



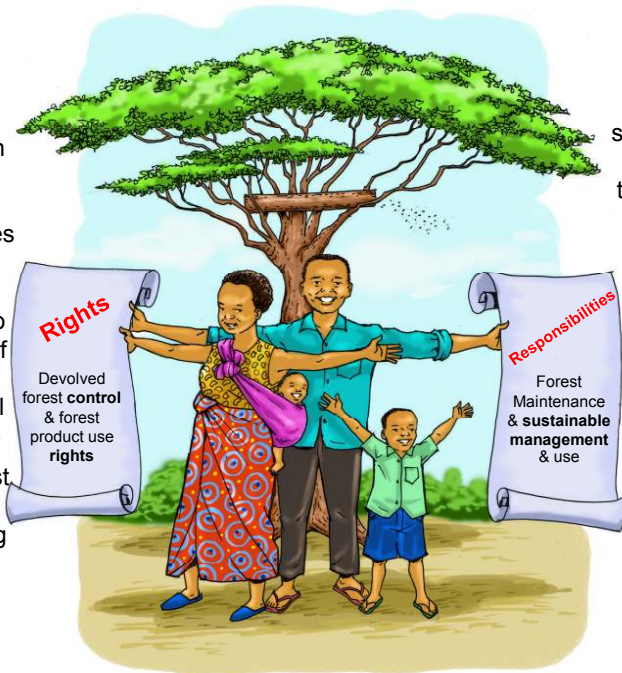
Community Forestry: rights, responsibilities, principles & steps

Community Rights

Local communities can now gain new rights to control access and use of their surrounding forests.

Through the Forests Act, 2015, the Director of Forestry may recognise, with the consent of the Chief of the area, persons living in close proximity to or having strong traditional or livelihood ties to an area of forest. The Director may enter into an **Agreement** with the community group to transfer authority to control access, use and management of a designated forest area following consultation with the Chief and the local authority.

The **Agreement** covers rights to harvest and trade in forest products, including: collection of medicinal herbs; harvesting of honey, grass and grazing of animals; collection of forest produce for community based industries; operating eco-tourism and recreational activities; establishing plantations; harvesting of timber or fuel wood; and many others as set out in the **Agreement**.



Community Responsibilities

Following negotiating and agreeing with neighbouring communities and traditional leaders on the community forest boundary, the community shall develop and implement a simple forest management plan with forest rules that set out how to manage the forest in a way that balances protection, development and use.

The community shall elect office bearers as a representative **Community Forest Management Group** that will be responsible and accountable for management of the forest.

The community shall protect sacred groves and protected trees and agree not to convert the community forest to agriculture or settlement.

The community shall assist the Forestry Department in enforcing the provisions of the Forests Act, 2015 in relation to unauthorized harvesting of forest produce and fire management.

The community shall support their traditional leaders with enforcement of natural resource based customary laws that protects their forest.

Principles of Community Forestry

Control:

Legally devolved control over a demarcated forest to a community organisation



Responsibilities:

to maintain, protect, develop & use the forest in a sustainable way



Secure rights to benefits:

for subsistence use, transport & sale of forest products & other related revenue

Community Forestry: Steps to secure rights

