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Evaluating the Potential Risks and Rewards in the Implementation of a REDD+ Policy in Uganda

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ABSTRACT

In this thesis, I analyze the potential for a REDD+ program to succeed in Uganda at this time, and I explore why this may or may not be possible. REDD+, which stands for Reducing Deforestation and Forest Degradation, aims to enhance carbon stocks while also conserving and sustainably managing forests. In doing so, REDD+ not only works to offset carbon emission levels and conserve forests and forest biodiversity, but also provides financial benefits to REDD+ participant countries, thus improving the livelihoods of local people living adjacent to forests. This program is widely regarded as the most effective and least risky solution to deforestation and forest degradation in developing countries, however, I argue that this may not be the case. Government documents reveal a rather simplistic and idealistic view of the policy, its implementation process, and desired outcomes, while specific case studies in countries outside of Uganda in which the REDD+ program has been implemented or is in the process of being implemented reveal unaddressed concerns with the mechanism itself and within the surrounding communities. Based on my research, I believe that if the recommendations that I propose are not included in the REDD+ preparation and implementation phases, the REDD+ mechanism is not only predestined to fail, but also to harm the most at-risk stakeholders that it is meant to benefit.

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List of Acronyms and Abbreviations

AD - avoided deforestation
ADC - Austrian Development Cooperation
BINGO - business and industry non-governmental organizations
CBO - community-based organization
CDM - Clean Development Mechanism
CMP - Conservation Measures Partnership
COAIT - Community Options Analysis and Investment Toolkit
COONAPIP - National Coordinating Body of Indigenous Peoples of Panama
CSO - civil society organization
FAO - Food and Agriculture Association of the United Nations
FCPF - Forest Carbon Partnership Facility
FPIC - free and informed consent
ICCWC - International Consortium on Combating Wildlife Crime
IEN - Indigenous Environmental Network
INTERPOL - International Criminal Police Organization
LEAF - Law Enforcement Assistance to Forests
NAMA - Nationally Appropriate Mitigation Actions
NDP - National Development Plan
NFA - National Forestry Authority
NGO - non-governmental organization
ODA - official development assistance
OWN - national ownership
PDD - Project Development Document
PES - payment for environmental services
PRA - participatory rural appraisal
R-PP - Readiness Preparation Proposal
REDD - Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation
SBIA - Social and Biodiversity Impact Assessment
SESA - Strategic Environmental and Social Assessment
TI - Transparency International
TMAs - tools, methods, approaches
UNDP - United Nations Development Programme
UNEP - United Nations Environment Program
UNFCCC - United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
VCM - voluntary carbon market

INTRODUCTION

The National Geographic Society defines deforestation as the clearing of Earth's forests on a massive scale, often resulting in damage to the quality of the land ("National Geographic Society", 2014). Forest cover in Uganda has declined from thirty-five percent to fifteen percent of land surface between 1890 and 2005, with an annual forest cover loss continuing at approximately 88,000 hectares, or 1.76 percent per year ("REDD in Uganda", n.d.). According to the National Forestry Authority of Uganda, the primary causes of forest degradation relate to the increasing agrarian human population, and the pressures on forest reserves and forest lands that result, as well as institutional weaknesses and shortcomings in forestry governance. The National Forestry Authority identifies the key drivers of deforestation and forest degradation as agricultural expansion in forested land, charcoal production, firewood harvesting, livestock grazing, timber production, and human settlement and urbanization. The greatest consequences of these drivers are decline in forest vegetation cover, decline in quality and quantity of forest goods and services, and conflicts regarding access, use, and control over forest resources (Mugumya Nyindo, 2011).

The difficulties in changing practices lie in the reality that about one third of the land in Uganda is used for agriculture, eighty percent of the workforce in Uganda is active in agriculture, and over ninety percent of the population directly or indirectly depends on the products and services that come from Uganda's agriculture, fisheries, forests, and wetlands. Additionally, forty percent of the rural population, which accounts for over eighty-five percent of the total population, is living in poverty, and five percent of the total population is food insecure ("Poverty and Environment in Uganda", n.d.). Biomass is used as the primary fuel in Uganda, and many women make their living cutting trees and collecting and selling wood and charcoal.

The need for charcoal production and firewood harvesting stems from the lack of an efficient energy source, coupled with the high tariffs the government imposes on electricity and petroleum ("Poverty and Environment in Uganda", n.d.).

The dire forest situation is being blamed partly on Uganda's growing population, which is increasing at a rate of 3.2 percent annually, as areas around Kampala, the capital, have lost more than seventy-eight percent of their forest land since 1990 (Kelly, 2009). Findings from local respondents have revealed that illegal human activities related to charcoal burning, fuel wood collection, and farming are responsible for deforestation, with forest officials both actively involved and by proxy engaged in the illegal activities. That is, forest officers are involved in the omissions policy, which enables local communities to succeed in illegal exploitation, from which the officers themselves receive a share of the revenue as part of their fee. The forest department's negligence in terms of strict supervision is thus paramount in deforestation and forest degradation. The opportunity for deforestation by the local communities in Uganda began in the 1970s with political instability. Timber was being exceedingly harvested to be used both domestically and commercially, and official forest encroachment was permitted without allowing local community participation in the decision making process (Buyinza and Otieno, 2010).

The Forest Carbon Partnership Facility cited in the *REDD Readiness Preparation Proposal for Uganda* that the drivers of deforestation and forest degradation in Uganda, in conjunction with favorable land tenure and policy and legal framework, favor the development and implementation of a strategy known as Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation, or REDD. However, the necessary national capacity to facilitate this strategy must first be developed in order for the mechanism to be effective. These areas of development include data gathering, policy and legal reforms, tools and systems for REDD implementation,

and institutional and human resources capacity to move REDD forward (Mugumya Nyindo, 2011). Beyond REDD, REDD+ aims to enhance carbon stocks while also conserving and sustainably managing forests. In doing so, REDD+ not only works to offset carbon emission levels and conserve forests and forest biodiversity, but also provides financial benefits to REDD+ participant countries, thus improving the livelihoods of local people living adjacent to forests. The merging of these goals makes REDD+ a more suitable program for Uganda, than would be the basic REDD mechanism.

Methodologies

My motivation for writing this thesis is to analyze the potential for a REDD+ program to succeed in Uganda at this time, and to explore why this may or may not be possible. In order to answer these questions, I researched policy documents laying out specific plans for REDD+ and investigated the progress that has been made toward REDD+ implementation in Uganda. These documents largely came from the United Nations, the Forest Carbon Partnership Fund, the World Bank, and the Ugandan Government, and presented a rather simplistic and idealistic view of the policy, its implementation process, and desired outcomes. I then looked at current Ugandan forest policies that may either enhance or hinder the ability for REDD+ to succeed, to see if the country is proactively working towards a set of conservation goals prior to the UN's implementation of the REDD+ program. Countless praises and criticisms of the UN-REDD program exist in journals, academic works, books, and other forms of literature, so I sorted through these sources to see which would prove to be relevant in Uganda's case, as fewer resources exist pertaining to Ugandan policy specifically. Beyond general praises and concerns about REDD, I looked at specific case studies in countries outside of Uganda in which the

REDD+ program has been implemented or is intended to be implemented. The resources I utilized included newspaper, magazine, and journal articles, academic works, and conference proceedings. These pieces brought to light the specific issues that local people are having with the REDD program, and what these local people would like to see done. I was able to relate many of these cases to the current state of Uganda because of similar government structures, economies, land tenure systems, social systems, and forest conservation concerns between the countries. Finally, I pulled together these resources and attempted to apply them to Uganda's own REDD+ program and policies and raise concerns and options specific to the country, and thus explicate the most important risks on which to focus. Based on these risks, and various sets of recommendations that scholars and environmentalists have proposed for all REDD programs, I compiled recommendations that would allow the opportunities that may come along with REDD+ implementation to come to fruition, if the risks and concerns are appropriately addressed.

For much of my background information, I rely upon *The REDD Readiness Preparation Proposal for Uganda* by Xavier Mugumya, as this is the most informative source regarding Uganda's current progress and future plans for REDD+ implementation. Mr. Xavier Mugumya, Mr. Alex Muhweezi, and Ms. Sheila Kiconco make up the R-PP Secretariat, which managed the R-PP and prepared the R-PP document. For my much of my information on the potential challenges facing REDD+ preparation and implementation in Uganda, I utilize Makhado et. al.'s "Challenges of reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation (REDD+) on the African continent," and Korhonen et. al.'s "Enabling factors for establishing REDD+ in a context of weak governance." These sources provide valuable comprehensive views on what are perceived to be the greatest limiting factors to the success of the REDD+ mechanism. Korhonen

et. al. analyze the factors that enable national REDD+ processes in the context of weak governance using a two-step 'qualitative comparative analysis' of twelve REDD+ countries. The factors influencing REDD+ implementation were then analyzed to determine their roles in an effort to establish all-inclusive REDD+ policies. This piece does not directly discuss Uganda, but the countries at which it does look are comparable in many ways. Finally, I used much of Michael Brown's, *Redeeming REDD*, to inform my hypothesis and recommendations, as he does a phenomenal job of bringing together all aspects of REDD on a broad scale. He touches on theoretical beliefs and understandings about climate change and REDD, current science and policy, and the societal implications, which allowed me, with the help of countless other sources, to more comprehensively understand REDD+ in Uganda.

Based on my research, I believe that if the proposed recommendations are not included in the REDD+ preparation and implementation phases, the REDD+ mechanism is doomed to fail in Uganda. Further, much of the US $10,617,000 that is being put towards financing the REDD+ readiness activities, in addition to the funds that will be used to finance REDD+ program implementation, will end up being lost when the project fails to meet its intended goals. This project may thus be detrimental not only to the people and the government of Uganda, but also to the World Bank and Forest Carbon Partnership Facility who are sinking large amounts of money into these projects, unless the proposed recommendations and risks are taken into account and put into immediate action. The primary concerns that must be addressed before any progress will be made are the lack of attention to social feasibility, the minimal inclusion of core stakeholders on the national, sub-national, and international levels, the potential for increased illegal activity to accompany REDD+ implementation, and the contradictory land tenure systems that exist within Uganda and as a result affect carbon ownership and rights.

CHAPTER 1 - REDD+ Background

Deforestation and forest degradation account for about seventeen percent of current global greenhouse gas emissions, and about twenty-five percent of current anthropogenic greenhouse gas emissions (Brown, 2013, p. 77). The concept of a REDD (Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation) mechanism was thus introduced as a means to curtail the anthropogenic portion of greenhouse gas emissions that are a result of deforestation. REDD was first introduced at the 11th United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) Conference of the Parties in 2005, and became an increasingly more important topic on the 2007 conference agenda in Bali. Since its inception, the concept of REDD has moved from a highly specific mechanism aimed at addressing deforestation and forest degradation, towards a broader mechanism that includes efforts to conserve and manage forests in order to enhance carbon stocks. Thus, it has become a potentially viable solution for the issues of deforestation and forest degradation in developing countries in Africa, as well as in other developing countries across the world. Makhado et. al. note that, "The international move towards conservation and management of forests to enhance carbon stocks as a broader concept, has seen the emergence of REDD+" (Makhado et. al., 2011, p. 3). REDD+ brings the need to reduce emissions from deforestation and forest degradation together with conservation, sustainable management, and enhancement of forest carbon stocks in developing countries. Hence the "plus". In theory, the REDD+ mechanism offers developing countries an opportunity to offset carbon emission levels, while also offering financial benefits through trading of REDD+ offset credits, improved livelihood of local people adjacent to forests, and contributions towards biodiversity conservation (Makhado et. al., 2011). The first formal step in the process of initiating implementation was the creation of and agreement on The Bali Action Plan in 2007.

Despite the efforts of the UNFCCC to create REDD and REDD+ programs however, scholars and environmentalists alike have raised numerous concerns regarding its implementation. REDD+ will inevitably have serious impacts on local communities, indigenous people, and forests if implemented, as I discuss below. Thus, any actions must be taken in a manner that keeps the interests of all stakeholders in mind.

A large driving force in the implementation of a REDD+ mechanism is the potential it has to benefit multiple stakeholders by shifting the focus towards national level conservation. REDD+ is a seemingly "low" cost program, both politically and financially, and it benefits both developed and developing countries. It creates incentives for developing countries to protect their forests by putting a financial value on the carbon that is stored in trees and not emitted into the atmosphere (Korhonen-Kurki et. al., 2014, p. 168), thus, it is argued, counterbalancing the carbon emitted by developed countries. In addition to its climate change goals, REDD+ claims to bring about "co-benefits" associated with forest conservation that are vitally important. These "co-benefits" include preservation of biodiversity, socioeconomic benefits such as reducing poverty, supporting livelihoods, and stimulating economic development, political change towards better governance, less corruption in the forest sector, more respect for the rights of vulnerable groups, and finally, a bolstered capacity of both forests and humans to adapt to climate change (Brown, 2013, p. 81).

The REDD+ mechanism is made up of three different phases. Phase one is the "preparatory" phase in which nations identify their causes of deforestation, establish a carbon inventory, and explain how they intend to model their future deforestation. Funding for this phase comes from the Forest Carbon Partnership Facility (FCPF), which is managed by the World Bank, and from the UN REDD-Program, co-managed by the Food and Agriculture

Association of the United Nations (FAO), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), and the United Nations Environment Program (UNEP). Phase two involves the implementation of REDD+ policies and measures, with funding largely coming from the UN Fund for International Partnerships or from bilateral agreements. The final phase is full-scale implementation, which no nation has yet reached. This would involve all efforts being supported by dedicated forest carbon funds, or being supported through access to the UN backed carbon market (Brown, 2013, p. 82).

To date, forty-four developing countries have been selected to join the Forest Carbon Partnership Facility, seventeen of which are in Africa, sixteen in Latin America, and eleven in the Asia-Pacific region. Thirty-six of these countries, which were selected at the inception of the FCPF, have signed the REDD Country Participation Agreement, while the other eight are in the process of reviewing and signing the Participation Agreement. Uganda is one of the countries that has signed the Participation Agreement, and is in the process of preparing to begin the implementation of their REDD+ program (Redd+ Country Participants, 2013).

The Readiness Preparation Proposal (R-PP) is comprised of a set of standards, specific to each country, that must be met before that country is prepared to begin work on its REDD+ mechanism. It is meant to "assist a country in laying out and organizing the steps needed to achieve 'Readiness' to undertake activities to reduce emissions from deforestation and forest degradation (REDD), in the specific country context" ("Forest Carbon Partnership Facility (FCPF) Readiness Mechanism Readiness Preparation Proposal (R-PP) External Review Template", 2011). The goal of Uganda's R-PP is "Uganda ready for REDD-Plus by 2014," a goal to be realized through seven laid out objectives. The first objective is to develop and elaborate strategies and actions for addressing the direct drivers of deforestation and forest

degradation in Uganda. The second objective is to develop practices for sustainable forest management and conservation, and then to define and pilot test processes for stakeholder engagement in the implementation of Uganda's REDD+ strategy. The fourth objective is to facilitate the development of tools and methodologies for measuring, reporting, and verifying the effects of the REDD+ Strategy on greenhouse gas emissions, and to monitor the drivers of deforestation and forest degradation. The fifth objective is to define and develop a system for assessing key social and environmental risks, and any potential impacts of the REDD+ Strategy. The sixth objective is to develop a system for estimating the historic forest cover change in relation to greenhouse gas emissions and uptake that have resulted from deforestation and forest degradation, in order to make projections of emissions in the future. Finally, the seventh objective is to strengthen national and institutional capacities for implementing Uganda's REDD+ Strategy.

If the FCPF's projections are correct, Uganda will require US$ 10,617,000 to finance its readiness activities, which are made up of six components. These include organizing REDD+ activities and consultations, preparing REDD+ strategy options, implementation frameworks, and social and environmental impacts, developing REDD+ reference levels, designing a monitoring system, creating an implementation schedule and budget, and developing the monitoring and evaluation framework (Mugumya Nyindo, 2011, p. 146-147). As of June 2011, Uganda had received US$ 200,000 from the Forest Carbon Partnership Fund through the World Bank to prepare their REDD Readiness Proposal. Additionally, the country received US$ 183,500 from the Norwegian Government to facilitate countrywide stakeholder consultations and participation (Mugumya Nyindo, 2011). Several local, national and international organizations have also provided support in the form of information, time, and resources to the R-PP

formulation (Kadiresan, and Bbumba, 2009, p. 1-7). The Readiness Preparation Grant Agreement was signed on July 10, 2013 between the Government of Uganda, represented by the Minister of Finance, Planning and Economic Development, and the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development, and preparations for the initial disbursement requests are underway ("Annex D: REDD Annual Country Progress Reporting (with semi-annual update)", 2013).

CHAPTER 2 - Existing policy and REDD+ Progress in Uganda

Current Progress on R-PP

Uganda submitted a formal request to the World Bank/Forest Carbon Partnership Fund in June of 2008 to participate in the FCPF program, and the Readiness Preparation Grant Agreement was signed into action on July 10, 2013. The participation request provided an overview of land use patterns and causes of deforestation, stakeholder consultation processes, and potential institutional arrangements in addressing REDD+. Countrywide consultations with stakeholders were conducted from April of 2010 to February of 2011, and studies were carried out by consultants in order to provide information about land use, forest policies and governance issues, options for REDD+ strategies, REDD+ implementation frameworks, likely social and environmental impacts, options for developing reference levels, systems to measure, verify, and report the effects of REDD+ on sustainable forest management, and implications of evictions due to REDD+ implementation. The National Forestry Authority then established a three person R-PP Secretariat, between May and April of 2011, under the leadership of the National REDD+ Focal Point. Institutions that have been assigned tasks by the REDD-Plus Steering Committee are referred to as "Implementing Institutions". These institutions were formed both from within and outside of the government by the lead ministry in order to implement and report on the progress of assigned tasks, participate in the REDD-Plus Steering Committee, and host and facilitate the functioning of taskforces.

Uganda's Existing Forest Policy

The Forest Carbon Partnership Committee asserts that Uganda's current policies and legislation are adequate for the implementation of the Readiness Preparation Proposal.

Specifically, existing policies show a commitment to sustainable forest management and maintenance of the Permanent Forest Estate, and stakeholder participation in the private sector, academic community, and forest dependent communities. However, the existing gaps in policy relating to the licensing of the carbon trade and defining carbon rights have the potential to negatively affect R-PP implementation.

The goals of the R-PP are in accordance with those of the 2002 National Forestry Policy and the 2003 National Forest Plan, both of which contribute to the ultimate goal of an integrated forest sector that achieves sustainable increases in economic, social, and environmental benefits from forests and trees by all the people of Uganda, and in particular, poor and vulnerable groups (Muganwa Kajura, 2001, p. 1). The REDD+ Strategy supplements the National Forest Plan through strategies that address deforestation and forest degradation, monitoring of emissions reduction, marketing of REDD carbon credits, distribution of benefits equitably amongst stakeholders that include the poor and vulnerable, sustainable forest management, biodiversity conservation, community participation, and engagement of partners to implement these activities. Uganda's 2010 National Development Plan (NDP) set out to increase forest cover from 3,604,176 hectares to 4,933,746 hectares by 2015, and forest cover was last reported at the 2014 Ugandan-UK Investment Summit to span approximately 4.9 million hectares ("Forestry and Agriculture", n.d.). "Forest cover is defined as an area more than 1 ha in extent and having tree canopy density of 10 percent and above" ("Forest Cover", n.d., p.1). No distinction with respect to the type of tree crops or tree species has been attempted, nor has notice been taken of the type of land ownership, land use, or legal status ("Forest Cover", n.d.). Uganda's NDP also commits to enhancing the country's capacity for enforcing forestry law, private tree planting, and farm forestry. The R-PP activities involving tree planting and development of tools and

methodologies for monitoring the impact of REDD+ on forestry resources in Uganda contribute to the goals of the NDP regarding forestry and capacity building for forestry resources development and management ("National Development Plan (2010/11-2014/15)", 2010, p. 1-3).

Implementation of the R-PP aims to add value to other ongoing forestry programs through the management of the seven hundred thirty-two protected forested areas in Uganda, which comprise 26.1 percent of the country's territorial area ("Encyclopedia of Earth", 2013), by gathering baseline information and inventory, participating in forest restoration, enhancing incomes from forestry resources management, and promoting stakeholder participation in forestry resources development and management. Further, the R-PP recognizes and seeks to collaborate with a variety of climate change initiatives and programs within the government, NGOs, CSOs, the private sector, and the general public, so to ensure that appropriate strategies for reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation are developed and effectively implemented. The R-PP also seeks to work with both ongoing and future conservation programs throughout Uganda (Mugumya Nyindo, 2011).

Stakeholder participation

With regard to stakeholder involvement, Uganda's R-PP formulation process emphasizes multi-stakeholder consultation and participation. The aim of the consultations was to sensitize the various stakeholders to REDD+ and its concepts through seeking their opinions and expectations and promoting an understanding of REDD+. This process was guided by an Outreach and Participation Plan developed by the FCPF through which consultations were carried out at both national and regional levels. In each region, consultations involved the following categories of stakeholders: farmers, politicians, and technical staff of local

governments, NGOs, CBOs, Protected Areas agencies, youth representatives, women representatives, special groups consisting of timber dealers and charcoal producers, forest dependent communities, representatives of forest resource user groups or associations, private sector, academia, and Community Opinion dealers. In addition, forest dependent communities of Benet and Batwa, or Pygmies, were consulted separately. At the national level, consultations involved central government ministries and agencies, National and international NGOs and development agencies, private sector, utility agencies, academia, and research organizations. (Mugumya Nyindo, 2011, p. 44)

One approach used to gain stakeholder participation was to raise awareness about the REDD+ and R-PP process through the use of promotional materials and radio and television programs. Information was also shared about forestry management and its relationship with REDD+, the R-PP, and Climate Change in Uganda through workshops, community public hearings, interviews, radio, and focus group discussions. Community members were asked to share their views on the perceived drivers of deforestation and forest degradation, the effects of deforestation and forest degradation, and the ongoing actions needed to address these drivers and their effects. The FCPF has worked with these community members to develop strategies and action plans aimed at tackling the issues that they discussed, and to further discuss their interests, expectations, and roles within the R-PP process and REDD+ implementation process. After all of the initial consultations, approximately 2,500 people representing seven different categories of stakeholders were directly consulted (Mugumya Nyindo, 2011). There was however a strong divide in terms of representation. Of the 2,071 consultants comprising the combined group of forest dependent people, communities, and special groups, 1,369 were male, while only 623 were female (Mugumya Nyindo, 2011, p. 45).

Consultation between the FCPF and sectorial ministries, lead agencies of government, and representatives of development partners revealed a number of areas of concern for these groups regarding the goals and implementation of the REDD+ Strategy. The first concern was that REDD+ programs focus their attention on legally established wilderness areas, while at-risk forests outside of legally established wilderness areas are largely ignored. Consultants also brought up the need to address the effects of human settlement and urbanization. Another concern is the need to strengthen conservation and management tools and systems and to ensure sustainable forest management. Finally, the need to ensure equity in cost and benefit sharing was identified (Mugumya Nyindo, 2011, p. 50-56). Overall, consultants recommended that R-PP implementation should continue to raise awareness and sensitize people about REDD+, build capacity to better implement REDD+, and ensure multi-sectorial approaches and partnerships throughout Uganda.

After consultations, the Ministry of Water and Environment, managed by the R-PP Secretariat who also prepared the R-PP document, compiled a list of five drivers of deforestation and forest degradation that were identified amongst stakeholders, the majority of whom are forest dependent peoples and communities. The first of these drivers is political interference. The underlying causes for this are thought to be a desire for power, greed, access to cheap resources, and political popularity, which results in people settling on forest reserves and thereby encroaching on wetlands. The strategy suggested to combat this issue is enhanced law enforcement by responsible authorities. The second driver identified is poverty. This is caused by the limited sources of income, inadequate employment opportunities, and high population densities, and has resulted in an unsustainable use of resources. Stakeholders suggest the implementation of community management and forest based enterprises to help address this

concern. The third key driver is the role that immigration plays, its negative effects caused by insufficient laws and political instability. The lack of regulation and enforcement surrounding immigration leads to encroachment of agricultural lands, settlement conflicts, overgrazing, and soil erosion, and may be dealt with by reporting specific cases to a higher authority, or else by eviction. The fourth driver of deforestation and forest degradation is the high population growth rate, which is said to be caused by the high fertility rate, low education rate, minimal family intervention by the government, and reproductive health and environmental factors. The population growth rate leads to a high demand for agricultural products, land for settlement, and forest resources; however, the FCPF claims that there are already some reproductive health services in place. The final stakeholder-identified driver of deforestation and forest degradation is uncertainties in land and tree tenure systems, caused by changes in land use and poor land use policies, and resulting in forest cover destruction and the population's resistance to land laws (Mugumya Nyindo, 2011). Land tenure, which includes tree tenure, is the relationship, whether legally or customarily defined, among people, as individuals or groups, with respect to land. It defines how access is granted to rights to use, control, and transfer land, as well as associated responsibilities and restraints ("Land Tenure and Rural Development", 2002, p. 7). The proposed strategies for dealing with tenure issues include the formulation of a national land policy, and an amendment to the Land Act (Mugumya Nyindo, 2011).

CHAPTER 3 - Issues facing REDD+ Implementation

Issues with R-PP

The two main multilateral readiness platforms for REDD, the UN-REDD Programme and the FCPF housed at the World Bank, are well aware of the challenges that REDD participant countries face in attempting to successfully prepare and implement REDD, thus the two initiatives are actively coordinating their efforts. "The revised R-PP template jointly developed by UN-REDD and FCPF is the best window to understand the standard they mutually have established for facilitating national level REDD planning" (Brown, 2013, p. 152), while the preparation of a Project Development Document (PDD) is central to the certification process of a REDD+ pilot project. With no framework for determining social feasibility, however, current standards enable accumulated background information to be arbitrarily structured under the guise of a theory for change. The PDD, it is argued, is uninformative about key variables impacting whether REDD can actually work in local social settings where projects operate, and does little to de-risk investments over the long term, as social feasibility issues are not being considered (Brown, 2013, p. 171). Further, an analysis of the FCPF's readiness plans conducted by the World Resources Institute revealed that, "The R-Plans do not adequately address fundamental governance issues as key drivers of deforestation and forest degradation in their REDD strategies" (Brown, 2013, p. 96). Issues such as land tenure, land use planning, questionable law enforcement, and the ability of systems to manage forest revenues and incentives will not be easy to address, but it will be necessary to do so in order to achieve the REDD objectives. These issues are mentioned in the readiness reports, yet few solutions are proposed in changes to the legal framework, and they are not addressed in plans of action.

A Readiness Preparation Proposal should address a number of concerns that appear to be

overlooked or given minimal attention. The first concern is the need to establish equitable and full community participation, which includes meaningful involvement of women, indigenous peoples, minorities, and youth. Women and children are some of the most important actors in terms of forest conservation in Uganda, as their livelihoods more often than not depend on forest resources. The R-PP needs to establish whether communities are able to fully understand and present costs, benefits, and risks of REDD proposals to project validators and auditors. It must establish credible community-level institutional capacity to make decisions and sustain project engagement, so to ensure that community decisions are truly representative. Once institutional capacity is established, credible community-level capacities to monitor, evaluate, and adaptively manage REDD engagements need to be verified, as does the credible ability to assess and advocate the necessity of policies, enabling conditions, and technical support to achieve the REDD+ permanence objectives. Further, credible community institutions and mechanisms to enable equitable and timely benefit sharing need to be achieved. This in particular must be addressed in Uganda, as it is currently unclear to whom exactly the financial benefits of REDD+ will be going. This then leads into the next question of determining whether land tenure is enabling or disabling of the REDD+ mechanism (Brown, 2013, p. 189-90). Given the current transitional state of land tenure in Uganda from a customary tenure system to one in which individual land ownership is required, carbon ownership is questionable, thus tenure could be seen as a possible constraint.

Currently, social feasibility is not a consideration in the five-step Conservation Measures Partnership (CMP) framework, and "the probability for REDD projects working in the absence of demonstrated social feasibility is minimal" (Brown, 2013, p. 196). The concept of community participation is widely prescribed in Uganda's R-PP, however there has been no subsequent

standardization or consensus on minimum threshold requirements for level and extent of participation, leaving the necessary level of involvement open to any number of interpretations (Brown, 2013, p. 192).

General Concerns with REDD+ Implementation

Critics of the REDD+ strategy, many of whom speak to REDD+ prospective and participant countries in Africa specifically, have presented a number of hurdles facing the plausibility of putting the REDD+ mechanism into action. These issues largely stem from the lack of attention being placed on social feasibility, and arise primarily in the form of capacity issues, funding issues, land tenure issues, and methodological issues, all of which are complicated by Uganda's weak governance. As explained by these critics, the World Bank as well as a number of other organizations have provided funding to commence phases one and two of the REDD+ Strategy, but the question remains whether or not this support is enough to get the program off the ground and begin implementing policies, given the current state of Uganda's forests and communities.

Land tenure, benefit sharing, and negotiations are central to social feasibility, however, by enhancing carbon values and its trade, the poor may end up inappropriately subsidizing the process from which they are meant to benefit. Increasing the value of nature based goods and services may result in their capture by politically powerful local actors, thereby excluding the poor from access to potential benefits that are supposed to go along with REDD+. Due to this possibility, political decision-making must be addressed in conjunction with existing social inclusion issues (Brown, 2013, p. 198). This is not currently being implemented in Uganda, as REDD+ projects are thus far being planned using a top-down approach which has the tendency

to exclude crucial groups of stakeholders when it comes time to implement policies, despite their initial inclusion in the R-PP through consultations. Additionally, top-down policies have the tendency to undermine both community governance and community values.

The main tool in creating and realizing expectations with regard to benefits is a carefully negotiated and thoroughly understood agreement between the REDD+ sponsor, the Ugandan government, and the local communities and individual beneficiaries. According to Brown (2013, p. 199):

> The principal objective of the agreement is to identify the resource, record the basic intention, and reach fundamental understandings, rather than trying "to decide land tenure issues beyond its ability to decide," as local perception of the agreement as legitimate is more important than its legal elegance or even its enforceability.

This constrains feasibility across Uganda, as external agents in the FCPF and UN-REDD committees have by and large designed the projects. The Community Options Analysis and Investment Toolkit (COAIT) appears to be one of the few toolkits available for REDD design and implementation that specifically seeks to strengthen community level stakeholder capacities and enable communities to be proactive and collaborate effectively on an informed basis, though nowhere in Uganda's R-PP is its use mentioned. COAIT stresses capacity building of the poorest, local marginalized stakeholders to enable more level bargaining spaces such that equitable outcomes emerge. It builds on information gathering strategies developed in the participatory rural appraisal (PRA), but extends significantly beyond the scope of the PRA by focusing on establishing the local stakeholders' definitions for social feasibility in REDD+ projects.

In order for social feasibility to be identified, Ugandan project developers need the

support of some high-level panel within UN-REDD or FCPF, from BINGOs or private sector shareholder firms working on REDD, and from institutional investors (Brown, 2013, p. 203). This support can force industry leaders to pay more explicit attention to social feasibility in REDD design, and more so, if voluntary buyers of carbon demand that project developers prove that social feasibility issues are being addressed, a demand for social feasibility as a standard set of issues can be established. This is not currently the case, but if REDD+ is to succeed in protecting Uganda's forests, there will be a need to show that REDD+ is truly benefitting communities, rather than only theoretically safeguarding them from harm. While it is important to focus on safeguarding REDD+ forests, this cannot be the only focus because solely protecting the forests has the potential to leave out the non-environmental needs of the communities who are dependent on such forests.

Makhado et. al. argue that most African countries lack the technical capacity to pilot emissions studies, and therefore will be unable to participate effectively if the capacity gap is not adequately addressed. Uganda will need to strengthen its technical capacity to accurately measure, monitor and report emission values versus storage capacity in order to deliver environmentally effective and economically efficient emission reductions. The potential of REDD+ varies based on this information, thus high quality data is needed in order for the country to be integrated into the international carbon market (Makhado et. al., 2011, p. 3).

In terms of funding, it is clear that REDD+ requires an exorbitant amount of money in order for the program to be maintained over the required period of time, which means until a UN carbon market that can sustain itself is developed. The REDD+ program is premised on the need for substantial amounts of capital coming from traditional official development assistance (ODA) sources, with the anticipation that carbon markets will provide the principal source of

funding further down the road. Many countries are not able to collect the funding required to conduct REDD+ feasibility studies, let alone participate in climate change mitigation mechanisms. As previously noted, Uganda requires US$ 10,617,000 to finance its readiness activities, and this speaks nothing of implementation costs (Makhado et. al., 2011, p. 3). As of May 2012, approximately US$ 4.511 million had been committed for a three-year period. US$ 3.634 million came from the FCPF/World Bank, Euros 0.650 million from the Austrian Government/Austrian Development Cooperation (ADC), and US$ 0.635 million from Government in-kind commitments. The funding gap of approximately US$ 6.158 million is expected to be filled through donor and Ugandan government support between 2015 and 2016 ("Annex D: REDD Annual Country Progress Reporting (with semi-annual update)", 2013), however, Brown writes that, “as of mid 2013, prospects for sustainable REDD finance remain unclear” (Brown, 2013, p. 212).

It is improbable that cost estimates reflect the scopes of the institutional and transaction costs that will be needed if REDD is to be implemented and become sustainable, if social feasibility requirements are considered (Brown, 2013, p. 213). “The Eliasch (2008) review suggested that the inclusion of the forest sector in global carbon markets would lower the costs of reducing emissions, and could provide the financing and incentive structure for the reduction of deforestation rates by up to 75 percent in 2030” (Brown, 2013, p. 213). The Environmental Defense Fund subsequently developed an analytical model considering carbon finance that stated that international carbon markets are the first, and possibly last, chance to create economic value for forests at a level commensurate with large-scale deforestation. As of mid-2012, however, the global community was sixteen times behind where it should have been in its reduction target of 5.5 billion tons of CO_2 by 2015 (Kanak, and Henderson, 2012, p. 2). The World Wildlife Fund

suggests that, “what is currently being asked of forest nations is to ignore lucrative alternatives to conserving the forests, and to engage in what might be a 30 year activity where the rewards beyond year 2 or 3 are completely unknown” (Kanak, and Henderson, 2012, p. 1-10). While this is the case, multi-stakeholder support for REDD from governments, BINGOs, international financiers, along with UN-REDD, the FCPF, and bilateral country programs, appears to be stable if not growing, thus “pronouncing thumbs up or down on REDD, therefore, remains difficult as of 2013” (Brown, 2013, p. 214).

Unclear land tenure practices also provide challenges for development of the REDD+ mechanism. Most forests and woodlands in Africa are located in rural areas where land is legally recognized as communal. Additionally, most African countries have multiple tenure systems whereby several land users may have multiple claims to access different resources on the same piece of land. Uganda currently has four different land tenure systems in place, mailo, leasehold, freehold, and customary, all of which have different implications for REDD+. Mailo tenure provides security of tenancy since land ownership is permanent and passed on from one generation to another, hence favoring long term investments. Leasehold is a system whereby land is held based on an agreement between the lessor and the lessee. This form of tenure is not safe today because terms and conditions are easily manipulated, and ownership may be revoked by the lessor before the expiry of the agreed period of time, resulting in the lessee losing his or her land. Freehold tenure is similar to mailo tenure, and can be obtained by securing land titles from district land offices, though this is easier said than done. Customary land tenure is the most dominant land tenure in Uganda. It is a tenure system where land is owned and disposed of under customary regulations. People have fewer personal interests under this tenure, which often leads to mismanagement and degradation. Further, there are no proper records kept under customary

tenure, which makes it hard to resolve conflicts that accrue from such a system (Semakula, and Brian Mayanja, 2012).

The variation in tenure systems presents problems in terms of who will own the carbon credits that are to be traded, and to whom the resulting income will go, whether it is the government, communities, or individual members of the local population. Further, it has been suggested that REDD+ implementation may lead to privatization whereby the elite and rich take over communal land, while the poor, rural populations who depend on forests gain little from the carbon trade (Makhado et. al., 2011, p. 3-4). This has to do with the difficulty in obtaining formal land permits as the government works to shift tenure systems towards freehold tenure. Many rural and forest communities are either unaware of the necessity of obtaining formal land permits, or the proper facilities through which to do so are not in place or not easily accessible.

Many developing countries face a profusion of methodological issues in climate action negotiations. For example, the Clean Development Mechanism (CDM), which allows emission-reduction projects in developing countries to earn certified emission reduction credits, excludes many African countries, as it allows emission-reduction projects in developing countries to earn credits only in areas where there has been no forest for the past fifty years ("Clean Development Mechanism (CDM)", 2014). Further, many arid African countries do not qualify for REDD+ because it defines forest as vegetation with ten to thirty percent tree cover or biomass (Makhado et. al., 2011, p. 3-4). Uganda clearly fits the requirements for a REDD+ Strategy, however it may face issues regarding the CDM, which is the main source of income for the UNFCCC Adaptation Fund. The CDM, nonetheless, was established to finance adaptation projects and programs in developing country Parties to the Kyoto Protocol that are particularly vulnerable to the adverse effects of climate change, one of which is REDD+ ("Clean Development Mechanism (CDM)",

2014).

An overriding issue contributing to all of the above concerns is the weak governance structure in most REDD+ candidate and participant countries. A weak governance, specifically that of Uganda, will undoubtedly impede the implementation, carbon-effectiveness, cost-efficiency, and equity of the REDD+ mechanism. The ability for a REDD+ program to be successful in a country with weak governance is dependent upon the potential of the program to induce transformational change.

> 'Transformational change' is understood here as a shift 'in discourse, attitudes, power relations, and deliberate policy and protest action that leads policy formulation and implementation away from business as usual policy approaches that directly or indirectly support deforestation and forest degradation'. (Korhonen-Kurki et. al., 2014, p. 169)

In evaluating the potential to induce transformational change, one must consider the institutional setting as well as the actor-related processes in the policy arena. The institutional setting is, "the formal and informal regulations, rules and norms that are established over time and that are not easily changed or transformed" (Korhonen-Kurki et. al., 2014, p. 169). The policy arena is "shaped by the actions of the actors, whether individuals, communities, organizations or networks, and characterized by more or less hierarchical or inclusive processes, involving a range of powerful actors, which can foster or prevent certain policies and influence policy formulation" (Korhonen-Kurki et. al., 2014, p. 169). A major challenge in achieving institutional change is a country's dependence on past policies, known as path dependency, while REDD+ programs have the tendency to challenge established institutions and policies. Korhonen-Kurki et. al. studied twelve different countries with weak governances in order to evaluate the likelihood of a REDD+ program to succeed. They looked at five African countries, three in

South America, and four in Asia and Oceania. All countries that were evaluated, except for Brazil, had shortcomings in effective horizontal, cross-sectorial coordination mechanisms, most had weak multilevel governance systems, and most lacked adequate professional and financial capacity in their forest administration. All countries studied except for Burkina Faso and Nepal nevertheless had powerful drivers of deforestation, and political leadership demonstrating a commitment to REDD+. These countries, however, face resistance from powerful interest groups who are strongly against the alteration of most forest policies (Korhonen-Kurki et. al., 2014, p. 172-3).

Korhonen-Kurki et. al. suggest three hypothetical remote conditions to determine whether a country has the institutional setting under which a REDD+ mechanism will be effective. The first condition is feeling pressure from a shortage of forest resources. This means that a large percentage of the country's forests are under pressure from economic activity due to the institutionalized patterns of forest use, and are at risk of becoming unable to meet the needs or usage interests of the community, which is indubitably the case in Uganda. If a country's forests are under high pressure, these authors suggest that it will be more necessary for said country to engage in active forest protection and overcome path dependency and resistance. The second condition is that the country has the key features necessary for effective forest legislation, policy, and governance. This means that the legal system clearly defines tenure, use, and management rights, and includes in these definitions both formal and customary regulations as well as enforcement laws and policies related to sustainable forest management. National and local authorities must participate in enforcement, and there must be some degree of compliance by forest users. In predicting the success of the REDD+ mechanism, countries would benefit if these key elements of a sound legal forestry framework were in place and enforced prior to project

implementation. Uganda does not fit all of these requirements, which means that before REDD+ is able to be successful, the legal system must clearly define the required terms, regulations, and policies, or else the mechanism will fail. The third and final condition that must be met, relating to the previous condition, is that the country has already initiated policy change. This condition implies that the country already has policies addressing climate change independent from REDD+ policies. These could include Nationally Appropriate Mitigation Actions (NAMAs), anti-deforestation programs, low-carbon development strategies, and payment for environmental services (PES) schemes. If policies are already in place, effective REDD+ strategies can emerge more easily and be implemented more successfully in relation to the forest economy (Korhonen-Kurki et. al., 2014, p. 173). Uganda has fulfilled this requirement to some extent with its Forest Policy created by the National Forestry Authority, the same organization that compiled the Readiness Preparation Proposal, but the problem lies in the level of enforcement and the clarity of existing policies. The presence or absence of these conditions indicates the probability of comprehensive REDD+ policies being successfully implemented, though for many countries the absence of already introduced policy changes is the decisive factor.

Institutional conditions alone cannot be used to explain the outcome of REDD+ programs. The above conditions for the institutional setting must be analyzed in conjunction with conditions for the policy arena. Korhonen-Kurki et. al. define three hypothetical conditions within the policy arena and their individual and combined impacts on REDD+ in order to evaluate the conditions that need to be met. The first condition is national ownership (OWN), which requires that national actors are dominant in shaping and supporting the policy discourse on REDD+, and are involved in the development of policy documents. OWN also implies that the country is financially committed to REDD+. It is understood that REDD+ policy documents

are more likely to be made into effective and sustainable practices if the policy processes are led by dedicated national actors rather than driven by international actors. The second condition is the presence of transformational coalitions. This means that policy actors and coalitions that can lead policy discussion and formulation away from business as usual, and in more positive and sustainable directions, are present. Coalition building is important among domestic pro-REDD+ political actors given the dominance of business as usual in the forestry sector. The conversation will be more successfully be moved towards transformational change if there is an agreement amongst political actors on the importance and content of REDD+. The third condition is inclusiveness within the policymaking process, which implies that there is a high degree of participation and consultation amongst key stakeholders, including the private sector, government officials, civil society, and indigenous peoples. This requires that legal provisions supporting the rights of indigenous peoples and communities to participate are already in place, as a commitment to stakeholder participation in REDD+ policy processes will ensure that multiple interests are taken into account, and as such, resistance will be reduced (Korhonen-Kurki et. al., 2014, p. 177-8). The findings of these studies indicate that comprehensive REDD+ policies can be established, so long as the country in question has the key elements of effective forest legislation, policy, and governance, has some policy change underway, and has pressure from a shortage of forest resources. Given the low success rates of existing programs, it is again evident that policy conditions must supplement institutional conditions in order for an effective strategy to be put in place, and that links must be established between existing forest policies and REDD+ policies (Korhonen-Kurki et. al., 2014, p. 183). It is also necessary to remember that these are not the only factors that make REDD+ possible or not, as every country and every forest is different.

REDD Trade-Offs

Given the above concerns regarding REDD+ implementation, it is important to recognize the inherent trade-offs, seeing both the positives and negatives and weighing their impacts. REDD has been portrayed by many as an ideal mechanism for reducing the magnitude and harmful effects of climate change because it is seen as a triple threat; a device to alleviate poverty, conserve biological diversity, and reduce atmospheric carbon. Some writers however think that REDD may serve as an impetus for industrialized countries to reduce their efforts to minimize carbon-emitting behaviors, or to reduce investments in clean and renewable energy technologies (Hirsch et. al., 2010, p. 261). Another concern is that although REDD programs may protect forests in some areas, they may result in forest loss in other areas, and in some circumstances may lead to reduction in species richness if monocultures of fast-growing trees are promoted at the expense of diverse species of slower growing trees (Hirsch et. al., 2010, p. 261). This concern has materialized in parts of Uganda, particularly in the Ssese Islands, with the development of palm oil plantations under the guise of productive reforestation. Further, the social goals that REDD is designed to promote may not be realized if the wealthy, who in most cases have more secure tenure that do the poor in Uganda, and have access to larger areas of forest, benefit disproportionately from REDD payments. REDD policies could then result in the ultimate loss of control of forest resources by local communities, if newly valuable forests are appropriated by governments or other powerful interests. This too could lead to more deforestation, particularly in cases in which community-based forms of forest management have proven to be more effective in the past than have the alternatives (Hirsch et. al., 2010, p. 261). Going beyond the realm of conservation, policy makers need to recognize the difficulties that

developing countries face in choosing between saving their natural resources for future generations, and exploiting them for immediate profit that could be put towards necessities such as food, shelter, education, and the like. Currently, REDD has little to no incentives motivating individuals or institutions to take the voluntary steps needed to preserve their forests, largely due to the fact that benefits are not being immediately seen, and if they are, they are going directly to either the government or to private interests. In order to properly weigh the benefits and downfalls of REDD, implementation strategies are necessary to ensure that a population can personally benefit by maintaining their forests as coherent ecological entities (Porter, 2009, p. 1).

As Hirsch et. al. indicate, evidence has shown that,

> Policy makers usually draw on policy narratives; stories or scenarios that enable or persuade citizens and decision makers to respond to problems in particular ways. Policy narratives often describe what will happen if certain events occur. The win-win narrative, for instance, says that implementing REDD policy will produce positive results in the form of poverty reduction, ecosystem protection, and climate-change mitigation. (Hirsch et. al., 2010, p. 261)

These narratives tend to become the standard explanations for problems, and are oftentimes used to convince both policy makers and the general public that a given understanding of a problem is correct, and that said choice of solutions is appropriate. In doing such, policy makers strive to mitigate uncertainty, and thus provide a secure basis for policy debate and action.

The Indigenous Environmental Network has fought against the classic policy narrative surrounding the REDD mechanism, rewording the acronym as “Reaping Profits from Evictions, land grabs, Deforestation, and Destruction of Biodiversity,” thereby creating a counter narrative that asserts the negative effects and profit-driven motives of REDD policies ("Indigenous

Environmental Network (IEN)", 2010). Miguel d'Escoto Brockmann, president of the United Nations General Assembly, notes that indigenous people are among those contributing least to the worsening problem of greenhouse gases and climate change, yet they are the first to feel the impacts of climate change. As is evident in their counter-REDD acronym, the Indigenous Environmental Network feels that REDD does nothing to address the underlying drivers of deforestation ("in the news", 2013, p. 6). These varying narratives highlight the importance of looking at both the positives and the negatives of all REDD programs, with an understanding of the inequalities and disputes between the poor and elite groups, amongst the poor groups, and between the poor and elite groups and the government. It is essential to recognize the differences in ability to exercise power, as this makes it difficult for some very important and potentially heavily impacted actors to voice their interests in decision making processes.

Given these varying narratives and interests, it is crucial to think through and make decisions regarding explicit trade-offs amongst different conservation goals and between conservation and other social goals such as poverty alleviation and economic development. Policy makers and stakeholders must see and understand the multiple dimensions of conservation initiatives, as opposed to offering only overly optimistic scenarios, as it appears the UN as well as the Ugandan government are doing. "Ignoring or obscuring trade-offs can contribute to the profound disappointment and even alienation of important partners in conservation" (Hirsch et. al., 2010, p. 263). An open and integrative approach that acknowledges trade-offs and embraces complexity includes a number of processes and understandings. First is awareness that no single perspective recognizes all dimensions of an issue. This means recognizing and exposing ways in which people with particular perspectives have partial views on the complexity of conservation issues and thus tend to oversimplify or take for granted the ways in which others understand this

complexity. Second is to systematically engage multiple partial perspectives in formulating a conclusion. Next is to not seek to provide one unified output that justifies one policy choice over another to all potential audiences. One single, final understanding would be inherently over simplistic for an issue as complex as is REDD. Finally, an open and integrative approach must provide insight and the opportunity for genuine reflection, honest communication, and responsible action (Hirsch et. al., 2010, p. 259-264).

Local and Media Criticisms of Existing REDD+ Programs

Illegal logging

Many of the hesitations and warnings against the REDD program that are coming from local populations and the media in Africa point to the potential for a rise in organized crime and illegal logging activity. Globally, illegal logging now accounts for between fifteen and thirty percent of the overall trade, according to a report from the UN Environmental Program and The International Criminal Police Organization (INTERPOL). The illegal trade, which is worth between US $30 and 100 billion annually, hampers the REDD initiative, in addition to its innate association with crimes such as murder, violence, and atrocities against indigenous forest residents. The REDD and REDD+ initiatives provide national and international legal frameworks aimed at reducing illegal logging and supporting sustainable practices, but INTERPOL reports that if REDD+ is to be sustainable over the long term, payments to communities for their conservation efforts need to be higher than are the returns from activities that lead to environmental degradation, so to ensure that unlawful activities are not more profitable than lawful activities under REDD+ ("Bikya News", 2012, p. 3). Under the REDD proposal, developed countries will pay communities in developing countries to keep their forests standing,

a bill that could amount to US $28-billion per year, as an attempt to counter the just under twenty percent of greenhouse gas emissions being generated by deforestation. In anticipation, seventeen donor countries have already spent more than U.S. $4-billion helping fifty poor countries build systems to monitor forests. Despite these promising numbers, one must keep in mind that, "illegal logging is almost 90 per cent of the forestry business in the largest timber-producing tropical countries" (Zommers, 2013, p. 1), far more than the global average, and it was not until traditional approaches to stop illegal logging had failed that the idea of issuing carbon credits to avoid deforestation was proposed. International watchdog groups however warn that REDD+ could help crooks more than it could ease deforestation through fraudulent manipulation of forest measurements. Furthermore, illegal types of logging have become more sophisticated, with at least thirty different known types of scams occurring (Zommers, 2013, p. 2).

The concern surrounding the REDD program's ability, or inability, to combat illegal logging activity lies in the fact that most conservation efforts are targeted at encouraging and creating incentives for legal trade, as opposed to combatting crime and, "unfortunately, current economic incentives are rarely effective in reducing collusive corruption and illegal logging activities as there is little risk of being apprehended" ("Bikya News", 2012, p. 4). Some of the primary methods of procuring and laundering illegal timber include falsification of logging permits, bribing officials to obtain permits, logging beyond concessions, hacking government websites to obtain or change electronic permits, and mixing illegal timber with legally cut timber and processing and laundering it through mills, amongst scores of other methods. The INTERPOL report portrays the severity of this issue in Uganda, describing incidences of Ugandan military personnel escorting loggers through border checkpoints from the Democratic Republic of Congo to bring high-value illegal timber into local markets for sale ("Bikya News",

2012, p. 4). Much of the laundering is made possible by large flows of investment funds based in the European Union, United States, and Asia moving into companies that are involved in the crime, and in many cases, the corrupt officials, local military, and police come out with revenues up to ten times that which they would have made through available legal pursuits, thus undermining investments in sustainable forest operations and alternative livelihood incentives. INTERPOL suggests that one possible solution would be to strengthen the Law Enforcement Assistance to Forests (LEAF) program, funded by the Norwegian Government agency NORAD, under INTERPOL and UNEP, and to collaborate closely with REDD+, the International Consortium on Combating Wildlife Crime (ICCWC) and all relevant partners ("Bikya News", 2012, p. 3-5).

Further skepticism comes from the fact that between 2002 and 2010, the World Bank and the Global Environmental Facility gave Uganda $34-million in loans and grants to manage conservation areas. As of now, Zommers writes, most of that money has disappeared and there are very few projects to show for it (Zommers, 2013, p. 2). This is not to say that nothing is being done, but what is being done is not being disclosed to the public nor is the public being involved in the projects as was stipulated in the Readiness Preparation Proposal. In the past fifteen years, only northern and western Uganda have achieved increased forest cover, which has been largely due to the National Forestry Authority's tree planting exercise there. Tom Rukundo, the environment impact assessment research specialist at NFA, echoes a view expressed by Ugandan stakeholders in consultations during the Readiness Preparation Phase, asserting that forests outside of protected areas should also have incentives under the REDD program, since desertification tendencies, bare hills, and evidence of soil erosion are prominent in these areas. As has been the case with funding given to Uganda, Lanyero writes that the money given to the

NFA to implement REDD in communities that would commit to protect Central Forest Reserves remains largely hanging somewhere between the Ministry of Finance and the World Bank (Lanyero, 2012, p. 10-11).

Need for Empowerment and Enhanced Stakeholder Participation

The skepticism surrounding REDD in Uganda and throughout the rest of Africa is amplified by cases outside of the continent, as many of the REDD+ projects elsewhere are further along than are those in Uganda, and they have been largely unsuccessful. A report on Laos begins by asserting the difficulty inherent in translating REDD+ principles into practice. Of particular concern is the inadequate involvement of local communities in tenure reform and REDD+ planning. Many observers are disappointed by the REDD+ readiness programs conducted by the World Bank's Forest Carbon Partnership Facility, and have similarly noted that the UN-REDD Programme has failed to respect its own pledge of social commitments, visible in the trend towards centralization of resource control and a general neglect of indigenous rights. Other critics point out that the lack of meaningful consultation and limited engagement with local communities are undermining the free, prior, and informed consent (FPIC) principle. In the process of implementation, the Lao government has largely disregarded customary practices of land-use planning, which are advocated in the literature, despite efforts targeting administrative decentralization and redistribution of land-use planning and management responsibilities among provincial and district authorities. Several studies have reported that local communities have relatively little participation in, and adherence to, land-use planning decisions, thus empowerment and enhanced participation represent important challenges for the development of REDD+ activities in Laos (Bourgoin et. al., 2013, p. 114-118).

Carbon Tenure Issues

In addition to the issues relating to community participation, the complex question of carbon tenure is raised in relation to land ownership and tree ownership, especially in the context of avoiding deforestation and degradation on existing forestland. In the current legal and regulatory context in Laos, government agencies mainly hold forest carbon rights, and are thus expected to be the main beneficiaries of REDD+ schemes. Non-governmental organizations and private enterprises may also become recipients of REDD+ payments through sustainable forestry initiatives and plantation concessions. The situation is more ambiguous for local communities, however, as they are currently able to retain carbon rights over planted forestland and can claim collective land rights over village production forests, but are not eligible for land rights in the carbon-rich areas that will generate the greatest benefits from REDD+ payments. Those who benefit from carbon payments will therefore depend on which REDD+ implementation strategies are adopted at the national level. Evidence suggests that giving local people social control over regulating park boundaries and control of illegal activities could create a cost-effective system. In said system, sharing carbon credits with villages inside and around the park can be seen as a form of compensation for the loss of access to forest resources facing the local communities that traditionally depend on forests for their livelihoods. Other systems in which government authorities are given sole control could jeopardize the equity principle, and REDD+ may then reverse decentralization trends by strengthening the state in its new role as carbon accountant. "To ensure fair distribution of co-benefits and to provide the incentives necessary to ensure local communities stay involved beyond the planning phases, participatory approaches need to be complemented by national tenure reforms" (Bourgoin et. al., 2013, p. 120). The success of

REDD+ depends on titles being granted for existing forestland and/or the establishment of forest management contracts. If local communities are not granted strong forest tenure and carbon rights, REDD+ could actually serve to further marginalize local stakeholders who are already largely excluded from the management of carbon-rich areas due to prior village re-settlements and land-use regulations.

The focus of the REDD+ mechanism seems to be on maximizing the effectiveness of carbon storage, however, overlooking equity could prove to be detrimental to the feasibility of planned projects by alienating local communities and increasing potential land conflicts and deforestation. Policy innovations at the national level should acknowledge the need to share the costs and benefits of REDD+ between both the state and the individuals directly involved in the conservation process. Securing tenure rights of local populations over communal lands could incentivize land management changes toward less intensive forest management, logging practices, and carbon sequestration in complex landscape arrangements. "By facilitating local understanding of socio-environmental issues and allowing stakeholders to reflect on their future, this innovative approach may provide a valuable insight on the local implementation of REDD+ mechanisms" (Bourgoin et. al., 2013, p. 121). This too could contribute to the reshaping of unequal power relationships, which have long undermined land-use planning implementation in Laos (Bourgoin et. al., 2013, p. 114-123).

Amongst communities of central Quintana Roo, known as Zona Maya in Mexico, the primary effect of REDD+ has been an increase in the privatization of land and the disenfranchisement of local Maya. The REDD+ program imposes various compliance restrictions that dictate what the communities can and cannot do with their land in order to receive carbon credits. If privatization of land continues, Martinez-Reyes asserts, it will lead to

further economic insecurity for the Masewalo'ob in Quintana Roo, and will produce a similar outcome for forest communities elsewhere (Martinez-Reyes, 2012, p. 8-9).

Some see the carbon market as an endeavor that in essence cannot be regulated, but the illusion of regulable offsets is sustained partially because climate policy has been captured on both national and international levels by an elite alliance comprised of big businesses, commodities traders, financial firms, neoclassical economic theorists, and an influential group of professionalized middle-class environmentalists, all of whom are set on seeing offset trading expanded rather than abolished. There is scant evidence, however, from experience in the principal climate change markets, that effective mitigation is actually promoted through market mechanisms. These markets have thus far failed to make developed countries take responsibility for their own emissions, instead allowing them to offset emissions by buying permits from REDD+ participant countries such as Uganda.

Disregard for Indigenous Rights

In a number of REDD+ participant countries, the issue of indigenous rights has been brought into question with regards how these rights interact with REDD policy implementation. Indigenous groups in Panama, for instance, have rejected the UN forest plan, seeing it as an attempt at colonization. These indigenous groups allege that the emerging plan was turning into an underhanded effort to weaken indigenous control over their forestland and chip away at their resistance to the potential exploitation of forest resources, ranging anywhere from wood to oil. The groups assert that they themselves look after their forests better than does anyone else. They claim that they were given the impression that REDD+ would strengthen their rights to their territories, while in actuality it would simply give increased control to the local government.

Gabriel Labbate, the UN's regional coordinator for REDD+ in Latin America and the Caribbean, believes however that the resistance in this instance goes further than just REDD apprehensions, fitting into the more complex context of conflicts between indigenous groups and the government of Panama. Arguing against these indigenous groups are those they see as "invaders", comprising those other local groups who cut the forest for agricultural purposes in order to feed themselves and their villages and who are largely pro-REDD+ (Tuckman, 2013, p. 1-2).

In March of 2013, The National Coordinating Body of Indigenous Peoples of Panama (COONAPIP) formally withdrew from the Collaborative Program on Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation (UN-REDD) in Panama. In doing this, they cited claims of the UN-REDD process being inconsistent and not guaranteeing Indigenous rights or Indigenous participation in the decision making process. The Coordinating Body has proceeded to warn Indigenous Peoples to continue to be wary of further deceptive practices by UN bodies and officials ("First Indigenous Peoples' Global Summit on Climate Change held", 2010, p. 15).

In 2010, environmental activist groups from Mexico, Denmark, Canada, and elsewhere protested against the REDD program outside of one of the venues for the UN's Framework Convention on Climate change talks in Cancun, Mexico. These groups are part of the fight to halt pollution, climate change, and environmental degradation, but do not want to do so through the commodification of their forests. Their concerns are based in the belief that indigenous people, who are often custodians of the forests, will be forced off of the land, and that developed countries will continue to exploit forest resources, albeit through more formal processes (Joubert, and Kanina Foss, 2010, p. 18). This feeling is similar to that expressed by indigenous groups in Panama who successfully shut down the REDD program, though the country agreed in

December of 2013 to reopen it. “It’s like putting the forest on the market…It sounds good if you read it, but it’s opening the window to privatizing land. Companies will just buy and continue polluting, and communities won’t be able to use the land again. It’s not reduction, it’s a total lie,” said Mexican student Diego Porras (Joubert, and Kanina Foss, 2010, p. 18).

Indigenous community groups have laid out the ways in which they believe schemes aiming to reduce deforestation and forest degradation should work for those living in and amongst the forest. The main message that they wish to get across is their rejection of top-down policies that undermine community governance and community values. The ‘payments for environmental services’ schemes that are currently elaborated as a part of the REDD program are not seen as positive payments, but rather, they are viewed as undermining indigenous community governances and value systems by introducing the notion that forests have to be conserved only when those conserving are being financially reimbursed for doing so ("Daily Trust", 2012, p. 1).

Many indigenous communities have also requested that attention be paid to land-tenure issues, false and misleading claims that have removed the rights of communities, and empowerment and gender concerns. Resolving the complex issues of land tenure will be vital if the countries in question are to sustainably manage their resources and keep their indigenous populations out of poverty. As these issues have not yet been resolved, the REDD+ mechanism will not be successful in its current form.

> In a recent study of the 10 worst REDD-type projects of all time, an indigenous leader was criminalized for defending his people and territory from a carbon cowboy who duped a community in the Peruvian Amazon into signing a REDD-type contract. Written in English, the contract granted the carbon trader total control the MatsÈs people's land, way of life, intellectual property, forests and carbon and threatened to sue anyone who

> denounced the scam. ("Daily Trust", 2012, p. 2)

One of the most important premises for successful development of the forest sector in the future is raising public awareness about the issues at hand and the potential roadblocks and conflicts that will arise through implementing policies. These indigenous communities call for exclusion of private sector companies in REDD, as they see these parties as being largely responsible for the environmental destruction in the first place. “There is often a lack of trust between these communities and the private sector so there is an opinion that conservation projects funded by these same organizations may have an ulterior motive” ("Daily Trust", 2012, p. 2), said Simone Lovera, Executive Director of the Global Forest Coalition. Top-down forms of support also often ignore women’s rights, which are a vital concern as women tend to be more dependent on forest resources for the majority of their food, fuel and livelihoods, and therefore more likely to take an active role in the protection of their forests than are men ("Daily Trust", 2012, p. 1-2).

REDD as a Mechanism for Developed Countries to Avoid Reducing Emissions

REDD+ is an effort to create financial value for the carbon stored in forests, offering incentives to developing countries for reducing emissions from forested lands and instead investing in low-carbon paths to sustainable development. Many social movements argue that REDD could however be used as a way for rich countries to avoid cutting their own emissions through paying poorer countries to preserve their forests.

> The UNFCCC's scientific sub-committee SBSTA proposed a "very weak" text on safeguards to protect local communities, indigenous peoples and biodiversity at COP17, said CIFOR scientist Louis Verchot. The text initially had strong requirements for collecting data and measuring impacts of REDD+ but had been softened to merely ensure

> developers report on how they are implementing safeguard measures. ("Daily Trust", 2012, p. 1)

This makes initiating the process easier for the governments of developing countries, but does little to ensure that local communities are not being harmed. In discussing the REDD agreements made at the UN's Framework Convention on Climate change talks in Cancun, Carlsen writes that, "This outcome means that developed countries responsible for climate change are let off the hook" (Carlsen, 2010, p. 1). Clean Development Mechanism (CDM) and REDD proposals undermine emissions reduction pledges by expanding the carbon trade market, and thus allowing wealthy countries to purchase the ability to pollute above safe levels. Rather than regulating polluters and mandating cleanups, the UNFCCC agreements made in Cancun reward historical polluters for adapting limited remedial measures exclusively in the area of greenhouse gas emissions (Carlsen, 2010, p. 1-2).

Lack of Success in Developed Countries

In Australia, a developed country hoping to utilize the captured carbon from Indonesia's forests, the widespread excitement and acceptance of REDD has quickly turned to disappointment. The REDD schemes in Indonesia have come under serious criticism for overstating their aims and then underachieving in practice. Five years after implementation of the conservation scheme, Indonesia remained one of the world's biggest deforesters. "Once Australia's best hope for REDD, it is yet to generate a single carbon credit or earn $1 for preserving forests. Credible observers wonder if it ever will" (Bachelard, 2012, p. 2). Australia needs to purchase four hundred thirty-four tons of offsets a year from offshore in order to meet its greenhouse reduction targets and, "It was believed saving Indonesian forests could supply

many of these offshore credits quickly and cheaply" (Bachelard, 2012, p. 2), but thus far REDD does not appear to be a viable solution. In theory, REDD is very simple, "Every tonne of carbon which is locked up in peat lands or inhaled by trees, and saved from logging or palm-oil plantations, creates carbon credits. These credits can be sold to big companies who cannot reduce their own emissions for a lower price, and the profits go to the forest communities, local governments and project proponents" (Bachelard, 2012, p. 2), however the benefits have been slow to emerge. Many Indonesian communities who know more than do most about the REDD program see it as a lie. They are not definitively opposed to the program, but with little or no tangible results, it is difficult for them to maintain faith. Australian entrepreneur Dorjee Sun believes that, "the biggest problem was the failure of the global community to come up with a large-scale carbon market for REDD credits" (Bachelard, 2012, p. 3). Carbon credits are instead bought and sold on the "voluntary market," in which companies often only participate to make themselves appear more "green." If a global trading market evolves under the UN's REDD program, it would have to be a "compliance market," in which financial incentives would be provided to develop REDD schemes (Bachelard, 2012, p. 1-3).

Ecosystem Marketplace suggests in its 2012 report commissioned by several industry trading associations that voluntary markets are pushing the envelope in terms of methods and accountability. Funds are seen by technical critics of REDD and PES markets as offering a more realistic mechanism to reduce the drivers of deforestation and forest degradation than are carbon markets (Brown, 2013, p. 219). Markets suffer from critical challenges involving additionality, leakage, and permanence of carbon sequestered, along with issues regarding social equity pertaining to the fair market value for carbon and to whom any and all revenues go. The topic of additionality is both the most fundamental and the most contentious issue in the carbon-offset

market. In theory, additionality answers the question, “would the activity have occurred, holding all else constant, if the activity were not implemented as an offset project?” (“Additionality - Carbon Markets”, 2014). If the activity would have occurred regardless, the project is not additional. Additionality is thus an essential element in ensuring the integrity of any baseline-and-credit scheme, but it is very difficult to determine in practice. Carbon leakage describes the situation that may occur if, for reasons of costs related to climate policies, businesses were to transfer production to other countries with less strict constraints on greenhouse gas emissions. This is problematic, particularly in relation to Uganda and other REDD+ participant countries, because it could lead to an increase in total emissions, thus making the carbon market counterproductive (“Carbon leakage”, 2014).

An alternative REDD structure is suggested that would rely on a “special fund” and thereby would protect against massive flooding of carbon markets by non-additional credits. With any market system though, it must be asked, should benefits flow to people who have legal rights to the land and carbon-storing resources, or to good forest managers who may not have a clear legal claim to the forest? This is an especially relevant question in Uganda currently, as land tenure is in the process of shifting from the later to the former, and the majority of forest communities lack a clear legal claim to their land. These forest managers also include REDD+ implementers such as private companies or NGOs who bring the investment capital to the table. Until there is a logical framework for assessing and negotiating fair outcomes regarding benefit sharing, REDD+ implementation and success will be constrained (Brown, 2013, p. 225).

CHAPTER 4 - Recommendations and Risks

Amongst the countries that have already begun REDD implementation, a number of key concerns have been brought up, all of which are potential, even likely, problems in Uganda and will prohibit REDD+ from succeeding. The first area of doubt amongst critics is the prevalence of illegal logging, which brings along with it other risks pertaining to corruption. As previously mentioned, there have been a number of cited cases in Uganda of illegal logging practices, and with the growing carbon market and focus on conservation, there is good reason to believe that the illegal trade will continue and potentially escalate. In response, Transparency International (TI) has created a manual aimed at dealing with corruption related to REDD+, looking specifically at the relationship between weak forest carbon accounting and potential for corruption and fraud in REDD. However, "an example of corruption and mismanagement from Uganda suggests that many countries may be "unready" for REDD+, as opposed to ready" (Brown, 2013, p. 237). In this case, forest and conservation sector deliverables have been systematically mismanaged and misappropriated, so while the Transparency International guide is exemplary for providing guidance on issues that civil society groups in Uganda can apply to assess entry points for corruption and proactively plan for it, many practical and non-operational questions remain as to who will take up the guide, and with what political and financial support. Further, companies working illegally now in the forest sector continue to launder illegal logging under fraudulent permits for ranch or plantation establishment schemes, which could open an additional channel for exacerbating risks and impacts to indigenous groups and local communities already burdened by the present corruption and weak governance (Brown, 2013, p. 238). "Proposals to mitigate these risks remain aspirational versus operational" (Brown, 2013, p. 238), which means that illegal issuance of permits and inappropriate zoning could continue to

occur under REDD, much as it historically has. A new, more country specific model must be implemented using the Transparency International manual as a guide and focusing on administrative corruption, if levels of corruption are to be assuaged and illegal logging is to be minimized.

The second major criticism amongst REDD opponents is the level of stakeholder participation in decision making processes. As discussed earlier in this paper, Uganda's R-PP formulation process emphasizes multi-stakeholder consultation and participation in order to sensitize stakeholders, seek their opinions and expectations, and promote an understanding of REDD+, however, critics argue that this is not enough. Despite attempts to be participatory, most people dependent on the tropical forests in Uganda for livelihood security have a limited sense of REDD, its risks, and its potential rewards. "To become a positive force for forest dependent populations, REDD must be guided by clear standards for democratic representation of local populations in REDD decision-making, as well as access to benefits" (Brown, 2013, p. 108), though if REDD only attempts neutrality, it will further deepen inequalities.

The REDD+ mechanism cannot and will not be successful in Uganda in its current form, and in order to better the program and take steps closer towards successful REDD+ implementation in Uganda, a social contract generated through multi-stakeholder negotiation must be the first step. "Avoiding deforestation successfully will require that an effective and equitable social contract be negotiated between the core group of stakeholders who must establish the framework for a viable global initiative" (Brown, 2013, p. 259). This, however, has never been a premise under REDD, as key groups of stakeholders have consistently been left out of the framing of REDD and its priorities, thus its viability has been undermined. Avoiding deforestation is not something that will readily become the priority of indigenous peoples or

local communities, as the presumption in REDD would have it, unless a solid rationale is provided. The men and women in Uganda depend too heavily on forest resources to readily give up timber harvesting and other practices without a compelling incentive. These local stakeholders are at the front lines of where tropical deforestation occurs, and they hold leverage over both the short and long term success of any initiative seeking to avoid deforestation, thus figuring out how to involve them coherently at international, national, and local levels in the framing of a new social contract for avoiding deforestation must become a top priority. Furthermore, the prospect of losing one's livelihood through an inability to harvest firewood and timber, exacerbated levels of poverty, loss of future development opportunities in agriculture, relocation, intra-community conflict, and other risks are inordinately high for these forest communities. This being the case, REDD pilot projects under the R-PP process must do as much as possible to ease concerns before REDD+ is fully implemented in Uganda.

While a range of stakeholders are involved in the REDD process and stand to benefit extensively, "the potential costs of failed REDD projects, meanwhile, stand to be inordinately borne by community level groups on the front lines of policy and project implementation" (Brown, 2013, p. 161). These stakeholders will suffer most directly from negative impacts and opportunity costs of changed resource use patterns fundamental to livelihoods, should REDD fail. The major beneficiaries from any REDD carbon trading schemes will likely turn out to be traders and intermediaries, including government entities such as the forest and park services, as opposed to local participating peoples.

> While capacity building at all levels of multilateral, bilateral, and NGO programming has persistently been recognized as needed for decades now, comprehensive capacity building strategies and programming have *never* become fully prioritized at any level of

donor programming involving development and environment. (Brown, 2013, p. 178) Aside from the initial outreach process in which consultations were conducted, it seems as though little has been done with regards to capacity building, thus rural Ugandan peoples have largely remained stuck, overly dependent on external sources to come and resolve their problems, as opposed to being able to work towards maintaining their forest resources themselves.

As previously discussed, women are key stakeholders who stand to suffer disproportionately from REDD+ implementation in Uganda. Institutionalized exclusion of women in the forest sector is a global phenomenon, largely because forests are managed and policies are designed both for and by men, and women's literacy rates are low, but while men's work is often linked to timber and markets, and thus more visible, women generally use forests to support their families (Brown, 2013, p. 242). In the Ssese Islands off the coast of Uganda for instance, where conservation measures have been put in place, "Sarah Namwanje used to collect timber and charcoal from the forests that she could sell to people around the island. Now the 28-year-old mother of seven has no way to make money" (Green, 2011). Local officials warn residents about cutting down trees, telling them that the forest is critical for preserving the island's animal life, thus women who depend on these forest resources are forced to become secretive about gathering timber. "Gender inclusion is a topic that historically has received much publicity and attention, yet has remained resistant in many instances to significant progress" (Brown, 2013, p. 242). Because of women's dependence on the forests and potential livelihoods being lost through conservation measures, it is important that revenue sharing strategies be vigilantly put in place so not to further support regressive gender imbalances.

The third major concern is the issue of carbon tenure. This is probably the most difficult

issue to address within the REDD+ framework as Uganda's land tenure system is in transition, and the different understandings of ownership are already a major source of conflict. Uganda's customary tenure system is one in which land is a resource for which people have use-rights. In this understanding, unconditional individual ownership of land is not permitted, but access to land for individuals in accordance with community authority is encouraged. In contrast, Uganda's freehold, mailo and leasehold systems are based on individual ownership, where land is individually owned with exclusive rights, and acquired through formal contractual agreements. The majority of Ugandans, however, interact with land under the customary tenure system, rather than under either the mailo or freehold tenure systems which require official land titles; while the government holds the view that this is inefficient and delays development (Owaraga, 2012, p. 2-3). Given the "open access" understanding, the state does not have the ability, nor customary owners the means or authority, to manage resources coherently. It is thus unclear how the project development process through Verified Carbon Standard initiatives, or the national policy setting through the R-PP process, is mitigating tenure constraints beyond the obligatory acknowledgement of urgency. The Forest Carbon Partnership Facility considers how carbon rights are addressed in laying out the REDD project design, though it is vague in identifying the tools and sequencing needed to satisfy the assessments that would be needed to comprehensively clarify respective rights. Before any REDD+ projects are implemented in Uganda, this must be addressed or else the local communities, those who will be held largely responsible for forest conservation, and need and deserve to benefit most from the carbon market, will see little in return for their conservation efforts.

A fourth concern in REDD+ implementation, that has seen much criticism and caused much resistance to projects elsewhere, is the disregard for indigenous rights. As opposed to

going over the heads of indigenous groups, it is possible that forest management by local or indigenous communities can be as if not more effective than forest management by national agencies, thus communities may be seen as a solution to forest management in the medium to long term, rather than as an impediment (Brown, 2013, p. 148). With sufficient training, communities have proven to be capable of assessing costs, benefits, and risks in land use planning and then coming up with plans that balance ecological economic, and social variables, ergo there are enough indications that communities, if given the chance to take on roles in REDD that have historically been reserved for external agencies or government, may be able to produce results equal or better than those of external agencies (Brown, 2013, p. 148-9). Furthermore, they could do so at far reduced costs.

If indigenous institutions were seen to be a more integral part of the solution, as opposed to the rhetorical or institutionalized players that they now primarily are under REDD, there would be major political and economic implications. Indigenous communities in Uganda would be likely to protect their forests because they rely so heavily upon them, both for subsistence and for livelihoods. In particular, Ugandan women could be utilized while also being provided substantial employment, as they depend disproportionately on forest resources and much of their work is in the forests. Many jobs will in theory be lost by protecting the forests, thus women can benefit both themselves and the forests by taking jobs managing the forests under REDD. Progressive empowerment of communities in REDD will be critical to success, and does not pose great risks if compared to standard best practice approaches that industry leaders from business and industry non-governmental organizations (BINGO) or the private sector offer. This however cannot happen without well-tailored institutional and technical capacity building, as in most weak nation states parks have been poorly protected due to customary tenure systems.

There will be a willingness to give REDD a try if appropriate mechanisms can be created for these groups to engage coherently in the process. The problem has more to do with the lack of a social contract to serve as a framework for coherently engaging indigenous groups than it does with the inherent antipathy to markets or the notion of turning carbon into a commodity to be traded (Brown, 2013, p. 184). Maximizing information transparency and providing indigenous peoples the capacity building needed to objectively assess whether or not they wish to embark on REDD and whether or not they wish to provide consent is fundamental to REDD's success. If this can be accomplished, perhaps a good number of indigenous groups may actually end up opting for REDD as the best option for the present and the future.

The ultimate success or failure of REDD depends on local people, indigenous groups and otherwise, as the actions of these actors will determine if and how the program is able to act to curb global climate change. Local people can buy into REDD and facilitate its objectives, or they can amass in opposition to REDD. "Instead of *driving* the process in defining how REDD should work, local peoples living in communities continue to be treated as instruments of policies and incentive structures drawn up primarily by expatriate experts" (Brown, 2013, p. 175). In practice this has led REDD and REDD+ to recycle ineffective practices, and focus attention and funding on "technical issues" that will enable carbon trading in markets to proceed. To be successful, peoples' perspectives on fairness must couple with resource sustainability. When empowered and provided sufficient technical support, communities have proven to be capable of cost-effectively developing management rules, so there is no reason that this should be any different if given responsibilities in avoiding deforestation through the implementation of REDD+ policies in Uganda (Brown, 2013, p. 179). Involving local Ugandan forest communities in the thought, decision-making, and implementation processes would provide means for appreciating the

diversity of opinion, thus making REDD+ less risky for all parties involved. Inclusion is also fundamental to building a new social contract in REDD+, as very few credible social contracts presently exist.

A fifth risk in existing REDD projects is the concern that they may be focusing on the wrong deforestation drivers. Deforestation is typically attributed to proximate causes. This is the belief in Uganda's strategy and solution that unsustainable farming practices, charcoal making, timber extraction, amongst other practices, are the problem, without giving a broader contextual analysis of their relation to other systemic drivers. The alternative argument can be made that underlying drivers such as lack of viable agricultural technologies, lack of alternative energy sources, and generalized poverty are what really merit programming focus. In particular, lack of an efficient energy source is a major issue in Uganda. A primary reason for logging is to gather firewood and charcoal, as petroleum is expensive, heavily taxed, and largely unavailable. This is not to say that petroleum is the best, or even a good alternative, but rather that it is yet another unsustainable energy source that is being limited in Uganda, further highlighting the need for an efficient energy source to be developed and provided as an option to local communities. This second set of drivers is far more difficult for implementers to tackle than are the more manageable issues which national policing and forest management services can support. REDD projects currently being designed and implemented do not appear to address these underlying drivers, nor is it clear how the interface between policy and practice in combating and avoiding corruption that REDD may induce is being dealt with (Brown, 2013, p. 177). Proposals to target one component of a system without analysis of the impact on a broader system can have deleterious consequences. The assumption in REDD is that by incentivizing carbon, a suite of sustainable outcomes will follow, but there is no empirical basis for this premise. REDD decision

makers and PDD developers may stand a better chance of success if they build on communities and people, rather than if they become seduced by the idea of a carbon trade (Brown, 2013, p. 181).

CONCLUSION

Given the above analysis of the REDD+ program both in Uganda and in developing countries across the world, it is clear that there are a number of issues that still need to be addressed before REDD+ is able to enter its final implementation phase. If the inherent risks are known and acknowledged, the hope is that countries as a collective as well as individual stakeholders will be in a greater position to weigh the different trade-offs and make educated decisions that promote the best outcome for everyone involved. Without this knowledge, the communities most at risk cannot benefit or benefit from the conservation process, and they will likely suffer severe consequences. If everything is out in the open, and capacity building within forest communities takes place, these people will be better equipped to expedite the conservation process and work towards the best solution possible in terms of conservation obligations for both developed and developing countries, social feasibility, and economic needs.

In order for REDD+ to succeed in Uganda, a number of extremely pertinent issues need to be addressed that have not been sufficiently addressed in the R-PP or elsewhere. These issues include concerns surrounding forestlands and resource availability, a host of governance and community participation concerns, and concerns surrounding capacity and social and human capital. These issues are not being comprehensively addressed through either the FCPF's Strategic Environmental and Social Assessment (SESA) methods, or through the Social and Biodiversity Impact Assessment (SBIA) for voluntary carbon market (VCM) activities (Brown, 2013, p. 107). Most issues relating to the tools, methods, and approaches (TMAs) needed for implementation are treated as such at an implementation level, but by not addressing weak TMAs as a policy issue, programs are set to replicate weak methodological standards at the project level across programs (Brown, 2013, p. 107).

> On its present pathway, deforestation will be exacerbated, climate change indicators from deforestation contributions will worsen, standards of living for tens of millions of forest peoples subject to REDD in developing countries will plunge further, and the contribution from deforestation to African droughts and the next hurricane Sandy will amplify. (Brown, 2013, p. 259)

Corruption, displacement, and overall opportunity costs that result from REDD+ will inordinately impact the politically marginalized, poor local peoples already suffering in Uganda. Positive outcomes and improvements are not guaranteed through conservation efforts, despite looking promising from the outside. Regardless of efforts that have been made and continue to be made in the Readiness Preparation Proposal, women and indigenous groups as a whole often have no voice, and although some progress has been made at the discourse level, this has had little impact on the realities of women and indigenous people who so depend on the forests that REDD is in theory working to conserve. Given this state of affairs, the question is raised whether the prevailing industry "best practice" that relies on participatory rural appraisal standards is going to be good enough to enable indigenous groups to escape their seemingly established fate, or if a different approach will be needed (Brown, 2013, p. 156).

If REDD continues to follow its poorly designed policy plan, dislocations and lost livelihoods for local peoples may ensue, and climate risks may actually be amplified. Forest governance is a political, social, and cultural problem, not simply a technical one, thus in this regard, the way in which the global community has approached REDD, aside from the political dimension at government levels, has been backwards (Brown, 2013, p. 229). The local Ugandan communities are seen as the problem that needs to be somehow mitigated, as opposed to what may be a more productive approach, which entails them being seen as the source of solutions for

deforestation. These communities may be seen as proactive members of the solution if provided with a context of enabling policy reforms, capacity building, and tools to analyze and negotiate feasible outcomes. They care about and depend upon their forests, thus it is in their own best interest to protect them, so long as protecting their forest resources is framed in a constructive and mutually beneficial way. Instead of putting these rural communities in a defensive position in which they will not feel compelled to foster the REDD+ program, the starting point should be maximizing or optimizing gain for local people. This may be done through policies and practices that promote sustainability based on negotiated outcomes, rather than by only attempting to control against harm. Because there is no verification process for safeguards actually being implemented, they become a rhetorical device to project a notational standard for REDD+ project developers. "When no material standard of safeguard practice has been structurally established in project contexts, reaching objective consensus among stakeholders about situations and events is compromised" (Brown, 2013, p. 231). It is unreasonable then to expect that all risks can or will ever be eliminated from REDD+, but governmental and implementing agencies should do their best to control for them. As UN-REDD and FCPF do not demand risk assessments, it is unlikely that Ugandan REDD+ implementers are paying much attention to the social feasibility requirements needed for REDD+ to be sustainable, and are thus amplifying risks to all stakeholders involved and affected.

After the present readiness preparation phase, there are still numerous risks of which to be wary. The lack of preparedness to address social feasibility issues is constraining readiness at all levels of planning and programming. There is also an unpreparedness to meet land tenure challenges, and a lack of adequate policy for avoiding corruption, and mitigating it if it does occur. These, amongst other concerns, show the high risk in beginning full-fledged project

implementation in Uganda on the premise that stakeholders are "ready" simply because the Readiness Preparation Proposal has been completed (Brown, 2013, p. 253).

Despite the countless risks associated, REDD+ might present a feasible opportunity to avoid deforestation and sequester carbon, depending on how decision makers and investors assess the present and the future, and adaptively manage their courses of action. "If approached realistically, with a strategy that empowers people by providing realistic incentives to escape poverty through AD, REDD could offer an opportunity to generate "triple win" outcomes" (Brown, 2013, p. 255). This, however, is dependent on the negotiation of a proper framework, and the support of a formalized social contract that outlines stakeholders' obligations and assumed risks. Without these things, many people, if not everyone, will likely suffer some sort of consequences, but if feasibility analysis drives the planning process, the type of multiple win that is planned for can be achieved.

Presently, REDD+ programming has been technocratically driven and overly abstract. People are placed second in practice, despite the prevailing rhetoric of participation and the primacy of people that UN-REDD and FCPF lay out. Rather than being an exercise of the people, which is necessary for resource management to work in Uganda where property is collectively owned and where competing claims exist, REDD+ continues to perpetuate a top-down planning process (Brown, 2013, p. 257). In order to succeed, alternative incentive structures must be implemented to allow for the emergence of more appropriate and sustainable funding arrangements. First, a policy for transparency in planning and decision-making must be established. Second, adaptive management capacity needs to be established for implementing the framework. Third, a credible comprehensive capacity building design is needed, and fourth, solutions for resource tenure constraints and incentives must be clarified.

In order for the REDD+ program to be redeemed in Uganda, the design must be changed to be driven by social feasibility, and a new social contract should be established between core stakeholders that is negotiated at national, sub-national, and international levels. The forest-dependent communities need to be front and center in planning and decision-making, a premise that has been thoroughly neglected to date. In it's current state, the REDD+ mechanism will be met with disaster on the basis of the ineffectiveness of governance arrangements that fail to bring stakeholders equitability into the process, thus equitability must be a central focus when looking at the various trade-offs if REDD+ is to have any success in the long run. Expert social analysis coupled with the outreach programs implemented in the R-PP phase are no substitute for effective stakeholder engagement, as external expertise cannot represent local understandings and approval. For REDD+ to avoid further and counter past deforestation and forest degradation, policy focus needs to shift from frameworks designed to enable external experts to shape policy and decision-making, and prioritize a social feasibility framework. Information should be provided to both local and national stakeholders living closest to forest resources, as these are the actors with the greatest ability to oversee, manage, and defend conservation interests. Local people will be most directly responsible for reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation, and overseeing that it is done. For best results, these groups should be tasked with responsibilities regarding conservation, sustainable management of forests, and enhancement of forest carbon stocks (Brown, 2013, p. 266), but again, these responsibilities can only be given if institutional, technical, human resource, and financial capacity issues are first addressed. Before REDD+ implementation begins, forest communities must be provided the resources and education necessary to empower them to protect their forests while also maintaining their own well being financially, culturally, and socially.

Focusing on formal land titling to reform tenure in REDD+ programming may inadvertently undermine constructive steps forward. The Ugandan government must either clarify tenure rights in a manner that will enable equitable development to proceed, while protecting against land grabbing and other injustices, or approach tenure ambiguity through negotiation strategies, rather than definitive legislative reform. In the current REDD+ design, there is too much reliance on moral imperatives and overly general recommendations. The REDD+ Readiness Phase does not appear to be achieving what is needed to methodologically inform REDD+ beyond a nominal and normative sense, thus the informed voice of REDD-impacted peoples needs to be integrated into decision making processes as well as that of the government and outside experts. Forest peoples with customary rights to forest resources must become aware of the full cost, benefit, and risk implications of REDD+ as a first step in feasibility and sustainability. The goal of REDD+ in Uganda is to ensure that local people who are dependent on the forests realize multiple benefits, including biodiversity conservation, financial benefits from selling carbon credits, and the improvement of their livelihoods. These benefits will not be obtained if REDD+ is implemented in following with Uganda's R-PP as it currently stands, but they may be obtained in the future if the proposed recommendations are followed and the concerns are addressed. If the REDD+ mechanism is implemented under existing policies, the most vulnerable stakeholders will suffer.

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