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LIST OF ACRONYMS & ABBREVIATIONS

CEP	Community Engagement Programme
DED	District Executive Director
EC	Environment Committee
ILFEMP	Institutional and Legal Framework for Environmental Management
LGA	Local Government Authorities
LGRP	Local Government Reform Programme
LGRT	Local Government Reform Team
MAMCOS	Madibira Agriculture and Marketing Co-operative Society
MRALG	Ministry of Regional and Local Government
NLP	National Land Policy
NLPC	National Land Use planning Commission
RAS	Regional Administrative Secretary
RBMSIIP	River Basin Management and Smallholder Irrigation Improvement Project
RBWB	Rufiji Basin Water Board
RBWO	Rufiji Basin Water Officer
RUBADA	Rufiji River Basin Authority
SMUWC	Sustainable Management of the Usangu Wetland and its Catchment
TMV	Timu ya Maendeleo Vijijini
VA	Village Assembly
VDT	Village Development Team
VG	Village Government
VEO	Village Executive Officer
VPO	Vice Presidents Office
WC	Ward Chairman
WDC	Ward Development Committee
WDT	Ward Development Team
WEO	Ward Executive Officer
WFT	Ward Facilitating Team

1. TRENDS IN POPULATION AND LAND USE IN USANGU

The following discussion refers to the Usangu plain. This area is largely synonymous with Mbarali District. Therefore, throughout the discussion, data for Mbarali District has been used as descriptive of the Usangu plain.

1.1 Trends in the human population of Usangu

In the first half of the 19th century Usangu was thinly populated by small groups of people who were mainly cultivators. The available historical evidence[1] is that in the middle of that century they were forged into a single and much more powerful group by Chief Merere and under him became known as the Sangu. There followed a period of frequent wars and raids between the people of that area, in the course of which the Sangu acquired substantial herds of cattle from their neighbours.

The 1948 population census in the 'Sangu Chiefdom', coincided approximately with the eight wards which have been variously known as 'Usangu', Mbeya East and the present Mbarali District. The human population of this area was then 31 353, but the Sangu comprised only 47% of the total, with Bena, Hehe, Nyakyusa, Safwa and Wanji and a few others making up the rest. This means that in the first half of the 20th century immigration from neighbouring areas had already reduced the Sangu to a minority in their own land.

The population for the remainder of the century shows a high rate of increase:

Table 1.1 Human population of Mbarali District

Date	Population	Source
1948	31 353	East African Population Census
1967	56 763	National census
1978	114947	National census
1988	152 882	National census
1999	211 762	Mbarali District Council

This is an increase of 180 409, or 575%. In broad terms the population of Usangu grew by almost six times in the last 50 years. Statistics on ethnic affiliations are no longer kept, but it seems likely that the Sangu now comprise a much smaller proportion of the whole than they did in 1948. By 1990 they comprised only 27% of the population of Usangu.[2]

The eight wards in Mbarali District (see Figure 1.1) have grown at very different rates, as shown in table 1.2.

[1] Drawn largely from the doctoral theses of Charnley and Walsh.
[2] Charnley, S. 'Pastoralism, Irrigation and Environmental Concerns on the Usangu Plains' RBMSIIP. August 1995

Figure 1.1: Wards in Mbarali District

These figures are evidence of migration into and out of the various wards, and probably between wards. The period of greatest growth in population in the district as a whole was between 1976 and 1988, but there are big variations in the growth rates of the different wards. Madibira and Mawindi grew fastest, almost certainly by attracting migrants. Chimala showed hardly any growth, and Msangaji began to lose population. In the most recent decade Madibira, followed by Utengule, Mawindi and Rujewa, continued to grow at a much faster rate than other wards; Chimala remained almost static in population, while Ruiwa and Msangaji lost population.

Table 1.2 Population Change by Ward in Mbarali District

Ward	Population				Change					
	1967[3]	1976[4]	1988[5]	1999[6]	1967-76		1976-88		1988-1999	
						%		%		%
Madibira	4 823	8 000	17 657	31 055	3 177	66	9 657	121	13 396	76
Mawindi	6 928	7 767	17 728	27 154	839	12	9 961	128	9 426	53
Rujewa	9 995	19 202	37 417	54 409	9 207	92	18 215	95	16 992	45
Mapogoro	4 278	5 509	10 112	11 228	1 231	29	4 603	84	1 116	11
Chimala	9 116	14 505	15 183	15 664	5 389	59	678	5	481	3
Utengule	7 473	18 123	29 875	47 424	10 650	143	11 752	65	17 549	59
Ruiwa	9 508	11 307	19 556	19 522	1 799	19	8 249	73	-34	0
Msangaji	4 642	6 375	5 355	5 306	1 733	37	-1 020	-16	-49	-1
Total	56 763	90 788	152 882	211 762	34 025	60	62 094	68	58 880	39

The decline in Msangaji's population may be accounted for by its remoteness, which makes the provision of services difficult and expensive. This has probably stimulated some outmigration; it may also have a higher mortality rate than other better serviced wards, but this has not been confirmed. It is less easy to suggest reasons for the slow growth of Chimala's population and the recent decline in Ruiwa's.

Table 1.2 above shows that the population of Mbarali District as a whole grew fastest from 1976 to 1988 when immigration to the district reached its peak, and much slower thereafter.

It is risky to draw far-reaching conclusions from the analysis of population data of this kind, but the table is indicative of where the population has grown most and where the natural resources are likely to be under the most pressure. Low or negative rates of population growth may indicate that a ward's land resources have been fully exploited, given the available technology, and that people are looking elsewhere to make a living.

The population of the project area now comprises about 18 different ethnic groups who are predominantly cultivators while owning some livestock, and five groups who are mainly pastoralists but also grow some crops. Apart from the indigenous Sangu most of these have arrived in the area in the last three or four decades. In the agricultural villages the populations are ethnically mixed, although the individual hamlets (vitongoji), may be inhabited by a single group. A village (kijiji), therefore, is often a heterogeneous society comprising people who arrived at different times, with

[3] Hazlewood and Livingstone, 1978
[4] ibid
[5] National Population Census, 1988
[6] Mbarali District Council

different ethnic origins, cultural practices, economies and languages. The special skills and aptitudes of these groups can work to their mutual benefit, but equally they can be a source of disunity and strife in the community and in village government.

1.2 Trends in Cultivated Land

Within the project area itself the land, water and other natural resources are used by the local farmers and pastoralists, and a few large scale irrigation schemes. The use of these resources is to a large extent unregulated: new land is opened up for rain-fed and irrigated agriculture, new irrigation offtakes and channels are built, and charcoal and timber merchants fell the trees, with only nominal controls. The rate at which these processes are proceeding can be gauged by comparing visually the aerial photographs taken in 1999, 1988 and before. A massive increase in the area under cultivation over the last two decades is clearly evident. A study of trends in irrigated land use in the project area was carried out by SMUWC in December 1999. In the Kimani River catchment there was an increase of almost 450%, from 460 to 2180 ha, in the irrigated area during the period 1977 to 1999. In the latter half of this period the rate of expansion slowed to a mere 9% over the decade, reflecting the limitations on water supply and irrigable land. The process of expansion of irrigated land during the past 22 years is graphically illustrated in Figure 1.2. Although new land is still being developed for irrigation the rate of expansion is small and often it is accompanied by the abandonment of areas previously irrigated.

The expansion of irrigation was accompanied by comparable increases in the area under rainfed agriculture and permanent settlement. The trend is illustrated for one small part of Usangu by Figure 1.3. Charnley compared the aerial photography of 1958 and 1978 and found the cultivated area had been extended from 33 121 to 71 658 in that period, an increase of 116% over 20 years.

1.3 Trends in Livestock Populations

Whenever new fields are opened up it is at the expense of grazing and forests, and of the users of these resources. The pastoralists find their grazing lands shrinking, their water sources being diminished or cut off, and their stock routes obstructed by new fields. At the same time livestock numbers are increasing, or have been doing so until very recently. Given that livestock are notoriously difficult to count under circumstances such as those prevailing in Usangu the following figures illustrate the trend in cattle numbers.

Table 1.3 Cattle Population in Usangu

Year	Number	Source
1926/7	66 865	Mbeya Regional Book, Vol 1
1938	44 924	Ibid, Vol 1
1948	187 244	Ibid, Vol 2
1953	226 269	Mbeya District Annual Report, 1953
1976	541 645	Mbeya District Livestock Office
1978	487 285	Livestock Census data
1984	437 821	Livestock Census data
1987	457 759	Mbarali District, Annual Livestock Report
1999 (Dry season)	224 044	(Ward Revenue records)
1999 (Wet season)	238 822	(Ward Revenue records)
1999 (Dry season)	322 248	(SMUWC aerial survey)
1999 (Wet season)	274 542	(SMUWC aerial survey)

These cattle numbers should not be interpreted too finely, but they point to a clear trend. The numbers peaked in the mid 1970s, after the arrival of the big Sukuma herds in the early 1970s. Thereafter they have declined substantially, probably due to several 'push' factors which have persuaded some of the larger herd-owners to move on to other places, outside Usangu. The factors are likely to include:

- a perception that Usangu is becoming overcrowded with livestock, leading to localised shortages of forage and water and to increased transmission of disease;
- a perception that the livestock cess is being more vigorously applied in Usangu than in other districts;
- the threatened exclusion of livestock from the *Ihefu*, making Usangu a less attractive place for a pastoralist than it used to be;
- the encroachment of arable farming on seasonally important pastures;
- an increase in conflicts with farmers and with local government and local authorities.

During the 1950s pastoralists from the north began to move in to Usangu. The official records of the time show that some 330 herders with 3500 head of cattle settled around Kapunga and to the north, some of whom later moved west towards Utengule. The Masai went through the formal procedures of asking permission of the traditional authorities, who were still in power at that time. They were allocated places to stay and to graze and to water their animals.

In the 1970s the migrations of Sukuma pastoralists from Shinyanga and Mwanza began. They came in large numbers and with many cattle, attracted by the abundant pasture and dependable water supplies of the Usangu plain. By the time they started arriving in substantial numbers the traditional authorities had been abolished and the new forms of local government were still finding their feet. There were effectively no controls on their arrival, settlement or grazing patterns.

The Mbeya District Livestock Office estimated that between 1973 and 1975 the Sukuma introduced over 200 000 cattle into Usangu. In 1979 it was officially estimated that there were some 1300

Sukuma near Madibira and over 300 at Luhanga. Charnley's data on herd sizes illustrates the difference between the Sukuma of Ukwaheri and the livestock-keeping Sangu and other settled farmers at Utengule: the average Ukwaheri herd size was 232 head, and that of Utengule 20 head. Charnley gives the distribution of cattle among the main cattle-owning groups as follows:

Table 1.4 Cattle Ownership in Usangu by Ethic Group: 1990[7]

Group	No. of cattle	Percent of Total Herd
Sukuma	299 267	65%
Masai	58 540	13%
Sangu	54 172	12%
Others	46 021	10%

It is said by some local officials and pastoralists that over the past few years substantial numbers of big herds have left the district, for the reasons given above. The recent SMUWC aerial surveys give reliable information on seasonal changes in stock numbers and distribution, but obviously cannot detect population trends. The results of the recent study of range ecology in Usangu (See Supporting Report 5) indicate localised degradation of the vegetation, but no serious overstocking or irreversible land degradation in Usangu as a whole due to overgrazing. Despite the illegality of grazing in the area around the *Ihefu* large numbers of cattle are still kept there in the dry season. If they were actually excluded from this area two results could follow. The first is an increase in dry season grazing pressure in the areas around the settled villages and the pastoralists' bomas; the second is another exodus to parts of the country where there is still relatively abundant grazing and water, and fewer restrictions on their use.

1.4 The Driving Forces of Change

The changing patterns of land use in Usangu are driven to a large extent by two forces: population increase and the exploitation of economic opportunities. The human population has grown as a result of natural increase and has been augmented by immigration. The immigration has been stimulated by the perception of economic opportunities in Usangu, mainly in irrigation and in stock-keeping. These two forces together have accelerated the pace at which land and water resources are used to the point where competition and conflict over them have become a serious problem. The institutions to regulate the use of resources and to reduce the scale and severity of conflicts have not developed at the same pace.

It was evident from the outset of the project that the CEP would be operating in a complex social, economic and political environment, and one so extensive that for anything to be achieved the effort had to be focused on a few, broadly representative communities. In these it was found that although there existed the structure of village government there was a general incapacity to carry out any but the most basic of its designated functions - mainly tax collection. Legislation was passed early in 1999 giving the village governments wide powers and responsibilities for the management of their land and natural resources, adding to their existing administrative and regulatory tasks. The village councils, and even the ward and district authorities, are barely aware of this legislation and there is a

[7] Charnley, S. 1995

reluctance on the part of district officials to relinquish their control over certain natural resources such as forests and wildlife.

2 CO-OPERATION AND CONFLICT

2.1 Open and Communal Access to Land and Water

In many parts of the project area land, water and grazing are becoming scarce and there is often friction between groups competing for the same resources. The problem has been characterised as one of 'open access', in contrast to one of 'communal access' in the past.

Open access refers to the current situation in many parts of Usangu where people either cannot be or are not denied the use of water, grazing, trees or arable land in any place they wish to enter, using the resources until they are depleted, and then moving on again.

Communal access is the situation where a local community controls a specific area and regulates access to that land and the use of its resources. People who are not recognised as members of that community do not have automatic rights of access, but must ask permission and may have to negotiate for access. They may also be refused access.

Open access works best where there are large areas of unoccupied or lightly settled land. As soon as land pressure builds up and natural resources become scarce in relation to the number of people competing for them, conflicts arise and open access becomes a barrier to the proper management of resources and to social harmony.

The natural and almost universal response to such a situation is an increasing tendency towards the definition of territories, and of rights of use within territories. At the individual level the more productive arable land becomes heritable and then saleable, and finally it becomes legally possible to own it outright. At the community level common natural resources like water, grazing and forests become the property of a defined group of people who constitute that community.

As the more valuable land and sources of water in the project area have become more intensively used, especially over the past twenty years or so, the demand for more narrowly defined rights of access has grown. It was reported by Pipping[8], who studied land use in Usangu during the 1970s, that land leasing was almost unheard of, and that land was never sold. Irrigated land is now frequently rented or sold, though without legal title, and some villages are keen to define their boundaries and to institute some form of resource management within them. The impetus for this movement towards exclusive communal rights often comes from the incursions of stock keepers on to scarce grazing, or on to irrigated areas where the cattle destroy crops and trample canal banks.

2.2 The Community

The word 'community' is used freely in this and many other reports, and is incorporated into the title of the CEP. It suggests a small group of people who live together, identify with one another, and help each other. It is a convenient term which derives its meaning from the context in which it used. When the CEP started its work it assumed the village, the smallest administrative unit in the local government hierarchy, was a community. It is, but it is comprised of smaller and often more

[8] Pipping, K. 1976. Land Holding in the Usangu Plain. Research Report No 33. Scandinavian Institute of African Studies. Uppsala.

homogeneous communities known as hamlets. In a broader sense 'community' may refer to a community of interest, which could include, for example, people with a common interest in a source of water for irrigation, who otherwise do not have much to do with each other.

As the CEP became more deeply involved with the pilot villages it emerged that women's perceptions and priorities were in many respects different from those of men; the same applied to cultivators and pastoralists. Again, the 'pastoralists' are not just Sukuma or Masai, but include settled farmers who also own large herds of cattle.

The term community is used here in its general sense and means no more than a group of people defined by a particular activity, or interest or context.

2.3 Harmony and Strife

In many ways co-operation is the basis of village life. It ranges over the more structured forms like irrigation committees, through kinship-based forms, to informal and occasional mutual help in the fields. Much of the area under traditional or 'unimproved' irrigation systems has been developed entirely on the initiative of groups of local farmers, who continue to operate their schemes. The pastoralists have joint herding arrangements, usually with members of the same kin group, but sometimes with people from the settled farming communities. Village government itself, for all its deficiencies, depends on the elected members providing their services without direct remuneration to the community. Without a substantial basis in community co-operation neither the villages, nor the irrigation systems, nor the CEP would be able to function.

It is to the weaknesses and breakdowns in co-operation that the CEP addresses itself. There is a general perception in Usangu that the frequency and severity of conflicts over access to land and its resources have increased. This is due to an increasing demand for the most valuable and limited resources and to competition over them. Some of the most common sources of conflict are as follows.

1. Competition for water along the same water course, between up- and down-stream irrigators, pastoralists and those who depends on these sources for their domestic water. There are many examples of this in the project area including the water users along the Kimani, Mlowo and Dudumizi Rivers.

In most places there are committees, often co-ordinated by the Ward Development Committee, to regulate access to irrigated land and water and to organise canal and drain clearing and maintenance. The regulations are broadly followed when water is plentiful, and at these times infractions of the rules are generally not too severe for those downstream. In times of water shortage, however, the regulations tend to be ignored as those who are able to take the water they need do so, regardless of the needs of the people downstream. The means of enforcement are generally weak - they work when offenders are few and collapse as the number of offenders grows, which is when the rules are most needed. This is when conflicts between top and tail-enders become serious.

In mid-1999 the Mabadaga VG asked the CEP to help them resolve the difficulties they were having with their irrigation water supplies. They are among the downstream users of this source and were often starved of water at critical times of the year, resulting in their being unable to cultivate their fields or in reduced yields. Because most of the water in the Kimani River, sometimes all of it, is diverted at the Mbuyuni headworks, upstream of the Mabadaga holdings, and this is in a different

village area, the Mabadaga VG could not resolve the issue. The association of water users which had once regulated the use of the Kimani River was unable to perform that function in the face of widespread flouting of the rules. The co-operative which inherited the Kimani Irrigation Scheme and its assets, including the headworks, was afraid that any concessions to downstream users would diminish its influence. Several influential local politicians were keen to protect their own and their constituents' interests against those of the downstream users.

Through patient negotiation and several setbacks the CEP brought together the district, ward, and village authorities and the co-operative leaders to form a joint association with a constitution which acknowledges the rights of the main users to the water of the Kimani River. This has resulted in a marked improvement in the situation of the downstream users.

This is only a beginning and the new association will need to consolidate itself and to extend its coverage to other users of the Kimani River, including upstream users in the upper catchment, the domestic water system with its offtake at the Kimani Falls and the pastoralists and other irrigators downstream of Mabadaga. They will need the continued support of the CEP, the ward and district authorities and the water office for some time to come. Out of this experience came the idea to establish a pilot Sub-catchment Resource Management Programme as a joint effort by SMUWC, Mbarali District Council and the Rufiji Basin Water Office.(See 3.3.4 below)

2. The expansion of irrigated land drawing water from sources that are already overstretched, given the prevailing systems of water management and allocation. There are, in effect, no controls or limitations on the development of irrigated land, other than those imposed by the availability of water and the command of the land. Most of the irrigators on traditional or 'unimproved' blocks have no formal water rights and therefore have no recourse to the courts or the Water Board in support of their claims and grievances.

The high demand and the scarcity of water and irrigable land lead to conflict among the farmers for these resources. The tensions are exacerbated by the unreliability of the water supplies, as described above.

3. The influx of people attracted by the economic opportunities of Usangu from many different areas. This has given rise to rapid increases in pressure on arable and residential land and to the indigenous Sangu people being outnumbered by incomers. The multi-ethnic composition of villages can give rise to cleavages in the village community, which make consensus and cohesion problematic. In some villages the constituent hamlets are occupied predominantly by a single ethnic group. In Ukwaheri, for example, the central hamlet where the school and the new well are, is occupied mainly by Sangu, while the rest of the hamlets are occupied by Sukuma. The village government is dominated by Sangu, despite the presence of a majority of Sukuma hamlet chairmen. The domination in village government of a majority by the minority does not prevent co-operation but the ethnic fault lines show up in times of stress.

4. The expansion of arable land into what was previously grazing land. The allocation of rainfed fields seldom takes into account the interests of pastoralists, who complain that their access to water, markets and other pastures is obstructed. The farmers complain that the pastoralists allow or even encourage their animals to damage crops and irrigation structures.

Even over the past decade there has been a massive expansion of rainfed agriculture into areas previous used only grazing and for collecting useful bush resources, such as poles, firewood,

medicines, etc. The process whereby arable fields consume grazing land is illustrated in the accompanying maps, which were traced off aerial photographs taken at a ten year interval. (figure 1.3)

The belief is common in settled farming communities, that their land rights, which are acquired through permanent settlement and clearing and cultivating an area of 'bush', take precedence over the land rights associated with the grazing of livestock, where the land is not intentionally improved. Since settled farmers are generally the most influential body in local government their view, that the land within a village where they are the majority belongs to them, prevails, and the land rights of pastoralists are subordinate. In short, pastoralists must back down before the land requirements of the farmers.

This characterisation of the land rights of farmers and pastoralists cannot be universally applied, as some of the pastoralists, Masai for example, are settled and now depend largely on agriculture for their livelihoods. Many Sukuma households, however, settle in one village for a few years and then move on, joining other Sukuma in a different village. This is a process which further weakens their claims to full civic and land rights in their current abode.

5. The shortage of dry season surface water in the plains for domestic and livestock use is largely due to the perennial rivers being diverted upstream by irrigators. Some of this water is used for dry season crops, but much is used for preparing land or the following season's paddy and some of it is simply led out into the bush to waste. There is a tendency, in the absence of better management, for farmers who can get water to use it profligately, without regard to the needs of people lower down.

This often results in stock keepers driving their cattle into the irrigated areas during the dry season to water their animals and also to graze them on the crop residues and the bunds where green forage grows. There ensues a period of tension between the farmers and the stock owners, as not all the crops may have been harvested, or some people are trying to grow high value dry season crops, and the stock damage the bunds and other irrigation works. This is a problem of high priority in Mahongole where fighting has broken out in the fields over the issue. The courts are said to be ineffectual in curbing these incursions and some farmers burn their fields after harvest to remove any stover that might attract the cattle.

In Ukwaheri cattle and people were usually able to get their water in the dry season from the Mlowo River. But various irrigation 'improvements' upstream, together with the increasing area under dry season crops and the demands of the Langwira seed farm have all but dried up the flow during the driest months of the year, causing acute problems for Ukwaheri. This was one of the reasons a well was urgently needed in that village.

In other parts of Mbarali District water rotas have been agreed between top- and tail-end users to share the water in a stream. The principle that domestic and livestock water users on the plain have a right to water equivalent to that of irrigators upstream is therefore established, although these agreements are often broken in practice.

6. Lack of agreement over the uses of forests and their products is a source of frequent tension between the authorities and different users. The district authorities tend to view the natural forests as resources to be conserved on the one hand, and exploited for the taxes and revenues they yield on the

other. Charcoal makers, who include some individuals or small groups and some merchants from the towns, often try to avoid paying the permit fees required by the district authorities, and instead pay something to the village government. Under the Village Land Act the VG appears to have been given the right to manage its own forest resources, but in the case of Mbarali District at least, the Council shows every sign of retaining this source of revenue for itself.

Where a village area contains a substantial area of natural forest it tends to be regarded by the VG as resource of little value or at least one that requires no particular attention or management. The Mabadaga VG, for example, when mapping its natural resources showed its natural forests as occupying a thin strip along the periphery of the settled and cultivated areas. In fact, Mabadaga's forests occupy some two thirds of its village area. Perceptions of this kind militate against the sustained management of forests, and will probably continue to do so until the point is reached where serious shortages of forest resources are encountered, or until the forests come to be regarded by the villagers as an economically significant resource.

In Conclusion, it can be seen from these examples that village governments could, in principle, avoid or resolve, or at least alleviate, a good number of the basic conflicts over resources. The problem is that VGs often do not know their powers, or do not have the leadership and cohesion to arbitrate serious disputes and to enforce decisions. In some cases, like the following one, they lack basic information and make wrong or unworkable decisions.

In Mabadaga the VG was confronted by an increasing degree of conflict between Sukuma and the settled farmers over the issues of crop damage and access to water. In the absence of any effective Sukuma representation the VG decided to solve the problem by allocating the Sukuma a defined grazing area, away from fields and houses. When they were informed of this the Sukuma objected that the area was unsuitable. The CEP was asked to help resolve the impasse. On a field visit to the designated area with the VG it was found, to the VG's surprise, that the designated area was waterless for much of the dry season, and that it was not in Mabadaga at all, but in a neighbouring village area. It was also quite heavily cultivated. This was one of the early experiences that alerted the CEP to the dire deficiencies of VGs as planning bodies.

2.4 Community-led and Externally-led Interventions

Population increase and the general human propensity to exploit the economic opportunities afforded by the land, water, trees and grazing are powerful engines of change. They have an internal energy of their own which drives processes with certain self-destructive properties. This can be illustrated in two examples, already mentioned, from the project area.

The growing population needs more land to feed it and satisfies its demands by clearing bush to make fields. This particular area of bush is that which is not seasonally flooded, and is used as wet season grazing by the stock keepers, who find themselves deprived of a continuously increasing area of this vital resource. Livestock as well as their owners have their own dynamics of population increase, and need proportionately more land to satisfy their requirements. But instead there is less. Eventually confrontation is inevitable. Each group, the cultivators on the one side and stock keepers on the other, form their own 'community' vis a vis the other; together, the farmers and the stock keepers are not a community but are opposed interest groups.

Farmers and state companies have been attracted to Usangu by the irrigation opportunities. They have diverted the waters in the perennial rivers to the point where many of the rivers are no longer

perennial below the headworks, and in the dry season they are dry. Those who are favourably placed in the upper reaches of the rivers take all the water they need and more, while those lower down are deprived. In this case there is no community among the water users as a whole, and a common interest exists only among groups who are ranged against each other in defense of their privileges and in their efforts to share in those privileges.

In these and many other instances where community-led initiatives develop eventually into self-destructive forces, external intervention or moderation can be helpful and sometimes vital. The external authorities, which include the district council, the Rufiji Basin Water Office (RBWO), and others are able to provide controls and means of regulation, if necessary with legal backing, which can contain an otherwise damaging trend.

The principle of guiding local energies and preventing them from becoming self destructive, by means of externally imposed constraints, is applied in SMUWC's Sub-catchment Resource Management Programme (SRMP), where the community led initiatives will be both supported and regulated by the respective district authorities and the Water Office.

2.5 Managing Scarce Resources

The structure of local government in Tanzania is long established and well developed. District councils, ward development committees and village councils and their sub-committees are all present in Usangu. They are supported by professional and administrative officials, by legislation and by revenues raised through taxation and provided by central government subventions. These local government institutions have a tradition of administration, and their effectiveness in resource management has not developed to keep up with the pace of change in demand for land and water, driven by population growth and the pursuit of economic opportunities. The result is an increasing frequency and severity of conflicts among resource users, exacerbated by ethnic divisions and the impotence of local institutions to cope with the demands placed on them.

Until recently in Usangu land was to be had for the asking and water flowed throughout the year in many of the rivers coming off the escarpment onto the plain. There was little need to manage these resources. In the last ten to fifteen years this changed and at all levels, from the farmers and stock keepers to the district authorities, it is recognised that without effective management productivity will decline and confrontations will rise. The responsibility falls primarily on village governments to address these problems, and on the ward and district authorities to support them in this.

The CEP's efforts are being addressed to strengthening this system of resource management, concentrating mainly at the village level.

3 OBJECTIVES OF THE CEP

SMUWC's mandate includes the responsibility to develop

> 'local capacity to manage the Usangu wetland and its catchment sustainably, for the social, economic and environmental benefit of local communities...'

This requires that the people living in the Usangu catchment and directly dependent on its natural resources should become increasingly engaged in managing the land, water, forests and pastures. The job of SMUWC's Community Engagement Programme (CEP) is to encourage and enable local communities to do this. It was clear to the designers of the project that this was going to take time and initial phase of three years followed by another of two was anticipated.[9]

The Land Act and the Village Land Act of 1999 devolved the primary responsibility for land and natural resource management from central government and district councils to village councils. However, the villages councils were entirely unprepared for this, and for the most part unaware that such responsibilities had been assigned to them. They lacked the skills, experience, resources and even the local political and administrative backing to enable them to carry out their new tasks. The district authorities, accustomed to managing the natural resources to a large extent for the purpose of raising revenues, were reluctant to forego these privileges. Although the legal and policy framework for devolution was in place the situation on the ground remained largely unaltered.

The CEP's mandate to help local communities to manage their own natural resources was thus supported by law and policy, but not by local government institutions nor by the rural population in general. The immediate task of the CEP was therefore to start work with the village, ward and district authorities to contribute to the process of devolving authority to the village governments and equipping them to carry out their new responsibilities.

The CEP[10] started, in late 1998, to initiate the lengthy process of community engagement in natural resource management, with the aim of bringing it to the point where it would be self-sustaining. It was foreseen by SMUWC and DFID at that time that some five years would be needed, and available, to achieve this. The CEP spent the first few months traveling widely in the project area in the company of district officials and villagers. The focus at this stage was on Mbarali and Makete Districts. With the help of their officials the project area was divided into six 'dominant activity' zones. One village was selected to represent each of them and to become a CEP 'pilot village'. Much later, in September 2000, Mbarali District decided to extend the programme to another village, Luwango (see Figure 1.2).

[9] SMUWC Project Memorandum.
[10] CEP personnel are listed in Appendix 1

Figure 1.2: Land use zones and pilot villages in the catchment

Table 3.1 The CEP Pilot Villages

Village	Ward	District	Agro-economic Zone	Dominant Activity
Lugoda	Matamba	Makete	Upper catchment	Rainfed agriculture
Mbuyuni	Mapogoro	Mbarali	Southern Plains	Traditional improved irrigation
Mabadaga	Mapogoro	Mbarali	Southern Plains	Traditional unimproved irrigation
Mahongole	Mahongole	Mbarali	Western Southern Plains	Traditional improved irrigation
Luwango	Mawindi	Mbarali	Eastern Southern Plains	Agro-pastoralism
Ukwaheri	Utengule	Mbarali	Central Plains	Agro-pastoralism
Sololwambo	Msangaji	Mbarali	Northern Plains	Pastoralism
Idunda	Msangaji	Mbarali	Northern Tstetse Belt	Hunting, fishing cultivating, beekeeping

Before the selections were confirmed meetings were held in each of the villages to introduce the project to them and to ask if they were interested to collaborate in a programme of land management and natural resource planning. All were. Out of the initial and subsequent village visits a broadly standard procedure for working with the village authorities was developed. Each village and its constituent hamlets were taken through a sequence of activities, which lead up to the formulation of a resource management plan and an implementation programme. Probably the most critical step was then for the village or hamlet actually to implement the plans, which it had drawn up. The seven villages are at various stages along this path.

In working through this process the CEP discovered that the village governments/councils (VGs) had received little if any support or guidance in defining their roles and responsibilities and no training at all to help them discharge their duties. VGs are responsible among other things, for the management of natural resources in the village areas. In the first few months of field work in the six CEP pilot villages it became clear that the VGs are too poorly organised, informed and equipped to carry out these tasks effectively and that until these weaknesses were addressed they would unable to carry out their basic responsibilities, especially those required of them by the Local Government Act and the recent Village Land Act.

An almost universal failing of VGs is in their management of revenues and other funds. This deficiency extends to other fund-managing groups in the villages. With the present state of accounting it is virtually impossible to tell whether funds have been misappropriated or miss-spent. Villagers, who already feel oppressed by taxes, levies, fees and subscriptions, suspect that much of what is collected from them is mis-used or stolen. Consequently they are reluctant to contribute anything more unless they are compelled to do so or they are confidant that a tangible benefit will ensue.

The community engagement team found a range of deficiencies at all institutional levels between the hamlet and the district. They are major obstacles to any significant engagement in resource management by the communities in the project area. Some of the specific issues relating to the institutional and communications deficiencies in the villages are as follows.

1. There were angry complaints from the hamlets that their village government is inept and unresponsive to their needs, that some of its elected officials are self-serving, and that it is

dominated by one or a few 'big men' who make all the decisions and suppress the views of others. These dissatisfactions have contributed to the replacement of most of the old VG members in the recent (December 1999) elections

2. There is a large turnover of VG members between elections, as those who feel manipulated or overshadowed by the big men get frustrated and leave. Their positions may be vacant for long periods before a replacement can be found;

3. None of the VGs had had any training or even guidance in their functions, responsibilities, legal powers, revenue-raising powers, accountability for finances, or the roles of office holders. This leaves VGs open to manipulation by local influentials. The people in the villages have little idea of what their VG and its officials are meant to be doing and can therefore have little influence on abuses of office. Many people believe the only actual function of the VG is to extract money from them. This is often done without receipts being given;

4. Village Executive Officers (VEOs) used to be employed and paid by the District Council, but due to 'shortage of funds' they are now employed and paid by the VGs. The village chairman may appoint a crony as VEO, thereby reinforcing his position;

5. Some villages have drafted by-laws in the past but few of these seem to be in force now. Mabadaga VG complains that they have drafted three sets of by-laws, and sent each to the Ward Development Committee, who have 'lost' them instead of forwarding them to the district. This kind of complaint about the unresponsiveness, even obstructiveness, of ward officials, is not unique. Some officials in Mbarali District say that in any case they cannot approve village by-laws because they have no legal officer to ensure that the drafts are legally valid;

6. VGs have substantial fund-raising powers, as set out in the Local Government Act of 1982. They should also receive a proportion of various taxes or levies collected by the District. The whole issue of VG funding, income and expenditure, accounting and general financial management is, however, veiled in obscurity. In some villages even VG members are unable to see the village accounts.

7. The Village Assembly, comprising all adult members of a village, is "the supreme authority on all matters of general policy-making in relation to the affairs of the village...". Whether it is or not seems to vary among villages, with some having a relatively strong 'vox populi' and others being dominated by the above-mentioned 'big men'. The village assembly should meet at least once every three months (Local Government Act 1982). It seems that Village Assemblies are rarely convened, are ill-attended, and are seldom asked to endorse decisions made by the village authorities;

8. Until recently, very few district officials have spent much time with the villagers, and when they do they have tended to harangue them rather than to listen, observe, and respond. Some officials regard the villagers as illiterate, ignorant and as 'liars', and their own role as having to do with control and exerting authority. Participation on equal terms with villagers seems to threaten some officials' authority. It is difficult to assess how far this reflects a general or cultural attitude in the district administration towards villagers and their concerns, but until this attitude changes genuine communication and collaboration between district and village will remain a major problem.

The general dissatisfaction of the people with their VGs resulted in the elections of late 1999 bringing many new and inexperienced people into the village governments. Most of the VGs now

have a majority of new members and new chairmen. This created an immediate need for the new VGs to become acquainted with and equipped for their responsibilities. It was also an opportunity to work with new and keen village governments.

9. There is a marked tendency for the settled farming community to regard the village territory as their land. The pastoralists who live in the village area have been allowed by the 'owners of the land' to settle there, usually in return for gifts, but this does not give the Sukuma full civic rights. Although Sukuma hamlets should be represented on the village council they are for most practical purposes excluded from important decisions, especially those relating to land. This obstructs land use planning and the resolution of conflicts between pastoralists and cultivators.

In addition to learning their new responsibilities VG members also need to adopt a new set of attitudes towards their role as an elected village government. A shift away from the dictatorial position towards an open, consultative and responsive relationship with the people is required, and this is endorsed by the current policy of participative local government.

The CEP started its work in the villages with the specific intent of helping them to manage their land, water, forest, grazing and financial resources better. But it soon became evident that the more fundamental problem of the ineptitude of local and especially of village government had to be addressed first.

4 INSTITUTIONAL ISSUES IN LOCAL GOVERNMENT

4.1 The Levels of Local Government

Government policy, including the Local Government Reform Programme (LGRP) acknowledges four tiers of 'local government':

District
Ward
Village
Hamlet

In practice, however, LGRP addresses itself to the reform of district councils. 'Local Government' is in effect synonymous with 'district council', despite the more inclusive definition given above. A central objective of local government reform is to make the district councils more responsive to the needs of the public. The LGRP is only just beginning to address how this will be done and is currently developing a framework for district participatory planning.

There is an abyss of mutual mistrust and misunderstanding between the village and the district. The district authorities seem remote from the villages in terms of their relevance to daily life at that level. Even the village governments, though the villagers elect them, are generally considered unresponsive and ineffectual. Most people, likewise, do not regard the ward, as an agency of democratic local government, but as a means whereby higher authorities extract money from them and keep a degree of law and order. All the levels of local government are seen from the 'grass roots' as corrupt and self-serving. In short, the four-tiered system of local government is not functioning as a means of self-governance or as a means of development. The LGRP is an attempt to get district councils working within the framework of national policy to serve the public more effectively.

There is a widespread, although not universal, attitude among council staff that most rural people, being poor and uneducated cannot understand the complexities and technicalities of development and that there is therefore no point in consulting them. Development specialists have reacted to these attitudes by portraying village level development planning as sufficient in itself to generate a sustainable momentum for economic and social change. All these attitudes are based on generalisations and often on exaggerations of the truth. Village level development planning on its own often comes up with little more than a shopping list of structures - school rooms, dispensaries, wells, etc. It is rare indeed for the profounder issues, for example of poverty, environmental degradation, and the management of land, water and forests to be addressed at this level, unless the village is able to participate in the planning process with an agency that will help it to grapple with such matters. This agency should be the district council, with its various specialist officers, field staff and political representation. However, as we have seen above, the district council on its own is far from being able to do this. One of the declared aims of the LGRP is to re-orient councils towards these functions, although it is not explicit on how to achieve these aims.

The local development planning process as envisaged in government policy corresponds broadly to the four tiered structure given above. Village development plans are drawn up annually by VGs comprised largely of hamlet chairmen who represent their local concerns; these plans are forwarded to the ward, where they are discussed by the Ward Development Committee and incorporated into a ward development plan; these are submitted to the district council where the relevant components are

considered by each head of department in the light of his own departmental budget and priorities. Finally, the district development plan is drawn up. One difficulty with this arrangement is that the villages and wards draw up their development plans without much idea of the costs or of the budgetary limits that will be imposed on their plans. Another is that the annual planning cycle does not encourage the longer-term view required for most land and natural resource management programmes. It is more conducive to the production of short-term wish lists.

4.2 Village Government

Local government in Tanzania is structured to allow every adult, even in the remotest parts of the country, to participate in decision making on matters of local concern. There are elected office-bearers at every level from the hamlet to the national parliament. For this arrangement to work each adult, and especially those elected to hold office, needs to be sufficiently well informed and politically articulate to make an active contribution to the conduct of local affairs. Working against these noble intentions, however, is a culture of deference to persons of influence, which discourages questioning, requests for transparency and participation in the affairs of local government. Most people in the villages are also unaware that their participation in public life is required. They are dissatisfied with all levels of local government but do not know how to bring about change - except by throwing out most of the old office holders at each election and installing new ones. Some of the advantages thus gained by this large turnover in incumbents are offset by the lack of accumulated experience in local government positions.

The VG is a legal entity, able in its own right to hold property and to run enterprises and to make by-laws which will be enforced in the courts. Its members include the elected chairmen of the constituent hamlets, and representatives of the women and youth of the village. Its maximum size is 25 members. The functions of the VG are mainly to help collect taxes, to manage, regulate and co-ordinate the development of the village, and to keep law and order. Recently the responsibility for land and natural resource management has been added to this list. To exercise these functions each VG was originally required to have five sub-committees:

a) Finance and Planning
b) Production and Marketing
c) Education, Culture and Social Welfare
d) Works and Transport
e) Security and Defense

In practice VGs now have committees a), c) and e). Some also have sub-sub committees to deal with matters relating to the environment and to water for irrigation and domestic use. These are usually created at the behest of donor-funded projects.

Although there exists the structure of village government, there is a general incapacity to carry out any but the most basic of its designated functions. The VG is required to convene the Village Assembly every three months to inform, consult and seek approval for its resolutions. In practice this is virtually never done. An assembly of one or two hundred people is a major event, but given the size of most village areas the full assembly could be 1000 or more people. The impracticality of involving this number of people, or even half, in an informed discussion on village affairs, and of reaching a consensus on policies and actions that will be generally observed and upheld, is so great

that decisions are either not made at all, or they are made by a few influentials. It is sometimes the village chairman alone who decides on behalf of the VG and the village assembly.

Each village has a Village Executive Officer appointed and paid a small monthly allowance by the VG[11].. The VEO is secretary to the VG and its chief executive. The VEO also serves as tax collector on behalf of the ward and the district council and receives some 3.5% of the revenues he collects. There is no provision for the training of VEOs, this is an area which the CEP has addressed through the village government training programme. The district council returns 20% of the taxes collected to the village governments. This is divided in fixed proportions between several cost headings, including allowances for the VG members, payments to hamlet chairmen for facilitating tax collection, the VG chairman, transport and other operating costs for the VG, and 'development'. VGs may also raise their own revenues by making levies on certain activities like *pombe* brewing and market stalls. Some have their own *pombe* shops.

The village has often been described by politicians and administrators as the basis of all democracy and rural development, but in practice it is largely neglected, except as a source of taxes collected on behalf of the district council.

A feature of villagers' attitude to development, often mentioned by their own leaders and by officials, is the legacy of many years of highly centralised government. It has led, according to this view, to a commonly held belief that development is something that government does to the villages, usually through the agency of the district authorities. This idea accounts for the passivity of the villagers and their VGs and their reluctance to take initiatives themselves. There may be truth in this, but it does not account for the fact that the great majority of villagers are self-supporting and not dependent on any external agency for their livelihood, or that villagers have developed large areas of irrigation with no external help. The CEP's experience has been that the villagers are keen to manage their own affairs and develop their own resources more effectively than they do now, and will freely give their time and energy to this end. It may be they have grown tired of waiting for government to provide them with 'development'.

Until now there has been no formal requirement in village government for a committee charged with the specific responsibility for management of the land and other natural resources. This weakness is particularly important in view of the dependence of most villagers on these resources for the livelihoods. In many villages permission to cultivate new land, to graze and to cut trees is granted by the chairman or VEO in return for a 'consideration'. The Department of Surveys and Lands is now encouraging villages to establish 'Lands Committees' Their functions would overlap with those of the few existing Environment Committees, and attempts are being made to remove this duplication of effort.

Mbarali District alone has 84 villages; the project area has over 200. For the public to participate meaningfully and effectively in local governance, and hence in the management of their natural resources, the VGs will have to become both more responsive to their own constituents and more effective in managing the affairs of the village. These requirements have become the focus of the efforts of the CEP and its district council partners.

[11] VEOs used to be appointed and paid by the district council, but are no longer.

4.3 The Ward

The senior local government official in the ward is the Ward Executive Officer (WEO). He is appointed and employed by the district and has judicial and executive powers. One of his most important duties is, in practice, to collect taxes from the villages and pass them on to the district council. He supervises a number of tax collectors and directs the collection of taxes by VEOs, even though they are not district employees. The WEOs in the project area have had no formal training in their roles and functions.

Based at the ward headquarters are staffs of various district council departments including Agriculture, Natural Resources, Health, and Education. They report immediately to the WEO.

The Ward Development Committee (WDC) is the body responsible for government, law and order and development within the ward. It consists of the VG chairmen and several appointed officials, with the Ward Councilor as chairman and the WEO as secretary. The WDC has no staff of its own and has to rely on the WEO to direct council staff to help. Nor does the WDC have any source of revenue other than that provided by the district council.

The official ward development planning procedure is as follows: the WDC receives the annual village development plans, and when it is satisfied that they represent the true wishes of the people of the respective villages, they are incorporated into the Ward Development Plan. This, in turn, is sent to the district for incorporation into the District Development Plan. The village development plans, which are to a great extent shopping lists of structures, are reflected in the ward and district development plans.

The recent Regional Commissioner in Mbeya announced a programme called *Mpango kata* - ward development planning. This was adopted in all districts of the region. In brief, it encourages local participation in village and ward development planning; it also provides for a savings and credit scheme in each ward, known as *Benkikata*. The development planning function of *Mpango kata* has largely fallen away, and the *Benkikata* is used as a source of credit, but seldom for saving.

Ward development plans are seldom more than a compilation of ward representatives shopping lists for items of infrastructure. The needs and ideas coming from village level planning are poorly recognised in them. The district authorities tend to ignore them and to base their plans on those of departmental heads and councilors. Thus, top-down planning continues despite the intentions of government to reverse the process.

4.4 The District and Local Government Reform

The LGRP provides for a devolution of responsibility for policy-making, development planning, staff employment and financial management to district councils.

The district council is primarily a service organisation, providing education, health, water supplies, roads and bridges and maintaining law and order. It collects taxes and other revenues from the public and is enjoined to be as financially self-supporting as possible, only depending on central government to fund specific activities, including at present health and education, but not its normal recurrent costs. It is also responsible for promoting the economic and social development of the

district and its people, with an increasing emphasis (in national policy) on public participation in development planning and implementation.

Councils face great difficulties in fulfilling these requirements. The costs of staff salaries, councilors' sitting and travel allowances, transport and other basic recurrent items consume a large proportion of the budgets councils are able to raise themselves, leaving little over for 'development'. Districts tend to be heavily dependent on donor-funded projects to support their development programmes and to some extent their recurrent costs, but however 'participatory' these programmes may be most of them are externally conceived and are not products of the village, ward or district development planning processes.

Participatory development planning and implementation, as a partnership between village, ward and district authorities, faces further difficulties of a practical nature - the cost and scarcity of transport and the difficulty of access to remote villages, which are sometimes isolated by rivers for months. These difficulties of transportation translate into wide gaps in communication between the village public and authorities and the district.

District councils have to balance the policy and directives received from central government with the political demands from the councilors and the interests of the departmental heads. Government policy is in support of public participation in development to alleviate poverty, increase food production and to manage the land and its resources wisely; the councilors tend to favour 'developments' which result in physical structures, like schools and clinics and the related services provided. These are tangible evidence of a councilor's political influence. Departmental heads in the council likewise have their own views and plans, which are often at variance with those of the councilors and with the participatory approach to development. Some senior council officials retain the notion that their job is to control and instruct the public, and the custody of natural resources should remain in the hands of professionals.

The LGRP suffers from some of the same lack of internal consistency. In most of its documentation it endorses the view that the council is to provide services and to plan the development of the district. In its verbal presentations and in some of its leaflets, however, LGRP embrace a broader and more participatory concept of development.

Given these views on the nature of development and of the primary responsibilities of the district council it is not surprising that at present, the great majority of village, ward and district development plans are concerned with building things - school rooms, health units, water supplies, roads, etc. Very little attention, and very little of the local government budgets, are assigned to improving livelihoods or supporting the evolution of local government. Development planning is still largely a process carried out by district officials and councilors, and not by villagers and their governments.

5 LEARNING FROM OTHER PROJECTS

The CEP is not unique in Tanzania. Some of its basic objectives and working methods can be seen in various forms in several other districts. There is much to be learned from other projects and the CEP has arranged for officials and representatives from Mbarali District to visit a number of them. In some cases the visits have been returned.

RBMSIIP is designed to strengthen river basin management in the Rufiji and Pagani River basins. One of its components is 'participatory river basin management'. It is intended to form participatory basin management teams, each comprising five members, to work in Mbarali (2 teams), Njombe and Makete Districts, all of which are within the SMUWC project area. The tasks of these teams include participatory assessment, training of stakeholders and formation of water users associations. RBMSIIP is one of the partners in the SRMP.

MBOMIPA: This translates into 'Sustainable Use of Wild Resources in Idodi and Pawaga', which are divisions in Iringa District. The project aims to establish an effective and sustainable wildlife management system under community authority and responsibility, in which communities derive direct benefits from managing the natural resources. The benefits to the villages come largely in the form of income from sport hunting in the village areas, which is paid to the District, and of which a proportion is given to the villages concerned.

HIMA. The CEP and HIMA have many points of common interest, with overlapping territories and concerns with environmental management and community engagement. HIMA has a base at Matamba in Makete District, staffed with district officials from the departments of forestry, community development and agriculture. The village of Lugoda has been chosen to represent the upper catchment agro-economic zone of SMUWC's project area. The CEP carries out the same programme in Lugoda as in the Mbarali District villages, but in collaboration with Makete District and HIMA.

Kilosa and Kilombero District Rural Development Programmes are supported by Irish aid. The Kilosa programme has a village government training programme which began in 1996. Its main objectives are described as 'Democratisation, good governance and Gender.' The Community Development Department leads the programme and the CDO manages the budget. He has a staff of 29. The Kilombero programme is developing approaches to community led planning.

Mbulu District Land and Water Management Programme started in 1993 with support from the Netherlands Government. Its aim was the transformation of the District's soil conservation and forestry activities into a community-based natural resources management programme. At the village level it was not only the VGs but farmers' groups, councilors, extension workers, churches and other NGOs who were involved.

The SONGEA District Development Programme is supported by the Netherlands Government. It is based on a 'unified district and village level planning cycle'. Village development plans are generated jointly by VGs and villages assemblies; they are supported by the ward development committees and by the district council.

The INADES Formation is an NGO supported by funds from Spain, Belgium, the Netherlands and probably elsewhere. It has been working in Dodoma since 1992. Its objective is to support farmers and women's organisations in the villages helping them to investigate and analyse their situations and problems, to draw up plans of action and to implement them.

Much of the work done by INADES is similar to that of the CEP. Their approach differs in that they prefer to work directly with the village groups, and do not intentionally involve the wards or districts, except on an occasional basis.

Tanzakesho is a part of UNDP's Capacity 21 programme. Recently launched in Mbozi District, Mbeya Region, its aim is to improve planning at the village, ward and district levels.

Rufiji Environmental Management Programme is supported by the Netherlands Government. It aims to improve environmental management in Rufiji District by promoting the long term conservation of the environment through wise resource use. Like the CEP it is assisting the district council to develop processes by which they support environmental planning at the village, ward and district level. Staff from the REMP project team and the district council visited SMUWC in May 2000 to learn from our experiences in supporting village level planning.

Family Heath Project is supported by DFID. The project began in 1994 with the original aim of improving the reproductive health of the people in Mbeya Region through strengthening family planning services. One way in which it is doing this is through supporting districts to facilitate the development of primary healthcare plans at the village and ward. The idea being that these plans are then reflected in the district's primary health care plan. The project has recently started work in Mbarali district council, however the focus of their work will be to improve / rebuild one health centre and four dispensaries. This work will also include supporting communities in establishing community health funds that will pay for the maintenance and future repairs to these buildings.

Urban Authorities Partnership Project is supported by DFID and works in Mtwara, Mbeya and Singida municipalities. The project aims to support the implementation of the LGRP with a particular focus on improving revenue systems and capacity in participatory planning at the community and district level. It is hoped that during the extension of phase I, the TMV will develop stronger links with the project team in Mbeya municipality and draw on some of their experiences in community led planning.

6 INITIATIVES OF THE CEP

6.1 Work in the pilot villages

The CEP began its work in the pilot villages through supporting VGs to develop and implement village development plans. Working together with district staff, the approach taken by the CEP team (Appendix1) in each village was broadly the same. Following introductory meetings, participatory mapping of resources was carried out at each hamlet, and for the whole village, with groups of men and women separately. The boundaries of settlements and resources were demarcated using a GPS, and this enabled the production of village resource maps by the project's GIS. The village resource maps were then taken back and used in public meetings with the village governments and in hamlets to establish the problems and concerns of people in all sections of the community.

The VGs were encouraged to identify and categorise their problems as follows:

- those that could be solved within the village
- those that could be solved within the village but with some external help
- those whose solution depends on external initiatives.

Most attention was focused on the first two categories, in efforts to make specific and immediate progress and to mobilise existing resources. External resources are available on a very limited scale, and important element in the CEP's approach to villages has been the emphasis on self-sufficiency and making the best use of available resources. Village governments, again with the assistance of project and district staff, analysed the problems in these two categories and formulated an implementation plan, based on decisions on

- the actions to solve each problem
- who will carry out the actions
- when the actions will be started and completed.

Implementation of the plan then started, and was monitored, both by the villagers themselves, and by project and district staff. The process includes continuous evaluation of plans and identification of new problems. The village management plans produced a wide variety of initiatives and activities. These are discussed further in supporting report 17.

In the early stages of development planning VGs tend to make unrealistically ambitious plans, as if in reaction to an earlier diffidence in their undertakings. Nevertheless, even those villages like Mahongole whose plans exceeded their capacity have implemented enough of them to have gained confidence. It is too early to say if the public's confidence in the VGs has also been elevated, but if participation in public works like school building, construction of public toilets in the market place and well construction is any measure, this too is changing.

The VGs are not discouraged from including a list of structures in their development plans, for these can be genuine needs of the community, but with the aid of maps, aerial photos, PRAs, field

inspections and the VG training programme, it helps the VGs towards a broader planning perspective.

6.1 The Changing Role of the CEP

In the course of the first six months of the project the CEP became aware of several major influences at work in local government:

- national policy and legislation directed strongly towards devolution of responsibility for self-government and natural resource management to local authorities, with an accompanying stress on bottom-up planning;
- the weakness of village government - the institution now responsible under law for land and natural resource management, and
- the unpreparedness of the district council as a whole to re-orient itself in relation to the new policies and laws, or to support the villages in undertaking their new tasks.

From its outset the CEP has worked closely with district staff. Whilst many of the staff involved were well-motivated, experienced and enthusiastic, their ability to listen to villagers and to help them with their own development efforts was often lacking. This was in spite of extensive previous training in PRA. The CEP encouraged in them an open and responsive attitude in their encounters with villagers and in training sessions, and to adopt a team approach, whereas district officials normally work through the departmental structure, and rarely go to the field as an inter-departmental team.

Initially the participation of district staff in the programme depended on their personal interest in it, rather than on any formal commitment by the district councils themselves. As the programme gathered momentum, however, interest in it and support for it increased to the point where formal district council participation became a necessity, obvious both to the district administration and to the CEP. This realisation gave rise to the Timu ya Maendeleo Vijijini (Village Development Team – TMV) with its village government support and training programmes.

The TMV came into being following discussions between SMUWC and the DED in Mbarali District. An inter-departmental team – the TMV - was established to support the villages in the implementation and adaptation of their village development plans. The TMV was inaugurated by the DED in February 2000. The TMV has taken on board the work of the CEP in the pilot villages and further developing the approach initiated by the CEP so that they become institutionalised as part of the district planning process. The TMV is described more fully in supporting report 17.

From working with the VGs it became apparent that they lacked many of the basic skills and knowledge to be able to support their communities in developing and implementing village development plans. Councillors were often unaware of the functions of village government and their role within it. They also lacked basic skills such as planning, budgeting, book keeping and good leadership. A village government training programme was developed to address these weaknesses and was launched soon after the village-level elections in late 1999. Co-ordinated by the TMV, it is conducted by district staff, each delivering a component on a specific aspect of village government.

The CEP has provided guidance, logistical support and training to the officials. This programme is described more fully in supporting report 17.

When the CEP began to work with the VG in Mabadaga, in early 1999, two burning issues arose: cattle damage in the fields, and shortages of irrigation water caused by the upstream users. The first is a complex of inter-related factors including the expansion of arable land into grazing, obstruction of stock routes through the fields, scarcity of forage and water for livestock in the dry season, physical damage by cattle to irrigation structures and social, cultural and political antagonisms. This provided an excellent introduction to the elements of participative land-use planning, a process which continues with the aid of maps, aerial photographs, sattelite images, and field traverses with a GPS.

The shortage of irrigation water could not be resolved at the village level because the upstream users were from a different village and some even in a different district. Since the existing local government structure did not lend itself to regulating the abstractions along the length of a river it was necessary to adopt the catchment of the river as the unit of management. This was the origin of the Sub-catchment Resource Management Programme (SRMP). The purpose of the SRMP is to contribute to the development of institutions to manage the water supplies in a single river and its catchment, as well as the associated land resources, for the benefit of the legitimate users along its length. This programme is described more fully in supporting report 18.

The activities of the CEP are, to a large and increasing extent, responses to the expressed needs of the villagers and their councils, and to the needs and abilities of the district and ward officials. To this end the CEP's activities taken as a whole are directed towards institutionalising and strengthening the processes of planning and implementation at the appropriate levels, of village, ward and district. Once the CEP had established a working relationship with a village it would respond to the priorities of the community by suggesting ways of addressing them and then helping them to become established and assimilated into normal practice by the existing institutions. The local institutions have, however, increasingly become the initiators and prime movers, with the CEP adopting a supporting role.

7. THE FUTURE

Over the past two and half years the focus of the CEP's work has evolved from directly supporting villagers in development planning and environmental management to strengthening the local institutions that are responsible for such activities. This change in focus has been in response to the demands and needs of the local communities and organisations that the CEP works with. Many of the initial activities of the CEP have now been successfully taken on by local government, through the VGT, TMV and SRMP initiatives. These initiatives are slowly moving towards maturity and independence, but are not there yet and still require the support of the CEP in terms of financial and logistical assistance, and technical advice.

The extension will be a period of consolidation for these initiatives, when the support of the CEP will be vital. The focus of the CEP's work will be to support local government in further developing these initiatives and institutionalising them. In doing so, the CEP will become a support agency for the following:

- The Mbarali District TMV
- The SRMP
- The Usangu strategy process

7.1 Support to the TMV

The TMV has made great progress over the past year and there is now within Mbarali District a well established team of staff with the skills and knowledge to support village planning. A positive advancement has been the reduction in the support required by the TMV from CEP staff. The TMV itself is now taking the lead in guiding the direction of the programme and developing their own approaches to strengthening local planning. This is a strong indication of the capacity and will within the district to manage and develop its own village development programme.

The TMV recently evaluated their activities, identified the issues that need to be overcome in the next year and developed a programme of activities to address these. The most pressing two issues for the TMV over the next year are, to expand the programme to cover more villages within the district, and to further develop district processes so that they are supportive of participatory planning.

7.1.1 Expansion of programme to other villages

Mbarali District has 84 villages; the TMV is only able to work with 6 of these. It is not feasible for a single unit - the TMV - to train and provide on-going support to all of these, given the long-term commitment required. Over the past couple of months the TMV has begun to develop a programme that will expand their coverage in Mbarali District. Drawing on experience from other districts they have decided that their activities should now focus at the ward level, with ward staff becoming responsible for supporting village planning. The TMV would then take on a co-ordination role being responsible for training ward staff and monitoring their activities (see supporting report 17).

7.1.2 Strengthening district planning processes

The TMV has done much to strengthen planning at the village level and this can be seen through the actions that villagers have taken. However, there is a limit to the level of development that villagers can take responsibility for themselves. There are some areas of development which require the support of the district both in terms of personnel and finances. This requires the district to have a better understanding of its communities' needs and to then reflect these in its annual development plan and departmental programmes. One way of achieving this is through a participatory planning process.

A future goal of the TMV is to support the development of a demand driven participatory planning process in Mbarali District. Over the coming year it will begin to address this through the following:

- Fully integrating the TMV into District processes
- Establishing a participatory planning framework for Mbarali District
- Gaining commitment and support from all district departments to participatory planning
- Moving the co-ordination of the team from the community development department to the planning office.
- Securing financial commitment from the district for the continuation of TMV's work.

These activities are further discussed in supporting report 17.

The CEP will support the TMV in addressing this issue. In keeping with the philosophy of the CEP, to respond to the needs of the organisations they are working with the CEP has asked the TMV to identify the specific areas of support that they will require from the CEP.

7.2 Support to SRMP

Like the TMV, the SRMP has achieved much in the short time that it has been in operation. Achievements include:

- The collection of baseline data on the Kimani catchment
- Resource mapping and problem identification in the villages
- Establishment of a working partnership between the key groups who have an interest in the management of water in Kimani

Over the next year it will be important for the local institutions and partners involved in the SRMP to take on greater ownership and responsibility for the programme. This will help to ensure that it continues beyond the current extension phase which ends in March 2002. Given this, the work of the SRMP will focus on the following three areas:

- institution development of stakeholder organisations
- developing an apex co-ordinating body for the Kimani sub-catchment
- working with the TMV to strengthen village and ward planning and environmental management

These activities are further discussed in supporting report 18

7.3 Support to the strategy process

Over the past six months, SMUWC activities have begun to focus on working with stakeholders to develop a strategy process for developing a vision for Usangu. A key component of this will be ensuring that local resource users are actively involved in the process and that their views are heard and taken on board by local and central level decision makers. The challenge facing those involved in the visioning process is how to meaningfully engage these local resource users given the size of the catchment and the variety of different resource users who have an interest.

One way is through strengthening the involvement of communities in the decision making processes of local government. To a large extent this is the area that the CEP has already focussed its activities on, in particular working both at the village and district level to make local government more transparent and accountable to the community that it serves. The experiences gained from this will be useful in helping other districts in the catchment involve their communities in the visioning process.

One weakness of just focussing on local government is that that some groups in society are not well represented through these formal structures. These for example include: women, the poor, marginal resource users e.g. pastoralists and fishermen (the majority of fishermen in *ihefu* come from Mufindi). During the recent production of the video, 'Talking about Usangu' some of these groups expressed their frustrations of not being involved in local decision making processes and asked for support in expressing their views to decision makers.

An important activity of the CEP will be to look at how these groups can be brought into local decision making processes. To some extent the CEP has already begun this, for example, both the TMV and the SRMP have supported pastoralists in forming associations that will represent these groups in decisions over land use and the management of water within Mapogoro ward. The making of the video, 'Talking about Usangu' has also provided a platform through which some of these groups can begin to express their views.

The CEP has begun to develop ideas on involving marginalised groups. These ideas were presented to the project steering group (January 2001) and at a workshop for key stakeholders (February 2001) and include:

- Awareness raising to these groups on their rights, in particular how they can participate in local decision making process.
- Supporting the development of special interest groups through which marginalised groups can voice their opinions
- Giving people voice and supporting establishment of issues, arguments and groups.
- Establishing precedents of how to negotiate rights and access to resources and services. How to play the system to strengthen your position.
- Identifying alternative forums and linkages for groups to express and exchange their views in.
- Support existing groups, institutions and networks

- Identifying deals that would be supported by policies that are currently being masked by layers of hidden interest; deals that are not being honoured, that offer new opportunities e.g. a percentage of livestock cess should be spent on livestock services. These are bargaining points that have the potential for improving equity of access to resources and the benefits that can be derived from them.

The CEP will play a key role in developing and piloting these processes, identifying best practice and developing the capacity of those involved in the strategy process to make use of such approaches.

Workshops to develop the strategy process have also highlighted the need to raise awareness of the findings of the SMUWC project to all stakeholders involved in Usangu. This will involve developing awareness raising material in a variety of different format and media that is appropriate to the groups at which the information is being targeted. For local resource users this will involve producing the information in a simplified format both in Swahili and in pictures, the illiteracy rate being particularly high in some areas of the catchment. Work has already begun on this and the following have been produced; a poster on using water in Usangu wisely; the video, 'Talking about Usangu' which presents some of the issues in Usangu from a local peoples view point and a community newsletter. The CEP will be involved in further developing awareness raising materials and the dissemination of them.

7.4 The CEP beyond March 2002

The processes that the CEP are supporting require long term commitment from the staff and organisations involved and in some instances external support to ensure that they are fully institutionalised within local organisations. Experience from other programmes working inTanzania indicate that a 5-10 year period is required for such activities. There however, is still much that can be achieved over the next year.

It is hoped that by the end of the extension period the TMV will be more fully integrated into district processes. In January 2002, Mbarali District will begin implementing the LGRP. The TMV will have formed a useful foundation from which these reform activities can be built upon. It is hoped that through the LGRP the activities of the TMV will continue and gain greater support from the district.

With the SRMP, it is likely that an apex co-ordinating body will have been established, however this will require further support to ensure the smooth functioning of it.

A furthers year work on both the TMV and SRMP will allow for useful lessons to be drawn out on approaches to village planning and land use management. Mbarali will provide a useful role model to the other districts working in the catchment, whilst the SRMP will serve as an example to other sub-catchments within the catchment.

In terms of the strategy process lessons will have been learnt on how to engage such a diverse range of stakeholders across a disparate area and mechanisms for bringing local resource users together with policy makers at the local and central level. Both areas where again Tanzania has little experience and the project could serve as a useful example to others and support the development of guidelines for such approaches.

Given the long time scale required for these types of activities, the CEP will contribute to the development of funding proposals that will allow the programme to carry on beyond the one year extension.

APPENDIX 1

CEP personnel

The CEP is led by an experienced Tanzanian Community Engagement Specialist who is a full-time member of the SMUWC team. He is supported by

1. A female Community Engagement Assistant who has the special responsibility for facilitating the participation of women in the CEP and who now also conducts village government training and public meetings with all sections of the village communities.

2. An Environmental Associate Professional Officer under the DFID 'APOS' programme. She assists the CEP in planning and guiding its programme, especially in relation to environmental and natural resource management issues and local government reform.

3. The Facilitator for the Pilot Sub-catchment Resource Management Programme (SRMP) is a water engineer with experience of community- based irrigation schemes.

4. The Community Organiser works to establish, guide and support CBOs, mainly irrigators' and pastoralists' associations.

5. Occasional visits to the project are made by the consultant Social Development Specialist in support of the CEP's programme and direction.