


*Natural Resource Use
Among HIV/AIDS-
impacted Communities in
East and Southern Africa*





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Purpose of the Presentation:

- *Raise awareness about the negative impacts of HIV/AIDS on the management and conservation of natural resources in sub-Saharan Africa*
- *Share findings on complex and critical linkages between biodiversity and HIV/AIDS*
- *Share practitioner experience and provide examples of good community biodiversity response strategies*

Basis of Presentation: FRAME & ABCG Studies; OCRA Activities

- *FRAME study on linkages between HIV/AIDS and Natural Resource Management and Conservation*
- *ABCG study on direct and indirect impacts of the HIV/AIDS pandemic on the use, management and conservation of NR using case studies of selected African countries- Kenya, Namibia, South Africa, Tanzania, and Uganda*
- *Biodiversity response strategies of OCRA*

Characteristics of NRM & Conservation Sectors that Make them Vulnerable to HIV/AIDS:

- *Requires work at many different levels including:
central/local government, NGOs and
communities*
- *Requires a large & healthy workforce*
 - *Soil conservation measures, such as tree-planting on slopes, afforestation, e.t.c*
 - *Protection of forests and wildlife from illegal logging and poaching requires reliable, skilled protected area personnel*
- *Often require staff to travel and work away from families*
- *Require trained personnel*
- *Major investment in training and capacity building*

Characteristics of NRM & Conservation Sectors that Makes Them Vulnerable to HIV/AIDS:

- *Conservation personnel are often posted in remote locations or receive training far from their families which increases chance of infection*
- *Information about and mitigation strategies against HIV/AIDS and resources to address the problem often not available in remote locations*
- *Work requires heavy investment in training and capacity-building of staff and community partners- vulnerable to financial losses due HIV/AIDS deaths and illnesses*
- *Absence from home for long periods of time for training or field work- increases chances of infection*
- *Social structures in rural communities on which NRM and Conservation activities are based often lend themselves to the spread of HIV/AIDS and are being eroded by HIV/AIDS*

Nature and Extent of HIV/AIDS Impacts:

- *NRM and conservation workforce- ailing & dying staff of Government Agencies, NGOs and communities affected*
- *Absenteeism- illness, funerals, unexpected death*
- *poor morale at work*
- *Conservation Activities affected*
 - *planning, duty roster, managing with fewer/untrained staff, lost skills,*
- *some conservation areas are ignored/neglected and thereby exposed to encroachment by poachers, illegal loggers, e.t.c.*
- *Loss of institutional capacity for conservation efforts- Uganda Forestry Department, Kenya Forestry Department*
- *Attention of community members diverted from conservation activities to funerals and other HIV/AIDS-related demands*
- *Accelerated rates of poverty- increased use of natural resources*

Nature and Extent of HIV/AIDS Impacts with Negative Implications for Biological Diversity

- *Sale of land & other resources to meet new HIV/AIDS demands*
- *Land Use changes- reduced farming, monoculture, e.t.c*
- *Indigenous knowledge loss*
- *Land ownership changes- impacts on NRM*
- *Compromise sustainability of NRM activities*
- *Impacts of NRM & conservation activities on HIV/AIDS*

Nature and Extent of HIV/AIDS Impacts

Impacts on natural resources

- *Increased deforestation due to over-harvesting of timber for coffins, wood for fuel, charcoal- coffin making, a booming business*
- *Over-harvesting of non-timber products- medicinal and edible plants, e.t.c*
- *Increased bush meat hunting*
- *Over-harvesting of turtle eggs*
- *Deteriorating livestock management- desperate sales to meet HIV/AIDS demands, wanton slaughter at funerals, loss of livestock by widows and orphans and less emphasis on livestock managements- labour constraints, loss of traditional knowledge, e.t.c*
- *Biodiversity loss*

Examples of Policy Strategies

Government and non-governmental agencies

- *KwaZulu Natal Nature Conservation Service has HIV/AIDS policy with various components*
- *WWF- EARO- HIV/AIDS policy with various components*
- *Kenya Wildlife Services*
- *Others*

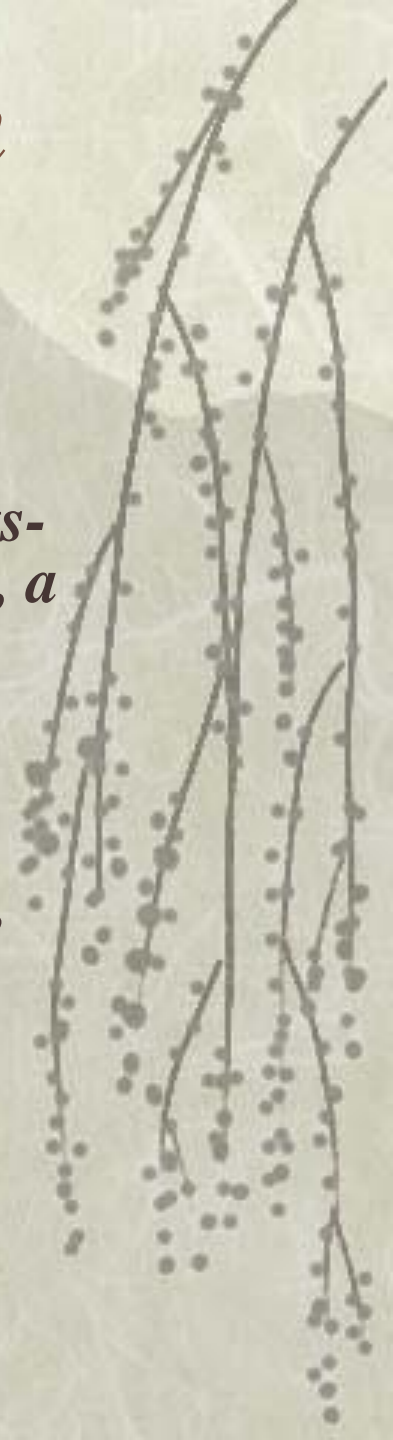
Basis of Response Action

- *Linkages between biodiversity and health*
- *Biodiversity is a fundamental source of nutrition-*
 - *Traditional societies relied on a wide variety of plants, herbs and wild fruits e.g. “mto” for the Luos in Kenya and Hunza community in India- made people who regularly ate it live longer, after scientific analysis, now christened “Crotalaria breviflora” and found to contain Vitamin E, prolong lifespan of red blood cells, increase virility, enhance myoglobin activity in the muscles, and necessary for people living with HIV/AIDS*
 - *Pumpkins- antioxidants including beta-carotene which provides the body with safe vitamin A; and zinc which protects against muscular degeneration and promotes production of antibodies against HIV, now found to be very good for people with HIV/AIDS*
 - *Fruits- guava (not ripe) has zinc, avocado produces oleic acid which in turn produces glutathione which if added to vitamin C from other fruits, reduces replication of the HIV virus*

Basis of Response Action

Linkages Between Biodiversity and health

- *Biodiversity provides basis for primary health care-*
 - *Many medicinal plants used in traditional societies and now, by poor communities to treat health ailments, now including HIV/AIDS-related ailments- “fuya ndawa”- more effective against herpes zoster, a HIV/AIDS-related ailment, than conventional medicine*
- *Provide income to poor communities if sustainably used, thus enables them to attain a range of health-related livelihood improvements from better shelter, e.t.c*
- *Provide other ecosystem services- clean air, water, e.t.c*



Basis of Response Strategies

Linkages between Biodiversity and health

- ❑ *Healthy populations are better placed to conserve biological diversity- necessary manpower, time, traditional and conventional biodiversity knowledge and possibly, interest in biodiversity conservation*
- ❑ *Therefore, a stronger relationship between biodiversity and human health provides substantial benefits for both.*
- ❑ *The stronger relationship has been hard and in some cases, impossible to maintain due to the HIV/AIDS impacts on natural resources already noted.*
- ❑ *Therefore, OCRA has stepped in to conserve biological diversity while using genetic, species and ecosystem diversity in addressing HIV/AIDS-related ailments and demands*