WHAT IS REALLY THE CASE? PERCEPTIONS ON LEGITIMACY AND EFFECTIVENESS OF GLOBAL ENVIRONMENTAL INITIATIVES IN ZAKA, ZIMBABWE

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ABSTRACT

This paper is premised on the notion that local communities tend to reject global environmental initiatives for reasons of legitimacy rather than efficacy. It explores the perceptions of local communities in Zaka District, Zimbabwe expounding on the legitimacy and effectiveness of Global Environmental Initiatives (GEI). In the evolution of the global environmental discourse, local communities have been labelled as "disdains of GEIs". Overall, the GEIs have been a critical concern of the global South yet the support by local communities has tended to be very minimal. Following this the stereotyping of the local communities as rejecters of GEIs by the international community has been inevitable. The stimulating questions have thus become: what are the nuances of the international community in perceiving the global South's local communities? In what form and way is the notion of legitimacy a concern by local communities? Are they (local communities) really enemies to GEIs? Can the international-local communities' relationship be enhanced towards global consensus? To critically examine these questions, a study of local perception on GEIs by Zaka communities has been used. This has mapped out several perspectives. Uniquely though, it is observed that local communities appreciate GEIs. They focus more on effectiveness rather than legitimacy as stereotyped under the collective global South. This call for need to mainstream GEIs in the local institutional frameworks, engaging in international-local relationship strengthening, local institutional capacity building towards global consensus. The international community should further decentralise to earn legitimacy of the global South to build relationships with the local communities whilst the global South should focus on what really matters rather than blind obedience, towards global consensus.

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INTRODUCTION

There has been awry universal premise prevailing globally that the global South rejects the global environmental initiatives for legitimate reasons rather than effectiveness (Najam, 2005). Delineating from this adage, a study on perception of local communities in Zaka rural district regarding Global Environmental Initiatives (GEI) uniquely disregards this byword by acquainting a dissimilar case. This paper explores the contradictions that subsist amongst the perceptions of the international community and that of local community, which leaves the national community at limelight as a hurdle to global environmental consensus. It illustrates that the international environmental community regards the global South as rejecters of environmental initiatives for irrational legitimacy purposes where they regard global as not global in the environmental governance discourse. While Najam (2005) notes that the global South has travelled a long journey from contestation, participation and now engagment, this appears, to a large extent, not to be the case with the local communities of the global South. Their active participation predates colonialism albeit being shadowed in the political armpits of the collectivism of the global South. This has led to their incapacitation in engaging in the GEIs, an event that has culminated in them being regarded as GEI disdains in the global environmental discourse. Given the transboundary nature of environmental issues, the marginalisation of rural communities in the global South becomes a silent weapon striking against achievement of global environmental governance and there has been underestimation of the notion (Besada and Werner, 2010). Thus, most focus has been on nominal North-South relationships as the key players in global environmental politics and less concern has been paid on the local communities themselves.

Legitimacy and effectiveness are the lenses to map out the local perceptions regarding GEIs (Najam, 2005). Though not delimiting the relationship of the global South and the global North, the paper identifies roadways in espousing the way forward towards global consensus in the realm of environmental governance. The case study of Zaka, as shall be seen, is critical in mapping out the local perceptions on GEIs. In the case, interviews, focus group discussions and

participatory observations were employed to the respondents and key informants, which are local villagers, traditional leaders all drawn for the local administrative authorities and non-governmental organisations. By and large, the study dismisses the awry adage of global South as rejecters of GEIs. In its organisation, the paper firstly conceptualises the notion of environmental governance at global scale then it establishes a snapshot of global-local nexus regarding GEIs. It narrows down relating to the environmental governance praxis at the national context. The local context is the core of the paper where the case study approach adopted maps out the interconnected global relationships and draws conclusions to delineate roadway towards global consensus in the realm of environmental governance.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Global environmental governance conceptualised raises several political rebuttals (Najam, 2005). The debate has somewhat widened the North-South dichotomy as arguments on misrepresentation, environmental colonialism and political expolitation persist. There has been parellism in the titling of the global North and South with the former being viewed with environmental effectiveness and the later, developmental legitimacy.these deviations have intensified the global politics of sustainable development due differentials in destinations (Waititu, 2003). As if that is not enough, the Global South is likely to continue measuring the legitimacy of the international environmental system in terms of how meaningfully it integrates development priorities into the global environmental priorities despite the embrace of sustainable development principles. Bernstein (2005) has defined legitimacy as the acceptance and justification of shared rule by a community. He refers to an empirical measure of legitimacy and a normative argument concerning whether the authority possesses legitimacy. These are mainstreamed to the operation of GEIs and the institutions in control. In essence, legitimacy requires democracy given its centrality in coeval politics. It justifies authority though this status is rather mamothic to reach given the utopianism associated with the term.

Figure 1 Conceptual Framework: Global-Local Environmental Relationships
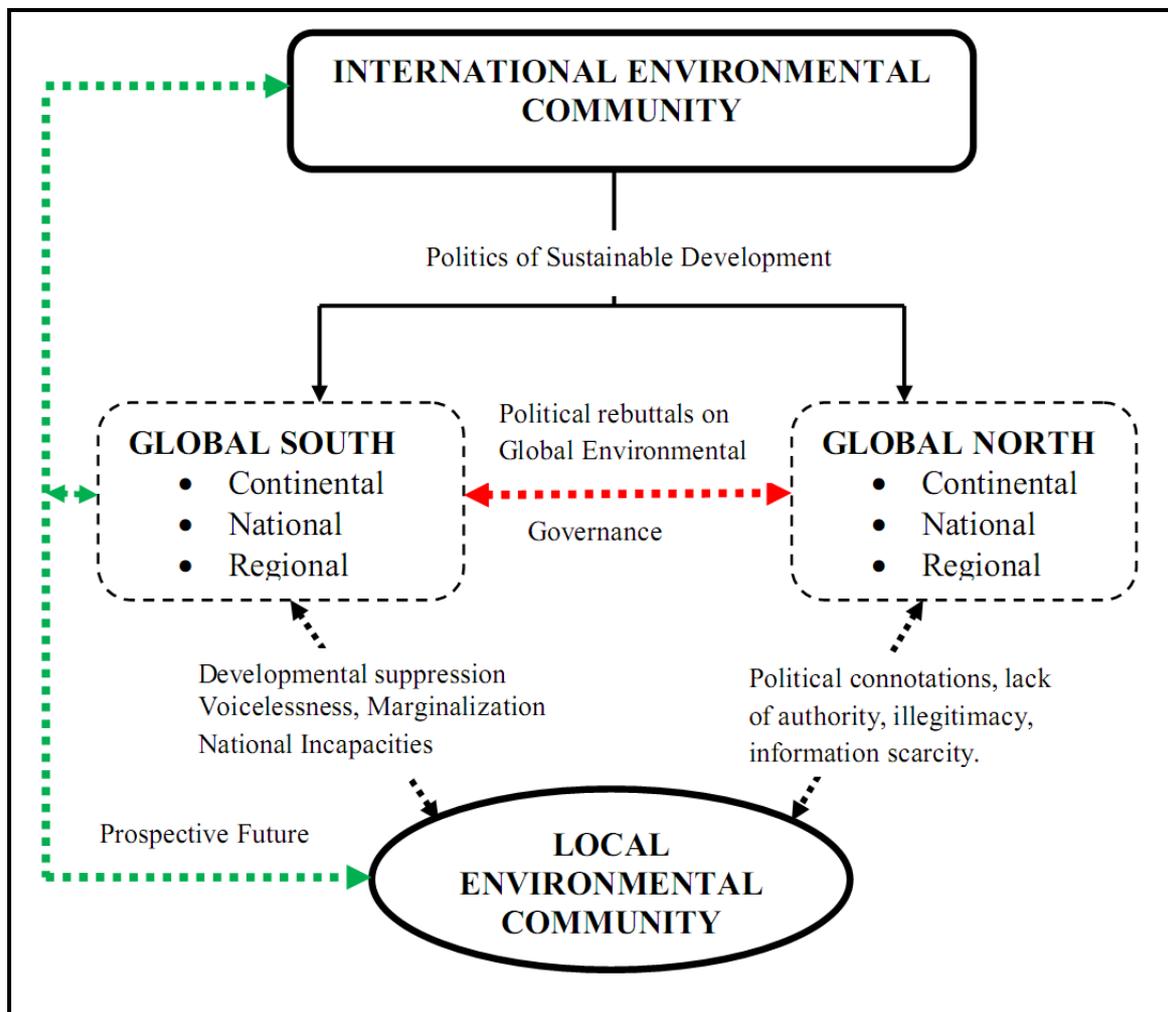
Source: (Author, 2012)

Realising the gap between the international community and the local environmental community, the ground in between has been a battlefield of the global South and North politics (Carley and Spapens, 1998) this is conceptualised by the international-local relationships (see figure 1). Common challenges such as developmental suppression, local community's voicelessness, rural marginalisation and national incapacities have worked to widen the North-South divide as illustrated in figure 1. Local communities of the Global South, in the process, have been faced challenges of political connotations, lack of authority, illegitimacy and lack of information among others. The political rebuttals of the North and South have diluted the relationships of the International and the local community.

ENVIRONMENTAL GOVERNANCE: AN OVERVIEW

The global environmental assessors have made a fallacy of composition regards the global South as the enemy of GEI not realising that the local communities appreciate these initiatives but suffer suppression from the national context (Howell, 2007). It is not a matter of creating an ideal set of procedures and then sees how well they can be enforced at local level but rather enactment of the procedures that can be enforced within the existing structures. That way the national community of developing world lessens scrutiny using the legitimacy lens. Realising that the globe is so wide and diverse this approach creates a fallacy of composition as well as centrism in application of environmental initiatives. This calls for more decentralized approaches to environmental governance (Coglianese and Nicolaidis, 1996).

While governance debates have remained at wider scale of global North and South, the local communities left voiceless. As the global South cry foul because of misrepresentation in the international system, the local community also does so to the Global South for its suppression to be heard in the international discourse but their voiceless remains a recede. Regarding GEIs, developing countries have consistently measured the legitimacy as well as effectiveness of environmental institutions in terms of their commitment to the broad developmental parameters rather than ecological concerns in the realm of sustainable development (Najam, 2005). The need to reform Global Environmental Governance (GEG) has been raised with opponents stating that it has outgrown its originial design, becoming diverse. The multiplicity has led to generalisation in attending to environmental issues (Najam, *et al* 2006). The institutions engaged in GEG are supposed to be state-centric. Changes in the environmental management players has seenstate actors stagnating if not diminishing in their participation in environmental issues globally .attempting to answer the question "how to design an institutional framework (system) that would best protect the global environment" Najam,*et al* (2006 pp 26) have notes that global consensus in a muilti-sectoral stakeholders to envirnmental management tend to be inconceivable.

A remarkable number in international institutions dealing with environmental issues has been notes yet environmental decomposition has persisited globally at an alarming rate (Andresen,

2001). The global South and North have different positions on how they percieve legitimacy and effectiveness of GEIs which has gone as far as global politics of sustainable devlopment (Mtisi,*et al* 2006) as stated by the sixth principle of the Rio Declaration that "the special situation and needs of developing countries, particularly the least developed and those most environmentally vulnerable, shall be given special priority. International actions in the field of environment and development should also address the interests and needs of all countries"

The Global-Local Nexus

The North-South dichotomy has gone a long way in the history of global environmental politics. Being exacerbated by neo-colonialism, international agencies have been blamed for standing on one side of the global environmental weighbridge (Najam, 2005). This has widened the North-South cleavage in the global politics of sustainable development where the current engagemennt is characterised by repellent reactions of denial, resistence and reluctance. While (Cadman, 2012) notes that democracy on a global level is occuring by collective action which is increasingly becoming pluralised and community based, and less under the direct organisation of the state, rural communities in the global South are missing out. The global South in the global environmental discourse views itself as the "forgotten continent" where therehave been suffering form the poverty of influence whilst the global North has been sufferinng from the poverty of affluence. These devepment differentials has led to conflicts of objectives towards the global environment. The principle of "Common but Differentiated Responsibility" encompassed in the Rio Declaration's Principle 7 states the need for states to engaged in global partnership for earth system's conservation (Third World Network, 2001). the global South's rural counterparts have missed out incorporation and are even unaware of the notion. struggles of interest have torn apart the global sustainable development agenda into a North-South debating platform. The Global South is playing politics of developmental dependency (Werksman, 2003).

Local communities of the global South are oppressed by the national environmental collectivism (Besada and Werner, 2010). They seem to accept the national opinion concerning environmental governance, but they always question it offstage but their aphonia has been a major drawback to air out their views to the international community. This has been contrary to democratic apotheoses where the voices making up the chorus of environmental representation is dominated

by the political persons (Coglianese and Nicolaidis 1996). From the view of the system of the global South, legitimacy has been regarded as a legal tool, which GEIs should posses to be operational in the management of environmental issues. While the global South have been trying to diffuse the dependency syndrome by strengthening the regional integration in the SADC bloc, they had gone too far on the issue of national sovereignty as Julias Nyerere notes that "African nationalism is meaningless, dangerous, anachronistic, if it is not, at the same time, pan-Africanism" cited by Chirisa, (2011). This clearly shows how soverignity has hindered the global cooperation on environmental management where fear to lose national sovereignty lead to rejection of GEIs for legitimacy reasons at national level.

The South wishes to have not just economic development, but a say in the political decisions that affect its destiny (Najam, 2005). Thus the South is not merly suffering from economic poverty but 'poverty of influence' as it always points on disempowerement, marginalisation and disenfranchisation by the international system (Najam, 2005). In addition, it believes that the international system is less than legitimate in terms of its commitment to Southern interests which has led to the New International Economic Order of 1970 in seeking to make the international system more legitimate by redressing environmental misrepresentation. when the South discusses effectiveness or legitimacy it refers not just to the effectiveness and legitimacy of environmental instruments, but of the international system as a whole and this lead to uncertainties on the success of global consensus. The failure to separate enivronmental governance from international politics reduces the possibilites of striking global consensus on the ordinary thinking platform. Most of the world's population resides in the South and the richest biological diversity as well as the most vulnerable ecosystems are located in the South, marginalisation of the South's rural counterparts is unjustifiable. The Rio Declaration Principle 10 affirms that 'environmental issues are best handled with the participation of all concerned citizens, at the relevant level' and promotes access to information, participation in decision-making, and access to judicial and administrative proceedings at the national level (Bernstein, 2005). Local communities of the South have, contrarily suffered marginalisation hence lack of voice in environmental decision-making, awareness and access to the environmental administrative systems leading to the fallacy of composition on the conclusions drawn regarding the global South and environmental governance.

ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES IN ZIMBABWE

Zimbabwe is rich with several environmental institutional and legislative frameworks in the realm of environmental management. Section 4 of Environmental Management Act, chapter 20:27 of 2002 enhances environmental rights to Zimbabwean citizens and promotes environmental stewardship among local citizens. The Parks and Wildlife Act of 1975, chapter 20:14 protects exploitation of wildlife (fauna). These instruments have called for updating, reforming and strengthening of their operation. This means to decentralise them to the lowest level of the rural, marginalised communities. Additionally there are various institutional and administrative structures in relation to environmental management. The Ministry of Environment and Natural Resource Management (MENRM) plays a pivotal role in management of environmental resources. The National Environmental Council (NEC) alternatively supports as an advisory board to allied institutions on environmental management. There is also Environmental Management Agency (EMA), which fosters environmental policies such as Environmental Impact Assessment policy of 1997 and the National Environmental Policy of 2003. However these various institutions and legal tools lack rural proofing in their practice as they are characterised by high degree of power centralisation, urban centralism lacking concerns of the rural communities.

Zimbabwe has been irrational where it has been embarking on "local proofing" of GEIs (scrutinizing their local impacts) but it has been lacking "rural proofing" of its national environmental instruments concerning its rural counterparts, which have seen marginalisation of the rural communities in sea of both economic and influential poverty. The national community has been more effective in creating new organisations than in repairing old ones, which has led to generalization in their multiplicity. The Rural District Councils Act does not establish the institutional infrastructure for decentralized natural resource management as it re-centralizes power at the district level (Mandondo and Mapedza, 2003). This hinders meaningful citizen participation in governance of environmental issues in Zimbabwe. The Communal Land Act (Chapter 20:04) of 1982 vests the custodianship of natural resources such as land in communal areas in the President (section 4) (Mandondo and Mapedza, 2003). Makumbe, (1998) notes that the postcolonial government divested chiefs of their power to allocate natural resources as a

punishment for their pre-independence role as officials of colonial oppression. This has led to powerlessness of traditional leaders as custodians of natural resources at community level thereby playing the mannequins role to diffuse the perceptions of the international community of central government as oppressor of traditional leadership by wearing clothes of democratic governance.

Several legislative tools devolved power only to district level as the lowest government administration unit and it compromise the consideration of the local communities into environmental governance participation. Environment-related laws even reinforce the RDC Act's re-centralization of power at the district level, at the expense of the citizenry at the grassroots by fall down of VIDCOs and WADCOs as platform for citizenry participation. Mandondo and Mapedza, (2003) in their paper concluded that although even though several institutional and legislative reforms assisted in the abolishment of the racial dualism characteristic of the colonial system, they have, in several ways, fallen far short of genuinely decentralizing or democratizing natural resource governance in the rural communities. This alludes that environmental governance has been disturbed by political interfernces in it incubation where several shortcomings were observed. Instead of having democratic grassroots institutions (VIDCOs and WADCOs) as platforms for enhancing environmental governance, they are devised as extended political arms of the ruling party for political motives which witnessed their ineffectiveness in fostering meaningful local environmental forums at local levels.

Cadman (2012) has notes three factors influencing the type of governance (authority, democracy and innovation); in local communities of Zimbabwe these three aspects have been under the oppression of centrism and marginalisation where centralization of authority led to incapacities of local communities to manage environmental resources. The failure of grassroots institutions led to diffused democracy where authority members dictate environmental issues to the local communities without their participation. Also due to poverty, innovation in rural communities of Zimbabwe has been of environmentally destructive nature as a survival strategy, which reduced their sense of stewardship. Originating from the collective bargaining of the global South in the global environmental discourse, Zimbabwe is becoming more concerned by how it is perceived by the collective group rather than solving the problem at home which is witnessing the fall

down of its grassroots institutions and failure to strike optimum governance at local levels. The majority of local governments in Africa are largely too incapacitated to effectively and efficiently play the emerging roles towards attaining MDGs, a fact attributable to the failure of decentralized governance (Olowu et.al, 2004).

The RDCs have minor legislative powers that enable them to enact by-laws on environmental conservation and natural resource management. As stated in the RDC Act, councils have the option of formulating these by-laws, with the participation of local communities, or of adopting model by-laws from the Communal Lands (Model Land Use and Conservation) By-Laws, 1985, which are designed to enable the state to control people and solve environmental issues (Mandondo and Mapedza, 2003). The central government realising the awakening of rural communities pertaining their massive marginalisation, it promoted proactive approaches to poverty eradication as a developmental goal where international organisations who came into play were granted permission to operate in these rural institutions but with a political whip to monitor their operations. This witnessed the environmental issues receiveng less apprehension where environmental governance have been dismissed in the name of neo environmental colonialism. The voilessness of the local communties failed to strike attention of global environmental watchdogs which left them with no cards to play but follow the way of the collective global South. Also centralization of environmental powes at the distrcit level is contradictory to the component of environmental governance, subsidiaritywh ere local people should be involved in environmental maganegement and decosison making efficiently and equiably. This has been a different cse with how the local communities percieve GEIs regarding their legitimacy and effectiveness.

CHARACTERISING THE STUDY AREA - ZAKA

Zaka district is a prominent rural area in Zimbabwe. It is characterised by remoteness, massive environmental degradation, high population pressures and monolithic political disputes (Chinogwenya, 2010). It is 86 kilometres Southeast of Masvingo town (see figure 2), located in the low-lying area of geographical coordinates $20^0 05^` S$ $31^0 37^` E/$ $20.083^0 S$ $31.617^0 E$. Geographically, Zaka is a Karanga smallholder farmland. It is semi-arid, mountainous and receives fickle rainfall averaging 6–800 mm/yr. There soils are poor on which subsistence farming thrives as the main economic activity.

Figure 2: Map of Zaka District, Masvingo
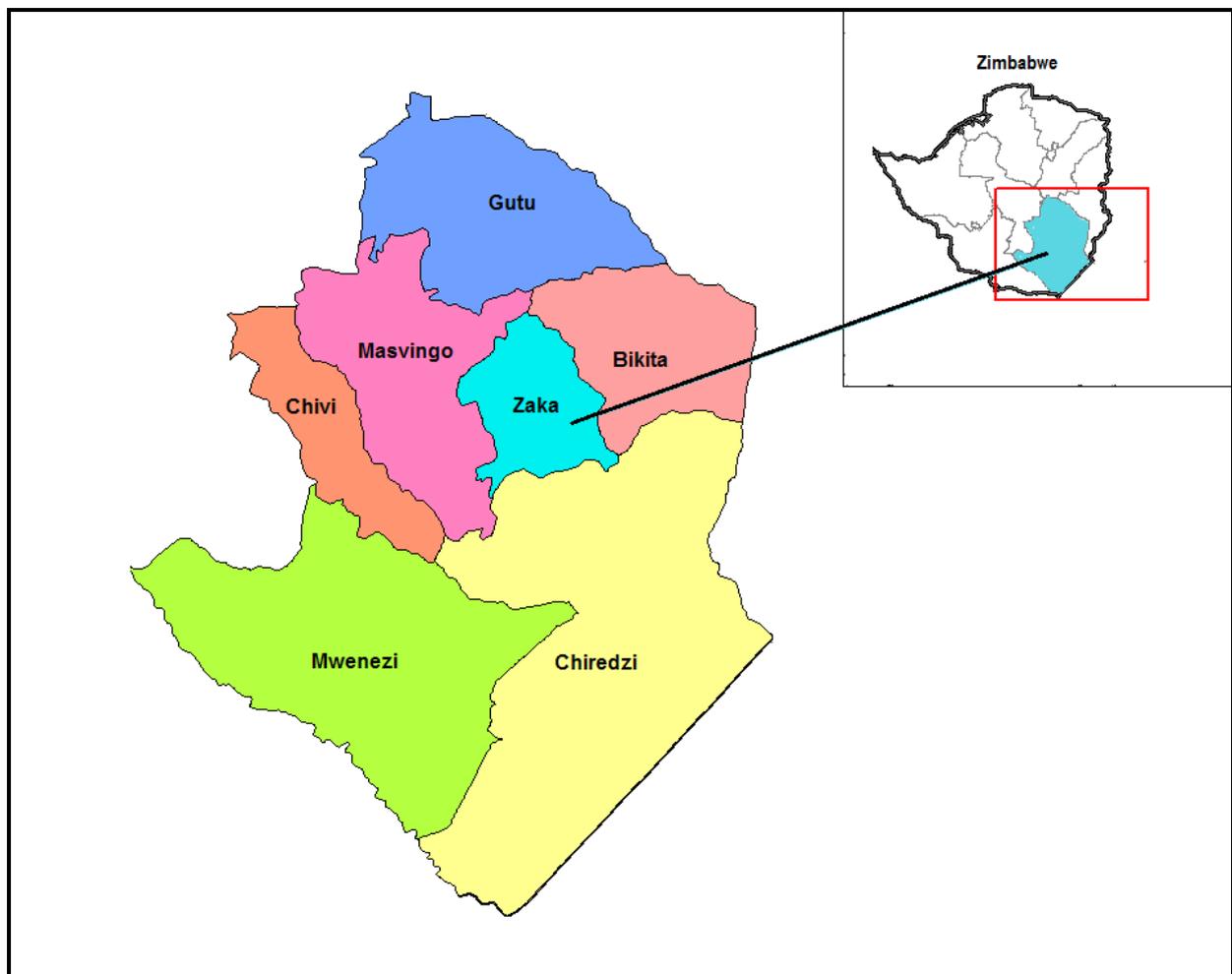
Source: Adapted from (www.mapsof.net/map/Zimbabwe-province-Masvingo, 2012)

Zaka is surrounded by spacious districts, which are Chiredzi, Mwenezi, Chivi, Masvingo, Gutu and Bikita (see figure 2). The population density is more than 65 persons per km^2. This is quite high for a mountainous area where subsistence farming is the main economic activity. It is the most densely populated rural district in the province and probably in the whole country. Institutionally it constitutes both traditional and modern structures, which work hand in hand to direct the activities of the district. There are five traditional chiefs. Under them are headmen who work with grassroots institutions like the village development committees (VIDCOs), ward development committees (WADCOs) and the rural district council (RDC).

ATTITUDES, KNOWLEDGE, PERCEPTIONS AND PRACTICES OF LOCAL COMMUNITIES IN ZAKA

People in Zaka district have various perceptions on GEIs but all reach the same conclusion. There is massive blame of the government for their marginalisation from participation in global environmental governance. One respondent highlights that "*hurumende haina basa nesu inongotivharidzira nadonor anoda kutibatsira hawo asi iyo haina chekutipa tinotoita kunge vasungwa vayo. Tikada kukumbira kuti iunze madonor tinoroverwa zvematongerwo enyika topedisira tanyarara*" (the government have no concern over us; it just hinders non state actors from assisting us but it has nothing to do for us like we are its detainees. If we call for donor assistance we found wanted on political reasons". This critically shows the complicatedness of GEIs implementation and the political situation controlling the local communities. One village headman notes that "*ma GEIs tinotomada chaizvo nokuti ndiwo arikutotiraramisa, chirikutonetsa ndechekuti sezvo achibatanidzira zvekupedza nzara arikuita mashoma zvekuti zviri kukonzera mhirizhonga kuti ndiani achabenefita*" "we really need these GEIs since they are surviving us, but since they are poverty eradicative, their fewness is causing conflicts over need to benefit from that little". The local communities are in seek of GEIs as their only hope on poverty and environmental improvement locally but political suppression and their inadequacy are left in question. Commenting on the lack of transparency in the local authorities one respondent highlights that "*madonor paanouya nezvirongwa zvekuchengetedza nzvimbo anotiudza nezvezvirongwa zvavo, mashandiro avo vachiterera zvichemo zvedu asi hurumende yedu hahiite izvozvo haimbotiudze kuti nei ichirambidza madonor acho*" (when donor bring the GEIs they tell us about how they operate attending to our queries but our government does not do the same). This shows how appreciative the local communities are to participatory approaches used by the international communities in contrast to those used by the local government which raise threats of political exploitation.

Zaka is in assistance of some non-state actors such as CARE International, World Food Programme (WFP), Protracted Relief Programme (PRP) and Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO). These are mainly focusing on poverty relief projects, which is the reason why the Government of Zimbabwe allowed them to operate in the area as poverty eradicative tools. The state actors also exist in their elite that include Environmental Management Agency mainly

focusing on environmental law enforcement and the Forestry Commission of Zimbabwe for forestry conservation. These state actors have been suffocating from financial and personnel incapacities to promote environmental governance as well as lack of power to strengthen grassroots institutions as one field officer notes "we do not have enough finance to address environmental issues in the local communities and sometimes we face strict political supervision from the government which is not conjusive for our operation". Of the few that occurred, the GEIs in the area include, reforestation projects, sustainable agriculture, water catchment management, combating stream bank cultivation, veldfire prevention, grazing land management, gully reclamation and wetland protection.

The non-state actor organisations are embarking on small projects such as dam construction in Mundoko village, wetland protection such as the Pamupunga wetland in Danda of Ward 3 in Zaka. There are uses of consolidated gardens to curb stream bank cultivation since it reduces haphazard gardens along the riverbanks such as the Mundoko Garden along Mushuche River. These projects being poverty eradicative have been receiving total support from the local communities as one respondent notes, [These projects are the ones we need as we are being marginalized by the government so they help us to reduce poverty as well as conserving our depleting environment. We welcome them well heartedly even though our leaders restrict them on political grounds]. This clarifies that being developmentally packed it is appreciated by the local residents as they realise that poverty is making them losing their crucial environment through exploitation for survival. However, the political nature of the district becomes a hindrance to their multiplication in operation as one respondent clarifies " *kupindira kurikuitwa negovernment hakusikwekubatsira madonor asi kutoongorora mashandiro avo vachishandisa politics, zvirikukonzera kuti zvimwe zvirongwa zvisaitwe zvimwe zvichisarira panzira*". [Government intervention is not of assistance to environmental management but scrutinising the operation on non state actors using political lenses, this is causing some programmes to fail or left uncompleted]

Institutionally, non-state actors such as PRP, CARE International and FAO are making use of participatory planning to map the needs of local communities, which has been beneficial and applauded by the local communities. This existence of international organisations in

environmental management assists the local authority and local communities on comprehensive decision-making and resources mobilization but their interventions are politically restrained. In support of this, one villager highlights that "these organisations of the few that we have are playing a pivotal role in governance of our local environment, we wish they were the local authorities because they are effective". However, a local authority member asserted that these organisations need monitoring to ensure that they do comply with national government policies. This shows conflicts between the local authorities and the non- state actors where the government of Zimbabwe through the local authorities makes political follow-ups on the operation of these organisations, which leave the local communities at jeopardy of environmental marginalisation as depicted by a common proverb "when elephants fight it is the grass that suffers".

The local communities are blaming the central government for the fall down of grassroots institutions (VIDCOs and WADCOs) where political interferences intensified as one of the learned villagers notes "the local government turned our grassroots institutions we used as platforms for discussing environment and development issues into political stages compromising their effectiveness. Thus the central government realizing the threat of successful of grassroots institutions to the fragmentation of the economy politically, it withdrew its support, which witnessed their downfall. Village leaders explain that the grassroots institutions instead of being platforms to empower the local communities, they turned to be extended political arms of the ruling party there by politicized to embrace GEIs as one respondent says "*kumameeting eVIDCO kwacho kunenge kuchingotaurwa nyaya dzepolitics nezvimwe zvisinei nedevelopment*" [At the VIDCO meeting politics issues are only discussed and other issues not to do with development]. Local communities are blaming the modern institutions for eroding the traditional values and norms in return of marginalisation. One village elder notes, "We lost our cultural activities of environmental governance where they took our traditional leadership and never returned authority over our environment and indigenous knowledge on local environmental management have been reluctantly adopted by the local authorities". Also another village elder told a story of ancient practices saying "*kare kare taitevedzera tsika nemagaririro akanaka tichiita zvemasango anoera kuchengetedza masango, mitupo ichichengetedza mhuka,*   This shows how the local communities have been suppressed pertaining environmental issues where instead of being a

corrective measure modern institutions have been replacers of the traditional way. This scenario keep fingers of the local communities pointed on the local authorities for environmental suppression where the local institutional frameworks are incompatible and inflexible to accommodate the GEIs.

After they felt the adverse impacts of environmental mismanagement, the local communities are now pointing fingers to the national community for their marginalisation remotely with no power over their environment. The rural communities are the people who hold the belief that environmental issues are solved through poverty eradication as it is the mother of all human induced environmental destruction. One village elder lamented that "*hatisanganise zvirongwa zvedevelopment nepolitics otherwise tingafa nenzara*" (we do not mix issues of politics and development otherwise we die of hunger). Separation of politics from development is a clear indication of desperation from rural marginalisation. Considering decision making at national level, development and politics are two sides of the same coin, which has led to scrutiny of non-state actors on their intervention to the local environmental management. One of the traditional chiefs' notes that "we never reject GEIs on legitimacy reasons all we need is for the international organisations to come into full play incorporating us in the conservation of our local environment as we face financial and expertise incapacities as well as lack of power over our environment". This clarifies how committed the local communities are towards GEIs at local scale where necessity has triggered effectiveness to be more crucial than legitimacy. This is supported by narration of a local village leader saying "madonor *tinoada chose hatina chokubata asi vakuru vedu ndovarikudzivisa madonour acho nepolitics dzisina basa vanhu vachitambura. Tirikufa nenzara kuno kugwenga vanhu vawandisa zvimbo yedu haichakwanisa kutichengeta ende hapana anonzwa zvichemo zvedu*" (we need the donors very much since we have nothing to assist us but our leaders are blocking them due to irrational politics. We are facing hunger in these deserts because there are high population pressures and no one hears our queries). This shows high degree of environmental suppression by the collective global South which hinder local participation towards global environmental consensus. They are also facing challenges of overcrowding where one respondent lamented that "*hatina pokurima saka tinotorima mudzinga menzizi nemumakomo*" (we have no other place to cultivate hence we opt for stream bank and downhill cultivation) of which it poses river siltation, which is an environmental defect. This

shows that there are poor if not of non-existence government mechanisms to regulate natural resources to the environment with expanding populace.

Delineating from these perceptions using the twin lenses of effectiveness and legitimacy, the local communities are in seek of the GEIs not only as a poverty eradicative intervention but also for conservation of the local environment at stake of human exploitation. Even though they will be in pursuance for poverty relief, their participation leads to the improvement of the environment. However, the suppression they receive from the national level and the collective Global South is immense to dissolve the wishes as well as the common challenges to be discussed as a common calabash.

DISCUSSION

THE COMMON CALABASH OF LOCAL CONSTRAINS

In relation to the global South, a common calabash of local challenges exists which is rather cumbersome to diffuse. Perennial poverty has been a great component of the calabash, which has led to the failure of GEIs in rural communities of Zimbabwe. While the international community has been debating on whether poverty is a developmental issue or an environmental issue (Najam, 2005), the local communities have not been stopping exploiting the environment for survival. Majority of the GEIs such as reforastation, conservation agriculture, wetland protection have been failing as a result of "poverty led expolitation".There are also immense political interferences in environmental issues. The intervention of non-state actors to environmental management in the local communities of the global South have been subject to political filtrations where majority of them have been failing to push through the legitimacy scrutiny. This has led to the environmental suffocation in the rural communities of Zaka.

The RDCs being the lowest government administration units with all the decentralized powers from the central government; they lack financial capacities to foster environmental management. Given that the government grants they need sometimes they do not get them when they get them they will be insufficient. Lack of partnerships with the local community members is also an exacerbating factor, which has led to lack of environmental stewardship among community

members. In addition, corruptive tendencies in the leadership of the developing countries where the local authority pay scrupulous activities, which suppresses governance components including transparency, accountability is immense. The institutional frameworks of the global South are characterized by bureaucracy where GEIs are hindered by the bureaucratic hurdles of the institutions. Also, institutional inflexibility, poor coordination and incompatibility leads to their failure to foster environmental initiatives. Rural marginalisation has been intense in the global South where "rural proofing" of national environmental initiatives is of non-existence. Being marginalized in the rural pressure on resources has contributed to intensification of conflicts over natural resources. This is hindering environmental conservation in the land of scarce resources. One of the major notifications is the lack of information about environmental conservation. They act like laggards in recepting information from national and international community. Also in rural communities, elitism exists where monopoly groups would need to benefit for the initiative more than others hence conflicts arises hence high degree of corruption.

African societies have degree of relying on external aid (Chirisa, 2012). This has exercebated the dependency syndrome which has destroyed the African communities' selfhelp mentality. In addition, there are persisting drought spells where the climatic nature of the global South is restrictive to environmental conservation. Struggles at local level persists where traditional leadership and modern leadership fight over power, the local community members are remaining with no other cards to play than dancing to the tune of power struggle turmoil which is also exacerbating the failure of environmental governance. These common challenges call for uncommon treatment for global consensus to be fully realized.

LESSON DRAWN
- The local communities are suppressed by the global misconception that the global South rejects GEIs for legitimacy reasons rather than effectiveness. This has been a different case with how the local communities perceive them.
- There is lack of effective coordination between the various organisations involved in planning and implementation severely weakens attempts to achieve the goals of empowerment associated with decentralized planning and called for in both the RDC Act and the Prime Minister's directive.

- There is persistence to enact new institutional frameworks governing environmental issues both at local and global scale and this has exacerbated the challenge of complexity of environmental institutions (poor coordination, unclear responsibility, generalizations)

- Rural community citizens appreciate developmental packed environmental initiatives as a poverty eradicative strategy.

- Local communities are wrongly stereotyped under the auspices of collective global South as irrational rejecters of GEIs

- As the national communities of the global South collectively advocate to the international community for suffering from poverty of influence pertaining global environmental governance, their local communities are also complaining about the poverty of influence in the national context.

- There is lack of democratic institutions to foster environmental initiatives rationally at local context.

- While the collective Global South is complaining for lack of "South proofing" of GEIs, it has been suppressing the local communities by lacking "rural proofing" of national environmental instruments.

TOWARDS GLOBAL CONSENSUS: BLESSING THE INTERRACIAL MATRIMONY

Realizing the controversial conceptions between the international community and the local communities there is need for robust mechanisms to foster the relationships of the two where interracial marriage needs to be supported. There is need to marry the local community and the international community as an interracial marriage with treasures of global environmental benefits. Striking such a relationship is a mammoth task considering the controversial global North and South politics in the realm of environmental governance. So, shall the international environmental community witness the suffocation of the local communities from environmental marginalisation in the name of controversial North- South politics? This is controversial and environmentally provocative scenario, which calls for collective action of all stakeholders towards global equity.

Drawing from the notion of interracial marriages, it has been regarded as an abnormality raising questions of racism in the African community. This is similar with what the global

environmental governance has been facing where relationship of the local community and the international community is rejected by the collective global South on legitimacy standpoint. Local communities and the international community need to be married though interracially, there is need to reach agreement with the custodians of the local communities, which are collectively called the Global South. This turns back to the North-South politics in a different angle where the bride price can be developmental package, which strengthen environmental relationships of the two. While (Najam *et al* 2006) emphasize on the need for reform of global environmental governance as it has outgrown its original design, there is need to include adoption of rural proofing for local communities of the global South in the reform. There need for global partnerships on environmental governance to strengthen global intergration (Clark and Dickson, 1999). Global consensus is too dense to be accomodated in the space limited by global politics hence there is need to diffuse other components of global politics.

POLICY OPTIONS

- Free agenda setting allows expression of citizens' diverse needs and aspirations, enabling them to form, assess and choose options and fostering internal coalescence and legitimacy

- Need for capacity building of local institutions such as VIDCOs and WADCOs to enhance platform for environmental discussion.

- Strengthen traditional leadership frameworks in governing the local environment

- Device tools for social mobilization to raise the local communities' lost hope for environmental governance.

- Strengthen the mutual marriage of modern and traditional institutions in fostering environmental initiatives at local level

- Mainstream international environmental institutions into the grassroots institutional frameworks

- Spread out global partnership agenda to the lower level of the local communities as a strengthening tool of local communities' capacities

- Foster global environmental institutions to engage in capacity building of local institutions such as the RDCs on environmental initiatives.

- Improve the provision of developmental packed environmental initiatives at local level

- Re-empower the local communities in the management of the local environment
- Further decentralize power from the RDC level to the grassroots institutions
- Increase environmental awareness to the local communities on GEIs to strengthen stewardship and environmental literacy.

CONCLUSION

This paper has explored the perception of the local communities on GEIs where it notes that local communities throw complementary applauses to the international community even though constrained by the common calabash of local challenges. The overall findings are a dismissal to the adage of local communities as rejecters of GEIs. It thereby develops a path towards global consensus, which calls for the need for collective action of all environmental stakeholders for prospective international-local environmental relationship to sail through the fatal global North-South battlefield. This turns to be a mammoth task to tackle which need collective action of all relevant stakeholders. It calls for the need to integrate the perceptions and knowledge of the local communities to fully realise embracement of GEIs towards Global Environmental Governance.

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