

Sustainable Forest Management in a Changing Climate
FAO-Finland Forestry Programme – TANZANIA

Piloting a Communication Strategy on Wildfire Management

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Executive Summary

What follows is an overview of a Pilot Project undertaken under the auspices of the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO-Tanzania) project, National Forest Monitoring and Assessment (NAFORMA). The Pilot was implemented between August and December 2012, to test the appropriateness of a *process*-based methodology for a proposed nationwide communication strategy on Wildfire Mitigation. The Pilot also provided the opportunity to identify necessary modifications to the proposed *process* if any were needed.

The radio-based Pilot was carried out in Kigoma District near Lake Tanganyika with a village in an area that has, over the years, become notorious for wildfires. The methodology being tested involved recording of voice interviews with residents of the village of Kazuramimba not far from the town of Kigoma, for broadcast over the Radio Kwizera network (with three stations in the Districts of Kigoma, Kagera and Mwanza). It was also intended that the programmes should stimulate discussions and potential activities/actions in Kazuramimba, with the ultimate objective of changing attitudes towards burning. This change could in turn lead to a reduction in the environmental destruction caused by fires that plagued the region.

The philosophy and methodology underlying the Pilot was based on a seminal communications initiative (the *Fogo Process*) undertaken in the mid-1960s in rural Newfoundland, Canada. The process utilized film (later video) to empower marginalized and under-served communities. The approach may be summed up as; creating a framework to help those who are, for the most part, never or seldom heard in the development dialogue, to have their voices brought forward so that they may contribute to policy planning and implementation and be a real part of decision-making about development that has a significant impact on their lives. While the medium employed in the original process on Fogo Island was film, this Pilot was to be implemented stripped of the visual element and operate through radio and face to face communication.

A fundamental requirement for process work of this nature is to have in place dedicated community workers that can be catalysts to animate community engagement. In this case a Community Engagement Team (CET) was recruited and trained. They worked with the villagers throughout the Pilot. One of their initial responsibilities was to survey attitudes about fires held by the residents of Kazuramimba. What they found at first was quite discouraging. There was little interest in the topic and protection of their environment was a very low priority for the villagers. In fact it was barely on the radar .

“Listening before talking” or setting policy or making development decisions lies at the core of the process. So the CET began with listening – allowing the residents of Kazuramimba to talk about what interested them and what were their concerns and needs. Gradually as they were interviewed it was revealed that there was some consciousness of the damage fires were causing. “Nobody likes to live in a desert” was one observation. Farmers talked about how the productivity of their land is decreasing. Some spoke of concern about fire near water supplies. Bit by bit niches were being identified that were fire linked or relevant.

One thing was made clear early on; previous campaigns against fires had not achieved their objective and had made little impression at all. One reason was that the messaging and imagery were either not understood or led villagers to conclusions sometimes directly contrary to what was intended. It was also noticed that for the most part the campaigns had been negative – warning against doing things, admonishing against setting fires, and the like. The “soft” approach adopted by the CET for the Pilot

proved much more effective. Being able to discuss issues that mattered to them built confidence within the village community that nothing was being imposed from outside. To encourage those who participated in interviews assume “ownership” of what was being recorded and of the programmes that would be broadcast, playback sessions were held. These provided opportunities to develop dialogue amongst community residents and between them and their leaders (Village Council) around important issues – problems facing farmers, population growth, delivery of services such as health and education and, before long, environmental issues including burning practices. Various views emerged about the uses of fire, who was most responsible for setting fires and what could be done about it. Most residents indicated that they were quite willing to obey by-laws to stop unnecessary burning and report arsonists if they knew what the by-laws were, and if they could be confident that enforcement would be even-handed and apply equally to everyone. Village leaders said that they had prepared by-laws and sent them to the District level for approval and had never heard about them again. Some said that those responsible for much of the burning were the pastoralists because they burned old grasses to help regenerate new growth for food for their cattle. The problem was, no pastoralists were present at any community meetings nor had any been interviewed in the course of recording for programmes. Clearly there were very significant issues that could be addressed so the CET drew up a plan for interventions and other activities.

The two key interventions were 1) to help clarify the status of by-laws and 2) to try to bring the pastoralists into a closer and mutually productive relationship with the rest of Kazuramimba. Among the activities undertaken was an initiative to engage school children in creative art activities to develop imagery and messaging that would be used to motivate and inform the community. Another was to energize the existing but largely inactive environment committee and help the village fire crews identify environmental activities with youth and schools and other segments of the community. Individuals and groups discovered an interest in tree planting; teachers led their students in small projects to plant grasses and other vegetation on bare ground patches around their schools.

Discussions between the Village Council and the District level progressed and steps were taken towards implementing more effective enforcement. The District recognized that it made most sense to have communities adjacent to forests be responsible for management of the resource including controlling fires. Interviews with pastoralists revealed they share many of the same concerns as agriculturalists. They indicated an interest in becoming more considered and more actively engaged in the life and affairs of their community. Both sides, for example, recognized the need to have some control over nomad pastoralists who, until this time, seemed to have come into the community and left at will. A common thread running through many of the interviews and in the dialogues that followed playback sessions was that village people wanted to work with the leaders. Likewise councillors showed willingness to provide better leadership.

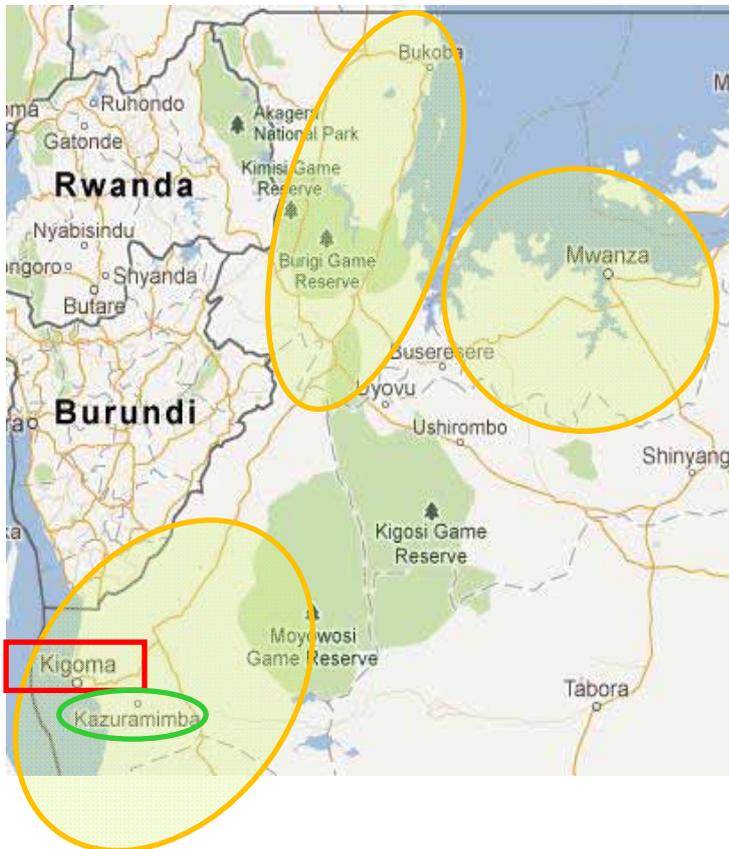
As the Pilot approached its time-limited conclusion it was felt that significant progress had been made that demonstrated the effectiveness of the methodology employed. Kazuramimba people had come together with remarkable enthusiasm in a very short time. They had displayed their willingness to work together. They had developed an integrated plan of action based around the concept of *ubhumwe* – solidarity – and calling for specific targets and initiatives in each quarter. Furthermore they had approached District departments and agencies and Civil Society Organizations requesting that they partner with them to reach their goals. This was a different paradigm from the norm. In the past Kazuramimba, like most communities, had simply accepted proposals and projects that came to them from outside, proposed by external stakeholders with their own agenda. This time the village had taken the driver’s seat, identified

what it wanted to do, and sought out potential partners who could bring knowledge and other support to work with them.

The District Executive Director responded with enthusiasm saying this example should be emulated by other villages in the district. "Be assured of my support and that of my team." Equally impressed was the Director of the Jane Goodall Institute in Kigoma.

The Kazuramimba plan, he said, had

"... unique components that set it apart from proposals that other clients bring to us. It identifies human, education, and partnership resources that are required. It doesn't place financial resources as the be-all or end-all. This why most community projects fail, because once the financial support ends nothing further takes place; they look only at external financial help, and if the external financial help doesn't materialize, the plans fail. But with Kazuramimba, the plan is different. Even if the partners do not bring money in, the plan is likely to continue because they have made it their plan not somebody else's. It includes the things that matter to people's lives. They have identified the capacity that they have and what they are looking for. We believe they can implement this, hence we want to be a part of it."



NOTE: areas of "coverage" not accurate. Estimates only to indicate bases for transmission this figure is not referenced in the text?

The transformation over a few short months was impressive. From a community in which few even cared to speak about issues around fire and burning or environmental issues, had emerged a more vibrant community with an action plan to address challenges not only related to the environment but also to the health, safety and well-being of all village people. Progress had been made on bringing all segments of the village together to work on common challenges. New voices were being heard in the community, and the community's voice was being heard at the planning and decision-making level of the District.

While the methodology appeared to be effective, the limitations of a Pilot Project meant that what had been established remains fragile and in need of nurturing. Important steps have been taken and a framework put in place to help support the people of Kazuramimba as they try to move forward to address important community issues that now include how to reduce the environmental damage caused by uncontrolled and unnecessary burning.

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1

1 Introduction and Background

1.1 Participatory Communication on Wildfires Mitigation

Between August and December, 2012, the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO-Tanzania) project, National Forest Monitoring and Assessment (NAFORMA) undertook a four-month Pilot Project to test its proposed nationwide communication strategy on Wildfires Mitigation. While the short period of time for the pilot did not permit measurement of long-term behavioral change on the part of community people – the ultimate goal of the strategy – it was intended to:

- Learn what communities identify as the impacts of wildfires. While the general outside perception is that impacts are all negative, villagers may have quite different perceptions and in fact may consider some uses to be necessary and perhaps even beneficial (e.g. for forest regeneration).
- Learn if community people accept that fires need to be managed, and if so, in what ways and what actions do they think should be taken to mitigate any negative impacts they may recognize.
- Try to determine how appropriate and acceptable the “Moto Jamii” concept may be to village people in Tanzania; and, if it is seen to be a helpful and useful concept, to identify how to assist communities to begin to blend their knowledge on fires with the concept, hence establishing the “Moto Jamii” brand as an acceptable tool to achieve intended results.
- Identify approaches to expand understanding in communities and encourage the adoption of new, community-led initiatives to address the challenges of wildfires.
- Foster meaningful dialogue between community people and those who set policies and implement plans that affect them – related to fire issues – dialogue that will ultimately lead to concrete, positive actions.

The goal of the pilot programme was to test and demonstrate the proposed communication strategy for NAFORMA and to identify modifications and amendments based on practical application of implementation of a bottom-up communication model. This was to ensure that if the strategy is adopted nation-wide, it will be through partner-focused tools that will engage communities actively and effectively to:

- raise awareness of environmental issues (especially fire-related) that impact the socio-economic well-being of all Tanzanians and especially the quality of life in the rural communities that are most impacted, and
- promote the adoption of more effective methods to lessen the negative impacts of fire such as destruction of natural resources and loss of human life, while helping those who have legitimate and essential uses for fire learn how to utilize and manage it safely.

1.2 The pilot Area

The pilot area Selected was Kazuramimba, one of the wards of Uvinza District in Kigoma Region, in the West part of Tanzania alongside Lake Tanganyika. With an estimated population of more than 32,000, Kazuramiba is surrounded by both grasslands and woodlands. This area is notorious for burning forests and grasses, especially from May through August. When people living near or having knowledge of Kazuramimba were asked what areas around Kazuramimba are burned, they replied: “*Everywhere is*

burnt!” Indeed, when we visited Kazuramimba it was hard to find unburned areas, except for small plots around individuals’ houses. Clearly the Pilot was in the right place at the right time. However, as the business world argues, organizations that excel are usually those that demonstrate an ability to replicate their services or products across multiple markets. At the outset, we wrestled with the question of whether the pilot could help define and articulate a strategy that can be applied nationwide.

When we visited the Regional Administrative Secretary (RAS) to explain the Pilot Project and FAO’s involvement in the region, the RAS commented that the village of Kazuramimba was a good choice: “The experience in Kazuramimba can likely be replicated in the entire Kigoma region, and in Rukwa and Katavi regions,” he told us, adding that these three regions have common socioeconomic characteristics. This suggested that whatever would be learned through the Pilot Project should be applicable for the design of broader bottom-up communications initiatives in all three regions. Thus the pilot served as preparation for the implementation of the long-term strategy for Tanzania which will be targeted towards “key point” regions where fire problems are widespread, namely Kigoma, Rukwa, and Katavi, as well as Ruvuma, and Tabora. In the case of the last two appropriate adjustments to the strategy will be made if necessary, depending on cultural, environmental or other differences.

1.3 It Begins with Existing Structure

The pilot emphasized implementation of the bottom-up communication model proposed for the broad communication strategy. This model is designed to empower ordinary people who are often marginalized and voiceless. In Kazuramimba techniques were employed to enable them to be heard so that they be able to contribute and have their opinions incorporated into decision and policy-making through direct dialogue with local authorities. The communication medium employed was focused local radio programming that was heard not only in Kazuramimba but in neighboring villages as well as urban centers in Kasulu, Uvinza, and Kigoma Municipality.

At the core is a people-centered process. To begin, a Consultation Committee was established made up of stakeholders from local government and NGOs working in the area. The Committee’s first meeting was held on Thursday, August 16, 2012. Members not only brought their experience, involvement, and knowledge on the area but also understood that the objective of the method being adopted is to create a common goal, and ultimately create a common communication strategy to continue beyond the pilot. The NGO stakeholders in the Pilot Project include the Jane Goodall Institute, the Jane Goodall Institute—REDD¹ Program, the Federation of Community Forest Conservation Networks in Tanzania (MJUMITA) and three local government agencies – District Community Development, District Natural Resources and the Zonal Extension and Publicity institutions. The last two had already begun to work with the NGOs and others to create awareness and to formulate by-laws to address the serious issues around wildfires issues.

Through one-to-one interviews and in meetings, it was observed that the stakeholders anticipated being able to extend beyond just learning about and from the process or contributing their experience to the Pilot Project. Their long-term goal was to sensitize the villagers of Kazuramimba to the serious impact of fires on their surroundings, and to show that there can be benefits to protecting the land and forests. They expressed interest in finding ways to foster a sense of responsibility about addressing these issues amongst village people. Clearly the potential existed to build on this shared motivation to try to identify opportunities that these stakeholders could embrace. The challenge would be to encourage them to

¹ REDD refers to Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation,.

remain engaged and follow through with whatever initiatives might be started under the pilot and to secure commitment from both community residents and local authorities to this effect. It was essential to recognize and accept from the outset that the limitations of time especially, and other resources made it highly unlikely that a profound change could be expected in deeply-rooted attitudes. Transformative change of this magnitude requires longer-term commitment and change of this type can seldom be expected to occur in a short time. From early on, issues of continuity and sustainability were considered to try to moderate the all too common “hit and run” Pilot Project syndrome. Furthermore, it is important to note that there is no “one size fits all” package that will magically transform a non-caring community into one that enthusiastically embraces fire management. Eliminating, or at least reducing apathy and changing human behaviour and attitudes takes time and requires patience.

1.4 A New Team Created

A Community Engagement Team (CET) made up of two community workers and two radio producers was selected. All four had the knowledge of and were living within the district of the pilot. They were purposely selected because they had no long, ingrained experience working with traditional “top down” models. They also admitted that they had little experience with communication for development. These were appreciated qualities, our thinking being that it is easier to teach a “new” dog, new tricks than to try to retrain an “old” dog out of ingrained habits. As the team members were not yet “fixed” or “experienced” in any formal communication methodology, the anticipation was that they would be more open to working with bottom-up communication methodologies to help village people initiate and shape their own messages and participate actively in developing solutions and strategies for fire management. This proved to be the case.

The project consultant, Dr. Kalugendo began *in situ* training to equip the CET to begin to work as community facilitators. Paul MacLeod, a *Fogo Process* Trainer with forty-years of experience worldwide, worked with the team in community-based radio production and utilization. The team also hoped to explore ways to use whatever new technologies and social media might be available at the community level.

Members of the CET quickly learned that they were to be community *animators*. They had to leave their comfort zones and take up the challenge of listening before talking, observing before doing, identifying potential “actors” and interview subjects. Most decidedly they were not to act on behalf of the community. Rather their initial responsibility was to gather knowledge, based on which they could begin to formulate opinions and identify what the local people wanted to talk about. The interest of the Pilot was especially in what they might have to say on the subject of fires that have an impact on their individual and community lives but not constrained to that topic. It was hoped that ultimately the people the CET was working with would start to look on fires differently and begin to formulate action plans to mitigate loss and destruction and learn how to develop and implement positive programmes so that the forests, grasslands people’s property and the environment in general can provide resources that are supportive of and appreciated by the population.

The core medium for this pilot was radio. The underlying philosophy and methodology are based on a seminal communications initiative (*the Fogo Process*) undertaken in the mid-1960s in rural Newfoundland, Canada – a process that utilized film (later video). Consequently there was some uncertainty as to how effective a similar process might be, stripped of the visual element and stimulus. As was demonstrated, this was unwarranted.

An underlying tenet of the *Fogo Process* (indeed of all bottom-up/participatory communication approaches) is that empowerment is vested in people's voices being heard. The focus is in creating opportunities for genuine (not just token) dialogue that allows input from the lowest socio-economic levels to be incorporated into policy design and decision-making – not just at the local government but at the highest national level as well. The CET began by listening to what village people had to say as the first step towards enabling them to become active participants in their own development. Listening was the priority for the month of August before starting to engage the community more actively with recorded interviews in September. August was a critical period for the team to begin to develop some understanding of the dynamics involved in bottom-up communication processes – and the dynamic of forces and influences within the community.

The direct hands-on experience gained by this team from day one to the completion of the pilot, was invaluable – and not only for the Pilot Project. There are ramifications for any broader programme to implement this prototype to address issues related to fire management nationwide. The members of this team emerged with valuable experience that can be drawn on to build other teams to pursue similar initiatives. In essence a small leadership cadre has thus been developed as a direct result of the Pilot Project.

2

2 Developing the Problem Tree

As they listened to stakeholders, the media, influential leaders and community residents talk about their knowledge of and interest in fires in the area team members began to develop what might be termed a "Problem Tree." Questions asked were designed to elicit honest responses (as opposed to superficial, "everything is great" type replies). One important objective was to try to learn why previous campaigns seem not to have been very effective. The CET was also interested in learning what are the actual reasons behind the fires – what is causing them? Also important was why people have been resistant to changing their attitudes and why laws and regulations have been so ineffective. Even more basic was the question of what people actually knew about fires. The approach taken to this exercise might be described as similar to diagnosing an illness. There was no intent to place blame; rather the purpose was to understand the problems and ultimately try to identify positive interventions to address them – to identify niches that might exist to open up collaboration between community residents and local authorities, based on community voices.

2.1 Pull vs. Push factor

Early in talking with residents of Kazuramimba the CET realized that no matter how creative an information campaign might be, alone it would not suffice. The deeper the CET looked the more they saw that the issue of wildfires and why people start them, while other people fail to manage them and may not even consider them important, is quite complex. It was revealed that to address it would require multiple initiatives at different levels and approaching from different angles.

One critical piece of the puzzle, for example is limited enforcement of laws and regulations. Early on, village Council members told the team: "Villagers will only be moved by enforced information." It was their perception that people will not respond to benefits alone that they must also understand that failure to comply with by-laws and other regulations will lead to penalties being imposed. This led directly into a discussion about how "punishment" has been applied, or, more to the point, why it has not been applied.

While Village Councilors and other committee members claimed they had attempted to establish by-laws at the village level, they complained that the process as initiated by the District has become too bureaucratic; consequently the task remains unfinished. Furthermore few villagers were actually involved in drafting by-laws; only a chosen few took part, and they failed to communicate what was happening to the rest of the community. Consequently, instead of even a draft of the proposed regulations being discussed in the village with every resident having an opportunity to participate, its existence was simply announced during a village meeting. Even then the draft was not made accessible, as it was locked away in the Village Executive's Office.

For their part, village residents claimed that when it came to "punishment" they had become accustomed to hearing the leaders make threats that whoever is caught burning the forests will face one year in jail and pay a fine of TZS 50,000. "But," they continued, "We haven't seen anybody being punished, although we have a large number of fires every year." Not surprising, then, that some villagers say that they do not see any point identifying the arsonists because nothing is ever done about it. In addition there are also social pressures that hinder villagers reporting fires. Like many Tanzanian communities, Kazuramimba is a closed society when it comes to relationships and the way village people release or share information, especially when consequences may result from doing so. As is common in rural communities, many people are

related to each other or may have inter-dependencies that take priority with respect to daily life or annual cycles. Thus it is unlikely that one party will notify authorities of any by-law infringements.

Individuals are also afraid of being “witched.” One influential leader told the team that “people do not reveal the people who either accidentally or intentionally set fires because they are afraid to be witched or lose privileges in the community.” Furthermore, villagers emphasized that they don’t see why some should have to obey the by-laws when those who set them hold themselves above the laws and ignore them.

There was some encouragement that there can be change. Some villagers said, “If we see that leaders at the district and village level are serious about enforcing the by-laws and violators are made accountable, we will be willing to identify arsonists and other forest intruders.”

One village with many voices. The multiparty system has taken strong root in Kazulamiba, dividing villagers according to their political affiliations. Political campaigns draw more people than do any development meetings. The reason given is that villagers expect to have their interests addressed and questions answered during political campaigns but not at meetings that just focus on development – even though after the elections promises are likely to be forgotten. In fact, it may be that political affiliations have become a hindrance for development. One Village Council member gave an example of how politicians can have a negative impact on fire management initiatives. “During the election campaign while one political party tried to emphasize the importance of conserving the forest and stopping cutting trees, the other political party encouraged people to do just the opposite. People were actually being encouraged to cut trees illegally, the justification being that no human being has the right to prevent people from using trees—as they are God-provided.”

2.3 Information Campaigns on Fire

For many years a standard way to tackle challenges, such as the wildfire situation in Tanzania, has been to roll out targeted information campaigns. However, it is becoming clearer that information campaigns that are typically top-down and “preaching” by prominent leaders are unlikely to change behaviours. The CET witnessed one of the latter activities when the District Commissioner delivered a speech at a special event set up in Kazuramimba to address the wildfire issue. What he had to say made little impression, and interviews with villagers following that event showed that there had been no perception or attitude change on their part.

Over the past few years there have been anti-fire campaigns waged in this area. Yet fires around Kazuramimba have burned, year after year. “Branding” has been one feature of most campaigns – the effort to imprint an image that says to everyone who looks at it “stop setting fires that destroy your forests.” Unfortunately, indications are that these efforts have borne little if any fruit. There is no doubt that the motivation behind them has been good if idealistic and simplistic. Key issues related to branding are exemplified in the most recent campaigns that have been mounted in the area. Each stakeholder came with its own strategy and different messages, which complicated the issue and confused the villagers. When people become confused and unable to identify with what they are being told, they ignore it, which is what seems to have happened to date. As an example, when village residents were asked about the most recent anti-fire campaign which ran for three weeks, they replied: “NGOs came to the village to talk about stopping fire. They put a poster by the road. They showed us movies. They talked about the negative impact of fires. Yet we still see a lot of fire in our area.”

The CET became interested in trying to determine the effectiveness of branding imagery of two recent campaigns. Villagers were shown two posters – one with a crying tree and the other showing an “X” over flames beneath a green, leafy tree:

Unfortunately they were unable to recall what messages were on the ‘crying tree’ poster. Furthermore some saw the face of the crying tree as being the face a lion and found it to be a “frightening” picture. Neither messages nor imagery conveyed what the designers had intended.

On the “Usichome Moto” poster the “X” on the flames beneath the image of the green-leaved tree was intended to mean that fire should not be set to burn trees. However Muslims identified the “X” as being a cross which is particularly problematic for them; so they just assumed that the poster was intended for Christians and had nothing to do with them. Many of those who did understand the intended meaning of the “X” through the fire took the meaning to be that fires shouldn’t be set under green trees during rainy seasons when trees won’t burn so easily; rather they should wait for dry seasons when burning will be easier. Clearly the poster did not impart to villagers any recognition they should not burn the forest at all – or even take great care if using fire!

Unfortunately that poster simply reinforced existing beliefs that burning should take place in dry seasons, and indeed during the next dry season a fire was set at the very place where the poster was placed.

One respondent also observed that since neither poster includes any visual reference to grasses, “It seems we are forbidden to burn the forest but not the grasses.” A few pointed out that no moon was included in any of the images (What is the significance of the moon? If any)

Both NGOs and government stakeholders that were involved in one of the campaigns shared their opinions about why it was ineffective. They believe that the problem was not that the campaign was too short, but that the messages communicated were not really down to earth and failed to communicate at the level of the local people. “We talked about the effect of fire in superficial terms – shortage of rain, drying up sources of water and so on. We didn’t show them how fire affects their soil, how they may become nomads – having to keep moving, looking for fertile soil, and how the shortage of food can affect their lives.”

The latest proposal for a campaign is to utilize methods and materials originally produced in South Africa. However several stakeholders are not confident this will work: “We even doubt that the current campaign will be effective,” they told us. “We are trying to import methods from South Africa where things are different from our context. We are seeing people waiting for finicky tools from South Africa, while we are losing sight of and not taking notice of the local knowledge and structure.”

NGOs also expressed concern that previous campaigns did not provide the villagers with enough education on fire and its impacts, but only emphasized the bad uses of fire without offering information about how fire can have good applications if used properly. While they acknowledge that the South African material has a lot of good things about it, they are concerned that it removes the local context which is important to people.

Speaking about a previous campaign those towards whom it was directed (i.e. the villagers) said:

“We believe that the campaign was too superficial. It didn’t consider our education and culture. We talk more and read less. Some of us don’t know how to read and write. So the campaigners missed a window of opportunity. They could have come into our homes and told us the story. This what the campaigners could

have done. They could have come not only to teach villagers about visual images [intended to motivate us not to misuse fires] but also to seek our opinions about those visuals.”

One influential leader added: “If the campaigners had given us a chance, we could have told them to add human elements to the visuals. We could have advised them to place a human being at the center in all fire management processes.” Thus it appears that the reason previous campaigns failed to touch the hearts of the villagers is in part because they didn’t make any provision to listen to them.

2.4 Are Fires a Big Deal?

During early visits to Kazuramimba, it seemed to the CET that fire was not a problem for the villagers. No one, including village leaders, ranked fire among the top ten issues that concerned them or hindered development. The issues that rank first in priority were the need for good governance, health, water, and political tolerance. Almost every person talked with said that fires are not a problem because they do not really affect their lives or destroy their personal belongings directly. Consequently fire is not recognized as a problem for development. At the same time some did admit that they have started to notice damage to the environment as a result of the fires. However they failed to make the link between this and development. They admitted that they do not report when fires break out; nor do they teach children that fire can be dangerous and do damage. Furthermore they do not dare to extinguish fires that break out, although individuals might seek help from friends or neighbors when their farms or houses begin to burn.

The lack of concern on the part of the Village Council was illustrated by a member of the village fire crew who told us: “We were selected as the village fire crew and received training from REDD. We reported to the village council and requested permission to reach out to each village unit to bring information about fire but the village leaders keep telling us to wait.” In fact everybody waited until much of the neighbouring area was burned in the dry season.

However the problem goes still deeper. It is not just that the issue of fires is not a priority at the village level. The same is true at the District’s headquarters where the issue is simply ignored. There is no budget for fire management at the district or regional levels; while there are budget line items for everything else – water, health, road maintenance, etc. – nothing is allocated for fire management. “Our activities rely on the NGOs’ plans,” one officer in Natural Resources lamented. “If the NGOs had not taken any initiatives nothing could have taken place.”

So what about the local media? Sadly they never consider fire to be worthy of any coverage. When a group of journalists from print and electronic media in Kigoma were asked how often and to what extent they inform the public about wildfires, they responded, “Fire is not typically in our daily assignment. From a journalistic point of view, fire hasn’t been made newsworthy.” They explained that fire incidences are not considered newsworthy because everybody knows that the dry season is the time for burning. The damage fire causes is not associated with human life, policy makers and law enforcers do not take action during the fire season and so fire is not considered important.

Furthermore, journalists are never involved in any discussions. “We are only invited to attend the launching of a project and coverage during the event focuses on the guest of honor or on the profile of the NGO that is running the project. The story doesn’t educate people. We are never invited to take part in the villages during the campaign.”

3

3 Local Knowledge about Fires and its Implications

We have observed so far a compilation of ideas and concerned needs related to environment and life in general of the village people and organisations working in Kazuramimba. Most striking was how little interest was found among the villagers on the subject of fires. We began to notice their responses to previous initiatives on fire and their judgement of the approaches and materials used and began to realise that negative campaigns on fire focusing primarily on messages such as “do not burn” may not be a successful strategy to change ingrained behaviour. This section focuses on how people residing in Kazuramimba look on burning and how they used to mitigate wildfires in the past.

In interviews with different groups in the village, people noted when and how the fires usually happen. They associated the dry season (normally May to September) with both unavoidable and preventable fires. Fires can begin as early as 11 am in the morning and burn for the entire day. Most fires occur on open or public land such as a large forest. Villagers do not regard this kind of fire as a threat. “We understand that animals and other species would disappear. But trees and grasses will regenerate. So what is wrong with that?”

Another type of fire takes place around houses or individual farms. These fires do create anxiety in the community. “We are afraid of the fires that take place around our homes and farms because they can directly damage our lives and properties such as houses and crops, and it can lead to death of human beings.”

3.1 Reasons for Burning

Whether by accident or intention, villagers certainly understand that human activity is behind the outbreaks of wildfires. From a psychological/traditional point of view, some individuals set fires to “prove” the length of their lives. Their belief is that the larger the area burned, the longer will be the life of the person who set that fire. One villager said that when two or more people are gathering firewood, or tending their cattle in the wilderness, or farming or carrying out other activities, they may argue over who will live longer. To prove who will have the longer life they set fires in different places. The person whose fire has burnt the largest area has proven that he will have a longer life than the person whose fires didn’t cover so large an area. While those who described this practice admitted that there is no scientific evidence of the “proof” they pointed out that no one has told them of a better way they can predict the length of their lives. So some burning incidents have been as a result of testing this hypothesis.

Another reason for burning is economic. Pastoralists often set fires during the dry season to ensure that grasses will regenerate so that they can feed their cattle with green grasses. They also believe burning will reduce pests that are dangerous to their animals. Although their primary intention is to burn grasses, the fires often get out of control and burn into forests.

Agriculturists also have economic reasons for using fire. The age-old “slash and burn” approach can clear large areas easily to prepare for cultivation but it also has negative environmental impacts. Agriculturalists also believe that using fire controls pests and increases ash that is good for soil.

Honey harvesters use fire to chase away or kill the bees so that they can more easily access honey.

Hunters burn forests and grasses so that they can more easily locate and catch animals.

Loggers use fires for cooking while they are working in the forest; unfortunately they often leave them unattended. Unwatched fires ignite mostly at night and burn large areas of forest.

Charcoal makers use fire to produce charcoal. They believe that their fires won't cause any harm since they set them under the ground. However it takes several hours to create charcoal and the charcoal makers leave their fires untended; sometimes these fires break out above ground and do considerable damage.

Most of these groups use fire for economic purposes or as a tool to make their work or processes easier. Yet none of them displayed any awareness that their fire activities can cause destruction. They displayed ignorance of what can happen when fires are left unattended. Despite their operational or economic reasons and good intentions, they do not know how to use fire responsibly or how to protect their lives and environment from unplanned fire impacts.

Sadly, there are some who set fires intentionally without any specific reason. Moris Mubiko, one of the influential leaders in the village lamented:

"In the past there was no culture of burning forest because first of all few people lived in the village. So people knew one another. We lived in solidarity in which of each community member was a keeper of one's life and property. In case a fire broke out accidentally in the village while one of the members is away, the villagers would not let his or her farm or house catch fire. The villagers would gather and put out the fire in his or her absence. We also had regulations that would guide those who violated the law of solidarity. Anyone identified as an arsonist or who didn't show up to help when fire broke out would be asked to pay a fine—for example they would be asked to pay for a certain amount of local brew. But now that kind of lifestyle has disappeared at the expense of individual rights. People are not afraid of the leaders or of legal orders. So people are doing whatever they want. "

It seems that no one wants to be identified as the source of either intentional or unintentional fires because they know the consequences. A number of villagers said that children are used as scapegoats. "Once you say children caused this fire, everybody knows the issue of who set the fire is closed. While it is true that some fires are caused by children, the fact is that everybody knows that if someone is identified as the source of fire, especially one that causes damage to lives or property, the community will be angry with him or her. Unfortunately the law is not strong enough to prevent people from burning." There appears to be considerable underlying 'tension' around this issue. People do not want to identify adults who start fires (or are reluctant to look very hard for those who do so), so just accept "children started it" as the cause. The reason they give for this is that they do not want to be subject to the rules and be forced to pay up. There is also an implication of 'shame' or of embarrassment at being identified as a fire starter. So the rules or "public naming" may be effective they are not acted upon because fire starters are not named due to the fear people have of becoming socially isolated by their neighbours and others in the village if they speak up and identify them.

Based on the evidence gathered by the CET, while community residents are aware that "illegal" fire is not allowed and destroys life and property, they say that the problem is unwillingness to identify arsonists or those who use fire irresponsibly. Khadija Khamisi, whose experience is similar to most of the fire victims in Kazuramimba had this to say: "Fire destroyed my farm a couple of years ago. I lost the farm and my cassava, maize and sweet potatoes. But until today I have no knowledge of who was behind the fire. I am

sure someone in the community knows that person or is the one who actually caused it. But it is not part of our culture to identify the person because of cultural pressures such as to be “witched” or socially isolated.”

Although the villagers are not willing to identify people who set fires, they have begun noticing changes to the environment around them, caused either by so much burning or by other human activities. The community residents said that in the year 1974 when Kazuramimba village was first established, problems of fire were not there. The village was greener and surrounded by forests that were home to a lot of wildlife including dangerous animals like lions. Today the area is totally different compared to the past, due largely to the increasing population, fire and other illegal activities.

3.2 Local Mitigation Knowledge

As the CET worked and talked with the people at Kazuramimba it became evident that the issue was less their readiness for change but rather the absence of motivation to do so. “Fire is so common during the dry season. People keep burning forests and grasses and we see no action taken against those who burn fires every day. There are very few instances where the villagers have participated in putting out a fire,” said one respondent. Action to suppress a fire usually only takes place when life or property of an individual is involved. When asked in interviews only one out of twenty respondents could remember an event where the villagers worked together to suppress fire. Village Council Chairman Fares J. Biaga told of a time when a fire broke out near the village forest, close to the railway station. Villagers and village leaders worked together to stop the fire before it caused much damage to the environment. But the motivation was not only to save the forest but also to clear the railway tracks before the train came. This was the rare case he could cite, despite the fact that burning takes place every day.

There was a time in the past when the people of Kazuramimba would not just let fires burn. When the fire wasn’t too strong, they would use any available means – water, sand, tree branches, banana trees – to ensure it did not spread and burn a large area. If the fire grew so intense that people could not put it out using these means, they would light controlled fires, depending on the wind direction, to deprive an on-coming fire of fuel. Although there was no evidence of fire breaks around the village during the most recent dry season, people used to create fire lines around their homes so that fire would not destroy their property.

In summary, the data gathered by the CET revealed that:

- Residents of Kazuramimba have good intentions to use fire and they do not want to use it in such a way as to cause damage to the environment or destroy lives or property. The key challenge is to help them realise how to use fire responsibly.
- There is not a lack of awareness or understanding of the consequences of fire but villagers at all levels seem to have come to the conclusion that there is nothing they can do about it, and so have lost interest in fire. They have come to accept as a “fact” that in dry season the area will be burnt any way and there is nothing to be done to prevent it. So far they don’t see that they are part of the problem and can become part of the solution.
- However people are starting to become agitated and concerned about the symptoms of environmental degradation that they see around them – for example the disappearance of forests and trees as well as the depletion of soil.

- The status of by-laws and regulations were unclear although Village Council indicated that they had been prepared and sent on to the District government for approval. No response had been received. The community at large remained uninformed about all of these things.
- Scepticism about rules and by-laws was high amongst the villagers. While rules may work, they may also create a perverse outcome if people do not trigger the rules since they do not want to be responsible for subjecting other people to the penalties and in so-doing risk social isolation or being “witched.”
- Any initiative to manage fire has to come from within. People must develop a sense that there is a “problem” before they will form any sort of solution. Available local tool-boxes (local knowledge, structure, equipment, concepts, and methods) should be used first to address fire management challenges in the rural areas. Given the suitability of local tools and local proficiency with them as well as the issue of sustainability, significant justification should be required before bringing in specialist tools from outside.

4

4 The Essence of an Unfolding Process

4.1 Determining the Interventions

The baseline survey provided considerable food for thought and interesting discussion about what would be the best way to proceed. By listening to the people talk about these issues, the Community Engagement Team (CET) gained very useful insights into how they are thinking and the challenges of motivating them to seek solutions that may reduce the amount of environmental damage they are inflicting on themselves every year by excess burning.

As is the case in most developing countries, the situation related to fires in Kazuramimba is a 'symptom' rather than the problem. The underlying causes of fires here appear to include the lack of perceived impact. At the same time, there are two distinct elements that need somehow to be managed and brought together: first the Pilot Project was to focus on issues related to forest and grass fires; and second the commitment to listening first before talking. How could these disparate elements be reconciled when there seemed to be little or no interest at any level to talk about the core issue? As past campaigns have clearly demonstrated it would be counter-productive simply to go forward and presume that our messages would be heard and acted upon.

The puzzle we needed to solve was how to create an interest on the part of the people of Kazuramimba in managing fires. We decided that it would be important to begin with a "soft" approach that did not focus directly on fires or on any other specific issues. Consequently the initial programmes introduced Kazuramimba to the listening audience through the voices of its people. This also provided the people of Kazuramimba with the opportunity to begin to hear themselves speak about things that interested them – what they like about living there; what they find attractive; what they would tell strangers about their community. Elders were also sought out to talk about what life was like when they were youngsters and how this compares with life today.

Gradually subsequent programmes began to incorporate issues that concerned villagers, and they began to talk about changes they would like to see. As the topics turned a little "harder" in content, the strategy was to identify niches into which the topic of fire could be introduced. The villagers were asked what they thought burning all around their community may mean in the long term for the environment and their own living circumstances in the future.

One of the pillars of the *Fogo Process* is the value of peer-to-peer learning. Based on this principle as opportunities presented themselves, information from people knowledgeable about and conditions similar to Kazuramimba began to be introduced. Peers with knowledge about fire in comparable environments (i.e. from villages in other similar communities in the region) were also brought into the on-air discussions.

For example, farmers who had experience with solving problems of soil degradation explained how they had improved their soil and increased production of various crops. This experience revealed that in many situations peer-to-peer learning can be more effective than expert-to-villager intervention.

By late September as a result of fairly intensive in-community discussions and the commencement of on-air programming and listening sessions leading to further discussions, specific interventions and other activities were identified around which the CET could focus its activities for the remainder of the Pilot Project. The objective of these interventions was to achieve some positive action that in the long run will

help contribute to a reduction of the wildfire problem in Kazuramimba and also contribute to general discussion of the issues around wildfires throughout the listening area of the radio programmes.

While the experience of the process was exciting, we were acutely aware that there could be no guarantee of success. Such “process” work is not a neat package that enables those implementing it to say “in so many weeks this and/or that will happen and everything will be resolved.” One of the challenges of a responsive approach is that by its very nature it can be unpredictable, precisely because it is responsive to a constantly evolving citizenry. However any imprecision inherent in the process was more than offset by the opportunities created to explore appropriate and effective approaches to begin to “speak to the hearts” of the people of Kazuramimba and their local and district leaders.

4.2 A “Soft” Alternative “Listening first” Approach to Development:

As stated earlier, the premise underlying the Pilot Project was simply that it is essential to listen to community people first, before planning, designing and imposing development plans from the top down.

This paradigm differs greatly from that most commonly practiced by planners, decision-makers and communications strategists working in the development context. The most commonly applied practices employed in development work traditionally provide for little consultation or active engagement with community people. Rather they are based on advertising methodologies better suited to selling cell phones and services than to responding to what communities see as real issues that need to be addressed to make their lives better. Consequently what planners and policy-makers think should be the priorities and needs of people at the community level may have little or no relevance to the people themselves. Thus project after project resort to the information “campaign,” usually with hard-sell messaging that often “miss the mark” as seen in the illustrations of the anti-fire posters in Kazuramimba. In the context of wildfire management and controlling burning, much of the messaging the people of Kazuramimba have been exposed to can best be described as negative. It is instructing people “not to do things” rather than identifying positive ways to encourage the intended beneficiaries to consider approaches to their environment that will reduce burning and benefit all in the long run.

This was largely affirmed by the Pilot’s baseline study, which provided the opportunity for the Community Engagement Team (CET) to begin to understand what issues truly commanded the attention of Kazuramimba. Initially, interest in and concerns about fire management were well down the list of priorities.

To practice what we preach (and believe), we could not ignore what community members told us and simply proceed to impose on them by focusing fully on our priority – burning and fire management issues. A subtler, more respectful approach was needed. There were no benefits to be gained by following the “same old” hard-sell campaign strategy used in the past. It was important to avoid negative messaging as everyone responds more positively to encouragement to rise to challenges. The CET began with a “soft approach” which involved listening to the community villagers’ narrations about their history in Kazuramimba, the changes they have seen over time and things that matters most in their lives.

Questions were structured to encourage them to narrate their stories without accusation that they were responsible for environmental degradation or giving them a list of things to do in order to stop wildfires. In a sense the CET allowed the villagers to set the agenda for what they felt was important.

From the first set of recorded interviews it was evident that the people of Kazuramimba had considerable pride in the background of their community – the history and melding of different cultures into what is a peaceful place to live. They also spoke of changes that have occurred and are occurring – and, perhaps most importantly, of the need to be open to accepting change.

An essential ingredient of “process” work is to create within those who participate and speak a real sense of “ownership” of their programmes before their programmes are broadcast. This in turn requires that mechanisms be put in place to facilitate “approvals” from those who speak and from the community at large, before they go on the air. This is particularly important at the beginning of the project as it contributes to the development of trust, an essential ingredient in the process. The CET therefore wanted to provide opportunities for people in the community to hear the initial programmes that had been edited from their interviews, before they were broadcast.

4.3 First Playback Session

The initial playback session was attended by more than fifty villagers, including most who participated in the interviews along with friends and other community members. Everyone enjoyed this first opportunity to hear their own voices talking about their village and issues that interested them.

Beyond listening, the community members offered some critique of the program, a very positive indication that they were engaging with the process. It was important that the villagers understood that the CET were not experts to tell them what to do; and it was equally important that the members of the team recognize that they are animators to work through ideas with the villagers and allow them to critique, edit, and/or make input into the process.

One enhancement suggested was that the sounds of lions and other wild animals be added to provide a background for the segment in which there was discussion of what it was like when Kazuramimba was established in 1974. Furthermore, they suggested that it might be interesting to go back well before 1974 to explain the source of the name, the original people and more of how people lived before the newcomers arrived. These new ideas from the audience provided further evidence that they had begun to “buy in” to the process of creating “their” programmes.

When discussion moved to the usefulness of the programme, the villagers observed that while the programme may not help Kazuramimba people themselves remember their past, it has opened an interesting way for others – peers in other communities – to learn and understand more about the place and their culture. Engaging in the process as they had done had also started to raise their own curiosity and confidence and they were beginning to look within themselves and their community. One woman observed, “We couldn’t think that we people here in Kazuramimba would ever be on radio to talk about issues that matter to our lives.” In essence they were beginning to recognize the inherent capacity of this approach to development to foster peer-to-peer learning, something that could translate into powerful transformative change over time.

Younger and some middle aged participants requested that the programmes be converted to pod-casts that could be downloaded onto their cell phones so that they could replay them with their families and share them with friends and other people in their communal networks.

Aside from hearing and approving what they heard for broadcast, participants were encouraged to promote the programme. More than two-thirds of those present (young, middle-aged and seniors) had cell

phones. They responded enthusiastically to the suggestion that they send a message to at least two family members, friends or acquaintances outside the village and three within to inform them of the broadcast time for the first programme. The young and middle-aged fired off their messages immediately. But some older people and most of the women were unaccustomed to using this feature.

This created the opportunity for a small “training exercise” with those familiar with the technology helping those who were not to send text messages to their children and other friends to encourage them to listen to the broadcast.

Once the community had listened to the initial 15-minute programme about the background and history of Kazuramimba, they were asked if they were satisfied with it and willing to have it aired. Agreement was unanimous.

4.4 Dialogue on Issues

Noteworthy in the initial interviews were expressions of willingness – a desire even – from community residents to discuss issues together and with their leaders. Also farmers had expressed concerns about their “primitive” agricultural practices and declining production from their farms, which was exacerbating the slash and burn approach to clearing still more land, which in turn contributes to more burning. Many also expressed openness to judicious implementation of bylaws for fire control. These threads had opened opportunities for the CET to assemble a module around those observations and comments, with the aim of stimulating a village dialogue that would include village citizens and leaders.

This first village dialogue was mediated, but not directed, by the CET. This was to be an open exchange of ideas among interested citizens and between citizens and their leaders about issues that mattered most to them. At the outset everyone was encouraged to avoid language that might hurt feelings or create confrontation. They were also advised that the CET would be recording the discussion and that it would be broadcast at some point in the next few weeks. Anyone who wanted to speak without being recorded had only to signal and the microphone would be switched off.

The session began with playback of a module that included many of the issues that had been raised in the course of the initial interviews, but had not been included in the first very general programme they had previewed and approved earlier in the day. These included:

- Concerns about soil depletion
- The need to adopt new ways of agriculture
- Social and economic issues (population growth, income activities generation and gender balance)
- Empowerment of women and youth
- Environmental concerns

- Fires and enforcement of by-laws
- Agriculturalist-pastoralist relationships

The discussion flowed as the participants decided, with no control exercised by the CET.

It did not take long for the discussion to turn to environmental issues. Almost every person spoke about how the soil no longer produces the crops it once did. More important, they not only stated the problem but also began to explore what causes might lie at the root of soil depletion. The soil is tired was the general conclusion, and in need of some kind of “booster” as well as the application of better practices for preservation and improvement.

The discussion then turned to the subject of village by-laws related to burning. A number expressed regret that no action was being taken to stop arsonists or to punish those who violate the environment: “If someone is identified burning the forest or cutting trees illegally, there is nothing we can do to make him accountable.” Village leaders were challenged to tell those assembled whether or not the community has bylaws to deal with these problems and, if so, to explain why they were not being effective. The Council Chairman responded that while bylaws had been prepared quite some time before and had been sent to the District headquarters, they had apparently gotten stuck there.

Then he added: “Even if we have village bylaws it is not enough. District Council issues permits to charcoal makers and loggers without informing us. Village by-laws need to conform with district procedures to avoid confusion between the village and the District.”

This meeting also provided a forum for interesting exchanges on the topic of the division of labour between men and women. Confidently, women spoke up to claim that most of the work is left on their shoulders – the men and the young people don’t want to work hard. The men present naturally did not agree on this point; however they did agree that women should be empowered in the area of “soft credit” so they can increase their ability to contribute to the family economy and to overall village welfare. There was also discussion about the importance of including young people more in family and village-related development. Financial and knowledge empowerment is lacking – especially for young people and women.

Another very interesting issue raised during this meeting was the presumption that those most responsible for degrading the environment are the pastoralists, and it was suggested that areas should be set aside for livestock grazing and that steps should be taken to involve the pastoralists in all issues related to environmental conservation. This discussion took place without a single pastoralist being present. Yet, as the Village Council Chairperson noted: “Kazuramimba is the place for us all; we have no place or intention to move. Pastoralists and peasants need to live and protect the environment together. There are challenges to overcome, but I am sure we can all work together.”

As a result of this discussion the CET identified a potential intervention. It was clear that there existed a deep divide between the pastoralists and the rest of the community. The pastoralists were not represented on council or on any committees; they were virtually isolated and totally disengaged from the rest of the community. Could the process play some part in helping to remedy this situation? It was very clear that they are an integral part of the problems related to burning, so could they be better integrated into the community to help solve them?

Early in the meeting there was some discussion about how increasing population threatens the environment. As the discussion progressed a participant expanded on the topic of population growth: “It is not a matter of just the environment, but human life goes hand in hand with this. We have so many children here in our village. The mothers and children are suffering most because of the lack of primary care education and a good health centre. We need a healthy community. We are ready to work with the government in order to establish a health centre.” A young man in his early thirties lamented “I have two

wives and ten children. It is painful to see them suffering from disease.” Clearly family planning might be a subject for consideration and could fit well into environmental protection initiatives as there seemed to be recognition that the rapidly growing population is putting added pressures on an already fragile environment.

Participants spoke favourably of the intervention of both government departments and agencies and NGOs in helping them confront development challenges – particularly CARE and the Jane Goodall Institute which work in collaboration with District Council. Some did say they would like to see NGOs “stay longer” to help the community achieve both short and longer-term results. At the same time there was recognition that when “NGOs come to help us, we need to open our minds and take advantage of their presence in our village. We shouldn’t blame them but blame ourselves, if things are not sustained. Development should come from us ourselves.” This positive observation was an encouragement for the CET; indeed the entire dialogue provided much content for the CET to develop their action plan to guide the remainder of the pilot.

4.5 Tackling Core Values

Based on the input from the community meetings and further discussion with stakeholders (District and NGOs) the following plan was put together to serve as a tool to help the CET, the village residents including their leaders, the NGOs and involved District-level officials and extension workers move forward and begin to translate information and awareness to actions that addresses core value. Four key area of focus were considered: building positive relationships and trust; peer-to-peer learning and knowledge sharing; motivating behavioral action; and sustainability.

Thread	Objectives	Approach
Interventions – to promote dialogue and build more functional relationships leading to partnerships for better cooperation and action	To expedite the progress of confirming by-laws, administration of licenses and enforcement <i>between Village and District governments vis-a-vis</i> to put in place better environmental management and reduce burning.	Interview lawmakers at both village and district levels; with their approval, play for each what the other is saying and seek common/ shared intersections.
	To facilitate dialogue and develop better relations between <i>agriculturalists and pastoralists</i> related to environmental practices and to reduce burning. Seek common ground to encourage pastoralists to become more engaged as part of the Kazuramimba community.	Starting with pastoralists, through interviews with each group identify common concerns and attempt to develop dialogue between the two communities that will ultimately lead to pastoralists becoming more integrated into the community and working together to address common/shared challenges.
Knowledge Sharing	To facilitate transfer of knowledge from and between peer groups. Specifically in the case of farmers, sharing of knowledge to help improve techniques and reduce “slash and burn” – (directly and indirectly), See activity (10) below. *	Interviews with farmers in other communities who can explain “best practices.” Draw in extension workers from appropriate departments --legal forestry, beekeeping, agricultural, livestock, and wildlife experts – and JG.
	To encourage tree planting	Link village environmental group with Forestry experts and JGI
	To engage women and youth more actively in financial planning and other community activities	Network with JGI (Mary Masanza) and District Community Development Officers
Activities – Projects to stimulate behavioral change	To spread word of how village people are learning to combat excessive burning	Work with media outlets – take the media to village listening/ discussion sessions
	To stimulate learning activities with youth and school children	Environment projects –e.g. tree planting or “beautification” projects
	To encourage the Fire crew find appropriate environmental projects	e.g. a special tree planting project – possibly with school children
	Art activities	Involve children from all schools (secondary and primary) in Kazuramimba to create posters/ calendar on fires and burning
	D. * Peer-to-peer learning activities (see number 3 above)	Prepare radio program(s) with successful farmers (in Kalinze or Matiazo)

Thread	Objectives	Approach
	1. Listening experiences	As programs are prepared, hold listening and discussion sessions in each sub-village, to seek feedback on the content of the radio show and stimulate more discussion on the topic.
Cross-cutting needs (To build sustainability of initiative)	2. Explore ways to maintain continuity of underway activities and initiatives post-Pilot	Network with JGI or field workers of line depts.
	3. Partner with Community-Based Organizations	Liaise with religious leaders to incorporate messages of environmental stewardship
	4. Explore possibility of keeping "voices" radio program on air through sponsorships	Discuss interest with management of Radio Kwizera. Work with them to bring sponsors to the table.

The two interventions (items 1 and 2) in the above table illustrate both an "external" engagement process (in this case between two levels of government – village and district) and a more "internal" engagement process within the community. While agriculturalists and pastoralists co-exist in close proximity to each other, there was little, if any, shared community life on an equal basis. Internal process work can be more sensitive and, depending on the circumstances, may require considerable patience and a longer time-frame to achieve positive results and the internal process often involves changing attitudes which will in turn contribute to behavioral change. External process initiatives require a willingness to engage at all levels required to implement a change of behavior – such as improved response times, enhanced planning frameworks, etc.

4.6 The Pastoralists' Story

The initial community meetings focused the attention of the Community Engagement Team on a key element that was missing – not only from their initial interviews but, even more critically, from all community dialogue. Pastoralists were very much part of the discussion of fires and their destructiveness while not represented.

The agriculturalists who are the majority in Kazuramimba and occupy most of positions on the Village Council and its committees, said that from their perspective the environmental degradation in the community is mostly caused by pastoralists. The agriculturalists held pastoralists responsible for setting many of the fires, and argued further that large areas of land were being laid waste by the grazing of their many cattle.

Clearly it was important to try to engage the pastoralists in the community dialogue in general and specifically about environmental issues. Once again the soft approach was taken. Pastoralists were approached and when they agreed to interviews they were asked similar questions to those asked of other villagers: when did they arrive in the community? What changes are they noticing in the community? Do they participate in daily communal life and do they feel "included" in the community?

The pastoralist arrived in the community much later than the agriculturalists. "When we arrived," pastoralists explained, "few households kept cattle. Most of them they had only two or three goats. There was a belief that the animals couldn't survive in Kazuramimba. At that time there was plenty of room for cattle but now the area has become smaller because the agriculturalists are everywhere.

Farmers establish their farms everywhere, so that we don't have any place to take our animals. Because they establish their farms in a zigzag pattern, their farms become vulnerable to our livestock. And that is where the problems start."

Adding to the problem of the "scattered" pattern of clearing land for farming, the pastoralists complained that no area had been set for livestock. The problem was compounded by a new influx of itinerants who are responsible for causing more damage to the environment. "These nomad pastoralists," they said, "move in with a large group of cattle. They take their cows to wherever there is green pasture. They don't listen to anybody. They don't care about village regulations. They stay around the village for a short time and once the grasses are consumed either by their animals or by fire, they move on to somewhere else. These nomads don't see any reason to establish a relationship with villagers or engage in any village activities."

The resident pastoralists admitted they are isolated and not involved in any community activities. They recognized that farmers hold them responsible for destroying their farms and regard them as being less concerned about communal customs, regulations, culture and individual life. "Other groups in the community regard us as different from the rest of community people. We are always called aliens even if we have stayed more than twenty years in the community. Our livestock which is the backbone of our existence are not valued. Our livestock are chased away from every corner."

On fire-related issues, the pastoralists offered different explanations about who sets fire. Some of the pastoralists admitted that members of their community are among the fire-starters. "We think that if we burn during the dry season we will have more green areas when the rain starts." Another group disagreed and argued that pastoralists are not the ones lighting fires during the dry season. In their eyes, most fires are set by the hunters for their hunting activities or by farmers clearing fields for planting crops. "We need grasses during the dry season more than at any other time of the year. If we burn, where should we take our animals?" There were also different ideas amongst the pastoralists about whether or not dry grasses are fodder for their animals. Some said that their animals look healthier during the dry season while some denied that fact and argued that a place like Kazuramimba, where there is insufficient water allocated for animals, dried grasses can be dangerous for their digestive system. Nonetheless, all groups agreed that first green grasses that come out when the rains start are too soft and give the cattle diarrhoea which causes mortality for some, especially calves. So, some said, "We think burning the grasses during the dry season for grass regeneration when the rains come is not a good idea."

The pastoralists seemed pleased to be able to share their opinions and points of view, and state their concerns through the interviews. While seeming relatively passive about taking steps to integrate themselves into the community, they were certainly not opposed to being included, especially if it could help them meet their needs. The CET believed a useful first step had been taken.

The first interviews with pastoralists were followed by a discussion with village council leaders. An initial question was if they were aware of alien pastoralists entering the community. Both the village council chairman and the environment committee chairman confirmed that they knew about a group of pastoralists who had entered the village. They had come from other areas of Tanzania as well as from

outside of the country with a large group of cattle. They would come during the rainy season and move away during the dry season. The councillors admitted that it was hard to deal with the newcomers, the situation is complicated because some of them have kin-linkages with resident pastoralists in the community. Clearly finding ways to deal with the problem of nomads coming into and leaving after the best grasses have been consumed is a challenge for the entire community (agriculturalists and pastoralists) to work on together.

Regarding the question of identifying grazing areas for the cattle, the Village Council Chairman said: "The village government in collaboration with the District Council identified and demarcated all areas for water sources, residence, farming, agriculture, and livestock grazing. The problem is, we haven't been able to enforce the plan because the process of finalizing it at the District level has taken longer than was expected" – another process challenge to be addressed through the external intervention.

On the other hand agriculturalists argued that the identification of areas for livestock failed to take into consideration the real situation in terms of the population of pastoralists, the number of cattle they owned or future expansion. They expressed doubt saying that the area that may be identified may not be sufficient to keep the livestock so that the pastoralists will be forced to look for green pastures in the areas allocated for agriculture. Competition for land use will be an on-going irritant for the relationship between pastoralists and agriculturalists. It may be unacceptable for pastoralists to move to identified areas which are normally rejected because they are overused and so do not have sufficient feed for their livestock; moreover the places often do not have water.

Criticism was also levelled at the exercise of identifying and demarcating areas, because it did not involve pastoralists and agriculturalists alike. "These groups need to talk and agree with one another on issues of land and natural resource uses," was one observation – which was quite favourable in that it recognized the importance of dialogue and cooperation.

Another point raised by the pastoralists was that the plan for proper usage of land has not been implemented because the leaders have not been able to disseminate information about what regulations had been agreed upon related to the proper usage of land and enforcement of the relevant bylaws.

CET members were encouraged by the fact that probably for the first time the pastoralists had an equal opportunity to talk openly about issues that concern them. Furthermore it was clear that they too recognize the importance of sustainable environmental practices and, indeed, have a need to prevent the degradation of the grasslands on which they depend to keep their livestock fed. They also admitted that they need education on how to keep livestock in more profitable and environmentally-friendly ways, on alternative ways of feeding animals (for example using dry grasses), and on what land and other resources are needed to accommodate medium- and large-scale pastoralists.

4.7 Capacity Identification

Throughout the dialogues sets of capacity needed by the community started to emerge. That led the CET to identify knowledge resources (or a toolbox of resources) to supply the knowledge needed and capacity being requested by the community. The need for environmental and other socio-economic education opened opportunities to link extension officers, individual experts, and district officers with the community, to respond to the issues and questions raised by the villagers. The interviews were recorded and subsequently aired. Interviews were conducted with officers with knowledge of and experience in

community development, forestry, environment, agriculture, the legal field, education and the wildlife and beekeeping sectors. Those interviewed included the District Executive Director as well as experts in related fields from NGOs. The officers and experts were asked to record their interviews in the form of education programmes that would align with villagers' conceptual levels. The programmes were designed not only for the people of Kazuramimba but to listeners across the Radio Kwizera network in other parts of Kigoma and in the neighbouring regions of Mwanza and Kagera.

Experience with the people of Kazuramimba revealed a gnawing hunger for knowledge. Villagers also had a strong desire to emulate best practices from other villages – even to have Kazuramimba look like other villages that have been successful in applying new ways of doing agriculture which they took as an indication that they were doing well in protecting their local environment. One response was to experiment with some peer-to-peer learning; this included conducting interviews with and preparing programmes around model farmers from villages that residents of Kazuramimba said they admired.

One important question for the farmers of Kazuramimba was how to use and protect land in order to prevent soil depletion. Agricultural, natural resources, beekeeping, and forestry extension officers and experts talked about reasons why land loses its nutrients through over- utilisation, soil erosion when forests are destroyed and slash and burn land clearing techniques.

More than just criticizing, they also offered alternatives to slash and burn and explained other techniques that farmers can use such as rotating crops and using manure. They challenged villagers to find more positive ways to farm while protecting trees rather than burning them.

Going beyond experts talking to the farmers, peer-to-peer learning was introduced as model farmers from two other villages talked about conditions for them had improved after they adopted new ways of farming. The first step for them had been to change their mind set to be open to accepting change. "When the soil starting to be less productive, some of our friends moved to other areas," they said. "We decided not to move but to face the problem. We listened and applied a new approach to our farming. We stopped burning and planted trees. Our leaders were keys in this new development. They brought people from the District and NGOs to work with us. Our leaders also encouraged us not go back to the old ways by enforcing the laws. Now protecting the soil so it produces more has become part of the culture of farmers here in our village." As the farmers talked about steps they took to boost soil production and make their village greener in a sustainable way, they emphasised that attitude change, leadership support, looking first within and seeking beneficial partnerships from outside were vital sustaining initiatives to making their village greener and the land more productive.

A number of the representatives from government and the NGOs emphasised the importance of trees in the environment. They provided education on tree germination and explained what kinds of trees would flourish in Kazuramimba and how villagers might consider planting trees for multi-purpose uses, including for business. They also educated the community about how to use fire responsibly, including attending fires, notifying neighbours when there was the need to set fires for specific purposes, requesting permission and preparing firebreaks.

Other knowledge sets were provided by people with expertise and experience in legal affairs, land use, wildlife and natural resources and education. Participating officers were from District departments and agencies as well as well-respected NGOs working in the district. The land officer described the process of developing village by-laws and what has to be done to get by-laws approved at the District level. He and other officials clearly explained that once village by-laws are approved by the village general meeting and

District Councillors' meeting, the village can begin putting those by-laws into effect. They also clarified issues related to licenses and permits recognizing that it is important to build a positive relationship between the community and the District governments to maintain and utilise the natural resources in the interests of both parties. Addressing issues related to enforcement, the land use officer emphasised that Kazuramimba land was demarcated with areas allocated for residences, agriculturists, pastoralists, water sources and forests identified. He appealed to the village leaders to start to educate their constituents about the land use plan.

As the Pilot Project continued there were a number of presentations addressing different interests in Kazuramimba. The FAO representation to Tanzania instructed the farmers on the means of protecting both the soil and food. She emphasised on the importance of establishing farmers' cooperatives and food warehouses to preserve crops so that there would be enough crops even out of season when the crops are in the high demand. Livestock officers spoke particularly to the pastoralists, and explained to them ways to keep their animals so they benefit both their families and the environment. They also spoke to the importance of pastoralists becoming better understood in the community. To this point it was becoming accepted that to build good working relationships between pastoralists and agriculturist regular and open communications must be established so each side has the opportunity to explain its perspectives and needs, and ways are found to work together to solve communal and environment problems. For their part, it is important that the pastoralists accept and follow village regulations and develop a culture of appreciating and protecting the environment and their neighbors' property. It is also important that they bring forward information about any new influx of nomad pastoralists to the village council.

The education officer talked about the long-term positive impacts that can result from educating school children about environmental conservation. He argued that teachers in the Kazuramimba and in other districts should begin to explore small-scale initiatives at their schools. Initiatives might include utilizing open bare areas to plant flowers and other plants as well as trees so that the schools may become models for the communities.

From the outset of the Pilot Project villagers expressed real concerns about significant social issues such as the size of families and the growing population. They also related these to environmental conservation – recognizing that an increased population places more pressure on the environment. Gender balance and youth involvement in development and environment protection were also topics of interest and discussion. These were socio-economic issues that fit into integrated fire management through the concept of sustainable development. Community development officers at the district and gender and youth specialists were approached to provide the socioeconomic knowledge in line with environmental sustainability. They highlighted areas in which the women and youth could involve themselves in protecting the environment. For example the gender specialist suggested that the women might undertake modest “beautification” activities around their own properties and lead their families to participate in expanding such initiatives. Helping to build a sense of pride in the “homestead” could strengthen the desire “not to see it burn.”

Other experts explained ways that the community can benefit from the forest and natural resources. For example there may be opportunities in proper land use. Nearby villages that protected the soil from over-burning had learned that increased productivity had led to greater production that provided the farmers with sufficient food for their families along with extra crops to sell for additional income. In some cases these villages were also reaping rewards from the forests that they protected. Their villages looked greener and people were proud of the improved quality of life. It was a direct challenge to the people of

Kazuramimba, one of whom admitted in her first interview that “nobody likes to live in a desert.” To change things was within their capacity if only they would change their mind set.

Even family planning may have environmental impact implications. This delicate subject was handled by the community nurse who informed of different ways families can apply for family planning and directed the community to visit the nearest health center for more advice. The dilemma for many families was said to be that while the size of the family was growing, the amount of land they had available for cultivation was not. Their solution to this imbalance was usually to slash and burn more forest area. Family size is also an economic challenge. Each family must decide how many children they will be able to afford to send to school and prepare for a good future. The important message was that this is an issue for each family to consider before it becomes too late.

4.8 A Shift in Mindset

The responses from the community were thus about more than just fire. Their concerns encompassed all aspects of their lives including income generation, health, education, food security, environment protection, relationships, gender and youth empowerment, harmony and relationship building. Environmental changes and issues related to this began to become an increasing part of their discussions. As the process progressed the CET could detect a shift from general indifference to a willingness to consider issues related to burning – as part of a broader canvass. Perhaps it was the openness of the process to encouraging participants to present their ideas about their priorities instead of being subjected to a barrage of information and messaging (often negative) about something they regarded as secondary. But as one interviewee observed, “we don’t want to live in a wilderness; we want a better, greener environment around us.”

Some began to look at causes of the environmental blight around them from an internal perspective, not blaming others from outside. “We have been told that cutting trees and burning the forest can cause environmental problems. Maybe this is true,” one person interviewed conceded. “Each year the periods of rains seem shorter, unlike what they used to be in the past. Maybe we should now begin to believe what our experts are telling us and take action.”

As for preserving the forests some began to suggest that it might be time to reduce, if not stop altogether, the “slash and burn” approach to clearing land, and instead of burning the grass allow it to decompose in the soil to produce more nutrients.

Understandably agriculture dominated discussions – especially the need to improve old methods: “We need to become more modern,” was a theme that stood out. A number of ideas were advanced on actions they could take to improve agriculture and also address the issue of wildfires:

- A private sector company might open an agricultural centre where farmers could buy fertilizers on credit and hire tractors to boost their production;
- A tree planting nursery might be viable in a community with more than 32,000 inhabitants, especially if everyone was encouraged to plant trees on their farms and around their homes;
- More involvement by agricultural extension officers was identified as a way to introduce new ways of doing agriculture – e.g. crop rotation;
- Uncontrolled and unwarranted burning of forests and grasses should be stopped by whatever means required including the enforcement of by-laws and all regulations;

- Action plans should be developed to involve all villagers in understanding how fire can be used and managed properly;
- Village leaders need to reach out and make fire management a part of daily business;
- Pastoralists should be encouraged to engage more actively in community affairs. Their animals should be identified, records maintained of their numbers and there should be planning to ensure that adequate pasture areas are available for livestock;
- Steps should be taken to control entrance of non-resident nomads coming into the village with their cattle and ignoring local rules and regulations, setting fires and allowing their cattle to over-graze local pasture-land creating problems for local pastoralists to feed their herds;
- Regular meetings should be held between pastoralists and agriculturalists to discuss issues of common concern to both groups and resolve any differences before they lead to more serious problems;
- Raise awareness among the both agriculturalists and pastoralists about the benefits of living together with each other in the same village;
- Work to create a better working relationship between the Village Council and District government to expedite efforts to develop and approve by-laws that can be implemented and enforced by the village to the benefit of both levels of government and the community at large;
- Once by-laws and regulations have been approved by and returned from the District government, the Village Council should implement whatever information or training sessions are required so that all villagers understand them – this should apply to those related to the environment as well as to all other sectors.

In the course of the Pilot Project, progress on a number of these points was made. For example The District Executive Director (DED) made a commitment on the part of the District Government when he said that while it may not be crystal clear who actually “owns” the forest – the village, local government or central government – it is the local community composed of the village leaders and residents that should be most entrusted to protect the those forests: “We will encourage our staff and all who are working in the forests to maintain good relationships and work with villages adjacent to those forests. We will also ensure that 5% of the income from the forests goes back into the village.” The DED also stated that the community residents should take responsibility for protecting the forests around them according to government regulations and village bylaws, and not fear any outside power whatsoever. Beginning Forming Long Term Actions

With community engagement firmly at the core of the entire Pilot Project – as the CET gathered interviews and prepared radio programming that would ensure that village “voices” would be heard. It was also important to expand the process beyond “listening” and “hearing” and to begin to incorporate community-level participation in creative processes. Such efforts could lead to the development of materials such “branding” tools, and the implementation of small environmental projects and the development of village-based plans to continue to address fire-related issues past the end of the pilot.

4.9 An Approach to Design for “Branding”

As covered earlier in this document, when asked for their reactions to posters of two previous campaigns, villagers either could not remember the messaging (i.e. from the “crying tree” poster), found the imaging unsettling (e.g. “the face resembled a lion’s face), or totally misinterpreted the messaging (e.g. the “X” on

the fire beneath the tree was a “cross” and thus that message was only for Christians, not Muslims; or the poster meant we should only burn in dry seasons). Overall, the failure to consult was noted as the significant missing ingredient in the development of those campaigns. Of course it is possible that there was consultation in other communities and with other village people; the full process of developing the posters is unknown. However the responses from the village as described and the overall experience of the Pilot Project point to the importance of taking a more consultative approach to address issues, engage communities and motivate people to respond to the challenges they face.

The Pilot took a further step with the decision to see if people could be more deeply involved in the creative process to produce materials to generate interest and motivate – in essence a “branding” exercise. Too often rural people (especially children) are ignored in this context and unable to participate in any meaningful way in initiatives that are considered “beyond” their capacities. For this exercise the CET considered it worthwhile to work against the stereotypes. More than 50 children from all primary schools in Kazuramimba were brought together into three groups according to age (grades 1-4; 5-6). Members of the CET facilitated sessions in which the children were encouraged to speak out and place their ideas for a poster on the table. Teachers were asked not to participate, so that whatever ideas emerged would come totally from the children. The participants chose to use pencil sketching to express their ideas on why the trees are disappearing, on proper use of fires and to suggest what responsibilities various stakeholders might have in improving the situation. Messages they considered important included the time it takes to prepare a tree nursery, how long it takes a tree to grow, that it is important for village leaders to teach by-laws, the role the environment committee and fire crew members can play in mobilizing villagers to prevent fires before the dry season and to monitor fires if/when they break out during the dry season.

Because of limited time, for this exercise an experienced artist was engaged to work with the children on the strict condition that his hands would be “the hands of the children’s group” with which he was working. His mandate was to translate the ideas and messaging of the children. The final “canvas” whether in acrylics, watercolour, as pencil sketches or computer generated imagery was to be what the children believe will motivate the entire community and stakeholders involved to make the difference in their community. The artist was cautioned not to “interpret” but to realize the children’s ideas. The objective was to ensure that in the end the children could say – “these are our images; this is our message” – what we want to say about how we all should relate to the environment and, in particular, protect our forests and grasslands from fire.

4.10 Environment projects

In another initiative the environment group decided to preserve one of the key water sources in the community. They worked with the Village Executive Council to educate the community around the water source about the importance of protecting that particular area. They highlighted the responsibilities of all parties – namely the community, the environmental committee and the Village Executive Council. They also negotiated with small scale farmers whose vegetables gardens are close to the water source. They asked them to stop once they harvest their crops. Then they decided to plant trees that are friendly to water sources. The environmental committee also selected one forest which it would accept the responsibility to maintain; and they linked with the village fire crews to work with the community to create firebreaks to protect the forest.

School teachers approached the village leaders to seek their blessing to launch a small environmental project at their school. Open areas around their school were without any vegetation; all that was there was

dusty soil that became muddy with the rains. The teachers proposed that grass be planted in these open areas, along with flowers and shade trees, to make the school compound more attractive. They discussed their proposal with their students explaining that doing what they proposed would reduce dirt and dust which would help keep uniforms and exercise books cleaner and would also reduce the amount of time students had to spend every morning to sweep the area. Students committed to take care of grasses and newly planted trees, and began by collecting manure to start the young plants. This encouraged some young people in the village to ask for a piece of land from the Village Executive Council where they could start by planting fruit trees such as avocado and orange.

The community's religious leaders came onside; they would incorporate messages supporting environmental responsibility and speak against improperly setting fires. Texts could be found in both the Bible and the Qu'ran to advocate protection of God's creation.

All of these initiatives were imagined and launched by people within the community who believed that by starting small projects they would be role models that others would emulate in their respective sub-village areas. There was also a perception that such activities would lead to greater recognition of environmental conservation concepts, including the importance of sound fire management practices. The CET was encouraged by the fact that the Village Executive Council gave their commitment to work with these groups to ensure their projects will be maintained. Furthermore the District promised to provide any support that the village may need to move forward with environment conservation. As well NGOs showed their readiness to work with the community to provide both technical and moral support.

5

5 The End of the Beginning

A major concern about pilot projects is that their inherent, fixed-term time limitations may not provide for continuity that is essential to consolidate gains made during its course or permit follow-through with essential activities launched as part of the Pilot. Consequently “let down” following an abrupt cessation can negatively impact those at the community level who have embraced a process that ends before it has been fully completed. For this reason efforts were made to secure support to maintain some momentum for what has been started – support from both government departments and NGOs that now share the same philosophy and seek the same objectives as were demonstrated by the work of the CET.

It was the hope of everyone involved in implementing the Pilot Project that the work begun in Kazuramimba would continue. One concern was that the time allotted for the Pilot would not be sufficient for the community to take “ownership” and continue to maintain the momentum of what they had started. But as the work proceeded the CET began to detect interest growing on the part of the community. At one point the Village Council Chairperson told participants attending a village meeting, “The work of the Pilot has built the capacity for us to continue. Kazuramimba is ours and we need to work together seriously to maintain our environment for our lives and the lives of the generations to come.”

His comment triggered discussion amongst those present at the meeting. In the end participants indicated that were motivated to pursue further the initiatives that had begun during the Pilot. People expressed willingness, even eagerness, to go forward and maintain the continuity of the project. This may be evidence of what others have observed: the leader of a community agrees with something, it is likely that the villagers will follow the cause.

In any case, upon agreeing in principle to continue beyond the Pilot, they asked if they would be able to borrow anything from our experience and from the surveys that were conducted at the beginning our Pilot. Essentially they were asking about evidence-based knowledge that could help prepare a plan for the year. We urged them to make their plans inclusive of all groups: pastoralists, peasants, beekeepers, hunters, charcoal makers, young people, women and men. Furthermore, we suggested that they consider activities related to soil depletion, tree planting, alternative means of energy and income generation, and trimming grasses before the dry season. In terms of community empowerment, we suggested that they look at education on the environment, good usages of fire, fire prevention, by-laws and regulations as well as issues of sanitation and beautification around their homes.

By the latter stages of the Pilot their interest and willingness to engage with the CET extended beyond environmental matters. So they also were encouraged to consider addressing issues such as family planning and HIV/AIDS and to find ways to continue to build community commitment and demand action from their leaders. All of the suggestions were drawn not from external research, but directly from the experiences in the villages; they were offered as guidance, not dictated as directions. As had been the case from the beginning, “the ball was very much in their court” and they would determine how to play it.

The villagers involved different committees to brainstorm and develop an actual plan to conserve the environment and manage fires for the year 2013. They organized their plan according to a quarterly calendar.

In the first quarter, they would revisit the plan for proper use of land, educate the pastoralists and agriculturalists on good usages of fire and continue to follow-up on land allocations for water sources,

forests, residential, agricultural and pasture for livestock grazing. They also agreed on the importance of encouraging every village resident to maintain a latrine and to cut down grasses around their premises in order to prevent malaria and disease outbreaks due to lack of hygiene. Cutting the vegetation during the rainy season will help to remove mosquito-breeding areas and reduce malaria; also if tall grasses are cut back, during the dry season they will not be a source for fires around village. Short green grass will remain through the dry season.

For April-June, the village plan is to prepare tree-nurseries, to finalize and implement by-laws on fire and environmental conservation in general, to meet with different groups that seem to be the source of lighting fires including pastoralists, hunters, beekeepers, charcoal and lime makers, loggers, and those who are involved in the business of selling grasses. In addition to meeting with groups separately they also decided that it is important to unite all parts of the village through a more homogeneous approach. Using their local knowledge, they crafted a day each week specifically set aside for village development. Calling this initiative *Ubhumwe* – solidarity – they propose to set one day each month for villagers to gather for development-related activities and information/knowledge exchange. The first activities proposed were fire-related management, such as making firebreaks.

During the dry season (July-September), village people have more time for leisure. The leaders propose to use that window of opportunity to involve villagers including men, women and youth in education programmes related to HIV and AIDS, family planning, alternative energy sources, issues related to credit, and environment-friendly income generation. Also during this period education will be provided to pastoralists on how to keep cattle in a profitable way, and for agriculturalists on techniques that will protect and improve the quality of the soil to boost production. During the last quarter, the village leaders hope to provide education about tree planting and to mobilize villagers to establish small and medium-sized forests in open places or around their farms. They also decided that that this plan should recur each year, with appropriate revisions based on implementation experience

5.2 Two-intervention Approach

With the plan and an outline of activities in place, they moved on to identify ways to implement them. They began by looking within themselves. Different groups within the village were identified to be responsible for implementation of specific components. Tasks were assigned to the Executive Village Council, the Environmental Committee, the Village Fire Crews and the Village Social Committee and community in general. The village leaders expressed their belief that no one succeeds if she/he works alone. They identified initiatives in which the District and NGOs can partner with the village people. Unlike what had often occurred in the past, the village leaders did not wait until external stakeholders come to propose (and perhaps dictate) what the community should do. Rather, they identified and prioritized their needs and approached the stakeholders requesting partnership.

The partners identified included the Kigoma District Council, the Jane Goodall Institute (JGI) and the Kigoma office of the International Center for AIDS Care and Treatment Programs (ICAP). They requested that these partners engage with them in environment conservation and life-saving initiatives. This is what is meant by a “two-intervention approach” through which people at the grass roots engage policy-makers and the leaders of advocacy groups and development institutions to discuss and work together with the community to address and implement plans identified and developed by people themselves. In seizing the initiative the people of Kazuramimba are demonstrating the impact of true bottom-up communication

which motivates and incentivizes community people to determine their own agenda to address their development priorities.

Ten representatives from the community arranged the meeting with District Executive Director (DED) and leaders of NGOs. The meeting was also attended by some district extension officers. The village leaders and others presented their 2013 agenda and posed a number of leading questions: Was what they proposed in the line with District plans? What should be subtracted from or added to in this plan? How can we work together? Who else should we see in order to succeed?

The DED was encouraged by the village's plan, saying that it was a good example that should be emulated by the other villages in the district. The villagers were told by one of the top leaders of the District that they would receive support. "Be assured of my support," she said, "and that of my team." She proposed they should consider establishing a farmers' cooperative through which they could preserve food beyond the harvest seasons, create a value/market chain, or use the stored food as collateral for bank loans and so on. She also proposed that the day of *Ubhumwe* be seen as a day for a broad range of development-related activities.

The director of JGI and his colleagues were impressed by the fact that the village leaders had identified components that are vital for development. "The village plan has ... unique components that set it apart from proposals that other clients bring to us. It identifies human, education, and partnership resources that are required. It doesn't place financial resources as the be-all/end-all. This why most community projects fail, because once the financial support ends nothing further takes place; they look only at external financial help, and if the external financial help doesn't materialize, the plans fail. But with Kazuramimba, the plan is different. Even if the partners do not bring money in, the plan is likely to continue because they have made it their plan not somebody else's. It includes the things that matter to people's lives. They have identified the capacity that they have and what they are looking for. We believe they can implement this, hence we want to be a part of it." Both parties decided to meet before the Pilot ends to finalise the plan and create action plans that all parties can agree upon.

Discussions between ICAP and village leaders focused on family planning and HIV/AIDS. The village leaders expressed their opinion that it is important to emphasize how the significant increase of population is having a negative impact on the environment. Also they want to identify how to protect the health of people as well as protect the environment. They could see links between human and environmental good health and safety and were prepared to place both human and environment health at the center of the initiative. ICAP was impressed to see how the villagers are approaching their plan. "We usually go to a village with our plans for what we what we want to do or the villagers come with lists of complaints. This is a unique situation in which the village people know what they want to do." Furthermore the manager of the Kigoma ICAP office advised the village leaders to write to the Regional Medical Officer for approval for ICAP to conduct activities on HIV and AIDS amelioration and prevention in the community. The village leaders can also identify individuals that ICAP can train so they can offer family planning and child-and-mother care in their village.

In the course of the discussions, inputs from the external stakeholders were embraced by the villagers and incorporated into the village plan. Thus ultimately it became more than just a village plan; it is now a joint plan between the villagers, the District leadership and development organizations working in the area. There is also some anticipation that the outcome from what was a primary focus on the community of Kazuramimba may reach well beyond Kazuramiba and become adopted, in their particular ways, by other communities.

The CET took steps to bring to the attention of other media (newspapers, television, etc.) how the process had evolved to create greater awareness of their own potential amongst the villagers and build self-confidence and infuse enthusiasm into Kazuramimba. It will be hard to understand if the local media in particular fails to follow through on such an inspiring "good news" story and monitor the on-going commitment of all parties – the community, the District, and the stakeholders alike.

6

6 Forum Meeting Between Policy Makers and Community People

The culmination of the FAO Pilot Project conducted in the Kigoma region to examine a different-than usual- paradigm of communications for development in the context of initiatives to reduce wildfires was a Forum Meeting in the pilot village of Kazuramimba, held on December 10, 2012. While this meeting was at the conclusion of the Pilot Project *per se*, it marked the beginning of an expanded relationship based on work initiated by the Pilot between the community of Kazuramimba and government and civil society stakeholders

6.1 The venue and set-up

The forum meeting, held in the village of Kazuramimba on December 10, 2012 was attended by:

- District Executive Director,
- District Officers,
- NGOs interested in Forestry and other issues (Jane Goodall Institute - JGI),
- Extension Officers,
- ICAP and international NGOs that deals particularly with HIV and AIDS.
- Representatives of and spokespeople for the village of Kazuramimba (see below).

The presence of JGI and the International Center for AIDS Care and Treatment Programs (ICAP) was important because it affirms their continuing engagement with Kazurmimba and follow-through on initiatives begun with the FAO Pilot Project. With officials and representatives of agencies and NGOs attending, it was important from the beginning to create an environment that would ensure that villagers felt truly comfortable and able to engage on an equal/level playing field. Thus the CET made sure that the setting for the meeting was very informal – for example no ceremonial speeches were made. This in itself was quite different from how meetings in the past had been held. The seating was also arranged so that villagers and stakeholders were all at the same level.

6.2 Presentation by Villagers and Villager Leaders

The theme of the meeting was 'what the villagers of Kazuramimba want to achieve by working together with District authorities and NGOs.' The presentation made by the village people and the dialogue that followed was organized around this theme. Prior to the meeting, the villager leaders had conducted several meetings with village council committees and villagers to lay out clearly in advance what they hoped to get out of the dialogue – emphasizing what the villagers need and want.

They discussed with their citizens how they would like to present their case. With a village population in excess of 30,000, obviously a meeting would only work if representatives were selected to participate directly; so in order to save time and allow for meaningful discussion, a spokespersons group had been selected to represent the community, make the presentation and participate in a question/answer dialogue. Care was taken to select spokespersons from all sectors: agriculturalists, women, pastoralists,

youth, shop-keepers, representatives of the environment committees, Village Executive Officer, and religious leaders. This was important to show the stakeholders that a few leaders were not speaking only for themselves but that what was being said represented the opinions of a broad cross-section of the community that included all interests.

The Pilot Project Community Engagement Team (CET) attended the pre-forum village and sub-village level meetings and encouraged the spokespeople/representatives to set priorities and avoid making any “pie-in-the-sky” requests that were not realistic. As a result of the work of the CET the community had developed an annual village environmental work plan which identified things that impact residents’ lives in negative ways as well as things they believed can be possible and that they can achieve. The CET also reminded the villagers that at a single meeting it was unlikely that every topic they would like to discuss could be covered; so they were advised to focus on issues that were a priority at this time, and on which they believed something could be accomplished. Through the process recognition grew that they should not expect to do everything at once. It was vital that they set priorities in direct consultation with their fellow-villagers, to make sure that there was broad agreement and acceptance. Once they achieve success in these first steps, they can build on the strength they gain through that experience of working together, and move on to their other issues and challenges. Throughout this process the CET’s role was to listen as much to talk, suggesting new ideas where they were appropriate and helpful, but not insisting that they be accepted. Suggestions were not directives but rather were just meant to help them shape what they would say to the policy makers.

Setting priorities during the pre-forum meetings helped the village spokespeople and the leaders clarify their views and develop a clear agenda which was circulated among the stakeholders and district authorities before the meeting, so that all parties were aware in advance what they would be talking about and what the people of Kazuramimba were requesting. This advance preparation was an important strategy intended to give the policymakers and stakeholders the opportunity to prepare and thus avoid any surprises that might lead to confrontation. Before the dialogue began, villagers, policy makers and planners were all reminded that the objective was not to have fine speeches or to talk in broad generalities, but to address the specific needs that had been identified and to try to figure out together how the issues can be addressed and, hopefully, resolved.

The lively three-hour discussion between the villagers, the District authority, and the stakeholders began with a presentation by the village spokespeople that included specific questions around the priorities they had identified:

1. The village had previously participated in a Proper Land Management Plan which allocated land for agriculturalists to use and land for use by pastoralists. Later, resources for mining were discovered in areas that had been allocated for agricultural and pastoral use. *How can we deal with this situation as we are implementing a Proper Land Management plan? How many acres should one person own?*
2. Village Council had prepared environmental bylaws that included regulations for burning. *When should we expect that the environmental bylaws submitted by the Village Council to the District Government will be approved so that we will have another tool to protect the environment and control and reduce the burning of grasses and forest?*
3. The village has planned to protect resources around the village and stop burning fires. However resources like forests and lime are being shifted outside of the community’s jurisdiction and villagers are not benefiting from those resources. *How can villagers be motivated to protect the environment if they don’t see any benefits?*

4. Although villagers are told they are responsible for protecting resources, the permits to exploit these resources are being issued by the District without any consultation with them. This does not work. *Why does this happen and why should villagers be held responsible for managing resources over which they have no direct control?*
5. Traditional land title deeds would help both pastoralists and agriculturalists officially have ownership of the land they cultivate and use for grazing livestock. Ownership would give them reason to value their land more and hence stop burning grasses and doing other environmental damage to it. *When will land title deeds be processed in our village?*
6. There is need for villagers to find additional/alternative economic activities that are environmentally friendly. *What steps can we take in order to create economic opportunities especially for women and youth that are friendly to the environment and use alternative energy that will help reduce deforestation and air pollutants?*
7. Pastoralists have identified the need to be better educated about profitable grazing and building a 'cattle dip' near the village in order to keep their cattle more healthy and productive. As well the farmers would like to know how they can improve their soil to bring back some of the productivity of the past. *What can be done to help us address these issues?*
8. We are planning to find new ways to motivate our fellow-citizens to prevent wildfires by encouraging them to plant trees. *How can we work together to establish a tree-nursery in our village and educate the adults in our community as well as the school children about tree planting and environmental conservation in general?*
9. A serious concern is that the quality of health care at the local dispensary is not adequate: there are not enough personnel, equipment, or space and as a result women and children mortalities are increasing, HVI and AIDS testing and AVR services are not available in this community with more than 30,000 people. *How can we work together to improve the services at our dispensary to protect the lives of people in the same way that we are protecting the environment?*

6.3 Responses from District officials and Civil Society stakeholders

On the question of a Proper Village Land Management Plan the District Executive Director (DED) and officers concerned explained that Proper Land Management for a village is a twenty-year plan, and can only be amended after five years. In order for it to be implemented there must be a survey that marks out all areas such as water sources, forest, land for agriculture uses and for livestock grazing and other uses so that everybody knows how their land can be utilized.

Furthermore assurance was given that the village is permitted to question anyone who is involved in lime production or mining or any other business using land, to ensure that the environment protection act is followed. If these operators don't have proper permits and a strategy for environmental protection, the District Executive should be informed immediately.

Then the DED officially presented the village with a Proper Village Land Management Plan with attached by-laws so that the community will have the necessary tools and be able to implement and enforce the accompanying bylaws to protect the environment.

The District authorities went on to inform the gathering that the Proper Land Management Plan belongs to the village. Acquiring land is a human right that should be applied so that every person can acquire land, including vulnerable groups such as women, orphans, people with disabilities, elderly people etc. Village leaders should ensure that no one has excessive land which is not utilized. Furthermore the forests and

other resources should benefit the whole village. "We need to work with the forestry ward associations to clarify the regulations and their responsibilities in implementing them." The DED further emphasized: "I encourage you to register JUMTANGO (*Jumuhia ya Kuhifadhi Misitu ya Mkati, Ntanda, na Ng'gomyi*) officially with the sector concerned so that we can establish working guidelines that will benefit both the village and the District. Through this arrangement we can sustain managing the forests and resources around us."

Regarding traditional title deeds, the DED said that "it is not difficult to process the traditional title deed. It has been done in other villages within our district. It is within our reach and we have resources for this. The Village Council needs to send a request in my office."

The District Executive Officer, extension officers, and the NGOs encouraged the villagers to establish associations in the village to help achieve their objectives. For example, JGI suggested that they mobilize small Village Community Bank (VICOPA) groups that can be turned into a Savings and Credit Cooperative (SACCO) which would then make it possible for financial institutions to provide soft loans to the village. JGI promised to assist the villagers in forming those financial institutions.

It was also recommended that the pastoralists establish an association through which they can raise their voices. The District authorities continued, "We would advise the pastoralists to contribute right away to begin construction of the 'Cattle Dip' they need. The District can only support existing efforts or initiatives that are already underway."

There was a substantial discussion around the issues of pastoralists and farmers, which led to the following action plan: village leaders should assist pastoralists to conduct a census of cattle ownership to determine how many animals any one pastoralist should have. They should also help monitor any new influx of pastoralists from outside the village, enforce by-laws so the pastoralists do not exceed the allowed maximum number of cattle, and work with the pastoralists on sustaining the grazing areas so that the animals will have continuous access to good pastures.

Similarly, the agriculturalists were encouraged to form farmers' associations and set up food warehouses. The associations would create a functional framework to increase the likelihood of financial institutions being willing to provide loans while having the warehouses would help them develop good markets for their crops.

The District as well as the NGOs represented at the forum meeting committed themselves to work with community on modern techniques to improve agriculture and animal husbandry and to establish a tree-nursery to help community people change attitudes and take actions to improve the village outlook and the life of all residents.

On the question of improving the quality of health care and the health of the people, the stakeholders from the District and NGOs agreed that it is important to build strong, healthy communities that can in turn protect the environment. The District Executive Director proposed that the village start by taking small steps toward building a health center. The initial steps she proposed included: identifying land that could be used to build a clinic and begin collecting materials such as sand and bricks. Once the villagers have the land and materials in place for the health center, the District and Region are likely to intervene. "Show us the sign and we will continue."

The ICAP Director based in Kigoma Region added that they are working with the District to increase the quality of service, and plans are underway to allocate the medical officer at Kazuramimba so that other

services can be available such as Antiretroviral (ARV) drugs and HVI and AIDs testing. He also advised the villagers to form an HIV and AIDs committee and identify people that can be trained to provide health services such as family planning in the village. The JGI representative added that his organization is reexamining the Home Based Care program for the village to improve services to families that are affected by HIV and AIDs.

In her closing remarks, the District Executive Director reiterated what she had said previously, and encouraged the people of Kazuramimba to implement the plan. "This is the model that should be implemented in other places. We should talk about it within and outside our district. She then instructed the District officers to help the community evaluate the plan and its progress every three months and to send their report to District office. A number of media were present and they were encouraged to follow up on what would follow from the meetings not only with villagers but also with the District and NGOs stakeholders to ensure each partner is doing its part. If the media do this, it will help keep the process in the public eye and may encourage others to be more aware of environmental issues and of the role ordinary village people can play in raising important policy and implementation issues and engaging actively in dialogue with policy and decision makers.

The positive tone of the forum, the level of participation by the community representatives, the interest of and positive suggestions made by the outside stakeholders (both government and civil society) was very encouraging and will hopefully lay the foundations for a creative and innovative on-going relationship that will be to the benefit of all.

7

7 Evaluation

7.1 Introduction

Between August and early December, 2012, FAO-Tanzania commissioned a Pilot Project to explore the potential of implementing a communications methodology to address the serious issue of wildfires that was different from the traditional “campaign” approach. The area selected was in the Kigoma Region, with particular focus on the village of Kazuramimba, a community with a population of over 30,000. The approach taken was based on the paradigm of working from the bottom up rather than imposing from the top down by listening before talking. The key communications tool was oral/aural utilized directly in the village with community playbacks and broadcast in three regions, namely Kigoma, Mwanza and Kagera, over the Radio Kwizera network. The functional time-frame for the project was approximately fourteen weeks.

The objective of the Pilot was to enable those who have been largely marginalized and uninvolved in the development dialogue, even when it impacts them directly, to be heard and to engage with policy-makers and decision-makers. This was to help them look at their own attitudes around the issues of fires and burning, to analyze them as much as possible and to consider what, if anything, they could do to become more environmentally aware and adopt practices that will respect the natural forest and grass resources so that burning will be controlled and the environment around their villages will become less vulnerable to fire.

Upon the conclusion of the Pilot, which culminated with a forum of community members, District officials (including the District Executive Director) and directors and representatives of key NGOs operating in the region, the following assessment/evaluation was undertaken to determine if anything positive had been achieved. The purpose was to get feedback from a good cross-section of the community – including pastoralists, agriculturalist, community people (village leaders, women and men, youth and children, representatives of village committees), as well as District government departments, schools, agencies and NGOs that have started to work with the people in Kazuramimba.

The ultimate goal of the assessment was not only to collect people’s ideas about what happened but also to explore if there were any tangible indications of change. One key piece of evidence, for example, would be if the villagers in Kazuramimba were more interested in wildfire and other environmental issues at the conclusion of the Pilot than they had been at the beginning when, initial research revealed the level of interest was negligible. In fact in interviews conducted in early September subjects indicated that the subject was not a priority, of no real concern and there was very little evidence of understanding of or interest in any environmental issues. Although there were fire crews who had responsibility for dealing with fires that might threaten the village itself, they were largely inactive otherwise.

They indicated that any efforts they had made to raise awareness or provide information about fire-related issues had been rebuffed or simply dismissed – even by the village council itself. A “village environmental committee” was similarly inactive and lacked any sense of direction or purpose. It was as if it had been set up at some point, merely as a *pro-forma* exercise as the result of some directive from a higher government level.

The evaluation was not as rigorous as an academic exercise would require; time simply would not allow for that. To determine if any change had occurred, the evaluation process began by identifying a few key

issues and asking individuals or focus groups to assess how they thought things had evolved during the pilot project. In particular whether or not they had detected any noticeable change (however slight) in attitude, spirit, interest, and willingness to talk about fires or environmental related issues on the part of the village people. The evaluation concentrated on what (if any) changes were seen and what were the observations that suggested any changes that might have occurred.

7.2 Pilot Activities

Over the fourteen-week period of the Pilot a variety of activities were undertaken. The key first one was to select and train four Community Engagement Team members who would work through the project as community animators and be responsible for recording and editing programmes for village listening sessions and radio broadcasts. As well, a Consultation Committee involving seven representatives from the District and international NGOs working in the region met four times to discuss different aspects of the process as the project evolved. During these meeting they had an opportunity to evaluate and amend the project.

Key to the process were training sessions and meetings with community leaders, villagers, schools, and village committees, religious leaders, and individuals. A total of 700 people attended meetings and training sessions or participated in interviews for the radio programmes. Three meetings were conducted with District extension officers, to keep them up to date about the project and to give them the opportunity to contribute knowledge and information needed and requested by the community.

Twenty-eight radio programmes were prepared and aired through Radio Kwizera. Topics included the background to and history of Kazuramimba, concerns about agricultural issues and knowledge they needed to improve their farming techniques and improve their crop yields, and basic needs of the community to improve health and education. The voices heard were primarily those of the villagers themselves, with a few brief narrative bridges to tie them together and create coherent programmes. The radio shows also included knowledge provided by district officers and other experts on the issues raised by the community people. What was interesting to observe was that even early in the process of recording interviews and preparing the programmes, some villagers began to express concerns about environmental changes they had observed and a couple even acknowledged that nobody really liked to "live in a desert." Others speculated that perhaps excessive burning might be contributing to the declining productivity of the soil. Observations such as these led naturally to discussions about what actions could be taken to protect their environment.

While the CET from the initial introductions in the village made it known that they were interested in issues related to burning, it is important to note that at no time did members apply pressure to solicit responses about environmental or any other issues. Their role was as facilitators to discussion and animators providing the community with the means to explore their interests and express their concerns. Nor was any judgment shown or criticism proffered when in early interviews environmental and burning issues were more or less dismissed by residents in Kazuramimba.

7.3 What are the Observations that Suggested Changes?

As the Pilot proceeded over fourteen weeks, village leaders, including members of the Village Executive Council, the Environmental Committee and the Fire Crews demonstrated several characteristics that

indicated changed attitudes about environmental conservation and their responsibilities towards it. One important characteristic was new commitment. Whereas fourteen weeks earlier the CET found a lack of energy verging on apathy towards issues about burning and, indeed any environmental issues, by the last weeks of November all of the groups were actively engaged in formulating a work plan for 2013 which they hoped would not only educate their fellow-villagers about environmental issues, but also would motivate them to become more pro-active in protecting their environment.

Furthermore they did not leave it at simply formulating the agenda for 2013 but also took the initiative to communicate their plan to the District government (at the highest level) and to NGOs such as the Jane Goodall Institute (JGI) which worked in the field of wildfire reduction, seeking partnerships to ensure that their plan will be implemented. Aside from external partnerships, they also sought internal partnerships with their fellow residents through sub-village leaders and religious leaders to ensure that the people of Kazuramimba would continue to “buy into” the process. Furthermore, they took advantage of the growing stakeholders’ interest in what was beginning to happen in Kazuramimba to seize the initiative and push the District authorities to finalize the bylaws and Village Proper Land Management plan so that they would have the necessary tools to enforce the proper uses of fires and environmental conservation in general.

Another indication of their increased interest and commitment was the enthusiasm with which they began to promote the radio programmes being made in Kazuramimba by sending text messages to people in their networks. They were eager to share their stories with others. Not to be left behind by their constituents, the village leaders actively participated by planting trees to protect water sources, not just for the short term but for the long term.

What was particularly encouraging to observe was how the villagers developed capacities to identify weak areas in need of improvement such as:

- delays in the confirmation and dissemination of bylaws;
- inertia that had to that point retarded the implementation of a Village Proper Land Management plan required to identify clearly land-use area;
- issues impeding the development of pastoralist-farmer relationships;
- agriculturalist and pastoralist issues such as soil depletion and adequate pasture land – both of which were factors that impacted burning practices by the two groups.

That for the first time the different groups and interests in the community were talking openly about issues with each other and with their district leaders as well as over the radio was a clear indication that they were beginning to understand their problems in new ways and were prepared to work together to tackle them.

Also new was the desire expressed by many in the village to do things to turn Kazuramimba into a more attractive greener village like villagers in other communities had been doing. Protection of the environment, which in early September barely registered as an issue had, by early December, become a priority as villagers discovered that there are things they can do to protect their local environment and improve the quality of life. This was an indication that they had begun to find conserving the environment very interesting, and taken an interest in doing something about it. “We think it is time to change our attitude in order to rescue our environment,” said one of villagers. “We must listen to the experts’ ideas

and work with our leaders to turn things around and make Kazuramimba look like the village it was in 1974 with a lot of food, forests, a flowing river, and good rainfalls.”

During the forum held on December 10, villagers accepted the annual plan to protect the environment that had been prepared by the Village Executive Council in consultation with the different village groups, and asked questions to seek clarity.

Up to the time the Pilot began, there had been no interest by school teachers in environmental issues. During the project, however, school teachers’ interest levels grew dramatically and they changed from doing “business as usual” to becoming pro-active in making their school compounds more attractive. Each school in the village designated an area in which to plant trees and flowers and grasses to reduce dust and soil erosion. They involved their students in the projects by making them supervisors of the identified areas so that the flowers, trees, and grasses would grow. If continued, engaging the citizens of the future pro-actively has the potential to generate long-term transformational change in villages.

Another important activity of the Pilot was to enable school children to participate directly in a fire and environment protection campaign for their community. This “branding” exercise produced a calendar about issues around burning and the need to protect forests, from the community perspective. The exercise came about as a result of the CET learning through the initial interviews that posters of previous “top-down” campaigns had left virtually no impression on anyone in the village. The resultant exercise with school children demonstrated that village people can be directly engaged in creating messaging tools and that the local perspective they bring strengthens the long-term impact of a campaign by direct engagement and involvement.

That this experiment with the school children had been effective beyond its intent to create messaging became evident during the Forum between the policy-makers and villagers when the students educated their parents about steps they needed take to protect the village environment and use fire wisely. It was also encouraging when teachers requested the villager leaders to include one teacher from each school for training in environment issues. This was affirmation that teachers in Kazuramimba have begun to recognize the long-term importance of teaching about environmental protection in the schools and are taking ownership of these issues and seeking ways to improve their capacity to teach their students about them.

The role of the NGOs during the short life of the Pilot and the support and encouragement given to the CET – especially by the Jane Goodall Institute and The Tanzanian Community Forestry Network (MJUMITA) that were involved from the beginning – was important. The Director of the JGI pointed out that providing knowledge on environmental and fire uses as well as soil and other development issues had helped address specific and expressed needs of people directly rather than attempting to promote a single element in more generic terms. Representatives of the NGOs were also pleased to note that the interventions of the Pilot had directly contributed to the District authorities developing new interest in working with the village on the environment issues. “We were impressed to see how the District moved quickly and submitted the Village Proper Land Management Plan. The plan had been so long awaited and it was good that it now was back in the hands of the villagers so that they can start implementing it.”

When it came to how their involvement in the Pilot had helped them, the NGOs expressed the view that one of the most impressive results was that the villagers came up with their own implementation plan. This, they feel, is an indication that the villagers are starting to become authors of their own development and custodians of their environment. “With this community, we have a place to start. The village plan to

address environmental issues is a point of entry for us. We don't need to reinvent the wheel. We will join their plan and assist them to implement it." They continued, "We have also learned how to use radio effectively to promote environmental issues and other related development issues in the rural areas through engaging the community people and authorities.

The participation of District leaders and officers and their engagement with the community increased noticeably during the Pilot. For example, extension officers provided knowledge over the radio in direct response to concerns expressed by villagers. The office of the Executive Director finalized and submitted the Village Proper Land Management Plan. Village leaders had claimed that the plan took a very long time to be processed. The District Executive Director (DED) organized the meeting between the village leaders and District officers to discuss the village's 2013 implementation plan for environment conservation. The officers provided inputs that connected the village's planning to the District plan for which funds may be available.

The DED indicated that she will dedicate her time to ensure traditional title deeds are provided for the village. High level District leaders came twice to the village to speak to the villagers. The most remarkable moment was at the Forum Meeting where District authorities accepted questions -- some of which challenged the effectiveness of the District to deliver results. Nonetheless, the officials responded to the villagers' concerns very positively and assured them of their cooperation.

Finally, the trust of District authorities in media and in how it can be utilized to promote and support development increased. District officials became comfortable to speak to media and they participated in radio programmes and responded to villager's questions. Quite remarkably during the Forum, the District Commissioner challenged the media to be pro-active by following up on the commitments made by both the District and the village to see how they are doing their parts to implement the village's 2013 plan on environment conservation. Such a challenge by policy and decision-makers at senior levels of government are rare, even in more developed societies. It is an indication that the commissioner recognizes the role that responsible media that actively engages citizens and helps create a participatory environment that facilitates open, frank, but non-confrontational dialogue can play an important role in development. This could also be a first step in establishing relationships that foster stronger governance and accountability on the part of governments and the acceptance of greater responsibility on the part of citizens with an effective press fulfilling the crucial monitoring role to create greater awareness on all sides. This in turn can lead to greater oversight of environmental and all other important development issues and initiatives.

As indicated at the beginning this is not a scientific but a qualitative evaluation that relies on reporting what actually transpired through the course of the Pilot. It attempts to assess how actions and initiatives at the community level with groups and individuals reflects changes from what was the case at the beginning to what was the case at the end – with input from village people and leaders as well as stakeholders (District level government and NGOs). The evidence shows that over a very short time-frame significant change occurred that led from a broadly observed and stated level of apathy to a core group of pro-active citizens who formulated the village implementation plan for 2013.

Probably for the first time in memory citizens of all categories and at all levels in Kazamurimba (hunters, pastoralists, beekeepers, agriculturalists, women, youth, leaders, teachers and school children) are actively engaging in positive decision-making and initiatives to improve the quality of their lives. They are recognizing that they can make a difference in their community and are demonstrating that their voices are heard and what they have to say is respectively listened to they can make good choices and become active participants in planning and implementing development initiatives.

There is evidence of a broad recognition of the environment and its importance to maintaining healthy forward-looking communities, and growing understanding that over-burning is damaging to the environment and undermines the quality of life for everyone.

The importance of listening first, before intervening, and accepting input from the bottom up pays dividends. In the case of the work with Kazurimamba it has not only led to increased awareness of and concomitant action to address environmental issues that include destructive and unnecessary burning but to initiatives to improve agriculture, help provide better grazing areas and other care for livestock, introduce credit opportunities for women and young people, improve education and begin to address the need for better health care that will benefit all. The willingness of the top District officials to listen to – indeed to welcome – the input from the villagers was equally impressive. If this “process” approach to development is to work, there must be acceptance on the part of those who set policy and make and implement decisions to become active collaborators in development with the people of the communities for which they have responsibilities. Likewise the Pilot has demonstrated the importance of good Civil Society partners such as the JGI and the International Centre for AIDS Care and Treatment (ICAP); their involvement will be critical going forward to maintain continuity of what has been started and provide support to the village initiatives.

Time constraints limited the capacity of the CET to pursue more actively wider engagement with radio audiences outside of the Kazuramimba area. Nor was it possible to explore to a desirable extent the potential for broader engagement through social media. Allocation of resources to pursue these initiatives would be important in the case of any full project being launched employing the “process” methodology of the Pilot.

While the Pilot demonstrated that oral/aural-only media can be very effective tools for engagement, there were numerous occasions in which it was felt that having a visual capacity would strengthen understanding and accelerate motivation. Nonetheless the role of media in creating peer-to-peer knowledge exchanges was confirmed (e.g. as villagers from other communities described their successes in environmental planning).

Thanks to this Pilot project there is now a small group of practitioners with basic experience in this “process” approach to development. This is a resource that should be further cultivated so that with further training and experience they will develop the capacity to lead projects based on this paradigm.

It is not clear for how long this initiative will be sustained. Ideally the CET would continue providing some support and follow-up as the villagers and other stakeholders begin to take full responsibility for implementation of the village plan and to undertake a thorough evaluation at the end of the next dry season to collect information and see how effective the initiative has been in reducing fires and areas burned. Regardless of the fact that the Pilot stopped at the beginning stage of when the villagers have begun to take actions and collaborate with their District and NGO partners, indications are that those involved at the community level have been well-sensitized to the importance of building on what has transpired and the commitment of the District level officials and the local NGOs is encouraging. Good foundations have been laid in a very short time; not only for fire management but also for other related development issues. It is a call for everyone concerned in the Kigoma region to build on these foundations to establish continuity and use the work done as a model which can be replicated in other communities in years to come.

8

8 Conclusions

8.1 Lessons Learned

It is worth repeating that what has been outlined above has taken place within a very limited time-frame. The duration of the Pilot Project upon its completion in December was a little less than four months. The challenge from the outset was to attempt to address deeply entrenched mind-sets and resultant behaviours in a responsible and sustainable way, and to initiate some change that can be carried forward.

The experience outlined is evidence that the approach works. That the paradigm of “listening before talking” (or planning or setting policy) is appropriate and culturally flexible; that actively engaging intended beneficiaries of development agendas and providing opportunities for their voices to be heard and their input to be incorporated into the planning process promises to be enormously beneficial for all stakeholders and for the nation.

Despite initial apprehensions, the Pilot has demonstrated that oral/aural tools on their own can very effectively engage participants. The process can enable the “voices” of those who are marginalized and disenfranchised within the development policy-making/implementation context to be heard, foster productive and instructive peer-to-peer learning, create bridges between different groups and levels of government and promote constructive dialogue within communities about the nature and specifics of implementing development initiatives that directly impact day-to-day life.

Just as the *Fogo Process* demonstrated that dedicated field workers were essential catalysts in process work, the Community Engagement Team has been pivotal to the successes of this Pilot Project. This well-led, highly motivated group has shown how critical the role of community worker is in implementing an effective, change-oriented development initiative.

8.2 Final Thoughts

As the Pilot ends amidst considerable pride and enthusiasm for what has been accomplished and demonstrated, it should be noted that what has sprouted is young and fragile. Time alone will show whether or not the roots have been planted deeply enough to ensure the flowering of a strong plant of participation and on-going engagement. What is encouraging is the “buy in” of local government departments and agencies and civil society organizations and their commitment to provide on-going tangible and moral support. Also encouraging is the enthusiasm of the people of Kazuramimba and their leaders. Not everything they have planned may work out as they have intended; for example maintaining a weekly *ubhumwe* day may become impractical, but even if it were to be modified to a monthly occurrence that could provide considerable momentum. What is particularly heartening is that they have identified important but relatively small initiatives that are well within their capacity to manage. As they succeed in one undertaking more of their fellow-citizens may be encouraged to join in to other activities – especially if, down the road in dry seasons they find that their environment and quality of life is much improved thanks to a reduction in burning.

The ultimate success of this pilot from the perspective of the sponsor can only be seen in years ahead if there is evidence of fewer fires being set in the area around Kazuramimba. It is to be hoped that some follow through on this can be undertaken. It would be ideal if a nation-wide initiative could be launched,

based on the experience of this Pilot Project, and if this were to happen, follow-up with and continued engagement with Kazuramimba should be part of the agenda.

The experience of this Pilot Project has clearly demonstrated the efficacy of a focused “listening first” *process* approach. However some intended components were left unfulfilled, simply due to the lack of time. Two notable areas for further exploration are 1) social media utilization and 2) strengthening of the broadcast feed-back and outreach element (which would require focused concentration for someone to build listenership responses). Furthermore it was not until near the end of the Pilot that the dynamic within the community and between the CET and villagers had reached the point at which it was deemed appropriate and not disruptive to introduce outside media to cover the story. The aspect of disseminating information about the progress being made – “spreading the word” so to speak – was not explored as thoroughly as could be the case in a full-scale project.

One final point is worth noting. While this Pilot Project demonstrated that utilizing voice alone can be effective, subsequent “process” initiatives based on this paradigm would benefit from inclusion of visual content – whether through “process” use of video or time to explore the full potential of emerging social media. Whatever “tools” are selected, the essential ingredient must always be motivated, sensitive and well-trained community workers with the skills to make full use of the tools with which they are provided.

