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To what extent do forest management regimes affect household tenure security and livelihoods? A multi-level analysis of baseline data from a REDD+ impact evaluation in Zambia

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The lack of formal recognition of local land tenure and property rights (LTPR) over forest resources is often a notable driver of conflict in forested areas and is highlighted as a principal driver of degradation and deforestation in many developing countries (Angelsen 2008; Araujo, et al, 2013, Larson et al. 2014). This paper aims to provide insights into the role of tenure security and local governance arrangements on forest condition and livelihood outcomes in the Mambwe and Nyimba Districts of Zambia's Eastern Province. We analyze survey and associated qualitative data from over 4000 households and 300 communities in Zambia's Eastern Province, drawn from the 2015 baseline survey of an ongoing impact evaluation (IE) of the USAID/Zambia-funded Community-based Forest Management Program (CFP) in Zambia.

A multi-level modeling approach will be used to exploit variation and disentangle processes operating at different levels of forest governance. Models of governance and tenure security will be run as hierarchical linear models with cross-level interactions between household, village, and chief level outcomes. This will enable us to better understand how the effect of tenure security and governance on household livelihood outcomes varies as a function of community level forest tenure governance.

CFP represents a 14 million dollar development initiative that is piloting the juxtaposition of new institutional regimes in a REDD+ context. Overarching policy questions motivating the CFP IE include how individual and communal tenure over tree resources and forests change as a result of REDD+ programming and whether any tenure changes result in net livelihood changes. As such, this paper seeks to drive evidence-based REDD+ programming and to provide policy makers and program implementers with a better understanding of the existing relationship between forest management regimes, property rights, and perceptions of tenure security under the status quo. Results of this paper will shed light on whether and how REDD+ programming can alter LTPR systems and the implications of any LTPR changes for communities and individuals whose livelihoods are derived from forest resources.