

Success factors in community based natural resources management in northern Botswana: Lessons from practice

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Abstract

The article explores and examines challenges and lessons learned from the implementation of community based natural resources management (CBNRM) programmes in Ngamiland, northern Botswana. The article, based largely on primary data, with some secondary data sources, draws on the CBNRM framework, which promotes rural socio-economic development and natural resources management. Among the key factors identified as pivotal to the success of CBNRM is broadening the consultation base during the mobilization phase of the programme to facilitate effective community participation and representation. Preparedness by both the implementing institutions and participating communities is also highlighted as key to effective mobilization. This means moving away from a conventional consultative forum, to a more multi-faceted approach that will facilitate capturing the views of diverse user groups within the community. The article also suggests that feasibility studies are needed to address socio-economic, political and cultural characteristics inherent in communities to guide programme implementation. To achieve increased community participation and enhance positive conservation attitudes, the article advocates a mobilization approach and practice that will effectively facilitate the process.

1. Introduction

During the course of its history, natural resource conservation in Africa has advocated the type of preservationist strategies that have had the effect of alienating local communities from the resources (Dladla, 1995). The socio-economic and political lives of rural communities hinged on the natural resource base (Machel, 1997; Taylor, 1998), which served as a buffer against poverty, unemployment, health risk and seasonal famine (Cunningham, 1985, 1988). The strategies employed brewed conflicts between conservation agencies — mainly the State — and rural Africa (Adams and McShane, 1992). Although put in place to arrest the decline of resources, conservation strategies were not effective, as natural resources have continued to inexorably decline (Metcalf, 1996).

Conservationists, ecologists and biologists, realising the continued decline, focused their attention on expensive scientific and ecological research projects in an attempt to unravel the mystery. However, they continued to ignore addressing the conflicting people/conservation interaction, which clouded insight into the problems (Cunningham,

1985). Conservationists did not realise that it was very difficult to implement sound resource management without a coordinated approach to the intertwined social, cultural, economic and political problems (Agrawal, 1995; Dladla, 1995; Kroma, 1995; Quiroz, 1996).

The awakening from this neglect came about in the 1980s through a shift from a preservationist conservation paradigm to a more integrated approach that recognised the need for promotion and empowerment of the communities by linking economic and social development to natural resources management (Williams *et al.*, 1998; Mbaiwa, 2004a). This realisation coincided with a general trend in rural development studies to include local communities in planning and management of natural resources in an attempt to promote economic growth through devolution, decentralization and the empowerment of local communities (Mwagiru *et al.*, 1989; Agrawal, 1995; Lelo and Dyiek, 1995). This facilitated establishment of integrated community based conservation and development programmes in Botswana, Kenya, Malawi, Mozambique, Namibia, South Africa, Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe between 1979 and 1995 (Steiner and Rihoy, 1995; Arntzen *et al.*, 2003).

In Botswana, initiatives towards collaboration with local communities in the management of natural resources, mainly wildlife, dates back to 1989 when a pilot project was initiated in the Chobe Enclave in the northern part of the country

(Matengu, 1995; Winer, 1996; Dikobe and Thakadu, 1997; Nchunga, 1997; Gujadhur, 2000). From this initiative, a community-based organization was established in 1993. The success of the pilot project provided incentives to the Government of Botswana to upgrade it to a full programme, now called Community Based Natural Resources Management (CBNRM), with country-wide coverage. In 2003, it was reported that there were 83 community-based organizations actively involved in CBNRM nationwide, 81% of them being legally registered (Madzwamuse, 2004).

In Botswana, the implementation approach to CBNRM took the form of planner-centred participation. Communities were asked for their views on how they could be involved in a government initiated and proposed programme for natural resources management. The process involved detailed consultations with selected local communities on how they intended to participate in the proposed CBNRM programme; facilitation to establish representative, accountable and legal entities (RALEs); to develop a constitution to govern the new community organization and set up bye-laws for resource governance. In the chosen co-management approach, the State had *de facto* rights over natural resources within the designated areas and user and management rights were given to local communities through 15-year leases. The need therefore arose to establish independent legal entities, governed by constitutions, to support such lease agreements with the State. The Botswana co-management approach can be described as a nested system wherein the State is the *de facto* holder of all legal rights in an area, and partly transfers the management rights over the resources in a specific area to local communities for their benefit.¹

The implementation of CBNRM was mainly driven by government officials, who provided facilitation to local communities. The government facilitation teams ensured compliance with a set of obligatory conditions. These included: the management group or entity formed by a community must be representative and accountable; the needs of special game license holders (hunting licenses given to individuals whose lives were entirely dependent on hunting and gathering) must be accommodated in a way that satisfied them. The Government also sanctioned the process of electing management structures to ensure adherence to democratic principles and participatory decision-making. Teams also extended technical advice to ensure conformity to plans and policies. It was these facilitation teams that shouldered the responsibility for the mobilization phase of CBNRM by consulting with communities on CBNRM through *kgotla* fora. A *kgotla* is a traditional public meeting place where customary judicial matters are handled and consultations take place within the community on a wide

range of issues. *Kgotla* meetings were initiated at the request of officials and deliberations were presided over either by the headman or tribal chief. The *kgotla* setting is traditionally viewed as democratic, which is why it was used by the programme's mobilization phase.

Studies of the CBNRM programme undertaken since its implementation² include discussion on its successes and failures, challenges, sustainability, the degree of participation in its projects, the impacts of the programme on local communities, and a general review. So far, there are no dedicated studies or reviews that examine the mobilization approach employed and its implications on the long-term durability of community-based organizations. Though most community organizations in Ngamiland (northern Botswana) were mobilized more or less at the same time, mixed results were observed regarding baseline targets, such as the time it took to develop and register a deed of trust and to venture into its first business project. Such ventures included: joint venture arrangements with private safari companies; community-run safari/tourism businesses; community-run curio shops; campsites and communal sales of thatching grass. On the basis of field observations, this article argues that the uneven results came about as a result of the approach employed by teams of officials in mobilizing communities into CBNRM projects. The article argues that the approach was not adequate to maximize community participation. It also explores and analyses the mobilization strategy followed in CBNRM implementation and suggests best practices that would ensure broader community interest, participation and support — aspects necessary to spark positive conservation attitudes. Finally, the article highlights the planning phase of CBNRM undertaken by the State as another factor critical to setting the scene for community mobilization. Through a review of the impacts of the approach employed, the article identifies the requisite elements that are necessary to enhance effective mobilization of communities. These are presented as success determinants.

In terms of structural organization, the article begins with an introduction outlining the conventional conservation paradigm and the elements that necessitated a shift to a co-management approach with rural communities. Section 2 focuses on the CBNRM framework and the key assumptions guiding the programme. Section 3 outlines the methodology. Section 4 introduces the approach to implementation in Botswana by outlining the programme's policy and planning framework, mobilization strategy employed and the establishment of management structures. Section 5 reviews the mobilization phase of CBNRM implementation and the implications of the strategy used. The section also reviews and analyses lessons learned from community mobilization

¹ Berkes *et al.* (1991) describe a continuum of co-management arrangements with varying degrees of local level participation and shared decision-making. Botswana's CBNRM programme fits into the third version of the concept of co-management described by Carlsson and Berkes (2003).

² See, e.g., Twyman (1998, 2000), Mbaiwa (2002, 2003, 2004a, b), Mvimi (2000), Mvimi *et al.* (2003), Thakadu (1997), Taylor (1998), Taylor (2000), Arntzen *et al.* (2003) and Beebe (2003).

and suggests pragmatic strategies for ensuring effective and maximum community participation in CBNRM. The last section concludes the article by making recommendations that can improve CBNRM mobilization in north-western Botswana, particularly in Ngamiland.

2. CBNRM framework

This article uses the community based natural resource management (CBNRM) framework to assess success factors in community mobilization and to provide lessons learnt from programme implementation during the last decade. The overall underlying concept behind this approach is to provide incentives for communities to manage natural resources in a sustainable way (Painter, 1995) through the partial transfer of management responsibility, decision-making processes (Taylor, 1998), and user benefits from designated areas (Van der Sluis, 1993; Thakadu, 1997; Arntzen *et al.*, 2003). A community, in the context of Botswana's CBNRM practice, denotes a group of people with varied socio-economic interests and capabilities bound together by their interest in conserving shared natural resources (Cassidy, 2000) and living within a legally defined geographic area. For convenience, as Cassidy (2000:15) expressed, "a community has normally come to mean a settlement" or a group of settlements in this context. Thus, selection and definition of a community for the purposes of the CBNRM programme in Botswana is based on residential proximity to the area where active resource management takes place.

The CBNRM approach combines conservation objectives with the generation of economic benefits for rural communities (Taylor, 1998; GoB, 1999; Rozemeijer, 2001). It is based on the following three key assumptions:

- Locals are better placed to conserve natural resources;
- People will conserve a resource only if benefits exceed the costs of conservation; and
- People will conserve a resource that is directly linked to their quality of life.

2.1. Locals better placed to conserve natural resources

Several studies³ have shown that the people best placed to conserve and manage natural resources are those living with those resources. Until the advent of colonialism and the introduction of western conservation norms in rural Africa, natural resources were managed through traditional institutions (Christofferson and Johnson, 1997; Machel, 1997). Indigenous communities had developed systems and

practices, through careful observation of local conditions, and complex processes of experimentation and adaptation to suit dynamic socio-economic and natural environments (Christofferson and Johnson, 1997; McLain and Jones, 1997; Thakadu, 1997). Conventional conservation strategies, introduced by colonial powers, marginalized indigenous cultures, practices and systems, and usurped the responsibility for natural resource management from traditional institutions (Bromley and Cernea, 1989; Metcalfe, 1996; Machel, 1997; Agrawal and Gibson, 1999), putting it in the "heavy hand of the State" (Agrawal and Gibson, 1999:631) based on the assumption that this was the best option for effective conservation. However, as Agrawal and Gibson (1999:632) hinted, this approach was only successful in showing that "the capacity of States to coerce their citizens into unpopular conservation programmes is limited". It was then realised that resource conservation could benefit better through cooperation and the active support of the people who live with the resources on a daily basis.

Painter (1995) and Twyman (2000) also point out that communities share an interest in conserving the natural resources in their surroundings, as their livelihoods are intricately connected with these resources. Local communities are therefore best placed to manage natural resources. Steiner and Rihoy (1995) similarly argue that people living closest to natural resources have more to lose from their degradation, and would therefore — if given proper tools and incentives — be the most likely to effectively preserve them. Such a solution is also a cost-effective option for conservation as opposed to 'fly-by-night' or 'quick-fix' monitoring by government officials. Co-management with local communities was therefore seen as a tool to ensuring that the people who live with natural resources also actively participate in their management.

2.2. Benefits must exceed costs of conservation

For sustainable and effective management of natural resources, it has been argued that the benefits derived must outweigh the costs (Murphree, 1993; Steiner and Rihoy, 1995; Baland and Platteau, 1996; DWNP, 1999b; Ostrom, 2001; Arntzen *et al.*, 2003; Hachileka, 2003). Ostrom *et al.* (1993:44) demonstrate this by highlighting that "an individual's choice of strategy in any particular situation depends on how he perceives and weighs the benefits and costs of various strategies and their likely outcomes". Communities will only embrace CBNRM as a long-term livelihood strategy if it proves attractive to them (Elliot, 1997) in terms of offsetting the costs of such management. It has been argued that people living with the negative consequences of unsuitable resource-management decisions and those receiving benefits have incentives to be good stewards. (McLain and Jones, 1997; Agrawal and Gibson, 1999). Only when communities derive real, meaningful and tangible benefits will their dedication to conservation be triggered (Winer, 1996; Rozemeijer and van der Jagt, 2000).

³ See, e.g., Winer (1993, 1994), Painter (1995), Baland and Platteau (1996), Agrawal and Gibson (1999), Brown (1999), DWNP (1999b), Agrawal (2001, 2002) and Hachileka (2003).

When the value of a resource is focused to meet a particular need, people will weigh the benefits of that resource against the costs of conserving it (Dikobe and Thakadu, 1998). If the costs are less, people will conserve the resource.

CBNRM will therefore work only if benefits to local communities outweigh the costs of conservation (Machel, 1997). This notion is based on the social marketing concept that assumes that people will change their behaviour if offered a benefit in exchange (Byers, 1996). The concept points out that people will only change if social marketing can demonstrate that the cost of changing behaviour is less than the benefits. The linkage of benefits in fostering sustainability of common pool resources together with the potential role in enhancing positive conservation attitudes by the same was supported by Murphree (1993), Ostrom *et al.* (1993), Rozemeijer and van der Jagt (2000), Cassidy (2000) and Mbaiwa (2002, 2004a, 2004b).

2.3. Resources directly linked to quality of life

People will conserve and manage only such resources that they perceive to contribute positively to their quality of life (Dikobe and Thakadu, 1998; DWNP, 1999b). When people or communities are able to link their survival and day-to-day welfare to a particular resource, they show interest in and commitment to the sustainable management of that particular resource. Baland and Platteau (1996) and Dikobe and Thakadu (1998) note that it is only when a resource directly contributes to their income or sustenance that people show dedication towards its conservation, as it is perceived to have a positive effect on their survival in the long term. Winer (1995, 1996), Dikobe and Thakadu (1997) and Machel (1997) caution that financial handouts, attempting to buy a community's compliance with environmental conservation, are bound to fail as they lack any connection to the natural resource in question. A similar observation was made by Lawry, who points out that 'economic incentives are often insufficient to stimulate individuals to participate in or sanction local level management' (Lawry, 1989:6, cited in Baland and Platteau, 1996:297). It is only when a resource demonstrates usefulness to daily human survival that people will regard its conservation as paramount. When local people's quality of life is enhanced, their efforts and commitment to ensure the future well-being of the resource is also enhanced (Ostrom *et al.*, 1993). This is the reason that CBNRM opted for economic benefits that have a direct positive impact on peoples' quality of life, as a means to bring about conservation, although the motivation for the programme as such was primarily conservation rather than social empowerment or economic development (Cassidy, 2000; Motladiile, 2004).

The above three interrelated assumptions have guided and influenced the implementation of CBNRM across southern Africa. The basis for community mobilization in Ngamiland was to provide a platform from which communities living with the resources could have an opportunity to

participate in the natural resources decision-making process, as they are perceived to be best placed to manage the resources. The implementation of CBNRM has entailed a great deal of consultation and mobilization to market the concept to communities and to facilitate their active involvement.

3. Methodology

This article draws on over a decade of active research by the author. As a government employee with the Department of Wildlife and National Parks (DWNP) in Botswana, the author mobilized rural communities towards the CBNRM programme. This involved addressing awareness-raising, informative and consultative *kgotla* meetings between December 1994 and December 1999 in several villages in Ngamiland District.⁴ This series of *kgotla* meetings were followed in 1995 by workshops and seminars that targeted local CBNRM institutions — such as village trust committees and boards of trustees — to further inform communities and raise their awareness of CBNRM implementation and to facilitate the drafting of constitutions that guided the respective community organizations. The method further involved frequent official visits to the communities, attending and/or participating in various meetings in an advisory capacity, and interaction with communities and user groups. This interaction formed part of progress evaluation and monitoring. Specific tailor-made workshops and seminars were also held, such as institutional training for all the community organizations in Ngamiland in September 1998. Participatory rural appraisal workshops were also held, and arrangements were made for community members to attend national and regional workshops.

From January 2000 to 2003, work with communities in CBNRM was carried out at the national level and entailed mobilizing communities to collaborate in the management of protected areas, and providing technical advice. From 2004 to date, the author has chaired the Ngamiland CBNRM Forum and is a member of Botswana's National CBNRM Steering Committee. According to Mbaiwa (2002), the Ngamiland CBNRM Forum provides an opportunity for all stakeholders (e.g., village trust committees and boards of trustees, Government, tour operators, researchers, and non-governmental organizations) to deliberate on issues that affect CBNRM progress. The National CBNRM Steering Committee is a national advisory body of the programme composed of private persons and professionals in tourism and natural resource use in Botswana. Documentary data were also collected and these included government policy documents, reports and other relevant published and unpublished documents.

⁴ Villages included were: Sankuyo, Mababe, Khwai, Godigwa, Beetsha, Eretsha, Gunotsoga, Seronga, Ditshiping, Xaraxao, Xaxaba, Daunara, Boro, Xuxao, Jao, Ikoga, Etsha 6, Etsha, 13 and Xai Xai.

4. CBNRM implementation in Botswana

4.1. Policy development and planning

Two policy documents, the Wildlife Conservation Policy (GoB, 1986) and the Tourism Policy (GoB, 1990) created an enabling environment for the implementation of the CBNRM programme (Thakadu, 1997; Rozemeijer and van der Jagt, 2000; Cassidy, 2000; Arntzen *et al.*, 2003). The two policy documents called for citizen involvement and participation in tourism and wildlife related industries. The Wildlife Conservation and National Parks Act (WCNPA) (GoB, 1992) facilitated community based wildlife utilisation and management within specified areas by enabling communities to play a greater role and allowing them to benefit from the utilisation of wildlife quotas (Thakadu, 1997).

While the policy on wildlife conservation and the Wildlife Conservation and National Parks Act (GoB, 1986, 1992) facilitated the implementation of CBNRM, the instruments are specific to wildlife. The policy documents do not cover other natural resources nor do they give firm guidance regarding CBNRM implementation (Rozemeijer and van der Jagt, 2000). The draft CBNRM policy (GoB, 2005), initiated in 1997, intended to address this gap by adopting a holistic approach and including resources such as wildlife, forests, fisheries and veld products, which are intricately linked together in the natural environment. Even after eight years of drafting, the policy is yet to be approved by Botswana's Parliament.

In the Ngamiland District, the Tawana Land Board, a land authority in the Ngamiland tribal areas, developed land use and management plans in 1987, 1991 and 1994 to guide and facilitate identification and designation of areas for community use through the CBNRM programme (DLUPU, 1987, 1991, 1994; GOB/MLGLH, 1995). The land use plans were pivotal towards implementation of CBNRM in the district as they apportioned areas for use by either safari operators or communities for commercial hunting and/or tourism. The land use plans were followed by the development of management plans for community controlled hunting areas which laid the foundation for the implementation of CBNRM in Ngamiland communities (GOB/MLGLH, 1995). These were designed to guide the activities and developments within the designated areas. To this end, consultations were held with communities in or adjacent to areas designated for their use to solicit views and input towards the development of management plans. The purpose was to ensure the involvement of the communities and their input in the development planning and process.

4.2. Mobilization and facilitation

With the completion of the planning phase at district level, multi-sectoral and interdisciplinary facilitation teams, consisting of officers from the Department of Wildlife and National Parks (DWNP) and district authorities, were

mobilized to consult with local communities regarding the CBNRM initiatives. Communities were mobilized through *kgotla* meetings as well as through information workshops and seminars. The latter were organized for elected community authorities to build their capacity to handle CBNRM issues.

The government-led consultation and mobilization teams informed the communities about the CBNRM concept, its policies and the legal framework within which it operated. The teams also provided technical assistance for implementation. Since CBNRM projects mainly concerned wildlife, the lead implementing agency was the Dept. of Wildlife and National Parks. Joint venture guidelines (GoB, 1999) were put in place, which outlined the roles and responsibilities of various government departments engaged in CBNRM, the roles of communities and the private sector. The document also set out procedures to be followed.

4.3. Formation of management structures

As a prerequisite to benefiting from a wildlife quota, communities were obliged to set up, through democratic and transparent elections, representative and accountable local management structures, sanctioned by district officials (DWNP, 1995a; Cassidy, 2000). Initially, there were views that existing local institutions, such as village development committees,⁵ could assume management responsibilities in order to avoid creating additional new structures. However, it was noted that most existing local structures were weak and not suitable for CBNRM work (Steiner and Rihoy, 1995). Moreover, since village management structures for CBNRM were intended to be independent from the Government, village development committees were not qualified as they were set up by the Government as an extension of its authority at village level. Nor could village committees attain the legal status required for CBNRM implementation. Villages opted to elect new local structures to undertake CBNRM management responsibilities rather than using the existing village development committees. However, some communities, recognising the important role played by the development committees in village affairs, made provisions for their representation as ex-officio members at meetings of the boards of trustees (CTT, 1997; MZCDT, 1998). Mbaiwa (2002) suggests that the inclusion of village development committees gave community organizations credibility, legitimacy and support from village authorities.

The elected local management structures were further mobilized to become legal entities and whilst the joint venture guidelines proposed different forms — such as a trust, a society, a cooperative or a company (DWNP, 1999a) — a trust found most application within existing community

⁵ These are classified as political institutions established by a Presidential Directive of 1968 for the purpose of implementing development programmes in the village (GoB, 1997).

organizations (Arntzen *et al.*, 2003). Management structures elected by the communities facilitated the drafting and development of constitutions to guide the management and administration of their community organizations. District teams of the Department of Wildlife and National Parks offered technical advice on drafting the legal instruments and advised on channels for registering the organizations and possible sources of funding.

5. Review of the CBNRM mobilization phase

A number of observations were made during the CBNRM implementation process, mainly during mobilization, which has a direct impact on community participation and performance. Generally, CBNRM in Botswana has lacked strong political support. While general policies, such as the Wildlife Conservation Policy and the Tourism Policy, were instrumental in initiating CBNRM, the continuity of the programme is at risk from the slow pace at which policy for guiding CBNRM is being drafted. This delay, depriving CBNRM of proper policy guidance and accompanying legislative and administrative support has been a considerable disadvantage to the programme. Continued delay in finalising the policy bars conservation from the benefits of a more holistic approach to natural resources management. The reason why Botswana's CBNRM programme is still wildlife based is that the two policies which facilitated the programme are so oriented. Numerous concerns have been raised regarding the need to broaden its base beyond wildlife, but there is no commitment towards this, as there is no supporting official policy.

Without the backing of a dedicated policy, the CBNRM programme continues to lack adequate commitment from other requisite government departments. Some have continued to view CBNRM as an initiative of the Department of Wildlife and National Parks (DWNP) and therefore wanted to conveniently leave the bulk of the responsibility for its mobilization with that department. As mentioned above, this is so because the programme was originally conceived through the DWNP. Reluctance by government agencies to actively participate in CBNRM is encouraged by the lack of a specific policy for the programme, as discussed above, to identify the roles and responsibilities of individual implementation agencies. While joint venture guidelines are in place (DWNP, 1999a) that outlines some of the roles and responsibilities of certain government implementing agencies, the guidelines lack policy and legislative backing to ensure compliance and service delivery.

Without such policy support, the requisite resources needed to drive the CBNRM implementation process have not been committed and made available by the Government. Insufficient capital and human resources dedicated to CBNRM have compromised community mobilization. In most cases, government agencies have to use resources reserved for other purposes to sponsor the CBNRM projects.

Unavailability of dedicated human resources to mobilize CBNRM denies communities a full complement of advice to facilitate holistic resource management. Some officers who were grafted into the teams during the course of implementation were not aware of their roles and responsibilities and could not adequately represent their departments. This policy vacuum and a mosaic of other related consequences points to the Government's initial lack of preparedness to venture into CBNRM.

While the Government did initiate plans for land use and development, the effort was self-defeating as the suggestions made by the same plans were ignored. Management plans for community hunting areas allocated to communities cautioned against the complexities of setting up multi-village areas that brought together many villages with different history, ethnicity, and livelihood strategies without proper studies to inform a way forward. Such studies were never undertaken but rather the project was rushed into implementation. Due to the planner-centred approach towards developing the initial land-use plan, communities were chosen without due attention to tribal affiliations, and some were left out. Even though some villages were later added to existing groups, this has not been fully accepted by certain communities. Thus, lingering dissatisfaction still haunts Botswana's CBNRM scenario. Some villages in Ngamiland are questioning why they were excluded from certain hunting areas while others were included: the Shorobe community asks why it was not included in the same area with Sankuyo Village, with which it shares a history of intimate tribal relations. Similarly, Xaxaba Village, which was later grafted into a block of communities at some distance from its location, also complains that it could have been given an area in its own vicinity. During a meeting held in February 2005 with all the headmen in the Maun area, the criterion for selecting and grouping villages for the CBNRM project was questioned. The headmen complained that Xaraxao Village, about 7 km from Maun, was part of a block of communities from which the town of Maun itself was left out, despite the fact that the village was directly answerable to administrative structures in Maun. Such dissenting voices are symptomatic of the ills of planner-centred approaches to development.

Apart from these policy-related issues, another factor that also impacted the mobilization of CBNRM was the *kgotla* setting, within which programme mobilization took place. Since the *kgotla* is deemed transparent and democratic by the traditions of Botswana, this forum was chosen for the launching of CBNRM. The election of management structures was also deemed representative and accountable only when done in the *kgotla*. However, due to the *kgotla* protocol, it was very difficult to ensure participatory decision-making in this forum, as this depends upon the individual presiding over the meeting — in most cases the headman. The headman facilitates the discussion by inviting people to make comments. Government officials are not allowed to preside over a *kgotla* meeting, their role being limited

Name of organization	Villages covered	Dates of initial/first			
		Project mobilization	Deed of trust	Community enterprise	Joint venture
Okavango Community Trust	Gudigwa, Beetsha, Eretsha, Gunotsoga, Seronga	December 1994	13 March 1995	1997	1997
Sankuyo Tshwaragano Management Trust	Sankuyo	March 1995	29 November 1995	1996	1996
Okavango Kopano Mokoro Community Trust	Ditshiping, Xaxaba, Quqao, Xaraxao Daunara, Boro	December 1996	24 April 1997	1997	1999
Cgaecgae Tlhabololo Trust	Xai Xai	August 1995	31 October 1997	1997	1998
Mababe Zokotsama Community Development Trust	Mababe	February 1995	10 August 1998	2000	2000
Okavango Jakotsha Community Trust	Jao, Ikoga, Etsha 1–13	February 1998	30 August 1999	2000	Pending
Khwai Development Trust	Khwai	December 1994	2 March 2000	1996	2000

only to making a presentation, and clarifying the specific matters under discussion. The *kgotla* setting and its environment has not traditionally encouraged participation of women, marginalized groups or youth, and therefore does not guarantee to be representative in this respect.

The factors noted above have impacted the performance of community based organizations in varying degrees. The most immediate and obvious effects have been reflected in the length of time required by communities to organize themselves, register deeds of trust and initiate a commercial community enterprise (Table 1). The time taken by a community organization to mobilise itself to form a legal entity and start an enterprise depends on a set of factors at play within the communities. Some of these factors were external while others were internal.

6. Success determinants

Observations of the implementation of the CBNRM programme in Ngamiland have yielded lessons that may be considered vital for the success of mobilizing communities towards co-management initiatives. These factors influenced the pace at which CBNRM concepts and implementation processes were received and assimilated, and a community consensus reached. These factors such as characteristics of the community, degree and nature of consultation; willingness and readiness; credibility and mutual trust; type of natural resource targeted; familiarity with the project's intended benefits; levels of literacy; socio-economic aspects; cultural and ethnic affiliations; as well as political factors influence pace of progress. These factors are very important in that they are directly linked to the degree to which a community will contribute to natural resource conservation as espoused in the CBNRM framework. These factors or dynamics at play within a community need to be acknowledged and addressed appropriately. Addressing these issues would enhance natural resource conservation through

the CBNRM approach. The factors are discussed in detail below.

6.1. Broadly based participation

The conventional form of public participation in Botswana is the *kgotla* forum, but the suitability or appropriateness of this institution as an all embracing and effective way of getting people's views and input is highly questionable, mainly when dealing with CBNRM, which demands broader community sponsorship for effectiveness. Women hardly speak or make contributions at *kgotla* meetings (Cassidy, 2001) and if they do speak, it is after an adult male has stated his position — with women featuring as supporters. Even among adult males, it is not common for any man to present his views on a matter before the *kgotla*, as it is usually the domain of locally influential people or opinion leaders. In communities where there are apparent ethnic conflicts, support of issues or motions in a *kgotla* is biased along ethnic lines (HaBarad *et al.*, 1995). Regarding women's passive participation in decision-making processes in a *kgotla* setting, only Khwai Village has proven to be an exception in Ngamiland. Women in Khwai were opinion leaders and influential in CBNRM issues. Outside this exception, there is a general tendency across the district for adult males to take the lead in setting the scene and directing discussions at *kgotla* meetings. Consequently, in *kgotla* meetings, only adult males are vocal and therefore decisions taken are male dominated and may not necessarily represent the views of women.

Another *kgotla* shortcoming is that youth hardly participates while minority groups like *BaSarwa* (San) are marginalised in decision-making (Magole, 2003). Furthermore, attendance at *kgotla* meetings is often very low (Taylor, 1998; DWNP, 1999b). Therefore, targeting *kgotla* as the sole means of electing representative management structures is not always the best option. This may be the reason why Arntzen *et al.* (2003) found that the management

structures of community organizations were neither necessarily representative nor accountable to their constituents. The *kgotla* format and protocol can immensely impact the quality of participation and consequently representation, as it does not promote audience segmentation. While it may be maintained as a base platform for initiating consultations, other means need to be explored (DWNP, 1999b) where the views of different interest groups can be taken aboard. These means and methods can target focus groups, interest groups, hunters, specialized groupings, basket weavers, gender, youth groups and other community groupings according to family, ethnicity and socio-economic class. These groups can be reached through focus/interest/user group discussions, interviews, meetings and workshops. Meetings designed for focus groups can be facilitated by the promoter rather than by the headmen so as to ensure that gender is taken into consideration during deliberations.

Achieving broad-based participation takes time, (Taylor, 1998; Thakadu, 1999; Arntzen *et al.*, 2003) as consensus has to be reached among all interest/user groups. It is this process of consensus seeking among all subgroups that has prompted proponents of private property regimes to discredit co-management efforts as leading to high 'transaction costs', as noted by Bromley and Cernea (1989:20) and echoed by Baland and Platteau (1996). Bromley and Cernea (1989) qualify their arguments by indicating that the notion of 'transaction costs' is culturally specific: while a meeting may be a tedious experience to one person (a cost), it may be enjoyable to another (a benefit). To local communities, joint discussions and consensus seeking would be a benefit as their views and positions would be considered, which is what community involvement is all about. Shying away from intensive consultations in order to avoid transaction costs will lead to projects that are unrealistic and unsustainable (Bromley and Cernea, 1989) and to resource-rich but institutionally compromised communities (Rozemeijer and van der Jagt, 2000).

6.2. Credibility and mutual trust

The government consultative process had previously been more of a 'mock consultation' approach than a truly participatory one, as more often than not communities were merely informed of decisions already made by implementing agencies. This is typical for a planner-centred approach. This practice has brewed a sense of scepticism within local communities towards participation in any new State-facilitated initiative. Local communities viewed conservation agencies as institutions denying them their rights to utilize and enjoy their own resources and as 'herdsmen' who fail to look after their animals (i.e., the wildlife), which were then allowed to destroy farmers' crops, livestock and property and even threaten human life (Winer, 1996). This community alienation happened because conventional approaches to natural resources conservation had fostered distrust, resentment and indifference towards the observance

of regulations imposed to protect the resources (Adams and McShane, 1992; Twyman, 2000).

Because of the non-enabling environment, a period of time was needed to establish credibility and build mutual trust with local communities that were still trying to recover from the setbacks of the conventional conservation approach (Arntzen *et al.*, 2003). Baland and Platteau (1996) also note that trust building between partners is necessary for effective co-management. The credibility and image of the Department of Wildlife and National Parks (lead facilitating agency in CBNRM) had been tarnished in the eyes of local communities (Thakadu, 1999). Turning the uniformed officers of what was seen as a law enforcement institution into extension workers met with more scepticism from local communities (Winer, 1996; Taylor, 1998). Some communities, e.g., the village of Khwai, did not trust the Government's intentions and resorted to independent technical advisors to guide them in CBNRM. Comments made during *kgotla* meetings such as, "How will we know that this new project will be implemented to really benefit us?" express the villagers' misgivings regarding the Government's ability to deliver on its promises. Such feelings undoubtedly originated in past experiences, and reveal a guarded expectation of future promises (GOB/MLGLH, 1995; Winer, 1996; Taylor, 1998; Twyman, 2000). This condition was symptomatic of a failure to involve the targeted community beneficiaries at the design stage of the project — a step found necessary by Ostrom *et al.* (1993) for facilitating sustainable projects.

To help close the trust gap and mitigate the condition of scepticism and apathy, frequent regular monitoring and interactive meetings had to be held with local communities. In an ideal situation, dedicated, on-site CBNRM practitioners would be deployed within communities to foster understanding and build relationships. The model for CBNRM project implementation in Xai Xai and Ngwaa Khobee Xeya Trust communities, where advisors were stationed within the villages, tended to promote trust and was a good recipe for success (Rozemeijer and van der Jagt, 2000). Advisors who live in community project areas are able to offer timely assistance, advice and facilitation on a day-to-day basis, as opposed to the approach adopted by government officials of facilitation over the telephone or on an emergency ('fire-fighting') basis. Frequent and regular interaction by on-site facilitators can reduce the transaction costs of collective decision-making (Agrawal and Gibson, 1999). Communities with on-site facilitators tend to perform better in administration and management than those without.

6.3. Willingness and readiness

Most communities, mainly those familiar with lucrative financial returns of a CBNRM project, had wanted to start projects in haste, overlooking other important factors, such as the need for capacity building (Thakadu, 1999). Such

factors are important for smooth and informed running of projects and contribute to the community's understanding of the concepts involved. Arntzen *et al.* (2003) found that problems of maladministration, mismanagement, improper running of day-to-day affairs, lack of accountability and project domineering by an enlightened few — which had been observed by the Government in 2001 (GoB/MLG, 2001) — still hampered community based organizations nationwide by 2003. It is therefore necessary to maintain a balance between a community's willingness (i.e., its acceptance of the project and desire to implement it), and its readiness (its understanding of concepts involved and its capacity to implement the project). If willingness is not balanced with readiness, communities run the risk of initiating projects that they cannot sustain. Agrawal (2001:1658) highlighted the fact that, in the commons "better-off group members are often likely to gain a larger share of benefits", an unhealthy situation for CBNRM. It has been found that some community organizations in Ngamiland, and the Chobe Enclave Conservation Trust pilot project, had benefited only the management elite (Rozemeijer and van der Jagt, 2000; Twyman, 2000; Mbaiwa, 2004a). However, while domineering by the elite has been highlighted as negative, Baland and Platteau (1996), Ostrom (2001), Bardhan and Johnson (2002) and Mansuri and Rao (2004) argued that this may be necessary in some cases to ensure coordination and proper enforcement, as the elite may hold the requisite structured authority. The above authors also caution that elite authority will work only if its powers are not abused and if there is a limit to social heterogeneity, which could become harmful to collective action. For certain community organizations, e.g., the Okavango Community Trust, the situation has been exacerbated by its strong political motivation during its formation (DWNP, 1995b), a condition still reported by Department of Wildlife and National Parks in 2000 (DWNP, 2000). This example demonstrates that, while a community may be eager and willing to engage in CBNRM, it may not necessarily be ready to assume consequent responsibilities.

The dichotomy of willingness and readiness also applies to implementing agencies. Implementing agencies have a tendency to rush into programmes for the sake of being part of the new paradigm bandwagon or fashionable approach to an initiative before assessing their real potential to sustain such programmes. As Twyman (2000) pointed out, governments succumbed to pressure to engage local communities in new initiatives irrespective of the adaptability of the programme in the specific regional environmental context. This seems to have been the case with the implementation of CBNRM in Botswana. Thus, CBNRM mobilization in Ngamiland began in December 1994 when the pilot project of the Chobe Enclave Conservation Trust was still at a nascent stage, and was yet to yield meaningful results and lessons.

CBNRM implementation has shown that community mobilization can be a cost both in time and effort, but this

was overlooked in Botswana. It took two and half years for the villages in the Chobe Enclave project to become fully mobilised into CBNRM. Most of this time was spent in explaining the concepts to community members to make them understand the programme, and to reach consensus within and among the five participating communities (Winer, 1996). As resources and new projects were spread away from the pilot, the Department of Wildlife and National Parks (DWNP) was unable to provide requisite follow-ups and monitoring, and it became clear that the Department lacked sufficient resources for long-term CBNRM facilitation (Rozemeijer and van der Jagt, 2000). This was a result of poor planning and an indication that the Government was not ready for CBNRM implementation. Committing adequate resources in terms of time, personnel and funds for capacity building and facilitation, mainly during the initial stages of project implementation, is a vital requirement for the success and sustainability of CBNRM. Inadequate monitoring of projects, due to resource constraints within the Government, affects the performance of community organizations, as they are denied timely guidance and facilitation and become prone to maladministration.

Twyman (2000) pointed out that certain ambiguities were observed in explanations given by officers mobilizing communities in the Ngwaa Khobee Xeya Trust community area. These ambiguities reveal that government implementers were not well equipped with the necessary information and process skills to facilitate CBNRM. There were no guidelines for the initial implementation phase, and this was the reason why the development of "clear unambiguous guidelines on options for special game license holders" was recommended (DWNP, 1995b:3). The first comprehensive guidelines for the implementation of CBNRM were drafted in 1999 (DWNP, 1999b), a decade after the advent of the programme in Botswana. Without proper guiding principles and tools understood by all, communities risked getting conflicting advice that ended up delaying progress. When facts were put straight during the course of implementation, this made communities lose confidence in the programme and its practitioners. Mbaiwa (2002, 2004a) observed that some communities were not fully informed about CBNRM and could hence not adequately apply its concepts to decision-making. To make sure communities understand well the issues related to their involvement in development initiatives, Ostrom *et al.* (1993) and Mansuri and Rao (2004) suggest that the collective benefits of participation must be stressed at the very inception of a project. The ambiguities that came about in the Botswana CBNRM implementation arose because officers did not have proper guiding tools to facilitate the programme at the beginning. This had a negative impact on the performance of the community organizations.

To overcome resource constraints within the Government, strategic partnerships should have been forged with local NGOs. However, this was not feasible because, as Steiner and Rihoy (1995:18) noted, six years after initiation

of CBNRM projects in Botswana, the “initial assumption that local NGOs could play a role as intermediaries in the institutional development processes within local communities proved immature”. Compared to Namibia, where NGOs were primary implementers of the CBNRM programme (Steiner and Rihoy, 1995; Gujadhur, 2000), Botswana had few NGOs with the requisite capacity and experience (Arntzen *et al.*, 2003). Government employees therefore shouldered the extension and implementation efforts, which compounded already existing resources constraints. If detailed feasibility studies had been undertaken prior to the implementation of CBNRM, the Government would have been in a better position to plan a pragmatic approach to offset the challenges that were later encountered. Such studies could have highlighted the various types of heterogeneity that existed within communities and how these could be harnessed and managed to ensure that they worked for the programme. Mansuri and Rao (2004) stressed that the success of a community-based project may depend on how such heterogeneity is managed, and the strategies selected for bringing communities together. Lack of feasibility studies deprived the CBNRM implementation of such vital strategies, which could have informed the mobilization on how best to manage differences. The Government’s hasty implementation of CBNRM without preliminary studies clearly indicates that, while the Government was willing to introduce the programme, it was not ready to do so.

6.4. Perceived benefits and their distribution

If community-based initiatives in management and utilisation of natural resources are to be effective, they need to address immediate needs at the village level. In practice, these needs have ranged from poverty alleviation, empowerment, and cultural satisfaction to security of tenure and proprietorship. In meeting the immediate needs of local communities, the programme provides incentives that link conservation of the resources with basic survival (Dikobe and Thakadu, 1997). A case in point was the use of wildlife quotas to address the need for cash income in most communities that participated in the CBNRM programme (Arntzen *et al.*, 2003). This provided an incentive to communities to conserve the species for future hunting seasons. The presence of elephants in certain communities increased the revenues accruing to those communities from the sale of quota (Arntzen *et al.*, 2003). According to popular perception in communities, wildlife is a nuisance and a liability that constrains rural production, and threatens crops, livestock and the local population (Adams and McShane, 1992; Winer, 1993, 1995). CBNRM is attempting to change this perception by ensuring that the communities living with wildlife also benefit from enhanced biodiversity.

Distribution of benefits is a crucial component of CBNRM as it can prompt a change in attitudes (Baland and Platteau,

1996; Winer, 1996; Rozemeijer and van der Jagt, 2000; Arntzen *et al.*, 2003). While it is appreciated that benefits may differ in type and mode of distribution, financial dividends that trickle down to household level are significantly meaningful and can catalyse changes in people’s attitude towards conservation (Winer, 1996; Mbaiwa, 2004a, 2004b; Rozemeijer and Jansen, 2004). A case in point is the Sankuyo and Kanyurira community, where each household was given cash dividends and these had lasting effects (Murphree, 1993; Mbaiwa, 2002). As benefits were trickling down to the individual or household level, people were able to link their survival directly to the presence of wildlife. Painter (1995) pointed out that if benefits were distributed broadly, this would build a strong constituency for conservation and sustainable use of wild resources. Poor distribution of benefits could threaten the sustainability of CBNRM (Mbaiwa, 2004). Plans for the distribution of benefits should be developed to guide the process (Rozemeijer and Jansen, 2004), a condition found lacking in community organizations by Arntzen *et al.* (2003).

Communities being aware of project benefits also affects the pace and success of CBNRM implementation. Ostrom *et al.* (1993) cautioned that sustainability can be assured in projects if beneficiaries are aware of its potential benefits. When beneficiaries perceive economic rewards of venturing into a project, they show eagerness. Murphree (1993) noted that there is a direct correlation between the financial value of a common property resource and the degree of success of a project to conserve it. The greater the value, the greater the chance of success. Since the mainstay of Ngamiland’s economy is tourism — which is mostly based on wildlife — communities were aware of the potential benefits of the wildlife resource, and were more eager to implement CBNRM quickly, compared to communities in western Botswana. Analysis indicates that communities in western Botswana had generated less revenue than communities in northern Botswana, where wild resources are comparatively more abundant and diverse (Arntzen *et al.*, 2003). Arntzen *et al.* (2003) also note that the expectations on joint ventures in wildlife-based enterprises as presented in the Government’s guidelines were unrealistic for communities in western Botswana due to resource scarcity.

6.5. Socio-economic and cultural stratification

The implementation of CBNRM in Botswana took place in a multi-ethnic setting among tribes that pursue different livelihoods and use resources differently (Rozemeijer and van der Jagt, 2000). Most CBNRM projects lumped together communities that differed in ethnic background, historical origin, geographic location, inter-ethnic/tribal allegiance, socio-economic status and literacy level. This method gave rise to heterogeneity and complex user characteristics. Baland and Platteau (1996) classify such heterogeneity into three categories: endowment, interest and

culture. Machel (1997) and Thakadu (1999) caution that the failure to address diversity within communities has in some localities made people suspicious, delayed progress and undermined participation. This has been the case with the projects in communities such as the Okavango Community Trust, the Okavango Jakotsha Community Trust, and the Okavango Kopano Mokoro Community Trust areas, which are all multi-village organizations, made up of a minimum of five villages each. However, the adverse impact of ethnic heterogeneity can be mitigated through a broadly based participatory approach, as proposed earlier in this section.

Communities selected to be part of the CBNRM project were grouped together based on locational proximity, and heterogeneous communities were treated as one. Ideally, communities are not homogeneous entities (Machel, 1997; Taylor, 1998), as there is stratification into subgroups with diverse socio-economic interests (Bromley and Cernea, 1989; Metcalfe, 1996) within and between communities. Such subgroups can have a major impact on the pace of implementation. The more homogeneous a community is in significant socio-economic characteristics, the easier it is for such a community to agree on management issues. More diverse communities often take longer to reach consensus, tend to develop weak social cohesion and leadership, and may lack community spirit (Bromley and Cernea, 1989; van der Jagt *et al.*, 2000). This is why single-village CBNRM project areas tend to do better than multi-village groups involving a larger number of people from different villages. A number of studies have reached similar conclusions: that the smaller the group, the greater the chances of success in co-management of common pool resources (Baland and Platteau, 1996; Wade, 1988 cited in Agrawal, 2001; Agrawal and Gibson, 1999). The Department of Wildlife and National Parks (DWNP, 2000) reported that the key problem among community block areas constructed for CBNRM was a lack of cohesion between the villages. Baland and Platteau (1996) have noted that heterogeneity of interest and culture can be highly detrimental to collective decision-making. Similarly, the most predominant adverse influence on the Ngamiland community organization has been cultural heterogeneity. This effect has surfaced in the block of the Okavango Jakotsha Community Trust, and even in the single-village project area of Xai Xai. Other forms of heterogeneity also surfaced with varying degrees of impact across the community organizations in the programme, a condition noted by Ostrom (2001). However, it should be mentioned here that the three forms are inter-related and their effects interlinked.

As mentioned above, even single-village CBNRM project areas are prone to conflict. This is due to the presence of different ethnic groups, as in the village of Xai Xai, a single-village CBNRM area. The Department of Wildlife and National Parks (DWNP, 2000) reported ethnic friction between the *BaSarwa* (San) and the *BaHerero* found in the village. HaBarad *et al.* (1995) noted that where dominance

by one group is the case, participation is often severely limited, as those who believe their views are not welcome simply withdraw to avoid the ordeal of being dominated, ignored or put at risk of retaliation. This type of scenario prevailed with regard to the *BaSarwa* ethnic group in Xai Xai Village, but the complexity of these problems increases in multi-village areas.

Ethnic friction has rocked the communities in the Okavango Jakotsha Community Trust area since the inception of the project, and has retarded progress even to the present. The community consists of several villages with diverse ethnic groups of shifting origin, history and background. Etsha villages comprise mainly *HaMbukushu* refugees, who came from Angola and Namibia in the 1970s and became naturalized citizens in recent times, and the *BaSarwa* communities who have a history of nomadism (GOB/MLGLH, 1995). Further investigations were recommended by consultants to resolve potential ethnic frictions, but nothing was done prior to implementation of CBNRM. More often than not, this has resulted in delays in progress, as conflicts arising from ethnic affiliation creep in during implementation (DWNP, 2000). Thorough socio-economic research conducted prior to implementation to inform the programme in associated communities, such as those in the Ngwaa Khobee Xeya Trust area (Rozemeijer and van der Jagt, 2000), could have helped to foresee the challenges and develop strategies to overcome them.

In communities in the Ngwaa Khobee Xeya Trust area and in Xai Xai Village, the project adopted a family structure approach to decision-making when problems of ethnic friction were anticipated, such as the ones discussed above. This approach has worked well, perhaps because it facilitates broader community input into decision-making through audience segmentation (Rozemeijer and van der Jagt, 2000). This example shows that it is necessary to consider the most appropriate structure that can be employed in decision-making, which takes cognisance of existing internal stratification within a community.

A community's literacy level also plays a role in determining CBNRM pace. It is expected that communities with lower levels of literacy would need more time to assimilate, adopt and/or adapt to new policies and concepts. Taylor (2001) indicated that the Mababe community delayed in implementing CBNRM (See Table 1), as older illiterate members of the community wanted the wildlife quota to be used entirely for subsistence while younger literate members pushed for commercializing the quota through joint ventures. The literate members won, as they were more vocal in articulating their views and positions to the mobilizing teams and therefore more influential in decision-making (Taylor, 2001). In working with communities, it is important to identify the existing social groupings and to work with all of them to ensure community solidarity (Matlakala, 2004). This calls for audience segmentation as a strategy towards capturing the views of all users so as to avoid projects being dominated by any single group or class.

7. Conclusion

The implementation of the CBNRM programme demonstrates that if communities are given proper tools and incentives to manage natural resources, they can organize themselves effectively and take appropriate conservation measures. Experience with the CBNRM programme has shown that communities developed positive attitudes to resource conservation, especially when they received benefits that contributed positively to their quality of life and linkages were established between benefits and the natural resource base. Communities which have implemented CBNRM programmes have spontaneously responded to the need to interact sustainably with natural resources in a way that also ensures their own well-being. Future CBNRM projects should build on experience and lessons learned with a view to facilitating enhanced positive attitudes towards resources conservation. However, the mobilization phase should endeavour to broker widespread support and engage the commitment of all community members.

On the basis of the above discussion of lessons learned from CBNRM implementation in Ngamiland, it is noted that while maintaining the *kgotla* meeting format as a platform for mobilizing communities, the consultative base should be broadened by exploring other fora through which communities could participate effectively to maximize their contribution. Broadening the consultative platform would facilitate identification of various user groups and strata within communities, and it could target these for consultations. In order to achieve this, CBNRM implementing agencies should deploy dedicated extension workers within participating communities to foster better understanding, build relationships, and identify different user groups. The choice of implementation officers who already bear important responsibilities outside the CBNRM programme will only compromise project success, as the selected personnel would not have enough time.

CBNRM implementation should also be informed and guided by preliminary studies. Detailed feasibility studies addressing legal, political, institutional, economic, socio-economic and cultural issues should precede CBNRM implementation. The studies should be able to advise on approaches to addressing socio-economic, cultural and political realities within participating communities. They could also inform mobilization approaches that would explore the most appropriate structures to be employed in decision-making, taking cognisance of the existing stratification within a community. The studies should also point out approaches to the distribution of benefits that will significantly foster the enhancement of conservation attitudes and contribute to the sustainability of the CBNRM programme.

CBNRM projects should aim, from the start, to facilitate the development of enterprises based on local mainstay natural resources, rather than encouraging types of enterprises not connected with the aspirations of the community. The CBNRM programme in Botswana has encouraged

wildlife-based tourism enterprises, even in cases where returns were not considerable and knowledge scant. However, in cases where related benefits were fully known by the community, it was comparatively easier to engage support for and buy-in into the ventures. This is because concepts are easy to understand and assimilate from practice. Focus on locally available natural resources with known economic importance will help instil conservation attitudes in participating communities and it also ensures a broadening base towards natural resources other than wildlife.

It is anticipated that taking these steps will create an enabling environment for effective and broad-based community participation and hence contribute to natural resources conservation as intended through the CBNRM framework.

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