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# TRADITIONAL AUTHORITY IN MOZAMBIQUE

- A potential resource in the implementation of a rural development project?

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## **Abstract**

Since the end of the civil war and the reformation of the socialist system in the early 1990's, Mozambique is undergoing changes. Part of this development are the government's measures to reinstall so called "traditional leaders" (chiefs) in power. In this essay I look into the issue of whether or not traditional leaders can serve as a valuable institutional resource to be used in the implementation of development programs in rural communities. I have studied the Community Based Natural Resource Management program "Programa Chipanje Chetu" to investigate the role of the traditional leaders within this program. I have focused on two villages - one where the implementation is going relatively smoothly (Nova Madeira), and another where the situation is rather chaotic (II Congresso). Through analysing the situation in each village, I argue that the differences in implementation can partly be explained by the individual behaviour of the chiefs, and the community structures that they are operating within. This indicates the importance of the chief in development projects such as this, as well as addresses to what extent their involvement can be useful. Through comparing two opposite ways of defining the concept of 'community' - the "territorial model" vs. its critics, I argue that the chief's authority within the community is neither totally insignificant nor exclusively pivotal and clear-cut. Each community has a chief with individual characteristics, as well as a community structure with distinct features. My recommendations are therefore to model the framework of the development program and its implementation procedure with respect to the situation within each particular community.

## **Keywords**

Traditional leaders, Community Based Natural Resource Management, community, implementation, Actor-Structure, tradition-modernity

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# 1. Introduction

Should African traditions have a place in modern African society, or should they be eradicated in order to make way for an imposed system of western democracy? This has been an issue for debate since the former colonies gained independence. Currently in focus are ongoing discussions regarding whether traditional African leaders (chiefs) should have a role in modern society or not, and if so, in what way. Hansen (2000, p.126f) identifies two competing contemporary views:

- a) One view is that Africa has an undemocratic past that hampers democratisation today. The institution of chieftaincy is problematic because it has been corrupted during authoritarian regimes. Traditional authority stands in conflict with democratic ideals.
- b) The other view stresses the democratic nature of pre-colonial African society. People recognise and can meet traditional authorities without much difficulty, and the superior chiefs can communicate directly with the head of state. Chiefs should therefore be incorporated into the political system.

Those advocating an increased role for traditional leaders usually stress the practical benefits of working with them, whereas those against argue that traditional authority is incompatible with universal democratic principles such as fairness and equality. Common arguments are that the elective procedures exclude a large majority of the population, including women (Bergstrand, 2002).

In Mozambique the debate is particularly evident in recent reforms that formally recognize the need for traditional leaders to exercise their power at local level. This breaks with the Marxist politics that followed after independence in 1975, when the ruling FRELIMO party tried to eradicate the practice of traditional leadership. Since the early 1990s, following political reform and the end of the civil war, the opinion that traditional leaders should be officially recognised and reinstalled has won increasing ground.

## 2. Aim

My general intention has been to look into the issue of whether traditional authority can serve as a valuable institutional base to include in the implementation process of development projects at rural community level. Initially my aim was to analyse recent measures of recognising traditional power, such as the introduction of the “15/2000 decree”, and investigate whether the renewed role of traditional authority could facilitate the implementation of food security programs at local level. The decree is a formal recognition that the state cannot run every village and that local state bodies must establish relations with those figures that can legitimately represent their communities (Mozambique File, 2000). I had chosen 4 villages in the Niassa province in Northern Mozambique, which is the least developed province in Mozambique and a place where contact between state bodies and the rural population is very limited. This makes the area an interesting place to study alternative forms of leadership to the government, such as the traditional. Since the 15/2000 decree involves a whole range

of issues such as education, health and conflict resolution, I decided to focus on one aspect – the maintenance of food security, in order to make the investigation and comparative analysis easier. Upon arrival in the first two villages (Chigoma and Meluluca), I soon however encountered difficulties with the focus that I had chosen. The main problem was that the implementation of the 15/2000 decree was only in its very early stages. For example at the time I visited Meluluca, the chief had not even been legitimated by the government yet. My ability to study how things had changed with the 15/2000 decree therefore showed itself to be less clear-cut than I had expected. I realised that in order to get a clear picture of how traditional leaders can be used in implementation I would need to find a program where they are directly involved and where they have a more defined role. I found the effects of the implementation of the 15/2000 decree to be simply too vague, or non-existent, in order to be readily identified.

Therefore I decided to shift focus to the Community Based Natural Resource Management (CBNRM) program “Programa Chipanje Chetu” (PCC) which directly involves local authority in the implementation and decision-making process. The program is being implemented in the northern Sanga district in Niassa and involves five villages. In consultation with one of the program officers I chose to study two of these villages (Nova Madeira and II Congresso), one where the cooperation with the traditional leaders was said to be working well, and one where the situation on the contrary was rather chaotic.

From this, my aim has been to analyse whether or not traditional authority can be seen as a valuable resource in the implementation of a rural development project, such as the PCC. If so, how can one make use of this resource? Looking at the issue more closely: what particular factors affect its success/failure? Focal points for the study have been on the individual chiefs, and the structures that they are operating within. Using a theoretic base of institutional aspects of traditional leadership and their respective communities, and CBNRM (to be considered a field of implementation theory), my aim has therefore been to answer the following questions:

1. Can traditional leaders be considered to be a valuable (i.e. the advantages outweighing the disadvantages) institutional resource to utilize when implementing development programs in rural areas?
2. What factors determine whether or not traditional leaders can be considered to be a valuable institutional resource for this purpose?

Although the two other villages (Chigoma and Meluluca) are not part of the PCC program, I made some useful observations that I believe can be applied within a more general context. I have therefore not chosen to ignore the material collected in these villages, but instead include it in the more general discussions regarding traditional authority in Mozambique.

### 3. Methodology

The empirical material used in this study is largely derived from interviews conducted with various people in Mozambique in June, July and August 2003. Six weeks were spent in the Niassa province in northern Mozambique. This area was selected in consultation with representatives of SIDA in Mozambique, and was considered interesting from a development-perspective because of its extreme level of underdevelopment. There is also a considerable number of NGO:s present in the area, which could enable transport possibilities to remote villages etc. In consultation with Camilla Salomonsson, representative of SIDA in the Niassa province, I selected four villages where I would conduct my study. These were considered suitable since ACORD, an NGO involved in the PCC, had regular contacts with these villages and considered each one to have different characteristics in terms of traditional structures. Also, ACORD offered to provide me with transport to them.

I used Lichinga, the capital of the Niassa province, as my base and from there made two journeys out into the remote countryside to visit the villages. The first journey, lasting for seven days, was made to the villages of Chigoma and Meluluca in the Lago district. To my help I had a driver, a guide, and one interpreter from ACORD (translating from local Nyanja language into English). The second journey, also lasting for seven days, was made to the villages of Nova Madeira and II Congresso in the Sanga district. On this trip I had a different team consisting of a driver and two interpreters from ACORD. Since there was no one available to translate directly from the local Yao language to English, I had to use one that translated from Yao into Portuguese. Since I only have basic understanding of spoken Portuguese, I also partly had to use one that would translate from Portuguese into English.

The type of people selected for interviews in the villages were the chief, the village secretary, as well as ordinary villagers. I would also interview people of special interest, such as those involved in particular community projects etc. I also interviewed government representatives in the area, such as the District Administrators and the “*Chefe*” of Administrative Posts. (for a list of all people interviewed, see section 10). The selection and introduction to the interviewees was facilitated by the help of the ACORD staff.

The interviews were to the largest extent possible conducted privately, so as to enable as honest responses as possible. However, in order to not offend anyone it was in a few cases difficult to keep interested onlookers in the villages away. The questions asked were of the semi-structured type. I based my questions on those from a questionnaire, but often felt the need to omit or add particular questions depending on the situation and the person interviewed. In many cases it was also necessary to ask follow-up questions, to clarify what had been said. Appendix I lists common questions that were asked.

## **4. Material and theoretic framework**

The literature that has been used to analyse the material has been within several fields. I have started with largely anthropological studies of what defines “traditional authority”, and its historical context in Mozambique. I have then looked at the issue of what role traditional authority should have in modernizing Mozambican society. Central to this issue has been the concept of “community” and its implications for the authority of the traditional leader. I have also looked at the implementation strategies of Community Based Natural Resource Management (CBNRM) and the role of traditional leaders within such projects. In the end I apply an actor/structure perspective to analyse the relation between traditional leaders and the structures that they operate within.

## **5. What is ‘traditional authority’?**

### **5.1 Definition of the term**

The terms “chiefs” and “traditional leaders” are used interchangeably in the essay, and should be read as synonyms. Similarly, “chieftaincy” and “traditional authority” are both meant to describe the authoritative structure that chiefs/traditional leaders represent.

Traditional authority can bluntly be defined as the ‘native authority’, a structure that existed long before the arrival of the Portuguese colonialists. Since the nature of tradition is subject to constant change (Cuahela, 1996), it is necessary to place traditional authority into its historical context (see section 5.2). Looking at its basic present-day organisational structure, one can note that the institution of traditional authority is mostly confined to the rural areas, since it has been replaced and eradicated by modern forms of governance in the urbanized areas. The chiefs have various duties such as administering land, solving disputes, maintaining social order, caring for the physical and mental health of the community, performing traditional ceremonies and making sure that the ideology of the community is carried over to future generations. Each chief has a number of advisors, called “Indunas”, to assist him. The structure and characteristics of traditional authority varies depending on region, but their power is usually confined to a territory with no more than 350 people for the normal chief of a lineage. The ruling lineage is the one that first occupied the territory or conquered it by force. (Baptista-Lundin, 2001, p.81-82)

The succession order of the chief stays within the lineage, with a patrilineal system being practiced in Southern Mozambique and a matrilineal system in the North (including Niassa). A matrilineal succession order means that the eldest son of the chief’s sister will inherit the position as chief. However, there are also exceptions where a woman can inherit the position as chief, as noted in Meluluca, one of the villages studied. Female chiefs in Mozambique are however quite rare (Harrison, 2000). A patrilineal system differs in the way that the eldest son of the chief’s brother will inherit the position as chief. (Juanga Assane, interview)

## **5.2 History of traditional authority in Mozambique**

The history of traditional authority in Mozambique can be divided into four different eras – the pre-colonial, the colonial, post-independence between 1975 and 1990, and from 1990 to the present.

### **5.2.1 Pre-colonialism**

The period before the arrival of colonialism is often referred to as the ‘unspoiled’ era of ‘true’ African society, characterized by an intricate system of traditional leadership where chiefs used to govern and rule independently (Baptista-Lundin, 2001). Koyana (1998) gives an explanation as to how the institution of chieftaincy originated. Along with human development, individuals decided to come together for protection and mutual co-operation to improve the quality of their lives. Naturally those more gifted in bravery and with greater skills for solving problems took the lead. It would then be natural to prefer, not only for the sons of those in power to take the place of their fathers but also for the community, that the sons and grandsons of those who had proved themselves would take the lead. This is how kings and chiefs came to be. (Koyana, 1998, p.119). Although debated, communities during this period are being seen as having lived in harmony with nature, using their resources sustainably. The intricate control exercised by the traditional authorities ensured a closed-access system to natural resources (Agrawal & Gibson, 1999). The lack of available literature describing this era indicates however that little about it can be said with certainty.

### **5.2.2 Colonialism**

The Portuguese arrived in East Africa during the late 1400’s. Activity was centred around the coastal trading posts of Inhambane, Ilha do Mocambique and Lourenco Marques, so parts of the inland remained independent of Portugal as late as 1914 (Briggs and Velton, 2002). The “Reforma Administrativa Ultramarina” (RAU), initiated in 1934, established the administrative hierarchy of the Portuguese colonial empire. The RAU stated that each colony should be divided into “regulados” (kingdoms). Each “regulado” would have a traditional leader, commonly called “regulo”, that had to participate in administrative duties. The “regulos” functioned as sub-alternate administrators for the colonial government at local level, thus acting as a tool for the control of rural society. The “regulos” constituted the strongest link between native Mozambique and the Portuguese colonialists. It would have been very difficult for the Portuguese to carry out tasks such as collecting tax, maintaining infrastructure such as roads, constructing wells etc. without forcing the “regulos” to assist them with this. (Alves, 1997)

This reform to a certain extent shifted the traditional leaders’ responsibility as serving their communities, toward serving the state. The colonial government would remove chiefs that would disobey orders or cause resistance. They could also intervene in succession procedures and nominate another person for the position of chieftaincy. The selections of the colonial government would often not necessarily be drawn from



the ruling lineage. This caused wounds to the traditional system of succession, as well as to the legitimate status of the chief among the community members (Cuahela, 1996). The involvement with traditional authorities under colonial rule should therefore more be regarded as an act of self-interest, rather than any good-willed desire to pay respect to traditional African culture.

### **5.2.3 Post-independence**

Mozambique gained independence in 1975 following several years of guerilla warfare against the colonial regime. The view within the Mozambican post-colonial government was that the institution of traditional authority was a 'relic of the past' that should not be considered anymore. Traditional leaders were seen as corrupt because of their previous involvement with the colonial government. Much of this philosophy can be traced to Marxist ideas regarding the relation between tradition and modernity. An illustrative example can be found in Ernst (1976, p.79) who from a Marxist viewpoint argues that traditional structures are an "obstacle to economic and social progress". Tradition and modernity are seen as two contradictory forces, and the only way to overcome this problem is the complete breakdown of traditional structures.

One concrete example of this was the introduction of the "village secretary" by the Marxist FRELIMO government after independence. Whereas the traditional leader had been the link between the communities and state administration under colonialism, a village secretary was now put in his place. The village secretary was a representative of the FRELIMO party at local level and had usually not had any previous authoritative position in the community that he was supposed to govern. His body of helpers and advisers would not be representatives from traditional structures, such as the Indunas. Instead the village secretary would be the head of a so-called "Dynamizing Group", set up by FRELIMO to mobilize party support. Occasionally administrators from foreign areas would come to inspect and assist, but due to a lack of understanding of the culture and language the communication would be very poor. (Jamisse Taimio, interview)

Judging from the responses of the people interviewed in the 4 villages studied, the message was rather clear: the system of using village secretaries as a link between state administration and rural communities seems to have been a major failure. This has also been confirmed by several sources (see Harrison (2000), Baptista-Lundin (2001) or West (1999) for example). The secretaries were not perceived as legitimate leaders, and therefore enjoyed very little natural respect. As a result things had to be implemented by use of force. People would be beaten or put into jail if they did not follow the secretary's orders. Along with the arrival of multi-party elections, the secretary would just be seen as an extension of the FRELIMO party, instead of representing the government. With the gradual abolishment of using force as a method to make people obey his orders, the ability for the village secretary to perform his duties weakened even further. Members of the opposition party RENAMO would refuse to come to village meetings, or would disobey instructions (villagers, interview). One villager in Meluluca (interview) described the authority of the village

secretary as “someone else’s mother telling you off” i.e. someone bossing you around without the authority to do so. Baptista-Lundin (2001, p.84) argues that the post-independence government tried to move as fast as it could towards modernity and development, at the expense of culture. The persistence of traditional authority structures eventually became a burden for the government. Seeing an arbitrary modernized administrative system being superimposed on them, the Mozambican people would turn to the institution that represented their own culture – the one that they knew best, namely the traditional leaders. “The introduction of the village secretaries constituted a denial of African culture. As a result, local communities became more vulnerable to socio-economic destabilization, which brought with it unhappiness, anomie and social chaos.” (Baptista-Lundin, 2001, p.85).

#### **5.2.4 1990-today**

Since the early 1990’s, along with liberalization, the end of the civil war and the reformation of Marxist politics, the government has taken a new approach towards recognizing traditional authority. Several academics have also voiced the opinion that traditional structures can coexist with modernity, and even reinforce modern institutions. A report published by the Ministry of State Administration in 1996, states: “traditional authority is present and important in the whole of the national territory” (Cuahela, 1996, p.7). There has been growing concern that the system of traditional authority should be recognized and granted formal powers. Irae Baptista-Lundin, former advisor to the Minister of State Administration, argues that “...chiefs fill a socio-cultural space with their presence: a presence that cannot be filled by anyone else. They exist as symbols for their communities” (Baptista-Lundin, 2001, p.86) . Another leading defender of traditional authority in the debate is Francisco Machava (former director of the Ministry of State Administration’s “Development Nucleus”) who has publicly stated: “The government committed a grave error in the abolition of traditional authority right after the proclamation of independence and today, recognizing this error, is disposed to the return of traditional power” (West, 1998b, p.143).

The 15/2000 decree, issued by the Mozambican government in June 2000, recognizes the role of “community authorities”, which includes “traditional chiefs, village secretaries and other leaders legitimized as such by their respective communities” (Mozambique File, September 2000, p.8). The decree lists a long set of tasks and issues in which these ‘community authorities’ are supposed to cooperate with the government. This includes publicizing laws, solving local disputes, educating people about social and health issues, mobilizing the communities for various development projects etc. As stated above, the definition of ‘community authorities’ encompasses virtually anyone holding the position as legitimate leader, theoretically opening the scope for virtually anyone with legitimate authority to be recognized as ‘community authority’ by the government. However, by far the most common figure to be identified by the village as its legitimate leader is the traditional leader, not the village secretary or anyone else. (Jamisse Taimo, interview)

The institution of village secretaries still exists, but has been stripped of many of its powers. The village secretaries are still responsible for delivering the messages of the Frelimo party to local level, but many of their former duties such as law enforcement, mobilizing the people for various duties etc. have been gradually removed (Virtanen, 2000, p.130). In all of the 4 villages studied the village secretary works together with the chief, both assisting each other in their duties. The village secretary of Meluluca mentioned that he nowadays always consults with the chief before making an announcement to the villagers. From what could be seen in the villages studied this worked rather friction-free. None of the village secretaries interviewed would agree that they saw the abolishment of their powers as any loss of prestige. Rather, they would openly admit the weaknesses of the former system, and say that the renewed recognition for the chief's authority is good. For example the village secretary in Meluluca said: "If the village secretary tries to do things on his own, people just see him as a FRELIMO representative, and some people will not cooperate. The chief will get everyone to listen."

It can be debated as to what extent FRELIMO's recent initiatives of approaching traditional authority is just a strategy to gain political power in rural areas. It also needs to be mentioned that there are frequent voices who argue that colonialism destroyed and manipulated traditional structures to the extent that chiefs no longer can be seen as having any legitimate authority. Similar to the modernist thinking of the post-independence era, traditional leaders are seen as irreconcilable with democratic governance, nation-building and development, and represent tribalism, backwardness and autocratic rule (Keulder, 1998, p. 292). Sergio Vieira, former minister of agriculture and a frequent voice in the debate regarding traditional leaders, adheres to the notion that Portuguese colonialism destroyed pre-existing Mozambican institutions of chieftaincy, and replaced the legitimate chiefs with authority figures who gained and kept their positions only through serving the Portuguese colonialists. According to him, the traditional leaders of today are a product of colonialism, and their authority should therefore have no recognition in today's Mozambican society. (West, 1998b, p.143).

## **6. Practical benefits of cooperating with traditional authority**

Those advocating a more active role for traditional authority often argue that there are considerable practical benefits to be yielded from this. These arguments often revolve around the issues of chiefs having the potential to mobilize their communities for collective action, acting as a link between the community and the state, and reinforcing modern institutions. (Bergstrand, 2002)

### **6.1 "Traditional leaders have a mobilizing potential"**

Robson & Roque (2003, p.90) argue that collective action is especially important in areas where social services provided by the state are absent. Furthermore it helps to develop social networks, norms, rules, trust and accountability.

Keulder (1998, p.302-305) describes in a case study of the Cuvelai pipeline project in Namibia how traditional leaders were “instrumental” in mobilizing free community labour when constructing the pipeline. In another case study, this time the Northern Namibia Rural Development Project, he mentions similarly: “Due to his authority and influence over the villagers, together with the fact that villagers are often unfamiliar with development projects, the traditional leader was able to mobilize community members in support of his cause”. He writes further on that: “It is clear that without the traditional leaders’ assistance, program officers would have experienced great difficulty in mobilizing community participation” (Keulder, 1998, p.312).

The belief that they are effective in mobilizing their respective communities for collective action is also reflected in the 15/2000 decree where 10 out of the 21 duties listed start with “To mobilize” (Boletim da Republica, July 2000). Typical examples are mobilizing community members to maintain infrastructure such as roads and irrigation ditches, build schools and health clinics, and participate in health projects to prevent the spread of diseases such HIV/AIDS and tuberculosis.

The chief’s potential in leading and mobilizing people for development projects was also evident in some of the villages studied. In Chigoma for example, the chief was active in leading several development projects. Martin, one of three teachers in the village, pointed towards the school building and said that “Without the chief that building would not exist.”. Another duty of the chief was to head the construction of roads in the area. Commenting further, Martin mentioned: “Projects can’t go well if chief is not active. People will be like sheep without control.” (Martin, interview).

## **6.2 “Traditional leaders can bridge the power vacuum”**

Mawhood (1983) shows in a number of case studies how the efforts of a newly independent African government to operate at a decentralized level runs into trouble. The lack of resources, internal corruption and inefficiency have usually resulted in chaos and re-centralization.

In Mozambique it is easy to understand this issue simply by observing the poor, or non-existent infrastructure in the rural areas. For example, in order to reach Chigoma from Lichinga, one first needs a 4-wheel driven jeep to drive through the bumpy road down to the lakeside village of Metangula. There one needs to wait for the ferry leaving only once a week for Cobue. In Cobue one needs to arrange with a local boatman to take oneself with his sailing boat four hours up the lake. This is the only way to reach the village, since there are no roads leading there. To reach the other villages at least a 4-wheel driven jeep with an experienced driver is a necessity. There is no electricity in any of the villages and no phone lines. Local governmental authorities are scarce (in the PCC area there is only one government employee – the “Chefe do Posto”, for the whole area of 4000 sqkm.). It is not hard to see that the poor infrastructure and lack of finances pose serious difficulties for the government of keeping significant control over these rural areas. Speaking to the Administrative Director of the Lago district, the issue becomes even clearer. Government employees are working in buildings that are close to ruin, and funds are lacking to carry out even

the simplest duties (Lago district administrator, interview). There is a “power vacuum” between the government and these rural communities. The only significant authority structures present at the local level are the traditional ones.

Nwomonoh (1994, p.161) argue that the “personal stature, prestige and dignity” of the traditional ruler can influence the local governing processes and facilitate communication between the people at local level and authorities at national level. Others with him such as Ivala (1999) and Vaughan (2000) also argue that the chief can act as an important mediator and implementer in, for example, local development projects. An important resource here is the local expertise that the chief inherits. The chief is the watchdog of the village, constantly checking up on people’s needs. He has an understanding of the community and its traditions that will take a very long time for an outsider to gain. He also speaks the same language as the other villagers, using words that the villagers will understand.

A study conducted by the Ministry of State Administration concluded that a great advantage with traditional leaders in regards to their respective communities are their “local knowledge in combination with their efficiency” (Cuahela, 1996, p.37). Traditional leaders could therefore help bridge the power vacuum between the state and rural communities.

### **6.3 “Traditional structures can reinforce modern institutions”**

Dia (1996a) argues that formal institutions that are not being rooted in local culture fail to gain the loyalty of society. These formal institutions are at odds with societal behaviour, expectations and incentive systems and therefore face a crisis of legitimacy and enforcement. Indigenous institutions on the other hand are rooted in local culture and values, and can count on the pillars of legitimacy, accountability and self-enforcement. He argues that the problems of capacity building and the related lack of social, political and economic development in post-independence Sub-Saharan Africa are largely attributable to a “crisis of institutions.” This crisis is mainly due to a “structural and functional disconnect, or lack of convergence, between formal institutions that are most transplanted from outside and informal institutions that are rooted in African history, tradition and culture and that generally characterize the governance of civil society.” (Dia, 1996b, p.29). Dia mentions the research program “AM90” (“Africa’s Management in the 90’s”), that has studied different countries’ efforts to develop their own institutions in respect to what is locally available in terms of human resources, local traditions, organizations and systems. The findings of the study were that Africa, perhaps contrary to popular belief, has great capacity and institutional skill as well as great experience in providing simple but effective solutions. Most of the projects that have involved local, traditional institutions have been highly effective at a low cost. Dia later applies this theory directly to the issue of chieftaincy: “Not only are chiefs important as an additional governance institution, but understanding their roles and functions is crucial to improving the provision of public services to local communities.” (Dia, 1996b, p.106). Similarly, Ivala (1999, p-183-184) writes “...chiefs in Mozambique generally are very collaborative in wanting to solve the current social and political crisis. They also have the potential in playing

an important part, because of the legitimacy they inherit. It is therefore vital to integrate the chiefs with governmental structures in order to effectively carry out development projects.”

Similarly, Cousins and Hornby (2000) discuss the failures of the CPA act in South Africa. What constituted the act was the creation of “Common Property Institutions” (CPI:s), that were to provide a framework for issues such as land tenure. Cousins and Hornby (2000) point to a number of weaknesses in the institutional basis of these CPIs that have had negative consequences. One major criticism is the disregard for traditional authorities. The act prescribes a number of principles such as “fair and inclusive decision-making processes”, “equality of membership” and “democratic processes” to form the moral and theoretical basis for the CPIs. The Act was passed in a legal and political environment dominated by principles of a new South African democracy based on universal values. Given the nature of traditional authority, the policy makers found the principles of traditional authority to be incompatible with the principles of the CPA, and therefore decided to keep traditional leaders outside of these institutions. Cousins and Hornby (2000, p.6) criticize how policy makers assumed that the new CPIs could exist in parallel with traditional systems without “intrusion, confusion or conflict”. They then mention a number of case studies where these dual systems have clashed. In many instances the situation has lead to an anarchic situation where both systems are dysfunctioning. The analysis reflects the disjuncture of state law and the daily-life realities of rural communities. This indeterminacy can be minimized through “serious attempts to achieve legal, institutional and technical coherence that recognizes local practices and builds bridges to formal law and institutions.” (Cousins and Hornby, 2000, p.23)

A solution, as many argue for, would then be to take advantage of the already existing ‘native’ institutions that function at local level. This would, according to the abovementioned arguments,: 1) save money, since government employees would not have to be paid. 2) compensate for the lack of infrastructure, since the chiefs are based in the area that they rule over 3) be effective, since the chiefs have the power to mobilize people and have good knowledge of local circumstances.

## **7. Programa Chipanje Chetu (PCC)**

The Chipanje Chetu Programme (PCC) is a Community Based Natural Resource Management (CBNRM) programme in the northern Sanga District, Niassa. The area was selected in 1998 as suitable for a CBNRM programme because:

- It had a relatively high level and variety of natural resources and a low density of people
- The local people were interested in such an initiative since they had few alternative development options and a high dependence on natural resources
- The provincial government agencies were supportive

- The area represented a good area of woodland to test various natural resource options, institutional options, and the current Mozambican legislative framework.

(RUANSD, 2000)

A study carried out by the initiative of IUCN and OPORTUN, demonstrated clearly that it was “outsiders” who were the main unsustainable users of the resources (see RUANSD, 2000). Poachers would come from Tanzania or other districts of Niassa, thus bringing the profits of their catch out of the area, as well as contributing to a unsustainable decrease in wildlife population. To bring an end to the unsustainable use of the natural resources, the PCC was initiated. It involves the local communities in the setting up of rules for access to the natural resources. The area of the PCC is now a protected area and is supervised by a number of community scouts, operating under the directions of the five village committees. Their duty is to patrol the area for poachers and they will catch anyone without a hunting license and bring him to the police. The only ones allowed to hunt in the area are those who have purchased a hunting license. Since these licenses amount to much more than the revenue made from poaching, the majority are sold to tourists from richer parts of the world, such as Europe or North America (Rui Redocho, interview). The revenue is then distributed equally among the local communities. In this way, the communities benefit directly from the resources that belong to them. It also provides them with an incentive to conserve and protect the area from exploitation. Other activities within the PCC programme that involve the communities in taking advantage of their natural resources include beekeeping, timber harvesting, fishing and ceremonial meat harvesting.

(RUANSD, 2000)

The PCC is now implemented through a group involving local community institutions (village natural resource committees), traditional leaders, Government agencies (SPFFB, District agencies) and NGOs (IUCN on general facilitation and funding, ACORD on capacity building and small income projects and OPORTUN on advocacy and social inputs). (See appendix II for a list of all abbreviations.)

(RUANSD, 2000)

### *Demography*

The PCC area covers an area of approximately 4000 sqkm and has a very low population density of 0.5 people/sqkm. In 2000 the area had a population of 2578 people and 650 households, distributed between 5 villages. These are Nova Madeira, Matchedje, II Congresso, Lilumba, and Maumbica (see appendix V for map). All 5 villages were considerably affected by the independence war, and many of the people fled to Tanzania, and lived there as refugees. Upon their return, they would not always choose to return to exactly where they came from. On their return in the mid- to late 1970's, the number of settlements declined and people moved into villages close to the new north-south road. The civil war created a second wave of emigration, with populations only returning from 1994 onwards.

(RUANSD, 2000)

A feature of the history is the very limited and short duration of the relationship between the colonial administration and the communities. Most villages recorded their first contact with the administration only in the early or mid-60s. Prior to this, contact seems to have been minimal and indirect. Contact with the post-independence authorities also seems to have been limited to the period in the mid- to late 1970s, and then again only in limited terms from the end of the civil war in 1994 up to the present day. The most extensive and important relationship seems to have been with Tanzania (especially in regard to natural resource use).

(RUANSD, 2000)

Most of the infrastructure of the district is located in the southern area, where the concentration of people is much higher. This area includes most of the road system, the district headquarters, the district hospital and the secondary schools. The northern area of Sanga where PCC is located has lesser in the way of infrastructure. There is one road running north-south through the area, which is unpaved. The access is more troublesome during the rainy season (approximately 5 months). There is one health clinic in II Congresso and each village has basic primary school facilities. There are no significant commercial outlets (shops) in the whole of the PCC area.

(RUANSD, 2000)

## **7.1 Community Based Natural Resource Management (CBNRM)**

The foundations and implementation of the PCC are based on the principles of Community Based Natural Resource Management (CBNRM). CBNRM is an implementation approach to managing natural resources that involves local communities in decision-making and management. This comes as a reaction towards state-centred strategies of natural resource management that has proven to be inefficient and of little use in small-scale farming areas (Nummelin & Virtanen, 2000, p.220). In the initial stages of formulation and implementation, CBNRM will often be oriented towards a “top-down” approach. This occurs when communities do not have capacity, expertise or resources to initiate such programmes themselves. However it is critical that CBNRM in the long term moves towards a bottom-up orientation, starting with the needs and wishes of the local communities that populate the project area (Abacar, 2000, p.14). Soeftestad (1998) identifies three core aspects of CBNRM:

- 1) The essential feature of CBNRM is *starting with the communities*, taking them into confidence and having confidence with them. It engages their ideas, experiences, values and capabilities on behalf of resource conservation objectives. It is prepared to accommodate local interests, needs and norms that are compatible with sustainable development. At the same time it seeks ways for communities to develop their strategies and become better served.
- 2) Secondly there is the *natural resource management* aspect of CBNRM. It focuses primarily on natural resources that are under some form of communal or collective management.



- 3) Third, there is the *co-management* aspect. This speaks to the importance of establishing relations between stakeholders that are located at different levels.

The concept entails any of the following characteristics: “local level”, “voluntary”, “participatory”, “decentralised” or “village level” (Abacar, 2000, p.6). There is an increasing awareness that centralized administration in many countries is not able to carry out the management of natural resources on its own. This is usually because it is understaffed and lacks infrastructure and financial means. A solution has then been to turn to local communities for support and guidance. CBNRM is a management strategy that has developed in response to the apparent past inadequacies in conservation and development. It recognises that rural communities have an important role to play in the management of natural resources and wildlife. It is a strategy based on sustainability by drawing on the effectiveness of local expertise, and also rests on the notion that local communities who are daily in touch with the natural resources are its best custodians. It is important to effectively integrate NGO:s, indigenous institutions and concerned individuals in the planning process. The role of ‘sub-national’ government should be strengthened, and there should be constant interaction between the community and other stakeholder groups. (Abacar, 2000). In the cases where CBNRM has been successful, it has for example managed to revive an understanding of the importance of interdependence between natural resources and local communities themselves, as well as created more sustainable practices for making use of natural resources, such as wildlife (Murphree, 1993).

## **7.2 The role of the chiefs within the PCC**

The leaflet “Os Dez Principios Do Programa Chipanje Chetu” lists 10 guiding principles for the program (see appendix III). Of particular interest is the first principle, “Goals and scope”, where it is stated that: “The basic hypothesis is that the transfer of authority and functions regarding natural resource use at community level will promote economic, social, environmental and political benefits. Particular emphasis is placed on the local focus of the project, involving local government and rural authorities.”

As explained in the organogram in appendix IV, the chiefs hold one formal place within the organisation of the PCC, in the council. Their duty there is to act as a representative for the communities, resolving conflicts if they occur. They are also responsible for guaranteeing the continued participation of the communities in the PCC, guaranteeing a continued sustainable use of natural resources, as well as preservation of cultural habits. (Termos de referencia, 2001).

At community level the chiefs are involved in many different aspects of the PCC. The NGO staff interviewed from ACORD, OPORTUN and IUCN mentioned that it was necessary to have the blessing and support of the chief in the activities taking place, so that he will not cause active resistance to project. Moreover, the committee does not operate in a vacuum from the regular authority of the chief. For instance, the chiefs hold a role as advisers of social and cultural aspects vis-à-vis the committees, and the committees also have an obligation to report to the chief about their activities.

“The chief has the power to say to the committee what he doesn’t like. He’s got the upper hand as long as it doesn’t interfere with the principles of the program” (Antonio Abacar, interview). The NGO staff have also mentioned the importance of the chief as a consultative resource. Antonio Abacar, project coordinator for PCC and director of IUCN in Lichinga, mentions as an example that the chiefs have been of great help in advising where to construct a new road, so that it won’t cross over areas that risk being flooded, where there are landmines etc. The chiefs were also helpful in selecting suitable people to be game-scouts, and are informally responsible for many organisational aspects of the project, such as mobilising people to come to village meetings etc.

There is however also a risk that the chiefs abuse the powers that they have been given. Gibson and Marks (1995) for example point out that there have been examples of where chiefs have acted out of self-interest and exploited the powers they have been given by development programs. This has led to problems such as skewed distribution of benefits and economic goods. Antonio Abacar (interview) stresses that it is important not to vest too much responsibility in the chief, and that the project should be run as a multidisciplinary group: “If we keep the chiefs too much inside there’ll be problems, because they’ll try and lead things traditionally. For example, a chief might take some money just because he is the chief.”. Marcos Assane, representative for OPORTUN within the PCC, expresses similarly: “If the chief makes a decision all on his own it’s not very good.”

The dilemma is therefore of granting the chief enough power to keep him content, but at the same time establish mechanisms that restrict any tendencies to exploit the power that he has been given or actively hinder the implementation procedure. The abovementioned discussion is important because it digs deeper than just the dialectic discussion of whether to ‘include the chief or not’. Unlike in the example mentioned in South Africa by Cousins and Hornby (2000), the PCC are not ignorant to traditional authority. At the same time the PCC are careful not to vest too much power into one individual. My general impression was that the chiefs seemed to have no major grievances with the program workers, or with the basic aims and principles of the program. All the chiefs interviewed mentioned that they saw the PCC as a “good thing” that benefited their communities. A conclusion I draw from the interviews, program documents and general observations is that although the chiefs do not have any significant formalised duties within the PCC (except for the position as consultant in the Council), the program is respecting and relying on them in an informal, unofficial, way. They are there to keep the community together, solve conflicts and make sure that things run smoothly by mobilizing people to work towards the goals of the project. The committee in II Congresso mentioned for example that they would have difficulties in making decisions when the chief was not present to consult. The informal duties that the chiefs are allotted appears to keep them away from feeling alienated, or that bodies such as the committee are competing with their jurisdiction.

At the same time there are indications that the weak status of the chief in II Congresso in combination with his role within the program has a destabilising effect on the implementation process. Assane Juanga, representative of ACORD within the PCC,

(interview) mentioned that ACORD are currently trying to develop better ways of getting round the problem, and to find a situation that would be acceptable for everyone involved.

### **7.3 The implementation of the PCC so far**

Of particular note is the effort to revert the system of open-access (especially by non-residents) into a closed-access system. This has been through the introduction of community scouts who patrol the whole area, looking for poachers. If they find one they are responsible for reporting him to the police. Along with the protection of the area, the PCC has initiated a commercial safari-hunting tourism project, which has been the main generator of economic benefit for the project (Anstey et.al., 2002, p. 16)

In addition to the safari-hunting tourism, the projects which the community of Nova Madeira and II Congresso had identified as important to be working within were:

1) Timber harvesting (Nova Madeira)

The community supported the formation of an association for the extraction of wood, which would help with material for the cutting as well as distribution in the market.

2) Agriculture (Nova Madeira, II Congresso)

The communities mentioned this as an activity that would function better if they had access to technical expertise and adequate instruments for production.

3) Apiculture (Nova Madeira)

The traditional methods of producing honey were identified as inefficient in relation to more modern techniques. Through the assistance of technical expertise the communities would be able to produce honey for commercial use.

4) Fishing (Nova Madeira, II Congresso)

The external support needs identified were assistance with equipment, support for training in new methods and assistance with marketing.

5) Handicrafts (II Congresso)

The external support needs identified were assistance with developing new methods/products and also marketing support.

(RUANSD, 2000)

There are noticeable differences in the levels to which the villages have advanced regarding these projects. For example, the community of Nova Madeira had used the first payment received from hunting revenue to construct a grinding mill. Also, a small-scale apiculture project was well under way. The honey produced was through the assistance of PCC sold in markets in Lichinga, and revenue would go back to the community. Also, a timber-cutting project was taking place.

In II Congresso, none of the agriculture-, fishing- and handicraft projects identified as viable and important had been started up. Assane Juanga (interview) described the situation in terms of a 6-step management plan that ACORD uses for the implementation of the program:

- 1) Preliminary contact only with the chief, explaining ACORD's objectives, and hearing his comments.
- 2) Enlarged contact with the chief, the chief's advisors (Indunas), and the rest of the community, explaining ACORD's objectives.
- 3) Planning and identification stage based on community's needs and initiatives, as well as ACORD's objectives. Here problems, causes, and possible solutions are discussed and identified. Duties are assigned.
- 4) Contact with the various interest groups. At this stage various management aspects are identified, as well as organisational and financial issues.
- 5) Granting of micro-credits.
- 6) Accompaniment and capacity training. Visits to inspect the work. The whole process is then repeated once again, to make sure people are clear of what their duties are.

Whereas the village of Nova Madeira had reached phase 6 in the projects of apiculture and agriculture, the village of II Congresso was still at phase 3 for all their projects. Also, the villagers of II Congresso were impatiently demanding money (micro-credit) already by stage 3. (Assane Juanga, interview)

### **7.3.1 Nova Madeira**

An important factor to consider when studying the differences between the two villages is that Nova Madeira lies much closer to the province capital Lichinga, thus making it easier and less time-consuming to reach. Also, a program "center" has been placed in the village, containing a radio transmitter/receiver. Also, the only game scout receiving a salary by the program resides in the village.

In pre-colonial times the Yao and Nyanja tribes together drove out the Ngoni tribe, who previously occupied the territory. Now the largely predominant tribe in the village is the Yao. According to figures from 2000, the village consists of 363 inhabitants, divided into 96 families (RUANSD, 2000).

Nova Madeira consists of three parts, each one with its own chief - Pauila, N'tabalika and Kadewele. N'tabalika moved together with a few other people in 1998 out to the margins of the village. His territory is rather insignificant, consisting mainly of himself and his family. He and Kadewele formerly saw each other as rivals. Through the assistance and conflict-resolving efforts from the PCC project, this rivalry has now been resolved. For instance, the chiefs were taken on study visits to areas such as the Niassa game reserve, where similar projects were going on. They would study how the leadership worked there, which helped them to organize themselves. Staff from OPORTUN acted as a mediator and gave them ideas about how to resolve the problem, but many issues were also solved through their own initiatives (Marcos

Assane, interview). The two, together with Paula, are now cooperating together in realizing the goals of the PCC. “If they were still enemies, there probably wouldn’t have been many projects going on, people wouldn’t have been involved very much.” (Marcos Assane, interview). PCC coordinator Antonio Abacar expresses a similar view, theorizing that three cooperating chiefs could perhaps be more effective for implementation: “When they understand each other they become stronger than others. They are much more organised.” (Antonio Abacar, interview)

### **7.3.2 II Congresso**

The situation in II Congresso is evidently more troublesome than in Nova Madeira. As mentioned earlier, II Congresso lies several hours drive further from Lichinga. The new road to the village was only recently upgraded in 2002. Prior to this it was virtually impossible to access the village during the rainy season (approximately 6 months per year). Also, II Congresso does not have any radio transmitter/receiver for communication purposes.

The village history is fairly recent, starting in 1968 with the realisation of the 2<sup>nd</sup> congress of FRELIMO (at the time a guerrilla movement fighting for independence) under the closed jungle-tree canopy. With this the former name of “Miangachi” was substituted for “II Congresso”. In 1976, following independence the year earlier, the new FRELIMO government decided to construct a monument in the area where the congress was held. A road leading to the monument was also constructed, which improved access to and from the area. During the following years, along with the dangers of war in their own territory, an increasing number of people from the Nyanja tribe decided to settle in the II Congresso area. As a response to this, the Yao tribe in neighbouring Machedje also decided to move into the area in order to prevent what they saw as a takeover of their land (Chief Masogo, interview). Despite this, the great majority of its population now consists of Nyanjas. There are also constant population movements in and out of the area. A lot of the villagers do work in nearby Tanzania, and are away for several days, thus making it difficult for them to attend village meetings etc. (Assane Juanga, interview). In 2000 the village had 268 inhabitants, divided into 75 families (RUANSD, 2000).

In the early formation stages of the village, the people there were to decide upon who was to be chief. Because of the people being divided into two tribes, there were many disputes. The Nyanjas opted for a leader that was not seen as the “father of the land” by the Yaos, who saw the land as belonging to them and their tribe. The villagers were unable to choose a leader that everyone agreed upon. In the end, Chief Sanda Mola was appointed by Chief Masogo of the neighbouring village of Machedje. Chief Sanda Mola was just a farmer in Machedje before he was appointed by Chief Masogo, but belonged to the ruling lineage of the area. Sanda Mola now rules under Masogo. (Chief Masogo, interview)

All village members interviewed complained that Chief Sanda Mola had a serious drinking problem and that this had a negative impact on his ability to perform his duties. The committee members complained that his habits made their work much

more difficult. Often they would have to postpone meetings until the next day because of the chief being too drunk to participate. Another problem mentioned was that together with the hunting restrictions there was no collective action taken against the increasing amount of wild animals eating and destroying crops in the “machambas” (small plots). For example, a hippopotamus would eat the crops by the river bank, and there was also a problem of elephants damaging and eating crops in the fields (villagers, interview). According to Assane Juanga (interview), the chief would take action to solve this problem, such as putting up a fence, if he had been more responsible. Some members of the committee attributed the slow development of PCC in II Congresso directly to the chief’s drinking habits.

Chief Masogo seems to deny, or be unaware of the abovementioned situation. When asked about Chief Sanda Mola he responded that he had never noticed any malpractices. There do exist traditional procedures to remove a chief from his position (Irae Baptista-Lundin, interview). However, there seemed to be a general feeling among the younger generation that they should avoid dealing with the abovementioned problem directly, without the consent of the elders in the village. The committee for example, consisting mainly of people in their 30’s and 40’s, mentioned that they had not discussed the problems with Chief Masogo. This was because the elders had not done so, and the committee was afraid of “bypassing” the elders by going directly to Chief Masogo. The committee also feared that if they would start investigating the problems of the chief, they might find out some “secret things” such as drug-dealings or practicing of witchcraft, which they were afraid could be a danger to them. Several people within the committee actually expressed the fear of getting killed by witchcraft if they would try and substitute the chief.

Mantega, one of the elders, also expressed the feeling that the chief’s drinking habits was a problem for the whole village, but that it would be extremely difficult to replace him since he is the “father of the land”. He also mentioned that “everyone makes mistakes” and that it might not always be right to replace someone immediately when he makes a mistake.

#### *Problems with the committee*

According to Marcos Assane and Antonio Abacar (interview), there have also been considerable problems with the committee in II Congresso. The first attempt to form a committee in 1998-1999 failed because of the members demanding a salary for the work done. The second committee, consisting of new members, failed as well because of similar reasons. The present one (third) again consists of a new set of members, and is working better than the others, but “lacks popular support”. (Marcos Assane, interview).

#### *General confusion*

The first payment of the revenue from hunting tourism in the area was thought to have disappeared into the hands of the chief. This money was supposed to be kept by the committee, but the chief had demanded that he would take care of it. Since then,

people have been wondering where the money has gone, and suspect that the chief has used it to finance his drinking habits (villagers, interview) According to Antonio Abacar (interview) the money has always been present safely in the hands of the president of the committee. However, the accusations of the chief using it for his own purposes is another indicator of the villagers' mistrust towards the chief.

## **8. An actor-structure approach**

While considering the problems with the chief in II Congresso situation, one of the more interesting things to note is that the implementation process of the PCC has been much slower there than in Nova Madeira. There are a few factors, such as the difference in geographical distance from Lichinga, that may have a considerable effect. However, what is also important to note is that there are several weaknesses related to the leadership in II Congresso that are not present in Nova Madeira. In this section I will discuss the actor (chief) and structure (community structure), as well as the interrelation between the two.

The actor/structure approach draws on the notion that actors and structures are not independent (as argued in extreme structuralism or voluntarism), but are complexly intertwined: "action and structure stand in a relation of logical entailment: the concept of actions presumes that of structure and vice versa" (Giddens in Lundquist, 1984, p.3).

A fundamental basis for the actor/structure approach is therefore that actors do not operate in a vacuum. "Structure" implies that the actors' behaviour are not only shaped by their personality, but also by their social context (Lundquist, 1984, p.8).

### **8.1 The chief**

Lundquist (1984, p.7) identifies three characteristics of the actor; (1) his understanding, (2) his ability to act, and (3) his willingness to act. My main focus here is (2), the chief's ability to act.

The more easily observable problems for the PCC in II Congresso are the ones related to the chief's "irresponsible" lifestyle. The fact that the committee has gone through three complete line-up changes is something that Marcos Assane (interview) derives partly to the inability of the chief to act as an organizational facilitator and to create popular support. Antonio Abacar (interview) expresses a similar view: "The people are not organized because the leadership is weak, and this is a problem. When the leadership is not strong, then people won't trust the project. I think the leadership is the main reason why the committee never worked."

Other negative factors that can bear possible relation to the chief's inability to coordinate his duties is the fact that no action has been taken towards the destruction of crops, as well as the existence of a general confusion surrounding the goals and activities of the project. His inability to host and organize village meetings because of

his alcoholism is yet another indicator that things could have been going better if he had been living a sober life.

The chiefs in Nova Madeira on the other hand are stronger, not least because they do not have a drinking problem, but also because of their willingness and ability to cooperate with the aims of the PCC and leave old grievances behind.

In the cases where the chief is weak, one has to consider whether it is worth involving the chief to any greater extent. On the other hand, in the cases where the chiefs have a greater potential to act (as in Nova Madeira), an organization may find that there are substantial advantages in utilizing the help of chiefs.

## **8.2 Community structure**

As mentioned previously, actors do not operate independently in a vacuum. Structures can act as a restriction for an actor in performing certain actions or accomplishing certain goals. The fundamental issue here is that structures can create restrictions that affect the actors ability to act. A central issue for the academic debate regarding traditional leaders is defining the concept of 'community'. This is important since the social structure of a community affects the traditional leader's ability to act.

Supporters of an increased role for traditional authority often have a fairly unproblematic way of perceiving communities and its boundaries. Virtanen (2000, p.117) identifies this viewpoint by outlining what he calls the "territorial model". This model describes communities as having boundaries that "enclose identifiable groups of interdependent users". Rights in land are closely linked with the allegiance of the chief, because of the system where chiefs hold land and resources on behalf of households. This means in practice a recognition of traditional authorities as the representatives of rural communities. Baptista-Lundin (2001, p.91), for example writes: "This territory has a chief that is entrusted to look after the land and the well-being of the community. It has a history and culture with a proper way of life, and this culture moulds the personality of the individual. Therefore, the territory becomes an important point of reference for anyone who is born there... Chieftaincy is an important symbolic institution, and the territory is the motherland for all individuals born there."

To the defenders of this model it is also easy to identify who is the real, legitimate leader in the village. According to the 15/2000 decree, deciding who is the real 'community authority' should be up to the communities themselves, theoretically leaving the space open for anyone inheriting popular legitimacy to become recognized as a community authority. According to Professor Jamisse Taimo, Rector for the Higher Institute for International Relations in Maputo, (interview) it is "very clear" that the communities in this process almost always identify the traditional leader as their rightful leader. This view is also supported by Francisco Machava, researcher in the field and former member of the Department of Public Administration (interview).



Agrawal and Gibson (1999) further define the territorial approach by identifying three dogmas about the term community, which are commonly emphasized by those advocating a more positive role for communities. These are that;

- 1) A community is a small spatial unit with territorial affiliation.
- 2) It has a homogenous social structure. Observers see communities as a group of relatively homogenous households who possess common characteristics in terms of ethnicity, religion, caste or language. This homogeneity is assumed to enable cooperative solutions and reduce conflict.
- 3) It is based on shared norms. Individuals within each community share common interests and common identification, growing out of shared characteristics.

The above model implies a fairly unproblematic role for the chief, since the community that he rules over can be easily identified. What he can do and cannot do is easily demarcated by a clear community structure. However, the situation in the Northern Sanga district poses various challenges to this concept of community:

1) *“A community is a small spatial unit with territorial affiliation”*

Recent population movements have been extensive in the Sanga district during wartime. The general result of this recent history is that: “village communities do not seem to have a strong attachment to a specific area or village, and a second feature that can be predicted is that with time there is likely to be further smaller settlements established and movements of people occurring.” (RUANSD, 2000, p.12).

This is also a topic raised by Antonio Abacar (interview). He mentions the administrative difficulties of the PCC in trying to involve people that are choosing to settle outside of the villages: “In order to be protected from animals they have to be inside the electrical fences. If you go along the road in PCC, there are settlements spread out all along the main road, far away from the main villages. You can find people in new places, new settlements. Those were not there before. This is going to be problematic to manage.”. This seems to be a general feature in the PCC area, and not restricted to any particular village.

However, there are also considerable structural differences between Nova Madeira and II Congresso. As mentioned earlier, II Congresso is largely a “constructed” village with a short history. Thus the geographical attachment and feeling of belonging to the community can be believed to be less than in Nova Madeira.

The situation is further weakened by the fact that many villagers are crossing the border to Tanzania, and stay there to work for several days. There is also a similar influx of Tanzanians in the opposite direction. In Nova Madeira there were no such close-by neighbouring communities, and I observed no particular movements in any direction.

2) “It has a homogenous social structure”, and 3) “It is based on shared norms”

In II Congresso two tribes with different histories, languages and traditions have rather arbitrarily been grouped together. The Nyanjas are in dominance, but the chief belongs to the Yao tribe. If one considers for example Baptista-Lundin’s (2000) explanations of how chiefs derive their legitimacy, there are reasons to believe that this chief’s ethnic belonging and history could be problematic: “Traditional authority plays a symbolic role for members of the communities, because it is perceived as the true and real representative institution of the territoriality, i.e. the territory of the lineage.”. Even though none of the community members openly admitted that the chief’s ethnic belonging would pose any significance to his ability to perform his duties, there are other sources that contest this view. First of all Chief Masogo mentioned that the people from Machedje saw the immigration of Nyanjas from the Lago district into the II Congresso area as an “invasion of their territory”. Also Chief Sanda Mola (interview) himself complained: “The people from Lago are not concerned about the PCC because one day they’ll go back to their homelands. They want to kill animals to eat and sell, because the land is not theirs. People from Machedje know that the land is theirs, therefore they follow the program. When there’s a meeting, it’s always hard to get the Lago people to come.” Assane Juanga (interview) mentioned that the idea of conserving the natural resources in the area is not “constructive” to the Lago people, since many of them do not feel any historical attachment or belonging to the land: “Perhaps the second generation of Lago people will feel differently, but for now the situation is difficult. The people from Lago don’t participate at all, or very insignificantly.”

In Nova Madeira the Yao population is the dominant ethnic group (RUANSD, 2000), with no other tribe posing any major significance population-wise. From what I noted, and from what the ACORD team informed me, there were no significant tensions between any of the segments of the village.

### *Critics of the model*

The opponents of the territorial model question the coherence and clear demarcation of communities. For example, modernist-, as well as evolutionary theorists highlight the disappearance of community and its replacement of other forms of social organization. Society moves along an evolutionary path where status, tradition, charisma and religion would increasingly give way to equality, modernity, rationality and scientific temper. Marx for example saw social changes as liberating humanity from the coercive and limiting world of the past, or the “idiocy of rural life” (Agrawal & Gibson, 1999, p.630-631). The modernist tradition would criticize the territorial model for not seeing a unitary state in which the accountability system is based on the rights and duties of the individual citizen vis-à-vis the state (Virtanen, 2000, p.120). To exemplify, Harrison (2002, p.122), finds it deeply problematic to accept the view that there in rural areas would exist a “patchwork of communities” that are “fairly unproblematic self-contained socio-geographical units, each with a traditional authority at its peak”. He criticizes the view of stable, definitive lineage structures in pre-colonial times, and is concerned over “the telling silence in the literature

concerning conflicts, arbitrary yielding of power, the confusion concerning who enjoys what authority and over what territory” (Harrison, 2002, p.122). According to Harrison, the institution of chieftaincy as it is today has not arisen from grassroots support but from political party concerns to gain votes and influence people. He questions the view that there should be a generic form of traditional power, and argues that there is no homogenous lineage structure at local level. Furthermore he considers it to be clear that lineage authority is in a state of flux, with chiefs moving out of the villages. Therefore, the concept of natural relations between chiefs and spatial units (jurisdictions) should be of limited practical use (Harrison, 2002).

### *Who is right?*

Judging from the situation in Nova Madeira and II Congresso, both the critics and the defenders of the territorial model have weaknesses in their arguments. It would be wrong to totally disregard traditional community structures, but also incorrect to view them as unproblematically homogenous. The disinterest by the Nyanja people to work towards any collective goals in II Congresso point to the importance of territorial belonging for the well being of a community. This would indicate that behaviour in terms of territorial belonging is not an insignificant factor, and that it can be problematic for outside institutions to treat community members without any regard to their behaviour as a group. At the same time the findings in II Congresso show that it can be troublesome to see all communities as being ethnically homogenous and territorially coherent. Even though the village of II Congresso has a rather special history, several other studies support the argument that there exists several communities where the homogeneity and demarcation is far from being clear-cut (see Virtanen (2000) and Harrison (2002) for reference).

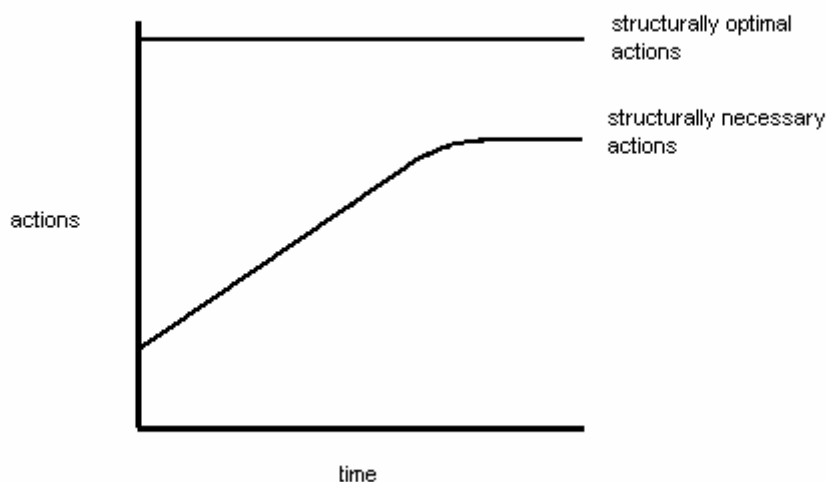
What probably best represents reality in the PCC are the discussions by Agrawal & Gibson (1999), Li (1996), West (1998a, 1998b, 1999) and Virtanen (2000), who call for a more balanced view of looking at the homogeneity and boundaries of a community. Agrawal & Gibson (1999) mention that the vision of community as a unified, organic whole is attractive, but fails to attend to existing differences within, and between, communities. Li (1996) argues that simplified representations of community can be effective when deployed in a macro policy context, but capable of doing damage when translated into more specific recommendations. Virtanen (2000), drawing his examples from the Manica province in Mozambique, tells of extensive socio-geographical movements (due to war for example), with people constantly moving in and out of the area. A common feature of the cases mentioned is the porosity of the borders; the local communities are surrounded by soft boundaries. This blurs the demarcation of where a community ends, and where another begins. At the same time he recognizes that functioning state institutions are largely absent in many rural areas, with traditional authority structures being the only present alternative. West (1998), sums up the argument by concluding: “Participants and observers alike will be best prepared for these processes not by ignoring history, nor by reducing it to simplistic formulations, but by learning its grey shades and becoming conversant in its complexities.” (West, 1998b, p.160).

### 8.3 A dynamic approach

In section 8.1 and 8.2 above I have discussed the actor (chief), and structure (community). I will now look at how the two affect each other in an ongoing process, such as the implementation of the PCC.

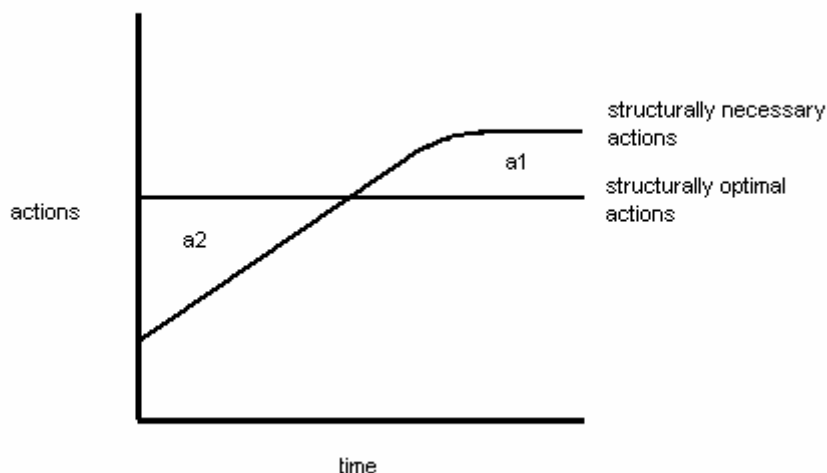
Lundquist (1984) describes what he calls “structurally optimal actions” and “structurally necessary actions”. Structurally necessary actions are those that are necessary for the maintenance of a system. If a system is to be maintained under certain conditions, then important actors cannot act in a way that the systems’ foundational structures are worked against. “Structurally optimal actions”, refers to the maximum level to which a certain actor is able to act (Lundquist, 1984, p.14). How great his ability to act is will depend on his individual characteristics, as well as the structure that he operates within. A restrictive structure will for example contribute to a lowering “structurally optimal actions”. If he at the same time due to his individuality is largely unable to act autonomously of the structure, then the lowering of “structurally optimal actions” will be even more significant.

FIG.1 The “ideal” situation



In Fig.1 I present the ideal situation where the structurally optimal actions always are greater than what is structurally necessary. As time progresses, an increasing number of structurally necessary actions need to be taken. For example, the implementation of a project often requires more from the actor as time evolves, since his personal involvement and responsibilities often becomes greater. However, Fig.1 assumes that the increment in structurally necessary actions will disappear at a certain point. This is where the process becomes routinised and where there is no need to take any further actions than what is already being taken. In Fig.1 the curve for structurally necessary actions levels off before it reaches the critical level where what is structurally optimal sets the limit for what actions can be taken. Fig.2 (a modification of Fig. 9 “En aktörs autonomi i ett tidsperspektiv” in Lundquist, 1984, p. 15) illustrates a more problematic situation:

FIG.2 The “problematic” situation



Compared to Fig.1, the structurally optimal actions are here set at a lower level. In this example there will be a point in time where the structurally necessary actions become greater than the structurally optimal actions. This creates a field (a1) where necessary actions should be taken but are hindered due to structural constraints. If the actor is incapable of performing what is structurally necessary, then the system will collapse.

This diagram can be used to describe the situation in II Congresso. The implementation of the PCC program requires an increasing number of necessary actions and initiatives to be taken before the process becomes routinised. But in II Congresso the process is hindered by;

- (1) the chief (actor) who is unable to perform his duties due to his alcoholism,
- (2) the constraint of the community structure (structure) that cripples his ability to mobilize people for working towards the goals of the PCC.

The result has been that both these factors have contributed to lowering the limit at which structurally optimal actions can be taken. This has created a situation where things should be done, but are impossible for the actor to do (represented by the field “a1”).

What I want to once again highlight is that actions and structures are not independent of each other. Therefore, in the context of II Congresso, the actions of the chief and community structure *in relation with each other* together contribute to the difficult situation in II Congresso (I also find it necessary to emphasize the word “contribute”, thus recognizing that other factors such as geographical distance etc. may also play an important role). A stronger, more sober, chief could possibly have united the village and created a community structure that could have been more favourable for the implementation of the PCC. At the same time, a more coherent community structure could have made life easier for the chief. The fact that people are moving in and out

of the village clearly illustrates the practical difficulties of, for example, assembling the villagers for meetings. A further issue (which I will not speculate further into) is whether his alcoholism is a result of being a chief under difficult structural conditions.

## 9. Conclusion

Judging by the situations in Nova Madeira and II Congresso, it would be incorrect to draw the general conclusion that the chief's status within the community is as insignificant as some would argue (see Harrison (2002)), or as exclusively pivotal and clear-cut as, for example, Baptista-Lundin (2001) describes it. Rather, there is a considerable grey area concerning the boundaries of a community, the homogeneity of the population, and the legitimacy of each chief. Anstey (e-mail interview) mentions that it is important that the issue of chiefs and local governance needs to be seen in the "specific context of the society, its history and the scales at which authority and management happen.". It is important to realise that community structures, as well as the behaviour of individual chiefs, vary from community to community, depending on its history and social context. Harrison (2002) may be right that it will be difficult to create an administratively homogenous structure at local level through the institution of chieftaincy. He is probably also right that the impact of colonialism to an extent manipulated and weakened pre-existing chieftaincy structures (although this effect seemed to be rather marginal in the villages studied). Despite this, I believe that the institution of chieftaincy in its present form can still hold potentials that are far too important to ignore in a country that is struggling with extreme poverty.

From my study I believe there is evidence in the case of Nova Madeira that traditional authority *can* be a valuable resource in the implementation of a development project, a resource that should not be disregarded. In the absence of functioning state structures at local level, traditional leaders can, depending on the local situation, be an effective channel through which development agencies can penetrate rural communities. They can be an important source of information to project workers, and can also be effective as disseminators of project information and mobilising their respective communities.

An important thing to note is that among the 40 villagers interviewed I did not encounter even one who would argue that the institution of chieftaincy would be illegitimate, or an insignificant 'relic of the past'. Rather I was met with comments such as "the chief is like my mother", "to have a chief is natural", "the chief is the founder of the village", "the chiefs are the tradition", "the chief is the link to the ancestors, the former parents from which we can receive instructions and advice", and the like. Even in II Congresso people said things such as "It is important to have a chief", which indicates that people do not see the actual institution as illegitimate.

It can still be problematic to uncritically take these statements as evidence that the institution of chieftaincy enjoy undisputed legitimacy. People may have different reasons for answering the way that they do. For example, the fear of witchcraft and occult practices showed to be a reason for cautiousness in dealing with the situation of

the chief in II Congresso. It is probably far more controversial to criticize the chief, than to say that you support him. However, my general perception was that the institution of chieftaincy does at least enjoy *certain* legitimacy among the rural population. This is evident in the number of projects they are involved in, the way that the government seeks to involve itself with them, and the way that the NGO:s are cooperating with them. The fact that the chiefs enjoy at least *certain* legitimacy will make it very problematic to disregard or replace such structures, as evidenced in the era of the village secretary.

The better alternative, as I see it, is to call for greater flexibility in dealing with traditional authority. This flexibility is important in order to deal with the situational differences between the communities. In this aspect CBNRM seems to be a viable implementation strategy. It is of a largely bottom-up nature, thus being more flexible in allowing space for local variations than a hierarchical top-down variety. If carried out successfully, the strategy itself will enable the identification of local variances (both in terms of actors and structures) and the measures necessary for adjustment. A top-down approach, with decisions *not* being taken in consultation with actors belonging to the communities, will face greater difficulties in adjusting to local circumstances - an issue I believe to be of great importance.

The situation in the village of II Congresso is chaotic in many aspects. The important thing to note is that there never existed any legitimate authority structure in II Congresso from the beginning. Propagators for CBNRM, as well as those advocating a more active role for traditional authority, draw their arguments from the notion that one should make use of the existing knowledge, cultural practices and traditions at local level. Since community structures and the characteristics of every chief varies from place to place, so will also the chief's potential of acting as a positive institutional resource. Solutions adjusted to each particular community are therefore to prefer, perhaps in combination with more general nation-wide measures such as the 15/2000 decree. In II Congresso, there seems to be very little to gain from a drug-abusing chief who is also disrespected by many community members. II Congresso lacks the valuable resource of a strong chief, and this has negative consequences for the development of the program. The case of Nova Madeira shows that it will be easier to implement a CBNRM program in those communities where the chiefs have a greater ability to act (for example being able to effectively mobilize their communities for collective action).

This constitutes support for the argument that one should carefully consider the actions/behaviour of the individual chief in relation with the particular community structure that he operates within in terms of homogeneity, territorial belonging and shared norms, when studying how valuable a chief can be for the implementation of a rural development project in Mozambique.

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Matzinhe, Alzidio Vida, District Administrator of Lago, Metangula, 2003-06-27

Taimo, Jamisse, Rector at the Higher Institute for International Relations (ISRI), Maputo, 2003-06-22

## **Chigoma**

Chief Carlos Chitejix, 2003-06-29

Villager 1, village secretary, 2003-06-29

Villager 2 (Martin), teacher, 2003-06-29

Villager 3 (John), 2003-06-29

Villager 4 (Oswald), 2003-06-29

Villager 5 (Arthur), 2003-06-29

Villager 6 (George), 2003-06-29

Villager 7 (Monica), 2003-06-30

Villager 8 (Matthew), 2003-06-30

Villager 9 (Pedro), chief's advisor, 2003-06-30

### **Meluluca**

Chief Mawana, 2003-07-04

Villager 1, "Chefe" of locality, 2003-07-04

Villager 2, chief's advisor, 2003-07-04

Villager 3, village secretary, 2003-07-04

Villager 4, 2003-07-04

Villager 5, (Teresa), 2003-07-05

Villager 6, (Said Mohammad), 2003-07-05

Villager 7, (Ashim), 2003-07-05

Villager 8, (Elena), 2003-07-05

### **Nova Madeira**

Benson Jacobs, government game scout, 2003-07-11

Chief Kadewele, 2003-07-12

Rui Redocho, head of safari-hunting operation, 2003-07-12

Villager 1, committee member, 2003-07-12

Villager 2, committee member, 2003-07-12

Villager 3, committee member, 2003-07-12

Villager 4, committee member, 2003-07-12

Villager 5, village secretary, 2003-07-12

### **II Congresso**

Chief Masogo (chief of Machedje), 2003-07-13

Chief Sanda Mola, 2003-07-13

Villager 1, president of committee, 2003-07-14

Villager 2, committee member, 2003-07-14

Villager 3, committee member, 2003-07-14

Villager 4, committee member, 2003-07-14

Villager 5, committee member, 2003-07-14

Villager 6, committee member, 2003-07-14

Villager 7, committee member, 2003-07-14

Villager 8, committee member, 2003-07-14

Villager 9, village secretary, 2003-07-15

Villager 10, 2003-07-15

Villager 11, 2003-07-15

Villager 12, 2003-07-15

Villager 13 (Antoni), 2003-07-15

Villager 14 (Fernando), 2003-07-15

Villager 15 (Shida), 2003-07-15

Villager 16 (Assumane), 2003-07-15

Villager 17 (Hussein), 2003-07-15

Villager 18 (Mantega), elderly villager, 2003-07-14

## **APPENDIX I. Common questions asked**

### **To government employees (district administrators and “chefes” of administrative posts), and NGO staff:**

What are the good things with the chief in Nova Madeira/ II Congresso/ Chigoma/ Meluluca?

What are the bad things with the chief in Nova Madeira/ II Congresso/ Chigoma/ Meluluca?

What has been the most important role of the chief in the implementation of the PCC so far?

Is the chief an obstacle or facilitator in making the PCC work well?

Is the chief capable of effectively mobilising the villages?

In which place is the PCC working the best/worst? Why? Does the chief have anything to do with its success/failure?

Is the chief cooperative?

Does he understand what is expected of him?

### **To chiefs:**

What is your involvement in the PCC?

Is the PCC program a good thing?

Do you feel that people in the village follow and understand your instructions?

Do you feel that you are allowed to influence the decision-making within the PCC?

How do you work together with the committee?

Is this cooperation between you and the committee working well?

### **To committee members:**

How do you work together with the chief?

Are there often disputes between the committee and the chief?

Is the chief important for making the PCC work well?

Is the chief a good leader in general?

### **To village secretaries:**

How long have you held the post as village secretary?

What are your duties?

Have your duties changed since you were appointed?

Do you cooperate with the chief?

What is your opinion about the chief getting increasingly more recognition by the government, at the expense of your power?

What is your opinion about the previous system, where the village secretary was the headman of the village?

**To villagers:**

What are the good things with the chief?

What are the bad things with the chief?

Do you follow his orders?

Is it necessary to follow his orders?

If it was possible, would you rather see another person as being chief?

## **APPENDIX II. Abbreviations**

ACORD	Agency for Cooperation in Research and Development
CBNRM	Community Based Natural Resource Management
CPI	Common Property Institutions
IUCN	The World Conservation Union
NGO	Non-governmental organization
OPORTUN	Organizacao para a Promocao de Terras Unicas do Niassa/ Project for Promotion and Optimisation of the Land in Niassa
PCC	Programa Chipanje Chetu
RUANSD	Resource Use Assessment of Northern Sanga District
SPFFB	Servicio Provinvial de Florestas e Fauna Bravia/Provincial Service for Forestry and Wildlife
WWF	World Wide Fund for Nature

## **APPENDIX III. Ten Guiding Principles for the PCC**

### **1. Goals and scope**

The basic goal of the programme is to achieve self-sufficient development based on the sustainable use of natural resources in the area. The basic hypothesis is that the transfer of authority and functions regarding natural resource use at community level will promote economic, social, environmental and political benefits. Particular emphasis is placed on the local focus of the project, involving local government and rural authorities.

### **2. Ownership and roles**

The program is implemented and owned by the local communities in the Northern Sanga district, through their representative institutions. The role of the governmental institutions is to facilitate the transference of rights, functions and responsibilities of natural resources to the communities. The role of the NGO:s are to facilitate the capacity building of the community institutions, and offer technical advice. The role of the private sector is to optimise the market value of the resources.

### **3. Tenure and institutions**

The two most critical activities for the success of the program will be to

1. Enable the transfer of rights of access to the land and natural resources to the communities
2. Establish local institutions to ensure that these rights are fulfilled.

In the long run the goal is that the communities should be able to manage the natural resource use independently.

### **4. Emphasis in implementation**

The focus of the help given by the program will be in the areas of capacity training, to enable the community institutions to manage the natural resources. This implies that only minimal part will be spent on facilities for NGO:s and Governmental organisations.

### **5. Equity and disincentives**

The management of natural resources within the programme will be treated in the same way as any other form of land use. The financial benefits derived from the projects will not be taxed any differently than those outside of the program. The financial benefits will also not substitute the district-, provincial- or national budget for services such as infrastructure, health and education.

### **6. Self-sufficiency**

In order to avoid the “dependency syndrome” and to promote self-sufficiency, the program will avoid the provision of “free” infrastructure or activities, such as the donation of clinics, cash payments etc. All activities will be based on the principles of long-term sustainability.



## **7. Transparency**

Maximum effort will be made to ensure the transparency of the project.

## **8. Viability**

The program will focus on those areas where the viability of the natural resource use with a local community base is high. This means areas with low population densities, high natural resource value, low level of alternative income-generating options, and strong social community system.

## **9. Coordination and political will**

To be effective and to avoid duplication of efforts, the program will be coordinated at two levels:

1. Between the community institutions and individuals of the area
2. Between the provincial and district government organisations, NGO:s, and donators.

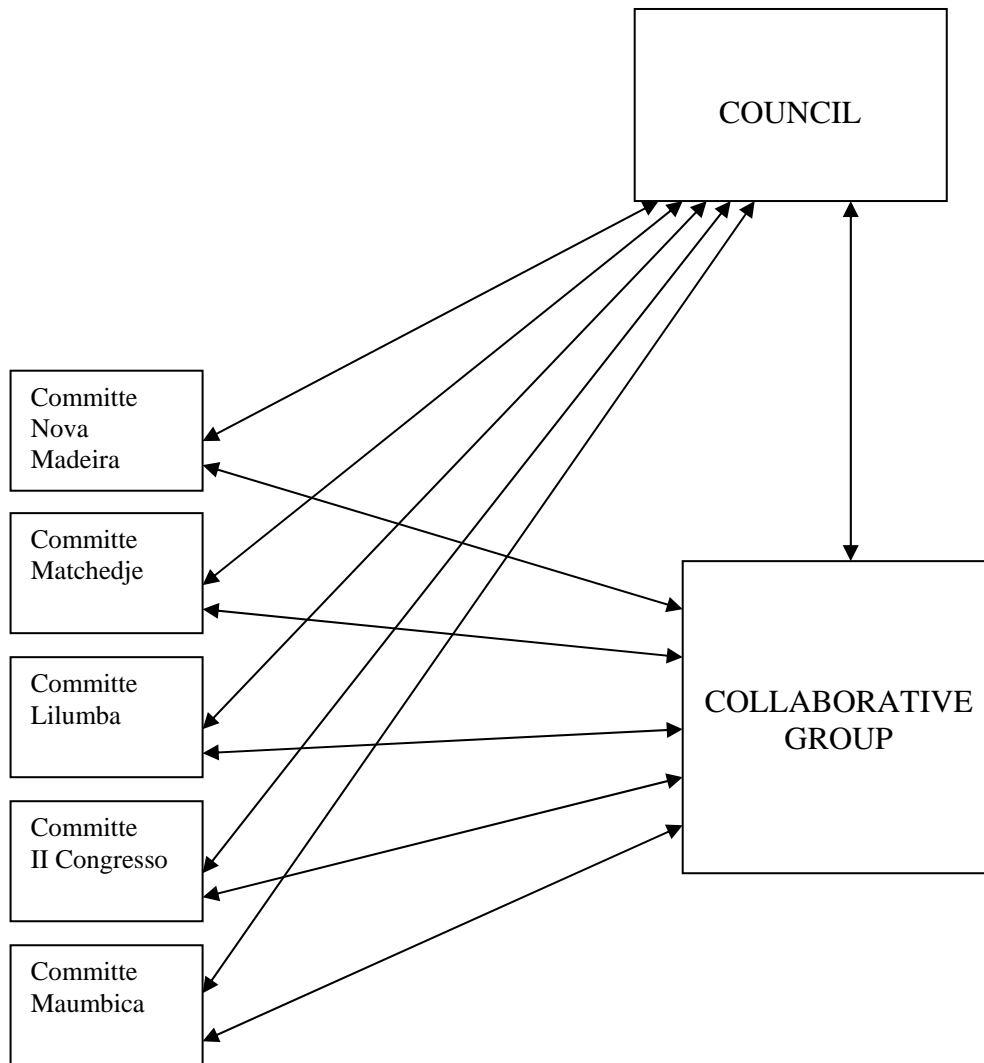
Strong political support will be necessary in order to minimise bureaucratic hindrances.

## **10. A process not a project**

A core principle is that it is a process of transferring the power and rights to the local level. Therefore it will take considerable time to, for example, establish the most effective community institutions. It is an experimental strategy and should therefore not be seen as a project, but rather as a process that will take up to 10 years to secure the goals noted in principle 1.

(Os Dez Principios Do Programa Chipanje Chetu, 2000)

## APPENDIX IV. Organogram of the PCC



Every village has its own **Committee**, responsible for monitoring, making decisions and implementing the program in the village. The committee consists of 12 village members, with equal gender representation. Traditional authorities are not formally included in the Committees but usually act as a consultative source.

The **Council** is the main decision-making body within the organisation. The current president is the District Administrator of Sanga District. Issues of greater importance, as well as issues that cannot be solved by the committees themselves, will be taken to the council. The council consists of representatives from the government, NGO:s and traditional authorities.

The **Collaborative Group** consists of representatives from NGOs (ACORD, OPORTUN and IUCN) and Government representatives (SPFFB, District

administration, DPADR and PRM). The collaborative group works directly with the villages and their respective committees to implement the PCC. This involves capacity training, identifying financial funding, facilitating the transfer of rights to use natural resources to the communities, monitoring and evaluation, disseminating information about the program etc.

(Terminos de referencia, 2001)

# APPENDIX V. Map

Map.1 Mozambique



([www.lonelyplanet.com/africa/mozambique.htm](http://www.lonelyplanet.com/africa/mozambique.htm))