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Learning from the Other: Benefit Sharing Lessons for REDD+ Implementation Based on CBFM Experience in Northern Tanzania

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Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation (REDD+) has emerged as a means through which communities, projects and countries can be financially rewarded for reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation. However, if not well executed, REDD+ may inadequately address poverty if benefit sharing arrangements are not well addressed. This paper investigates benefit-sharing issues using the famous Tanzanian Duru-Haitemba Villages Land Forest Reserve (DHVLR) which has begun to participate in selling carbon. The DHVLR is particularly important as it is one of the oldest cases of village-based forest management in the country (established in 1994), and one of the most well known because of the optimistic assessments of governance quality that were attributed to it. Fieldwork for this paper was conducted in two villages (Riroda and Ayasanda) adjacent to DHVLR in Babati District, northern Tanzania in 2012. A total of 101 households were randomly interviewed, and combined with literature review, key informant interviews, transect walks, participant observation, and focus group discussions. Our study finds, while governance arrangements have improved under the devolved forest management regimes that were established in Tanzania in

the 1990's, old governance challenges associated with elite capture of forest benefits are resurfacing and community forest is becoming a victim of its own success. Oversight from central government has failed to control the problem. A majority of respondents felt benefits are not well shared, but are concentrated on an elite. Weak governance mechanisms and a lack of transparency further affect benefit sharing. We argue that governance mechanisms and institutions at the local level must be strengthened if proper benefit sharing is to be realized under REDD+. As Tanzania move from pilot phase to full scale REDD+ implementation, the country should heed the lessons learned from years of experience in community forestry from this famous site. Additional carbon payments from REDD+ could increase the rewards for elite capture, or it might raise local dissatisfaction and resistance to elite capture.