

**IMPACT OF COMMUNITY-BASED ORGANIZATIONS ON SUSTAINABLE
MANAGEMENT OF FOREST, SOIL AND WATER: THE CASE OF MOUNT ELGON
ECOSYSTEM, UGANDA**

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Abstract

The recent development of devolution of natural resources management of community-based organizations (CBOs) has become important study topic today as many scholars try to examine issues such as structure, context and contents to find out what works. This is particularly crucial to critically threatened ecosystem such as that of Mt. Elgon. Between 2010 and 2014, the impact of CBOs in sustainable development of forest, soil and water in areas surrounding Mt. Elgon National Park in Uganda was assessed with the aim of obtaining data to improve the management of the ecosystem. Data were collected using schedule and focus group discussions. Data treatment was by R statistical environment to perform regression analysis, Reny's diversity profiling, principal component analysis and preference matrix ranking.

The study revealed that CBOs operating in areas that are adjacent to Mt. Elgon National Park (MENP) have significant impact on the management of forest, soil and water. For instance logistic regression analysis indicated that respondents from areas with CBOs were significantly four times more likely to participate in forest, soil and water management (Estimate = 1.325, Std. Error = 0.503, z value = 2.635, p-Value = 0.008 and odds ratio = 3.602). The findings also revealed that

CBOs' organizational characteristics such as transparency and participatory decision making (p-Value = 0.008), sustainable and reliable funding sources (p-Value = 0.061) had influence on CBOs' operation in forest, soil and water management.

It is concluded that CBOs play important role in managing forest, soil and water around MENP and that when CBOs' organizational characteristics are well balanced with particular natural resource management activities that they carry out, tremendous improvement in forest, soil and water management is noticed. It is recommended that, to reduce pressure on forest, soil and water resources and improve the livelihoods of the local people, government and other stakeholders should support CBOs' efforts in forest, soil and water management.