest management as a strategy for sustainably managing forests and promoting local development. Establishing a legal framework for more efficient participation of rural people in forest management, the reforms were designed to promote good governance and equal representation of social groups and stakeholders in the forestry sector. Since 1994, the number of Community Forests (CFs) in Cameroon has expanded to over 180 CFs currently in operation, covering a total area of 28,272 ha of forest (Mutoni 2019).

With its legal and regulatory framework rooted in principles of equal and fair local representation of community stakeholders, the structure of the Community Forestry sector is designed to enhance good governance (Rayner and Howlett, 2019). In October of 2015, Cameroon's Ministry of Environment, Protection of Nature and Sustainable Development (MINEPDED) submitted a National Adaptation Plan of Action (NAPA) to the UNFCCC, laying out priority action steps it would undertake in effort to mitigate climate change. In the country's readiness proposal, Cameroon's Community Forestry sector was identified as a potential method for implementing REDD+ activities that adhere to UNFCCC's good governance requirements as defined by the good governance framework of the Program on Forests and the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (PROFOR) (FAO, 2011). The framework of the Program on Forests provides key principles of good governance including accountability, participation, and the need for full and effective engagement of indigenous peoples and local communities in monitoring and reporting activities (FAO, 2011).

The current state of Cameroon's Community Forestry sector, plagued with inter-community conflicts, weak technical capacity, illegal logging and poor governance exemplifies how far CFs are from having the financial resources, technical capacity and practices of good governance to implement REDD+ projects. The net effect of good governance in Community Forestry for locals should be the enhanced capacity of CFs to sustainably manage local forests, thus affording benefits to rural livelihoods if done in accordance with the forestry laws of Cameroon. For the state's commitment to REDD+, ensuring the institutionalization of processes of good governance and investing in the development of capacity building trainings and monitoring activities should pave

the way for eventual payments received from international donors for sustainable and carbon-off-setting ecosystem services. Therefore, complexities of capacity building and good governance require special attention from the Government of Cameroon (Pepke et al., 2016).

It is possible for the Community Forestry sector to adjust and align with the UNFCCC's good governance requirements and the state's commitment to REDD+ guidelines. However, the extent to which this synergy lives up to its promises and potential depends on strategic interventions by stakeholders designed to enhance institutional capacity for the sector to ensure downward accountability of CF management committees and equal participation of indigenous peoples and women at the local level (Hope, 2009).

III. Conceptual Framework

This literature review consists of publications gathered during an extensive desk review of academic articles and publications, official reports published by the Government of Cameroon and online publications by international donor agencies and non-government organizations.

Section 1 of the literature review outlines gray literature; retrieved from key donor agencies including the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, the UN's Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change and the government of Cameroon.

Section 2 lays out the conceptual framework of this study which is rooted in academic articles and journal publications on the concepts of “community forestry,” “good governance” and “capacity building.”

Section 1. Gray Literature

3.1 International Donor Agencies

The UN-IPCC defines climate change as, “a change of climate which is attributed directly or indirectly to human activity that alters the composition of the global atmosphere and which is in addition to natural climate variability observed over comparable time periods” (2007). The concept of reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation and the role of conservation, sustainable management of forests and enhancement of forest carbon stocks in developing countries (REDD+) was negotiated under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) in 2005 and went into effect in 2008 (FAO, 2019).

With the purpose of reducing net emissions of greenhouse gases through enhanced forest management practices in developing countries, the United Nations Development Program (UNDP), United Nations Environment Program (UNEP) and the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) support nationally led REDD+ processes and efforts to implement climate change mitigation measures contained in individual countries’ national REDD+ action plans (UN-REDD+ Framework, 2015). According to the UN-REDD+ Framework, decision 4/CP.15 states that in order for REDD+ countries to receive donor funds the following technical guidelines and principles of good governance must be followed:

- 1) Use a combination of remote sensing and ground-based forest carbon inventory approaches,
- 2) Provide estimates that are as far as possible accurate and that reduce uncertainties
- 3) Enable the assessment of different types of forest in the country, including natural forests
- 4) Provide estimates that are transparent and their results are available and suitable for review
- 5) Integrate the full and effective engagement of indigenous peoples and local communities (UNFCCC, 2015).

Decision 4/CP.15 introduced the National Forest Monitoring System, a “methodological guidance for activities relating to reducing emission” (UN-REDD+ Framework, 2015). A year later, decision 1/CP.16 was adopted during the 2010 Climate Change Conference in Copenhagen where it outlines, “policy approaches and positive incentives on issues relating to reducing emissions and the role of conservation, sustainable management of forests as requirements to be included in the REDD+ national action plans (UN-REDD+ Framework, 2015).

3.2 Reports on Community Forestry by the Government of Cameroon

Community forestry groups are responsible for undertaking sustainable forest management of no more than 5000 ha for a period of 25 years renewable (MINEPDED, 2017). To improve the regulatory framework of the forestry sector, in 1998 the Government of Cameroon published the Manual of Procedures for the

Acquisition and Norms for Management of Community Forests introducing the following measures:

- 1) The provision of early stage information and awareness-raising;
- 2) Efforts to represent all social components in the process with the aim of limiting conflict;
- 3) More specific detail on the management entity (management roles);
- 4) Reduced file processing time (2017).

A 2009 revision to the Manual of Procedures introduces the need for each community forestry group to prepare a simple management plan (SMP) that is reported to the Ministry of Forestry and Wildlife (MINFOF) every five years. SMP's include a description of the CFs natural environment, a forest inventory, calculation of the potential available forest resources, analysis of who has rights regarding the use of forest resources and the benefits from activities, and modes of community resource management (MINEPDED, 2017).

Section 2. Academic Articles & Publications

3.3. Community Forestry

Proposed in 1978 by the FAO as an alternative to state-managed conservation, Community Forestry can be defined as “forest management in which communities manage and use forests, often with some form of legal authority to do so,” and “it is primarily driven by local community benefits and ecological sustainability goals” (Minang, 2019). In their seminal work, Totikidis et al., adds that Community Forest governance refers to community level management and decision making “that is

undertaken by, with, or on behalf of a community by a group of community stakeholders”, with emphasis on “community” as the distinguishing feature (2005).

Minang et al., explains that community stakeholders in the Forestry sector of Cameroon include the Cameroon Ministry of Forestry and Wildlife (MINFOF), NGOs, and community-based organizations (civil society), community forest entities and local communities, community forestry networks, timber companies, universities, and consultants—all of whom have vested interests in the success of the system (2019).

3.4. Principles of good governance

In their analysis of Community forest governance, Piabuo and Minang define governance as “the process of decision making and implementation (2018). In 2006, the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UNESCAP) developed principles for “good governance” and, later in 2011, the World Bank Program on Forests (PROFOR) modified the framework, introducing the concept of “good forest governance” (PROFOR, 2011).

In the context of Community Forestry, discourse about good governance includes two principles of good governance: accountability and participation (2011). Evidence suggests that accountability and participation are key principles of good governance (Hope, 2009) and that good community forest governance is a significant determinant of Community Forestry success (Piabuo et al., 2018). Maidell and Cheney explain that when assessing and monitoring forest governance, participation includes the involvement of all CF members and stakeholders in decision making, and accountability can be manifested as the responsibility of the management committee to

the committee (2012). Dresser et al., add that “good governance at local levels reduces inequalities and encourages participatory decision making and sustainable management of forest resources,” while “poor governance reinforces rural poverty and promotes elite capture and poor management of resources (2010).

The seminal work, *Capacity Development for Good Governance*, explains that good governance can be “practiced in environments where human resources capacities exist” and “absent of such potential, actors’ efforts do not lead to their realized capacities” (Hope, 2009). Thus, good governance in Community Forestry is contingent on institutional capacity as “the practice of good governance has shifted towards recognizing the critical role of capacity building of institutions as increasingly important for delivering policy outcomes” (2009).

3.5 Institutional Capacity

The seminal work, *What is Institutional Capacity*, defines institutional capacity as “the extent to which actors develop and apply rules and procedures in order to solve collective problems” (Cornell, S.E., 2002). Wickham and Kinch add “the quality and extent of stakeholder participation is regarded as an important indicator of institutional capacity (2009). As socioeconomics, gender and other community dynamics are critical determinants of actors’ interactions, it is posited that socioeconomic context may also influence potential capacities of forestry groups (Gonzalez and Healey, 2005).

By referring to the “extent” to which capacities can be realized, literature on the subject of institutional capacity within good forestry governance can be broken down into two main components: potential and realized capacities. Adams et al.,

explains that “a potential capacity may exist in institutions, but actors may not recognize or develop strategies to take advantage of such policy interventions or unleash sources of underutilized capacity for institutional uptake” due to socioeconomic factors (2020). Additional constraints to realizing institutional capacity include lack of administrative and technical capacity as well as lack of financing (Rayner and Howlett, 2009).

When fully realized, institutional capacities outperform limitations to Community Forestry outputs complicated by factors such as social, structural and financial factors (Rayner and Howlett, 2009). Thus, improving human capacities to develop and apply rules and procedures in order to solve collective problems not only enhances institutional capacity but also improves good-governance by increasing the quality and extent of stakeholder participation in decision-making processes.

IV. Problems & Potential Solutions

4.1 Lack of Participation in Decision-Making Processes

The current ‘realized’ capacity of Cameroon’s Community Forestry sector is rooted in the legal framework of the 1998 reforms to the forestry law which established a Manual of Procedures as the mechanism for participation. Though the mechanism has been established, evidence shows that the mechanism is not frequently applied and that procedures for participatory decision-making processes are not open and clear to all community stakeholders.

Community elites, local officials, and in some cases, even representatives of MINFOF, have been complicit in the appropriation of Community Forestry groups’

decision-making processes. Given the complexity of navigating the legal framework for obtaining and managing CFs, management committees which are vested with authority to regulate activities are unrepresentative, undemocratic and decision-making is imposed in a top-down manner.

In their 2015 evaluation of 36 Community Forestry groups, Piabuo et al., discovered that 70% did not meet standards for participation, only 10% of management committees were democratically elected and 43% of members of the management committees were self-appointed. Although women represented 35% of membership of CF groups and 18% of management committees, no woman was in attendance during management committee meetings, including the drafting and submission of the simple management plan. In a similar study evaluating the distribution of management positions between youths and senior members of the community, Bernard, F., P. Minang revealed that majority of youths perceive themselves as having been excluded from the management process and from the resource benefit-sharing system of CFs (Bernard, F., P. Minang. 2019).

The lack of community participation enhances illegal logging, deforestation, and disengagement of community members from CF activities (Assemble 2006). Looking ahead, the capacity of CFs to advance stakeholder participation in decision-making processes will determine the capacity for the Community Forestry sector to advance the state's REDD+ pilot project implementation process. Mechanisms for increasing participation of marginalized stakeholders and further developing multi-stakeholder engagements must be embedded in any dialogue amongst stakeholders in REDD+ activities so to achieve the systems full potential.

4.2 Lack of Downward Accountability

The realized capacity for accountability within CFs is poor, as no system for revenue traceability exists nor any avenue for redressing grievances. The majority of authority is concentrated in the hands of elites as most local and indigenous communities are without the knowledge to navigate the regulatory framework. Instead, elite members of society with connections to government officials and knowledge of the commercial extraction process are able to create a legal entity to be chartered as a CF and with the payment of a bribe to corrupt government officials, the plundering of forest resources by commercial loggers has become more widespread. Although exploitation cycles are for 25 years, most forests within community forestry concessions were stripped of all the timber with the highest commercial value within the first five years (Bernard, F., P. Minang. 2019).

What is missing in any of the legal and regulatory frameworks of CFs are effective mechanisms for downward accountability where the management committee is held accountable to the community. In their evaluation of 36 case studies of CFs in Cameroon, Piabuo et al., applied the framework for assessing good governance principles to 36 case studies, revealing that all case studies did not meet standards for accountability and in 21 CFs, revenue from the sale of timber was not accounted for by the management committee (2019). The Manual of Procedures dictates that funds earned from CFs must be used for community development.

Without an existing mechanism for downward accountability by management committees to members, CFs will be unable to ensure the same for REDD+ benefits as well. The lack of management accountability and resource-sharing has led to the

recentralization of power at the top of CFs and the same can be expected for the flow of resources and decision-making power when it comes to the local implementation of REDD+ funds distributed by MINEPDED. In order for CFs to advance REDD+, an equitable and transparent benefit-sharing mechanism and efficient methods of enforcing downward accountability and resolving conflicts will be required of MINEPDEDs REDD+ strategy.

Weak Institutional Capacity

4.3 Lack of Financial & Technical Capacity

The SMP process is technical in nature and extremely cost prohibitive. Rural communities seeking to organize and manage their forest resources are already financially constrained and the high financial cost embedded within the CF planning process is an additional hindrance to their ability to benefit from CFs. The costs, ranging from \$12,000 USD to \$24,000 USD, and technical skills needed to conduct an inventory of forest resources and develop a SMP remains out of reach for most communities (Bernard, F., P. Minang. 2019). As a direct result, the number of community forestry groups with a valid simple management plan (SMP) has been significantly reduced (Minang et al., 2019) as illegal logging and corruption is increasing.

Since 2010, most CFs SMPs have been oriented to logging activities rather than conservation activities due to the high simple management plan (SMP) development costs for communities. More Community Forestry groups are delegating the task of developing the SMP to elite community members with technical

knowledge and/or logging companies for commercial logging which is illegal according to the Manual of Procedures.

Crucial to the success of CFs implementing REDD+ activities will be the development of income-generating activities which reduce deforestation and promote sustainable forest exploitation. Most CFs are without the knowledge of the environmental benefits of Non-Forest Timber Products and lack the start-up capital to process such products. Developing CF enterprises and implementing REDD+ activities requires financial literacy, start-up capital, and technical knowledge to formulate business ideas and implement business plans rooted in the resources made available within the CF. Doing so would allow for true community ownership and self-reliance. To date, the most successful CFs in Cameroon have relied on the services of international non-governmental organizations and external funds to develop SMPs which ultimately excludes community members from their direct involvement in the process.

Currently, MINFOF and its partners are not promoting the concept of “self-reliance” by sharing technical knowledge, facilitating enterprise development and/or financial literacy training that is needed to allow for CFs to be independent and sustainable in their enterprises.

V. Further Recommendations

It is evident that commercial logging and timber exploitation are not compatible with REDD+ objectives. The Government of Cameroon has become dependent on export tax revenue for timber, financing much of the state's budget while weak regulations create opportunities for key government actors to further benefit from illicit activity, de-incentivizing any changes from the status quo. Furthermore, issues with the appropriation of CFs and the top-down manner in which decisions are made do not align with REDD+ principles of participatory decision-making at the community level.

The guidelines for assessing REDD+ countries adherence to good governance processes reflect the very barriers to operationalization that plague CFs, including the lack of technical and administrative capacity as well as the need to enhance good governance.

In order for Cameroon to adhere to the UNFCCC's framework for REDD+ countries, progress must be made in building the capacity of Community Forestry groups to adhere to principles of good governance and strong institutional capacity as these processes are key to the success of Community Forestry and will be a barrier to their future implementation of REDD+ pilot projects. By adopting the following suggestion for enhancing Community Forestry groups' capacity for good governance and institutional capacity building, there will be greater likelihood of the Community Forestry sector supporting the broader agenda of Cameroon's REDD+ project goals.

5.1 A Parastatal Organization leading Capacity Building Efforts

5.2 Concept

As the state must strengthen its own administrative and technical capacity in adhering to the UNFCCC framework for REDD+ guidelines, technical experts in government, research universities and the private sector could be recruited for the formation of a parastatal organization responsible for the training and capacity building of CFs seeking to implement REDD+ pilot projects. Such a non-governmental, third-party with technical knowledge of forestry has the potential to improve REDD+ policy actions by conducting “capacity-assessments” and providing useful insights into the specific capacity building needs and constraints of CFs on a case-by-case basis.

MINEPDED has \$13million USD of international funds set aside for the participation of stakeholders in the design and implementation of REDD+ strategy. By committing some of this money to the creation of a non-government entity charged with directly facilitating financial support and technical assistance needed by CFs to improve the institutional framework of good governance, Cameroon will have a greater opportunity to build on the positive aspects of CFs that are compatible with REDD+ implementation.

A five-year project to be conducted in two phases, the mission of this organization would be to promote a learning-centered approach to community development and promote their self-reliance.

5.3 Goals:

Support in accomplishing the following activities will be as direct as possible:

- Facilitate processes of knowledge generation and sharing of legal and institutional reforms related to CF processes in collaboration with national agencies
- Provide Technical support by working with CFs and stakeholders to strengthen capacity building in forest regeneration, performance monitoring and conducting routine capacity assessments that provide useful insights into the specific capacity required by location specific CFs.
- Provide institutional support by working with CFs and stakeholders to put in place conflict management mechanisms that help facilitate community management and conflict resolution, e.g. creation of conflict management teams in CFs.
- Facilitate recognition and awards to elites that support and are positive contributors in CFs, nation-wide and on an annual basis. Also, enforce disincentives for negative effects on CFs by elites, such as fines/prosecution in cases of abuse, embezzlement or corruption.

5.4 Timeline

Phase 1: With a three-year mandate, the organization's delivery structure should integrate financial assistance and technical training with the monitoring and tracking of services by experts. During this phase, identification, recruitment and additional

training of CF members who have been identified by the organization as leaders and institutional organizers will be conducted.

Phase 2: Recruited and trained locals will assume the working responsibilities of the experts and continue delivering technical training as well as the monitoring and tracking of services while receiving paid salary and additional training and/or certification for financial literacy and organizational leadership and management courses.

VI. Call for Further Research

With more time, the author would like to have moved beyond the normative framing of the problem in terms of good governance issues and ground this analysis in political economy. Future research should explore more deeply the role of the Government of Cameroon and its dependence on logging and forest resources. Such an analysis would help to better understand the forces that underpin what appears to be a lack-of-capacity to self-govern and would likely challenge the finding that more training is what is needed. Additional questions to be addressed in future research include whether the country is the appropriate scale for the intervention suggested above. Given that there are differences around Cameroon in forest management models and cultural dynamics, future field research should incorporate in-depth case-studies targeting assorted models of Community Forestry in Cameroon in order to capture various nuances and highlight the complexities of factors hindering equal and fair participation in decision-making processes.

VII. Conclusion

Both the Community Forestry program in Cameroon and UN-REDD+ initiatives were envisioned to be conducted in a participatory and collaborative way, including participation by the most vulnerable groups such as women and indigenous peoples, and a multitude of actors from government agencies, civil society organizations, technical and financial partners. If this is done, Cameroon's Community Forest program and REDD+ activities have the potential to fulfill critical development objectives including enhancing livelihoods, biodiversity conservation, and providing ecological services.

Direct payments to Community Forestry stakeholders from REDD+ donor funds provide the necessary incentive for the forestry sector to advance principles of good governance, facilitate trainings for technical capacity building processes and provide administrative and technical assistance to local communities. These incentives can have a significant positive impact on CF dynamics and related governance outcomes (Piabuo et al 2018).

When the Government of Cameroon invests REDD+ donor funds into locally designed mechanisms addressing barriers to good governance in the CF sector, local communities' capacities to understand and implement legal and sustainable CF activities will realize their promised potential. Key drivers of positive outcomes will be the presence of economic activities that generate direct benefits, the extent of technical support, and the influence and support of elites. As a result, positive outcomes will include increased employment, enhanced livelihoods and

socioeconomic development while adapting to and mitigating the effects of climate change.

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