

ABSTRACT

Title of Dissertation: PARTICIPATION AND DEVOLUTION IN
ZIMBABWE'S CAMPFIRE PROGRAM: FINDINGS
FROM LOCAL PROJECTS IN MAHENYE AND
NYAMINYAMI

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Participation and devolution are central components of CAMPFIRE, Zimbabwe's community-based natural resource management program. Here I report the results of case studies of two important CAMPFIRE projects, one in Mahenye ward and the other in Nyaminyami district. These two influential projects were both studied repeatedly up through 2000. Since 2000, however, research on CAMPFIRE has been limited by two powerful external shocks: the end of international donor funding for CAMPFIRE and the beginning of Zimbabwe's severe national political and economic crisis. In my research, conducted in 2004 and 2006, I compared current conditions in the two sites with results reported in pre-2000 studies. Through this comparison, I examined the impact of the two external shocks on project performance. In my fieldwork, I focused on the quality of community participation and the level of devolution of authority for wildlife

management. Key findings from the case studies include: (1) the extent and quality of community participation has declined sharply in both sites; (2) capture of benefits by local elites has contributed significantly to these declines; (3) lack of full devolution to the communities, which is frequently cited as a critical weakness in CAMPFIRE, played a relatively minor role in shaping outcomes; (4) the loss of NGO support that followed the end of donor funding had severe negative effects on outcomes; and (5) the national political and economic crisis, while detrimental, had less of an impact than expected. After discussing these findings, I offer recommendations for addressing problems of participation and devolution in CAMPFIRE.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF TABLES	vi
LIST OF FIGURES	vii
LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS.....	viii
CHAPTER 1. Introduction to the Study	1
1.1. Overview.....	1
1.2. Statement of the Problem.....	3
1.3. Purpose and Significance of the Study	6
1.4. Research Questions and Study Design	8
1.4.1. Research Questions.....	8
1.4.2. Study Design.....	10
1.5. Brief Introduction to the Case Studies.....	12
1.6. Organization of the Paper	15
CHAPTER 2. Community-Based Natural Resource Management	17
2.1. Origins.....	17
2.2. Community and Participation	21
2.2.1. Community	21
2.2.2. Participation	24
2.3. CBNRM and Donor Funding.....	32
2.4. Critiques of CBNRM	36
2.4.1. Assumptions.....	37
2.4.2. Implementation	38
2.4.3. Hidden Agendas.....	39
2.4.4. Comments	40
CHAPTER 3. Zimbabwe’s National Context.....	41
3.1. Background.....	41
3.2. Pre-colonial and Colonial Period.....	41
3.3. Post-independence: 1980-2000.....	45
3.3.1. Party Politics: 1980-2000.....	46
3.3.2. Land Policy	47
3.3.3. Governance, Wildlife Law, and Institutional Context	49
3.3.4. Traditional Institutions of Power	51
3.4. Current Political and Economic Crisis: 2000-Present	54
CHAPTER 4. CAMPFIRE	57
4.1. Background and Objectives	57
4.2. Implementation	61
4.2.1. Institutional Structures	61
4.2.2. Project Activities, Revenues, and Other Benefits.....	67

4.3. Key Achievements	71
4.4. Critiques	73
4.5. Impact of the Current Political and Economic Crisis	76
CHAPTER 5. Methods	80
5.1. Introduction.....	80
5.2. Qualitative Case Study Techniques	80
5.3. Limitations	86
CHAPTER 6. Mahenye Case Study	90
6.1. Background.....	90
6.2. Findings from the Fieldwork	91
6.2.1. Description of the Mahenye CAMPFIRE Project	91
6.2.2. Participation	106
6.2.3. Devolution.....	111
CHAPTER 7. Nyaminyami Case Study	114
7.1. Background.....	114
7.2. Findings from the Fieldwork	116
7.2.1. Description of the Nyaminyami CAMPFIRE Project	116
7.2.2. Participation	128
7.2.3. Conservation	132
CHAPTER 8. Discussion and Comparative Analysis	133
8.1. Overview.....	133
8.2. Discussion	136
8.2.1. Community Development.....	136
8.2.2. Participation	138
8.2.3. Reasons for Failure	141
8.2.4. Conservation	144
8.2.5. Return to the Research Questions: Devolution.....	146
8.2.6. Return to the Research Questions: Participation	148
CHAPTER 9. Recommendations and Conclusions	153
9.1. Overview.....	153
9.2. Recommendations.....	156
9.3. Recommendations for Further Research.....	163
9.4. Conclusion	164
REFERENCES	165

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1. Pimbert and Pretty's Typology of Participation.	28
Table 2. UNCDF's Typology of Participation.....	29
Table 3. USAID Allocation of Funds in NRMP II.....	66
Table 4. Summary of Post-2000 Changes.....	136

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1. Map of the Study Sites	12
Figure 2. CAMPFIRE Institutional Structure	62
Figure 3. Map of the Mahenye Study Site.	90
Figure 4. Map of the Nyaminyami Study Site.	114

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ART	Africa Resources Trust
BSP	Biodiversity Support Program
CAMPFIRE	Communal Areas Management Programme for Indigenous Resources
CASS	Centre for Applied Social Sciences
CBNRM	Community-based natural resource management
CCG	CAMPFIRE Collaboration Group
CDF	CAMPFIRE Development Fund
CFU	(Zimbabwe) Commercial Farmers Union
CITES	Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species
DA	Development Associates
DNPWM	Department of National Parks and Wildlife Management
ESAP	Economic Structural Adjustment Program
EU	European Union
GAO	(US) General Accounting Office (Government Accountability Office)
IUCN	Int'l Union for the Conservation of Nature (World Conservation Union)
IUCN-ROSA	IUCN Regional Office for Southern Africa
MDC	Movement for Democratic Change
MLGRUD	Ministry of Local Government and Rural and Urban Development
NGO	Nongovernmental organization
NRMP	Initiative for Southern Africa Natural Resources Management Program
RDC	Rural District Council
UNCDF	United Nations Capital Development Fund
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
US	United States
US\$	US dollar
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
VIDCO	Village Development Committee
VWC	Village Wildlife Committee
WADCO	Ward Development Committee
WWC	Ward Wildlife Committee
WWF	World Wide Fund for Nature (World Wildlife Fund)
WWF-SARPO	WWF Southern Africa Regional Programme Office
Z\$	Zimbabwe dollar
ZANU	Zimbabwe African National Union
ZANU-PF	Zimbabwe African National Union-Patriotic Front
ZAPU	Zimbabwe African People's Union
ZimTrust	Zimbabwe Trust

CHAPTER 1. Introduction to the Study

1.1. Overview

In the late 1980s, the government of Zimbabwe instituted a national program combining wildlife conservation and rural development known as CAMPFIRE (Communal Areas Management Programme for Indigenous Resources) (Metcalfe 1994). CAMPFIRE centers on the use of community-based natural resource management (CBNRM) to generate revenue for the country's underdeveloped rural districts through sustainable use of wildlife and habitat in these outlying areas. The expressed logic of the program is that once income from sustainable use of wildlife flows to the communities, local residents will have the incentives to support rather than undermine conservation efforts and local districts will have a reliable source of funds for community development (Hulme & Murphree 2001a).

The program was in part a response to injustices that occurred before Zimbabwe became independent in 1980. During the colonial era, lands set aside as game reserves were often expropriated from the traditional territory of local communities. Compounding the insult, the regime asserted ownership of all wildlife, both inside and outside protected areas. Thus, community members were forbidden to hunt either in the newly established game reserves or in the resettlement areas. Not surprisingly, poaching and conflicts with wildlife management authorities were common (Murphree 2001). After independence, CAMPFIRE was an effort to defuse these conflicts and redress the grievances by providing the opportunity for locals to benefit from wildlife. The program

had the additional benefit of helping fund local government institutions in the previously neglected rural districts.

CBNRM, on which CAMPFIRE is based, attempts to integrate environmental conservation and local community development. The CBNRM concept emerged in the early 1980s as an alternative to top-down, state-centered environmental protection regimes instituted in the 1960s and 1970s. Many observers judged these earlier conservation efforts to have failed, locally and globally, in promoting sustainable practices (Gibson & Marks 1995; Matzke & Nabane 1996). The central idea of CBNRM is devolution of control over natural resources from the state or other external agents to the community, with an emphasis on participatory democracy (Li 2002; Western & Wright 1994). CBNRM quickly become a primary strategy for conservation action in developing nations where rural communities, often the poorest segments of society, have long inhabited and managed ecologically valuable regions. Underlying the approach is the belief that, to be effective over the long-term, resource management programs must offer local residents clearly defined rights, responsibilities, and benefits.

Despite the compelling economic logic and social ideals of CBNRM and CAMPFIRE, however, outcomes in the field have often been disappointing (Alexander & McGregor 2000; Hasler 1999; Murombedzi 2001; Newsham 2002). In particular, observers have often criticized the program for its lack of complete devolution (Murombedzi 1992; Murphree 2004). Under CAMPFIRE's enabling statutes, authority for resource management passes to the rural district councils (RDCs) rather than to the communities, which hold land in common and therefore lack legal property tenure. Others have noted that participation is a potential weak point (Dzingirai 2003a).

Traditional communities typically do not have deeply rooted norms of electoral politics, gender equity, power sharing, and other characteristics supporting deliberative democracy (Agrawal & Gibson 1999). To assess the depth and quality of community participation in practice and to explore the impact of levels of participation on outcomes, I investigated, using a case study approach, the performance of two important and well-known CAMPFIRE projects. I report the results of my study in this thesis.

1.2. Statement of the Problem

Integrated conservation programs including CBNRM call for devolution of authority and local participation not only as desirable ends in themselves but also as means to promote effective natural resource management and community development (Wyckoff-Baird et al. 2000). Thus governance plays a central role in CBRNM. While recognizing that various definitions of governance can be found in the literature (Frederickson & Smith 2003; Lynn et al. 2001), I adopt in this discussion a meaning in common use that equates the quality of governance with institutional performance on a set of interrelated variables. Among the most important of these variables are transparency, accountability, capacity, control of corruption, devolution, and participation (Kaufmann et al. 2005; USAID 1998a). Although the focus of my investigation is on devolution and participation, I also discuss the other governance variables since they are interlinked and all affect outcomes in the case study areas.

A new focus on these variables among experts has helped drive a broad global reform effort to improve public sector outcomes at all levels from the national to the local. As the list of governance indicators suggests, processes of governance may be as

important as concrete results. Supporting this view, Volcker et al., (1999, p. 3) state “that how government acts is often as important as what it does, that good government is measured by process as well as purpose”. Sen (1999, p. 36) makes the point more strongly in arguing that the opportunity for people to exercise social, economic, and political rights, in other words to function under a system that satisfies the criteria of good governance, “is both (1) the *primary end* and the *principal means* of development” (emphasis in original).

More directly relevant to my study, researchers in various disciplines touching on links between conservation and development also now emphasize the importance of governance. Scholars of collective action in the management of common-pool resources, for example, highlight the impact of local norms, institutions, and rules-in-use on social and environmental outcomes (A. Agrawal 2001; Baland & Platteau 1996; Dietz et al. 2002; Ostrom 1990; Wade 1988). Contributors to the literature in geography, political ecology, and conservation biology commonly consider devolution, participation, and other sociopolitical indicators as key criteria for assessing probabilities for success in conservation efforts (Berkes 2004; Neumann 1998; Redford et al. 2006; Robbins 1998).

Practitioners and stakeholders in CBNRM, including international donors, national ministries, nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), and academics are also now paying greater attention to governance in project management. This shift in focus has strengthened following the emergence of evidence from the field indicating that in practice CBNRM, despite its early promise and compelling underlying logic, often falls short of expectations (Agrawal & Gibson 1999; Brandon et al. 1998; Goldman 2003; Hackel 1999) and that poor performance is often correlated with weak governance (A.

Agrawal 2001; Bowles & Gintis 2002; Murphree 2004). The United States Agency for International Development (USAID), for example, in reviewing its 20 years of experience with CBNRM finds that where decision-making processes are not transparent, accountable, and responsive, both conservation and development are likely to suffer (USAID 2004). The agency's assessment notes that the converse is also true—that there are multiple, positive, mutually reinforcing interactions that connect good governance with effective environmental management, community empowerment, and sustainable local livelihoods.

As with other governance variables, participation is important both as an end and as a means. In terms of ethical and democratic principles, it is right and proper for people to participate in debating and deciding matters that affect their well being (Crocker forthcoming). Also participation leads to a sense of ownership and responsibility and a clear understanding of purpose, thus contributing to improved outcomes. Moreover in participatory projects, community members are motivated to monitor environmental and social changes to strengthen adaptive management.

Experience with CBNRM to date has demonstrated that, although straightforward in concept, integrating conservation and development is often problematic in practice (Brandon & Wells 1992; Larson et al. 1998). For instance, during implementation, projects that attempt to address conservation and development simultaneously often bring together a multiplicity of stakeholders, including government agencies, private sector firms, and national and international NGOs, with divergent goals, incentives, worldviews, and expertise. At the same time, local communities are not homogeneous, but rather are made up of differing groups—defined for example by gender, power, economic status,

education, age, and so on—with distinct interests, agendas, needs, resources, abilities, and expectations (Agrawal & Gibson 1999; Crocker 1991). Thus, despite the straightforward underlying logic of economic incentives, CBNRM programs in practice are highly complex with multiple social, cultural, political and ecological factors that can affect performance.

Regarding the CAMPFIRE program specifically, questions of governance have been central from the outset. The program began with negotiations and compromise relating to devolution (Hulme & Murphree 2001a; Metcalfe 1994), and, as mentioned above, many observers contend that a key flaw in the program’s design and implementation is that authority for wildlife management remains at the level of the RDCs instead of being transferred directly to the communities (Logan & Moseley 2002; Matzke & Nabane 1996; Murombedzi 1999). Murphree (2004), an influential scholar of CAMPFIRE, now argues in reflecting on the program’s first 15 years that governance should be considered more fundamental than either conservation or development, the interlocking goals that drove its original design. He writes that “institutional resilience is the pivotal variable” and that “communal approaches, which emphasize conservation or economic development are missing an essential element and are unlikely to be sustained” (Murphree 2004, p. 211).

1.3. Purpose and Significance of the Study

While various authors have discussed general issues related to participation by local people in CAMPFIRE (Matzke & Nabane 1996; Murombedzi 1999), to my knowledge no studies critically examine in detail in individual projects the factors that

support or constrain participation, the actual nature of participation by various subgroups, and the impact of the extent and quality of participation on project outcomes. My research helps fill this gap. Taking into account the context of Zimbabwe's ongoing national crisis and considering both processes and outcomes, I examine the history and current status of the Mahenye and Nyaminyami CAMPFIRE projects. I analyze the performance of institutions and leaders along several dimensions of governance, including devolution, while keeping a sharp focus on community participation.

Although difficulties with CBNRM programs are widely acknowledged (Brandon et al. 1998; Murphree 2004), this study argues that practical problems associated with participation, a key element underpinning the CBNRM approach, have yet to be directly assessed. Unanswered questions include the following. How broad, deep, and sustained is community participation in specific cases? What shapes the kind of participation that occurs? And how does the nature of participation affect the level of success in achieving conservation and development goals?

Frequently, innovative and promising new approaches—including decentralized, participatory projects such as CBNRM—have unintended consequences or unwittingly establish perverse incentives that may undermine rather than promote the expressed goals. Thus, critical assessments of the major assumptions on which the new conservation models are based are crucial for understanding performance. Since participation is now accepted as a vital tool for responsible conservation, detailed case studies of CBNRM programs such as those I describe here are important in that they may reveal areas of weakness and suggest alternate approaches to improve outcomes.

The prevailing adverse national economic and political conditions in Zimbabwe since 2000 have limited research on projects in the field. These adverse conditions have also destabilized CAMPFIRE projects and thus have the potential to provide useful lessons for project managers, community members, and other stakeholders. In this regard, my research provides important information on the performance of CAMPFIRE under duress.

1.4. Research Questions and Study Design

1.4.1. Research Questions

I began the investigation with a set of key general questions related to the extent and quality of participation in the case study communities. Given that devolution of wildlife management authority from the central government to local institutions is a critical component in CBNRM, I also had a set of questions related to the effect of the level of devolution on program performance.

Ethnographic case studies often lead in unforeseen directions. Therefore while these broad sets of questions guided my research from the outset, more specific questions emerged as I went forward with the study. During the course of my field research, initial findings reinforced the importance of some questions, made others less relevant, and also suggested new lines of inquiry. To accommodate the unexpected realities on the ground, I altered some of the questions I had framed at the beginning and where appropriate developed new ones with a view to striking a balance between flexibility and consistency.

The following broad questions on community participation remained central throughout my research:

1. What was the extent and quality of participation in the two sites at the outset and up through 2000?
2. What was the extent and quality of participation in the two sites at the time of my research?
3. What factors caused the observed changes, if any, in extent and quality of participation from the pre-2000 to post-2000 periods?
4. How did the extent and quality of participation affect project outcomes related to conservation and development?
5. What do the findings regarding the extent and quality of participation imply for efforts to improve CBNRM?

Broad questions on devolution included the following:

1. What were the effects on project performance of the devolution of authority for wildlife management to the RDCs rather than to the communities?
2. To what extent did these effects match predictions by critics of the CAMPFIRE devolution process?
3. What were the effects, if any, of the post-2000 changes on devolution and other related governance practices?
4. What are the implications for program design and management of the findings regarding the appropriate kind and level of devolution in CBNRM?

During my interviews, I typically began with the following specific questions:

1. What was your understanding of the CAMPFIRE project's objectives?

2. What were your expectations for the project?
3. From your perspective, have project objectives been met?
4. Have your personal expectations been met?
5. How have you been involved in project activities?
6. Have you observed changes in the project since its inception?
7. What is your opinion and assessment of the RDC's involvement?
8. What has most satisfied and dissatisfied you regarding the project?
9. What are your opinions about and experiences with external NGOs, such as World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF), the CAMPFIRE Association, and Zimbabwe Trust (ZimTrust)?
10. How has the project been affected by donor funding?
11. From your perspective, how has the current national political and economic crisis affected the project?

After beginning with these opening questions, whether speaking to outside experts, local leaders, or rural community members, I would then let my respondents guide continuing conversations so that I could get as much insight as possible into their experiences, perceptions, and opinions.

1.4.2. Study Design

I conducted field research in Zimbabwe during two periods: July-August 2004 for the Mahenye case, and February-March 2006 for the Nyaminyami case. The prevailing national political and economic crisis in Zimbabwe, which began in 2000, made it

difficult for me to carry out the research for both cases within the same year. Travel to the case study areas, which are located in isolated parts of the country, required that I have a sufficient supply of fuel. However, the economic situation has created severe fuel shortages in the country. I therefore had to wait for windows of opportunity that allowed me to undertake the research.

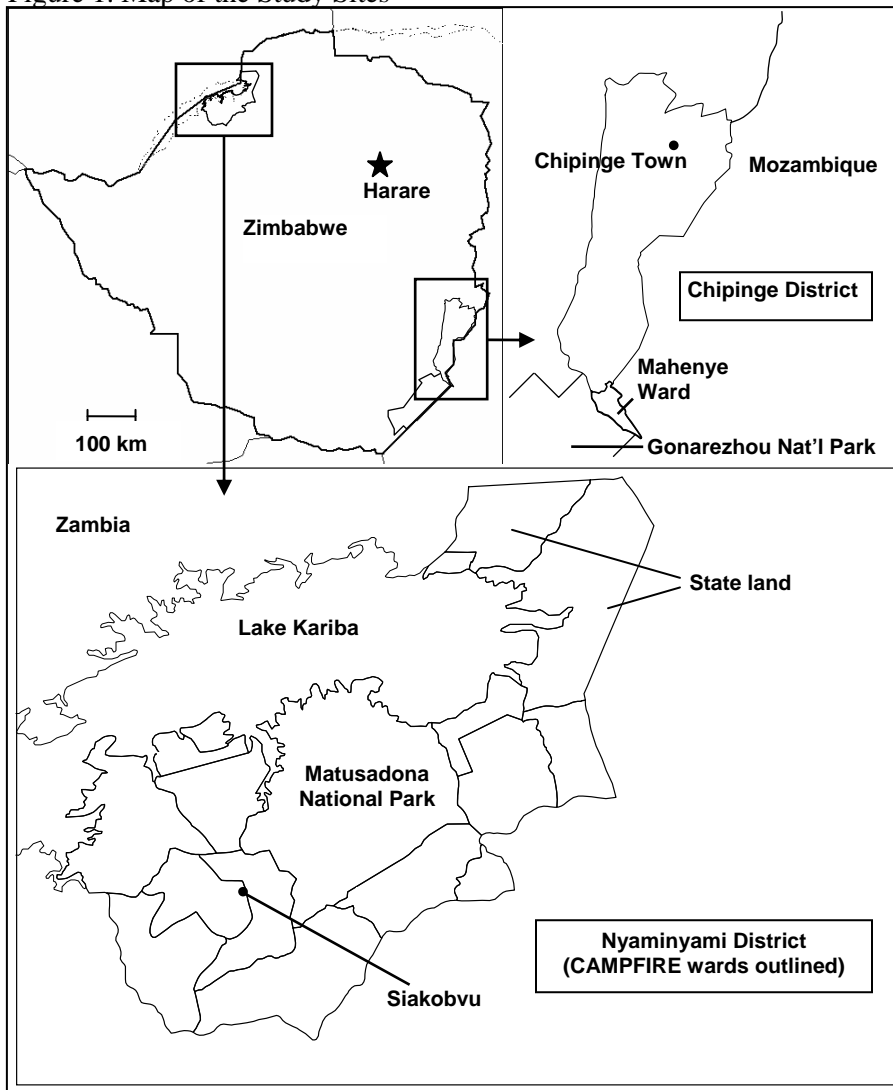
In conducting the two case studies I used established tools of qualitative social science research (Cook & Crang 1995; Dexter 1970; Protti 1999). I gathered data through reviews of project documents and other written sources, interviews with key informants, discussions with focus groups of community members, and personal observations in the field. I integrated this information to derive detailed narratives describing how the projects developed and were implemented and how community members participated in and were affected by the projects.

In carrying out the field research, I utilized my knowledge of Zimbabwean languages, politics, traditions, and customs. In a previous career, I worked for the Parliament of Zimbabwe for nearly 14 years and thus have an in-depth knowledge of the country's politics, institutions, and leaders. Moreover, as a native speaker of Shona I was able to communicate with villagers in a local language familiar to all residents. My knowledge of the rural traditions of Zimbabwe also enabled me to pay appropriate respects to the community members whom I interviewed and to understand and respond appropriately to nonverbal cues that non-native researchers may have missed or misunderstood.

1.5. Brief Introduction to the Case Studies

At its inception in 1989, the CAMPFIRE program emerged from three pilot programs: in Mahenye ward, Nyaminyami district, and Masoka ward. The first two of these are my case study sites (Figure 1).

Figure 1. Map of the Study Sites



Source: Adapted from maps provided by WWF-SARPO.

CAMPFIRE has provided a critically important learning experience driving the evolution of CBNRM in southern Africa and the developing world at large (Matzke & Nabane 1996; Li 2002). Scholars and practitioners have followed outcomes in

CAMPFIRE closely, both across Zimbabwe and in Mahenye and Nyaminyami in particular. CAMPFIRE in general has been studied repeatedly because it was one of the first examples of national level CBNRM (Alexander & McGregor 2000; Chaumba et al. 2003; Derman 1995; Logan & Moseley 2002; Muchapondwa 2003; Newsham 2002). The project in Nyaminyami rural district attracted the interest of researchers for two reasons. First, the area satisfied several criteria thought to be necessary for successful implementation of CBNRM, including rich wildlife resources, local poverty, and conflicts between wildlife conservation and local livelihoods. In principle, these characteristics should support the development of local community-based wildlife management projects that are both economically and ecologically sustainable. Second, the RDC in Nyaminyami, which has statutory authority for program management, chose an approach to community engagement that was representative rather than directly participatory, thus raising questions of the appropriate form of governance in CBNRM (Metcalf 1994; Murombedzi 1992). Mahenye is of particular interest because it has frequently been cited as a strong CAMPFIRE project with a positive record (Bond 2001; Matanhire 2003; Murphree 1995, 2001; Peterson 1991). Moreover, local leaders in Mahenye, unlike in Nyaminyami, established at the outset a system of community participation that was designed to be directly participatory.

Thus, Nyaminyami and Mahenye serve as useful test cases. They are both long-running projects with well-documented track records. The two sites have similar levels of poverty, and both are located in remote areas of Zimbabwe—Mahenye in the southeast lowveld and Nyaminyami in the Zambezi valley (Figure 1).

The Mahenye community is made up of descendents of Shangaan migrants who moved up from the south during the 19th century. Other Shangaan people live in neighboring areas in northern South Africa and western Mozambique. The Shangaan in Zimbabwe form a tiny minority of the national population. Their territory is isolated and their land has marginal agricultural potential. Prior to eradication programs conducted in the 1960s and 1970s, ubiquitous tsetse flies further isolated the region and limited livestock husbandry.

The land the Shangaan people currently occupy lies across the Save River from Gonarezhou National Park. Colonial authorities expropriated the land for the reserve in the 1960s and forcibly resettled the people of Mahenye on the land they now occupy. After independence the new government reneged on a promise to return the protected area to its former occupants. Under both pre- and post-independence regimes, the clan was forbidden to hunt wildlife either on their former lands or in their new settlements. Not surprisingly, conflicts arose relating to poaching and other unauthorized resource use. In the early 1980s, a local white rancher, who had good relations with the locals, worked to mediate the conflicts. As discussed in detail in later chapters, the experimental collaborative plan that emerged helped lay the groundwork for CAMPFIRE.

The traditional population of Nyaminyami, on the other hand, is made up of ethnic Tonga, another tiny minority group in Zimbabwe. The majority of the Tonga people live in southern Zambia, across the Zambezi River. The completion of the Kariba Dam in 1960 separated the two groups of Tonga. The rising waters of Lake Kariba drove the Tonga on the southern side in what is now Zimbabwe from their fertile bottomlands up onto higher ground. In their new settlement area, they were cut off from traditional

trading routes, the land had poor fertility, and wildlife densities were high. Wild animals, too, had been forced to higher ground. The government established Matusadona National Park in the middle of what became Nyaminyami district as a sanctuary for wildlife. As in Mahenye, factors including marginal agricultural potential, dense populations of wild animals, severe tsetse fly infestations, and strict prohibition on local subsistence hunting deepened poverty and led to conflict with conservation authorities. When CAMPFIRE began in 1989, Nyaminyami was one of the first districts given authority to manage wildlife for local benefit.

1.6. Organization of the Paper

The paper includes nine chapters. After this introduction, chapter 2 presents a review of the literature on several topics related to CBNRM. This discussion provides a theoretical foundation for the case study interpretations and for the tentative conclusions and recommendations. Sections in the chapter include a discussion of the origins of the CBNRM concept and a review of the importance of participation and devolution in CBNRM.

Chapter 3 considers the national context in which Zimbabwe's CBNRM program was initiated and is currently operating. In addition to discussing the historical background of Zimbabwe's environmental policy, this chapter also reviews the country's current political and economic crisis.

Chapter 4 provides an overview of Zimbabwe's CAMPFIRE program focusing on relevant background material to support understanding of the case study results. In this chapter I discuss the program's objectives, implementation practices, key achievements,

and common criticisms. Here I also review the impact of the current national crisis on CAMPFIRE performance.

Chapter 5 details the methodology I applied in this investigation. I explain and justify the research design and methods. I offer a general review of the case study approach and describe how I adapted and applied this methodology in the current investigation. I also consider the strengths and weaknesses of case study research and acknowledge its limitations.

Chapters 6 and 7 provide detailed narratives of the Mahenye and Nyaminyami case studies, respectively.

Chapter 8 offers a comparative analysis of findings from the two projects. For a broader perspective, the comparative analysis also refers to the findings from previous studies reported in the literature.

Chapter 9 concludes the paper. This chapter offers policy recommendations, suggests avenues for further research, and presents a brief summation.

CHAPTER 2. Community-Based Natural Resource Management

2.1. Origins

Community-based natural resource management is an approach to environmental protection in rural areas that attempts to integrate the goals of conservation, sustainable development, and community participation (Wainwright & Wehrmeyer 1998). CBNRM projects, particularly in eastern and southern Africa, frequently focus on conservation of wildlife, but in principle the method may be used for management of a range of natural resources (Brandon & Wells 1992; Newmark & Hough 2000). The approach has been applied widely in the developing world, including in Zimbabwe, the site of the case studies reviewed in this dissertation (Larson et al. 1998; Marks 2001).

The concept of CBNRM emerged and gained popularity in the early 1980s as an alternative to resource management regimes that were generally perceived to be failing (Gibson & Marks 1995; Matzke & Nabane 1996). Existing top-down conservation policies and strategies relied on strict protection of protected areas that excluded humans from the landscape. This “fortress conservation,” also referred to as “fences and fines” (Wells et al. 1992) or “coercive conservation” (Peluso 1993), for a long time dominated conservation thinking internationally

Central to this approach is the belief that human beings and wilderness are not compatible and should be kept apart (Wells et al. 1992). The model treats local people’s traditional rights of use and access as encroachment and poaching (Hasler 1999). Traditional usufruct is criminalized (Neumann 1998). The premise is that without strict

protection from human activities, wildlife and other ecological values will be overexploited or replaced by livestock, agriculture, and settlements.

In Africa, the colonial interest in sport hunting and the redefinition of subsistence hunting as poaching merged with the international consensus about nature reserves. This merging of ideas led to the reclassification of safari hunting areas as protected wilderness areas. Although the protected area approach contributed to the sustainable management of certain species, it had negative impacts on the livelihoods and traditional cultures of local people (Geisler 2002; Hasler 1999; Neumann 1998). Because nearby communities often bore significant costs and rarely received any benefits associated with neighboring protected areas, they no longer had any vested interest in protecting the wildlife and often came to develop negative attitudes towards conservation (Hannah 1992; Pimbert & Pretty 1994). Protected area policies undermined the incentives underlying traditional sustainable use practices. Uncompensated costs suffered by communities include depredation of crops and livestock and direct attacks on people leading to injury and death (Neumann 2004). Under these conditions, local people often turned to poaching and otherwise worked to sabotage conservation efforts. These anti-conservation activities, in tandem with a general trend of growing human populations, lead to increasing environmental degradation and further conflict (Geisler & De Sousa 2001; Ghai & Vivian 1992; Hasler 1999). Thus, in rural areas of developing countries, national parks and game reserves often both fail to sustain the wildlife populations they are designed to protect and engender conflict with locals (Gibson & Marks 1995; Hasler 1999; Matzke & Nabane 1996; Redford et al. 2006).

The perceived failure of centrally controlled programs to realize conservation goals led to a policy shift as conservationists and natural resource managers moved away from trying to keep people out of protected areas and toward developing productive relationships with traditional resource users (Hasler 1999). Conservationists also began to recognize that, in Africa and elsewhere, most wildlife would always be found outside protected areas. This added to the list of complications making it unlikely that state-centered resource management regimes focusing on state lands would be able to achieve conservation objectives and further justified the CBNRM approach. CBNRM spread rapidly, and by the early 1990s it had become for many conservation and development agencies, both governmental and nongovernmental, the default first choice for natural resource management in rural areas of poor countries (Marks 2001). Its perceived primary strength is that it integrates several desirable objectives: wildlife and habitat conservation, community development, social justice, and improved relations between local residents and external authorities (Newmark & Hough 2000).

Under CBNRM schemes, local communities are given economic development rights to the natural resources on the lands they occupy and may then generate revenue in various ways. I use the term community to refer to traditional communities as defined by the members themselves. Traditional communities in Zimbabwe and elsewhere in southern Africa are defined by clan and traditional leadership. Geographically, clans in Zimbabwe overlap at least partially with ward boundaries. The wards, established after independence, are statutory administrative subunits of the rural districts. Traditional communities hold land informally and communally. Legal ownership of the land and wildlife is vested in the state. Thus CBNRM in southern Africa is typically implemented

in rural areas where households do not have title to their land. According to the logic of CBNRM, rights to wildlife should be transferred to these local communities to reestablish economic incentives for sustainable management. From this perspective, under CBNRM the local communities are defined as wildlife “producer communities” (Hulme & Murphree 2001a). Thus CBNRM incorporates an argument in favor of local control that is both normative and instrumental. First, producer communities should be allowed to earn benefits from the product that they produce. Second, if the communities benefit from the product, they will be more likely to continue to produce it, thus contributing to conservation.

In southern Africa, where wildlife is the key resource in CBNRM, a common mechanism for generating revenue for local communities is to develop contracts with professional safari operators. The operators manage sport hunting or game viewing safaris on communal territory with local communities receiving a share of the proceeds (Murphree 1995). Such activities can be lucrative. Sport hunting typically involves the taking of valuable trophy animals, and game viewing ventures may be linked to the establishment of safari lodges and other tourism facilities. Under such contracts, the community is typically guaranteed a significant portion of the revenue. Community residents may also receive benefits beyond direct income, including problem-animal control, infrastructure improvements, and job opportunities. In return, local communities are expected to cease poaching and to help maintain wildlife habitat.

Given the importance of participation as a central component of CBNRM, projects typically include the establishment at the local level of democratic, participatory institutions. In principle, these institutions and processes allow community members

opportunities for input into decisions concerning project management and distribution of benefits (Western & Wright 1994; Roe et al. 2000).

2.2. Community and Participation

Community and participation are fundamental concepts underlying the theory of CBNRM. However, various definitions for the terms are found in the literature (Agrawal & Gibson 1999; Leach et al. 1999). This section reviews the concepts of community and local participation in CBNRM.

2.2.1. Community

Within the CBNRM rubric, the existence of a distinct community is a necessary condition for devolution, meaningful participation, and conservation (Chambers & McBeth 1992; Chitere 1994; Leach et al. 1999). Agrawal and Gibson (1999) describe three components of community important to those who promote its positive role in the conservation of natural resources: (1) community as a spatial unit, (2) community as a homogenous social structure, and (3) community as a set of shared norms. However, while these three characteristics capture the ideals of “community,” Agrawal and Gibson (1999) note that communities in practice rarely reflect these ideals.

Similarly, Leach et al. (1999) define community as a homogenous, bounded social group whose members share characteristics distinguishing them from outsiders. Such groups may include people of a local administrative unit, of a local rural area, or of a cultural or ethnic group. Roe et al. (2000) identify smallness, in a social rather than spatial sense, as one of the characteristics that influence the success of a community-

based resource management programs. A community, according to these authors, also has a political component. In this sense, a community exists where leadership and community participation coordinate to achieve the political and economic interests of the group.

Scholars further observe that a community exists where people organize themselves with the purpose of sustainable management of their natural resources through the application of local knowledge, norms, and institutions (Ostrom 1990; Ostrom et al. 2002). In most cases these authors acknowledge the gaps between the ideals of community and the real dynamics of communities as found in practice (Agrawal & Gibson 1999; Leach et al. 1999).

In discussing their three categories of what constitutes community, Agrawal and Gibson (1999) observe that community as a spatial unit implies relative smallness in area and number of people. For natural resource management, the concept of community also assumes a close geographic match between the community of users and the resource (Murphree 2004). Agrawal and Gibson (1999) argue that in practice this assumption is inappropriate and misleading, however. Often multiple communities may have claim to overlapping resources. The presence of important migratory resources, such as wildlife or fish, complicates the situation further (Ostrom et al. 2002).

One problem with these analyses is that “small” and other characteristics of community are not easily specified. There is no indication for instance as to whether the smallness is defined in relation to the overall national population, in relation to the natural resource base, or in relation to a particular numerical limit.

In criticizing the naïve concept of community as a homogeneous social structure, Agrawal and Gibson (1999) suggest that the concept often assumes a group with similar

endowments and common ethnicity, religion, language, and other cultural traits. These authors also note that this homogeneity is assumed to improve the chances for cooperative solutions, reduce hierarchical and conflictual interactions, and promote better resource management. However, they argue that even if members of a group are similar in several respects, it is not clear that these shared characteristics are critical to conservation. The notion of community as “common interests and shared norms” flows from homogeneity, small size, and shared characteristics (Agrawal & Gibson 1999). The general assumption is that “common and shared” rather than “individual and selfish” interests are what lead to successful resource management.

Because of the limitations they see in the three categories of community, Agrawal and Gibson (1999) propose that community can be viewed more accurately from a political perspective. They suggest that community must be understood through a focus on the multiple interests and actors within communities, on how they influence decision making, and on the internal and external institutions that shape the decision-making process. The multiple actors may consist of various subgroups at the local level. Moreover, within those subgroups there are likely to be individuals with varying preferences for resource use and distribution (Agrawal & Gibson 1999). Local communities are therefore made up of different stakeholders with a variety of defining characteristics—including, for example, gender, class, power, ethnicity, religion, age, and so forth (Hannah 1992). The CAMPFIRE projects reviewed in this dissertation exemplify both the multiple interests and actors that can occur within a community and the important role of internal and external institutions. In the analysis of the case study

results, I consider ways in which these intra- and extra-communal dynamics helped shape the outcomes that I observed.

2.2.2. Participation

The concept of participation underpins the normative theory of community conservation (IIED 1994). It is the subject central to this research study. As discussed above, a key component of the CBNRM approach is devolution of control over natural resources from the state or other external agents to the community (Li 2002) with an emphasis on participatory democracy (Western & Wright 1994). Thus CBNRM integrates concepts of devolution and participation in the context of natural resource management. Within this framework, participation is valued both as a processes in itself and for the outcomes it helps produce. In other words, participation is an important individual right, and in principle it leads to improved individual and social outcomes.

Participation in CBNRM can take the form of direct democracy, in which all individuals belonging to a community participate themselves, or in the form of representative democracy, in which elected leaders speak for their constituents. In CBNRM, participatory processes differ from community to community. In Zimbabwe, non-local citizens are excluded from participation, as evidenced in both my case studies. Eligible participants are typically defined through clan and kinship. Traditional chiefs often act for the community in determining membership. CBNRM relies on clear membership eligibility and strong enforcement to safeguard against in-migration of people from wildlife-poor to wildlife-rich areas. In-migration of this sort is

counterproductive, in that it leads to expansion of human settlements, reduction in habitat, and increased threats to the wildlife that supports the project.

Conservationists embraced the concept of good governance when it moved to the center of development debates in the 1980s and 1990s (Balint 2006a; Kaufman et al. 2005; Oakley 1991; USAID 1998a). Conservation practitioners began to incorporate local participation as a component of good governance in biodiversity conservation efforts and looked at development experiences for useful lessons on how to bring local people into the conservation process. In theory as well as in practice, however, the issues of participation and good governance are surrounded by uncertainty and ambiguity. As with the term community, the term participation is neither readily defined nor easily measured and can mean different things to different people in different situations. In this section I review some of the literature on notions of participation. I also identify some useful frameworks for assessing community participation in the two CAMPFIRE case studies. I apply these frameworks in my case study analyses.

Participatory approaches can have numerous and diverse objectives, operational strategies, and results. Different strategies for encouraging participation and different levels of participation may be appropriate to different circumstances and different groups. Projects may be classified on the basis of their approaches to and relationships with the participants. Wells et al. (1992) identify two types of participation: the “beneficiary” approach, in which involvement of local people is passive; and the “participatory” approach in which projects seek to involve people directly in the process of their own development.

With regard to rural development, Cohen and Uphoff (1977) interpret participation as signifying people's involvement in program decision-making processes, in implementation and evaluation, and in benefit sharing. Paul (1987) suggests that community participation is the process whereby people in concert shape the design and implementation of the development programs that affect them. Under this interpretation, participation may therefore be thought of as the deliberate action of the people and government to respond jointly in formulation, planning, and implementation to satisfy particular needs. Paul (1987) summarized much of the literature on participation, observing that the objectives of participation include increasing project effectiveness, increasing the capacity of participants to take responsibility for project activities, and facilitating cost-sharing through local contributions of land, money, or labor.

Carnea (1985) describes local participation as a process of empowering people to develop and utilize their own capacities, to be actors rather than subjects, to control the projects that affect their lives. The World Bank (1996) defines participation as a process through which stakeholders influence and share control over development initiatives and the decisions and resources that affect them.

Although there is some variation in these definitions and models of participation as they apply to integrated conservation and development projects, practitioners adopt a general consensus on the positive role and function of meaningful participation. Based on Cohen and Uphoff's (1977) and Crocker's (forthcoming) interpretations, the key stages of participation in projects are agenda setting, deliberation, decision-making, implementation, monitoring, evaluation, modification, and benefit sharing.

The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), following Sen (1999), has identified participation as both a means and an end in development projects. As a means, the agency states that participation is a process in which local people cooperate with externally introduced projects to improve outcomes. As an end, participation in itself is a key goal and indicator of human development. When people fully participate, they are agents in and responsible parties for their own development.

Scholars of participation have proposed several scales of participation. Of these, Pimbert and Pretty's (1994) typology of participation is widely accepted in the conservation context (Newsham 2002; Pretty 1995). Pimbert and Pretty (1994) present the various levels of participation along a continuum ranging from nominal to meaningful. At the nominal level, there is very little direct involvement of the people. The upper end of the spectrum represents direct and effective participation, leading to the full empowerment of participants. Table 1 (next page) summarizes this participation typology.

Within this framework, passive participation and participation in information giving cannot be considered sufficient for effective community conservation, since at this level people are only informed through a unilateral announcement from project administrators regarding what is going to happen. There is no input from the people. The information sharing is unidirectional, with "participants" relegated to answering questions (Barrow & Murphree 1999). Only the last four categories meet standards of community participation sufficient to satisfy normative requirements and support effective collective action.

Table 1. Pimbert and Pretty's Typology of Participation.

Level	Characteristics
Passive Participation	People participate by being told what is going to happen or has already happened. It is a unilateral announcement by an administration or project management without any listening to people's responses.
Participation in information giving	The shared information belongs only to external professionals. People participate by answering questions posed by extractive researchers using questionnaire surveys or such similar approaches. People do not have the opportunity to influence proceedings, as the findings of the research are neither shared nor checked for accuracy.
Participation by consultation	People participate through consultation, and external agents listen to views. External agents define both problems and solutions, and may modify these in the light of people's responses. Such a process does not concede any share in decision making, and professionals are under no obligation to take on board people's views.
Participation for material benefits	People participate by providing resources such as labor, in return for food, cash or other material incentives. It is very common to see this called participation yet people have no stake in prolonging activities when incentives end.
Functional participation	People participate by forming groups to meet predetermined objectives related to the project, which can involve the development or promotion of externally initiated social organization. Such involvement tends not to be at early stages of project cycles or planning, but rather after major decisions have already been made. These institutions tend to be dependent on external initiators and facilitators, but may become self-dependent.
Interactive participation	People participate in joint analysis, leading to action plans and the formation of new local institutions or the strengthening of existing ones. It tends to involve interdisciplinary methodologies that seek multiple objectives and make use of systematic and structured learning processes. These groups take control/ownership over local decisions, and so people have a stake in maintaining structures or practices.
Self-mobilization	People participate by taking initiatives independent of external institutions to change systems. Such self-initiated mobilization and collective action may or may not challenge existing inequitable distributions of wealth and power.

Source: Adapted from Pimbert and Pretty (1994).

The United Nations Capital Development Fund (UNCDF) (1997) also distinguishes among levels, degrees, and kinds of participation (Table 2, next page). The UNCDF framework presents types of participation along a continuum ranging from manipulative participation, used essentially as an act of control, to self-managing participation, in which stakeholders are true and robust partners in the development project and assume full management responsibility. These two typologies of participation, from Pimbert and Pretty (1994) and UNCDF (1997), have considerable overlap. I use both frameworks as references in assessing the levels, degrees, and qualities of participation in the CAMPFIRE case studies.

Following these two frameworks, meaningful participation in CBNRM should occur in all stages of a project cycle (BSP 1993). For example, local people should (1) define the problem; (2) participate in project design and planning; (3) assume some responsibility for project implementation; and (4) participate in project management, monitoring, evaluation, and modification; and (5) participate in determining the parameters for sharing benefits and costs. There are various obstacles to attaining these ideals, however. These include communication problems, differing cultural traditions, and inadequate local knowledge and skills.

Table 2. UNCDF's Typology of Participation.

Level	Characteristics
Manipulation	The lowest rung applies to situations of "non-participation," where participation is contrived as the opportunity to indoctrinate.
Information	When stakeholders are informed about their rights, responsibilities, and options, the first important step towards genuine participation takes place. The main drawback at this stage is that emphasis is placed on one-way communication, with neither channel for feedback nor power for negotiation.
Consultation	This level entails two-way communication, where stakeholders have the opportunity to express suggestions and concerns, but no assurance that their input will be used at all or as they intended. Therefore, it could be said that at this level stakeholders are "participating in participation." The most frequent approaches to consultation are chaired meetings where stakeholders do not contribute to the agenda, public hearings, and surveys, or debates about problems or solutions.
Consensus-building	Here stakeholders interact in order to understand each other and arrive at negotiated positions which are tolerable to the entire group. A common drawback is that vulnerable individuals and groups tend to remain silent or passively acquiesce.
Decision-making	When consensus is acted upon through collective decisions, this marks the initiation of shared responsibilities for outcomes that may result. Negotiations at this stage reflect different degrees of leverage exercised by individuals and groups.
Risk-sharing	This level builds upon the preceding one but expands beyond decisions to encompass the effects of their results, a mix of beneficial, harmful, and natural consequences. Things being constantly in flux, there is always the element of risk, where even the best intended decisions may yield the least desired results. Hence accountability is fundamental at this level, especially when those with the greatest leverage may be the ones with the least at risk.
Partnership	This relationship entails exchange among equals working towards a mutual goal. Note that equal as applied here is not in terms of form, structure, or function but in terms of balance of respect. Since partnership builds upon the proceeding levels, it assumes mutual responsibility and risk sharing.
Self-management	This is the pinnacle of participatory efforts, where stakeholders interact in learning processes which optimize the well-being of all concerned.

Source: Adapted from UNCDF (1997).

Discussions on participation require the identification of the primary stakeholders in the project—individuals and groups with a vested interest in the outcome. In CBNRM, and indeed in development projects generally, women often constitute an important stakeholder group. One of the main principles of participation strongly supported by development practitioners is that participation must empower women (UNCDF 1997). The issue of gender is important because women in rural areas are generally marginalized because of cultural traditions. Women are expected not to participate in decision making. Participatory projects intend to reduce these gender inequalities by encouraging women to take part in decision making and ensuring that their participation is meaningful and transformative rather than merely nominal (Kothari et al. 2000; UNCDF 1997). The issues of gender inequality in decision making are relevant to my case studies because these sites are in rural communities where cultural traditions are still very strong, especially with reference to the roles of women.

Researchers have identified various obstacles to full participation in community development that may apply to women or to men (Kothari et al. 2000; Newsham 2002; Wells et al. 1992). These obstacles include the presence of authority structures that seek to control the outcomes of nominally participatory projects. Privileged elites tend to use their power to thwart the aspirations of marginalized community members. Moreover, national or district government agencies may limit the extent of local empowerment, particularly where they perceive a threat to their own interests (USAID 2004).

Overcoming local people's negative preconceptions, especially in conservation projects, is another important challenge to meaningful local participation. Rural people in Africa, and in the developing world in general, often view conservation as antithetical to

development (Gartlan 1992). Unless local people perceive conservation projects as serving their economic and cultural interests, they are unlikely to respond to opportunities for participation, and the projects will be unlikely to achieve their long-term biodiversity conservation and development goals (Brown & Wyckoff-Baird 1992).

Facilitating authentic participation is also difficult and time-consuming (Wells et al. 1992). Problems arise at least in part as a result of funding and implementation requirements from donors. Donor agencies and project managers are under pressure to spend money and demonstrate results. Developing effective and fully participatory project planning and implementation is a slow process, especially if the project is to have authentic local community engagement. Often, however, donors do not have the expertise, motivation, or the time necessary to assess community variables, initiate community dialogue, and promote and nurture effective participation in every phase of a project (Wells et al. 1992). Moreover, taking the time to do what is necessary to ensure authentic participation may conflict with the need for quick action to stop destructive patterns of natural resource degradation (Wells et al. 1992). In addition, community-based conservation programs, by their very nature, have inherent limits to participation in that, to achieve their objective of biodiversity conservation, people cannot be allowed to choose actions that lead to overexploitation or degradation of the protected resource (Wells et al. 1992). In CBNRM, for example, local people cannot have full control over wildlife utilization practices. Within this framework, they cannot decide to harvest the resource at unsustainable levels, even if this might be in their economic interest.

In my analysis, I examine the extent to which the projects meet the standards of participation described in the typologies described above. Taking into account the

presence of constraints, I focus particularly on the level of meaningful participation and the role of gender.

2.3. CBNRM and Donor Funding

Funding from international donor agencies was critical in the emergence of CBNRM in southern Africa. External agencies encouraged national governments to permit the necessary devolution of authority for wildlife management, provided essential capacity building at the national and local levels, underwrote initial implementation costs, and supported program management during the early years. USAID played a particularly important role in the region, providing substantial funding for national CBNRM programs in Botswana, Malawi, Namibia, Zambia, and Zimbabwe. Given its relevance to CAMPFIRE in Zimbabwe, I briefly review in this section the role of foreign aid in Africa in general and in African CBNRM in particular.

For the most part, the record of Western aid to sub-Saharan Africa is one of dismal failure (Bovard 1986; Easterly 2006; Hancock 1989). Between 1960 and 1997, multilateral organizations and national development agencies from rich countries invested more than \$500 billion in the continent—higher than sub-Saharan's 2002 aggregate GDP of \$420 billion (Ayodele et al. 2005). Yet economic development in the region continued to stagnate. Critics note that donor funding in many instances creates an unhealthy dependency on external support, resulting in the collapse of initiatives when funders withdraw (Calderisi 2006). The substantial foreign aid could not stem continuing deterioration of standards of living across the continent in the 1980s and 1990s.

Scholars have offered many explanations for the failure of development aid in Africa and elsewhere in the developing world. A consistent criticism is that foreign aid has in general underwritten misguided policies and fed bloated and corrupt bureaucracies (Ayttey 1998; Ayodele et al. 2005; Hancock 1989). Thus, in many ways the donors themselves contributed to the failures of foreign aid in Africa (Easterly 2006). For example, critics have charged that IMF and World Bank experts who draw up the development plans are often largely out of touch with African reality, including with the social norms of doing business (Ayttey 2004). Moreover, foreign loans and aid programs are often poorly monitored. As Edward P. Brynn, former United States ambassador to Ghana, acknowledged, “We failed to keep a real hands-on posture with aid [and] allowed a small, clever class that inherited power from the colonial masters to take us to the cleaners. It will take a whole lot of time and money to turn Africa around” (quoted in Harden 2000).

Another reason for failure, as noted by the US General Accounting Office (now the Government Accountability Office), is that the large number of donors and their administrative requirements place a considerable burden on recipient governments and strain their already weak administrative capacity (GAO 1985). Many African institutions officially responsible for planning and implementing development projects are saturated with development assistance, paralyzed by administrative inefficiency, and staggering beneath a complex burden of differing donor requirements.

Among foreign aid donors, USAID and the European Union (EU) generally take the lead in supporting natural resource management programs in Africa. Initiatives include national planning programs, protected area programs, CBNRM programs,

projects related to soil and water conservation, and so on (Ellsworth 1999). Often donors attach conditions to their aid and primarily fund activities that push recipient country policies and laws in the direction the donors favor. For example, in many countries, donors and NGOs were instrumental in driving the agenda toward greater devolution (Shackleton et al. 2002). In part because CBNRM emphasizes local control of resource management, it attracted significant donor funding.

Thus project objectives often incorporate sets of stringent indicators designed to appeal to the donor's constituency at headquarters rather than to fit well with the work of participating local and international organizations on the ground (Ellsworth 1999). This creates problems in implementation, especially if there is no local expertise with appropriate skills and experience for adhering to these often arcane standards. To meet these requirements, local projects end up hiring expatriates with the know-how. Donors often prefer to transfer their money through large, well established international NGOs. In the case of CAMPFIRE, USAID and EU typically transmitted money intended for projects through established NGOs such as WWF that would then disburse funds down to the projects through various project implementing activities.

Consequently donor funded projects typically involve multiple powerful players with a strong international presence and considerable influence in the global environment and development sectors. These players typically include representatives of the donor agencies, senior park service staff, national NGO leaders, expatriate technical experts with various specializations, and heads of newly created local NGOs that channel funding to internationally backed projects (Ellsworth 1999). However, these parties bring along their own interests and agendas, which may negatively impact the projects. In most cases,

the involvement of these key actors ends with the end of the donor funding cycle, resulting in the withdrawal of essential capacity from the projects and negative impacts on project performance (Ellsworth 1999). Moreover outside experts often draw off a significant share of the funding for administrative costs. The stereotypical image of wasteful management practices, which has some truth, centers on project administrators driving around developing world capitals, and making occasional forays into the countryside, in expensive and ostentatious big white sport utility vehicles.

The dependency of local projects on donor funding and the donors' reliance on large international NGOs and a cadre of well traveled experts have the effect of robbing local organizations and professionals of strategic initiative. Moreover, over time most of the field experience and planning expertise accrues to the staff of the favored large NGOs (Ellsworth 1999). This pattern inhibits the development of strong local leadership and organizations. These problems emerged in the CAMPFIRE program in the years following the end of USAID funding in 2000.

There have been some notable gains from outside investments in African natural resource management projects. These achievements include improved legislative frameworks for certain resources and some parks and species that have been saved from the brink (Ellsworth 1999). Nevertheless, evaluations of natural resource management programs have highlighted a number of problems (Kiss 1999), matching the poor record of international development more generally. Kiss (1999) observes that despite the substantial levels of effort and funding, the collective efforts of conservationists and donors have generally not succeeded in halting or even slowing the rate of biodiversity

loss in sub-Saharan Africa. Ellsworth (1999) lists the following commonly occurring weaknesses, many of which are relevant for CAMPFIRE.

- Local government agencies responsible for protected area management are often weak and unable to achieve financial sustainability.
- Political chaos, violence, and population growth undermine any conservation gains. As examples, she cites the killing of protected animals in Uganda's Bwindi National Park and the recent peasant settlement of some of Zimbabwe's national parks during the country's chaotic post-2000 fast-track land reform program.
- Local NGOs are weak and inexperienced. Moreover much of the technical knowledge gained through project implementation accrues not to Africans but to the staff of international organizations.
- The enthusiasm over CBNRM and ecotourism may be unjustified given the difficulty of achieving success in such projects.

2.4. Critiques of CBNRM

As CBNRM emerged in the 1990s as a new orthodoxy for promoting conservation and development in rural areas of Africa and elsewhere—to a considerable degree as a result of the perceived success of CAMPFIRE—the approach began to be examined more critically (Hasler 1999). Evaluations by donors, practitioners, and scholars through the mid 1990s were generally positive (Child 1995). By the early 1990s, however, challenges had begun to appear more frequently (Newmark & Hough 2000), and by the end of the decade many assessments were critical (Hasler 1999; Li 2002). Most observers accept the value of CBNRM in principle but advocate various

improvements in program design and implementation (Murphree 2004). Others argue that the approach has not demonstrated the potential for long-term success and no longer deserves continued support.

Agrawal and Gibson (1999), Hasler (1999), Newmark and Hough (2000), Hughes (2001), Li (2002), Wolmer et al. (2004), and other scholars have summarized the range of assessments. While not claiming a comprehensive cataloguing of criticisms, I argue that these reviewers' questions regarding CBNRM can usefully be seen as centering on three important areas of concern: underlying assumptions, implementation practices, and hidden agendas.

2.4.1. Assumptions

One key assumption subject to question is that CBNRM programs can generate the income necessary to achieve their objectives (Wainwright & Wehrmeyer 1998). Some researchers suggest that even if these projects approached their maximum sustainable potential revenue, they would not produce income sufficient to compensate local residents fully for the costs of living with wildlife (Bond 2001; Newmark & Hough 2000; Norton-Griffiths & Southey 1995), let alone raise the target communities out of poverty. Following this argument, market-based models of rural conservation based primarily on economic incentives are bound to have disappointing results over the long term.

Another questioned assumption relates to notions of community (Leach et al. 1999; Twyman 2000). In addition to issues discussed in detail above in the section defining the term community, critics note that even closely knit traditional communities are far from homogeneous (Agrawal & Gibson 1999; Leach et al. 1999; Li 2002).

Without strong oversight either from benevolent external agents or from durable democratic internal institutions, local elites may divert community income for their own purposes (Wainwright & Wehrmeyer 1998; Wolmer et al. 2004). Yet predictable tendencies are likely to undermine whatever oversight institutions are established. External agents will follow their own agendas and work to maintain their own revenue streams, and community committees, typically established at the urging of outsiders as part of project implementation, will be weak and subject to co-optation by traditional leaders (Derman 1995). As discussed in chapters below, my research supports these critiques.

2.4.2. Implementation

As mentioned earlier, a common concern regarding implementation is that, despite articulated ideals of devolution, authority is not fully passed to the communities (Derman 1995; Hasler 1999; Logan & Moseley 2002; Matzke & Nabane 1996). In Zimbabwe, for example, rural district councils retain authority to make and break contracts with hunting and tourism operators and to siphon off a significant portion of the proceeds through various taxes and levies. Lack of full devolution and continuing interference by RDCs were the criticisms of CAMPFIRE that I heard most often as I talked to scholars and practitioners in preparation for my fieldwork in Mahenye and Nyaminyami. The central government of Zimbabwe has also retained some control through its legal ownership of the wildlife and its authority to set hunting quotas. By law, communities have no right to take animals for their own use. Local residents can only

benefit from the revenue generated through hunting and game viewing activities in their communal areas, not from direct household use.

A second problem raised in relation to project implementation is that the ecological component of CBNRM is often given short shrift in program evaluation (Kremen et al. 1994; Newmark & Hough 2000). Critics argue that while it may be relatively easy to measure local socioeconomic outcomes within acceptable margins of error, it is more difficult to assess impacts on wildlife and habitat (Hasler 1999). Biological baseline data are often incomplete, population and migration patterns for wide-ranging species that cross political boundaries are costly to monitor, and the full ecological effects of project activities may not become apparent for years or even decades. Thus, critics suggest, conservation gains may be overstated (Hasler 1999).

2.4.3. Hidden Agendas

Some critics argue that the two central dimensions of CBNRM, wildlife protection as the priority and economic incentives as the mechanism, are Northern or Western ideas imposed on weak national governments and marginalized local communities through asymmetric power relationships (Derman 1995). A related but even stronger assertion is that CBNRM is actually a means for the state, large private property owners, or international conservation interests to promote their own agendas under the guise of local community empowerment (Hughes 2001; Wainwright & Wehrmeyer 1998). According to this argument, large (in Africa, typically white) landholders support CBNRM to burnish their image, fend off national land redistribution schemes, and protect the game they are using for their own money-making enterprises. In a similar

vein, these critics suggest that international environmental NGOs back CBNRM for the conservation component, and for the associated fund-raising opportunities, and have no deep commitment to rural development or community control (Hasler 1999).

2.4.4. Comments

While each line of criticism merits further exploration, the questions most relevant for my case studies concern the robustness of participatory community institutions linked to CBNRM and the appropriate level of devolution of authority for project management. Also, although these criticisms of CBNRM may have merit in some situations, the approach has also appealed to national and local organizations, including local communities in the developing world, because of the potential economic benefits. Numerous national poverty alleviation plans in developing nations include tourism as a strategy for economic development. Tourism in Africa and other developing countries is primarily nature tourism. Revenue from nature tourism contributes significantly to the national budgets of these nations. Zimbabwe also benefited significantly from tourism before the current crisis.

CHAPTER 3. Zimbabwe's National Context

3.1. Background

Current social and land use patterns related to wildlife management in Zimbabwe have their roots in environmental policies made decades ago. In this chapter, I briefly explore the history of Zimbabwe's environmental policy as it relates to land, wildlife, and institutional capacity during the country's pre-colonial, colonial, and post-independence periods.

Zimbabwe's history from 1890 to 1980 was marked by colonialism and the resulting appropriation of land for the ruling class, disenfranchisement of the indigenous people, and establishment of laws and policies designed to sustain this system. At independence in 1980, there were high hopes that new policies would be more egalitarian and past inequities redressed. Decades after independence, however, Zimbabwe is still far from realizing this hope. The country continues to struggle with some firmly entrenched conditions left over from the colonial era. In some cases the new government has retained some of the laws and practices of the former regime. For example, during the fight to end colonial rule, the leaders of the independence movement promised to return land expropriated to create protected areas to displaced former residents. Yet because of pressures from the international conservation community and the flow of income that the parks produce, the independent government has retained the protected area system.

3.2. Pre-colonial and Colonial Period

Prior to European settlement in 1890, African traditional methods of resource management imposed little stress on the natural environment (Gore et al. 1992). Wildlife

was plentiful, largely because of low human population density and low technology hunting methods. Also people had incentives to hunt sustainably because they depended on wildlife as a food supply (Gore et al. 1992). Authority over wildlife use was vested in village chiefs, and cultural taboos limited the types and numbers of wildlife hunted (Gore et al. 1992; Hulme & Murphree 2001a). Religious respect and superstitious fears protected many species. For example, in traditional culture it is taboo to eat the meat of an animal that is the totem of one's tribe (B. Child 1996; Gore et al. 1992). Thus, even though the regulatory mechanisms were weak, they were adequate for the protection of wildlife (Child et al. 1997).

Cecil Rhodes's British South Africa Company established Rhodesia as a British settler colony in 1890. The colony remained under British direct rule until 1965, when the white settler population led by Ian Smith declared unilateral independence. From 1965 the country remained under white minority rule until independence in April 1980, in accordance with an agreement reached during talks held at Lancaster House in London in 1979.

During the colonial years, the indigenous African population of what is now Zimbabwe endured one of the most extensive land alienation policies implemented on the African continent (Hill 1996). The colonial government expropriated land from locals on a large scale at the beginning of the colonial period, with additional takeovers continuing intermittently through the 1960s (Gore et al. 1992; Hulme & Murphree 2001b; Munro 1998).

Zimbabwe's land is classified into five broad agro-ecological regions based on altitude, rainfall, and temperature (Vincent & Thomas 1960). The regions are categorized

on a scale based on their agricultural potential, with less fertile lands listed as suitable only for livestock. The white settlers appropriated the best agricultural land (Newsham 2002) and forcibly resettled the black peasant population into “native reserves,” also known as “communal areas” and “Tribal Trust Lands.” These resettlement areas were agriculturally marginal and prone to rapid environmental degradation (Gore et al. 1992).

Areas of high agricultural potential were transformed into large commercial farms. Only European settlers were allowed to own these enterprises. As a result, by the mid 1970s, whites, who constituted a tiny minority of the population, occupied the majority of the land in agro-ecological regions I-III. Indigenous people, constituting over 95 percent of the population, were driven primarily onto land categorized as having low fertility, regions IV-V (Thomas 1995). The 1930 Rhodesia Land Apportionment Act laid down the parameters of land and property ownership, dividing the land along strict racial lines (Gore et al. 1992; Munro 1998). European settlers’ land was held under legal private title and black occupants of communal land retained usufruct rights only.

These restrictive racial land apportionment measures disrupted indigenous traditions of natural resource management. Authorities also set aside protected areas, often expropriated from communal areas, to preserve game populations for white hunters or respond to other environmental management concerns (BSP 1993; G. Child 1996). The restructuring of land-use traditions resulted in negative impacts on wildlife populations and also created human-wildlife conflicts (G. Child 1996; Gore et al. 1992; Murphree 2001).

Colonial governments instituted British concepts of wildlife protection under which wildlife did not belong to people but became the responsibility of the Crown on

behalf of the people (Child et al. 1997; Gore et al. 1992; Hulme & Murphree 2001b; Munro 1998). Legislation designated wildlife as the “King’s Game.” The new wildlife management strategies therefore alienated black people from wildlife as a resource and prohibited rural farmers from hunting on the meager lands allocated to them (Hulme & Murphree 2001b; Metcalfe 1994; Mombeshora 2002; Murombedzi 1992). These laws exacerbated African resentment toward wildlife since rural community members had to suffer the consequences of living with dangerous animals while reaping no benefits from their presence and having no control over their management (Chaumba et al. 2003; Child et al. 1997). Thus, during the colonial period, resentment over human-animal conflicts intertwined with resentment to colonial rule and resettlement into marginal areas. After independence, the wildlife conflicts continued, demonstrating that this problem had salience for local residents independent of resistance to colonialism.

As communities during the colonial period were no longer proprietors of land and wildlife, they no longer had economic motivation for effective collective management of the resources (Jones & Murphree 2001). The result was opportunistic, illegal use of wildlife in and around national parks and other state game reserves. Similarly, white private landowners had little incentive to protect wildlife. They typically converted range land to livestock, to the detriment of wild animal populations. In response to the decline of wildlife outside of national parks, the Rhodesian Government in 1975 passed the Parks and Wildlife Act. This act gave freehold land owners “Appropriate Authority” to manage and use wild animals found on their land. The intent of the policy shift was to promote sustainable use of wildlife by devolving rights for commercial exploitation of game animals from the state to private landowners, who at that time included only white

farmers and ranchers (Matzke & Nabane 1996). This policy effectively meant that owners of private land became the proprietors of the wildlife. The new law did not apply to the rural black majority who held land in common without individual or group legal title (Murphree 2001). This legislation led to the development of lucrative private game ranching activities on white owned land. On communal land, however, wildlife populations—which were both more diverse and potentially more economically valuable than those on private lands—continued to decline (Child et al. 1997).

3.3. Post-independence: 1980-2000

My discussion of Zimbabwe's post independence period is divided into two sections. The first focuses on national conditions relevant to natural resource management from 1980 until 1999. During this period, Zimbabwe made the initial transition from colonial conditions and expanded social services and infrastructure into previously disadvantaged sectors of society (Mapedza & Bond 2006). The government of President Robert Mugabe enjoyed substantial popularity during this period, especially among the Shona ethnic people who constitute the majority of the country's population. The country experienced economic growth in the first decade after independence.

Beginning in the late 1980s, however, progress slowed, due mainly to overregulation, price controls, and debt-servicing requirements inherited from the previous regime (Mapedza & Bond 2006). At the same time, a World Bank supported economic structural adjustment program (ESAP), designed to liberalize the economy, resulted in positive impacts on the middle and upper income earners but failed to cushion the poorest segments of society (Mapedza & Bond 2006). In addition, the ESAP

promoted corruption and triggered inflation. These changes caused a slowdown of the economy in the 1990s. The adverse political and economic trends in turn led to the emergence of a strong political opposition movement and set the stage for the catastrophic descent into crisis that occurred after 2000.

To a considerable degree, the constitution agreed to at Lancaster House also created destabilizing conditions that would ultimately contribute to the post-2000 crisis. The constitution entrenched the interests of whites and thus constrained political and economic development. In particular, the document prohibited compulsory acquisition of most land for resettlement of black people (Stewart et al. 1994). Because of these legal restrictions and the desire to avoid sudden capital flight and exodus of whites, the new government adopted a policy of reconciliation between the races and rival factions that became a predominate feature of its post-independence governing mandate. Thus the legacy of colonialism manifested in the grossly distorted pattern of land ownership that continued after independence forms the backdrop of the current, highly politicized land reform crisis (Chaumba et al. 2003).

3.3.1. Party Politics: 1980-2000

The ruling Zimbabwe African National Union (ZANU) party secured 57 of the 80 seats allocated for blacks in the 1980 elections. The Zimbabwe African People's Union (ZAPU) party, the second major black party won 20 seats, mainly from the Matebeleland province, home of the large Ndebele ethnic minority. The two parties largely reflected ethnic divisions, with ZANU being majority Shona and ZAPU being mostly Ndebele. The Shona ethnic group constitutes more than 70 percent of the national population.

Throughout much of the 1980s, ZANU and ZAPU engaged in an often violent political struggle. The ruling ZANU party committed numerous human rights violations against the Ndebele people in Matebeleland. In 1987, the two parties signed a unity accord forming one party, ZANU-PF and the political violence subsided.

3.3.2. Land Policy

Land policy is a central factor in the development of CBNRM in Zimbabwe (Dzingirai 2003b; Murombedzi 1999). Redressing imbalances in land distribution created during the colonial period was one of the most critical issues facing the government immediately following independence. The new government's initial land policy was designed to promote redistribution, economic growth, and the abolition of dualism in the treatment of commercial and communal land (Chaumba et al. 2003; Munro 1998; Sachikonye 2003). However, there were many constraints that the new government faced in attempting to realize its land policy goals. Most important, the Lancaster House constitution did not permit a comprehensive, mandatory land reform program (Sachikonye 2003).

Lack of funds and bureaucratic capacity also constrained the government. Hence, by the end of the 1980s only 20 percent of the 75,000 black families targeted for resettlement between 1985 and 1990 had been given new land (Munro 1998; Sachikonye 2003). The post-independence land reform constraints ended in 1990. At that time the government amended the constitutional provisions on property rights. These changes culminated in the 1992 Land Acquisition Act, which provided the government with authority to purchase land for resettlement subject to fair compensation. Despite these

laws, the pace of resettlement actually slowed down. Fewer than 20,000 families were resettled during the 1990s (Human Rights Watch 2002). Government budgetary allocations during the period indicated that land acquisition was not a high government priority (Human Rights Watch 2002).

Thus, 20 years after independence and the institution of black rule, fewer than 5000 white commercial farmers and ranchers still controlled over 50 percent of the best arable land, found in agro-ecological regions I-III (Human Rights Watch 2002; Muir-Leresche 1996). The country's rural blacks continued to live primarily in the arid, unproductive areas in which they had been resettled during British and later Rhodesian rule.

The post-independence government also helped perpetuate the land tenure system instituted by colonial governments (Chaumba et al. 2003; Munro 1998; Sachikonye 2003). The new government could not immediately do away with the colonial land allocation system because any alternative required study to ensure that changes would not be detrimental to the economic and social well being of the country.

Post-independence land tenure systems fall into four basic categories (Muir-Leresche 1996). The first is *communal tenure*, established in rural areas for blacks and providing usufruct rights only, with no ownership of land or resources. Under the communal tenure regime, arable land is held under traditional tenure with family members having a right to subdivide land set aside for their customary use and to bequeath or inherit. Pasture, forests, and other common-pool resources are held under communal tenure with the traditional chiefs having customary authority to allocate use (Dzingirai 2003b). The second land tenure category applies to *resettlement areas*. In

these areas, residents have leasehold tenure. The third category, *state land*, comprises national parks, game reserves, state farms, and national forests. The fourth category includes large and small scale *commercial farms*, where owners have freehold tenure and full property rights.

Relevant to the study described in this dissertation, this tenure system meant that in independent Zimbabwe rural communities did not own or derive any benefits from wildlife. This state of affairs fostered continuing conflicts over wildlife utilization, mainly related to poaching and human encroachment into wildlife habitat (Gore et al. 1992; Murombedzi 1999; Murphree 2001).

3.3.3. Governance, Wildlife Law, and Institutional Context

Independence also provided the government of Zimbabwe the opportunity to remove past discrimination and extend to communal areas the wildlife management privileges accorded to private landowners in colonial times. To this end, the government in 1982 amended the 1975 Parks and Wildlife Act to grant Appropriate Authority for wildlife management to rural district governments as representatives of the communities (Metcalf 1994; Muchapondwa 2003; Murombedzi 1999; Murphree 2004). This authority is now held by rural district councils, created in 1988 when the Rural District Councils Act amalgamated district councils and rural councils to form the RDCs. The fact that this authority was not devolved directly to the communities is one of the most frequently heard criticisms of the CAMPFIRE program (Mackenzie 1988; Metcalf 1994; Murombedzi 1999; Murphree 2001). In my case study analyses, I discuss the question of devolution in detail.

Following these statutory changes, Zimbabwe's local government institutions came to play an important role in natural resource management. RDCs are made up of elected councilors, with one member from each ward. Under the Rural District Councils Act, the RDCs have authority to implement conservation and environmental policies. RDCs also have authority to control in-migration in communal areas in coordination with local chiefs. Migrations to rural communal areas can result from rising unemployment in urban areas. Also, rural-to-rural migration can occur when people move from overcrowded communal areas into less densely populated areas (Munro 1998). In-migration can be a significant problem in the CAMPFIRE program areas. New migrants can undermine community dynamics supporting sustainable resource management (Dzingirai 2003a) and can reduce incentives for conservation as they dilute household revenues by making their own claims on CAMPFIRE project earnings.

Project revenues support RDC budgets. In CAMPFIRE districts, grants from the central government on average account for about 50 percent of RDC budgets. In non-CAMPFIRE districts, the figure is closer to 85 percent. This disparity indicates that CAMPFIRE often subsidizes rather than supplements government spending on rural development. As a consequence, in CAMPFIRE districts, the RDCs and ward committees struggle over control of the funds. The district councils have often been slow to disburse money to the communities as required by CAMPFIRE guidelines or have retained more than their share. These outcomes offer support for arguments favoring full devolution of authority to the communities.

Under the Zimbabwe's model of rural development, the RDCs in areas that utilize natural resources on a commercial basis establish village development committees

(VIDCOs) and ward development committees (WADCOs) (Hulme & Murphree 2001b; Munro 1998). These new institutional structures tend to undermine or supersede the traditional authority system in the communal areas, however, leading to conflict (Dzingirai 2003a; Moyo 1999; Murombedzi 2001).

3.3.4. Traditional Institutions of Power

The status of traditional leaders in communal areas has shifted more than once during colonialism and independence. Their status is now undergoing a new transition as a result of the current political instability in the country. Despite the changes, traditional leaders still play an important role in the society and politics of rural Zimbabwe, although the strength of their authority varies from region to region. The chiefs are now formally engaged in local government at the district and ward levels. The Minister of Local Government and Rural and Urban Development (MLGRUD) appoints at least three chiefs to each RDC (Munro 1998). The chiefs also wield substantial cultural authority in many villages and communal areas. For example, they often determine access to land and resources and adjudicate disputes. In many areas, communities continue to hold chiefs in high esteem.

Zimbabwe's traditional institutions of power are hereditary. In the pre-colonial era, the traditional leadership system included, in order of authority, kings (*madzimambo*), chiefs (*madzishu*), headmen (*sadunhu*), and kraal heads (*sabhuku*). Following the demise of the position of king during the early years of European settlement, the chief became the highest traditional authority of a particular tribe. The chiefs by and large retain this position in the rural areas. A chief's territory is typically

divided into semi-autonomous administrative units by clan or lineage, each under a headman. Each administrative kinship unit contains a number of villages. The kraal head is usually in charge of a small area, or village, that comprises closely related people. Outsiders not necessarily related to the ruling lineage living in the villages are expected to respect and pay allegiance to the existing institutional arrangements.

Traditionally, chiefs play significant roles in maintaining community integrity. These responsibilities include protecting the communities from negative outside influences, controlling in-migration, maintaining the productivity and fertility of the land, and coordinating rainmaking ceremonies and other religious activities. The chiefs carry out these responsibilities through their chain of deputies that include the headmen and kraal heads. Thus, chiefs are not always dictatorial and autocratic. Chiefdoms may include a traditional legislature composed of spirit mediums, chiefs, and headmen; an executive branch composed of chiefs, headmen, kraal heads and their councilors; and a judicial system involving all community members. Traditional institutions of governance often also regulate natural resource appropriation. Access to land and resources follows local norms, customs, and conventions.

Colonialism began the process of disrupting indigenous traditions and social hierarchies. Instead of overturning African cultures, early colonialists sought to understand them in order to use them for the benefit of colonial administrations (Gore et al. 1992). After colonial rulers forcibly relocated indigenous communities from fertile agricultural lands to marginal territory, the authorities co-opted the chiefs by providing favors, bribes, and ceremonial recognition. In return, the new regime expected local community leaders to support government action, report agitators, and otherwise help

keep resistance in check. Thus the chiefs changed from acting on behalf of the people to acting as state instruments for crime prevention, tax collection, and maintenance of order.

After independence, the chiefs who had collaborated with the Rhodesian government were discredited, and many of the powers that they had nominally held under the colonial regime were vested in the newly constituted district councils. Despite this diminution of government-sanctioned authority, however, chiefs generally retained their most important and long-standing power—control over land use in the communal areas. While households and clans typically retain rights to plots based on customary usage, they have no enforceable deeds, and their land use prerogatives are subject to the chief's acquiescence.

A third round of changes in the authority of the traditional leaders is now underway. To strengthen its standing in preparation for the 2005 parliamentary elections, the ruling party elevated the status of the chiefs in an attempt to consolidate electoral support for its candidates in the rural areas. As I observed in Mahenye during my field work, traditional leaders were receiving valuable gifts and perquisites, including pickup trucks, boreholes for potable water, and electricity connections.

While the traditional chiefs no longer wield sole and unquestioned authority as in pre-colonial times, they still play a powerful cultural and social role in community life at the ward and village level. It is difficult to understand the local dynamics of CAMPFIRE project implementation without taking the attitudes and behaviors of the traditional leaders into account.

3.4. Current Political and Economic Crisis: 2000-Present

Before discussing the CAMPFIRE program in general and the two case studies, Mahenye and Nyaminyami, in particular, I briefly describe Zimbabwe's recent political and economic crisis. The crisis, which began in earnest in 2000, has adversely affected all aspects of life in the country, including the CAMPFIRE program. The crisis has a complex history, shaped by links among residual effects of colonial rule, the parameters of the Lancaster House Agreement, and recent struggles over the country's political future. White minority control of most of the best land was a sore point during colonial rule and after independence (Chaumba et al. 2003). Although land reform had been on the government's agenda since independence, negotiations with commercial farmers had failed to resolve the dilemma. Political and economic trends in the mid to late 1990s propelled the matter into the forefront of government policy and led in 2000 to implementation of so-called "fast track" land reform (Sachikonye 2003).

In the late 1990s, the weakening economy undermined popular support for Mugabe and his ZANU-PF party, particularly in urban areas, leading to a strengthening of the political opposition (Human Rights Watch 2002). By 2000, Mugabe's credibility had declined to the point that in February of that year voters defeated a referendum on government-supported changes to the constitution. In June 2000, despite widespread vote-rigging, ZANU-PF lost substantial ground in parliamentary elections to the recently established opposition party, Movement for Democratic Change (MDC). Mugabe and his party responded to the unfavorable electoral outcomes with systematic intimidation and political violence directed at the opposition. Beatings and arrests of leaders and supporters of the opposition increased again during election cycles in 2002 and 2005.

The revised constitution defeated in the 2000 referendum included clauses to allow the government to expropriate land to compensate aging veterans of the war for independence. The veterans had been agitating for pensions and benefits for some time, creating tensions with the ruling party. Following the defeat of the constitutional referendum, Mugabe gave his blessing for illegal land invasions. Parliament then passed legislation to enact the provisions related to land seizures rejected in the referendum. In July 2000, the government announced a fast-track program of land acquisition and redistribution. The process quickly degenerated into chaotic and often violent invasions and seizures of white-owned farms and ranches, and even of state-owned national parks and other protected areas (Chaumba et al. 2003; Wolmer et al. 2004). The government claimed to have completed the fast-track program by August 2002, although new acquisitions were still going on in 2006. About 90 percent of commercial farmland was confiscated without compensation (Sachikonye 2003).

In response to the combination of this radical and destructive land reform initiative and the suppression of political opposition, international donors and investors pulled out of the country and the US and European governments imposed selective sanctions (so-called smart sanctions) on Zimbabwe's leaders. As a consequence, international tourism declined sharply, supplies of foreign currency constricted, and inflation soared.

In addition, the productivity of the seized commercial farms plummeted due to loss of capital and know-how. New tenants lack both the resources and skills necessary to run the farms effectively. Production of tobacco, which used to be one of the top foreign exchange earners, has dropped from 230 million kg in 2000 to approximately 50 million

kg in 2006. While Zimbabwe used to supply its own grain needs and export surpluses to other countries, the 2006 harvest produced only one third of the 1.8 million tons of maize required to meet the country's domestic requirements (Hawkins 2006).

In combination, the loss of foreign investment and the sharp declines in agricultural productivity triggered an economic collapse. Over the past six years, gross domestic product has shrunk by half, annual inflation rates have reached 1000 percent, and approximately 75 percent of the working age population has become unemployed or underemployed (Hawkins 2006; Muir-Leresche et al. 2003; Shaw 2006; Wines 2006). Over 20 percent of population has emigrated from the country to seek improved opportunities in neighboring countries or overseas.

Mugabe's policy responses have worsened the already dire situation. In a vain attempt to combat hyperinflation, the government has imposed price controls on fuel, staple foods, and foreign currency, thus exacerbating shortages. Moreover, central bank's official overvaluation of the Zimbabwe dollar (Z\$) on currency markets has fostered an illegal parallel market. During the time of my research in 2004, for example, the official exchange rate was Z\$5,400 to US\$1, while the parallel market rate was about Z\$6,500 to US\$1. In 2006 the official rate was Z\$99,202 to US\$1, while on the parallel market the rate was at or above Z\$200,000 to US\$1. This policy worsens shortages of hard currency and promotes corruption. In a vicious cycle, Mugabe's rule has become increasingly authoritarian and conditions in the country continue to deteriorate.

CHAPTER 4. CAMPFIRE

4.1. Background and Objectives

Zimbabwe instituted CAMPFIRE in the late 1980s to promote community-based natural resource management in its rural districts. CAMPFIRE was one of the first national CBNRM programs (Jones & Murphree 2001; Marks 2001; Matanhire 2003; Muir-Leresche et al. 2003). Over the first decade of its existence, the program garnered positive reviews and served as a model for similar efforts in Zambia, Botswana, Namibia, and elsewhere (Jones & Murphree 2001; Marks 2001). More recently, however, the program has attracted critical scrutiny. Disappointing social, economic, and ecological outcomes observed in the field have tempered the initial enthusiasm.

The Department of National Parks and Wildlife Management (DNPWM)¹ conceived the CAMPFIRE program as a policy response to potential threats to wildlife within and outside national parks (Moyo 1999). Other leading players in the emergence of CAMPFIRE included academics from the University of Zimbabwe's Centre for Applied Social Sciences (CASS) and representatives of NGOs, including rural development advocates from ZimTrust and environmentalists from the WWF's Southern Africa Regional Programme Office (WWF-SARPO) (Jones & Murphree 2001; Muir-Leresche et al. 2003). Once it was created, the CAMPFIRE Association, a group representing participating districts at the national level, also played an important role in program development.

¹ This agency is now named the Parks and Wildlife Authority.

At the outset, the primary purpose of CAMPFIRE was to promote conservation and development in marginal rural areas where wildlife management represented an opportunity for revenue production but where game populations were threatened. Advocates argued that the future of wildlife could only be guaranteed in a policy context where wildlife constituted an economically competitive form of land use (Murphree 2001). Following the principles of CBNRM, the program's key underlying assumption is that providing local communities with economic benefits, and involving them in management, will promote the long-term sustainability of wildlife and habitat because the communities will have a vested interest in the conservation of these resources (G. Child 1996; Hasler 1999; Mugabe 2004). CAMPFIRE also has the beneficial social effect of restoring some aspects of historical and customary rights to wildlife that were expropriated during colonial rule (Child et al. 1997; Hasler 1999; Murombedzi 2001). An additional objective of the program was to provide new sources of revenue for the underfunded RDCs (Muir-Leresche et al. 2003).

In designing the CAMPFIRE program, the founding organizations established a set of principles considered central to the successful management of wildlife on communal land. The principles, listed below, address issues of costs, benefits, incentives, rules, and sanctions (Murphree 1995).

- *Effective management of natural resources is best achieved when focused on creating value for those who live with the resources.* People will manage the environment sustainably when benefits of management are perceived to exceed the costs.

- *Benefits should go directly to those who pay the associated costs.* Costs paid by local people for maintenance of resources such as wildlife are significant and include allocation of land for habitat, crop losses to problem animals, and injury or death to people caused by wild animals (Murombedzi 1999). Benefits should be targeted to those who bear these costs.
- *There must be a positive correlation between the quality of management and the magnitude of benefit.* Local residents should see their income from the program increase as they preserve more habitat and reduce poaching.
- *The unit of proprietorship should be vested in the unit of production.* This principle incorporates aspects of the previous three. Proprietorship, which determines who participates and makes decisions, must be vested in those who “produce” the resource.
- *The unit of proprietorship should be as small as practicable, within ecological and socio-political constraints.* A communal resource management regime functions best when it is small enough in membership size to enable all members to be in occasional face-to-face contact and to permit enforcement of rules through peer pressure.

In 1988, the national government officially endorsed CAMPFIRE projects in two rural districts endowed with significant wildlife populations, Nyaminyami and Guruve (Child et al. 1997; Metcalfe 1994; Newsham 2002). Both districts are located in the wildlife rich Zambezi valley. The Mahenye CAMPFIRE program in Chipinge district received authority for wildlife management soon after the first two program areas. By the

end of 1998, 36 of Zimbabwe's 56 districts had been granted Appropriate Authority status (Hasler 1999; Newsham 2002). By 2000, however, the number of districts earning revenue from CAMPFIRE projects had dropped back to 14 (Muir-Leresche et al. 2003). This decline resulted in part from overexpansion of the CAMPFIRE concept into areas that lacked sufficient wildlife populations to sustain trophy hunting or other tourism-related projects.

Conceptually, the CAMPFIRE model could apply to all natural resources. In practice, however, it has focused on wildlife in communal areas, particularly those adjacent to national parks, where human-animal conflict is likely to be common and where opportunities for income from wildlife are greatest (Child et al. 1997). Consequently, the first 12 districts to have CAMPFIRE were the best endowed in terms of wildlife (Child et al. 1997). The districts with fewer valuable trophy animals attempted different programs based on cultural heritage, natural scenery, game viewing, and bird watching. These types of projects typically take longer to establish and are less likely to be economically viable (Child et al. 1997; Metcalfe 1994; Murombedzi 1999). Game viewing tourism, for example, requires construction of facilities, such as hotels, that entail extensive initial capital investment. Safari hunting, on the other hand, requires minimal fixed infrastructure.

From 1989 to 2000, aid agencies from the European Union, from individual European nations such as the Netherlands, and from the United States provided substantial funding for CAMPFIRE. USAID, the largest donor, awarded grants totaling approximately US\$28 million (Muir-Leresche et al. 2003). Much of the external funding, channeled through the CAMPFIRE Association and various other NGOs, was used for

outreach, project development, capacity building, monitoring, and evaluation. Over the same period, revenues derived from CAMPFIRE in the field nationwide generated a cumulative total of approximately US\$20 million, of which about half directly benefited participating communities (Muir-Leresche et al. 2003). The remainder of the income was withheld to fund activities of governmental agencies, including the RDCs, the implementing NGOs, and the CAMPFIRE Association. That the program absorbed more revenue than it generated over its first 10 years illustrates the obstacles to economic viability in many district projects.

Approximately 90 percent of CAMPFIRE revenue derives from sport hunting, with most of the rest coming from the sale of meat, hides, and other wildlife products (Muir-Leresche et al. 2003; Murphree 2001). Only about 2 percent flows from non-consumptive activities such as game viewing. Consequently the earning potential of communities correlates closely with the presence of trophy animals. To date only seven districts have consistently generated income of at least US\$100,000 per year (CAMPFIRE Association 2005).

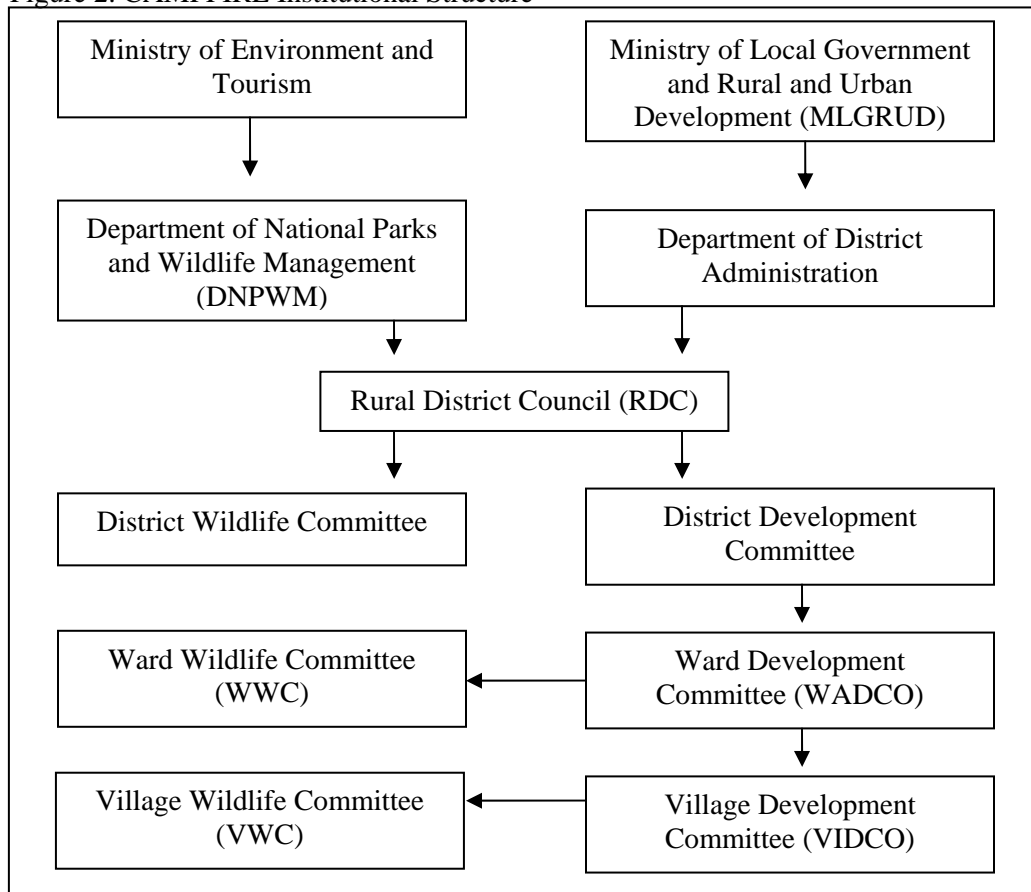
4.2. Implementation

4.2.1. Institutional Structures

CAMPFIRE's institutional and administrative structures significantly influence the nature of local participation in the program. International, national, and district level actors and organizations affect project performance. International influences have included donor agencies, primarily USAID and the EU, and relevant international treaties, including the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species

(CITES). At the national level there are politicians, civil servants, and technocrats; the CAMPFIRE Collaborative Group (CCG), made up of the founding organizations; and the private sector, particularly the safari operators. District level actors include local government and RDC officials, ward councilors, district wildlife committees, and extension officers. Ward and village level players include chiefs, councilors, ward development committees (WADCOs), village development committees (VIDCOs), and members of the general communities. This general CAMPFIRE institutional structure is presented schematically in Figure 2.

Figure 2. CAMPFIRE Institutional Structure



The program operates through a hierarchy of institutions based at the national, district, and sub-district level (Murombedzi 2001). At the district and sub-district level,

the rural districts include multiple wards. Wards in turn include six to 10 villages, averaging a total of around 6000 people. Villages generally include about 100 households, or approximately 1000 people (Thomas 1995). The district administrative body, the RDC, is made up of a councilor from each ward. In CAMPFIRE districts, the district also has a wildlife management committee responsible for CAMPFIRE activities. This structure is replicated at the ward and village level, with each having a development committee (WADCO or VIDCO) and a wildlife management committee (WWC or VWC). The village wildlife committees include six members elected from the village. VWC members also sit on the corresponding ward wildlife committee (WWC) (Thomas 1995). The WWC provides the link between the sub-district and district level since the councilor who chairs it also sits on the district wildlife committee, a sub-committee of the RDC (Metcalf 1994).

The RDC's functions, as the level at which appropriate authority for wildlife management lies, include the following responsibilities. The ward and village committees perform similar functions at their respective levels.

- Problem animal control—managing conflict between wild animals and local communities, especially responding to destruction of crops and livestock by wild animals.
- Wildlife population management—contracting and managing hunting concessions operated by safari firms (after DNPWM sets hunting quotas for each species).
- Game guard training—training local communities to participate in anti-poaching activities and game counts.

- Local institutional and organizational development—establishing CAMPFIRE institutions at the ward and village levels, and providing financial auditing services and other forms of administrative support.
- Payment of ward dividends—disbursing revenue from CAMPFIRE activities to wards for the benefit of local people.
- Population registration and in-migration control—controlling in-migration into CAMPFIRE areas that could lead to dilution of economic benefits and increased habitat conversion.

The multidisciplinary nature of CAMPFIRE activities required the close involvement of external organizations. Eight groups formed the CAMPFIRE Collaborative Group (CCG) to support projects in the field. Members included the five organizations that helped develop the national program—DNPWM, CASS, ZimTrust, WWF-SARPO, and the CAMPFIRE Association. In forming CCG, the Ministry of Local Government and Rural and Urban Development (MLGRUD) and two NGOs, Africa Resources Trust (ART) and ACTION, joined the five original organizations. The CCG, later known as the CAMPFIRE Services Providers, offered essential support to the RDCs, and each organization in the group performed a specific role within CAMPFIRE (Moyo 1999). DNPWM provided policy guidance, ecological monitoring, and wildlife management advisory services. CASS provided policy research and socioeconomic expertise. WWF provided ecological and economic development expertise. The MLGRUD is the arm of central government with responsibility over the RDCs. ZimTrust provided institutional development support and funding. ART provided information and

links to international networks on major issues affecting international conservation policy and regulations. The CAMPFIRE Association represented the interests of CAMPFIRE districts at the national level through policy advocacy (Newsham 2002; USAID 1998a). ACTION provided support for development of community education initiatives. As discussed in detail in the case study analysis, the CCG groups were no longer able to provide these services once the donor funding ended in 2000. This withdrawal of administrative support and capacity building contributed to the sharp decline in project performance that I observed in my research.

Of the external institutions involved with CAMPFIRE, foreign aid agencies had the most impact on the program up through the end of the funding cycle in 2000. Since the US contributed 80 percent of the total international aid (USAID 1998b), my discussion here focuses on USAID. USAID provided approximately US\$8 million in financial support to CAMPFIRE beginning in 1989 under the regional program known as Initiative for Southern Africa Natural Resources Management Program, commonly referred to as NRMP I. NRMP I supported several pilot efforts to test various approaches to community-based natural resource management.

Encouraged by the success of NRMP I, USAID greatly expanded its assistance to CAMPFIRE under NRMP II, which was in effect from 1994 to 2000. During this funding cycle, USAID provided an additional US\$20.5 million. USAID funding through both NRMP I and NRMP II was primarily for capacity building and training to help the rural districts and communities prepare for effective wildlife management. These funds enabled CAMPFIRE institutions to obtain new or updated equipment, including vehicles, computers, and other supplies, and to provide salaries for key personnel.

USAID disbursed NRMP II funds through three main channels: the CCG organizations; the CAMPFIRE Development Fund (CDF); and Development Associates (DA), a US-based consulting firm that served as USAID’s contracting agency. Table 3 lists these allocations. DA was responsible for managing CDF. The CAMPFIRE Association, a principal beneficiary of USAID’s NRMP II funding, received US\$1.35 million, which supported more than 90 percent of its budget. DA received US\$3.45 million. Its role was to assist the CAMPFIRE Association in coordinating and implementing CAMPFIRE.

Table 3. USAID Allocation of Funds in NRMP II

Recipient	Amount (US\$)
CAMPFIRE Development Fund (CDF)	6,000,000
Development Associates (DA)	3,453,613
Department of National Parks and Wildlife Management (DNPWM)	1,500,000
Ministry of Local Government and Rural and Urban Development	200,000
CAMPFIRE Association	1,750,000
Zimbabwe Trust (ZimTrust)	4,225,000
World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF)	1,570,000
Centre for Applied Social Sciences (CASS)	1,050,000
USAID Regional Office for Southern Africa	358,959
Total	20,500,000

Source: Adapted from USAID (1998b).

Thus, USAID funds mainly supported technical and advisory services. Positive impacts of USAID funding on CAMPFIRE included a significant contribution to rapid institutional evolution. Despite having been channeled indirectly through NGOs and other participating organizations removed from the local communities, the donor funds provided incentives for community development, applied research, regional communication, project management, project evaluation, and wildlife conservation, among other beneficial activities.

However, the overall effect of donor funding on CAMPFIRE may be viewed as double-edged. That is, some of the positive effects also ultimately had unintended

negative implications for the program. As Murombedzi (1999) points out, foreign aid, by implicitly vesting power in external agents, may have hampered the development of local leadership and decision-making capacity. Similarly, the allocation of external funds resulted in the development of expert-driven, top-heavy management structures. Of critical importance to later outcomes, the CCG service providers gradually ended their work with the program following the end of USAID funding, leaving projects without established local capacity.

4.2.2. Project Activities, Revenues, and Other Benefits

As discussed above, sport hunting generates about 90 percent of CAMPFIRE's revenue. Non-consumptive tourist activities such as game viewing contribute only about 2 percent. Most CAMPFIRE districts rely on safari hunting ventures because they do not have the infrastructure to support conventional tourism. Sport hunting management within CAMPFIRE follows several steps. Each year DNPWM estimates the wildlife populations for valuable species. These estimates are based on reports from game scouts in the field, aerial surveys, and data from professional hunters and tour operators. With these data in hand, the agency sets sustainable hunting quotas for each participating district (Khumalo 2003; WWF-SARPO 2003). The RDC then markets hunting concessions to safari operators. Often these concessions follow five-year cycles. The professional hunters and safari operators then market hunting excursions to hunters, mostly from the US and Europe. The hunting concessions are highly lucrative. At the time of my research, for example, the fee for an elephant trophy was approximately US\$10,000. The fee for a buffalo trophy averaged around US\$2000. In addition, hunters

have to pay the costs of the excursion, including supplies, guides, porters, and so on. The cost of a hunt typically exceeds US\$30,000. Monitors from DNPWM and the RDC accompany each hunting party to ensure compliance with game laws and quotas. Safari operators must, by law, keep detailed records of animals killed, including number, location, circumstances, size, weight, and the characteristics of the horns, tusks and other trophies (Khumalo 2003; WWF-SARPO 2003). DNPWM will not issue new permits for subsequent hunts until operators produce these records. During my field research I found that CAMPFIRE leaders in Mahenye expressed concern with the process of issuing hunting concessions and also with the system of record keeping by safari operators. I will discuss this issue and other deviations from ideal practice later on in chapters dealing with the case studies.

Trophy hunting is considered to be the most lucrative form of ecotourism. Hunters usually travel in small groups, demand few amenities, and cause minimal interference with local ecosystems and cultures. Yet they provide considerable income. Mahenye is one of the few projects to diversify successfully into conventional tourism. As I discuss in detail below, the ward now has two upscale lodges catering to game viewing tourists.

RDCs collect and distribute revenue from CAMPFIRE activities following national guidelines. The guidelines stipulate that RDCs may retain 12 percent of the revenue as an administrative levy and may keep 35 percent for wildlife management costs (Metcalf 1994; Murombedzi 1999; Nemarundwe 2004). According to the guidelines, at least 50 percent of the revenue must be disbursed to the “producer” communities, the wards where the hunting occurs. The distribution of revenue between

RDCs and local communities has remained one of the sources of conflict in CAMPFIRE implementation. Under CAMPFIRE processes, the RDCs have both the incentive and the opportunity to retain as much as possible. In practice, the proportion of CAMPFIRE revenue that reaches communities has varied from district to district. In my research, for example, I found that in Mahenye, where a strong ward leadership emerged, the communities received 80 percent of the income from ward activities. In Nyaminyami, in contrast, the wards received closer to 40 percent of the income they generated.

At the ward level, CAMPFIRE funds typically support community projects such as building and equipping clinics and schools, constructing electric fences to keep wild animals away from crop fields, drilling boreholes for water, improving roads, and paying game scouts and guides (Murombedzi 2001; Murphree 2004; Newsham 2002). Some districts have also paid some of the money directly to households as cash dividends. In drought years, all the income may be distributed directly to local people or used to buy maize and other food items. In principle, the local CAMPFIRE committees decide how to allocate the income. CAMPFIRE revenue distribution may be a source of conflict not only between the RDCs and communities but also within communities. I discuss these issues in detail in later chapters on the case studies.

Developing an overall judgment of the CAMPFIRE program is a complex task. On one hand, over the first decade of its existence the program nationwide absorbed more money in donor funding (approximately US\$30 million) than it produced from local projects (approximately US\$20 million) (Hasler 1999; Muir-Leresche et al. 2003). Moreover, on average only about half of the revenue generated has gone to the participating communities. Consequently, actual average disbursements to households

have been modest at best (Bond 2001; Wolmer et al. 2004). In 2001, for example, CAMPFIRE projects generated approximately US\$2.2 million, of which about US\$1.1 million benefited local families (Muir-Leresche et al. 2003). Thus on average in 2001 each of the approximately 100,000 households around the country that participated in income-producing CAMPFIRE projects received the equivalent of about US\$5 in direct earnings. Even in the very poor communities, characteristic of CAMPFIRE districts, with average annual household incomes of about US\$100, this level of additional income provides at best a marginal gain, and cannot be a foundation for effective poverty alleviation efforts.

On the other hand, benefits for communities and the nation may be more significant than they first appear. One estimate suggests that CAMPFIRE's contribution to national GDP since its inception may be on the order of five times greater than the direct revenue from constituent projects (Muir-Leresche et al. 2003). At least through 2000, the nation benefited from the associated donor aid and visitors' additional non-CAMPFIRE spending that flowed through the economy. Moreover, households in areas that do have plentiful trophy animals and successful hunting concessions earn dividends significantly higher than the national average (Muir-Leresche et al. 2003). Also, the infrastructure improvements such as roadwork, grinding mills, and school buildings significantly enhance community life beyond the value of the investment expenses. Finally, projects provide capacity building, employment, and entrepreneurial opportunities that for some residents may multiply the modest direct income.

4.3. Key Achievements

In this section I discuss what other reviewers and I consider to have been the key achievements of the CAMPFIRE program. This discussion helps develop a framework for the analysis of the recent performance of the two CAMPFIRE projects detailed in subsequent chapters.

Important measures of success include the program's rapid spread in Zimbabwe and its powerful influence on environmental policymaking in southern Africa and the developing world more broadly. The program developed from three key pilot project sites (Mahenye, Nyaminyami, and Masoka) in the late 1980s. Within a decade, it had spread to two-thirds of Zimbabwe's rural districts (Hasler 1999). At its height, the program had a rural constituency of several million people living in CAMPFIRE districts. About 200,000 people live in the districts that are in areas of high wildlife potential and, therefore, high earning potential (Hasler 1999). CAMPFIRE led to the development of the political will that enabled wildlife management to become a prominent issue at the ward, district, and national level in Zimbabwe.

The achievements of CAMPFIRE inspired ongoing regional natural resource management programs in other countries, including Namibia, Botswana, and Zambia—all of which were also funded by USAID (Hasler 1999; Murphree 2001). CAMPFIRE is frequently held up as a model from which other countries can draw lessons. Practitioners from as far away as Mongolia refer to the positive influence of Zimbabwe's model (Bedunah & Schmidt 2004).

The CAMPFIRE program increased its financial base rapidly from humble beginnings (Muir-Leresche et al. 2003; Murphree 2000). Annual income nationwide rose

from about US\$350,000 in 1989 to US\$1.8 million in 1996 (Bond 2001). At the time of my research in Nyaminyami, that district alone was earning US\$750,000 per year from CAMPFIRE activities. The growth in income was a result of a combination of several factors: more communities participating, higher trophy quotas, higher trophy fees, and improved international marketing (Child et al. 1997).

In principle, wildlife numbers should be a key indicator of success in CAMPFIRE's conservation component. However, many variables can affect wildlife populations, including drought, disease, habitat changes in other areas important for wide-ranging species, and so on. Consequently, it is difficult to establish specific causal links between CAMPFIRE activities and wildlife numbers (Bond 2001). Nevertheless, according to WWF-SARPO, the ecological watchdog of the program, numbers of key species have been relatively stable and habitat loss has been moderated in CAMPFIRE areas (Bond 2001; Hasler 1999). According to animal surveys, for example, Zimbabwe's elephant population increased from 46,000 in 1980 to 90,000 in 2000 (Bond 2001; Khumalo 2003). These gains have occurred both on state reserves and in CAMPFIRE areas. At independence, 12 percent of the land in Zimbabwe was devoted to wildlife management, all in protected areas managed by the state. This percentage has increased to 33 percent since the establishment of CAMPFIRE through the inclusion of communal lands and private conservancies (Bond 2001; Khumalo 2003; Murphree 2001). Furthermore, evidence from Zimbabwe shows that poaching, which was widespread prior to the introduction of CAMPFIRE, declined significantly once communities began to receive economic benefits and once communities members were exposed to education about conservation (Bond 2001; Khumalo 2003; Murphree 2001). Local residents

became watchdogs on their neighbors. Some RDCs began to make public arrests of both subsistence and commercial poachers.

Reviewers also state that the program contributed to the establishment of important new local governance systems linked to CAMPFIRE. The new institutions resulted in increased responsiveness and accountability and greater participation in distribution of benefits (Hasler 1999). Hasler (1999) argues that through these institutions CAMPFIRE communities learned more effective practices for collective management of their resources and for articulating their development needs. A critical finding in my field research is that these positive outcomes have not been sustained.

4.4. Critiques

In this section I discuss and evaluate what reviewers of the CAMPFIRE program have identified as its major weaknesses, focusing especially on limitations related to participation and devolution, the subjects of my research.

CAMPFIRE had various weaknesses built in to the original design. The weaknesses start with the document that the DNPWM produced on CAMPFIRE. Murphree (2000) faults the document for not spelling out key areas of how the five CAMPFIRE principles, listed in the opening section of this chapter, would be translated into practice. For instance, it did not define the “communities” that were to manage CAMPFIRE projects. Moreover, because the central government devolved wildlife management to the RDC level only, the CAMPFIRE document is silent on how to confer the effective status of Appropriate Authority to these communities. Critics argue that retaining Appropriate Authority at the RDC level raised immediate doubts regarding how

much control local communities would be allowed to have and how much long-term commitment to the program would be created at the village level (Murphree 2000). These scholars contend that with resource ownership in the hands of the RDCs, the participatory component of the program was compromised even before CAMPFIRE was implemented (Murombedzi 1999; Murphree 2000; Newsham 2002).

Although Murphree (2004) and others consider the level of devolution for wildlife management to be a fundamental weakness in CAMPFIRE, I found that quality of governance, both at the RDC and ward level, may be an equally important concern. In other words, with good governance, RDCs could effectively manage the resources for the benefit of the local communities. Conversely, community institutions lacking in capacity would be unlikely to serve the community interest. Devolving authority to the local level would not necessarily guarantee good governance or equitable, participatory distribution of benefits.

CAMPFIRE must also be viewed in the national political arena since national policies, politics, and economics can often promote or thwart its initiatives. Political interference and manipulation by the ruling ZANU-PF party has undermined local participation in some districts (Murombedzi 1999). Although one of the strengths of the CAMPFIRE program is its application of a multi-sectoral and multi-level approach facilitating policy integration across agencies, internal differences and lack of coordination among these levels posed difficulties (Murombedzi 1999; Newsham 2002). For example, politicians and senior government officials representing different constituencies and government departments may have agendas that are not consistent with CAMPFIRE objectives. External politicians may attempt to influence RDC

decisions on revenue distribution, which can affect CAMPFIRE benefits to the ward and hence to households (Hasler 1999; Murombedzi 1999; Newsham 2002). Similarly provincial and even district politics can influence project outcomes. Evidence from my field research supports this observation. I found that national and district politics did have an impact on program performance and the extent and quality of local participation. However, I found these effects varied from case to case and that they did not entirely explain the failures in governance and participation I observed at the local level. I discuss these issues in detail in following chapters.

Another problem with the original design of CAMPFIRE is that, while in some districts all wards are involved, in other districts only one or two wards have projects. In these cases, the RDCs may be more reluctant to devolve control and benefits to individual producer wards that make up only a part of the district's constituent base and are often among the least influential wards, politically, economically, and otherwise (Mombeshora 2002; Murombedzi 2001).

The complexity of the bureaucracy affecting CAMPFIRE (Figure 2) also has negative implications for meaningful local participation. The sub-district, district, and national levels through which decisions are made involve a series of processes that are not highly participatory and can be accurately described at best as "representative participation." While in principle representative participation can be effective, in the context of rural communities with little democratic experience, representative participation is not an ideal approach. It ranks lower on Pimbert and Pretty's typology of participation (Table 1) (Newsham 2002). Moreover, the concept of CBNRM assumes direct participation to the extent possible.

Critics have also pointed to problems arising from the CAMPFIRE's early reliance on donor funding (Murombedzi 1999; Newsham 2002). These investments, while essential during the start-up period, tended to erode self-direction and self-sufficiency in community development. Some districts established CAMPFIRE projects with the primary purpose of leveraging donor funds, rather than to achieve sustainable wildlife management (Murombedzi 1999).

Since economic incentives are at the core of CBNRN, the income must live up to community members' expectations. In an analysis of revenues generated by CAMPFIRE projects from 1989 to 1996, Bond (2001) showed that the average annual benefit per household from wildlife dropped from about US\$19 to about US\$4.50. Bond identified two factors that limited revenues and thus also limited attitudinal and behavioral change: (1) low percentages of revenues devolved to local communities, and (2) the dilution of revenues resulting from in-migration. Murombedzi (1999) observed that population growth reduces the share of revenues received by each household and also contributes to higher rates of conversion of wildlife habitat to agricultural plots, leading to the decline of wildlife populations.

4.5. Impact of the Current Political and Economic Crisis

The economic and political crisis in Zimbabwe has adversely affected CAMPFIRE projects in various ways. A key impact is the reduction in the CAMPFIRE revenue that flows to the districts. First, negative international publicity has virtually eliminated game viewing tourism. This has had a minor effect on CAMPFIRE incomes nationwide because less than 5 percent of program revenues depend on conventional

tourism. The Mahenye project, however, felt the negative effects more acutely, as occupancy rates in its lodges dropped sharply. Because Nyaminyami has always relied almost entirely on sport hunters, who are less affected by domestic disturbances in the countries they visit, the effect of a drop in conventional tourism on revenues in this district was negligible. The government's policy of overvaluing the Z\$ has been more damaging to CAMPFIRE than the decline in conventional tourism. The government requires hard currency earnings, including CAMPFIRE earnings, to be exchanged through the central bank. In effect, the overvaluation of the local currency allows the central bank to capture the difference between the official exchange rate and the parallel market rate (Muir-Leresche et al. 2003).² On the other hand, price controls on staple goods to some extent mitigate these exchange rate losses.

Reservations for safari hunting have not declined, despite the unrest (Khumalo 2003; Muir-Leresche et al. 2003).³ Safari hunting bookings in Nyaminyami continue to take up all hunting quotas for valuable trophy animals. In Mahenye, bookings for trophy hunts have been flat since 2000. Yet this lack of growth primarily results from the safari operator being busy with other concessions rather than from a lack of interested clients.

A second impact on CAMPFIRE linked to the national crisis relates to politics. As part of its efforts to retain control in preparation for the parliamentary elections of 2005, the ruling party worked to consolidate its position in the countryside by recruiting traditional leaders to enforce party discipline. In 2004, for example, the government doubled the monthly allowances for chiefs from Z\$500,000 to Z\$1 million (equivalent at

² At the time of my research in Mahenye, US\$1 bought approximately Z\$5400 at the official rate and approximately Z\$6500 at the "parallel market" rate.

³ Typically about 60 percent of the hunters come from the United States and about 25 percent from Europe (Khumalo 2003).

the time to US\$185). The increase resulted in chiefs earning more than councilors and some civil servants. This strengthening of the chiefs' authority by a government willing to use political violence could be expected to threaten the stability and durability of local participatory institutions established for management of CAMPFIRE projects (Matanhire 2003). Yet the particular local political situations in the two case study areas limited the impact in these locations. Neither site has had any significant MDC activity.

Consequently neither site has experienced the political violence common in Ndebele regions and in urban areas, where militias, youth groups, and war veterans have worked to intimidate voters and opposition supporters. Before the 1987 unity of Zimbabwe's two major political parties, Nyaminyami district had ZAPU presence. The district did suffer from violence associated with the broad repression of ZAPU that was rampant during the early years after independence. Since 1987, however, Nyaminyami district has voted solidly for ZANU-PF.⁴

For different reasons, Mahenye has also been largely spared political violence. Mahenye ward since independence has consistently voted for the minority ZANU-Ndonga. This small minority party primarily represents the interests of the Shangaan ethnic group found in the country's isolated southeast corner. At most, ZANU-Ndonga has held one seat in parliament. As the party poses no threat to ZANU-PF hegemony, the ruling party has tolerated its presence. I discuss local politics and culture in greater detail in later chapters.

A third impact on CAMPFIRE of the current crisis has been the reduced activity of the NGOs that local projects depended on for administrative support. While the previously scheduled end of USAID funding in 2000 sharply reduced NGOs' capacity,

⁴ Interview with Nyaminyami RDC chief executive officer in Siakobvu, March 5, 2006.

the national crisis has further constrained their work in the field. The government has intimidated, harassed, or expelled NGOs that are in any way critical of the president or the ruling party. The US and EU sanctions have further reduced the level of international assistance.

Finally, the chaotic fast-track land reform program has threatened wildlife refuges in some areas. Along with taking over commercial farms, war veterans and other groups have invaded private game conservancies and parts of national parks. Sections of Gonarezhou National Park, which borders Mahenye, have been affected (Wolmer et al. 2004). However, these problems have occurred in Chiredzi district far away from the more isolated Mahenye Ward. Protected areas bordering Nyaminyami have not experienced invasions of this type.

Zimbabwe's crisis has adversely affected CAMPFIRE in various ways. My findings indicate, however, that these impacts do not entirely explain the post-2000 declines in project performance on Mahenye and Nyaminyami. This is a key point for my analysis and conclusions. If, as might be expected, the national crisis overwhelmed all other factors, then questions of devolution, governance, and participation at the local level would lose their relevance. Yet I found that conditions at the district and ward levels significantly affected post-2000 outcomes. I describe and interpret these independent local effects in the analytic chapters.

CHAPTER 5. Methods

5.1. Introduction

In this chapter I discuss the way I collected, analyzed, and interpreted data and also consider the strengths and weaknesses of the research methodology. I conducted the field research in Zimbabwe in two periods: in Mahenye Ward from late June to mid August 2004 and in Nyaminyami District from late February to mid March 2006. In conducting the Nyaminyami case study research, I benefited from the knowledge of CAMPFIRE gained during the Mahenye case study. The major problem I encountered in conducting the second case study two years after the first one was the worsened economic conditions. For example, in 2006 there were serious fuel shortages in the country. It was a challenge to acquire sufficient fuel for the trip, and once underway I had to travel with many containers of extra fuel in the back of the vehicle. On the other hand, the two-year difference provided me with opportunities to observe the effects over time of the prolonged economic and political crisis.

5.2. Qualitative Case Study Techniques

In the course of investigating the two CAMPFIRE projects, I developed comprehensive narratives that describe their beginnings and subsequent histories. During the work, I focused on questions of local participation and governance. Although I present tentative general conclusions and recommendations in the final chapter, I believe that the primary contribution of this research is the collection, interpretation, and analysis of case-study data. This research contributes to filling existing gaps in detailed empirical

knowledge. The current crisis has curtailed research in the countryside. My work provides useful information regarding the effects of external disturbances on project performance. These findings are relevant for questions related to the effectiveness, sustainability, and resilience under duress of community-based natural resource management programs.

I collected primary data using ethnographic techniques (Cook & Crang 1995). These field techniques included formal and informal interviews with experts and local residents and my own observations in the field. I supplemented information gathered during interviews with information gathered through document review. My review of documents included examining records, reports, and articles in the public domain and others obtained at the offices of NGOs and government departments in Zimbabwe's capital, Harare, in Mahenye CAMPFIRE offices, and in the Nyaminyami RDC headquarters in the town of Siakobvu.

During interviews, I applied the "elite interviewing" and "key informants" techniques described by Lewis Anthony Dexter (Dexter 1970). According to Dexter (1970), elite interviews are exchanges in which interviewees are encouraged to define the situation under study, structure the account of the situation, and largely determine what is relevant. Key informants are a small subset of elite interview subjects who often serve as guides within the social context under study (Dexter 1970). Key informants typically provide explanations and interpretations of events over a period of time substantially longer than a conventional interview and often suggest other useful avenues for further investigation within the research framework.

The second qualitative research method I applied during the course of the investigations is extended participant observation. This approach is described by political scientist Richard Fenno, Jr., as “soaking and poking” and “just hanging around” (Fenno 1990, p. 55). Fenno urges researchers to “go where you are driven; take what you are given; and, when in doubt, be quiet” (Fenno 1990, p. 68). The participant observation methodology is characterized by openness, patience, and flexibility and thus allows for deeper immersion in community life. I stayed in villages implementing CAMPFIRE projects for relatively long periods and participated in daily activities of work and relaxation, allowing community members to control the direction of our interactions. This slow-paced, non-structured approach minimized distorting effects of my presence and reduced the likelihood that my observations were influenced by exceptional events.

Both before and after visiting the case study areas, I interviewed representatives of relevant NGOs, government agencies, and private sector firms based in Harare, Chipinge district, and Nyaminyami district. These respondents included professionals whom I sought out for their specific expertise. In Harare, I interviewed people affiliated with ART, the CAMPFIRE Association, CASS, WWF-SARPO, the Zimbabwe Environmental Law Association, ZimTrust, and DNPWM. Staff in these organizations also provided me with relevant documents. In Mahenye, I interviewed representatives of the Chipinge rural district council and River Lodges of Africa, the firm now responsible for managing the two safari lodges established in Mahenye in conjunction with the community’s CAMPFIRE project. In Siakobvu, in Nyaminyami district, I interviewed RDC officials and council members and staff from Save the Children, which maintains offices at the RDC headquarters. These participants also provided useful documents.

During my stays in Mahenye and Nyaminyami, I observed CAMPFIRE project activities and interviewed people living or working in the areas. When seeking appointments with prospective respondents, I explained my interest and purpose and requested their consent to be interviewed promising to protect their anonymity and confidentiality. No one refused to speak to me, and many engaged me in open discussions. On entering both field study sites in the rural areas, I followed customary practice and introduced myself to the traditional chief, kraal heads, or chairmen and secured permission to spend time in the community and conduct my research. I typically conducted interviews in English with staff of NGOs and agencies, and interacted in Shona with townspeople, villagers, and general community members in outlying areas. Quotations from respondents included in the thesis are presented in English. I translated the words of rural residents from Shona.

In both case study sites, I sought out respondents along a continuum from project insiders to project outsiders. I solicited the opinions of people with no direct links to project management. I interviewed members of the general public as I encountered them in public places, including at village centers, on roads, at grinding mills, on paths in the bush, at schools, at riverbanks and lakeshores, in fishing camps, and so on. I also approached people in their homes and family compounds and asked for permission to speak with them. With professionals in Harare, after receiving permission, I recorded interviews using audio tape recorders. I supplemented the tapes with my notes taken after each session regarding nonverbal cues. In the rural areas, I did not use recording devices. Instead I wrote down field notes as soon as possible after each encounter.

Interviews typically took the form of face-to-face meetings of between 30 and 60 minutes in length involving one or more respondents. There were several common variations, however. Some interviews, particularly my ad hoc meetings with villagers in both Mahenye and Nyaminyami, were often shorter, perhaps 10 to 20 minutes in length. In contrast, interviews with particularly important respondents were often more extensive. These discussions either lasted longer during the course of one day or continued over several days. I conducted more extensive interviews of this type in Harare with Zimbabwean staff at WWF-SARPO, in Mahenye with CAMPFIRE committee members, and in Nyaminyami with RDC officials and councilors, and with several other key informants among villagers not affiliated with the CAMPFIRE leadership. In total I completed interviews with 54 respondents for the Mahenye case study and 70 respondents for the Nyaminyami case study.

For the most part I interviewed respondents individually. Where I had the opportunity to speak to people in groups, as was common in the rural areas, I facilitated discussions using focus group techniques. In Mahenye, I engaged in group discussions with CAMPFIRE committee members, primary school teachers, women at the grinding mill, and tourist lodge employees. In Nyaminyami I held group discussions with fishermen at a camp on Lake Kariba, young men at a canteen in Siakobvu, family members of a village kraal head, and district councilors at RDC headquarters.

In Mahenye, among those closely tied to the project, I interviewed traditional community leaders, members of the CAMPFIRE committee, committee staff, and people working at the tourist lodges, including both local residents and company employees brought in from outside. I also spoke to people—former CAMPFIRE committee

members, for example—who had been closely involved with the project in the past but were no longer engaged. I selected these current and former insiders because of their personal knowledge of the project's history and current status.

The respondents I encountered in Mahenye fell into three categories: permanent residents, temporary residents, and non-residents. Permanent village residents constituted the majority of my interviewees. Temporary residents I spoke to included secondary school teachers who had been assigned to the village after completing their training. Non-residents were generally people from nearby communities who happened to be in Mahenye visiting relatives or conducting business, but this group also included rangers at nearby Gonarezhou National Park who were long-term neighbors of the community. I sought out these respondents from Mahenye and its environs to learn about the perceptions and attitudes of people in the area who were not directly involved with project activities.

On first arriving in Mahenye, I met with the traditional chief, who agreed to my request to be interviewed while emphasizing, falsely as it turned out, that he was not personally involved with the local CAMPFIRE project. Although I was exploring what I later found to be a highly charged topic, I started my visit with considerable ignorance. None of the professionals I interviewed in Harare prior to my trip to Mahenye appeared to have any awareness of the depth of current troubles on the ground. While after the fact I found this lack of knowledge among outside experts surprising, I believe in practice it helped me undertake my work at the site with objectivity and open-mindedness.

In Nyaminyami, I focused my fieldwork on the town of Siakobvu and on two of the district's twelve wards, Mola A and Negande A⁵. I selected these two wards for particular attention as they reflect the range of CAMPFIRE income. Mola A is regularly one of the top three earners based on the safari hunts completed within its borders while Negande A is typically third or fourth from the bottom. I obtained information on the wards I did not visit and on the Nyaminyami CAMPFIRE project as a whole through interviews with townspeople in Siakobvu, fishermen from many wards I encountered at a camp on Lake Kariba, ward councilors attending an RDC meeting at Siakobvu, and RDC staff. In Siakobvu, I also interviewed townspeople and NGO officials who had no direct connection with CAMPFIRE. My interviewees in the wards included traditional leaders, CAMPFIRE employees, school teachers, others with positions of responsibility, and members of the community at large. I also interviewed employees of a private crocodile farm in Mola.

5.3. Limitations

I acknowledge several limitations in my study methods. Analytic concerns relate to issues such as the validity and reliability of processes used in the collection and analysis of data. Questions in this regard include: Did data measure what they were intended to measure? Are measurements accurate? Would a second study of the same subject find similar results? Qualitative, ethnographic methods are subject to well-known biases, many of which are similar to biases that also affect quantitative, statistical analyses. Participant observation studies in particular must take into account biases

⁵ Mola and Negande are both communal areas with traditional chiefs. For administrative purposes within Nyaminyami rural district, the areas are each divided into two wards, A and B.

related to measurement error (Webb et al. 1966). For instance the act of measuring itself may alter what is being measured. In this regard, the presence of an outside investigator may influence the views, behavior patterns, and interpretation dynamics of members of a community under study.

Moreover, a researcher's perspective may shift over time while conducting an investigation in unfamiliar cultural surroundings (Webb et al. 1966). Webb et al. (1996, p. 114) note that the observer's "increased familiarity with the culture alters him as an instrument." Fenno (1990, p. 78) acknowledged this problem and described the social researcher's tendency to become "so close to your respondents, so immersed in their world and so dependent on this close relationship that you lose all intellectual distance and scholarly objectivity." Another common problem with ethnographic research is selection bias (Webb et al. 1966). Case studies are rarely randomly selected, and within a case study the researcher is more likely to be exposed to and therefore influenced by the perspectives of the interviewees who are open to outsiders (Webb et al. 1966). The researcher may ignore, overlook or discount views of more reticent insiders.

In addition to selection bias is the problem of sample size in ethnographic research (Fenno 1990). Because qualitative researchers focus on a few in-depth case studies, they are sharply limited in the generalizability of conclusions drawn due to constraints of "small-*n*" analysis (Fenno 1990). According to Fenno (1990, p. 60), the investigator makes "a deliberate decision to sacrifice analytical range for analytical depth."

Arguments on the best way to address perceived methodological shortcomings inherent in case study research fall along a continuum. Some argue that qualitative

research can and must conform to standards of inference generally accepted in scientific research if it is to be useful in the policy domain (King et al. 1994). Others, such as Lofland and Lofland (1995), argue that case study research is different enough to warrant distinct evaluation criteria. They note that all human interpretations of information are filtered through social constructs and specifically caution against drawing inferences.

With reference to my two case studies specifically, I emphasize that I explored local political and socioeconomic outcomes rather than ecological effects. Second, for the most part I was not able to verify independently what my respondents told me about the history of the Mahenye and Nyaminyami projects since 2000. Generally I did not witness the events described, and researchers have not published reports of the projects' development over the past several years. In both case study sites, the documents related to project performance often had significant gaps and inconsistencies in the figures available regarding incomes and expenditures. Hyperinflation in Zimbabwe—at the time of my research in 2006 it was nearly 1000 percent per year—also made it difficult to estimate the true value of the CAMPFIRE projects' cash flow. I also recognize that several important respondents had incentives to dissemble, including both current insiders who may have wished to hide or downplay problems and outsiders who may have wished to exaggerate them or otherwise distort the issues under discussion.

To mitigate the effects of these limitations, I followed the guidance of Webb et al. (1966) and employed “triangulation”—the use of multiple methods in a single investigation—to increase the reliability of my findings. Thus, to address possible distortions in my respondents' descriptions of events and conditions, I worked to take likely biases into account and to get multiple characterizations of important issues from a

wide variety of respondents. Where possible, I attempted to confirm their statements with my own observations. In the end, the unusual unanimity of public opinion in both case study areas gave me confidence that I was capturing accurately both the substance of significant events and the perceptions of community members regarding project performance. I also believe that the fact that I am Zimbabwean, familiar with the cultural background of my respondents and able to communicate in a language in which all respondents were comfortable, strengthened my relationships with village residents and helped deepen the interpersonal dynamics. My background helped strengthen the quality of data collected because I could more accurately interpret the information provided by respondents. Finally, to address weaknesses in the available financial records, I present mean estimates derived from multiple sources or use estimates from sources that I consider most reliable. Given hyperinflation, the US dollar conversions of Z\$ values I present are approximations.

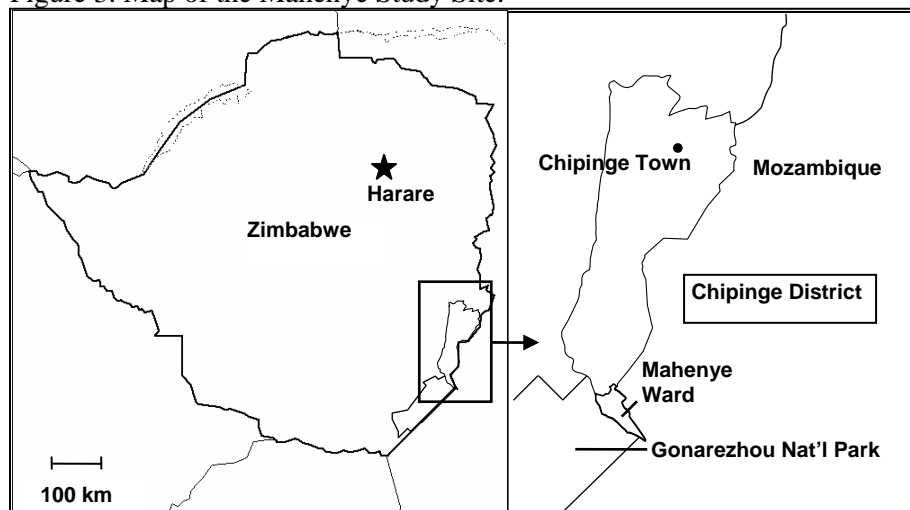
Given these limitations inherent in case study research, the conclusions and recommendations I offer in the final chapter are tentative and preliminary and subject to further testing. I highlight the importance of my findings specific to the projects studied and do not make strong assertions for broader application. Nevertheless, I believe that if applied cautiously my findings may be helpful to scholars and practitioners involved with CBNRM in Zimbabwe and elsewhere.

CHAPTER 6. Mahenye Case Study

6.1. Background

Mahenye ward is located about 1000 km south of Harare in Chipinge district in Manicaland province. The ward lies at the southernmost tip of Chipinge district (Figure 3).

Figure 3. Map of the Mahenye Study Site.



Mozambique lies to the north and east of the ward with the Save River to the south and west. The Save River separates Mahenye from Zimbabwe's Gonarezhou National Park. In addition to the land set aside for settlements and agriculture, Mahenye includes land allocated for wildlife. Some of the land reserved for settlements and livestock is still predominately unmanaged and used by wild animals, including elephant and buffalo that move between the national park and Mahenye ward (Murphree 2001).

The low average rainfall of about 450-500 mm per year makes the ward generally unsuitable for agriculture or commercial ranching (Murphree 2001). Despite the unfavorable conditions, however, local communities keep livestock and grow some crops

for subsistence use. The ward has a relatively low population density of about 20 persons per km². The total population is about 5,000 people constituting about 1000 households (Murphree 2001). The traditional leadership of the ward consists of Chief Mahenye and 27 kraal and village heads.

The Mahenye villages are far removed from the main regional urban centers. The nearest tarred highway passes about 50 kilometers to the north and is accessible from Mahenye only by an unpaved road. There is no regular bus or other public transportation between the highway and Mahenye Ward. This geographic description of Mahenye reflects its isolation. This isolation contributes the ward's low socioeconomic status (Murphree 2001). The people of Mahenye ward are primarily Shangaan, a small minority ethnic group constituting about 1 percent of Zimbabwe's population. Their traditional territory in Zimbabwe formerly included part of what is now Gonarezhou National Park.

6.2. Findings from the Fieldwork

6.2.1. Description of the Mahenye CAMPFIRE Project

In 1991 the national government granted Chipinge district authority to establish a CAMPFIRE program. Mahenye ward, with its proximity to Gonarezhou, was the primary site for CAMPFIRE implementation in Chipinge district. Almost 10 years earlier, however, Mahenye had been the site of an experiment in community conservation that served as a precursor to the larger national program. I therefore begin my discussion with a brief overview of these prior events.

In the early 1960s the Rhodesian colonial government expropriated most of the Mahenye people's traditional territories to establish Gonarezhou National Park. The

people were resettled across the Save River in what is now Mahenye ward. Since the colonial government had already established state ownership of wildlife both inside and outside protected areas, the resettled people found themselves forbidden to hunt on either the old land or the new. Not surprisingly, the people of Mahenye resented the park and the wildlife to which they no longer had access. Poaching became a severe problem, resulting in running conflicts with park managers. The conflicts accelerated after independence as the new government failed to fulfill its promise to return lands from Gonarezhou to them and continued to enforce game laws.

At this time, with strife over wildlife continuing, park officials in the region asked a local white rancher, Clive Stockil to attempt mediation. Stockil had grown up in the area, had good relations with the Mahenye people, and spoke Shangaan fluently. At a meeting involving the rancher, wildlife officials, and local residents, community leaders made it clear that their traditional sense of stewardship of wildlife no longer held. Peterson (1991, p. 10) quotes a community elder of the time as referring to “their animals.” He said, “If they would control their animals, we could grow our crops. Then there would be no poaching.” As Murphree (2001) notes, the reference to “their animals” reveals the locals’ alienation and anger at the expropriation of their rights to wildlife, previously an important component of traditional livelihoods.

With this new understanding of the roots of the poaching problem, the park officials, with Stockil’s assistance, worked out an innovative arrangement with the local people, which in its implementation served as a pilot project for CAMPFIRE (Murphree 2001). Since government sanctioned hunts were allowed in the national park area, government authorities agreed that hunts should also be permitted in Mahenye, with local

communities getting a share of the income earned from these legal hunts. DNPWM accepted this agreement on the condition that the community cooperated with park officials in anti-poaching efforts. In return the authorities agreed to ensure that a portion of the concession fees for the hunts would be paid to Mahenye ward.

The arrangement faced a variety of problems right from the beginning. Most of the problems related to complex bureaucracy at the rural district level where no official mechanism for disbursing hunting revenue to the communities existed. Consequently, for several years, money earned from sport hunting in Mahenye ward was retained at the district level, and the community was frustrated (Murphree 2001). Only in 1987, as CAMPFIRE was about to be launched nationally, did the Chipinge RDC finally transfer to Mahenye the funds that had accumulated over the previous five years. The ward then used the funds for various community improvements, including construction of a primary school, a grinding mill, and teachers' accommodations in the village. In 1991, the process was formalized as Chipinge district joined the national CAMPFIRE program. Thus, although Mahenye was not the first official CAMPFIRE project the Mahenye community and its partners helped pioneer the concepts.

Here I describe and analyze what I learned about the community development benefits associated with the formal CAMPFIRE project that began in 1991. The premise of CBNRM is that, on communal lands, those bearing costs of wildlife management should derive benefits from the resource for it to become an acceptable land use. Furthermore, according to development practitioners, benefits should include meaningful local participation in decision making. During my research, I examined the extent to which local people benefited from CAMPFIRE activities and the nature and extent of

their participation. I investigated the level and allocation of both sport hunting revenue and revenue from the project's game-viewing tourism business.

Mahenye was the first CAMPFIRE ward to develop a substantial game-viewing tourism component. With Clive Stockil's help, the community reached agreement with a national hotel chain to establish two upscale lodges on the shores of the Save River across from Gonarezhou on Mahenye land. Chilo Lodge and Mahenye Lodge opened for business in the mid-1990s. In return for leasing the land, the firm agreed to pay a percentage of gross revenue, rising over the 10-year contract from 8 to 12 percent, to the RDC. In turn the RDC agreed to return 80 percent of the proceeds to the community.

A CAMPFIRE committee is responsible for managing project activities related to hunting and game-viewing tourism. The committee represents community interests in dealings with the RDC, the safari operator, and the lodge management. The committee also decides on the allocation of income from CAMPFIRE activities. The Mahenye CAMPFIRE bylaws require biennial elections for CAMPFIRE committee members, auditing of financial records every three months, and annual general meetings to facilitate broad community participation. From the project's inception until 2000, a local teacher not directly related to the ruling clan served as the committee chairman. He was last elected to that position in 1998. Since 2000, the chairman has been Chief Mahenye's brother, who had been the vice-chairman in 1998. The chief's brother was not elected to the chairmanship. He was promoted to the position under the Chief's directive in a direct breach of the CAMPFIRE guidelines.

Evaluations of the Mahenye CAMPFIRE project from its inception through 2000 consistently judged it to be a model CAMPFIRE project because of its diversified sources

of income and its stable, participatory community leadership arrangements (Matanhire 2003; Muir-Leresche et al. 2003; Murphree 2001; Peterson 1991). Matanhire (2003), for example, listed the local project management institutions for January through June 2001, the latest cycle for which data were available, as having an 89 percent performance rating, with 75 percent being the standard for model status.

During the early years, the Mahenye project generated revenues from sport hunting of wildlife only. The primary trophy animal in the region that interests sport hunters is the elephant. The quota for elephants in Mahenye ward, four per year through 1996 and then increasing to seven, has only rarely been filled. Through much of the 1990s only one or two elephants were taken each year (Murphree 2001), largely because extended droughts had significantly reduced the population. During my fieldwork in 2004, I was informed that the same pattern of takes below the quota has persisted. Community members reported that the reason now is that the safari operator is overextended with multiple concessions that he holds in other areas.

The director of the CAMPFIRE Association confirmed that the hunter did hold other concessions, but could not confirm whether this contributed to the hunter's inability to take the full quota in Mahenye. However, other researchers confirm my respondents' statements that the national crisis has not adversely affected trophy hunting bookings (Khumalo 2003; Matanhire 2003; Muir-Leresche et al. 2003). As described later, findings from Nyaminyami support the evidence from Mahenye in this regard.

From 1990 to 2000, the price paid by hunters for an elephant in Zimbabwe has averaged about US\$9,000, with variation depending on the size of the trophy (Muir-Leresche et al. 2003). Combined, the Chipinge RDC and the national CAMPFIRE

Association take 50 percent of the hunting revenue. The RDC retains 46 percent and the CAMPFIRE Association takes 4 percent as district dues. Mahenye ward receives the other half. About 50 percent of the ward's share of the revenue has typically been disbursed directly to households as cash dividends. Typically the remainder is allocated for general community purposes. These funds cover committee expenses and local infrastructure improvements, such as grinding mills and school buildings (Murphree 2001).

Direct dividends to households in Mahenye from the CAMPFIRE program through the mid 1990s averaged between US\$10 and US\$30 a year, depending on the number of animals hunted and the size of the trophies (Muir-Leresche et al. 2003). Although these sums amounted to about 5 percent to 10 percent of average annual family income from crops and livestock, additional sources of income were clearly needed. Receipts from four or fewer elephant hunts a year can make only marginal improvements to standards of living in a community of 1000 households. The need for more, and more diversified, sources of income led the community, with Stockil's help, to develop the lodge venture. Mahenye Lodge opened in 1994 and Chilo Lodge followed in 1996.

Combined, the two lodges can serve about 45 guests. Room rates at the time of my field visit were advertised in the range of US\$120 to US\$150 per person per night. The 10-year agreement required the hotel firm to pay 8 percent of gross revenues during the first three years, 10 percent during the following three years, and 12 percent during the last four years. Stockil also helped the community negotiate a more favorable arrangement with the RDC. The RDC agreed to channel about 80 percent of the lodge

revenue back to Mahenye ward, rather than the 50 percent normally returned for hunting income (Murphree 2001).

The community benefited from this new partnership in several ways. The hotel firm improved the 50-kilometer unpaved road connecting Mahenye village to the main paved highway. The firm also extended the lodges' telephone service into the village center for the clinic and police post. The community was not charged for the roadwork or for the telephone service. To improve water supplies in the villages, a cost-sharing arrangement was established under which the firm provided potable water from the lodges along with the necessary materials, and the community contributed labor to lay a pipe and construct a convenient water source for local residents and their livestock. The company and the RDC also allowed the community to take an advance on its first few years of receipts from the venture to pay for the extension of electricity supply to the village for its grinding mill, clinic, general store, and other common-use buildings. In addition, the lodges provided about 40 jobs local villagers. The jobs are primarily low-skill positions, for example, waiters, cooks, mechanics, drivers, maintenance workers, housekeepers, launderers, etc. However, in an area with almost no other regular employment, this is a substantial benefit both to the individuals hired and by extension to their families and the community at large.

In 2004, at the end of the 10-year contract, the hotel firm declined to seek renewal of the lease arrangement. According to the manager of the Mahenye lodges, the main reason for the non-renewal of the lease was the sharp reduction in conventional tourism in Zimbabwe linked to the country's political crisis. A new group, River Lodges of Africa, took over the lease. Mr. Stockil is the managing director of the new partnership.

A representative of the RDC and the chairman of the CAMPFIRE committee are members of the board of directors for the partnership. Decisions concerning the partnership are made by the board and not the RDC. These changes, just underway at the time of my research, appeared to be an attempt to move the Mahenye project out from under the rubric of CAMPFIRE. The CAMPFIRE committee chairman spoke of establishing a private corporation at the community level to manage its business affairs independent of the RDC. As I discuss below, I question whether the committee has the skills and capacity to protect its interests in negotiations with its much more sophisticated partners in the lodge venture.

For example, at the time of my research, Stockil and the community were negotiating a joint ownership arrangement. The new company would include the lodges, hunting concessions, and agricultural development. This new arrangement, according to the lodge manager, would generate various advantages. He said the lodges were losing money due to the decline in tourism, but hunting was still viable. Thus combining the proposed areas of operation would help the partnership weather the difficult times.

Should the new company be formed, the revenue-sharing arrangement would also have to be renegotiated. In this respect, Mr. Stockil intended to negotiate directly with the communities rather than with the RDC. The argument for this shift is that community residents are the ones who live with the wildlife, while the RDC is located 200 km away. However, under the new arrangement communities would receive a percentage of net rather than gross receipts. Given the political and economic instability in the country that has resulted in the dearth of tourism, the proposed arrangement would mean that the

communities would not receive any money until the lodges started making profits from tourism activities at some future time.

In my research I found that the level and quality of participation and community benefits have shifted over time. In my interviews, I encountered a striking, broad and deep agreement that the project is no longer managed to benefit the community. Not one of the people I spoke to outside of the current leadership expressed satisfaction with current management practices. Even several interviewees with close ties to project leaders were critical of performance. Regardless of gender, age, or education, and whether responding individually or in groups, local residents complained of bad management, corruption, nepotism, and intimidation. One respondent said, for example, “Let them steal a little. If I had CAMPFIRE money in my pocket and I was thirsty, I’d buy myself a beer, too. But it’s not right to take it all.”⁶

Interviewees in the community at large also expressed profound disillusionment and skepticism regarding the annual disbursements to households from CAMPFIRE revenue. For example, in the most recent cycle of annual benefit sharing that took place before my visit, each of the approximately 1000 households in Mahenye eligible for benefits was to have received Z\$6,100 as its share of CAMPFIRE revenues for the previous year. This payment was the equivalent of US\$1.55 at contemporary exchange rates.⁷ Before disbursement and without prior notification, however, CAMPFIRE committee leaders in agreement with kraal heads deducted Z\$6,000 from each family’s payment to cover a community development tax unrelated to CAMPFIRE.

⁶ Interview with Gonarezhou park guard near the Save River, August 5, 2004 (translated from Shona).

⁷ The official exchange rate in March 2004 was US\$1=Z\$3930.

In the end, in 2004 each household in Mahenye Ward received in return for being a member of the CAMPFIRE project an after-tax income of Z\$100, the equivalent of approximately US\$0.02 at contemporary exchange rates. One of the teachers I spoke to commented that this amount was not even enough to buy candy for a child. Women at the grinding mill observed that they couldn't even buy a piece of laundry soap with it or pay to grind a five-gallon bucket of corn.⁸ Most important, the dividend was certainly not enough to compensate families for the costs of living with wildlife, which is one of the central promises of CBNRM.

Accounting for emotional well-being, the CAMPFIRE program appears now to have negative returns to residents. The cash dividend was so small as to be useless. Moreover, many community members took the delivery of the trivial amount as an insult, thereby undermining community solidarity and the sense of common purpose. Villagers interpreted the manner and timing of the levy collection as one more means by which their local leadership was expropriating CAMPFIRE benefits. They also referred to the fact that they were not consulted regarding the collection of the levy as an illustration of how community participation took place only on paper and not in practice.

Moreover, I discovered evidence that the money allocated for dividends did not reasonably account for the 2003 CAMPFIRE project earnings. For example, while at the time of my research the project's records were poorly maintained, I saw documents reporting the most recent payment from the hotel firm to the CAMPFIRE project. These documents showed that in early 2004 the Mahenye CAMPFIRE project had, after withholdings to cover levies for the RDC and the CAMPFIRE Association, received

⁸ At the time of my research, the fee for grinding a five-gallon bucket of corn at the Mahenye grinding mill was Z\$1,800, the equivalent of about US\$0.30.

Z\$28.9 million from the hotel firm as the community's share of 2003 lodge receipts.⁹ This amount did not include project revenue from hunting safaris or from other sources, such as the grinding mill operations or the sale of elephant hides. Historically, as mentioned above, the practice in Mahenye is that about half the income from CAMPFIRE is used for committee expenses, such as salaries, allowances, and contributions to infrastructure development in the village, and the other half is distributed directly to households as dividends. However, in 2004 following receipt of the payment from the lodges and other revenue-generating activities, the committee failed to distribute funds promised for school construction. In addition, annual disbursements to households totaled only about Z\$6 million, less than one quarter of the payment from the hotel firm, which in itself was only a fraction of total project receipts for the year.¹⁰ This partial accounting, although inconclusive, adds significant credibility to the respondents' skepticism regarding the CAMPFIRE committee's management practices.

My respondents confirmed that annual household revenues from CAMPFIRE through the 1990s had been relatively significant. Moreover, while in years with adequate rainfall the percentage of total household income derived from CAMPFIRE would be relatively low compared to proceeds from agriculture and livestock, the income stream from wildlife projects serves as a partial buffer against the effects of cyclical droughts (Matanhire 2003; Muir-Leresche et al. 2003). Yet the amounts received recently in Mahenye had dropped to levels that were inconsequential even by the standards of very poor families.

⁹ This represents approximately US\$7,400 at the contemporary official exchange rate. In interviews, both the committee chairman and the lodge manager confirmed that the committee received this payment.

¹⁰ Several respondents in Mahenye independently mentioned mysterious bags of money, assumed to be CAMPFIRE funds gone missing, that had been found recently buried in the bush.

The decline in revenues can only be partly explained by the sharp drop in international game-viewing tourism following the worsening of the country's political and economic conditions after 2000. This decline affected the lodges but not the safari hunting. The manager of the lodges told me that occupancy rates for 2003 averaged about 20 percent with only 2 percent of visitors coming from outside the country. Consequently the lodges were operating well below the breakeven point. Safari hunts remained steady, however, as sport hunters are less affected by political unrest than conventional tourists. Hunting quotas have increased in Mahenye. However, the project's income from trophy hunting has remained flat despite these higher quotas not because of the lack of hunters, but because the contracted safari operator has not conducted enough hunts to fill the allotted takes. For example, while the elephant quota for the previous year was seven, only four were taken.¹¹ Members of the CAMPFIRE committee complained that the safari hunter did not provide adequate service to Mahenye because he had too many commitments with other concessions around the country. Nevertheless, the community should still have earned at least US\$40,000 from elephant trophy fees alone. This money is also not accounted for. Furthermore, the professional hunter subsequently paid the community a negotiated amount to compensate for revenue lost because he failed to fill the quotas. This money is also not accounted for.

Respondents from the general community also complained that since 2000 jobs allocated for locals at Mahenye Lodge and Chilo Lodge have gone to the ruling clan and its allies. Indeed, the CAMPFIRE committee chairman, the chief's brother, was on salary at the lodges as community tourism officer. Another immediate member of the family, also deputy committee chairman, was employed as head chef at Chilo Lodge. Local

¹¹ Interview with RDC councilor for Mahenye Ward in Mahenye village center, July 31, 2004.

leaders have also monopolized project equipment, such as vehicles, intended for community benefit. For example, the committee chairman and his family were using for private purposes a pickup truck donated by the professional hunter as an ambulance or for other local emergency needs. The vehicle had been extensively damaged during one of the private trips and was consequently not in working order at the time of my research. USAID had also donated a tractor to the project for fire management and habitat protection. Instead members of the chief's family had been using the vehicle to carry paying passengers from the villages out to the paved highway, with earnings benefiting the chief and his family. At the time of my research, this vehicle, too, was broken down.

Many local residents interviewed expressed sentiments about the Mahenye CAMPFIRE project that were aptly reflected by the response of one woman who, when asked about the project, replied, "It's for them, not for us."¹² The woman, who was sitting with three other women at their homestead, was referring to the community leaders and their families. This statement is sadly ironic given the history of Mahenye's community-based conservation project. In 1982, as mentioned above, a community leader spoke of "their animals," referring to the government's claims on all wildlife whether inside or outside Gonarezhou National Park and the local people's alienation from that wildlife. The effort to generate income for the community from wildlife was created in part to overcome this alienation. Now, 20 years later, community members use similar language to express alienation from their own CAMPFIRE project as they see their opportunities for participation in the project's decision making disappear and household revenues dwindle.

¹² Interview in Mahenye village, August 3, 2004 (translated from Shona).

A group of primary school teachers whom I interviewed echoed the old woman's words. I came across the teachers as they were gathered in the school yard at the end of the school day. When I informed them that I was in the area researching CAMPFIRE, one person's response was, "that project is being run by the chief."¹³ They explained that the project was completely under the control of, and run in the interest of, the chief's family.

In addition to commenting on the lack of transparency and accountability, respondents from the community also reported evidence of misallocation of funds and mismanagement relating to the CAMPFIRE revenue-generating projects. For example, the village grinding mill is occasionally inoperative because managers fail to clear the electricity bill despite steady usage by local women who pay a fee every time they use it. Informants also said that money promised in the past year for school construction and entered in the records as paid to the local school authorities had not been delivered.¹⁴ Local residents showed me the two secondary school blocks that continue to sit unfinished and deteriorating without a roof in place. The money promised but not delivered was intended to complete these construction projects. My interviewees said that no work had been done on the building since the change of the CAMPFIRE committee administration in 2000. In addition, the village store, established with CAMPFIRE funds as a cooperative had been given to private merchants. Profits from the store were supposed to be used for community improvements. During my field work, the shelves were largely bare, with the primary products for sale being beer and soft drinks.

¹³ Interview with a teacher at Mahenye primary school, July 31, 2004 (translated from Shona).

¹⁴ Interview with school principal at Mahenye primary school, July 31, 2004.

People blamed the recent failings on corrupt and inefficient leadership. As an example, the teachers and other respondents told me that project's financial records had not been audited since the change in leadership in 2000. When at my request the current chairman showed me the records, I found them in obvious disarray. The most straightforward annual totals for income and expenditures for that year or previous years could not be found. Most of the limited documentation that existed was on scraps of paper stored randomly on shelves. The chairman, apparently embarrassed, chastised the bookkeeper in my presence for what was clearly long-standing and normal practice. While in the office, I also observed casual disbursements of CAMPFIRE funds. The amounts were relatively small, but there was no attempt to make a record of the transaction for financial accounting purposes.

Thus, evidence from my respondents indicates that outcomes have deteriorated in Mahenye since the time of the last positive reviews up through 2000. Benefits accruing to local people have declined almost to nothing. There are three main contributory factors: the national crisis, the loss of NGO support, and elite capture at the local level. The primary adverse effects of the national crisis relate to hyperinflation, manipulation of the exchange rate, and the decline in conventional tourists. The withdrawal of the NGOs following the ending of USAID funding removed all monitoring and oversight. In turn these two negative influences allowed the local elite to capture benefits. An important finding in my research is that there were opportunities for resilience and continued community benefits at the local level despite the negative effects of the national crisis and the end of donor funding. The safari hunting and lodge ventures continued to provide a reduced but still viable flow of earnings. There were still opportunities for the community

to work with solidarity and participation for the common good. Local corruption and power grabbing contributed significantly to the collapse of the project's development component.

6.2.2. Participation

This section focuses on changes in levels of community participation in project activities. During interviews respondents provided insights into their levels of participation in agenda setting, implementation, monitoring, evaluation, and modification. I examine both their opportunities and capabilities to participate.

During my research, community members not part of project management universally expressed various combinations of resignation, anger, and fear directed at their own local leaders. Community residents have become disillusioned and cynical, especially as the CAMPFIRE leadership has abandoned all pretense of adhering to democratic processes.

Respondents reported that there had been no elections since 1998, despite the requirement in the Mahenye CAMPFIRE bylaws that polls be held every two years. My respondents reported that up through 1998, the community participated in elections for CAMPFIRE committee members, including the chairperson, every two years as stipulated in the bylaws. In 2000, however, Chief Mahenye, who has no legal authority over CAMPFIRE activities, elevated his own brother to the position of chairman. The chief unilaterally dismissed the sitting chairman on the grounds that he had property outside the ward and therefore did not meet residency requirements.

After the change in leadership, the committee abandoned annual general meetings that had previously provided a platform for villagers to participate in deliberations and decision making on project activities. Normal business at the annual general meetings included financial reports detailing project income and expenses and amounts left for household dividends. It is also at this time that elections for new committee members, when due, would be held. My respondents told me that without regular meetings and elections there are now virtually no opportunities for community members to participate in deliberations or decision making.

Regarding women's participation, my respondents reported that when women attended annual general meetings up through 2000 their contributions to the discussions focused almost entirely on problems they were facing with wild animals destroying their crops. This focus on crop losses reflects the social conventions in Zimbabwe that rural women work in the fields more than men. The problem with wild animals raiding crop fields is one of the major costs that rural people pay for having wildlife within their areas. By law, villagers cannot shoot problem animals. When there are problem animals, the local leadership informs the RDC, which in turn alerts DNPWM. The DNPWM can send wildlife scouts to deal with the animals or can authorize additional income-generating safari hunts. Villagers in Mahenye complained that the process for handling problem animals had completely broken down. In other words, CAMPFIRE no longer delivered on its promise to protect villagers from costs linked to the presence of wildlife.

Furthermore, women's representation on the CAMPFIRE committee has always been minimal, typically no more than token participation. In 2004, the 14-member committee had only two female members. Project leaders had appointed the women, both

members of the chief's family, to replace men who had resigned. No elections were held to fill the vacated positions as would have been appropriate. I asked the two women, who were also employed by Chilo Lodge, about their views of the committee and their participation in meetings. They said they did not participate much in the meetings. I later asked the vice-chairman about women's participation in committee meetings. He confirmed that only one woman had attended a committee meeting since being appointed. Other demographic details I observed in the management of the Mahenye CAMPFIRE project are that the leaders tended to be relatively young men, ranging in age from their mid 20s to the late 30s. Elders were generally not represented. The leaders typically had two to four years of high school education. None had more than secondary education. Thus women and older community members were largely unrepresented. Moreover the leaders lacked capacity. Without external oversight, they managed the project for their own benefit rather than for the benefit of the broader community.

To confirm my respondents' complaints about non-compliance with Mahenye CAMPFIRE project bylaws, I asked the current chairman, the chief's brother, about these issues. I asked specifically about his irregular accession to committee chairmanship, the lack of elections for the past four years, and the canceling of the annual general meetings. He acknowledged the accuracy of my characterization of these events. With regards to the change in leadership in 2000, he repeated that the previous chairman could no longer serve because of a change in residency. He also said that his brother, the chief, had pronounced at the time that he, the chief's brother, would be the best person to take over and that the community had agreed. Regarding the lack of elections since his accession to the chairmanship, he told me that the community had decided that stability and continuity

in leadership was more important than changing leadership with every election. He said that continuity ensured the retention of experience. Regarding the canceling of the annual general meeting, he said that it was not valuable to have the meeting because the villagers did not understand the issues and just liked to complain. His responses indicated the antidemocratic attitudes of the new leadership.

Several of my respondents independently talked of being intimidated and afraid of reprisals if they criticized the leadership. They told me that these fears explained why residents did not question the leadership concerning the way the project was being managed. One respondent said, referring to the current CAMPFIRE committee chairman, “He’s my uncle, but I’ll still tell you he’s a bad man.” He continued to say, referring to the chief’s family, “If you speak against them, the sun will not set on you.”¹⁵ Interviewees also said that because the chief retains his traditional authority to allocate agricultural plots to residents in the communal area, those who might criticize the current CAMPFIRE leadership dare not to do so for fear of losing rights to the plots on which they depend for subsistence livelihoods.

While it might be reasonable to assume that the current national political crisis in Zimbabwe is largely responsible for the collapse of participatory project management processes in Mahenye, information from interviewees did not support this assumption. My research indicates that the national crisis had a negative impact on revenue, although valuable income still flowed to the community. However, blame for the collapse of participation and democratic processes at the village level falls on the local leadership. In this regard, elite capture of project benefits was more damaging to the project than the national crisis.

¹⁵ Interview on the road from Mahenye to the Chiredzi highway, August 6, 2004 (translated from Shona).

Even though the national crisis reduced income, the remaining revenue was still sufficient to provide benefits to the committee at or near pre-2000 levels, when Mahenye was judged a model project. The national political struggle may also have had an indirect effect on deliberative processes in Mahenye as the national government was working to co-opt the chiefs in return for electoral support in the rural areas. Chief Mahenye may have seen the benefits he received as a signal of impunity. However, the chief could have used his powers to interfere in CAMPFIRE earlier. My discussions with the previous and current leaders of the CAMPFIRE committee suggest that the withdrawal of NGO monitoring and support following the end of USAID funding had a greater impact than the national political struggle, from which Mahenye was largely isolated. My findings indicate that local failures of governance, facilitated by the lack of NGO oversight, were more to blame for the collapse of local participation and deliberation than national politics.

Mahenye, an isolated ward, has had no MDC presence and consequently no reason for ZANU-PF enforcement. Mahenye has traditionally supported a small political party, ZANU-Ndonga, which has normally held the parliamentary seat for Chipinge district. Even during the 2000 parliamentary election cycle, war veterans and youth militia loyal to ZANU-PF did not attack Mahenye as happened in other parts of the country. Interviewees confirmed that this lack of violence continued up to the time of my research. For example, a young man who is a resident in Mahenye with relatives in an area near the main Chiredzi highway told me that he only feels politically threatened when he visits his relatives and never when he is in Mahenye. A teacher stationed in Mahenye showed me a scar he had received in a political attack that occurred in his

previous assignment near Bulawayo. But he also said that he had not had similar problems in Mahenye. The manager of Chilo Lodge supported this position, reporting that the political unrest found in other parts of the country was absent in Mahenye. During my field research I did not witness any political activity, nor did anyone I interviewed refer to political intimidation related to the national crisis.

6.2.3. Devolution

Next I consider the question of the appropriate level of devolution of authority for wildlife management based on my findings in Mahenye. A common criticism of CAMPFIRE is that devolution stalls at the RDC level, limiting community control and undermining the logic of CBNRM.

My respondents in Mahenye complained about the performance of the leadership at the both levels. They described the incompetent and corrupt actions of the village leaders. They also expressed frustration with the Chipinge RDC. A major area of contention involving the RDC related to the current safari operator. The RDC had overruled the local preference to give the hunting concession to Stockil, the rancher who had helped the community develop its CAMPFIRE project. Stockil had held the concession in the project's early years. Instead the RDC had selected another hunter. The villagers complained that the current hunter did not fill the local quotas, thereby limiting income, and that he did not respond to problem animal complaints, thereby imposing additional costs on villagers who suffered crop losses. Villagers, including local CAMPFIRE leaders, told me that the current hunter had won the concession from the RDC through bribes.

During an interview, I asked the Chipinge district councilor from Mahenye ward about these complaints. He responded, first, that the RDC could not terminate the hunting concession for the current safari hunter before its due date despite the complaints about his performance. Second, he argued that RDC was right to select the current hunter over Stockil because Stockil, as a partner in the lodge venture, had too much involvement in local affairs and therefore some conflicts of interest. These arguments seemed implausible. The more likely explanation was a power struggle between the RDC and the locals, including Stockil and the Chief's family, over control of the project.

The adversarial relationship between the RDC and the Mahenye CAMPFIRE committee is not unexpected given the different incentives of the two institutions. A pattern of conflict rather than cooperation between the RDC and the Mahenye CAMPFIRE program can be traced back to the inception of the pilot project in the early 1980s (Murphree 2001).

Many external experts I interviewed, including academics and NGO staff in Harare, noted that the current paternalistic arrangement in which the RDC retains ultimate authority for project management undermines CAMPFIRE's central two-pronged objective: to provide local communities with incentives for sustainable use of natural resources and expanded opportunities for social and economic development. The committee chairman in Mahenye also reiterated that Appropriate Authority for wildlife management should be at the local level and asserted that his committee has the requisite capacity to run the project without RDC control.

Yet community residents in Mahenye, including the school teachers I spoke to, argued against further devolution of authority from the RDC. They reported that local

CAMPFIRE institutions have not been able to sustain the necessary levels of participation, transparency, and accountability. They suggested that the lack of oversight from NGOs, the RDC, and the CAMPFIRE Association had opened the way for the committee chairman and the traditional leaders to usurp powers of the CAMPFIRE committee.

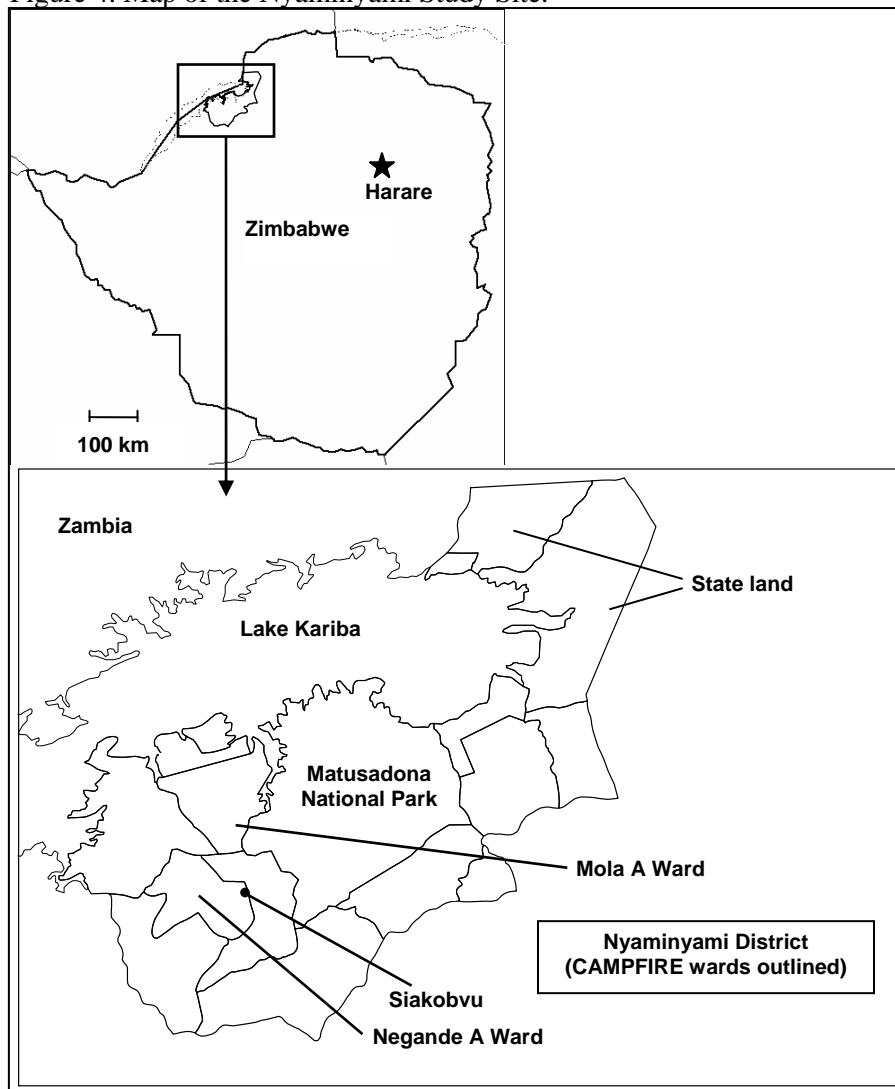
The evidence from Mahenye argues against sole control at either the RDC or community level. Some form of separation of powers seems appropriate. The RDC is unlikely to represent the community's interest in a disinterested manner. Yet local authorities also have incentives to expropriate benefits for their own use to the detriment of the general community. Full devolution of authority should be approached with caution, as external oversight of some kind appears to be essential. The CAMPFIRE Association director in Harare also argued that devolution of Appropriate Authority to the community level should be conditional and decided on a case-by-case basis.

CHAPTER 7. Nyaminyami Case Study

7.1. Background

Nyaminyami rural district is situated in northern Zimbabwe, on the shores of Lake Kariba in the mid-Zambezi valley (Figure 4).

Figure 4. Map of the Nyaminyami Study Site.



The district is divided into 12 administrative wards with an area totaling approximately 3300 km². According the 2002 national census, the district has a population of about 35,000 people in 7500 households. Ethnically, the residents of

Nyaminyami are divided almost equally between the Tonga and Shangwe people, with the Shangwe being a sub-group of the Shona national majority. In 2003 UNDP ranked Nyaminyami as the least developed and poorest of Zimbabwe's 55 rural districts (Save the Children 2004). Annual household incomes average less than US\$100. The poverty results from low and erratic rainfall, poor soils, limited social and educational development, and isolation from markets. Local residents rely on subsistence agriculture and limited livestock management. The district suffers from chronic food insecurity. Through the early 2000s food donated by relief agencies accounted for between 45 percent and 55 percent of the average household's caloric intake (Save the Children 2004).

The high density of wildlife in the district also undermines local livelihoods. Wildlife destroys crops and livestock and thus contributes to poverty. Nyaminyami is rich in wildlife. The district has an estimated 2,400 resident elephants, both the largest number and highest density for elephants of any communal area in Zimbabwe (Dunham & Mackie 2002). In a country where 90 percent of the elephants are in national parks and game reserves, the elephant population in Nyaminyami constitutes about a third of all elephants occurring outside of state reserves (Dunham & Mackie 2002). Matusadona National Park, located in the center of Nyaminyami, has an estimated 1700 elephants. These animals move in and out of the park into the communal area. Nyaminyami also has significant population of lions, leopards, hippos, impalas, buffaloes, and other species.

Human-animal conflicts are common in Nyaminyami. Local residents suffer crop and livestock depredation and direct threats to life and limb. The RDC staff reported that 54 residents were killed by wild animals from 1997 to 2005: 23 by elephants, 12 by

hippopotamuses, 10 by crocodiles, and nine by buffaloes. The combination of poverty, substantial costs associated with the presence of wildlife, and the revenue potential of the large populations of valuable trophy animals made Nyaminyami a logical choice for a CAMPFIRE project when the program began in the late 1980s. Nyaminyami and Guruve, another wildlife-rich area to the east in the Zambezi Valley, were the first districts to receive authority to implement projects.

7.2. Findings from the Fieldwork

7.2.1. Description of the Nyaminyami CAMPFIRE Project

Nyaminyami received Appropriate Authority for wildlife management in 1989. Unlike many other districts in Zimbabwe, the CAMPFIRE project in Nyaminyami covers the entire district. All 12 wards in the district participate. This contrasts with the situation in Chipinge, where Mahenye is the primary active ward. In districts with few participating wards and where RDC headquarters are located in distant towns or cities, local communities have often been able to establish significant local control. In Nyaminyami, however, the RDC is situated in the midst of the CAMPFIRE areas, in the town of Siakobvu (Figure 4). Consequently, the RDC is highly engaged.

The Nyaminyami RDC centralized control of its CAMPFIRE project from the outset (Metcalf 1994). The council operates under a representative system under which, in principle, elected councilors speak for the wards. The “producer” communities have no opportunities for direct participation at the district level. Moreover each councilor chairs the CAMPFIRE committee in his ward, thereby extending council authority to the community level.

Councilors are elected on a political party ticket to represent their wards in the RDC for a four-year term. ZANU-PF dominates electoral politics in Nyaminyami. CAMPFIRE project bylaws require that members of the CAMPFIRE committees stand for election every four years, coinciding with the councilors' term of office with RDC. The bylaws also require two CAMPFIRE general meetings per year in each ward. The meetings are held in June and December when the wards receive their semi-annual CAMPFIRE payments from the RDC. These meetings are intended to provide a forum for project leaders to report back to communities on project activities, including financial activity. The meetings are also meant to offer a platform at which villagers can discuss and agree on community projects to be funded by the income from CAMPFIRE. Each ward is responsible for maintaining financial records and managing its portion of funds from project activities. Bylaws also require the RDC to conduct an annual audit of each ward's financial records.

The RDC receives all income generated from CAMPFIRE project activities and then distributes it to the wards. As in all CAMPFIRE projects, trophy fees are denominated in US dollars and safari operators submit the fees in hard currency to the Reserve Bank of Zimbabwe. The central bank exchanges the money into Zimbabwe dollars at the official rate before passing it to the RDC.

From the inception of the CAMPFIRE project until 1994, all 12 wards in Nyaminyami received equal shares of the revenue. However, since 1994, each ward has received a share of the income that is directly proportional to the hunting revenue generated within its borders. Since wildlife populations differ from ward to ward, wards with more wildlife than others have more hunting activities and thus more income. This

change was meant to provide incentives for wards to restrain in-migration and the spread of human settlements, thereby protecting habitat and attracting and protecting the revenue-generating wildlife.

On average from 1989 to 2001, the Nyaminyami RDC retained about 60 percent of CAMPFIRE project earnings: 12 percent as council levy, 35 percent for wildlife management, 2 percent as dues to the CAMPFIRE Association, and 10 percent as “unallocated” (Khumalo 2003). This allocation was in violation of national CAMPFIRE guidelines, which require that the wards receive at least 50 percent of project income.

During the time of my field research, an RDC official told me that the RDC now retains 11 percent as a levy and 35 percent for CAMPFIRE project administration. The CAMPFIRE Association receives 4 percent, an increase in dues meant to partially compensate for the loss of donor funds after 2000. In the aggregate, the wards now get 50 percent. In turn, CAMPFIRE revenue accounts for almost 50 percent of the Nyaminyami RDC’s budget, with the remainder funded through grants from the increasingly cash strapped central government.

Until 1994, wards distributed part of their share of project income as direct household dividends, as continues to be the case in Mahenye. The rest of the money was used for community projects such as school buildings and grinding mills. In 1994 the RDC and district project leaders, without community participation, decided to eliminate household dividends and instead require the wards to use all the income for general community projects and administrative expenses. The rationale for eliminating household dividends was partly that the dividends were attracting an influx of people from other districts, thus reducing the amounts accruing to each household and undermining the

conservation goals. The in-migration was occurring without council approval or permits. Interestingly, the traditional leaders and communities often informally approved of the in-migration, believing it was a means to promote development and strengthen political power in the wards (Muir-Leresche et al. 2003). These points suggest that the logic of CBNRM—that economic incentives can lead to wildlife protection—may not be sufficient to change local attitudes, even in areas with rich wildlife resources. Nevertheless, up through 2000 external reviews continued to judge Nyaminyami a model CAMPFIRE project based on the criteria of wildlife conservation, revenue generation, and community development (Matanhire 2003; Muir-Leresche 2003).

Next, I describe what I learned about revenue generation in Nyaminyami. The trends in revenue generation and disbursement over time help clarify patterns of community benefits and allow comparisons of pre- and post-2000 project performance. Nyaminyami is one of seven financially sustainable CAMPFIRE programs in the nation (CAMPFIRE Association 2005). The district has consistently ranked as the most successful CAMPFIRE district in both aggregate and per household income (Khumalo 2003). For instance, in 2001 all CAMPFIRE projects in Zimbabwe earned a total of about US\$2.3 million, with a median per-household return among districts of about US\$9. Nyaminyami accounted for just under 30 percent of total national earnings. The district earned US\$675,000 that year, with a per-household income of US\$90, about 10 times the national median (Khumalo 2003).

From its inception in 1989 to 2001, Nyaminyami CAMPFIRE project revenues grew from US\$150,000 to about US\$675,000 (Khumalo 2003; Muir-Leresche et al. 2003). This upward trend reflected its healthy animal populations, which translated into

higher quotas, and higher trophy and concession fees, which reflected the growing worldwide interest in sport hunting. Trophy fees for elephant during this period rose from about US\$4,500 to about US\$9,000 (Muir-Leresche et al. 2003). From 2001 to date, hunting income has remained stable or even grown somewhat. In 2005 safari hunting revenues totaled about US\$760,000.¹⁶ This steady trend in earnings confirms that international sport hunters have not been deterred by Zimbabwe's current national political and economic crisis.

Given evidence from documents and interviews that district CAMPFIRE income remained strong from 2001 to 2005, I wanted to examine the extent to which the revenues translated into community development benefits at the ward level and the extent to which local people participated in decision making. In my field work, I also examined the transparency and accountability of local institutions. In exploring these questions, I focused my research efforts in two wards: Mola A and Negande A (Figure 4). These wards reflect the range of CAMPFIRE earnings in Nyaminyami. Mola is a high earning ward while Negande is in the lower tier.

My respondents in both wards overwhelmingly reported dissatisfaction with the current performance of the district project's community development component. Respondents from the general communities unreservedly expressed views that the project had lost its credibility over the past several years. I emphasize that the local people's judgments of project performance referred to the lack of benefits to them. Although the project continued to generate revenues comparable to earlier years, the benefits that people derived from the project had declined sharply. In tones ranging from resignation to outright anger, interviewees complained of an unaccountable power structure,

¹⁶ Interview with Nyaminyami RDC chief executive officer, in Siakobvu, March 5, 2006.

corruption, exclusion of villagers from project activities, little or no project benefits, and ineffective responses to human-animal conflicts. Among people I interviewed, only the councilors and some RDC staff expressed positive views about the project's community development component.

When I asked about benefits in earlier times, my interviewees in the rural areas expressed satisfaction with the project's initial successes. Community members cited grinding mills, school buildings, and tractors for shared use during field tilling. Many respondents, male and female, first mentioned grinding mills. Without mechanized mills to convert maize kernels to flour, women must spend hours each day manually pounding grain into flour used for *sadza*, the staple food.¹⁷ Yet, respondents indicated that there have been no new investments in community projects since the early 2000s. They also reported that most of the old projects are no longer useful because the equipment and structures have not been maintained.

At the time of my research, none of the grinding mills in Mola and Negande were operational. Some had broken down and not been repaired, and others did not have fuel to power the motors. Villagers said that even when functioning the grinding mills had been prone to breakdowns because they are too few for the size of the population. Mola and Negande, each with a population of about 7,000 people, had only two grinding mills each. Residents reported that up through 2001 the ward councilors had generally repaired the mills as necessary to keep them operational. After that, however, once the mills broke down they were abandoned.

¹⁷ A report by the US National Research Council (1996, p. 285) states that pounding grain is "a hot and disagreeable task [that] has to be done day after day, in fair weather and foul, and regardless of sickness or other indisposition. Probably no single development could help rural Africa more than relief from this never-ending drudgery."

In Negande, villagers showed me a grinding mill without a motor sitting in a field near a village shop. The shop owner and other villagers said the grinding mill, installed in 2000, had broken down a year later. They reported further that the councilor, without explanation to the community, took the mill's diesel motor away and had not returned it since. Several months later, they said, the councilor had returned and removed the roofing and other material that protected the grinding mill from the weather. While I did not confirm the allegation directly, the people told me that the councilor used the motor and building materials in his own home.

In Mola, villagers showed me a grinding mill that had not been working for two years. They told me that the councilor had explained that no fuel was available. Yet in Siakobvu, I observed that the RDC had plenty of government-subsidized diesel fuel on hand. Indeed district employees offered to sell me fuel for my vehicle. When asked about the impact of the loss of the mills, a village kraal head's senior wife replied by holding out her hands. She showed me the palms that had hardened and developed calluses from manually pounding grains.

I asked council officials and councilors about the lack of maintenance of the grinding mills. Council officials said the problem was that the grinding mills were not operated as businesses that would generate enough for maintenance. They said that the villagers demanded to pay below-market prices for its services. When I described the council officials' responses, villagers replied that CAMPFIRE income should subsidize maintenance because grinding mills are supposed to be one of their benefits from the project meant to compensate them for the costs of living with wildlife.

Other community projects such as school construction had also suffered. The most recent construction in Negande was a secondary school block built with funds allocated in 2000. After extensive delays, the building was put in use in 2005. During a visit to the school, the headmaster pointed out that the school remains an incomplete shell and already shows signs of deterioration from water damage along the foundation. The headmaster alleged that the bidding process was plagued with corruption. The contracted builder subsequently used inferior materials for construction and pocketed the difference in costs. I observed for myself that the two classrooms had no desks or other supplies. During lessons, students stood or sat on the bare floor or on pieces of rock and brick.

Several respondents complained in particular about poor educational opportunities for their children and the lack of any contribution from the CAMPFIRE project that was supposed to provide development benefits. For example, a fisherman on Lake Kariba said, “Although we understand that CAMPFIRE does not generate enough funds to solve all our problems, it should provide basics such as books for our children. They could buy a few books to be shared by a group of children. While useful, a school building is just a shell and not learning. Learning is in the books and can take place even sitting under a tree instead of inside a building.”¹⁸ These failures of development projects reveal that the “producer” communities are no longer earning any useful benefits in return for protecting the wildlife that continues to generate income for others, including the national, district, and ward governments and the safari operators.

The villagers also expressed their dissatisfaction with the end of household dividends, even though this change in policy dated from 1994. A group of people I spoke to told me that since most families have very limited income, they would prefer to receive

¹⁸ Interview in Mola A ward, March 5, 2006 (translated from Shona).

cash from the project so they can buy necessities. CAMPFIRE experts had advocated for the termination of dividend payments, arguing that community infrastructure improvements would have a greater development benefit than relatively small payments to households. This point is convincing. There are two problems, however. First the communities did not participate in the decision. Second, despite the continuing flow of income to the RDC, the communities no longer receive any infrastructure improvements. Thus the premise of the argument no longer holds.

While they had no information about revenues and expenditures, villagers told me that they believed the project was still earning income. Cynicism was common. Many respondents independently reported suspicions that project leaders were misappropriating funds. Villagers in Negande described one project that they said symbolized the corruption and arrogance of the CAMPFIRE leadership. They took me to see a well-constructed butcher shop, built with CAMPFIRE funds, that now sits unused in the village center. Villagers explained the building's history. RDC officials later confirmed their story. First the people my informants referred to a national government-supported program independent of CAMPFIRE to cull impala and provide residents of rural areas with meat at below-market prices.¹⁹ They said the Negande councilor, who is also the chairman of the ward's CAMPFIRE committee, devised a plan to purchase large quantities of this meat at the subsidized price and resell it to the local residents at market prices. The councilor influenced the committee to use CAMPFIRE funds to construct the shop that he would then use as a distribution point for the meat. Villagers were outraged by the councilor's plan to charge them higher prices for meat that people in other wards were getting at much lower prices. The plan collapsed and the building was never used.

¹⁹ Known as Project Nyama.

Describing the problems of corruption, two individuals commenting separately used two different Shona metaphors with the similar meanings that captured the general attitude of locals. A fisherman from the camp on Lake Kariba said, “There are too many little fingers” while demonstrating grasping motions with his fingertips close together.²⁰ In Siakobvu, a young man I interviewed at a canteen said, “There are too many snakes in the anthill.”²¹

An RDC administrator I spoke to confirmed that the ward councilors were no longer accountable. He reported that since 2000 the RDC had no longer conducted the required annual audits of the ward committees. He told me that without support from the external NGOs, which ended with the USAID funding cycle, the RDC lacked the necessary capacity to oversee the wards.

Villagers also complained of ineffective problem animal control, the second leg of CAMPFIRE’s compact with rural residents. Respondents repeatedly and sometimes emotionally described failures to control wild animals that resulted in the loss of crops and livestock. Many interviewees independently described severe crop losses from elephants in particular. Villagers in Mola also described a running problem they had had in the previous year with a pack of eight lions that raided livestock for months. After repeatedly reporting incidents to the RDC with no response, the villagers took matters into their own hands and poisoned the lions.

To deal with problem-animal issues, the RDC employs game scouts posted in each ward. To follow up on villagers’ complaints, I interviewed two game scouts stationed at the CAMPFIRE project offices in Negande. The two young men said their

²⁰ Interview in Mola A ward, March 5, 2006 (translated from Shona).

²¹ Interview in Siakobvu, March 7, 2006 (translated from Shona).

responsibilities included investigating complaints, responding themselves where appropriate, and otherwise radioing into RDC headquarters in Siakobvu to request help from DNPWM wardens. They told me that in practice, however, they were no longer able to perform these duties. The radio used to communicate with RDC headquarters had been broken for over a year. In addition, the central government had recently removed their guns, making it too dangerous for them to patrol. They also reported that their salaries had not been adjusted for inflation for months. At the time of my research their monthly pay was the equivalent of US\$2 at the official exchange rate (or US\$1 at the parallel market rate).

In the early 1990s, the CAMPFIRE project had installed solar-powered electric fences in the wards to protect villagers' crops from wildlife. Villagers reported that the fences, including the solar panels, were never maintained and soon became ineffective. Interviewees in Negande felt that their project leaders were not concerned with the common fences because they themselves did not suffer crop or livestock losses. Residents reported that their ward councilor uses project money to maintain a functioning electric fence around his fields, while leaving community plots unprotected.

In my discussion with the district councilors, I asked about the reported decline in community benefits. The councilors responded that the project has provided villagers with schools and grinding mills. They also commented that community members commonly lie about or exaggerate crop and livestock losses. Regarding problems with wildlife attacks, the councilors said that animal control efforts depended on the availability of safari hunters and was out of their control.

During follow up discussions with locals in the villages, I described the councilors' responses to their concerns. Regarding allegations of fraudulent crop damage claims, respondents scoffed at the response and argued that anyone can tell where an elephant has been. They said that RDC representatives never come to observe the damage for themselves. The villagers argued further that the claim that they lie was just an excuse to deny them compensation. I found the residents complaints more plausible than the councilors' responses. I saw for myself that the grinding mills were nonfunctional, that the school buildings were poorly constructed and deteriorating, and that the game scouts had neither weapons nor a working radio. The RDC staff confirmed that the district still kept 35 percent of revenue for wildlife management, income intended for animal control measures. The RDC staff also supported the contention that the wards still received substantial funds from the district CAMPFIRE project and that the ward committees were unaccountable. Community members may have failed to meet their responsibilities in various ways, but the leadership was clearly failing to serve community interests, and the promises of CAMPFIRE were clearly unfulfilled.

The RDC's chief executive officer provided valuable insights. Now in civil service, he is an experienced administrator and politician. He previously served as a member of parliament for the constituency that includes Nyaminyami. He was candid in discussing the project's management problems. He discussed weaknesses in governance at both the district and national level. His concern with the district council related to the councilors' lack of managerial capacity and integrity. While acknowledging his own capacity limitations and that of his staff, he was sharply critical of the elected councilors. He described problems of poor planning and inadequate financial management. He

showed me documents indicating that district continued to receive substantial funding from trophy hunting and that the wards continued to receive their share. He told me that the councilors rewarded themselves with mobile phones, trips to Harare and Kariba town, and extra stipends. If spent on community projects, these funds could certainly at a minimum have maintained grinding mills and provided some desks and school books.

Regarding the central government, the chief executive officer complained that the district does not realize the true value of the revenue earned from sport hunting because of the central government's foreign exchange regulations. He said that the central government requires that hard currency earnings be exchanged through the central bank at the official rate, and because the official rate overvalues the Z\$, the district thus loses money. In addition, the central bank transfers the Z\$ to the districts at an "interbank" rate that further disadvantages the district. He told me that CAMPFIRE districts were negotiating with the central government, unsuccessfully to that point, for the right to hold and manage their earnings directly in hard currency.

7.2.2. Participation

As mentioned above, the Nyaminyami RDC centralized control of its CAMPFIRE project from the outset. On several occasions over the first decade of the project, outside evaluators expressed concern about the lack of grassroots involvement. Metcalfe (1994, p. 176), discussing conditions district-wide in 1993, noted that "the communities are not actively participating in the planning and management process and appear alienated" from both the CAMPFIRE institutions and the wildlife. Similarly Matanhire (2003, p. 11), summarizing results of an assessment in Mola Ward conducted at the end of the

USAID funding cycle in 2001, described “adverse relations between the ward councilor, traditional leaders, and the community.” Derman and Murombedzi (1994) have emphasized the limitations of councilors as community representatives in CAMPFIRE more generally.

In my research, however, I discovered that levels of community participation have deteriorated much further since the last reviews in 2001. Most telling, the project is no longer relevant to local residents. Often when asked about CAMPFIRE, people scoffed or shrugged. One teenage girl said she had heard of CAMPFIRE but knew nothing about how it was supposed to function. Adults who remembered the project’s earlier benefits expressed frustration with the current lack of benefits and complete absence of information about revenues and expenditures.

When I asked about meetings to inform community members about project activities and offer opportunities for local participation, my respondents told me no one went to meetings any more. They said committee meetings were held without notice, at inconvenient times, or at distant locations. In Nyaminyami, where there is no public transportation, people cannot attend under these circumstances. During a discussion with a group of fishermen, a young man said that the ward committees are rubber stamps for the councilors and that “committee elections are not real—the same people always get re-elected.”²² Another fisherman said that “only the elders are heard; the concerns of others are disregarded.”²³

Despite the reported privileged position of the elders, members of the traditional elite also offered criticisms. A kraal head, who was joined in the discussion by his three

²² Interview in Mola A ward, March 5, 2006 (translated from Shona).

²³ Interview in Mola A ward, March 5, 2006 (translated from Shona).

wives and three adult sons, spoke dismissively of ward councilors and other committee leaders, criticizing their competence and integrity. He said he used to participate in meetings but had not attended for over three years. One of his sons spoke up to say that the committees are controlled by those with “political muscle,”²⁴ referring to the influence of the ruling ZANU-PF party. He said it would be risky to challenge them. Other villagers also told me that they did not question project leaders regarding the lack of opportunities for participation for fear of reprisals. Given the current national political crisis in Zimbabwe and the fact that all councilors in Nyaminyami belong to ZANU-PF, it is reasonable for community members to have this fear.

In my discussion with the district councilors, I asked them about the lack of real opportunities for community participation in project activities. The councilors, while acknowledging the decline in community participation in CAMPFIRE meetings, blamed it on the lack of interest by the villagers. They told me that they still held meetings but that few villagers came. They also explained that women did not attend because of cultural constraints.

In follow up discussions, villagers reiterated that they did not attend the meetings because the meetings were held at times and in places that were purposefully inconvenient and that only selective invitations were issued. My respondents in the community emphasized strongly the need for outside monitoring of the leadership to improve project performance. They said since the project leaders are also the councilors who make decisions in the RDC, the RDC could not oversee the projects effectively. As with the contradictory explanations between councilors and community members regarding the failures of the development projects, I found the community members’

²⁴ Interview in Negande A ward, March 7, 2006 (translated from Shona).

descriptions of the reasons for the lack of participation to be more convincing. I observed directly the people's frustration with the failures of the project. The RDC chief executive officer also served as a powerful witness confirming the petty corruptions of the ward councilors.

Regarding the demographics of the ward committees, I observed that there were no women on the committees in either Negande or Mola. This reflects traditional culture, but demonstrates the failure to implement CAMPFIRE principles, which include an emphasis on broad-based and gender-equitable participation. During my interviews in the rural areas, women typically deferred to men in responding and spoke up mostly to support what the men were saying. For instance, when I first arrived at the kraal head's household compound in Negande, only the wives were present. Rather than respond to me on their own, they preferred to call their husband who was in the fields at the time. Only after I began the conversation with the kraal head, did the women begin to occasionally contribute, and then only to support what their husband was saying. In contrast, their sons, who came to join the discussion much later, jumped into the conversation without any urging at all. The moment they learned why I was there, they immediately started to tell me about CAMPFIRE, with critical comments about its leadership.

Women only took the lead when men were not around and not readily available. For example, when I first entered Negande ward, I went to pay my respects to the chief and ask for his permission to spend time in the community. The chief was away at an elephant kill. In that circumstance, his senior wife was confident in speaking to me and in authorizing me to conduct interviews in the village.

7.2.3. Conservation

As in Mahenye, I found that conservation efforts in Nyaminyami have not suffered declines in performance on the scale of the development efforts. Other scholars conducting research in other areas support these findings. Mapedza and Bond (2006) draw similar conclusions in their 2004 study of Gokwe North district, which borders Nyaminyami to the south. WWF animal censuses (Dunham and Mackie 2002), CAMPFIRE Association surveys (CAMPFIRE Association 2005), and DNPWM game counts all confirm that populations of elephants and other valued species are stable or growing. Moreover, while wildlife authorities are concerned about occasional commercial poaching by groups from Zambia, illegal hunting by local residents remains a minor problem, primarily affecting the abundant populations of impala and other antelope. My respondents explained that poaching remains low despite the drop in CAMPFIRE benefits because of effective enforcement of game laws. Their comments also suggested that they have internalized the teaching of CAMPFIRE that animals should be protected. Respondents said, for example, that community members often report suspicious activity or unexplained meat supplies they observe among their neighbors. Mapedza and Bond (2006) report similar findings in Gokwe North.

CHAPTER 8. Discussion and Comparative Analysis

8.1. Overview

In this chapter I discuss my findings and assess them in relation to the research questions. I also compare and contrast the case studies to provide a framework for the conclusions and recommendations offered in the next chapter.

CAMPFIRE, as with CBNRM generally, is designed to integrate conservation and community development. The central assumption is that positive development outcomes linked to conservation efforts provide incentives for local communities to conserve wildlife (Li 2002). Success in the development component assumes that local residents gain social and economic benefits that outweigh the costs of living with wild animals. Along with receiving direct income or infrastructure improvements, community members must also have a reasonable level of protection from human-animal conflicts. A third central tenet is that people must have robust opportunities to participate in project implementation (Roe et al. 2000). This last criterion for success follows the thinking of scholars mentioned earlier (Sen 1999; Volcker et al. 1999) that good governance incorporates both processes and outcomes. It also reflects the discourse in development theory that the two elements of participation, as a goal and as a means, are synergistic rather than mutually exclusive.

Previous studies indicate that, while imperfect, the Mahenye and Nyaminyami CAMPFIRE projects through 2000 met minimum performance standards on these criteria. I found, however, that since that time both projects have failed to satisfy any of these assumptions. Recent outcomes in both case study areas indicate that local

participation has declined in quantity and quality to the point that local residents not affiliated with project leadership are broadly disaffected and alienated.

Given this alienation, and the low level of participation associated with it, the quality of participation in these projects now hinders rather than promotes community development. People are angry or indifferent. In either case, these responses undermine rather than foster a sense of mutual effort toward a common goal. My research therefore documents the decline of two promising CBNRM programs. The communities in Mahenye and Nyaminyami no longer participate meaningfully in project activities or receive the flow of significant social and economic benefits reported in earlier studies.

Yet I also found that the current failures cannot be explained entirely by factors linked to the post-2000 national political turmoil. Given the publicity surrounding Zimbabwe's tragic social and economic collapse, it would be justified to assume that national influences would overwhelm all other factors in explaining outcomes in CAMPFIRE projects in the rural areas. Indeed I did find significant effects of the national crisis at the local level. The negative impacts are manifested particularly in the sharp drop in game-viewing tourism in Mahenye, in the exchange rate losses and financial management challenges resulting from hyperinflation in both sites, and in the sense of impunity that local leaders may have internalized.

Nevertheless, I also discovered that there were significant opportunities for resilience and continued success despite these negative influences. Significant income continued to flow to the district and ward levels from safari hunting. Given the extreme poverty of the local communities, this money, although somewhat reduced in value by effects of the national crisis, could still provide important development benefits. Even

modest investments, such as maintaining grinding mills and providing school books, would improve living conditions and maintain community satisfaction with CAMPFIRE.

Instead, the community development components of the two projects collapsed despite these opportunities for continued success because of local failures of governance. These local failures of leadership have some indirect connections to the national crisis, but in many ways they are independent. I found that the loss of NGO engagement—including capacity building and administrative support—that followed the end of international donor funding was an important factor contributing to these local failures of governance. The loss of external oversight allowed local traditional and political elites to capture the project benefits that continued to flow.

These findings reinforce doubts about the long-term effectiveness of international development strategies and about the resilience and sustainability of democratic local institutions. My findings further suggest that full devolution of authority to the community level would not ensure that the community interest would be served. On the contrary, evidence indicates that local elites are as likely to be corrupt and self-serving as leadership institutions at the district or national level.

I believe the evidence I found for the impact of local failures of governance—to a considerable degree independent of the national crisis—are perhaps the most interesting results of my study. Murphree (2004, p. 211) has argued that the presence of resilient local institutions is “the pivotal variable” determining whether CBNRM projects succeed or fail. My research supports his fears that local governance is a weak link likely to give way under the duress of adverse external conditions. In this case, external conditions include both the national crisis and the end of NGO support. I found evidence that in both

study sites local projects had sufficient revenue and sufficient independence to maintain a valuable community development component after 2000. In both cases, however, local leaders and institutions failed to serve the community interest once external oversight ended.

I argue that responsibility for the recent failures of community development efforts in Mahenye and Nyaminyami falls on international donors, international and national NGOs, and local leaders at the RDC and ward levels. The national crisis has been a powerful negative influence. But these other factors also played important roles.

Table 4 summarizes outcomes in the two case study sites. I discuss these results in greater detail in the sections that follow.

Table 4. Summary of Post-2000 Changes

	Evidence from Mahenye (2004)	Evidence from Nyaminyami (2006)
External conditions	Beginning in 2000: Donor funding ends; national crisis begins.	
Local governance	Traditional elite captures ward committee; transparency, accountability, and participation sharply reduced.	Councilors capture ward committees; transparency, accountability, and participation sharply reduced.
Project revenues	Decline in gross revenue less than expected; net revenue reduced, but still sufficient to provide useful benefits.	Increase in gross revenue; net revenue somewhat reduced but still sufficient to provide significant benefits.
Development outcomes	Household dividends decline to ~0; community investments decline to ~0.	Household dividends remain at 0; community investments decline to ~0.
Conservation outcomes	Poaching remains minor; habitat protections sustained.	Poaching remains minor; key wildlife populations stable or growing.

8.2. Discussion

8.2.1. Community Development

There are two questions of importance when evaluating the revenue in a CAMPFIRE project: Is it adequate in total to compensate residents for the costs of living

with wildlife? And is it distributed fairly so that all residents see useful benefits and thus have incentives to cooperate with conservation? I consider each question in turn.

Despite the ongoing post-2000 crisis, CAMPFIRE revenue has remained surprisingly strong in both Mahenye and Nyaminyami. Hunting revenue across Zimbabwe is to some degree buffered against the national political and economic disturbances. Trophy hunters are not deterred by adverse publicity and safari bookings have remained strong. Annual elephant takes in Mahenye after 2000, four per year, matched the rate common before 2000. The average trophy fee for an elephant has risen to about US\$10,000. Thus even accounting for exchange rate losses and RDC levies, the Mahenye project still received at the time of my research the equivalent of approximately US\$18 from hunting for each of Mahenye's 1000 households. In a community where average annual family incomes fall below US\$150, this represents a substantial opportunity to improve livelihoods. Moreover this level of income falls within the range that earned Mahenye model status in pre-2000 assessments (Matanhire 2003). Moreover, because the contract with the tourist lodges management firm required the firm to pay a percentage of gross revenues rather than of now nonexistent profits, the project continued to earn valuable additional revenue from the lodge venture.

In Nyaminyami, hunting revenues have actually continued to increase in the years since 2000, rising from about US\$650,000 in 2000 to about US\$750,000 in 2005. For perspective, because average family incomes in the district, fall below US\$100 per year, the gross annual revenue from hunting exceeds the total combined annual income from other sources of all the district's 7500 households. Accounting for exchange rate losses and district levies, the wards in Nyaminyami were in line to receive the equivalent of

about US\$21 per household. While these earnings fall below peak per-household earnings before the crisis, this amount is still in the range that would earn model status. The income is certainly still sufficient to provide substantial community benefits.

In both Mahenye and Nyaminyami, my research indicates that revenues are still sufficient to support local development efforts. Regarding the question of distribution, however, I found that the revenues are not equitably shared. In Mahenye, families received a trivial sum, the equivalent of less than US\$0.05, in annual dividends for 2004. And promised community infrastructure improvements have not materialized. Partially constructed school buildings sit abandoned. Community shops and vehicles now serve private interests.

In Nyaminyami, families have not received direct payments for participating in CAMPFIRE since the mid 1990s. The justification for discontinuing direct payments was that using the money for general community infrastructure improvements would bring greater benefits. Yet despite continuing strong revenues there have been no new investments in community projects since 2001. At the time of my research in 2006, there was no school construction underway, no road improvements, no maintenance for community grinding mills, and no meaningful effects to mitigate human-animal conflicts.

8.2.2. Participation

Robust community participation in project management is a central prerequisite for success in CBNRM. My research findings indicate that since 2000 villagers in Mahenye and Nyaminyami no longer have opportunities to participate. I found local residents in both sites to be profoundly alienated from the CAMPFIRE projects and from

their leadership. The processes and trends leading to the breakdowns in community engagement differed in the two cases, however.

Mahenye is a single ward geographically isolated from Chipinge district headquarters. This isolation, among other factors, facilitated the emergence of a relatively strong and independent ward-level CAMPFIRE committee. The ward's relatively small population also promoted richer participation. Up through 2000, previous studies and my respondents' recollections describe regular elections, regular community meetings, and strong community participation in decision making regarding project implementation. After the ruling clan unilaterally took over project leadership in 2000, however, community participation ended.

In Nyaminyami, in contrast, the RDC established tight central control from the beginning. Ward-level institutions were much weaker. Consequently, community members had fewer opportunities for direct participation. In principle, the communities could influence RDC decisions through their elected councilors. In practice, this representative approach was never effective (Metcalf 1994). Another difference between the two projects in terms of governance structures and practices at inception involved the role of traditional leaders. The traditional chief in Mahenye retained considerable social and political power in the community but, in accordance with CAMPFIRE ground rules, allowed the CAMPFIRE committee independence for project management, at least until 2000. In contrast, the RDC in Nyaminyami largely superseded the authority of the traditional community leaders. The ward councilors owe their positions to ZANU-PF rather than to the traditional chiefs. Thus, traditional leadership remained more important and influential in Mahenye than in Nyaminyami. Clan allegiances play a much larger role

in Mahenye than in Nyaminyami. In Nyaminyami the influential leaders are political rather than traditional.

Since 2000, both projects experienced sharp declines in the quality of governance at the ward level. Again the processes and dynamics were somewhat different in the two cases. In Mahenye, the chief usurped the previously independent authority of the CAMPFIRE committee. He elevated his brother to the top post and stifled opposition using his customary powers as chief over land use and community membership. In Nyaminyami in contrast, local power was linked to the ruling ZANU-PF party. In this environment, the councilors simply concentrated control at the ward level and discontinued practices designed to ensure transparency and accountability. The critical factor enabling elite capture in both sites appeared to be the end of NGO engagement and oversight. Once the external actors withdrew, local leaders took advantage of the opportunity to return to undemocratic conditions.

The national political crisis played a less significant role. For different reasons, neither case study site has experienced the political violence that has plagued many areas of Zimbabwe since 2000. None of my respondents in either location, whether members of the CAMPFIRE leadership, other community residents, or outsiders, suggested that the areas had been directly affected by unrest and intimidation linked to national politics. One reason why the youth militias and other pro-ruling party groups that caused problems elsewhere have not been active in Mahenye or Nyaminyami is that the opposition MDC party has no presence in either site. Mahenye, like the Chipinge district more generally, has always voted for the small minority ZANU-Ndonga party in parliamentary elections. The ruling ZANU-PF party has tolerated this political

independence because the primarily Shangaan ZANU-Ndonga party poses no threat to ZANU-PF control. Nyaminyami, on the other hand, has in recent times consistently supported ZANU-PF. Thus, the political crisis that might be expected to destabilize local projects cannot be blamed for undermining CAMPFIRE institutions in either of the two case study sites.

Regarding gender equity, both sites manifested severe imbalances both before and after 2000. Men have held all leadership positions in both locations. The only woman with a CAMPFIRE staff position was a bookkeeper in Mahenye. However, her position has no decision-making power. This absence of women in leadership roles is not surprising given the cultural traditions of these areas. Although the primacy of men is on the decline in urban areas, it is still strong in rural areas. These outcomes indicate that even where donors and NGOs create pressure for the inclusion of women in leadership and participation, the gains have been token at best. Women still lack the confidence and social support to seek leadership positions or be assertive in participation.

8.2.3. Reasons for Failure

The central failure of the Mahenye and Nyaminyami CAMPFIRE projects has been elite capture. Leaders appropriated project revenues for their own benefit. In Mahenye since the undemocratic takeover of the committee in 2000 by the chief's immediate family, there have been no elections, no general meetings, and no outside audits of receipts and expenditures. Similarly in Nyaminyami since 2000 there have been no external audits of ward-level revenues. My research suggests that both projects suffered significantly from the withdrawal of the NGOs at the end of USAID funding in

2000. At this point, the projects lost capacity building and oversight that helped ensure transparency and accountability. Without these external checks, the management environment in the project areas now protects incompetence and rewards corruption. The loss of capacity can be seen, among other ways, in weakened financial management. In Nyaminyami, for example, hunting revenues, although considerable, are lower than they should be. Rather than using market forces to maximize payments from the safari operators by encouraging competition among operators, the councilors settle for long-term no-bid contracts to avoid jeopardizing the steady income stream that ensures their own perquisites, including travel, stipends, mobile phone service, and so on.

More importantly, the loss of oversight has permitted misappropriation of benefits. In Mahenye members of the ruling clan fill jobs at the lodges meant to be open to the community at large and use project vehicles for personal purposes. In Nyaminyami, my respondents described how councilors use CAMPFIRE funds to maintain electric fences for animal control around their own fields, while leaving community plots unprotected. Local leaders also appropriated the diesel motors meant to power the community grinding mills for their own use. Hence, in both sites, community members no longer trust their CAMPFIRE leadership or feel any sense of ownership in the local project. In both sites, the socioeconomic component has broken down despite the continued flow of revenues. In sum, while I observed damaging economic and social effects from the national crisis, my findings suggest that failures in governance and capacity at the local level were significant contributors to the decline in community benefits and the near universal distrust and disillusionment voiced by my respondents.

It appears that the promising projects in Mahenye and Nyaminyami succumbed in part because of structural problems that may be inherent in CBNRM. For example, other scholars have observed both the tendency of local elites to expropriate benefits and the instability of local participatory processes linked to community projects (Agrawal & Gibson 1999; Gray & Moseley 2005; Li 2002; Murphree 2004; Ribot 1996). My results also indicate, as other researchers have noted as well, that in times of economic difficulties, the incentives of private firms often come to conflict with community development goals (Balint 2006b). As discussed in chapter 6, for example, the lodge management in Mahenye was working to negotiate a new contract with the community that favored the firm over local residents.

My research also reflects the pattern reported in other cases (Derman 1995) that when donor funding comes to an end, as it did nationally for CAMPFIRE in 2000, essential outside support for local projects drops off, thereby undermining success. The end of USAID funding, in particular, was followed by the withdrawal of NGOs that provided support services to CAMPFIRE projects. While the actions and motivation of the NGOs supported by this funding are subject to criticism (Derman 1995), these organizations in the period up to 2000 provided essential capacity and oversight for CAMPFIRE's local institutions.

The declines in the CAMPFIRE projects following the termination of USAID funding are similar to more general failures in international development initiatives that have occurred in Africa and elsewhere. As discussed in chapter 2, the record of donor funded development projects has for the most part been dismal (Ayodele et al. 2005; Calderisi 2006). Problems with donor interventions are common where, as in

CAMPFIRE, the funding creates a large support structure of government and nongovernmental agencies dependent on continued external largesse (Ellsworth 1999). According to critics, initiatives are prone to collapse when funders withdraw (Ayodele et al. 2005; Harden 2000). Although the Mahenye and Nyaminyami CAMPFIRE projects were able to maintain their revenue streams after 2000, thus demonstrating some financial self-sufficiency, they were not able to sustain good governance practices. In particular, transparency, accountability and participation all suffered following the end of USAID funding. The social and community development components did not demonstrate independent viability (Murphree 2004).

In a related adverse outcome, my two case studies support observations by critics that in donor funded projects experience and expertise accrue to staff of the favored large NGOs rather than to the communities (Ellsworth 1999). This inhibits the development of strong local leadership and organizations. I observed these problems at both the ward and RDC level in the CAMPFIRE projects I studied. Without local capacity, the projects could not survive the withdrawal of external support.

8.2.4. Conservation

While my research focused on the development components of the projects, my findings regarding conservation were unexpected and warrant some discussion. The logic of CAMPFIRE suggests that if development benefits decline, conservation will also suffer. If projects no longer provide economic benefits from wildlife and protection from human-animal conflicts, people can be expected to return to pre-CAMPFIRE levels of

poaching and other anti-conservation activities. Yet I did not find evidence of these expected trends in either Mahenye or Nyaminyami.

While I did not do independent research on ecological outcomes, wildlife surveys, reports from local and national officials, the continued success of hunting concessions, and the continuing reports of human-animal conflicts all point to healthy populations of wild animals. Moreover, wildlife surveys conducted by WWF-SARPO and supported by RDC experience, indicate that poaching by locals remains a minor rather than a major concern and that habitat protection efforts at the ward level remain largely intact. The largest conservation concern reported in both Mahenye and Nyaminyami is haphazard expansion of human settlements that tends to constrain animal movements and exacerbate human-animal conflicts. Mapedza and Bond (2000) noted similar unexpected results in their study of Gokwe North.

Two factors may contribute to the continuation of relatively positive conservation outcomes in both sites despite the breakdown of the community development components. First, while officials at the national, district, and local level compete for control of decision-making authority and revenue from CAMPFIRE, they all have strong incentives to conserve the wildlife that generates the flow of income. This leads to continuing enforcement of game laws. Second, local residents appear to have internalized the message of CAMPFIRE that wildlife should be protected. In my interviews in both locations, my respondents told me that community members are willing to report their neighbors' violations.

Thus, contrary to expectations, the assumptions of a close link between conservation and development components of CAMPFIRE appear unjustified. Some

conservationists have criticized community-based programs on the grounds that these interventions prioritize development over conservation and that consequently the resource protection components tend to fail first (Newmark & Hough 2000; Redford et al. 2006). My findings appear to undermine this contention. Further effort to understand and explain this unexpected outcome may be a useful area for further research.

8.2.5. Return to the Research Questions: Devolution

The case studies reported here are relevant for the debate over the appropriate level of devolution in CAMPFIRE, and in CBNRM more generally. As discussed earlier, many CAMPFIRE analysts have considered the devolution of appropriate authority for wildlife management to the RDC level—and not all the way to the local community level—as the major weakness of the program (Murphree 2004). My findings provide some support for this position but also cast some doubt as to whether full devolution would have the desired effect.

Supporting full devolution, I did find that conflicts between the RDC and the wards undermine development gains at the community level. The current institutional structure of CAMPFIRE, which vests authority for program management in the districts, creates incentives and opportunities for the RDCs to shortchange the communities or interfere with their management practices. On the other hand, I also found significant failures of governance at the ward level. In the absence of oversight, local leaders acted without accountability, to the detriment of the communities. Thus outcomes in Mahenye and Nyaminyami highlight the importance of, and fragility of, good governance and

adequate capacity in CBNRM. But the implications for the debate over the appropriate level of devolution are mixed.

Given my findings, it seems unlikely that a statutory change to devolve authority to the ward or village level without safeguards to promote good governance would eliminate the tendency for elites, whether elected or traditional, to exclude ordinary villagers from participation and to capture project benefits. In other words, the problems I observed appear to emerge from unaccountable leadership institutions rather than from an inappropriate level of devolution. Thus, while not ideal custodians of the communities' interests, the district councils under current conditions provide the only check on the otherwise unconstrained power of local leaders. Local leaders appear as likely as district or national authorities to diverge from good governance practices if the opportunity is available. The CAMPFIRE Association director in Harare emphasized this point when he argued that devolution to communities should be approached carefully and done on a case by case basis taking into account the availability of necessary capacities at the local level.

Under current circumstances, no ideal solution is available. Without devolution of authority, the communities will continue to give up important powers and resources to district authorities. But with devolution, the CAMPFIRE committees may fall under the rule of the traditional chiefs, councilors, and other leaders who are unlikely to govern in the community interest without external checks and balances.

8.2.6. Return to the Research Questions: Participation

In my research, I also explored questions related to the extent and quality of participation in the two CAMPFIRE sites. In examining the periods from project inception up through 2000 and from 2000 until the time of my research, I observed changes in participation and worked to identify the factors responsible for the observed changes. Definitions of participation discussed in chapter 2 provide lenses through which local participation in the two case study areas can be evaluated.

Meaningful participation as laid out in Pimbert and Pretty's (1994) typology includes collective participation in the making or modification of operational program rules. According to Pimbert and Pretty (1994), interactive participation of stakeholder groups in all project stages results in the groups taking control over local decisions and having a stake in maintaining operating structures or practices. Following this interpretation, participation in CAMPFIRE was flawed at the design stage. From the beginning, program development was selectively participatory and did not involve the most important stakeholders—the rural communities, who in principle “produce” the wildlife and own the local CAMPFIRE projects. DPNWM, CASS, WWF-SARPO, and other members of the CCG designed the program without input from local people or from the RDCs that represent them. Ironically, these leaders incorporated principles of participation in project implementation but did not promote participation in project design. Murphree (2004, p. 215) offers a critical description of this process: “With some notable exceptions and considerable rhetoric to the contrary, the [community of experts] continues to be dominated by a scientific-cum-bureaucratic paradigm which is deterministic, reductionist and impositional. Applied to communal approaches, this

paradigm translates into the following assumptions and attributes: designs emanate from external agents whose knowledge and norms are transcendent; designs can be engineered to produce predictable outcomes; designs are implemented through a time and resource-bound project mode; projects are produced by external agents on behalf of third parties, the communal actors who are its dependent subjects.”

Despite these initial shortcomings, many local communities and RDCs nationwide eagerly accepted the program as designed. The RDCs and local residents were not coerced to accept the arrangement but freely agreed to participate. Further, the communities were initially ill prepared to design such a program themselves. From the outset, villages lacked the institutions and the local traditions of participation. Women in particular were culturally excluded from decision making. The new institutions resulted in many areas in relatively effective local participation. These issues reveal the inherent paradoxes and complexity of externally imposed communal projects (Murphree 2004). Given these complications, it is not surprising that local projects in many cases struggle to establish deep roots and become self-regulating and self-sustaining.

Regarding general CAMPFIRE program implementation, local participation is also flawed in that local communities do not participate in any form at RDC level other than through their elected representatives, the councilors. Once elected for a term of four years, the councilors are governed by the Rural District Councils Act. Under this statute, the community that elected a councilor cannot impeach him even if he is egregiously failing to serve the community interest. Furthermore, sport hunting, the dominant wildlife utilization strategy in CAMPFIRE, is reserved for rich international trophy hunters. Local communities are limited in their ability to participate in revenue generation because they

lack the requisite skills (professional hunting and marketing), capital (finance and equipment), and foreign clientele.

Following the thinking of development theorists such as Sen (1999), participation in CBNRM is both instrumentally and intrinsically good. It serves as both a means to an end—strengthened economic opportunities and improved conservation outcomes—and as an end in itself—manifested in personal and community empowerment and expanded choices (Little 1994). Evaluating observed participation in the case study areas against these parameters, I found that from project inception to 2000, the projects in the two sites can be said to have been at least moderately successful. Wildlife populations were sustained and poaching was limited. And local people saw benefits and had at least some reasonable opportunities to actively participate in directing the projects' paths. However, as discussed above, after 2000 the quality and quantity of community engagement declined to insignificant levels that fail in all respects to satisfy the parameters of desirable participation.

Also as discussed in Chapter 2, Cohen and Uphoff (1977) defined participation as including people's involvement in program decision-making processes, in program implementation, and in benefit sharing. According to these criteria as well, residents in Mahenye and Nyaminyami from 2000 on have not had meaningful opportunities for participation. My findings indicate that the extent and quality of participation in the two sites also fail to meet Carnea's (1985) standards. Carnea argues that local participation, when functioning well, empowers people to mobilize their own capacities, to be social actors rather than passive subjects, and to control activities that affect their lives. In contrast, residents of Mahenye and Nyaminyami revealed to me their sense of

disempowerment and loss of control. They reported strong feelings of frustration, disappointment, distrust, and alienation. It is possible to argue that they are actually worse off in this regard than they would have been without the projects and the disillusionment that has followed the collapse of the development components.

Using Pimbert and Pretty's typology of participation (Table 1), which is commonly used as an interpretation framework, local participation in Mahenye and Nyaminyami can at best be categorized as "passive participation" or "participation in information giving"—the lowest participation categories. Since, according to Barrow and Murphree (1999), the concept of community participation has relevance only in the last four categories of Pimbert and Pretty's (1994) typology, evidence from my research indicates that local participation in the two areas declined to unsatisfactory levels. Similarly, since community members no longer have opportunities to give feedback or negotiate, local participation in Mahenye and Nyaminyami fits in UNCDF's "manipulation" category

A consideration of the state of women reveals even more disappointing outcomes. While the breadth and depth of participation of all local people beyond the project leaders were weak, at least men had some opportunities for engagement. Women, on the other hand, were totally excluded at all levels of participation in the project. Despite the ideals of CAMPFIRE, women remained second class citizens in comparison to their male counterparts. All the committee members I talked to in both case study areas off-handedly dismissed women and their relevance in the management of project activities. Effective participation for women, both as a measure of citizenship and as means of empowerment (B. Agrawal 2001), was not present in either of my case studies.

To further illustrate the marginalization of women, most of my respondents were men. While women were often present, and while I specifically asked for their input, women often did not readily offer their opinions. Being aware of the cultural constraints, I often approached women when they were on their own. Where only women were present, they spoke more openly and we were able to chat about the issues. I believe my traits as an outsider, with education and worldly experience, elevated me in the eyes of the men to the extent that they were willing to discuss important issues with me even though I am a woman. I have personal experience with these patterns in my own family and clan. I have learned how to get men to hear my views.

I believe education is central to empowering women. Given the low levels of education available to girls in the rural areas, the cultural constraints are likely to continue. CAMPFIRE was designed in part to address these issues by engaging women and by funding schools. Unfortunately, my findings suggest that the projects are no longer helping to empower women. In as far as participation is a measure of citizenship and a form of empowerment (B. Agrawal 2001), women's lack of participation in Mahenye and Nyaminyami is itself an indicator of failure.

CHAPTER 9. Recommendations and Conclusions

9.1. Overview

In this final chapter, I offer tentative recommendations for improving project design and implementation strategies. Following the precepts of CBNRM, my investigation focused on two aspects of local governance. In both case study sites, I assessed the level of devolution of authority for wildlife management and examined the depth and quality of community participation in project activities. In both cases, I then studied the impact of the level of devolution and the quality of participation on project outcomes. Devolution deserves attention because CAMPFIRE has been criticized for failing to adopt this critical assumption of CBNRM. Participation is centrally important because it underpins the normative theory of CBNRM.

My research reveals sharp declines in the community development components of two previously successful CAMPFIRE projects. Earlier published studies, corroborated by the recollections of my respondents, indicate that both projects achieved significant conservation and community development gains up through 2000. After 2000, however, the quality of local governance and the gains in community development collapsed at both sites. Factors contributing to the failures included elite capture at the local level, the adverse effects of the national economic and political crisis, and the loss of capacity building and oversight that followed the withdrawal of the NGOs.

In contrast, I found that positive conservation outcomes were sustained in both locations. This unexpected result, which deserves further study, appears tied to the incentives for leaders at the national, district, and local level to maintain the flow of

revenue from wildlife. I also found that community members had to some degree internalized CAMPFIRE ideals regarding conservation and therefore continued to limit poaching despite the loss of compensatory development benefits.

The act of offering recommendations assumes that a fix is possible. To achieve significant improvements in CAMPFIRE, however, major transformations at the local, national, and international level would have to occur. One lesson from my research and the work of other scholars is that any quick or superficial fixes will be overwhelmed by structural problems at all three levels. Local communities struggle with entrenched poverty, lack of capacity, and antidemocratic traditions. The national government is profoundly corrupt and authoritarian and is presiding over an economy in freefall. International donors have withdrawn from Zimbabwe, and when they were active they created dependent and unsustainable projects.

Given these problems, Murphree (2004) has proposed a reform package with four main components. First, projects must nurture resilient local project management institutions with strong consensual legitimacy. These institutions should emulate the self-organized social structures found in communities worldwide that have learned to manage their common-pool resources successfully (Ostrom 1990). Second, project design should match the social and ecological context. Fixed templates for project design are doomed to fail. Instead, project implementers and participating communities must work together to develop plans adapted to local conditions. Third, local projects must be nested within a larger framework that integrates planning and action across multiple social and ecological scales. No small project can succeed if it is isolated from or undermined by external forces. Fourth, the local communities must be part of a reciprocal learning network

involving community members and external actors at all levels. Projects must be truly inclusive, must incorporate and learn from local knowledge, and must accept all stakeholders as equal partners, albeit with differing strengths. This list exposes the magnitude of the challenges. Murphree's (2004) ideas are insightful and important. Yet they have no real chance of taking hold under current circumstances. The obstacles are too great.

A second fundamental problem with recommendations in the field of community-based conservation is that the recommendations are often inherently contradictory. Projects assume that external interventions can impose local institutions with consensual legitimacy. They envision independent self-sufficient, self-directed, and self-regulating local institutions in a national and international environment that lacks these characteristics. They assume that project implementation over limited funding cycles can create local institutions with long-term adaptability and resilience. Experience in the field indicates that all these assumptions are suspect.

In offering several recommendations that follow from my research, I recognize and acknowledge these limitations. I offer the recommendations with humility and without great expectations that they could inoculate local projects from the failures I observed. The recommendations focus particularly on promoting good governance, protecting projects from elite capture, and strengthening local capacity for effective financial management. Good governance in this context incorporates broad and deep participation, transparency, accountability, and gender equity. The two projects suffered from weaknesses in all these areas.

9.2. Recommendations

1. Promote sustainable democratic institutions to avoid elite capture.

Projects must foster the emergence of resilient and democratic local institutions that have consensual legitimacy in the participating communities. Externally imposed participatory institutions in rural areas that lack strong democratic traditions are likely to be fragile. The types of participation envisioned in CBNRM and other development programs have to be nurtured from program inception. Once established, enduring democratic structures would help protect against elite capture.

Nurturing locally legitimate institutions requires time and patience. Typical project timelines constrained by donor funding cycles are insufficient. As exemplified in my case study sites, the aid process and the abrupt termination of aid both contributed to local failures. The conditions in rural areas and the conditions driving aid processes combine to create challenging obstacles to success. Expert external guidance is essential; yet expert interventions tend to undermine local legitimacy. Moreover, national efforts to build democratic local institutions assume deep-rooted democracy at the national level, a condition often lacking in developing countries. Nevertheless, projects that do not focus sharply on facilitating the emergence of resilient, democratic local institutions are bound to be short-lived.

2. Separate CAMPFIRE committee leadership from other local leadership.

Project design guidelines should stipulate that individuals who hold other community positions are not eligible for election or appointment to CAMPFIRE leadership positions. This requirement should also apply to immediate members of the

ruling family. While this requirement would appear discriminatory, it is necessary to reduce the likelihood that existing traditional elites can co-opt benefits.

As noted in both Mahenye and Nyaminyami, close ties or overlap between project leadership positions and other community leadership positions resulted in conflicts of interest and abuse of power at the expense of ordinary members of the community. In Mahenye, the project chairman was the brother of the traditional chief. Several other members of the project committee were members of the ruling clan. In Nyaminyami, the chairmen of the ward CAMPFIRE committees were also the district councilors, beholden to the national ruling party. The leaders in both sites abused their powers with impunity after external oversight ended. Ordinary community members were afraid to challenge them given their powerful positions and connections.

3. Ensure that women occupy some leadership positions in the project committees.

Many studies in international development indicate that the involvement of women increases chances for success. Given the traditional culture of Zimbabwe, which discourages female leadership and participation, only direct, specific interventions would guarantee the inclusion of women in decision-making. I recommend a quota system requiring that women fill a minimum of one-third of the seats on local committees and that a woman must be committee chair at least once in every three election cycles.

Attitudinal changes regarding gender are taking place in urban areas. Women now hold prominent positions, including the country's vice presidency, many parliamentary seats, and corporate leadership portfolios. An affirmative action policy for women in CAMPFIRE communities is also appropriate. The policy should be maintained until it

becomes common practice for women to be leaders. As a side benefit, the presence of women in leadership positions would encourage young girls to seek such positions in their adult lives.

I also recommend that CAMPFIRE include specific efforts to promote education for girls in the rural areas. Project funds could be invested in scholarships for girls. Such efforts would help develop a positive cycle of development. Educated women are more likely to ensure that their daughters are also educated. Education will provide women with confidence to participate in matters that affect their lives, regardless of social norms and cultures. Ultimately, through education, gender equality will come from within rather than from external regulations.

4. Approach devolution of appropriate authority to the community level with caution.

I recommend based on my research findings that authority for wildlife management should remain at RDC level in the short to medium term. However, the ultimate goal should be to devolve substantial, perhaps complete, authority to the communities once consensually legitimate, democratic institutions become deeply rooted. Devolution can be addressed on a project by project basis. The most important condition is the existence of checks and balances to avoid project capture by local elites and to ensure that the project is implemented in a transparent and accountable manner.

This recommendation will be difficult to implement. As Murphree (2204) discusses, external expertise may be essential to promote strong democratic institutions in

areas where such institutions have never existed, but external expertise tends to create patron-client relationships that hamper the emergence of these institutions.

5. Permit “producer communities” to hold and manage their earnings in hard currency.

CAMPFIRE earnings should go directly to the projects. Currently, local communities lose money because the official exchange rates undervalue their hard currency earnings and because, in a hyperinflationary economy, funds converted to Z\$ quickly drop in value. However, to manage their money, local institutions would need access to financial services and competent financial management expertise. This change would reverse the current power structure in which the RDCs receive the money first and then disburse some portion to the wards. Under the recommended arrangement, the roles would be reserved. The communities would receive the income directly. Then the RDCs would collect their share in the form of taxes. This reversal, given adequate financial management capacity, would substantially improve conditions for the communities.

6. Require the use of external experts for business management oversight.

Failures in financial management occurred after the withdrawal of the NGOs that had previously provided capacity and oversight. It is essential to have consistent, long-term monitoring and support from external agents that can audit records and advise on marketing hunting concessions and managing investments. As private sector agencies that provide these consulting services may be too costly for the local CAMPFIRE projects to afford, the central government should subsidize private contracts once donor-

funded NGOs are no longer available. To promote local responsibility, the CAMPFIRE projects should be required to pay some amount as cost sharing.

In the end, better revenue returns from such advice and support would justify and cover the additional cost. My findings suggest that CAMPFIRE projects in wildlife-rich districts could earn much more than they are currently earning if they had expert advice. The observation that safari hunters and their international clientele have not been deterred from the market even under Zimbabwe's unstable and hostile political and economic conditions indicates that there are opportunities for stronger financial returns. Unfortunately, the communities, lacking capacity, are unable to realize the full financial potential of their resources.

7. Require the RDCs and the CAMPFIRE Association to oversee governance practices.

The loss of external oversight after 2000 was a critical contributor to the decline of the development components of the projects in both sites. CAMPFIRE projects pay a portion of their revenues to the RDCs and to the CAMPFIRE Association in order to receive support services. However, these institutions are not undertaking their stewardship responsibilities. DNPWM, which provides authority for wildlife management to the RDCs and is ultimately responsible for wildlife management in Zimbabwe, should have an enforceable policy that requires the RDCs to provide ward CAMPFIRE projects with the support services they pay for. The RDCs on average keep 35 percent of CAMPFIRE revenues for the management of project activities. The policy

should stipulate that whenever the RDCs fail to carry out their responsibilities with respect to the CAMPFIRE projects, they would forfeit CAMPFIRE revenue for that year.

Given the importance of participation to local community empowerment and sense of program ownership, the RDCs should be required to guarantee community participation as provided in the CAMPFIRE guidelines. Specifically the RDCs should ensure that general elections and annual general meetings take place according to CAMPFIRE rules and regulations. The CAMPFIRE Association should also be required to visit each project at least once per year to ensure that projects are operating within the CAMPFIRE guidelines. Failure to do so would result in the association forfeiting its 4 percent share of CAMPFIRE revenue from projects where it did not visit or provide support services.

8. Implement broad-based, long-term strategies to build local capacity.

Donors invested significant funds in NGOs and state agencies that provided essential support services to local CAMPFIRE projects. NGOs that benefit from bilateral aid should be required to develop true and sustainable local capacity. The government agency responsible for approving proposals for NGOs to work with CAMPFIRE projects should only approve proposals that clearly articulate plans to develop skills and expertise in the communities that would be sustained after the NGOs withdraw. Capacity building should nurture internal and external systems of checks and balances that would promote accountability and protect projects from elite capture. Once developed, these internal capacities would in turn support sustainable, resilient institutions.

Given that external support from NGOs is unreliable, long-term project success depends significantly on the development of independent local capacity in technical skills, marketing, organizational development, and management. Project sustainability also requires resilient local institutions that can guarantee participation, accountability, and transparency over the long term. These are particularly challenging goals given the level of education of people in the countryside and the inability of the rural areas to attract and retain nationals with requisite qualifications. However, it may be possible to achieve these desired outcomes if projects operate effectively and earn the high revenues that are possible in the lucrative trophy hunting and game-viewing tourism markets. In these circumstances, it may be possible for the projects to compensate skilled locals highly enough to entice them to stay in the rural areas.

In making these recommendations, I acknowledge the difficulty of achieving the goals of CBNRM given the prevailing political and economic conditions. The country is experiencing severe economic hardships and widespread corruption in all sectors, making it difficult to imagine the possibility of efficient and honest project management institutions.

The recommendations I make here would not require significant additional government or donor expenditures. Better business management of CAMPFIRE projects should generate enough extra income to cover additional expenses associated with oversight and capacity building.

The problem of corruption is more daunting. Who will “watch the watchdog” to make sure that the benefits of CAMPFIRE accrue to the communities? In an ideal

situation, CAMPFIRE would be implemented in the broader context of good governance at all levels. In practice, however, CBNRM programs by nature are most frequently established in rural areas of developing countries, where capacity and quality of governance are often weak. Unfortunately, the current policy environment in Zimbabwe is an extreme example of these problems.

9.3. Recommendations for Further Research

To substantiate or add to the findings from my research, I recommend that future scholarship include the following activities.

- 1. Conduct additional detailed case studies of CAMPFIRE projects in Zimbabwe and CBNRM projects in other southern African countries.** This research will contribute to the development of larger databases of project performance. Analyses of the resulting datasets would produce stronger and more generalizable conclusions.
- 2. Conduct meta-analyses of existing case studies of CBNRM projects, including those reported here.** Integrating findings from case studies already reported in the literature would generate larger samples supporting recommendations that practitioners could apply with greater confidence.
- 3. Test the key assumption of CBNRM that conservation of natural resources can be successfully integrated with development goals.** A central assumption of CBNRM is that positive socioeconomic gains from wildlife utilization lead to desirable conservation

outcomes in rural areas of the developing world. Many countries are relying on the approach to improve conditions in their impoverished rural areas. Yet critical reports, including the case studies reported here, suggest that the promised integrated gains may not be easily achieved.

9.4. Conclusion

Findings from the case studies described in this thesis highlight major obstacles to successful development of self-sustaining CBNRM projects. Local CAMPFIRE institutions are fragile and highly sensitive to changes in the external political and economic environment. This fragility will be hard to overcome. Developing resilient, transparent, and accountable institutions must be a priority in future planning and implementation of CBNRM in Zimbabwe and elsewhere. I hope that my work contributes to understanding these challenges. I hope that this additional knowledge will help communities and outside practitioners collaborate more effectively to improve outcomes.

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