

REDD+ as a Tanzanian model for strengthening indigenous land rights and improving livelihoods. Pastoralist and hunter-gatherer communities in Tanzania are gaining rights to own and control their land as the foundation for generating new income through REDD+.



Land insecurities

Pastoralists and hunter-gatherer communities depend on shared land and natural resources where they live, such as grazing land for rearing livestock and forests for foraging and hunting. Yet they face serious threats of losing their community lands due to weak land tenure security for customary lands and territories.

Recent research reveals that across Sub-Saharan Africa, only 3% of all land is legally recognised as owned by local people under community-based tenure laws. Source: Rights and Resources Initiative. 2015. *Who Owns the World's Land? A global baseline of formally recognized indigenous and community land rights.* Washington, DC: RRI.



“Land is life for pastoralists and hunter-gatherers – without access, control or management of it, their livelihoods and cultures are threatened. We need to ensure their rights are protected.”

EDWARD LOURE, Executive Director of the Ujamaa

Figure 1: Area of land designated for vs. owned by indigenous peoples and local communities in Sub-Saharan Africa.

Land rights for hunter-gatherers and pastoralists in Tanzania

Tanzania has relatively favorable laws that recognise the rights of communities to own or control their customary land. Yet in practice, communities still struggle to gain secure rights over their land and remain at risk of losing it. This is particularly true for hunter-gatherer and pastoralist communities in northern Tanzania, who are vulnerable to land loss and expropriation due to the high value of their land for tourism, agriculture and other purposes. Hunter-gatherer groups such as the Hadzabe, and pastoralists such as the Barabaig (Datoga) have progressively been pushed out of their customary lands and territories into increasingly marginal lands.

“After clear boundary identification in our sub-village, illegal dwellers returned to their villages. Since then, animals like Elephant, Kudu and Impala are increasingly seen... There is a big difference in the surrounding forest compared to years back because of reduced livestock grazing.”

ATHUMANI MAGANDULA, Chairman of the Hadzabe Survival Council

An effective legal instrument

Tanzania's Village Land Act recognises customary lands ('village lands') and the rights of communities to manage those through locally elected Village Councils and Village Assemblies. It also provides a mechanism, known as a 'Certificate of Customary Right of Occupancy' (CCRO), which is an even stronger legal tool for strengthening community land rights and collective lands. The CCRO formalises and documents customary rights within village land, and can be used to strengthen the external legal recognition and boundaries of communal areas such as grazing land or forests. It is based on a village-wide land use plan, and is governed by village-enforced by-laws.

A CCRO is a particularly useful tool for women and other minority groups, such as pastoralists and hunter-gatherers, because it can be granted to a specific group of people within a village.

Securing Hadzabe traditional lands

Today, the majority of the roughly 1,300 remaining Hadzabe hunter-gatherers reside in Mongo wa Mono and Domanaga villages in northern Tanzania's Yaeda Valley. As a minority group living in an area of spectacular scenery and biological diversity, with Lake Eyasi and the Ngorongoro Conservation Area, a World Heritage Site, bordering Yaeda Valley. Having already lost most of their land, in 2012 the Ujamaa Community Resource Team worked with the Hadzabe and the Ministry of Lands to help them secure a CCRO covering 20,700ha the first-ever group certificate of its kind – giving them ownership of their land and the right to use it as they always have, sustainably.

This area of land is considered a conservation zone and it forms the basis of Carbon Tanzania's flagship REDD+ project. With secure land rights, a land use management plan, a governance system and village by-laws, the Hadzabe and their partners have established an effective way to earn results-based payments for REDD+.

Owning land - earning an income

The Hadzabe, who are sustainably managing the land under their CCRO, are now earning what is known as "results-based" payments from Carbon Tanzania. Carbon Tanzania has certified the carbon offset project under the Plan Vivo Standard, helping the communities earn a premium price for their carbon offsets.

How it works

The Hadzabe communities and Carbon Tanzania signed a legal contract that binds the community to adhere to the village's own by-laws for managing the area documented by the CCRO. Monitoring of the CCRO is done on a monthly basis and payments are determined based on the results. Twice a year community meetings are held to determine how the income should be used and shared. Key government personnel and community members must attend these meetings in order to ensure transparency.

US\$94,500 has been paid to the Hadzabe since 2012

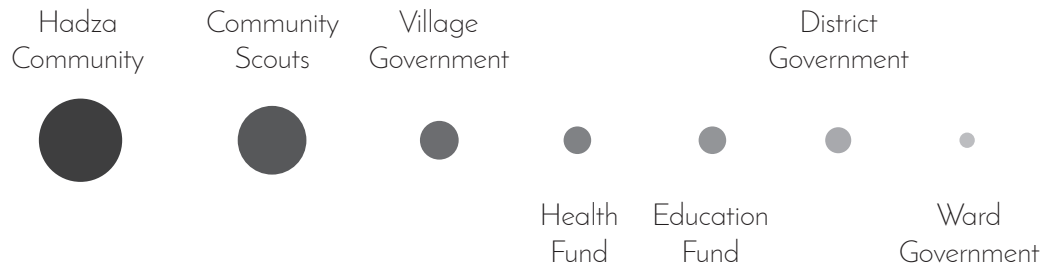


Figure 2: Revenue distribution 2012 - 2015

While many concerns and critiques have been expressed around the interaction between REDD and customary land rights, Carbon Tanzania's project, working with UCRT and other collaborators, shows how carbon offset payments, if designed effectively, can be used to strengthen and consolidate local land claims and customary resource use practices. This provides a potential model for addressing both climate change goals and the urgent need to better recognise and strengthen customary land rights across Tanzania and much of sub-Saharan Africa.

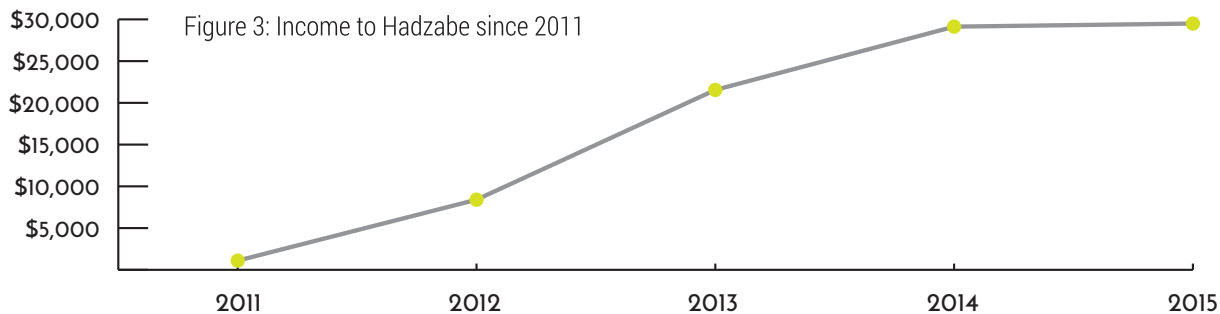


Figure 3: Income to Hadzabe since 2011

"The payments we received from Carbon Tanzania were spent on school fees for 11 Hadzabe students from Mongo wa Mono to study at Secondary Schools as well as hospital bills for community members and we bought maize to be shared during the times of hunger. The community scouts were also paid from this money, and they take care of our forest for us to stop illegal cutting of trees and grazing at times when it is prohibited. We also used the money to buy a machine to generate income for the community by grinding maize for surrounding villages. We are thankful to UCRT and Carbon Tanzania for this income that is so important to our welfare."

ATHUMANI MAGANDULA, resident of Mongo wa Mono and Chairman of the Hadzabe Survival Council



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