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UJAMAA COMMUNITY RESOURCE TEAM

Tanzania



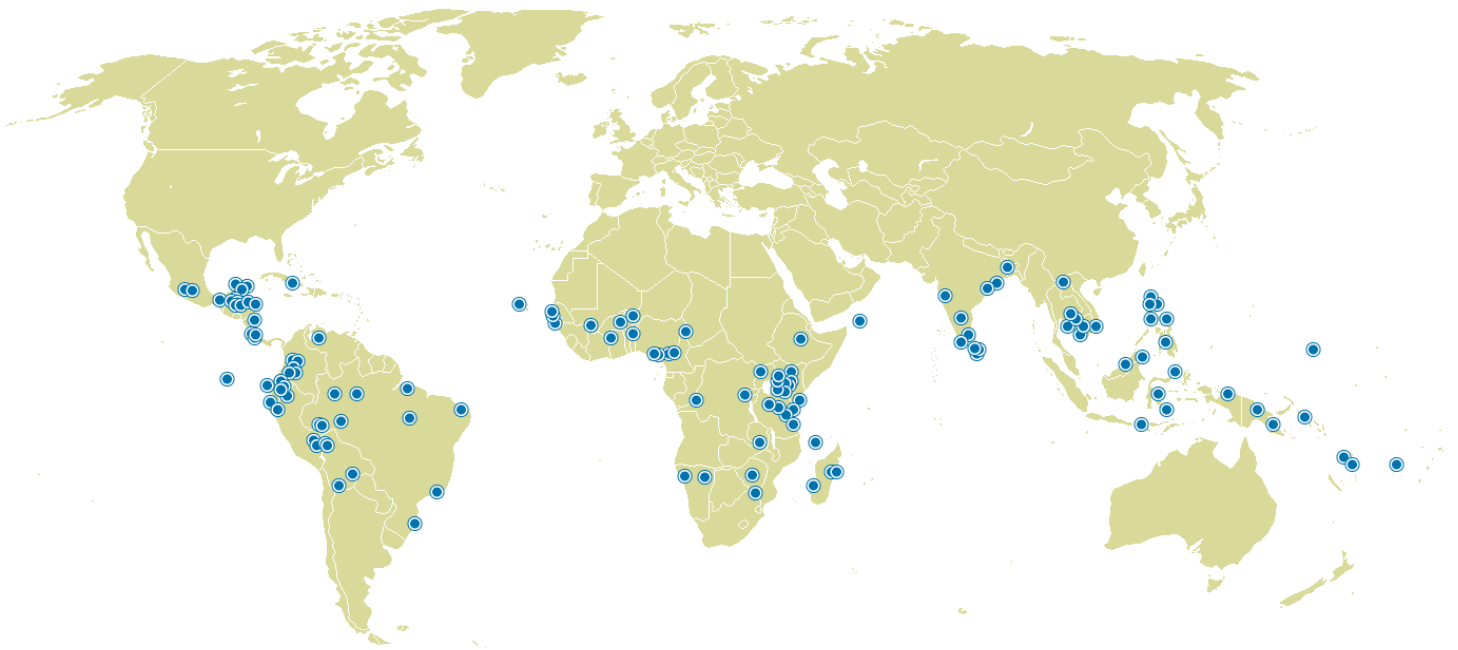
Equator Initiative Case Studies

Local sustainable development solutions for people, nature, and resilient communities

UNDP EQUATOR INITIATIVE CASE STUDY SERIES

Local and indigenous communities across the world are advancing innovative sustainable development solutions that work for people and for nature. Few publications or case studies tell the full story of how such initiatives evolve, the breadth of their impacts, or how they change over time. Fewer still have undertaken to tell these stories with community practitioners themselves guiding the narrative.

To mark its 10-year anniversary, the Equator Initiative aims to fill this gap. The following case study is one in a growing series that details the work of Equator Prize winners – vetted and peer-reviewed best practices in community-based environmental conservation and sustainable livelihoods. These cases are intended to inspire the policy dialogue needed to take local success to scale, to improve the global knowledge base on local environment and development solutions, and to serve as models for replication. Case studies are best viewed and understood with reference to *'The Power of Local Action: Lessons from 10 Years of the Equator Prize'*, a compendium of lessons learned and policy guidance that draws from the case material.



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Tanzania

PROJECT SUMMARY

Ujamaa Community Resource Team works across northern Tanzania to help secure land and resource rights for pastoralist, agro-pastoralist, and hunter-gatherer communities, many of whom are negatively affected by the existence of the country's large protected areas. The group's approach has capitalized on Tanzania's village land legislation, which allows communities to develop by-laws and land use plans for their customary lands, and has also focused on improving the ecosystem management capacity of these communities.

By guiding socially marginalized groups through the arduous process of securing official rights to land, the NGO has secured several landmark agreements, including the legal demarcation of the first village for hunter-gatherers in Tanzania. Capacity-building, conflict resolution, and sustainable livelihoods programming have underpinned the initiative's work, helping to demonstrate the effectiveness of these rural communities as land and resource managers.

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KEY FACTS

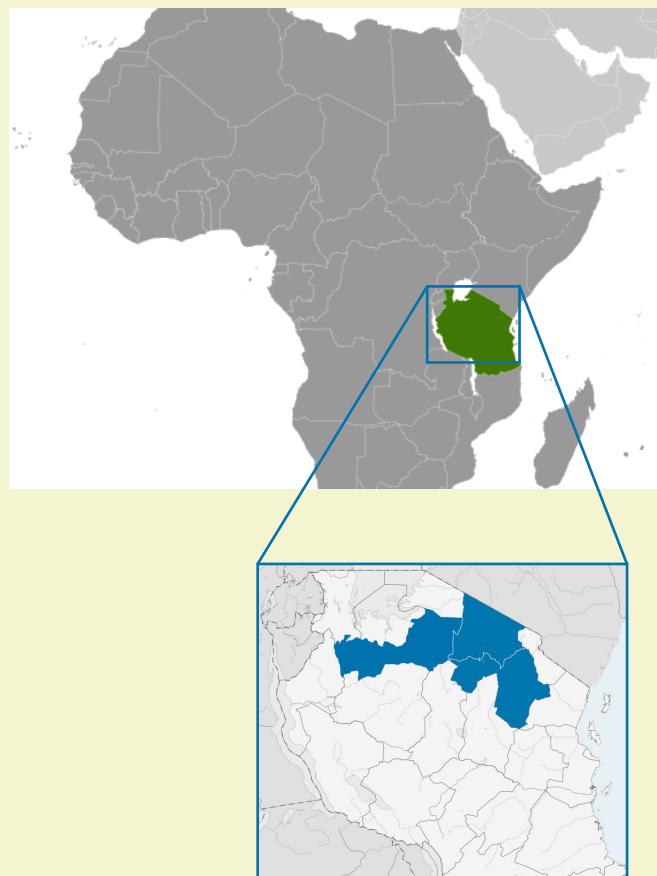
EQUATOR PRIZE WINNER: 2008

FOUNDED: 1998

LOCATION: Northern Tanzania

BENEFICIARIES: Pastoralist & agro-pastoralist communities

BIODIVERSITY: Community-conserved areas



Background and Context



Ujamaa Community Resource Team (UCRT) is a non-profit environmental and social justice organization that works with indigenous groups of different cultures in northern Tanzania. The target communities are those who depend on communal resource management regimes to support their livelihoods.

Threats facing ethnic minorities

UCRT's work began in 1998, under what was known as TAZAMA Trust, before its official registration in 2002. The organization aims to strengthen the capacity of ethnic minorities in northern Tanzania, principally pastoralists and hunter-gatherers such as the Maasai, Barabaig, Akie, Sonjo and Hadzabe. The livelihoods of these communities are under threat by overexploitation of natural resources, political marginalization, and limited resources and access to knowledge. Marginalization has been further exacerbated by the geographical remoteness of many ethnic minority communities; the village nearest to Arusha, for example, is 85 kilometres away, while some are as far as 370 kilometres from the nearest urban centre.

Making law and policy work for marginalized communities

UCRT's goal is improved welfare of villages in marginalized areas through community-based natural resource management. Participatory natural resource governance is a central tenet of the organization's work, as is building on customary institutions, community-based land management practices, and traditional resource governance systems. UCRT views law and policy as instruments for empowering resource-dependent communities, while also acknowledging the barriers they can (and often do) pose to local empowerment. By supporting community-based natural resource management, local institutions, and community land rights, the organization aims not only to protect the rich biodiversity around the Serengeti and Tarangire ecosystems, but also to protect communities from the growing trend of illegitimate and exploitative land appropriation.

The organization works with 40 villages in six districts across the regions of Arusha, Manyara, and Shinyanga. Capacity building and training is offered to each village in how best to positively influence and leverage existing policies and legal processes. Local government reform in Tanzania has created opportunities for resource-dependent communities to secure collective property rights and resource entitlements. Taking advantage of these opportunities, however, requires knowledge of where and how best to advocate for rights. For this reason, UCRT has focused on education and training for community leaders – building their capacity to meaningfully engage with policymaking processes and with the legal frameworks that govern land and resource access.



Key Activities and Innovations



UCRT works primarily with pastoralists, agro-pastoralists, and hunter-gatherers. The goal is to help these typically marginalized communities secure land and resource rights, improve their natural resource management capacity, develop the skills and tools to manage their resources more effectively, establish community conserved areas based on indigenous land management practices, and to enhance the economic benefits accruing from their lands and ecosystems (largely through ecotourism). The geographic scope of the initiative is northern Tanzania, including the biodiversity-rich areas of the Serengeti and Tarangire. UCRT work falls into four key areas: land use, natural resource management, community empowerment, and advocacy.

Land use and securing tenure

One central component of the UCRT work is the development of land use plans that ensure communities have secure property rights and resource access. Since the Tanzanian Land Act of 1999, official documentation is needed to support land claims. To obtain a village land or customary right-of-occupancy certificate, communities must produce land use plans stating who will be given what land, and for what purpose. UCRT then has been involved in the surveying, mapping and demarcation of community lands to ease inter-community conflicts and the process of formalizing tenure. In addition to support with drafting land use plans, UCRT also helps to facilitate the implementation of plans within the villages.

Community-based natural resource management

A second key area in which Ujamaa works is the management of natural resources. The intention is to ensure that villages are able to identify and document the natural resources that are available to them, and to take advantage of those that can sustainably leveraged to greatest economic and social benefit. To assist in this process, UCRT forms committees within village councils to oversee resource plans and to monitor resource use. This resource mapping exercise

has also resulted in innovative partnerships between communities and cultural tourism operators, establishing ethno-tourism enterprises which provide communities with an additional source of income. In these instances, UCRT has ensured that there is a balanced relationship between the tourism enterprise and the communities, particularly in the areas of land and resource access. Other successful ventures have included a number of women's village bomas: artisanal cooperative groups which have formed to market local products. As part of its resource management work, UCRT employs community members as game scouts, providing bicycles, GPS devices and other equipment to ensure the protection and monitoring of endemic species. The organization is also involved in the development of resource management by-laws. These laws drawn up by UCRT with village-level input, are reviewed at the way and district levels, and are then put into practice by local government authorities.

Community empowerment & building on local institutions

Another dimension of UCRT work is community empowerment. The majority of work in this area has involved work with village councils – governing bodies that are created by the central government, but which have often received very little formal training on good governance standards, financial management planning (including the allocation of village revenues), and land management responsibilities. UCRT has filled this vacuum by providing workshops for village council members on some of these issues, and by making available basic narrative reports on their work. Each village council is composed of three committees: security, financial management and planning, and general development issues. UCRT provides appropriate training in each of these areas for the village members who participate in specific committees. Trainings also include information on land and resource legislation, such as that contained in local government reform programs. Through these trainings, communities are supported to better understand their land rights under Tanzanian law. In addition, information is provided on the role and

functioning of village land tribunals (Mabaraza ya ardhi) and village assemblies, which are often the arbiters of village land by-laws.

Lobbying and advocacy

Another important aspect of UCRT work is educating communities on existing and emerging government policies so they are equipped with the information needed to effectively lobby for their rights and advocate for policy reform. Among the most important policies included in this orientation is Tanzania's National Strategy for Growth and the Reduction of Poverty (MKUKUTA), a development framework which constitutes the nation's roadmap for delivering on a 'Vision 2025' plan. Inroads into this strategy have focused on economic growth and the reduction of poverty, improved quality of life and social wellbeing, and improved governance and accountability. Guidance is also given on other important legislation such as: the Property and Business Formalisation Programme (MKURABITA), which has aimed at facilitating the transformation of property and business entities in the informal sector into legally held and majority operated entities in the formal sector; the Local Government Re-

form Programme, which has aimed to empower local government authorities to improve the quality, access to and equitable delivery of public services; and the Strategic Plan for the Implementation of Land Laws, which has been an attempt to coordinate Tanzania's various land laws – the Land Act (1999), the Village Land Act (1999), and the Land Disputes Courts Act (2002).

Through on-site training, UCRT has been able to raise awareness of these different policies and how they relate to community natural resource management. Communities are advised on how they can react to new laws, and on how to argue for the amendment of contentious passages. For example, community capacity building has been particularly important in cases where communities have been dispossessed of land for commercial conservation purposes. And while UCRT has served as an 'early warning' system for communities on unfair land legislation, they have also evolved the function of giving local communities a direct voice in legislative processes. Communities have been empowered to contact and lobby local politicians, and have been given the floor at parliamentary hearings for the Wildlife Act (2010) and Tanzanian Rangeland Act (2010).



“Policy makers should consider the needs of local people before they impose policies. By the same token, traditional means of conserving wildlife have been successful for generations and should be recognised. Conservation and the safeguarding of local livelihoods are not opposing goals and can be pursued together.”

Edward Loure Parmelo, Coordinator, UCRT

Impacts



BIODIVERSITY IMPACTS

Ujamaa has had a considerable impact on biodiversity in northern Tanzania, primarily through the creation of community-conserved areas in key wildlife corridors and habitats of the Serengeti ecosystem. Notable among the conservation areas have been Loliondo and Simanjiro, which contain important populations of wildebeest, African wild dogs, cheetahs, and oryx.

An important facet of UCRT work has been to balance conservation priorities, community resource needs and eco-tourism enterprise ambitions. The organization has helped ecotourism ventures and other commercial interests understand the incentives of conserving vegetation for both livestock and wildlife, as opposed to converting land to agriculture. Through its “easement” program, started in 2005, tour operating companies give USD 5,000 annually to villages owning land adjacent to Tarangire (in which the wildebeest come to graze) in return for community commitment to conserving the land. Contracts are drawn up between the villages and tour operators to ensure that the conservation of biodiversity and the socio-economic well-being of participating communities are legally secured.

UCRT has also worked to mitigate wildlife-livestock conflict, which inevitably leads to tensions between the local population and wildlife. For example, wildebeest from Tarangire National Park migrate to Simanjiro during the wet season, carrying diseases that are fatal to cattle. This has meant that communities are unable to graze their herds on these lands. UCRT has worked with effected communities to develop alternative strategies that allow for healthy livestock feeding and protection of the wildebeest populations.

Securing land and resource rights for local communities has produced biodiversity benefits in the form of more effective land management and providing the kind of certainty which makes for long-term land investments. One notable case of a community reclaiming its territory was in Hanang. In the 1970s, the state-owned corpora-

tion NAFCO appropriated 100,000 acres of land from pastoralists in Hanang to grow wheat, leaving thousands of families landless. After mismanagement of the farms and failure of the wheat project, the government decided to grant some of the land back to the Hanang pastoralists. The process was subverted, however, by local politicians who proposed awarding the land to Mount Hanang cultivators instead. With the support of Oxfam Ireland, UCRT was able to put pressure on the government to return the land to the pastoralists. Eventually, 28,000 acres of land were returned to the Ming'enyi, Mogitu, Mulbadaw, Gidika, Basotu and Gawidu villages, benefiting more than 8,000 families.

Another example of UCRT advocacy for the return of community land comes from Emboreet, where pastoralists living along the eastern edge of Tarangire National Park were similarly dispossessed of 29,000 hectares of land by the government. In this instance, the lands were appropriated for a large-scale, commercial bean cultivation project. When the project failed, the government assumed rights to the land rather than returning them to the pastoralists. In response, UCRT partnered with the Wildlife Conservation Society to appeal for the return of the land to its rightful occupants. After a lengthy negotiation, all 29,000 hectares of land were returned to the community.

SOCIOECONOMIC IMPACTS

One of the main socioeconomic impacts of UCRT work has been the fostering of private sector partnerships that have enabled villages to earn income from wildlife conservation by way of community-based ecotourism ventures. In Ngorongoro district alone, seven Maasai villages have used ecotourism to increase their incomes from approximately USD 30,000 in 1998 to over USD 300,000 in 2007. Participating villages also created cultural bomas, where women produce artisanal goods which are sold to tourists. UCRT conducted training in each village on community-based natural resource management and the development of land-use plans.

Rather than have ecotourism exist in isolation from other economic and social activities, UCRT emphasised balancing ecotourism priorities with other environmental and economic considerations. Participating villages were provided with access to legal aid during negotiations with prospective tourism operators, ensuring that contracts were not asymmetrically weighted towards the interests of private sector partners. For example, in the village of Engaresero, UCRT assisted in drawing up a participatory and transparent contract between the community and the tour operator which, among other things, recognized the community's rights to their natural resources. The ecotourism enterprise generated employment for nine villagers, while annual income in 2009 alone cleared USD 30,000. Revenues have subsequently been invested into school infrastructure, school fees, a rotating loan scheme for women and youth, health service provision, and the construction of a health centre.

UCRT works through the Olalaa Pastoralist Development Initiatives, Simanjiro Women Income Generating Group, and Hanang women groups to empower and support alternative livelihoods projects for local women. To date, more than 20 women's cooperatives have been formed. Each of the groups is engaged in subsistence farming on small, two-acre plots of land. Each has been provided with an ox-plough, which has eased the manual labor burden and improved farm productivity. Local women's cooperatives have also been provided with goats (more than 600 to date), allowing them diversify their livelihoods with livestock rearing. UCRT has also used these groups to promote genetic diversity and agricultural diversification, distributing over 300 kilograms of bean seeds and over 100 kilograms of maize seeds.

Women's empowerment programs are operated in conjunction with the Pastoral Women's Council of Tanzania: an NGO working with pastoralist groups in northern Tanzania to advance women's rights and the education of Masaai girls. Since its inception, UCRT has recognized the empowerment of women as an essential dimension of its work to secure community-based property rights and land tenure. They recognized that a fractured community – whether along



ethnic, economic or gender lines – cannot advocate as successfully for collective rights as one in which the rights of all members of the community are given equal consideration. As such, UCRT mobilized women to become active and visible in the design and implementation of community projects. In partnership with a number of different advocacy groups and non-governmental organizations, UCRT provides trainings to women in land rights issues, economic independence and livelihoods diversification (including beadwork, soap-making and ecotourism). Local women have not only become participants in land rights advocacy, but active leaders and champions of community-based property rights.

The organization has been equally active in promoting literacy and opening up access to schools and education for geographically, economically and socially marginalized youth. UCRT has a program in place which covers secondary school fees for children from poor backgrounds who have passed their primary school exams, but who are unable to attend classes because of inadequate finances. At the time this report was written, more than 150 students were being supported to attend school through this program. Scholarships have also been extended to both pastoralist families and the remote hunter-gatherer communities of Hadzabe and Akie to cover tuition, clothing and transportation expenses. In a related initiative, UCRT funded construction of a local orphanage and currently supports 33 orphans to attend secondary school. An important stipulation of UCRT support for scholarships and school fees is that students that graduate are required to return to the village for a minimum of three years and act as a peer educator. Students receiving support through UCRT are brought together at an annual forum, where they share experiences and plans for future collaboration.

UCRT has also mainstreamed HIV/AIDS education and awareness-raising into its programs, with a particular outreach focus on remote and marginalized villages. The organization has leveraged its peer educators to disseminate knowledge of the disease and how it is transmitted among ethnic minorities such as the Maasai and Barabai tribes.



POLICY IMPACTS

UCRT is one of the only organizations in Tanzania to effectively bridge the gap between national government land policies and community-based property rights regimes. In 2008, UCRT mobilized a critical mass of community representatives to travel to Dodoma in an effort to convince Tanzanian parliament to reject a proposed Wildlife Bill. Had it not been voted down, the bill would have forced pastoralist communities out of 'Game Controlled Areas', which were unilaterally zoned without community consultation as strict conservation areas, thereby stripping these communities of their traditional livelihoods. Most recently, the organization helped to ensure that community voices were included in hearings on the Wildlife Act (2009) and the Rangeland Act (2010). The organization serves an essential communication and advocacy function, linking pastoralist communities into dialogue with government representatives and other key stakeholders.

Navigating government bureaucracy and local politics is a programmatic constant for UCRT. Even when land use plans and tenure arrangements have been agreed upon within and between communities, there are often significant delays at the local level of gov-

ernment where the approval process for village by-laws takes place. Addressing the barriers faced to getting by-laws approved can be both time-consuming and costly. As one example, district officials require payment to participate in by-law approval meetings; officials often charge by the USD 32 per day for a process that can run as long as three to four weeks. At one stage of the approval process, nine district officials are required.

In July of 2009, the national government supported a foreign commercial hunting company to forcibly evict eight Maasai villages from land adjacent to Serengeti National Park – village infrastructure and Maasai cultural bomas were burned to the ground. This was the latest incident in a long history of dispute over an area of land that has been sustainably managed by Maasai peoples for generations. The eviction affected more than 10,000 pastoralists and displaced more than 50,000 heads of their cattle, many of which died in the following months due to insufficient grazing areas and scarce access to water. Although the people remain dispossessed, UCRT has been able to involve local, national and international media and rights groups in documenting the plight of these communities. Knowledge of the eviction within Tanzania has increased and pressure has been put on the government to launch an official inquiry into the incident.



Sustainability and Replication



SUSTAINABILITY

UCRT is financially dependent on donor support. The organization has been able to sustain its work through a number of different partnership programs, ranging from one-off to continuous funding. For example, Dorobo Fund and Oxfam Ireland are annual donors, while UCRT received a GEF-Small Grants Programme grant of USD 27,000 for 2009-2010. And while individual communities are engaged in eco-tourism ventures, UCRT itself does not operate profit-making enterprises. The organization is currently seeking a long-term donor to support its work and ensure the long-term financial viability of its activities.

Organisational sustainability is ensured by employing staff members from within the communities where UCRT works. The majority of staff remains connected with grassroots initiatives, and many divide their time between on-site activities and the UCRT office in Arusha. 'Field facilitators' are permanently based in participating villages to allow for easy communication between the field and headquarters. Staff are also supported to pursue degree and certificate programs, for instance at the Arusha-based Training Centre for Development Cooperation or at Kenyatta University, Nairobi.

REPLICATION

UCRT has been a model of peer-to-peer learning and successful replication. The organization has been able to secure land and resource tenure for more than 40 village communities. Not only have these villages benefited from improved tenure security, but communities have also been supported to improve and diversify their livelihoods. The key to UCRT's success has been a combination of holistic land use plans and leveraging village by-laws. The

organization's model of empowering communities to advocate for security of tenure has been transferred on a demand-driven basis; several communities have approached UCRT to request support in applying the model of land use and resource management planning in their village.

Peer-to-peer knowledge exchanges have been critical for UCRT in effectively mobilizing support for policy change and land reform; so too, partnerships with groups such as the Pastoralist Indigenous Non-Governmental Organisations' Forum and Pastoral Women's Council have created a support structure and board-based coalition on which effective lobbying efforts have been built. It is through partnerships that the responsibilities and risks associated with advocacy are shared.

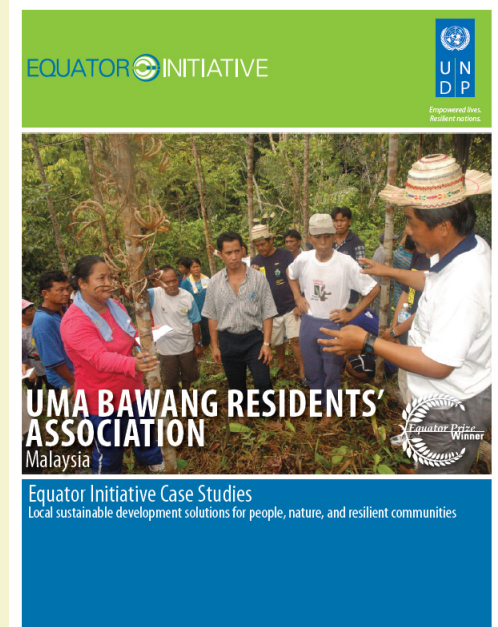
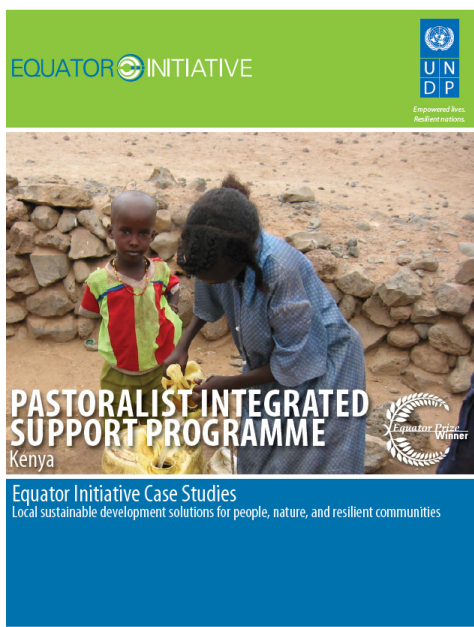
PARTNERS

- African Initiatives (a UK-based NGO) was initially an important donor, but phased out their support in 2007
- OXFAM Ireland makes annual financial contributions
- Norwegian People's Aid (NPA) makes annual financial contributions
- UNDP-implemented GEF-Small Grants Programme provided a grant for 2009-2010 (USD 27,000)
- Wildlife Conservation Society makes an annual financial contribution
- Cordaid (Netherlands-based NGO) makes an annual financial contribution
- Pastoralist Indigenous Non-Governmental Organisations' Forum (PINGOs' Forum) advocates at the national level for indigenous rights

FURTHER REFERENCE

- Ujamaa Community Resource Team (UCRT). 2010. *Participatory Land Use Planning as a Tool for Community Empowerment in Northern Tanzania*. IIED, Gatekeeper 147, December (with Fred Nelson, Malisaili Initiatives). <http://pubs.iied.org/pdfs/14608IIED.pdf>
- ResourceAfrica UK, *A Plain Plan*, (YouTube) <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wuy8h1F7GvE>
- Ujamaa Community Resource Team PhotoStory (Vimeo) (English) <https://vimeo.com/15783140> (Swahili) <https://vimeo.com/15783208>

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