

December 2014

Forest Governance Learning Group

Malawi

Pushing for justice: opening up the
governance of Malawi's forests

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About the project

For more information about this report, or the Forest Governance Learning Group and the Social Justice in Forestry project, visit <http://iied.org/forest-governance-learning-group>, or contact: James Mayers, James.Mayers@iied.org.

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Published by IIED, December 2014

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1. Introduction

1.1. Background to this report

Social Justice in Forestry – as a project of FGLG with funding from the European Commission (EC) – supported the Malawi Forest Governance Learning Group (FGLG Malawi) from January 2009 to December 2013, building on a first phase of EC support from April 2005 to December 2008 and an even earlier phase of work funded by DFID that started in 2003-2004. Within the contractual obligations of the latter phase of support to FGLG Malawi, it was agreed that the Centre for Development Management (CDM), the convenor for FGLG Malawi, would provide a final narrative report to cover the entire contract period (2009-2013), within one month of the end of the contract. This was to include an assessment of the implementation of all activities, reasons for modifying activities, results and outcomes, and impacts on final beneficiaries/ target groups. The report was to show what had been learnt from the activities, and how this learning had been utilised and disseminated. The final narrative report would also list all publications, films, websites and other media produced under this contract. This document constitutes the final narrative report from FGLG Malawi for the *Social Justice in Forestry* project.

1.2. Brief history of the prior work of FGLG Malawi (2004-2008)

FGLG Malawi was initiated in 2004 with support from IIED. It began as a loose association of interested individuals who worked together in their own capacity to explore workable approaches to forest governance. The group began and has continued with a broad membership including government and non-government representatives, and donor-assisted project staff. The group was from the beginning coordinated by a secretariat, hosted by the CDM. In the early phase of work, the convenor was the Deputy Director of Forestry Mr Wellings Simwela, in his personal capacity.

The key challenge identified by the group in 2004 was the lack of implementation of the policy framework, which results in poorly governed harvesting and trade of specific forest products. The forest policy framework on paper provided an excellent backdrop to promote good forest governance, but the reality on the ground revealed that many barriers existed to enabling both the improvement of livelihoods and sustainable forest management.

During Phase I, which ran from 2004 to 2005, FGLG Malawi identified the main issues through studies on *Law enforcement, illegality and the forest dependent poor*, and *Bridging the gap: Opportunities for forest-livelihoods orientated governance in Malawi*; developed a tool for heating up the issue of local government accountability; participated in regional FGLG learning events in Ghana (July 2004) and South Africa (October 2004); and presented findings at the Commonwealth Forestry Conference in February 2005. It campaigned for better forest governance at the National Council for the Environment and sought to raise issues at the Parliamentary Committee on Agriculture and Natural Resources. It also contributed heavily to the standards and guidelines for decentralised forest management in Malawi and supported a Mzuzu Forum on sustainable forest management. In early 2006, the group prepared a first policy briefing note on charcoal production that highlighted the current plight of poor people dependent on charcoal for fuel where all production is currently deemed 'illegal'. The group also began a newsletter for district forest officers on governance issues called *The District Post*.

During Phase II, which ran from 2005 to 2008, FGLG Malawi focused on three consecutive annual themes that build on one another: (1) understanding the dynamics of local charcoal enterprises and legalising sustainable approaches to community charcoal production; (2) reviewing and spreading understanding of what makes for successful small and medium forest enterprises; and (3) reviewing Village Natural Resource Management Committees (VNRMCs) and mechanisms to improve entrepreneurial forest use and benefit sharing at the local level.

Under the first annual theme, FGLG Malawi researched in 2006 and then published in 2007 a groundbreaking first study, *Charcoal: the reality*, on the scale and nature of the charcoal trade, together with a decision making piece, *Charcoal: the options*, for policymakers. It organised and hosted an international FGLG learning event at Ku Chawe Inn, Zomba that focused in its fieldwork on the charcoal production issue and options for legalisation through community forest management in reserves and on customary land. It contributed to film footage of governance problems associated with charcoal production. The group even organised a petition to the president on the issue and are taking up the need to address charcoal with the Forest Management Board, which advises the president.

Under the second annual theme, FGLG Malawi produced a second policy briefing on how to support SMFEs and presented this at the first Forest Based Enterprise Fair, which brought small forest enterprise traders together in 2007. The group then commissioned a second study to analyse in more detail SMFEs in Malawi, looking at timber production, bamboo furniture, honey and fruit juices, and launched this work at the international FGLG meeting in Malawi in 2008.

Under the third theme, FGLG Malawi managed a case study at Ntanda hill to show how customary clan-based management of forest resources could provide the ownership and security needed to make community forestry work. Communities in the area were trained in sustainable forest management. A third study was completed that compared community forest management across areas in which VNRMCs had been established versus areas in which they had not, with lessons on how to make community forestry work. The group summarised their findings in a third policy briefing note on community-based forest management (CBFM) to give to the minister in the 2008 international learning event. Meanwhile in Ntanda hill, bye-law development has been supported with a need now to formally recognise those community-driven management laws at the district level. Throughout these activities, the group sought to brief the media on the findings and bring the debate more clearly into the public domain. FGLG has appeared several times on Malawi TV, in national newspapers and on radio shows.

Key outcomes included marked changes in the direction of the discourse on forest governance. In both the public domain and the Department of Forestry itself, the governance debate moved away from a narrow focus on illegal harvesting and deforestation to a better analysis of how policy and law, and their weak implementation, are contributing to further degradation. Work with the media allowed the general public to capture many more forestry issues on a more regular basis and from a range of angles. The release of credible evidence on the charcoal industry was particularly fruitful in changing the quality and direction of the debate – as was early work on the opportunities and challenges faced by other small and medium forest enterprises. To date, the charcoal study continues to be the main reference documents for government, development partners, the media and NGOs for environmental and natural resources management programmes.

Other impacts from early work included better quality partnerships and consultative approach to forest governance among concerned actors, and recognition that a group such as FGLG can sometimes have more influence than individual organisations working alone. Other practical impacts in local sites, such as Ntcheu, have driven interest from other communities in adopting similar approaches in their own areas.

In the first five years, FGLG Malawi learned that although time-consuming and costly, generating credible evidence and using it in combination with anecdotes can be a powerful tool for changing discourse and can assist more informed decision making. However, it was felt that a clear communication and advocacy strategy was needed to ensure actions are taken further on the basis of the evidence generated.

When the first phase of work concluded, the FGLG Malawi team expressed the desire to undertake further practical demonstration and documentation of sustainable charcoal production, to coordinate a national level committee on small forest enterprises and to continue local-level learning on clan-based approaches to community forestry. In addition, the group also felt the need to respond to new governance agendas by raising awareness on climate change adaptation strategies such as REDD and distilling information from other studies on bio-fuels, with a view to informing the implementation of the National Adaptation Programme of Action.

2. Targets, team, tactics and main actions

2.1. Key issues in social justice in forestry that the team sought to address

Building on the achievements and lessons from previous phases, from January 2009 onwards FGLG Malawi developed a new work plan that addressed four key issues in social justice in forestry which were themselves linked to the achievement of the head contract between the EC and IIED.

Issue 1: Forest rights for small forest enterprise development. Poverty reduction through small forest enterprise development is a massive issue in Malawi, one of the world's poorest countries. The issue is that complex tenure situations govern local forest and farm enterprises. Too often, past projects had ignored these complexities and imposed new enterprise structures and committees that left local people unsure of their commercial rights. By 2009, the FGLG Malawi team had developed a detailed understanding of the clan management systems in Ntanda hill in Ntcheu district, which had resulted in a large pine plantation that one day could form the basis for community enterprise. But outside of this one pilot site, confusion and uncertainty continued. In addition, in 2009 many local people still lacked awareness of the commercial possibilities that exist to develop enterprises based on tree resources (not only plantations and woodlots, but also trees on farms, including fruit, oil and medicinal plant crops). The implementation of community forestry in Malawi is still embryonic and while some co-management agreements have been reached, there is still an over-emphasis on forest management rather than on profitable and sustainable forest enterprise. This emphasis diminishes local incentives to restore and manage forests and comes in part from a lack of exposure amongst key support organisations to how small forest enterprise development is happening elsewhere.

Issue 2: Legitimate timber, biomass energy and non-timber forest products. Within Malawi, pressure on forests comes from a number of sources, including agricultural land expansion for the growing population, the need for biomass energy on which most rural people rely (given that over 90 per cent of the population is not connected to electricity), and unsustainable logging of natural and planted forests. One particular area of concern in 2009 was the continuing unsustainable use of charcoal, with charcoal production effectively banned (though allowed in principal providing a management plan is agreed, none have been licensed to date). Another major area of concern was the unsustainable logging within the large Viphya plantations, on which many small pitsawyer associations depend and which provide an important source of local revenue.

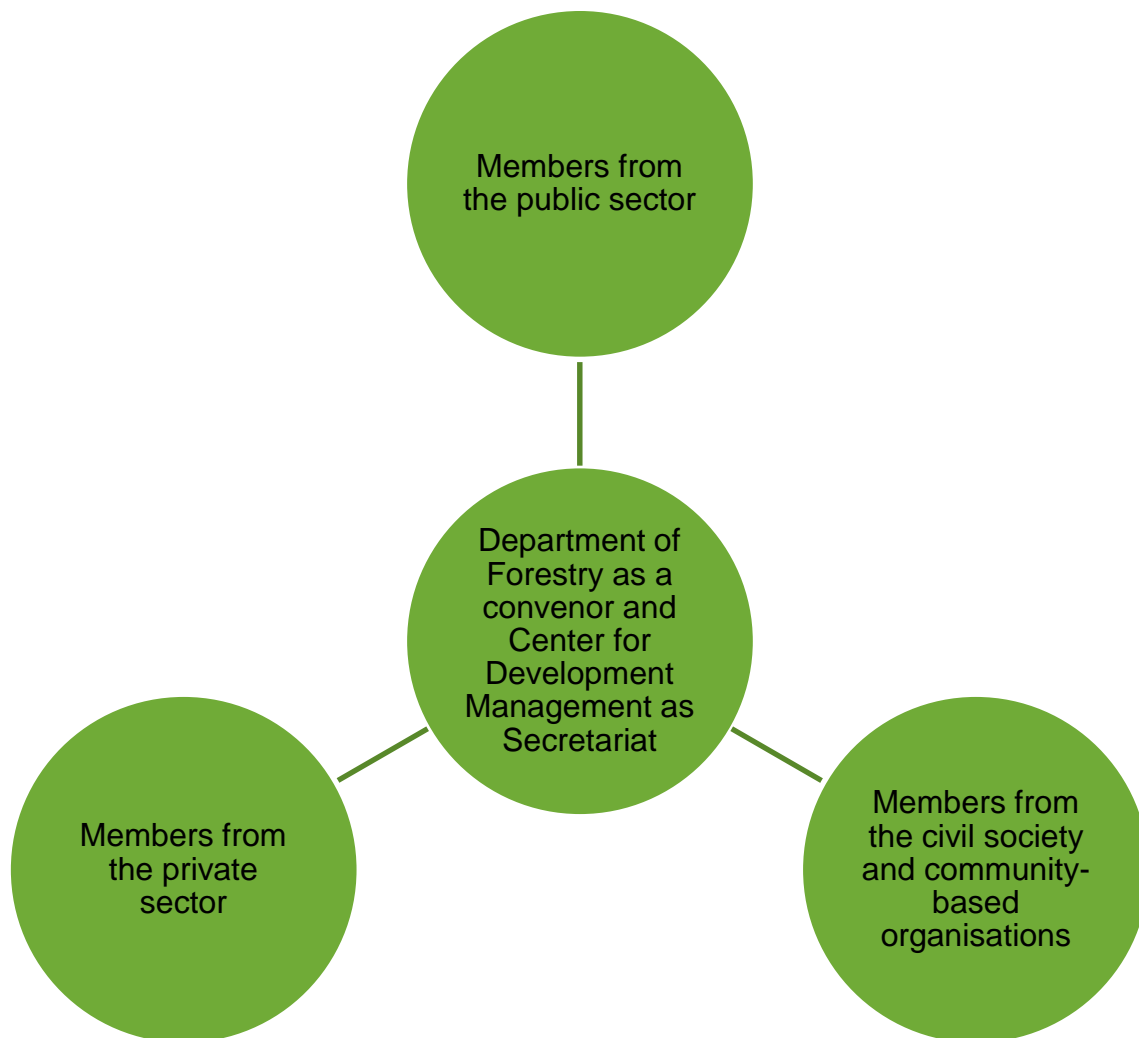
Issue 3: Pro-poor climate change mitigation and adaptation through forestry. Malawi is uniquely vulnerable to the climate change unleashed by carbon emissions, mostly from elsewhere. This is because of high and rising population density of very poor people. More than 90 per cent of its population depends on food produced from subsistence rain-fed agriculture, area per capita of which is falling to unsustainable levels, and on fuel primarily from tree cover that is rapidly disappearing. Government fertiliser subsidies, introduced in 2005, have restored short-term food security, but their long-term financial sustainability is highly questionable. At current rates of consumption and replanting, Malawi's off-reserve forest will be totally exhausted by 2024. Unless tree cover can be maintained and restored to enhance soil fertility, provide fuel and diversify rural livelihoods, Malawi faces a catastrophe. REDD+ finance offers a major opportunity to address this issue, but in 2009 Malawi had no REDD+ strategy. With funding from the US Agency for International Development (USAID), the REDD+ process is now in full swing and a USAID-supported facility called PERFORM is expected to pilot REDD+ interventions in the next five years. An active process with UN-REDD has now been initiated.

Issue 4. Lack of learning and preparedness through informed forest policy debate. Forest producer groups and civil society have historically had few chances to engage directly with policy development. One notable exception was in the development of Malawi's National Forest Programme, but since that time, more than a decade ago, there have been few broad consultative platforms to discuss the issues highlighted above. One opportunity lies with the Forest Management Board and the

potential to revive an annual National Forestry Governance Forum, but in 2009 this potential lay unrealised.

2.2. Structure of the team and wider consultative groupings

FGLG Malawi was convened by the Department of Forestry, while the day-to-day secretariat functions were performed by the Centre for Development Management. Members were drawn from across all sectors of the economy, representing the public, private and CSO sectors. Members of the FGLG did not necessarily represent their organisations, but attended as individuals. However, because of their linkages with their respective institutions and based on the comparative advantages of their particular institutions, they were able to contribute and share ideas which represented their sectors.



2.3. Main tactics used

In the following table we detail the main tactics used by FGLG Malawi during the last five years.

Table 1. Tactics used by the FGLG Malawi team with examples of their efficacy

Tactic	How it worked
Generating evidence through studies	FGLG Malawi conducted a number of studies to generate evidence for policy advocacy. For example, the team conducted a charcoal study that found that the industry was worth US\$41 million, making it the third largest industry in the country. The report has been widely used to develop options for sustainable production and management of charcoal.
Meetings to share information	FGLG Malawi used a series of formal and informal meetings to advocate for policy governance improvements. The meetings were held in government offices, at CDM and at the Department of Forestry offices, and sometimes over dinner and other informal situations. FGLG Malawi also used field trips as a way of bringing experts together to discuss governance issues in situ.
Policy engagements with decision makers	The FGLG Malawi team produced a series of five policy briefs that were disseminated through multi-media methods to policymakers. The group engaged the media and supported it to publish these policy briefs. It also engaged policymakers through workshops, visits to their offices, media and press releases and through its mother body, the Coordination Unit for the Rehabilitation of the Environment.
Advocacy to ensure approaches taken into major new initiatives	Evidence-based advocacy was the main tactic to influence policy debates and reforms. FGLG Malawi implemented various strategies for advocacy, including but not limited to meetings, media releases, policy briefs, and field pilot sites (Mtanda Community Based Forest Initiative). The group produced high-quality documents that attracted government attention.
Site visits inside and outside Malawi to learn and share tactics	As mentioned, FGLG Malawi brought policymakers, planners and decision makers into the group as team members so they could see and observe governance problems at the local level and could appreciate the problems and the ideas the group fought for. FGLG Malawi involved the Department of Forestry in international forest governance learning meetings, so they can share with other countries and also learn from them – a tool for spreading the knowledge.
National, regional and international meetings	FGLG Malawi focused mainly on national and international meetings, although also organised some bilateral exchanges. The national meetings were held once a year, to give time for the members to implement various activities, generate evidence and lessons learnt and then annually share them locally and globally through the FGLG learning events.
Pilot development of new approaches	The adage 'seeing is believing' had a lot of relevance in the group's work. FGLG Malawi created a pilot project in Ntcheu to demonstrate good governance at the community level, using community-clan management systems.
Publicity using the media	In the team was a seasoned environmental journalist who provided a linkage to media houses. He organised media tours to forest governance hot spots such as the Viphya Plantations, Zomba Mountain and other charcoal producing sites. These tours were covered by the media and resulted in more attention on the sectors by government.

2.4. Main actions taken over the five years

The main in-country actions taken over the five-year reporting period are described here in chronological order and are compiled from annual work plans and their corresponding narrative reports. This section does not include the important participation in international FGLG learning events (including participation in the setting up of the China-Africa Forest Governance Learning Platform). The stories of change sections below complements this section by disaggregating activities into discreet story lines over the five-year period.

2009

The slow contractual process with the EC led to a bridging grant to allow the FGLG Malawi team to recommence work. An initial focus was on support for small forest enterprises (following two prior booklets on charcoal and broader small forest enterprise options published in the preceding phase of FGLG).

A first step was to organise a national workshop in Lilongwe on 6-9 April 2009 on small forest enterprises. A national steering committee was then convened to provide support to small forest enterprises through Forest Connect, involving: Johan Nurhuis (Improved Forest Management for Sustainable Livelihoods programme), Trinitas Senganimalunje (Malawi College of Forest and Wildlife), Robert Kafakoma (Training Support for Partners), Titus Zulu (Department of Forestry), Chief Kwataine (traditional leader from Ntcheu District) and Chris Mwale (Coordination Unit for the Rehabilitation of the Environment, CURE).

The FGLG team helped to secure funding from the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) to bring a trainer in on the market analysis and development (MA&D) methodology of screening and planning new businesses who trained 28 community level facilitators in eight districts across the country. The group wanted to press forward with (i) an analysis of service providers; (ii) a value chain analysis for timber; (iii) a policy analysis and review on support for small forest enterprises (regulatory aspects); and (iv) the documentation and sharing of lessons on institutional arrangements on forest-based enterprises (FBEs) (lessons on associations versus groups).

As a result of the above, an immediate next step in 2009 was to undertake a value chain analysis and analysis of the state of the timber trade originating from small pitsaw groups in the Viphya Plantations. As a result of the study, the government of Malawi issued a ban on timber exports leading to strikes and border closures that followed FGLG publicity work. Also as a result, the government set up a timber Audit Committee to try to clamp down on the abuse of licensing and extraction rules. The report of that Audit Committee (<http://afrosai-e.org.za/sites/afrosai-e.org.za/files/reports/Viphya%20Performance%20Audit%20report%20tabled%20in%20Parliament%202%20Dec%202011.pdf>) and the government tightening up of regulations were widely discussed in the media (see, for example, <http://www.theafricareport.com/Southern-Africa/logging-and-deforestation-malawis-diminishing-plantations.html>).

Elsewhere the team undertook a review of the key factors affecting the effectiveness of community-based forest management across the country, putting the work on pilot clan-based management systems in Ntcheu into context and drawing broader conclusions about the new system being piloted. The conclusions of this study were used in the design of major new regional development projects, such as the World Bank Shire River Basin Management Program.

The team continued to push forward work to improve the governance of charcoal that had been initiated in the preceding phase. They prepared a 'tool' that was essentially a description of how earlier work to expose the reality of the charcoal trade in Malawi had been undertaken. The aim was to ensure that other FGLG teams could use a similar approach to generate policy relevant evidence. The team also pushed the issue within Malawi, holding a press briefing on why it was important to bring charcoal under sustainable (and profitable) management.

2010

The year 2010 saw the start of more regular contractual arrangements with the FGLG Malawi team. A regular cycle of work planning and reporting was established. The team continued their advocacy on charcoal, including at a joint parliament committee meeting with the Coordination Unit for the Rehabilitation of the Environment (CURE). However, charcoal had been so demonised that theoretical possibility of including charcoal production in the 20 or so new co-management plans signed between the government and communities did not materialise. Nevertheless, the charcoal work did contribute to the Department of Energy within the Ministry of Natural Resources researching, publishing and approving a new Biomass Energy Strategy for Malawi. This took up and indeed went further than FGLG Malawi work in projecting future demands for charcoal that will be double or triple current demand levels, with calls for urgent legalisation and moves toward community control. The FGLG Malawi team built on this development by hosting an FGLG meeting in the Department of Forestry to frame how charcoal could and should be considered as an issue of broader energy security in Malawi linked to any strategy to reduce emissions from deforestation and degradation.

In addition to the above, the team hosted an exchange visit from the FGLG Mozambique team to demonstrate the process through which they had raised the profile of charcoal production in Malawi. They also consolidated their knowledge on the charcoal trade in Malawi as part of a broader project design on the impacts of charcoal production on poverty reduction and ecosystem services funded by the Ecosystem Services for Poverty Alleviation (ESPA) programme.

Following longstanding attempts to reactivate the Forest Management Board, the director of the Department of Forestry, Dennis Kyambazinthu, finally agreed not only to its reactivation, but also to the inclusion of a seat for the FGLG in the body. In addition, the work of FGLG Malawi led to environment and forestry being included as nine (instead of six) priority areas for Malawi in the National Development Plan.

In terms of forest and climate change, 2010 saw FGLG Malawi hold a meeting with the director of the Department of Forestry, the new deputy director (John Ngalande) and the contact point on climate change (Nyuma Mughogho) at which it was agreed that the FGLG would contribute by commissioning a study that would present a framework for a draft National REDD+ Strategy. Terms of reference were prepared and the Norwegian Embassy was approached with an (ultimately unsuccessful) proposal on capacity building and consultation in support of a draft strategy.

2011

This year saw an increasingly difficult relationship between the government of Malawi and international donors, who ultimately temporarily withdrew from Malawi. The political situation made life extremely difficult for civil society groups in general, and in particular to address contentious issues such as the governance of the charcoal trade. It was agreed that the FGLG Malawi team should engage in more positive agendas such as REDD+. FGLG Malawi team members therefore participated in a national workshop on monitoring deforestation and degradation which was funded by a University of Edinburgh project. One study was prepared by the team – an initial assessment of the likely impacts and implications for deforestation of the decision to locate Nkhata Bay Hospital in the Kalwe Forest Reserve. Following the meeting, the FGLG Malawi team prepared a policy brief on the need to develop a Malawi REDD+ strategy and some of the main elements that such a strategy should contain. Media work by the team led to press coverage of the climate change issues facing Malawi and its forests. As a result of these interventions, a Working Group of Technical Experts on REDD+ was formed – including Bright Sibale, Robert Kafakoma, John Ngalande, Dr Augustine Chikuni, Dr David Mkwambisi and Dr Judith Kamoto – and terms of reference were prepared to enable the team to develop a REDD+ work plan.

In part because of the political difficulties described above, a renewed attempt was made by the FGLG Malawi team to resuscitate the Malawi National Forestry Programme (NFP) Forum. A concept for this

was produced and representations made to government authorities. The team, through CURE, also undertook a national consultation process to underpin the concept – focusing on aspects such as financing options for the sustainability of the operations of the NFP Forum and the Forest Management Board; how best to harmonise linkages between the NFP Forum and Forest Management Board with the National Council on the Environment; and how to develop an implementation plan that could lead to the resuscitation of the NFP Forum and the Forestry Management Board.

An open letter was written to the principal secretary at the Ministry of Natural Resources and Mining on the new Malawi Growth and Development Strategy. One major development was then the establishment by the government of Malawi of the Forest Management and Development Fund in its financial year 2010-11. This had been the subject of longstanding lobbying by FGLG Malawi members. In a difficult political climate, considerable effort was also put into saving the support to the Integrated Forest Management and Sustainable Livelihoods Programme financed by the EC, which was threatened with closure due to poor governance of the project.

2012

With an improvement in the political climate, 2012 saw renewed media action by the FGLG Malawi team to tackle the charcoal issue, with press briefings on the impact of escalating electricity tariffs on the use of charcoal. As a result, Robert Kafakoma became involved with assessing and developing case studies for renewable energy technologies in Malawi under the Malawi Renewable Energy Project. This ensured that biomass energy and sustainable charcoal production were included in the emerging renewable energy strategy. In collaboration with FGLG Mozambique and FGLG Tanzania, the team studied the dynamics of the cross-border charcoal trade. In addition, a bio-fuels report was drafted by Bunda College consultants and a draft policy brief prepared by the FGLG Malawi team on biofuels in Malawi. This work was then incorporated within a bio-fuels project which is being implemented by Bunda College (by the expert who conducted the FGLG Malawi study). A national dissemination forum was also organised.

Also in 2012, FGLG Malawi expanded its pilot work on clan-based forest management work from Ntanda hill to the Mpira Dam and Dzonzi–Mvai Catchment area in the same district. This was linked to the substantial new World Bank Shire River Basin Program. A rapid assessment of the catchment needs, stakeholders' analysis and priorities was carried out by FGLG Malawi members. Meetings with the Ntcheu District Executive Committee and the Central Region Water Board facilitated this process. The District Forestry Officer (also a member of FGLG Malawi) took a leading part in the action. The project focuses on improving governance of the catchment to ensure equitable utilisation of water and forest resources originating from the catchment. Linked to this work, FGLG Malawi team members also participated in national tree planting exercises, planting 12,000 trees in Wenya in Chitipa District, and Ntanda and Kamuzeni villages in the Mpira Dam Catchment area in Ntcheu district. The ultimate objective was to begin to scale up the clan management system that was innovated in Ntcheu District.

Developing the forest rights and enterprise theme, the FGLG Malawi team worked with IIED to generate ideas on how to mobilise additional funding for forest-based enterprises. This resulted in a small grant to look in more depth at trees on-farm enterprises – focusing on, but not exclusive to, the Janeemo project. FGLG Malawi members also worked with the Department of Forestry to support the development of small-scale operators in Chikangawa so that they could export timber outside Malawi and realise benefits that motivate them to invest more in plantation management.

In relation to forests and climate change, FGLG Malawi team members continued to take part in Malawi's REDD+ strategy development and led a consultation process, while spreading awareness of REDD+ through its briefing paper and through the development of a readiness preparation proposal (R-PP). As a result of the FGLG efforts to put in place a REDD+ strategy, the Malawi government formally established a REDD+ strategy preparation process with the support of USAID. A multi-stakeholder REDD+ Governance Mechanism and a Coordination Secretariat were established in the Department of Forestry. The first ever REDD+ national consultation meeting was held on 18 December 2012, with FGLG Malawi helping to facilitate it. A press release was prepared by the FGLG Malawi team to highlight developments nationally.

2013

In the final year of FGLG Malawi activities, the team continued to push for the governance of the charcoal trade. FGLG Malawi team members (from CDM and CURE) developed a project to be funded by WWF to promote biomass energy in urban areas based on the model that FGLG Malawi promoted at Ntanda hill. A team of FGLG Malawi members went to Zimbabwe to develop the concept and to share its experiences from Ntanda hill there. The long-term case study at Ntanda hill community also acted as a model for the development and application of local bye-laws governing the management of village forest areas during the training that was conducted for the villages surrounding Chief Njolomole's headquarters. The Ntanda community demonstrated the making of and cooking with energy efficient stoves. This was to discourage community members from other villages from cutting down tree regenerants for fuel wood, but instead use less fuel wood for more days than when using the traditional 3 stone fire place.

At Ntanda hill itself, the FGLG Malawi team helped to finalise Ntanda institutional-strengthening bye-laws. Several meetings with local leaders and clan committees were conducted. One training session was also conducted on law enforcement and linkages to the village development committee structure. A similar model has been proposed to support woodfuel production around Lilongwe, and WWF is interested in funding the initiative.

The report resulting from the previous year's exercise to investigate and publicise potential enterprise options from trees on-farm was published and disseminated electronically. Unfortunately the project period ending has reduced the chance that this study will ever be published and distributed in hard copy (which would be of much more relevance to local producer groups).

FGLG Malawi continued to be active in setting up the REDD+ process in Malawi. In collaboration with the Department of Forestry, FGLG Malawi and CDM have now engaged USAID and the US Department of Forest Services in developing the REDD+ strategy in Malawi. Through US government support, an FGLG adviser has been mobilised and is based at the Department of Forestry to advise the department on the REDD+ strategy. In addition, further meetings to develop the REDD+ work plan were held in 2013 and FGLG Malawi continued to organise meetings on behalf of the US government and the Department of Forestry. The draft REDD+ work plan was finally distributed, with comments supplied by many FGLG Malawi members including at a dedicated meeting on 30 October 2013.

In terms of inclusive policy engagement, following a meeting held in Salima, there were ongoing discussions with the Department of Forestry on current issues that need to be reflected in the new forest policy review process. There is renewed commitment to implement the National Forestry Programme. FGLG also drafted a concept note for a national stakeholders meeting (the NFP Forum), which will be held jointly with the Department of Forestry.

3. The changing context of forest governance

3.1. Main issues in forest governance in Malawi from 2009 to 2013

New government. 2009 was an election year when Malawians voted for the president and members of parliament. During the year, the late President Bingu wa Mutharika and his Democratic Progressive Party (DPP) achieved a resounding and overwhelming majority after his minority government had performed beyond everyone's expectations between 2004 and 2009. In 2004, he had changed political parties from United Democratic Front (UDF) and formed his own party, the DPP but struggled to have an annual budget approved by parliament and there were issues whereby Section 65 of the Constitution, if implemented, would have nullified the government. There were major political sensitivities to tackling contentious issues during this reporting period – especially for sensitive areas such as charcoal production (which had been one of the strong focuses of the group in the prior phase).

Changes of director in the Department of Forestry. The former Director of Forestry retired in 2006 in a manner that left the Department of Forestry in a confused state. The three Deputy Directors (Administration, Research and Plantations) were eventually relocated through an instruction from the Office of the President and Cabinet in 2007. The former Deputy Director (Research) finally filled the position of Director of Forestry in 2009. In a period of less than a year, the new Deputies for Administration and Research left for early retirement, adding to the disorganisation of an institution that was already facing management problems. This affected the degree to which FGLG Malawi could engage with the Department of Forestry during this period.

Changes within the major donor forest programme. Phase I of the EU-supported Improved Forest Management for Sustainable Livelihoods Programme (IFMSLP) came to an end in 2009. The end of Phase I evaluation showed that the programme's performance had been below average and if support from the donor was to continue, the new Director of Forestry would have to take charge of the day-to-day management of the programme. Thus in 2010, the Deputy Director of Forestry (Plantations), Mr. John Ngalande, was recalled from Viphya in the north to he headquarters to salvage the programme in addition to responding to numerous administrative responsibilities. Phase II kicked off in earnest in 2010 after a new Technical Assistant Team was recruited and the first annual budget (Cost Estimate) was approved by the EU. The formerly strong alliance between FGLG Malawi and IFMSLP (which had led to the *Charcoal: the reality* study, for example) was more difficult during the transition period.

Problematic concession issues. Having obtained a majority, the new and powerful government commenced a process of reviewing the privatisation efforts and achievements of the former UDF government. The government ordered that the performance of the Raiply concession be reviewed, the results of which would inform policymakers if the existing concession would continue and plans to issue new ones on public forest plantations would be pursued. The report died a natural death and no further action was taken; Raiply continued to operate on the existing agreement. Due to lack of guidance, the Department of Forestry continued to offer harvesting rights to short-term timber miners who were never really obligated to re-invest in sustainable forest management. During this reporting period, the public and professionally managed forestry plantation sub-sector has collapsed.

Interest in the Forest Development and Management Fund rekindled. The chronic problems of low funding and lack of private sector investment in forestry rekindled the interest in starting discussions of the Forest Development and Management Fund (FDMF) with authorities. In addition to the above, the resumption of EU support for Phase II of the IFMSLP was conditional on government formally instituting the provisions of the Forest Act to ensure that programme activities and their extension to new areas were to be sustained using the Fund.

3.2. What has changed over the five years to 2013, good and bad

The period 2009 to 2013 saw a general decline in political governance of the country. The late President Bingu Wa Mutharika, who was elected for his second term in 2009 with a majority vote of about 70 per cent, became more dictatorial. His relationship with donors worsened when he expelled the British High Commissioner to Malawi. It became very difficult to address difficult issues, notably the legalisation of charcoal production. While this situation eventually improved, it had serious implications for the reform of forest governance, for which high hopes had been held up to 2009. Nevertheless, one major new initiative that occurred between 2009 and 2013 was the emergence of a REDD+ process grounded at the national level. Part of the importance of this process was the requirement for stakeholders to meet frequently to discuss and develop a work plan towards the development of a REDD+ strategy. With the revitalisation of the IFMSLP programme, new impetus was given to ensuring that forest governance truly benefited the rural people of Malawi. During the period, a succession of co-management agreements between the Department of Forestry and communities were signed, increasing local control over forest resources and incentivising local actors to become engaged in forest decision making.

Notwithstanding the changeable situation described above, FGLG Malawi members have been able to engage government, media and academia, specifically securing government (Department of Forestry) buy-in to discuss openly sensitive issues and accept the numerous challenges that the sector is facing. The fact that the Department of Forestry accepted to host/convene FGLG Malawi was a notable milestone at a time when the department was being accused of ineptitude and sluggishness in implementing forest policy and the National Forestry Programme. The fact that the FGLG Malawi team was highly involved in the development of the national REDD+ process is another indication of the high regard in which the group was held.

This has created a positive environment that has seen proactive responses to the needs of many stakeholders, communities, individuals and the private sector at large in the sector. However, much still needs to be done in clarifying the roles of central government vis-à-vis other role-players in the sector, which are still fuzzy.

4. Stories of change

In this section we introduce several examples of useful changes in aspects of forest governance resulting from the work of FGLG Malawi during the five years of the project.

4.1. Clan-based tree planting leading to enterprise possibilities

What happened?

Until 1990, Ntanda hill in Traditional Authority Njolomole in Ntcheu was fully covered by indigenous trees. The forest area was managed by the communities, with support from the Department of Forestry. However things changed with the arrival of refugees from Mozambique who invaded the forestry area and cut down most of the trees for firewood and poles for house construction. By 1993, the forest area was heavily deforested and no trees were left. Considering the importance of the forest areas to the people in the district, and particularly to people around the area, the government, with support from UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), decided to rehabilitate the forest area. It was actually the Malawi College of Forestry and Wildlife Students who facilitated the process of replanting the forest area with tree species like eucalyptus and pine.

In line with the change in policy direction in the Department of Forestry, the management of the forest areas was handed over to the community through the VNRMC that was set up to oversee and coordinate the management of the village forest area. By early 2000, trees in the forest area had grown to harvesting age, but the harvesting process created a lot of mistrust amongst the committees themselves and amongst the people around the forest area. Performance of the VNRMC was very poor due to a number of reasons including, among others, weak capacity, lack of transparency and accountability. Many illegal activities were taking place, communities lost trust in the leadership of the committees and the whole forest area was wiped out again.

Between 2006 and 2007, FGLG Malawi, led by Training Support for Partners (TSP) and CDM, arranged a meeting with the 10 villages around the forest area at which people agreed to rehabilitate the hill by using a different approach. They decided to partition the forest area into clans (families) in order to strengthen land tenure and tree tenure security. The village was divided into plots belonging to 10 clans and clan-based committees were formed to replant and monitor progress. Over the subsequent years, the model proved highly successful in establishing locally controlled forest plantations.

Who implemented it (or contributed to it)?

Training Support for Partners (TSP), in collaboration with the District Forestry Office, designed a capacity building program to strengthen the capacity of the clan committees and leadership. Apart from the trainings, TSP also provided equipment, materials and moral support to assist the communities to replant the forest area. When the communities started planting the trees, the Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources was pleased with the progress and decided to enrol the forest area to benefit from the carbon funding the government secured. The clans were being paid for the trees that survived, which further motivated and strengthened participation of the clan families in the management of the forest area. This process continued for a period of two seasons (2006 and 2007) and then stopped.

How do we know this? Is there corroborating evidence?



The Ntanda forest area is one of the success stories that FGLG Malawi has facilitated. The forest area is now full of trees and families are able to access firewood and building materials such as poles. The families are also selling firewood and poles. With support from TSP, the families have also invested in bee-keeping. Currently the forest area has 50 beehives from which they are harvesting honey. The communities intend to form a cooperative society to assist them in the marketing of the wood and timber that they will soon start harvesting.

Photo 1. One of the clan leaders showcasing her plot

There is now a visible extensive forest plantation owned by communities in Ntcheu, with major project activities in Mpira Dam Catchment to replicate the success.

Why is this important? What needs to be done next?

Families around Ntanda forest area have started to derive a lot of benefits from the forest area. There is a new level of commitment from the people to ensure that they maximise these benefits. They have agreed to form a cooperative society, as indicated above, and also to link up with other business ventures such as One Village One Product (OVOP), who have a factory processing honey in the district. To achieve the cooperative society status they need a lot of training, which they have already requested from TSP.

How has FGLG Malawi's work has been taken on by other organisations and initiatives?

The work on Ntanda has attracted attention from the government, who are now advancing the idea of clan-based forest management. Other NGOs have also adopted the systems and are now promoting it in their various areas of operation. They believe the approach is simple, easy and does not require much investment in terms of finances and it is highly sustainable since it is based on the existing traditional systems of land and tree management.

The clan system is being scaled up to forest areas around Mpira Dam Catchment in the district. Communities and local leaders in Traditional Authorities Kwataine and Mpando in Ntcheu district have been mobilised to scale up the clan systems. Several meetings have been organised in the areas and the communities believe that the system is going to help restore and rehabilitate the degraded catchment of the dam. Mpira dam provides water to 600,000 people in five districts: Ntcheu, Balaka, Machinga, Mangochi and Neno. Rehabilitation of the dragged areas around the dam will help to reduce siltation of the dam and improve water levels, resulting in more water for the people.

Mpira Dam Catchment is also of interest to the Shire River Catchment Program funded by the World Bank and many other government projects. Apart from the dam, the catchment is one of the biggest catchments for the Shire River. The organisation of the communities in the catchment is important to the overall management of the Shire River catchment.



Photo 2. Part of the Degraded Mpira Dam catchment

4.2. Better and organised small timber enterprises through value chain studies and exposing of law enforcement issues

What happened?

In 2009, FGLG Malawi commissioned a value chain study on timber with a particular focus on the Chikwangawa Plantations. The study looked at, among other things, the roles of value chain players in the plantations, the timber trade channels, and various harvesting processes and practices. It made a series of critical observations about the inefficient and non-transparent management of the plantations. The study team consulted the various chain players widely and had validation meetings on the report.



The outcome of and responses to the findings of the study were dramatic, especially from the government, timber traders and timber companies. The immediate response from the government was to temporarily withdraw the timber licences and stop any timber exports. This decision irked many players, in particular those who export timber through the northern corridor of Malawi.

Photo 3. Timber leaving the plantations

Who implemented it (or contributed to it)?

The study was carried out by Training Support for Partners (TSP) and Mzuzu University, led by Robert Kafakoma and Benet Mataya. Bright Sibale (CDM) and Robert Kafakoma informed journalists of the results of the study in late 2009 and as a result, the Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources banned exports. The next step involved the Department of Forestry rearranging investing and marketing arrangements and tariffs. Bright Sibale and Bennet Mataya conducted training workshops to introduce new management arrangements and expectations.

How do we know this? Is there corroborating evidence?

The timber transporters, in particular those from Tanzania, closed the border road between Malawi and Tanzania, which stopped the flow of traffic into and out of the country. This caused a diplomatic row between the two countries. The issue was immediately resolved, but resulted in some changes in the way the timber trade was conducted in the Malawi. A number of changes took place relating to the issuing of timber licences and some illegal timber sawyers were moved out of the Chikwangawa Plantations. The government gave attention to the plantations by strengthening law enforcement activities, and replanting of the plantations also increased. Media coverage of the timber trade grew significantly, with the report being covered widely on the radio, television and in newspapers, which further prompted the government to act and make some changes in the plantations and way the timber trade is conducted.



Photo 4. Sawn timber in the plantation area

Why is this important? What needs to be done next?

Rational use of forests by well-organised small producer groups is critical for poverty reduction and forest protection. However, the emerging organisations now require significant capacity building.

- How has FGLG Malawi's work has been taken on by other organisations and initiatives?

Our work on advocacy will be continued through the Coordination Unit for the Rehabilitation of the Environment (CURE), while our pilot community-based case at Mtanda is being managed by the government through the Ntcheu District Forestry Office and Training Support Programme.

4.3. National REDD+ strategy process catalysed and facilitated

What happened?

The first insights into REDD or carbon financing started in 2005, when the Director of Department of Forestry Dennis Kayambazinthu (then the Chief Forestry Research Officer) attended a Katoomba Group workshop on carbon finance, where he learned about the experiences of 'carbon farmers' in Uganda as part of the Plan Vivo Trees for Global Benefits project (initially created with technical assistance from LTS International). The Minister of Environment in Malawi at the time,

Henry Chimunthu Banda, also learned about the innovative idea of reducing greenhouse gas emissions through curbing forest deforestation and degradation, proposed jointly by Papua New Guinea and Costa Rica at the 11th Conference of Parties (COP 11) in Montreal in 2005. He became excited by this concept of paying smallholder farmers to plant trees based on the amount of carbon sequestered as a result. A Ministerial Directive was then drafted in 2006 that mandated the Forest Research Institute of Malawi (FRIM) to partner with the Department of Forestry and Leadership for Environment and Development (LEAD). Financial resources were quickly mobilised following a meeting between Minister Banda and the Minister of Finance.

Efforts were made to establish a trust that would manage a registry of projects, a carbon trust fund, carbon sales agreements, and other statutory and legal agreements, and coordinate project monitoring

and reporting. The trust was intended to be modelled on ECOTRUST in Uganda, ECOSUR in Mexico and ENVIROTRADE in Mozambique. A decision was made to use the Malawi Environment Endowment Trust (MEET), a long-established environmental trust whose major role was facilitating the implementation of environmental projects in Malawi by providing financial support and technical oversight. The selection of MEET would reduce the gestation period required if a new organisation were to be created for the abovementioned roles. MEET had existent infrastructure and reasonable human resource capacity; any additional support required would go into reorienting MEET to the management of the FD's carbon project. MEET closed in 2012 due to financial difficulties. By that time, no formal agreement had been entered into between the government of Malawi and MEET as the official carbon trust/manager for Malawi. No further action has been taken to establish a trust.

It was not possible to develop further the REDD process in the absence of a REDD Strategy for Malawi. Thus the FGLG commenced the process of discussions and preparation of a Concept Note for the REDD Strategy.

Who implemented it (or contributed to it)?

Nyuma Mughogho and Kasizo Chirambo of the Department of Forestry, together with Bright Sibale, Robert Kafakoma and Duncan Macqueen, initiated thinking on REDD+ and contact with the Norwegians. Bennet Mataya, Robert Kafakoma and Duncan Macqueen participated in a workshop on monitoring deforestation and produced a policy brief. Many members of FGLG Malawi participated in a national stakeholder workshop. Bright Sibale and Bennet Mataya hosted press briefings on Malawi climate change in Malawi. A number of government members formed a task force on climate change. Duncan Macqueen and Bright Sibale produced a proposal for developing a R-PP. The Department of Forestry and Denis Kayambazinthu engaged USFS, who eventually provided a technical assistant (John Kerkering) and some start-up funds to prepare the REDD+ strategy for Malawi.

In spite of this assistance, little progress was made until John Ngalande and Bright Sibale were drafted into the Department of Forestry committee that was charged with the responsibility of managing the preparation of the strategy. The two brought their wide experience from the formulation of the National Forestry Programme (NFP).

How do we know this? Is there corroborating evidence?

Administrative arrangements were proposed and agreed upon and a workplan to kick start the programme was drawn up and approved. FGLG/CDM (John Ngalande and Bright Sibale) facilitated the first stakeholder REDD+ mechanisms meetings by managing the invitations, the venue and finances. Many FGLG Malawi members participated in these workshops and helped draft or comment on the governance structure and national REDD+ workplan. The ultimate result was the publication of the Malawi REDD+ workplan under the Malawi Redd+ Readiness Programme (MRRP).

Why is this important? What needs to be done next?

Malawi is particularly vulnerable to climate change, and having a strategy that links mitigation actions with efforts to help communities to adapt to climate change is extremely important for the country. The FGLG Malawi work on REDD+ is fully being implemented by the Department of Forestry, while pilot REDD+ projects will be implemented through a USAID-funded programme called PERFORM (linked to the MRRP programme described below).

How has FGLG Malawi's work has been taken on by other organisations and initiatives?

The Malawi REDD+ Readiness Program (MRRP) was launched in August 2012 as a joint effort of the government of Malawi, USAID, and the United States Forest Service (USFS). The MRRP is based out of the Malawi Department of Forestry and is presently slated to run until August 2014. The MRRP has three objectives:

1. Secure membership for Malawi of a multilateral REDD+ body (e.g. World Bank Forest Carbon Partnership Facility, FCPF, and/or United Nations REDD+ Programme, UN-REDD) and/or bilateral partner to support the pursuit of REDD+ readiness and implementation of REDD+ in Malawi.
2. Develop a zero-draft national REDD+ strategy by August 2014.

3. Build capacity at the Department of Forestry and other relevant institutions in REDD+ and climate change.

Since its inception, MRRP has made considerable progress toward these objectives. Accomplishments of note include the completion of a rapid, on-the-ground assessment of REDD+ capacity; a stakeholder inventory; the design and operationalisation of a national REDD+ institutional governance framework (Appendices 2-7); the streamlining of this framework with the extant National Climate Change Program (NCCP); awareness-building workshops for both the policy and science/technical aspects of REDD+; the launch of a national-level policy review of the natural resource management sector; the establishment of a relationship with UN-REDD; and the completion of REDD+ study tours to Zambia and Tanzania.

4.4. Better, more informed public debate on forest policy issues (charcoal timber, SMEs, NFP)

What happened?

The charcoal industry had largely been understudied in Malawi, so there was limited evidence of the value of the industry that could be used to formulate evidence-based policies in the country's forestry and energy sectors. In 2007, FGLG Malawi developed terms of reference for a groundbreaking study of charcoal consumption, trade and production in Malawi. FGLG Malawi teamed with the USAID-funded COMPASS project to conduct the study. The findings of the study have been widely used in developing policies and programmes in the country, although the charcoal industry is still informal. In addition, the findings were debated within government and an *Options for Charcoal Management Paper* was also produced. FGLG Malawi produced a policy brief outlining the options and also produced guidelines for conducting large-scale charcoal value chain studies.

FGLG Malawi also conducted a study to identify constraints and opportunities facing the NFP Forum in Malawi, which has led to more debate about the need to re-introduce the NFP Forum in the Department of Forestry.

Who implemented it (or contributed to it)?

The charcoal study was conducted in 2007 by a team of FGLG Malawi experts, led by Patrick Kambewa, Bennet Mataya, Killy Sichinga and Todd Johnson, while the timber value chain study was conducted by Robert Kafakoma and Bennet Mataya. FGLG Malawi also conducted studies of the value chains of timber and of small and medium scale enterprises (SMEs) in Malawi. Both of these have increased the debate of timber and SME issues.

How do we know this? Is there corroborating evidence?

All studies have been published and have been quoted in most relevant forums.

Why is this important? What needs to be done next?

Biomass energy remains the backbone of the energy sector in Malawi, as the major source of energy for the rural poor. Charcoal is a key source of energy for the urban sector, providing more than 42 per cent of energy at the household level. Yet the production, transportation/marketing and consumption of charcoal is not regulated or managed. There is a need for more debate, more action, more experimentation and for taking risks. At the moment, few risks on sustainable charcoal production are being taken by the key stakeholders.

How has FGLG Malawi's work has been taken on by other organisations and initiatives?

FGLG Malawi recommendations on sustainable charcoal production and its related principles have been adopted by a number of donor programmes, including the World Bank Shire River Basin Management Program, the UNDP Sustainable Land Management Project, the Millennium Challenge Account Middle and Upper Shire Catchment Management, and by a number of NGOs implementing livelihood and environmental management programmes. Many more NGOs and donor projects are

considering sustainable charcoal production options. There is now more openness in the Department of Forestry on charcoal and more licences have been issued for co-management, which may incorporate sustainable charcoal management.

5. Looking ahead

FGLG Malawi's work will hopefully be taken over in the near future by a planned national association of professional foresters. The idea such a foresters association is being discussed amongst FGLG Malawi members.

FGLG Malawi has been working in partnership with the Department of Forestry, Mzuzu University, CURE, CDM and many more organisations and the team's work has been embedded in the work of its partners. Most of FGLG tasks will therefore continue, although the speed and quality of work may be reduced due to capacity problems. FGLG Malawi has benefitted from IIED's technical support role, which will leave a very difficult gap to fill.

5.2. Key needs for future related work in the immediate or longer term

The main areas where future work is needed include:

Follow up TA on establishing a professional foresters association which is independent and advocates and lobbies for forest governance issue.

Continued IIED linkages with FGLG Malawi's local partners, such as CDM, TSP, CURE and Mzuzu University, to benefit from IIED's technical capacity.

Continued engagement and advocacy work with the Department of Forestry by FGLG Malawi partners so that products produced by FGLG Malawi over the past 10 years continue to inform policy debate and governance issues in the sector.

Integration of FGLG Malawi issues in donor projects, such as the EC-supported project to fund the development of the NFP Coordination Unit. The project has also conducted an institutional assessment for the Department of Forestry and developed a financing strategy for the forestry sector.

Annex 1: Self-evaluation form for external reviewer

Country: Malawi

Date of assessment: 9th October, 2013

Approach of FGLG initiative (in your own country)

1.1 What were the major forest governance issues and opportunities in your country since 2005? [list them]

- Illegalities in forest sector
- Unsustainable charcoal production
- Forest-based enterprises
- Timber trade and value chain analysis
- Role of the private sector in forestry
- Resuscitation of the National Forestry Program (NFP) form
- Communication, coordination and collaboration

1.2 What have been the most effective methodologies that FGLG has used since 2005? [describe as many as you wish. You could refer to the country level methods from page 23 of the project document]

- Studies
- Meetings
- Policy engagements
- Advocacy
- Site visits inside and outside Malawi
- National, regional and international meetings
- Case study development
- Publicity

1.3 What changes have there been in approach of FGLG in your country since the start of the initiative? Why have these changes taken place?

FGLG Malawi has maintained the approaches mentioned in Section 1.2 above

1.4 How effective has the team-based structure and approach of FGLG been? Comment on the strengths and weaknesses of this.

FGLG Malawi has been able to engage government, media and academia.

FGLG Malawi secured government buy-in and was able to openly discuss sensitive issues.

Respect for deadlines from some members has not been easy.

The geographic spread of the FGLG Malawi members has often posed difficulties with respect to logistics and operational expenses.

Performance and impact of FGLG (in your own country)

2.1 To what extent has FGLG has contributed to improved forest governance in your country [*tick the best box and provide an explanation for your answer*]

- No contribution at all
- Minor contribution only
- Significant contribution
- Highly significant contribution

Explanation: FGLG Malawi has influenced policy review, charcoal production and trade, revision of tariffs for forest products, and promulgation of co-management agreements, among others.

2.2 For each of the 4 outputs of FGLG – how do you rate the performance of FGLG [*give a score where: (1) = governance impacts have been widely achieved that have had wider impacts on the ground; (2) = governance impacts have been achieved that have had some impacts on the ground; (3) = some governance impacts have been achieved but with little actual impact on the ground; (4) = there have been only limited learning or governance impacts with no signs of tangible impacts on the ground*]. Give an explanation for your assessment score

Output 1: Forest rights and small forest enterprise

Score = 2

Explanation for score given: FGLG Malawi facilitated dialogue between government and small scale timber producers around Viphya Plantations; and dialogue between government, traditional leaders and communities around Mpira Dam in Ntcheu. Both initiatives are ongoing.

Output 2: Legitimate forest products

Score = 2

Explanation for score given: There has been a rise in the number of honey producers across the country registering high profits. There has been an increase in the number of co-management agreements signed that has resulted in legitimate forest based enterprises.

Output 3: Pro-poor climate change mitigation and adaptation through forestry

Score = 2

Explanation for score given: The forest-based enterprises offer an alternative livelihood and enhance resilience to climate change impacts among communities involved. By deriving direct benefits from

forestry, communities are now engaged more in conservation thereby contributing to climate change mitigation.

Output 4: Trans-national learning and preparedness

Score = 2

Explanation for score given: International meetings have contributed to the adoption of improved planning and methodologies, e.g. the Mabira case in Uganda was adopted to Malawi with some amendments.

A forestry platform being advanced in Malawi is a result of lessons learnt from international engagements.

Dialogue involving international, national and community players, e.g. the Ku Chawe meetings, offered insights into policy issues and erased misconceptions that communities concerning forestry.

2.3 What external factors (outside the control of FGLG) have affected the impacts that FGLG has had? <i>[describe them]</i>	<p>Conducive political environment enabled FGLG Malawi to operate with minimal hindrance.</p> <p>Fall of the Malawi currency against major currencies led to price escalations and fuel shortages.</p>
2.4 Describe the performance of IIED as overall coordinator of FGLG in terms of (a) its capacity support and (b) overall management support for your in-country team and your team's actions.	<p>IIED has performed well in provision of capacity support and overall direction to the FGLG Malawi chapter.</p>
2.5 To what extent will partnerships and working approaches developed under FGLG continue after the end of the current phase? Comment on the sustainability of the FGLG initiative. What needs to happen for the effective approaches to continue?	<p>In the case of FGLG, Malawi, the partnerships and approaches are well grounded and operating. There is, however, a need to modify approaches to address emerging issues of climate change.</p> <p>There is further need for the chapter to mobilise its own financial resources</p>
2.6 Describe any changes in the relationship between government and civil society in your country as a result of FGLG?	<p>There has been remarkable improvement in relationship between government and CSOs. FGLG Malawi has provided these linkages.</p>
2.7 Has the FGLG had any unexpected impacts? Describe these.	<p>At the inception of FGLG in Malawi, the working relationship between CSOs and government was not cordial. Following government acceptance to convene FGLG Malawi, there has been improvement in the government-CSO relationship with respect to forestry.</p>
2.8 What evidence is there to show that the various activities that you have carried out have had impacts on the ground (for target	<p>The revision of forest product tariffs was a result of the timber trade study.</p>

groups)? Describe this evidence – or list any documents/sources of evidence	Adoption of the clan system in the management of forests is a result of the study FGLG conducted in Ntcheu.
	The resuscitation of NFP Forum is being pursued by government and other development partners.
	The REDD process which was initiated and raised by FGLG Malawi has been adopted and taken over by government and has significant funding from USAID.
	The Charcoal Options are being used by government and donors-for example UNDP is piloting sustainable charcoal production in middle Shire.

Lessons learnt from FGLG

3.1 Describe any innovative approaches that FGLG has followed in your country	The clan system in Ntcheu is an example of the role of indigenous structures in sustainable forestry management.
	FGLG Malawi was able to prepare a policy options paper on charcoal for consideration by government.
	Mainstreaming of FGLG activities in member institutions was an innovation to ensure sustainability.
	Use of loose membership allows individual members to express their feeling freely from their organisations views

3.2 Describe (in bullets) any lessons from FGLG about effective ways of influencing forest policy and enhancing forest governance	Policy influence must be supported by evidence
	Multi-stakeholder participation and platforms are central to policy influence and improvement of forest governance.
	Best practices provide good ground for learning and influencing change
	Impartial analysis of issues on policy and governance.

Other comments about FGLG

4.1 Do you have any other comments about the performance and lessons from FGLG? Please describe them here.	None
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Annex 2: List of publications, films, media pieces and other products produced by, or linked to, the FGLG team

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The Forest Governance Learning Group is an informal alliance of in-country groups and international partners currently active in seven African and three Asian countries. We aim to connect those marginalised from forest governance to those controlling it, and to help both do things better.

This report gives an overview of the activities and achievements of the Malawi FGLG team between 2009 and 2013.



Project materials

Forests

Keywords:

Forestry, Forest Governance Learning Group, Natural resource management



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Funded by:



This research was part-funded by UK aid from the UK Government, however the views expressed do not necessarily reflect the views of the UK Government. This document has been produced with the financial assistance of the European Union. The contents of this document are the sole responsibility of IIED and can under no circumstances be regarded as reflecting the position of the European Union.