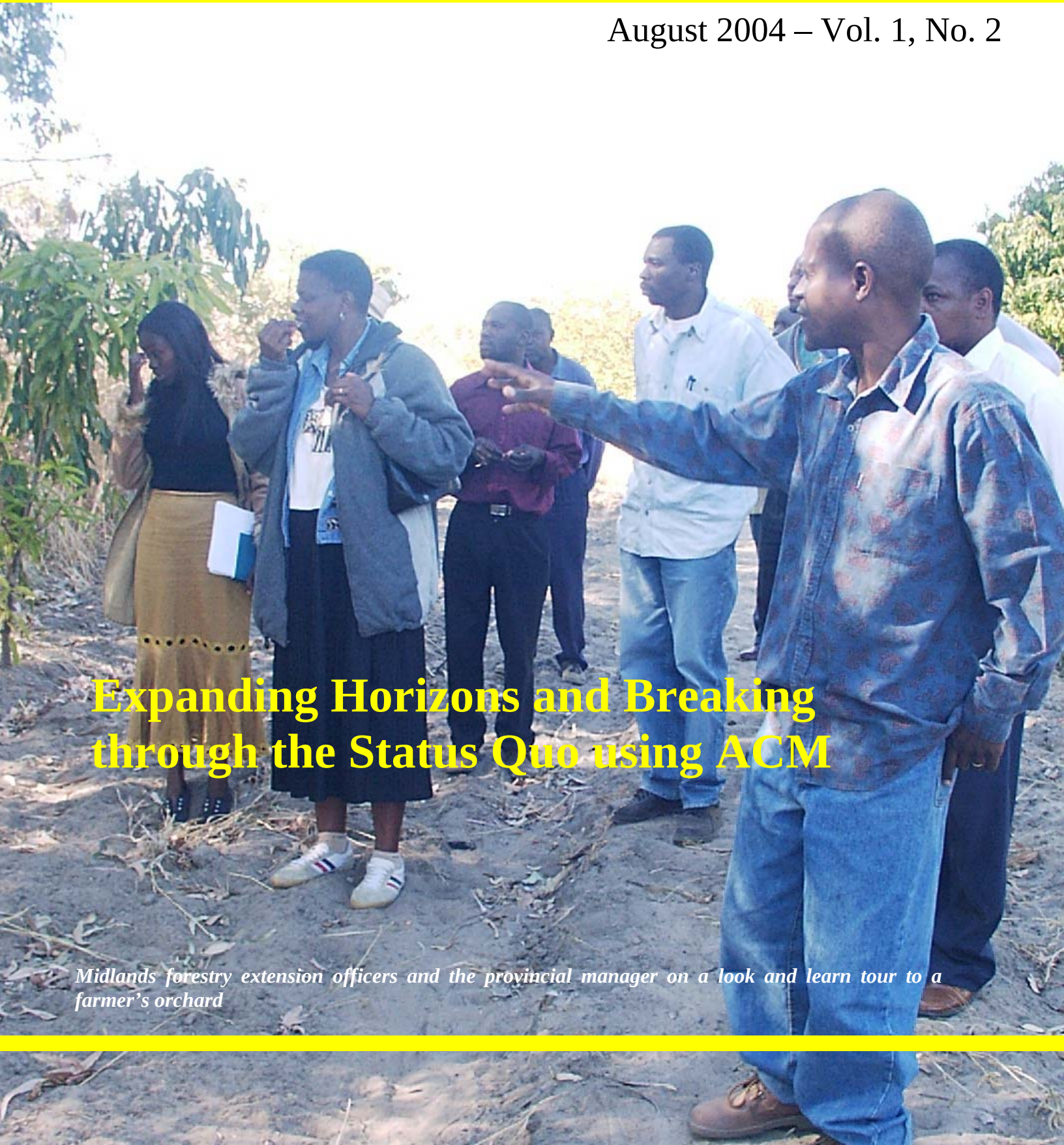
ACM Zim NEWS

August 2004 – Vol. 1, No. 2



Expanding Horizons and Breaking through the Status Quo using ACM

Midlands forestry extension officers and the provincial manager on a look and learn tour to a farmer's orchard

Table of Contents

Abbreviations 2
1.0 From the editors..... 2
2.0 Promoting the participation of marginalized groups in natural resource management in Bindura..... 4
3.0 Creation of Platforms for Social Learning Continues in Gokwe..... 4
3.1 Introduction 4
3.2 The pre-grass cutting workshop 4
3.3 Look and learn tour 5
3.4 Fostering collaboration among district level stakeholders 5
3.5 Sharing the ACM concept with the rest of the FEOs in Midlands Province 5
4.0 Reaching New Heights in Gokwe Through ACM 6
4.1 Communities demand downward accountability by resource management committees 6
4.2 Carpenters seek legal recognition around the state forest 6
5.0 Major Event: The Masvingo ACM Refresher Course 7
5.1 Introduction 7
5.2 Objectives of the workshop..... 8
5.3 The training approach 8
6.0 Taking ACM to the Forestry College 9
7.0 Quotable Quotes..... 9
8.0 News..... 9

Abbreviations

ACM:	Adaptive Collaborative Management
CAMPFIRE:	Communal Areas Management Program for Indigenous Resources
CIFOR:	Center for International Forestry Research
DA:	District Administrator
FC:	Forestry Commission
FEO:	Forestry Extension Officer
FTLRP:	Fast Track Land Reform Program
LTC:	Lutope Training Centre
PFEM:	Provincial Forest Extension Manager
RDC:	Rural District Council
RMC:	Resource Management Committee
ZCF:	Zimbabwe College of Forestry

1.0 From the editors[1]



Dear Readers

As we promised in the first issue of the ACM newsletter (Feb 2004, Vol 1, No.1), this volume will focus on experiences and challenges that forestry extension officers (FEOs) in Zimbabwe have faced in using the Adaptive Collaborative Management (ACM) approach in their respective districts. ACM is a learning and collaboration based approach that is characterised by deliberate efforts among collaborating groups to *communicate, negotiate and seek out opportunities to learn together about the impacts of their actions*. From such efforts they then improve the benefits they get from their forests while at the same time ensuring the sustenance of the forest.

The FEOs in the selected districts are at different stages of implementing the ACM approach and it is therefore important for them to share their experiences and learn from each other. It is however important to take note of the fact that the FEOs work in different contexts and things that may seem to work in one place may not work in another. Experiences and lessons learnt by others should not be taken as prescriptions or cookbooks in using the ACM approach.

About the articles

The articles in this volume focus on two central issues (a) up-scaling the ACM approach and (b) dealing with some challenges in implementing the ACM approach. The first article from Bindura shows that, to enhance effective participation of all stakeholders requires

[1] The editors of this newsletter are: Ms T. Mutimukuru and Mr. W. Kozanayi. Both of them work for the Center for International Forestry Research [CIFOR], Regional Office for Eastern and Southern Africa, Harare, Zimbabwe.

investment in time by the extension officers: time to discuss, debate and understand each stakeholder's role. Ensuring that all stakeholders critically reflect on their level of participation in forestry issues is a precursor to taking the stakeholders on board. The Bindura case shows how careful and possibly protracted facilitation resulted in iconic levels of enthusiasm in local forestry issues by women who previously had remained at the periphery of forestry initiatives. It would be interesting to follow this case in the next issues to see if the participation by women and youth is going or not going to add value to the management of natural resources.

Articles from Gokwe are not just highlighting the major activities that have taken place there, but also bring out a number of lessons about the ACM approach. Consistent facilitation and interaction with communities can yield positive results. "Trust and confidence builds over time"- to borrow the words of Mr. I. Mutasa, the Mafungautsi resource-sharing program coordinator. Monitoring does not only entail the ecological facet, it can be extended to include institutional monitoring. Effective institutional monitoring can guarantee financial accountability by all office bearers to their respective constituents. For learning to take place among stakeholders, platforms should be created for the stakeholders to share their experiences. Look and learn tours are an example of platforms that can be used to make stakeholders cross-pollinate their experiences and insights about forest issues

The Gokwe team is also bringing out the fact that ACM, as a value adding approach, can be tried along with other approaches. The Gokwe team is tinkering with the idea of melding the ACM approach with the Communal Areas Management Program for Indigenous Resources (CAMPFIRE) in a setting that is completely different and far away from the state forest. The District level multi-stakeholders workshop in Gokwe clearly shows that collaboration with other stakeholders, and creation of feed back mechanisms is important for all stakeholders as they become well informed about what is happening. Once stakeholders are aware of what is taking place, they will reflect on their own actions and re-strategise their approach if need be.

The article by Mrs Gombe shows the enthusiasm by the Zimbabwe Forestry College (ZFC) to incorporate the ACM approach in their curriculum. If this happens, this will be a big step by the FC to equip the graduates with the ACM approach at an early stage rather than following them up when they are in the field, for as usual, it is *difficult to teach an old dog new tricks!* (Source unknown)

Thank you

We would like to thank the authors of articles in this newsletter for their contributions. A volley of thanks goes to the readers of this newsletter who commented on the first edition. We greatly value your comments, as these are important in improving the quality of this newsletter. We urge you to keep on forwarding your comments to us in ways that are convenient to you such as telephones, emails, letters, or verbal discussions.

Future editions

In future editions of this newsletter, we hope to also include some articles from resource users themselves to get their perceptions on how things are unfolding after the introduction of the ACM approach. It is our belief that the resource users also have important contributions to make and that we can also learn from them, hence the need to accord them opportunities to also share their views with everyone who has forests at heart. Like the Shona proverb that says,*"Chara chimwe hachitswanyi inda"'* literally translated meaning, one thumb does not kill lice, to effectively and successfully do any piece of work, collaboration with others is essential. We also urge you to submit articles about your work to keep us abreast with your progress.

For the sake of avoiding being Forestry fundamentalists, we would like to encourage you to contribute articles on the ripple effects of the ACM approach that you have facilitated on other non-forest activities such as agriculture. It is also our ultimate vision that the ACM newsletter reaches, informs, influences and stimulates discussions about the ACM approach to a much wider audience.

And finally, this being the second and last edition for the year, we would like to take this opportunity to wish you all a happy Christmas and a prosperous new 2005! The next edition will be out in February 2005 and the theme will be announced in due course.

Happy reading!

2.0 Promoting the participation of marginalized groups in natural resource management in Bindura

By Wellington Kamuruko, FEO for Bindura

Background
In Bindura, the FC is mainly involved in assisting farmers who want to establish tree woodlots and raising awareness on sound methods of managing forest resources. Since the inception of the ACM approach, the FEO for Bindura has been facilitating collaboration with all stakeholders in forestry at different levels. The FC's initiatives are directed in communal areas. With the advent of the fast track land reform program (FTLRP), more farmers have been resettled in the District and the FC has a mammoth task to work with the newly resettled farmers to manage available woodland resources. Before the FTLRP, about 60% of Bindura was commercial farms.

Gender stigmatisation in natural resource management
In many developmental workshops in rural areas of Zimbabwe, gender stigmatisation poses the greatest threat to project identification, implementation and monitoring. Male dominated workshops usually eclipse the wishes and aspirations of the youth and women, leaving them as mere rubber stamps of men's vision and proposals.

In Bindura district, community workshops and meetings resulted in instinctive division of labour/ roles in the running of the workshops. Men are usually tasked with participating in the workshops, while women and youths are relegated to meal preparation and other menial logistics. Consequently, the men are the ones, who are empowered yet the youths and women are the major implementers of projects.

The break through
The facilitation of the ACM approach brought astounding changes to this status quo. After being introduced to the ACM approach, the FEO spent considerable time explaining that everyone, men, women and the youth are important stakeholders who have something to contribute to the management of their resource and that it was important to learn from each other so as to improve and adapt their management strategies. Nowadays, women and youths also participate fully in the workshops and all stakeholders have also accepted it. Women are now opting for bread and drinks instead of losing out at community workshops while preparing food for the men.

Reflection
ACM allows open cross-pollination of ideas since every stakeholder is given an equal and fair opportunity to participate in any developmental issue. This is a good recipe for sustainable projects because they address the needs of all people in the community

3.0 Creation of Platforms for Social Learning Continues in Gokwe

By Mkhululi Ngwenya, Provincial Forest Extension Manager [PFEM], Midlands Province

3.1 Introduction

In the second phase of the ACM project in Mafungautsi, the main activities revolved around the creation of social learning platforms where stakeholders shared information. These activities included a look and learn tour, a pre-grass cutting workshop, a district stakeholder collaborative meeting and the sharing of the ACM approach with the rest of the FEOs in Midlands Province. These activities are described separately below.

3.2 The pre-grass cutting workshop



Mr. I. Mutasa, (the Resource Sharing project coordinator) facilitating a session during the pre-grass cutting workshop.

The pre-grass cutting workshop, which has now become a yearly event, was held at Lutope Training Center (LTC) in Mafungautsi in April this year. The main objective of the workshop was to review the grass cutting process in the last season and to map out strategies for the current

grass harvesting process The workshop was attended by members of the Resource Management Committees (RMCs) involved in grass cutting, the Provincial Forestry Extension Manager (PFEM) for the Midlands Province, the Center for International Forestry Research's (CIFOR) ACM team [comprising of the team leader and two researchers], two local Forestry Commission Officers and Rural District Council (RDC) officers and various government departments. The main lessons shared during the workshop included the sustainable harvesting of thatch grass where participants agreed that grass should only be harvested when all the seed has been allowed to fall to the ground to ensure continued availability of the resource. The workshop participants also managed to come up with an agreement on the prices for the grass to be harvested during the coming grass season.

3.3 Look and learn tour

To facilitate learning and adaptation by local resource users from their counterparts with projects similar to theirs, an intra-district tour was done. The tour team comprised the two local FEOs, the CAMPFIRE coordinator under the RDC and 10 community members from 4 RMCs around the forest. The main objective of the tour was to facilitate stakeholders to share experiences in their projects and for the transfer of information and skills between the touring team and the hosts. The main issues discussed during the tour included (a) Beekeeping projects – there was a lengthy discussion on this issue as the hosts showed keen interest on these projects, (b) the issue of incentives and allowances paid to CAMPFIRE members and (c) the management of fish resources by the CAMPFIRE committee in the area visited. Generally, there was balanced transfer of information between the visiting and hosting teams and the hosting team expressed interest to visit the Mafungautsi Forest.

3.4 Fostering collaboration among district level stakeholders

To encourage cooperation among the district level stakeholders and also to allow the district team to sample the training facilities in the forest, a district collaborative meeting was held at LTC in Mafungautsi Forest. The meeting was attended by 27 heads of departments in Gokwe South District (including the FEOs), the District Administrator (DA) and the Council Chairman. This was the second time a meeting of this kind has been held and it was interesting to note that the attendance was much higher than that of the first meeting, that was attended by only five departmental heads. The local Forestry Commission Extension Officers attributed this to the general interest created by the project and the use of the DA to convene the meetings, as previously they had called for the meetings themselves. One lesson learned from this is that it is important to use influential members like the DA or Members of Parliament to convene the meetings. At the meeting, the FEO updated the district stakeholders on the progress with the ACM project, they also highlighted the problems and challenges they faced and the district level stakeholders made suggestions on how the FEOs could solve some of their problems. The district heads were also encouraged to use the training centre facility for their meetings and trainings.

3.5 Sharing the ACM concept with the rest of the FEOs in Midlands Province



The PFEM and FEOs from Midlands Province discussing grass harvesting during a field tour in Machije vlei, Mafungautsi

To introduce all the other officers in the midlands province to the ACM approach, a meeting was held at LTC in Mafungautsi Forest in July. Two ACM team members were asked to make a presentation on the concept of ACM and this was followed by presentation by the local FEOs in Mafungautsi who presented papers on their experience so far in implementing the ACM approach. This created interest among the officers on the ACM approach and the FEOs indicated that they would like to try out the ACM approach in their respective districts.

4.0 Reaching New Heights in Gokwe Through ACM

Using the ACM approach has resulted in two remarkable changes in the Mafungautsi resource-sharing project. Firstly, communities have taken an active role in monitoring the RMC work and secondly, some resource users have begun to demand legal recognition in accessing the timber resource in the forest. These two cases are described in detail in the next sections.

4.1 Communities demand downward accountability by resource management committees

By Isaiah Mutasa, Resource Sharing Project Coordinator, Mafungautsi Forest

Introduction

Over the past years, the emphasis of both the FC and the RMCs has been on ecological monitoring in Mafungautsi forest. RMCs were formed primarily to serve as a link between the user communities that reside at the periphery of the state forest and the FC, a government arm that is responsible for the management of forests in the country. Communities also tasked the RMCs with the responsibility to monitor the harvesting trends of resources. This ecological monitoring exercise has been going on fairly well since 1996 when the Resource sharing program was initiated.

Spending quality time with communities after the ACM approach

The introduction of the ACM approach has seen the FEO spending more and quality time with communities, discussing issues that concern the forest. This has been important in building trust among stakeholders. Because of the amount of time spent with them by the FEO, local communities have now stopped taking him as a visitor and began opening up and engaging in serious discussions on the management of their forest resource. During these discussions, many issues were clarified and misconceptions on the project were cleared. One useful exercise involved going through the constitution with the various local stakeholders as the failure to understand the roles of the RMCs was one of the major causes of conflicts between the traditional authority (traditional leaders and councillors) and the RMCs. At one such meeting in Chemwiro Masawi RMC where a new committee was about to be elected, the councillor commented that he was so happy that he now understood how the RMC was supposed to work and he went on to say that, '*manje vanhu vatichasarudza iye zvino tichavagadza papfumo remoto nekuti takuziva basa ravo*' – literally translated 'now that we know the role of the RMC, the people we will elect next [as RMC office bearers] will be sitting on a burning spear as we will closely monitor their work.' In this case, the local stakeholders show the willingness to monitor the performance of their RMCs now that they understood the role they are supposed to play.

The communities in Chemwiro Masawi RMC have since then started monitoring the operations of their RMC. They are doing this to ensure that there is accountability by the elected bodies to the constituency that elected them. In the case of Gwehava and Chemwiro RMCs, the communities have requested the RMCs to make quarterly progress reports, instead of the two mandatory general meetings stipulated in the constitution. This attempt to monitor the activities of institutions comes in the wake of alleged rampant abuse of community funds by some RMC members.

Reflection

This extension of the monitoring exercise to cover local institutions is very pleasing, as it will result in accountability and transparency.

4.2 Carpenters seek legal recognition around the state forest

By I. Mutasa, Resource Sharing Project Coordinator, Mafungautsi Forest

Mukwa, teak and other hardwood species are protected species which communities around Mafungautsi cannot harvest under the resource-sharing program. Harvesting is only possible if a farmer has been given a permit/license. The license is usually given to bidders through a tender system. In the past the tender has been given to big companies from outside the immediate communities. Accessing timber around the forest by local communities has continued to be an illegal act even under the resource-sharing project. However, this has been on an increase and poses a threat to the timber species in the forest. After the ACM approach, the FC organised a look and learn tour to Nyagadza Carpentry project in Chipinge in February this year (for more details, see article by M. Ngwenya in this newsletter). This trip has

been an eye opener on the type of system that can be put in place for managing and monitoring the harvesting of timber, not only to the FC but also the community members who went on the tour.

After the Nyagadza trip, some carpenters living around the state forest requested that they be given permission to harvest the hard wood timber which is much more valuable than the grass, mushroom and firewood resources which the communities are allowed to harvest under the resource sharing program.

A preliminary survey has been carried out by the FC to determine the number of carpenters, their skills, and the tools they have. This has been done by the local FC with a view to request the FC management at head office to consider granting harvesting authority to the carpenters. Close monitoring of harvested timber will be done to ensure that there is no over harvesting of the precious resource.

Communities have welcomed the initiative by the FC as they think that the carpenters will greatly better their lives if they are allowed to access the high value timber resources. The community also believes that there are abundant carpentry skills among the local communities. If all goes well, this year samples of the wood artefacts made by the local communities will be taken for display at the Provincial Agricultural show in Gweru.

4.3 Taking ACM beyond the state forest

By Nyasha Poto Joe, FEO Gokwe South District

One of the most promising emerging strategies that the FC has undertaken of late is to promote sustainable forest management policies and programmes that enable the active involvement of local communities in public natural resource use and protection.

Although some forests do disappear through clear felling or devastating fires, most forest ecosystems instead suffer from a process of degradation. This occurs through a series of human interventions and natural events that result from lack of management controls. Mafungautsi resource sharing project is one success story in community based natural resource management. The 82 000 ha gazetted forest which acts as a catchment area for rivers that drain into the Zambezi river (a source of hydro electricity) has seen a marked decline in the rate of natural resource degradation since the onset of the resource sharing initiative. The formation of the RMCs by communities around the state forest complements well the idea of community natural resource management. Over the past 5 years the FC has also been implementing the ACM approach in the resource-sharing program.

The FC in Gokwe South is deliberately trying to extend this concept of RMCs to areas outside the state forest. The ACM approach will also be tried out in the new site to test it in different contexts. This deliberate effort is set to complement existing initiatives in the district like the CAMPFIRE program. The FC in collaboration with relevant government departments is currently working with communities in trying to diversify the CAMPFIRE concept from solely looking at fauna resources and incorporate flora resources.

This approach will be tried in the Jahana area in Gokwe South District. Jahana ward is richly endowed with thatch grass and wildlife, mainly zebras. The CAMPFIRE program in the area is only centred on game, leaving outsiders from far off places coming to harvest the valuable thatch grass free of charge. The thatch grass is not covered under the CAMPFIRE program. Thus if the initiative to meld the CAMPFIRE and resource sharing programs is implemented, it will see more resources being covered. The Jahana community will therefore benefit from a wider revenue base. Already a participatory rural appraisal was done in the community, to try to tease out key issues from all the stakeholders. The local community, the FC, and officers from the RDC attended this meeting.

5.0 Major Event: The Masvingo ACM Refresher Course

By W. Kozanayi and N. Nemarundwe

5.1 Introduction

Nineteen participants, including 4 CIFOR researchers, the Acting Operations Manager, the Principal for the Forestry College of Zimbabwe, 5 PFEMs and 8 FEOs attended the Masvingo ACM training workshop.

This workshop was organized following requests from the PFEMs and FC management at head

office during the ACM planning meeting held on the 11th of March 2004. The need for this workshop arose from the fact that not all PFEMs from the six provinces participating in the ACM up-scaling initiatives participated in earlier the ACM training workshop for FEOs held at Kadoma in October 2003. Thus the workshop was meant to be an "eye opener" for those PFEMS who did not participate in the Kadoma training workshop. For those officers and PFEMS who attended the Kadoma and previous workshops, this particular workshop was meant to serve as an opportunity to share experiences so far with the ACM approach. The workshop was facilitated by CIFOR but drew heavily on the experiences of FEOs who participated in the training workshop held in October 2003. The workshop was part of the ongoing collaborative work between CIFOR and the FC. The workshop was held on the 28th and 29th of June 2004 at the Inn on Great Zimbabwe in Masvingo, Zimbabwe.

5.2 Objectives of the workshop

The workshop objectives were as follows:

1.) To introduce the ACM approach to the PFEMS and some FEOs from the 6 ACM up-scaling districts who did not participate in earlier training
2.) To act as a refresher course for the FEOs and PFEMs who have already been exposed to the ACM approach.
3.) To give an opportunity to FEOs who have received training in the ACM approach and have already started to operationalise the concept to share, reflect and learn from field experiences with other participants.

For a detailed workshop report, please contact

Dr. N. Nemarundwe
CIFOR regional Office for Eastern and Southern Africa
73, Harare Drive
Mount Pleasant, Harare, Zimbabwe
e-mail: n.nemarundwe@cgiar.org

5.3 The training approach

The training was based on the concept of peer learning, where peers who have been exposed to the ACM approach were accorded the opportunity to spearhead learning processes for those participants who have not been exposed to the ACM approach. Real life examples and experiences were shared by the participants thereby making the learning process not only enjoyable but also relevant.

The workshop started off with formal presentations by the CIFOR team, explaining the main steps and features of the ACM approach. A 15minutes long ACM video by the Zimbabwe ACM team was shown after the formal presentation to reinforce the presentations by the CIFOR team. After the presentation and video, participants discussed their experiences with facilitating the different steps of the ACM approach. FEOs who have already started using the ACM approach in the field played a key role in the workshop by sharing with other participants, their experiences with the ACM approach.



Workshop participants at a productive farmer's house during an excursion at the Masvingo training workshop

A field visit planned for the second day whereby participants got first hand experience in following some of the ACM steps was successful and became the main highlight of the workshop. The CIFOR team also got an opportunity to learn from the FEOs who are implementing the ACM approach especially with regards to how the approach works in different settings/contexts. Sharing of experiences was important in enhancing social learning among the participants.

6.0 Taking ACM to the Forestry College

By Joyce Gombe[2], principal, Forestry College of Zimbabwe

Zimbabwe College of Forestry (ZCF) offers a two-year diploma and a one-year certificate training in forestry. The college is situated at Christmas Pass outside of the city of Mutare in the Eastern part of the country. Realising that some of our students will need to know and apply the ACM concept when they leave college, the college resolved to train its students in this concept. To achieve this we intend to invite guest lecturers from CIFOR to train students on ACM. We also intend to accord them some field visits where they can apply the concept as part of the training.

Graduates from ZCF are mostly employed by commercial timber companies, rural development agencies, research institutions and the government as extension officers. For those that will become extension agents, gaining knowledge on the ACM approach is very vital. Communities are dynamic and complex, and as such knowledge of ACM is required to achieve harmony and better working relations with them. We believe that this concept will also apply to other work situations, as the graduates will have appreciated the need for adaptation at work and the importance of collaboration with others to achieve effective management of resources.

Our wish is to equip the group that is graduating at the end of November 2004, with the ACM approach.

7.0 Quotable Quotes

- Not everything that counts can be counted and not everything that can be counted, counts.

If you have any inspiring quote, please send it to us so that we can share it with all our readers. Remember we all need to be inspired.

[2]*Mrs Gombe attended a number of ACM workshops when she was a PFEM and is still actively involved in the implementation of the ACM approach in the six learning centres, as she is a member of the ACM monitoring team.*

8.0 News

1. A regional training course in ACM is pencilled in for the 6th -15th of December 2004. A total of about 20 participants will be trained. Participants will be drawn from Zimbabwe and a number of countries in Southern Africa. The venue for the course will be LTC in Mafungautsi. Soon advertisements for the course will be circulated, and please help us by passing the message to those you think are in need of this kind of training.

2. Mrs Gombe, the PFEM for Manicaland province has been appointed the Principal for the Forestry College of Zimbabwe. The college is bound to scale great heights in her capable hands. We wish her the best in her new post.

3. Mr Kamuruko, the FEO for Bindura has been transferred. He is now the FEO for Harare.

4. Mr Vurayai, the FEO for Kariba has been transferred to Zvimba. Mr Kamponje is now the new FEO for Kariba

5. Mr Makarimai , the FEO for Chipinge and Mr Mlilo, the FEO for Masvingo did not attend the training workshop in Masvingo because they were not feeling well. We wish them a speedy recovery.

6 The monitoring team is planning to conduct their second trip to visit the 6 learning centres at the beginning of September 2004.

7. CIFOR will be holding a ten-year anniversary celebration on the 23rd of September this year, in Harare, Zimbabwe.

For the news section, we would be also delighted to have news on the social front from you, on birthdays, marriages, deaths and appointments. We did not receive any letters to the editor and we do hope that we will get some contributions on this section in the next Issue in February 2005.

Centre for International Forestry Research (CIFOR)

Regional Office for Eastern and Southern Africa

73 Harare Drive, Mount Pleasant
Harare, Zimbabwe
Tel: +263 4 369655/6
Fax: +263 4 369657
E-mail: cifor-zw@cgair.org

Acknowledgements
This document is based on various internal and published documents of the Adaptive Collaborative Management (ACM) Project. For further information, visit our website http///www.cifor.cgiar.org or contact the Zimbabwe ACM team on e-mail: cifor-zw@cgair.org