

Country Name	Participatory Forest Resource Management Project in the Transitional Zone
Ghana	

I. Project Outline

Project Cost	474 million yen	
Project Period	March, 2004 – March, 2009	
Implementing Agency	Forestry Commission - Forest Services Division (FSD), Ministry of Lands, Forestry and Mines	
Cooperation Agency in Japan	-	
Related Projects (if any)	<p>Japan's cooperation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · The Study on the Reserve Forest Management in Transitional Zone in Ghana (Development Study, 1997-1999) · Dispatch of individual expert (2001-2003) · Follow-up cooperation for this project (2011) 	
Background	<p>In Ghana, pace of reduction of forest cover reached the annual average of 1.7% (120,000 ha) during 1990 to 2000. In the Transitional Zone lying between the High Forest Zone and the Savannah Zone, degradation of forest resources was serious due to over-logging and wildfire; thus restoration and conservation of forest resources was an urgent issue. Sunyani Forest District in Brong Ahafo Region, the target area of this project, was located in the Transitional Zone and rich in forest resources with the seven forest reserves. In addition to serving as a resource, forests there played important roles for local people in ways that they brought good rainfall and protected agricultural crops from the Hamatan (seasonal wind with sand blown from the Sahara desert).</p> <p>Under this circumstance, Japan implemented a development study and dispatched an individual expert in Forest Reserve Management in Sunyani Forest District. Based on the achievement of such cooperation, the government of Ghana requested Japan for the implementation of this project to carry out sustainable forest management in a participatory manner.</p>	
Inputs	Japanese Side	Ghanaian Side
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Experts: 3 for Long term, 4 for Short term and 6 on outsourcing basis from the private sector¹ 2. Trainees Received: 5 persons 3. Equipment: 38 million yen 4. Local Cost: 75 million yen 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Staff Allocated: 22 persons 2. Land and Facilities: FSD Brong Ahafo Office, FSD Head office (Accra) 3. Local Cost: 12 million yen
Project Objectives	Overall goal	
	Improved participatory approaches for sustainable forest reserve management are adopted in Sunyani Forest District	
	Project Objective	
Participatory approaches for sustainable management of the forest reserves in the Transitional Zone are improved through pilot activities in Sunyani Forest District		Outputs
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) FSD personnel are trained in necessary skills and knowledge for planning and implementing participatory Forest Reserve Management Plan (FRMP). 2) Manual of Procedure (MoP) is modified to reflect the draft Strategic Plan (SP). 3) Partnership between FSD and target communities for Forest Reserve Management is established. 4) FRMPs are developed with active participation of local population. 5) Forest reserve management activities are implemented in collaboration with local population. 6) Recommendations on the basis of lessons learned from project are submitted to the government of Ghana. 		

II. Result of the Evaluation

Summary of the Evaluation

In Ghana, community participation had been consistently important in a series of policies related to forest restoration and conservation. However, the challenge lied on establishing a practical method to operationalize the concept of forest conservation on the ground.

For the project purpose of developing and upgrading the participatory approach in sustainable forest conservation, this project developed the draft FRMP for the two forest reserves (direct target sites of this project) and implemented the community activities, the central component of the FRMP, with high satisfaction of the participant communities. However, there observed some challenges at the time of the ex-post evaluation: the draft FRMP has not been officially approved yet, and the FSD of the Forest Committee is in a position to continue the process for approval. Also, the community activities became stagnant after the project completion. As for the overall goal, although FRMP was approved for one of the seven

¹ At the beginning, this project had been directly managed by JICA. In May 2006, after the mid-term evaluation, the project management was outsourced to the private sector in order to avoid risks associated with yearly selection of personnel (experts to dispatch) and thus to further enhance consistency and efficiency.

forest reserves in Sunyani Forest District after project completion, the FSD District Office continues consultations with the FSD Region Office and the head office of the Forest Committee toward development of FRMPs. As for sustainability, some problems have been observed in terms of the implementing agency's structural, technical and financial aspects due to (i) difficulties in allocating personnel and securing transportation means to fully practice participatory forest management based on the achievement of this project, (ii) only some evidences to show the utilization of the models of Green Belt (GB) Activities² and Income Generation Activities (IGA) at the time of ex-post evaluation, and (iii) continuous effort is needed to secure the budget allocation for some actions to establish FRMP.

For relevance, the project has been highly relevant with Ghana's development policy, development needs as well as Japan's ODA policy. For efficiency, while the project cost significantly exceeded the plan, the project period was within the plan.

In the light of above, this project is evaluated to be partially satisfactory.

1 Relevance

This project has been highly relevant with Ghana's development policy "Forestation through conservation of forest land" as set in the Ghana Poverty Reduction Strategy (GPRS, 2003) and the GPRS II (2006-2008), development needs (participatory forest conservation in Sunyani Forest District, Brong Ahafo Region) as well as Japan's ODA policy "Revitalization of rural area" as set in the Country Assistance Program for Ghana, at the time of both ex-ante evaluation and project completion. Therefore, relevance of this project is high.

2 Effectiveness/Impact

This project set an indicator "FRMPs are developed" to measure the achievement of the overall goal and the project purpose. However, the project document and other reports did not clarify the criteria on how to determine if a plan was "developed". To carry out evaluation, the ex-post evaluation team set a criterion by which a FRMP is regarded as "developed" once a workshop to validate the draft FRMP is held, and at the workshop, the draft FRMP is presented as the final draft for approval. This criterion is based on a recommendation noted in the terminal evaluation report that the project should complete the validation workshop by the end of the project period.

This project developed the "PAFORM Model", a participatory approach for sustainable management of forest conservation. More specifically, the draft FRMPs incorporating community activities such as GB and IGA were developed for Tain I Forest Reserve and Nzemere Forest Reserve, respectively, through pilot activities (i.e., participatory forest management activities). As a result, the two indicators for the project purpose, namely, satisfaction of the participant communities and the development of the FRMPs, were achieved by the project completion time. Regarding the status of forest management activities at the time of the ex-post evaluation, a good practice of GB (harvesting citrus fruits as part of sustainable forest management) was observed. Difficulties were however seen in documenting complex issues of land ownership (e.g., securing the land use right and managing agricultural products from the concerned land), and now the Legal Department of Forestry Commission is still studying the draft memorandum of understanding to advance the process of agreeing between the Forestry Commission and affected Forest Fringe Communities. Also, there observed stagnation of some community activities due to lack of initial investment and markets for IGAs.

For the overall goal, only one FRMP has been adopted for another Forest Reserve in Sunyani Forest District (the above-mentioned draft FRMPs for the two project pilot reserves have not been officially approved by FSD yet due to the change in political administrations and personnel transfer). While the characteristic activities of the PARORM Model such as GB and IGAs are not seen in this approved FRMP, stakeholders have been involved in the planning process (i.e., through a participatory approach). Also, FSD continues its efforts to increase the number of FRMPs. In addition, according to the implementing agency, there are neither negative impacts of the forest reserve management activities on the ecosystem nor involuntary resettlement due to this project. Therefore, effectiveness/impact of this project is fair.

In 2011, JICA implemented the follow-up cooperation of this project, under which FSD and the communities agreed on measures to solve the above-mentioned issues (see "4 Sustainability").

3 Efficiency

Although the amount of time allocated for preparation and implementation of the exit strategy was not long enough, the project period was within the plan. The project cost was significantly higher than the plan (ratio against the plan: 156%) because of the change of the project management system from direct management by JICA to a consignment basis. Therefore, efficiency of the project is fair.

4 Sustainability

This project continues to be in an important position in Ghana as the development of FRMPs is ongoing with other donors' assistance such as the Natural Resources and Environmental Governance (NREG) program.

The structure of the implementing agency has been sustained in a similar manner to the one during the implementation period. The FSD Sunyani Forest District Office took over the job of Community Facilitators that had been the central entity of the project implementation. Although the implementation structure for GB and IGAs is facing challenges such as lack of personnel and transportation means, FSD continues monitoring of GB and IGA by utilizing opportunities of site visits such as patrolling to fulfill various duties of forest conservation. In practicing IGAs, the coordination between FSD and the Ministry of Food and Agriculture is not sufficient.

In the technical aspect, the field officers of FSD are trained on forest conservation duties through on the job training. It is deemed, and FSD acknowledges, that FSD officers have basic skills of developing FRMPs as they actually developed one after the project completion. However, it will require more time to consolidate the skills for introducing GB and IGAs fully under FRMPs. Note that the communities that continue GB have shared and practiced the contents of sustainable forest

² Green Belt (GB) Activities include planting and growing fruit trees by communities with support from FSD, aiming to consolidate the cooperative relationship between FSD and the communities.

management.

In the financial aspect, a progress is expected as the fiscal 2012 budget was approved for implementation of GB in both Tain I and Nzemere Forest Reserves (i.e., cost of purchasing seedlings and fuel for field visits by officers). However, still continuous effort is needed to secure the budget allocation for development and approval of FRMPs though being behind the schedule the Forestry Commission initiated efforts to finance the final phase of the Forest Management Plans with funds released from NREG allocations for 2013. FSD Bong Ahafo Region Office and Sunyani Forest District Office continue their work toward the mainstreaming of PAFORM (e.g., stating in FSD's operation manuals) and promotion of GB and IGAs implementation based on the five-year plan agreed upon at the re-orientation workshop in 2011 (held as part of the follow-up cooperation).

From the above, the project has some problems in the structural, technical and financial aspects of the implementing agency. Therefore, sustainability of the effects of this project is fair.

III. Recommendations & Lessons Learned

Recommendations for Implementing agency

- Although some activities are stagnant, the FSD Region and District Offices should ensure implementation of the five-year plan that was agreed by the stakeholders at the re-orientation workshop in 2011.
- Measures should be taken to put the FRMPs of Tain I and Nzemere into practice.
- For revitalizing currently stagnant IGA, concrete plans of coordination between FSD and the Ministry of Food and Agriculture should be discussed again.

Lessons learned for JICA

- In case where the core project activities are carried out by outside personnel hired by the project, such as the Community Facilitators of this project, the exit strategy should thoroughly consider the capacity and work environment of those who are to take over the job (officers of the FSD Sunyani District Office in case of this project).
- In a project with indicators that expect development of plans or consensus documents, each action plan to reach the target (e.g., memorandum of understanding on land use for GB and FRMP) should clearly identify the process of planning, piloting, approval and adoption/implementation. Also, the clear target (i.e., criteria, stage of work or conditions to be met/reached) should be defined for each indicator at the mid-term review or terminal evaluation.
- When supporting the development of such consensus documents or plans, it is desirable that the project have smooth communication with those who are responsible for approving the documents/plans during the project implementation period.

Nzemere Forest Reserve



Citrus for harvest in 2012
(outcomes of the continuing GB
Activities)



A forest ranger of FSD monitoring the
citrus trees in GB and patrolling the
Forest Reserve

