

Z A M B I A



A S S O C I A T I O N



ZCRBA SUMMARY PROGRESS REPORT



SUMMARY

The Zambia Community Resources Board Association (ZCRBA) stands as a pivotal umbrella organization, unifying Community Resource Boards (CRBs) and Community Forest Management Groups (CFMGs) across the diverse landscapes of the Eastern, Central, Western, and Northern regions. Serving as a central coordinating body, ZCRBA plays a crucial role in overseeing and facilitating the activities of individual CRBs. Its primary objective is to ensure the seamless management of the abundant natural resources surrounding local communities within these regions.

ZCRBA is dedicated to fostering a profound sense of local community ownership, empowering communities to actively participate in the protection and management of their natural resources, spanning wildlife, fish, and forests. The association places a strong emphasis on capacity building, providing invaluable training and resources to communities to enhance their ability to manage and sustainably utilize the resources within their local landscapes. By instilling a deep understanding of the importance of conservation, ZCRBA strives to underscore the direct benefits to both local communities and the broader national context.

Over the years, ZCRBA has emerged as a beacon of collaboration, working tirelessly alongside various partners to engage local populations in the conservation of Zambia's rich natural resources. This collaborative effort involves extensive interaction with elected representatives of individual CRBs or CFMGs, collecting crucial information on the progress and challenges faced by Community-Based Organizations (CBOs). ZCRBA then synthesizes and disseminates these insights through comprehensive reports, fostering an environment of informed decision-making and continuous developmental progress. Through its multifaceted initiatives, ZCRBA exemplifies a commitment to sustainable resource management, community empowerment, and the preservation of Zambia's natural heritage.

Hence, this paper aims to provide a concise overview of ZCRBA and various activities and projects undertaken by Community-Based Organizations (CBOs) under the guidance and coordination of the Zambia Community Resources Board Association (ZCRBA). It delves into the collaborative efforts between these CBOs and the National Association to foster effective natural resource management practices.



WHO WE ARE


The Zambia Community Resources Board Association (ZCRBA) is a non-profit, national-level organization established with a fundamental belief in the influential power of community voices in natural resource management. Founded on the principle that creating a platform could serve as a bridge uniting local natural resources governance institutions, civil society organizations, and the government, ZCRBA envisions the development of a vibrant natural resource's economy within communities rich in these valuable assets.

ZCRBA's mission is centered around empowering communities with Village Action Groups (VAGs), Community Resources Boards (CRBs), Community Forest Management Groups (CFMGs), Community Fisheries Groups (VCFGs), and Conservation Trusts (CTs). By directly engaging and benefiting these communities, ZCRBA aims to facilitate effective and sustainable management of natural resources. This vision underscores the commitment to building a resilient natural resources economy that serves the best interests of local communities while ensuring the responsible stewardship of precious environmental assets.

WHAT WE DO

The Zambia Community Resources Board Association (ZCRBA) is dedicated to the sustenance of natural resources, a critical endeavor for the future generations in communities surrounding Game Management Areas (GMAs). As a non-profit, national-level organization, ZCRBA serves as a cohesive platform bridging local natural resources governance institutions, civil society organizations, and the government. The overarching goal is to build a vibrant natural resources economy within communities boasting Village Action Groups (VAGs), Community Resources Boards (CRBs), Community Forest Management Groups (CFMGs), Community Fisheries Groups (VCFGs), and Conservation Trusts (CTs). ZCRBA advocates for inclusive policies, sustainable resource use, enhanced governance, and collaboration among partners.

To improve the socio-economic well-being of communities in GMAs, ZCRBA focuses on enhancing alternative livelihoods for those overdependent on natural resources. Collaborative efforts with financially capacitated NGOs are directed towards implementing programs that



empower communities with income generation ventures, concurrently contributing to the conservation of natural resources.

ZCRBA's impacts on conservation are substantial, ranging from influencing policy development and amendments to the Wildlife Act to championing gender inclusion in Community-Based Natural Resource Management (CBNRM). The organization has introduced governance tools such as GMETT for self-assessment, successfully addressed gaps in conservation through manual development, and embraced technology like the open data kit (ODK) for streamlined reporting.

Organizational goals encompass self-sustaining GMAs, equal women representation in natural resource management, 100% retention of user rights from natural resources, and continuous advocacy for support and alternative livelihoods. ZCRBA aspires to remain flexible, collaborative, and adaptive, contributing to the growth of the wildlife economy through sustainable use.


Capacity development needs include data capture of phone usage for Survey CTO data collection, proposal writing for ZCRBA staff, project management and strategic planning for member-CBOs, adaptive training topics for staff and communities, effective partnership engagement strategies, and additional funding for specific project activities.

Partnerships and Collaborations: Our Extensive Network

At ZCRBA, our footprint extends across the diverse landscapes of the Central, Western, Northern, and Eastern regions of Zambia. In each of these regions, we are actively engaged in collaborative efforts aimed at protecting and sustaining our precious natural resources. This monumental task is achieved through robust partnerships with a multitude of cooperating organizations that share our common goal.

Our cooperating partners play a pivotal role in supporting and amplifying our efforts within these regions. Their commitment aligns with our mission to manage natural resources in a manner that not only safeguards the environment but also prioritizes the well-being of local communities intricately linked to these resources.

These partnerships encompass a spectrum of entities, including governmental bodies, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), international agencies, and community-based organizations



(CBOs). By bringing together stakeholders from various sectors, we create a comprehensive and collaborative approach to natural resource management. This approach recognizes the interconnectedness of ecological conservation, community livelihoods, and sustainable development.

The shared goal among ZCRBA and our cooperating partners is to strike a harmonious balance between environmental preservation and community welfare. Through strategic collaborations, we leverage diverse expertise, resources, and perspectives to implement effective initiatives that address the complex challenges of natural resource management.

In essence, our extensive network of partnerships reflects a collective commitment to holistic, community-driven conservation. By working hand-in-hand with a diverse array of organizations, we strengthen the resilience of ecosystems, empower local communities, and contribute to the overarching vision of sustainable natural resource management in Zambia.


OUR MEMBERSHIP AND THEIR WORKS



CENTRAL REGION ASSOCIATION

The Central Region CRBA exclusivity lies in several features and one of them being the Lower Zambezi National Park that is opposite to the famous Mana Pools Reserve in Zimbabwe making the area a sight of beauty to look and mesmerize on the enormous Wildlife on the two sides of the Zambezi River. The beautiful sites on the south side of the valley are known for abundant wildlife which include the elephants, Crocodiles, buffalos, hippos, and fish eagles. There is an escarpment along the northern end which acts as a physical barrier to most of the Park's animal species. Enormous herds of elephant, some are up to 100 strong, and they are often seen at the river's edge. 'Island hopping' buffalo and waterbuck are common. The Park also hosts good populations of lion and leopard and listen to the ubiquitous cry of the fish eagle.

Therefore, the region is known for its great works through the Community Resources Borad (CRBs) and Community Forest Management Groups (CFMGs) in the management of natural



resources in their landscape respectively with great support from their cooperating partners within the region.

Central region has for a while utilized the District Development Coordination Committee platform to stay informed on activities implemented and actions being taken in the region by various cooperating partners who are operating the 3 GMAs (Luano, Rufunsa and Chiawa). The region has also continued to align their operations to the governance and management of the natural resources collectively because of the value and benefits that come with inclusivity and co-management around implementing activities.

It is interestingly to that the Central region landscape has seen transformation in law enforcement through the community scouts to Wildlife Police Officers, this has been done to upgrade and intensify laws enforcement activities in the Game Management areas. Established law enforcement camps have continued to be set up by conservation partners who work closely with the local community scouts who are supported through their institutions. The Department of National Parks and Wildlife in the region have equally set up strategic measures to ensure that law is followed in accordance with the Wildlife Act, as a way of ensuring that natural resources and wildlife are protected and conserved. Further, GMA patrols, Community anti-poaching sensitization activities in the region are perceived as life changing opportunities by the local communities who have begun to appreciate the natural resources in their landscapes thereby enforcing community measures to help the relevant authorities with the conservation and monitoring of natural resources.

The region has created employment for the local community members. Thus, employment helps in alleviating poverty and helps in decreasing the illegal activities in protected areas, for Central region, tourism is the backbone of its economy because through tourism development many community members have been employed by lodge owners and NGOs, some members have been employed as community scouts whilst others have been upgraded from scouts to Wildlife Police Officers.

Despite its extreme achievement in the management of natural resource in the region. Central regions face several threats in the landscape that are coupled with human wildlife conflict.

However, Human Wildlife Conflicts are so rampant in the Central CRB Region at a scale of 9/10 percent leading to Crop destruction, Loss of Livestock, Loss of Human life and Injury, this vice has been increasingly affecting the livelihood of the communities in the region as not much is done by the relevant authorities' due constraints that they encounter in their operations. Some of the major cause of HWC in the region are due to human settlements, agricultural field expansions, illegal grass collection, overgrazing by livestock and deforestation in in protected areas that are increasing daily.



Figure 1HWC

Climate change has been also noticed to be a threat in the region as it has slowly increasingly affected the biophysical environment across the globe, consequently the CR-CRB and CFMGs has not been spared from the diverse effects. For instance, the rainfall patterns are now disturbed especially those CRBs and CFMGs who are fully dependent on agriculture have been affected and because agriculture is the second to tourism in the Region and a great boost to the economy, this calamity has led to food shortages for communities who in turn have opted to poach wildlife to sustain themselves and venture in business that are not environment friendly.

For the past two years of non-hunting in the country has affected most regions and the central region is not spared on the negative impact of the ban. The CRBs in the central region has faced financial challenges as most of them depend on income coming from hunting and this has made most CRBs not to have community projects and failing to run the day today activities of the local communities. Most of the income generate from external sources like carbon credit is not enough to sustain the CRBs in the region. Most of the local communities are on FISP to help them to have access to farming inputs which boost their farming and increase the income.

Conservation Stakeholders operating in Central Region CRB Association

SN	STAKEHOLDER NAME(S)	OPERATIONAL FUNCTION(S)	AREA OF OPERATION
1	Bio carbon Partners	Forest Conservation/ Carbon trade	Rufunsa, Lower Luano, Chiawa GMAs
2	Conservation Lower Zambezi	Wildlife protection/ Community engagement	Lower Zambezi National Park and surrounding GMAs (Rufunsa, Chiawa and Lower Luano GMA)
3	Game Rangers International	Wildlife Protection/ Human Wildlife Conflict	Mburuma and Mphuka CRBs
4	Zambezi Wildlife Trust	Wildlife protection/ Community engagement	Chiawa GMA
5	Lower Zambezi Tourism Association	Wildlife Protection/ Tourism development	West Lower Zambezi Area Management Unit
6	Makasa Safaris	Safari Hunting	Lower Luano GMA
7	Nyampala Safaris	Safari Hunting	Rufunsa GMA
8	Jungle Safaris	Safari Hunting	Chiawa West Hunting Block

Table 1: Central Region partners and stakeholders in conservation.

Therefore, the region has faced several challenges ranging from human wildlife conflicts and financial challenges which has affected the region operations.

EASTERN REGION ASSOCIATION

The Eastern Region was formed in 2016 when the CRBs in the region organized themselves to form a regional association which is now an umbrella conservation organization representing

grassroots community-based organizations, known as the Community Resources Boards (CRBs), in the eastern ecological region in Zambia. This region is devoted to the conservation of biodiversity and other natural resources in all the GMAs and open areas within its coverage and has the passion to conserve the aesthetic wealth of life on earth, which includes all living organisms, biological communities, and ecosystems. They also aim at improving Game Management Area (GMA) and open area performance for improvement and effective management of Natural Resources and improved sustainable community livelihood.

The eastern region association is in the eastern part of Zambia and comprises of 5 GMAs and 3 National Parks that contributes effectively to the economic development of both the eastern region and the country through the availability of natural resources and resource wildlife in their landscape. Though, the region is smaller compared to Northern and Western regions. But it is one of the regions rich in natural resources and resources wildlife.

The uniqueness of the region is seen in its density of Game areas and parks that have the advantage of showing local and international visitors such as view of variety of wildlife and isolated wilderness. The picture below shows the great South Luangwa National Park.



Figure 2 shows the great south Luangwa National Park

The works of the region is known and dedicated to conservation of biodiversity and natural resources. It is also noted that through the employed community scouts and community forestry management officers of the CRBs and CFMGs biodiversity and natural resources are protected in their landscape, respectively. However, the inclusion of Forestry and fisheries groups in the



region has also enhances the management of community based natural resources management in the region.

The significant part of the region is seen through its primary livelihoods and activities which includes farming, fishing, livestock rearing and both small and medium enterprises. In this regard, most communities are dependent on fishing along the great Luangwa River. Mostly the fish business is done at Luangwa bridge be at a good road network area for business and traveling.

The region also engages in Eco-tourism business initiatives which helps the local communities to generate income as well as in farming, livestock rearing, poultry, beekeeping, gardening, carpentry, conservation farming and small enterprises. The revenues generated from these initiatives are not just used for consumption but even for other developmental activities which help in the management of their CRBs/CFMGs such building and renovation of school blocks, guest houses, drilling community boreholes and health posts.

Despite the achievements of the region, like central region, Human wildlife conflict still stands a major threat in the management of natural resources in the region's communities residing adjacent to GMAs. However, mitigation measures are being taken by the able wildlife police officers of DNPW and alongside the Community scouts of the CRBs. However, the region continued to apply HWC mitigation measures such as chili fencing, and animal scaring using fire works with the help from partners.

Poaching is still a big threat to the conservation effort in the region. The CRBs are not getting sufficient resource to deal with the poaching problems in the vast areas. Though poaching activities has reduced in Lukusuzi national park due to the illegal activity taking place in the park of gold mining. People have concentrated a lot on gold mining than poaching, may be the justification can be the trading prices which are so high than selling illegal wild meat. Poaching is quite high in Kasungu national Park but mostly it is controlled by the support from the project (Ifaw) International fund for Animal Welfare which is doing a great job around this Land scape Kasungu, Lukusuzi and Luambe national parks.

The region strives to the strengthening of the CBNRM approach in promoting transparent, accountable, and inclusive leadership in the CBNRM sector. By boosting the drive for the region

to achieve the primary goal for conservation of its natural resources within the catchment area of the western region and thereby developing plans to help in curbing the many illegal activities that occurs in the conservation fraternity within the region.

WESTERN REGION ASSOCIATION


The Western Region currently has a total number of 33 Community Resources Board spreading across 14 GMAs namely Mufunta, Nkala bilili, Musele matebo (3,700 sq.km), West Zambezi, Mumbwa, Namwala, Kafue flats, Mulobezi, Kasonso busanga (7,780 sq.km), Lunga luswishi, Sichifulo, Lukwakwa (2,540 sq.km), Chizera (2,280 sq.km), Chibwika-ntambu (1,550 sq.km) GMAs that are buffer zones to the wondrous National parks that the Regional has. The western region has seven National Parks namely, West Lunga, Blue Lagoon, Sioma Ngwezi, Mosi-oa-Tunya, Liuwa Plain, Lochinvar and Kafue National Parks.

The region is characterized by a wide range of habitats varying from open grassy plains comprising of a mixture of dry to wet grasslands, Miombo woodlands, Swamps, Kalahari, Mavunda dry evergreen forests, Termitaria woodlands, Dambos and Chipya woodlands.

Western region CRB stands out as an icon of conservation in Zambia for natural resources and resource wildlife organizations in the region. Further, the region is an intersect of GMAs in the Kafue Ecosystem Zone.

The region is well known for its magical site Busanga plains that is awesomely attractive to the sights of the tourists. Additionally, diverse species inhabited by the Kafue National Park spice up a significant view to the region status. The Busanga plains has plenty of animals' species such as bushbuck, puku, wildebeest, oribi, red lechwe, lions' sable and roan antelope.

With support from different cooperating partners like African Parks and TNC the region continued involving communities in the Kafue ecosystem to introduce them to REDD+ to see if they can work with BCP and so far, Mujimanzovu CRB has shown interest of forming a CFMG as an avenue for Sustainable management of forests and the process is in the pipeline as engagements from both sides have intensified and a needs assessment has been concluded. The western region has hope that the carbon trade in the region will help address climate change because of the



communities have known the importance of conserving and protecting the biophysical environment.

Through community development region empowers community members and creates stronger opportunities and connection to be able to sustain themselves in line with organizational objectives and continued to implement various actions/activities to fulfil its mission. Below are some of the community development projects that have been implemented.


Despite the great achievements the region still experiences threats such as the Encroachment in the GMAs which is getting out of hand each passing moment especially in Mumbwa GMA due to increasing illegal human settlements and farming sprees that have led to clearance of large portions of natural resources. Consequently, encroachment in the regional GMAs is increasingly becoming a big challenge in natural resource conservation, there is less protection of the natural resources by the communities in the region and less of ownership by the communities which has become a loophole for them to carryout illegal activities in the GMAs which leads back to lack of awareness programs by PA actors hence the increase in encroachment due to expansions of agriculture and charcoal burning.



NORTHERN REGION ASSOCIATION

The Northern region lies in the Northern part of Zambia alongside sharing an international boundary with the Democratic Republic Congo and Tanzania. However, the Northern region CRB/CFMG Association is an umbrella organization representing community-based organizations Known as Community Resources Board Association and the Community Forestry Groups in the northern part of Zambia with the engagement support from the cooperating partners within the region.

The region is rich in natural resource that make up a pride for the local community people residing in the northern landscape. In light of this the region has a significant interest and passion to conserve biodiversity and other natural resources in the game management area (GMA) and open areas with the aim to sustainability conserve the natural resources and improving the



livelihoods of the local community people in the landscape, which in return improves the performance of the GMAs and open areas for the enhancement of livelihoods through economic opportunities.


There are six (6) National parks (North Luangwa Park, Lavushi National Park, Isangano National Park, Lusenga Palins National Park, Mwarwantipa National Park and Luambe National Park) surrounding 10 GMAs (Mukungule, Musalangu, Bangweulu, Chambeshi, Luwingu, Kalasa-Mukosa, Mansa, Tondwe, Kaputa and Kafinda GMA), with Several CRBs/CFMGs.

Uniqueness of the region

The beauty of the region is exhibited by its wonderous features that are unique from the other parts of the country and regions and such includes Natural resources, Soil, climate and adequate rainfall rivers and lakes that facilitate the implementation and execution of the conservation activities in the landscape.

Community-related issues are primarily related to the fact that local people do not receive adequate benefit flows from wildlife in GMAs, because community ownership of land and wildlife resources is not recognized in GMAs and because 'community membership' is not defined, with the effect that outsiders are free to move in and exploit natural resources and further diminish minimal per-capita wildlife-based benefits. The modest per capita benefits generated from trophy hunting are frequently misused and tend to favour local elites due to problems with the structure, functioning and accountability of Community Resource Boards (CRBs). Consequently, GMAs are effectively open access regimes and there is an incentive for communities to occupy land and kill wildlife to obtain meat or harvest trees before someone else does, resulting in rapid and widespread immigration, encroachment, habitat destruction and bush meat poaching.

Human wildlife conflicts are still an issue and a threaten communities living in the GMAs, and open areas. This has forced more strict measures to reduce the cases. WPOs and the community scouts have been deployed to protect the area and help save human life. However, communities are using other means to prevent the human wildlife conflict such as, fencing livestock.



The Region strive to contribute positively to strengthening the CBNRM approach in Zambia by ensuring that there is transparent, accountable and inclusive leadership in the management of natural resources and enhancing partnership with the government, private sector and NGOs working in the conservation fraternity in the region and country at large.


CHALLENGES

There have been some setbacks in the management of natural resources and livelihoods improvement in these regions and the major reason being financial challenges. Most local communities depend on the income which is generated from hunting, and this has posed a big challenge on the people from the CRBs/CFMGs due to the two-year hunting ban the country has experienced. The negative impact which comes with non-hunting has lowered the livelihoods of the local community as most people do not have enough resources to sustain them. Even the community developmental activities have been affected as the CRBs/CFMGs are lacking the needed funds to do these projects which can improve the outlook of the CRBs/CFMGs. For this fact the locals have started engaging themselves into illegal activities such as illegal mining, poaching, encroachment and unsustainable cutting of trees.

CONCLUSION

Our nation is bestowed with abundant natural resources, ranging from diverse wildlife and fisheries to extensive forests and water bodies. These invaluable resources serve as the lifeblood of our country, offering not only environmental benefits but also serving as a foundation for the well-being and prosperity of our future generations. Recognizing the critical importance of conservation, it is imperative to cultivate a mindset that prioritizes the sustainable management of these resources. The Zambia Community Resources Board Association (ZCRBA) has emerged as a staunch advocate for this cause, aiming to instill a conservation ethos within communities residing in Game Management Areas (GMAs).

The core objective of ZCRBA's advocacy efforts is not only the sustainable management of natural resources within GMAs but also the cultivation of a profound realization among local communities regarding the significance of conservation. It underscores the importance of fostering a sense of ownership and responsibility among the local populace towards the resources



that surround them. This dual approach seeks not only to safeguard the ecological integrity of these regions but also to ensure that the communities intimately linked to these resources actively participate in and benefit from their preservation.

Undoubtedly, the regions housing these valuable resources face numerous challenges, often posing impediments to the livelihoods of local communities. However, the vision of a harmonious and sustainable future is within reach. By fostering collaboration among all stakeholders in the conservation sector and the government, a united front can be forged to address these challenges. Through a collective and harmonious effort, the prospects for significant improvements in the livelihoods of Community Resources Boards (CRBs) and Community Forest Management Groups (CFMGs) are substantial. Furthermore, such collaboration lays the foundation for the sustainable management of our natural resources, ensuring that they continue to be a source of prosperity for generations to come.

In essence, while challenges persist, the potential for positive transformation is immense. By working together, stakeholders can usher in a new era of sustainable practices, improved livelihoods, and the enduring conservation of our nation's precious natural resources. The vision of a future where conservation is ingrained in the mindset of all, and where the benefits of natural resource management are equitably distributed, is both achievable and worth pursuing.

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