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Can small scale livelihood projects help contribute
to both sustainable development and forest
conservation outcomes?

Harvey & al in (prep)

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Introduction

- There is a need to reconcile sustainable development with forest conservation, especially in remote rural areas.
- Implementing small scale livelihood projects can enhance the livelihoods of rural communities and also reduce local pressure on remaining forests.
- Many conservation projects implement small-scale livelihood projects to enhance the livelihoods of rural communities and reduce local pressure on remaining forests
- However, there is little information on how effective these small-scale livelihood projects are in delivering both livelihood and conservation outcomes.
- There is a particular need to understand how local communities view the conservation and livelihood outcomes of these projects.
- Such information is needed to help policy makers, donors and practitioners design and implement effective projects



RESEARCH QUESTIONS



- 1) What are the perceived benefits and costs of small-scale livelihood projects to local communities?
- 2) What are the perceived impacts of livelihood projects on conservation?
- 3) Do different types of livelihood projects vary in their ability to deliver livelihood and conservation benefits ?

Site: ANKENIHENY ZAHAMENA CORRIDOR (CAZ)

- Area: 369,266 ha
- Tropical Rain Forest
- Mosaic of forests, agricultural land and fallow areas
- Poor, remote communities, practicing subsistence farming
- REDD+ pilot project from 2008 onwards; led by Government of Madagascar & CI
- CI is the designated manager of CAZ



Small scale livelihood projects in CAZ

- >400 small-scale livelihood projects (2006-2014)
- Purpose of projects is to improve local livelihoods of rural communities and contribute to reducing pressure on adjacent forests
- Projects are small scale (mean of 30 households/project), short duration (mean of 9 months), low budget (mean US\$2,746)
- We focused on 4 types of projects:

1. Agriculture



2. Bee keeping



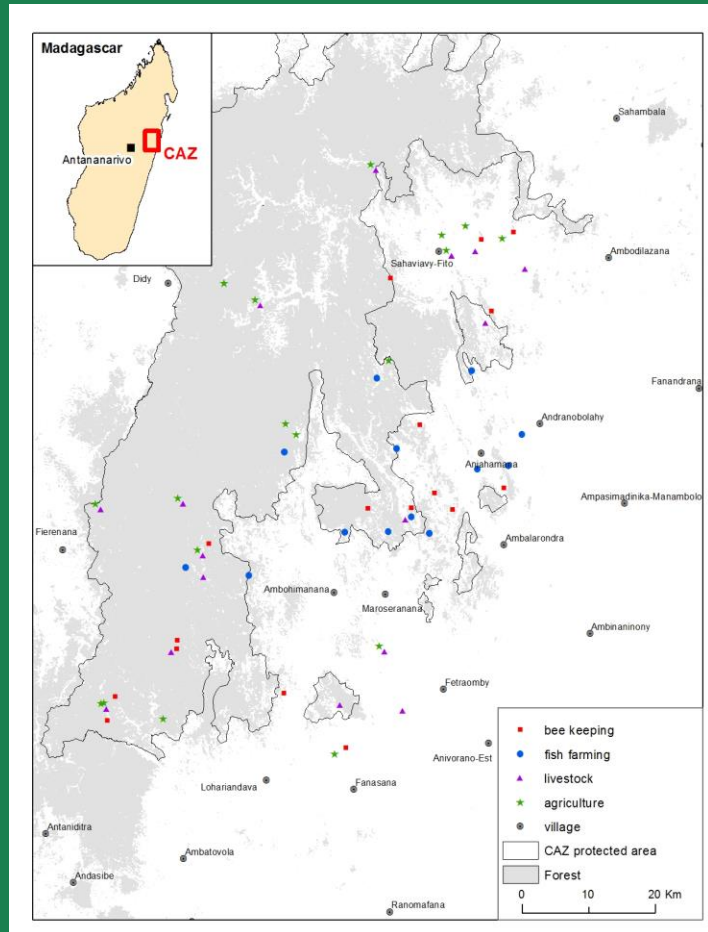
3. Fish farming



4. Livestock production



Sampling strategy and methodology



- Randomly chose 10-17 projects per project type, from existing data base of >400 projects
- Randomly interviewed 10 people (men and women) per project
- Total sample: 61 projects (611 persons)
- Conducted detailed household surveys about the perceived costs and benefits of projects to local livelihoods, and impacts on forest conservation

Location of the 61 projects surveyed

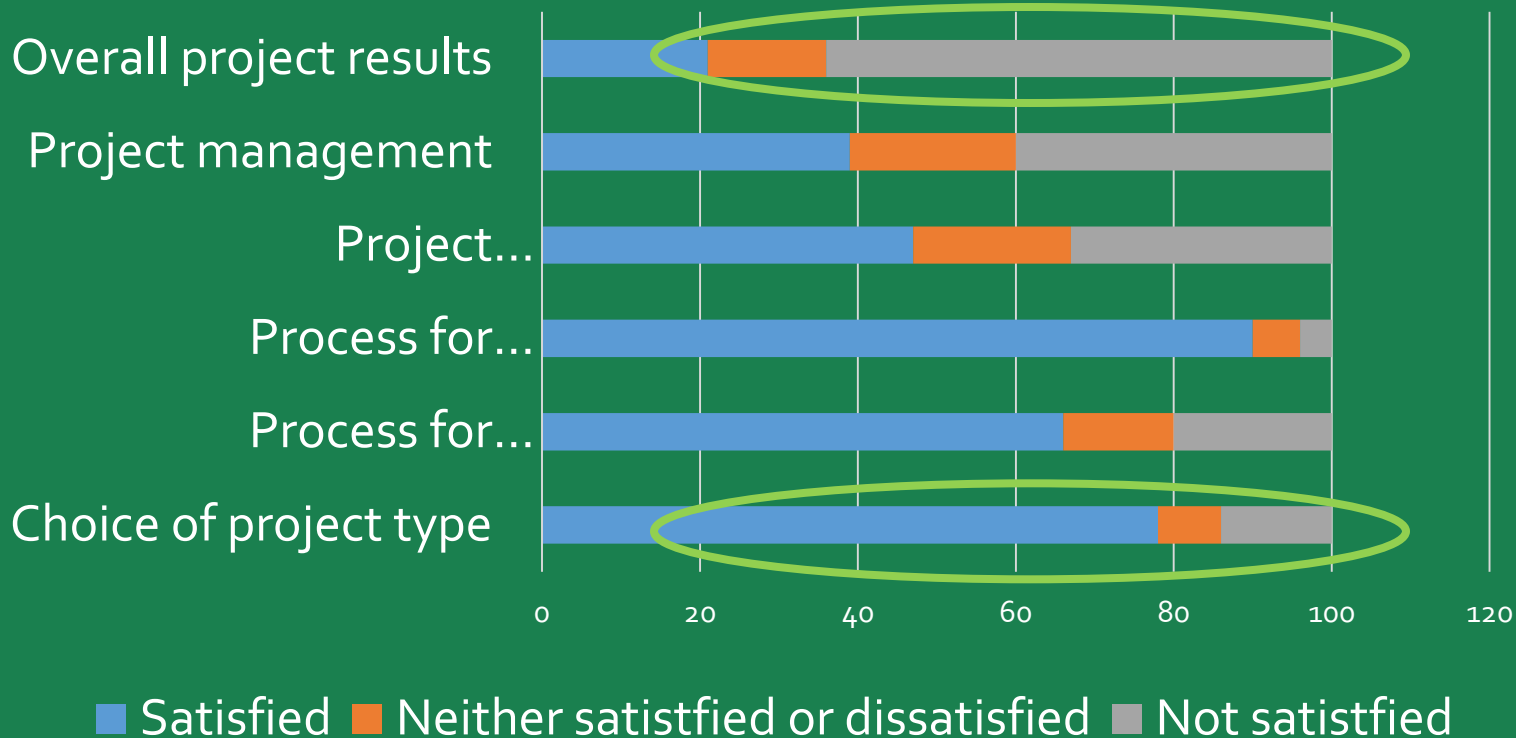
Household survey



- Structured interviews, consisting of 82 questions
- Mean duration of: 64 minutes, max of 132 minutes
- Key topics:
 - Participant's background and socioeconomic conditions
 - Participant satisfaction with project design, implementation and results
 - Perceptions on the types of project benefits and the importance of these benefits
 - Perceptions on potential negative impacts of projects
 - The links between the microproject and conservation activities
 - The extent to which the microprojects led to conservation outcomes

RESULTS

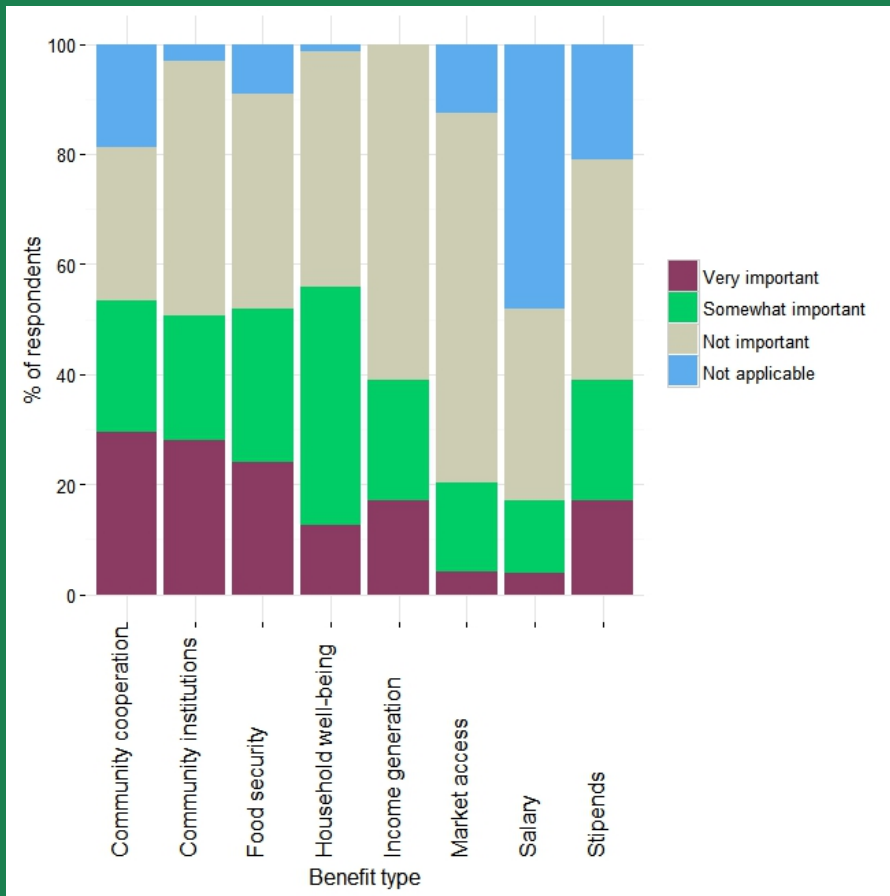
1. How satisfied were participants with the projects?



→ Participants were generally satisfied with the choice of projects and participants, but less satisfied with implementation and overall results

RESULTS

2. Did local people receive livelihood benefits from the projects?

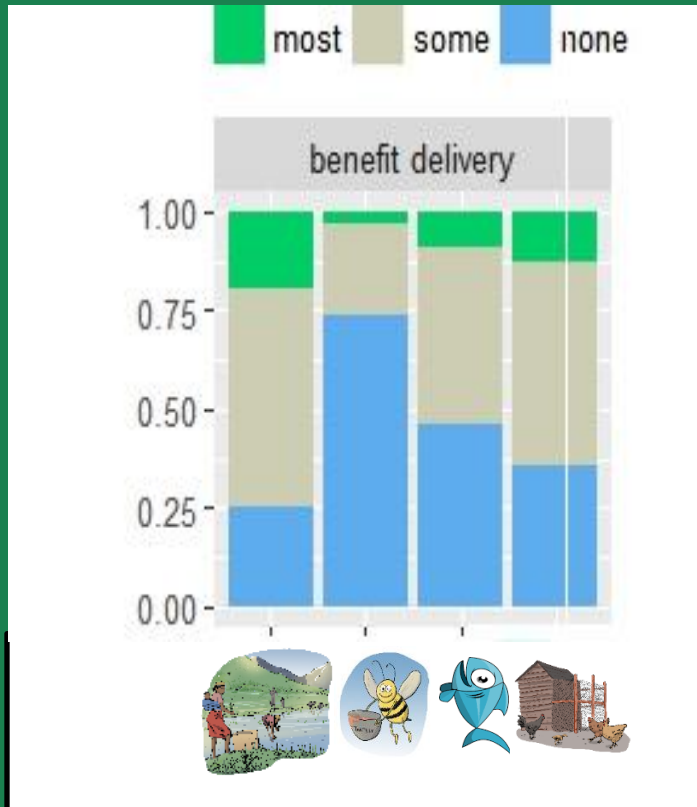


- 58% of respondents indicated that the projects had provided them with benefits
- The most important benefits included improved household well-being, improved community cooperation, strengthened community institution and improved food security.
- Of those who received benefits:
 - 44% only received benefits during the project's lifetime
 - 50% are still receiving benefits several years after the project ended

RESULTS

3. Did different types of projects differ in their ability to deliver livelihood benefits?

- Yes!
- Agriculture and livestock projects had higher levels of benefit delivery.
- Bee keeping projects were the least likely to deliver livelihood benefits.
- The different types of projects also affected the TYPES of livelihood benefits provided



RESULTS

4. Did the projects have any negative impact?

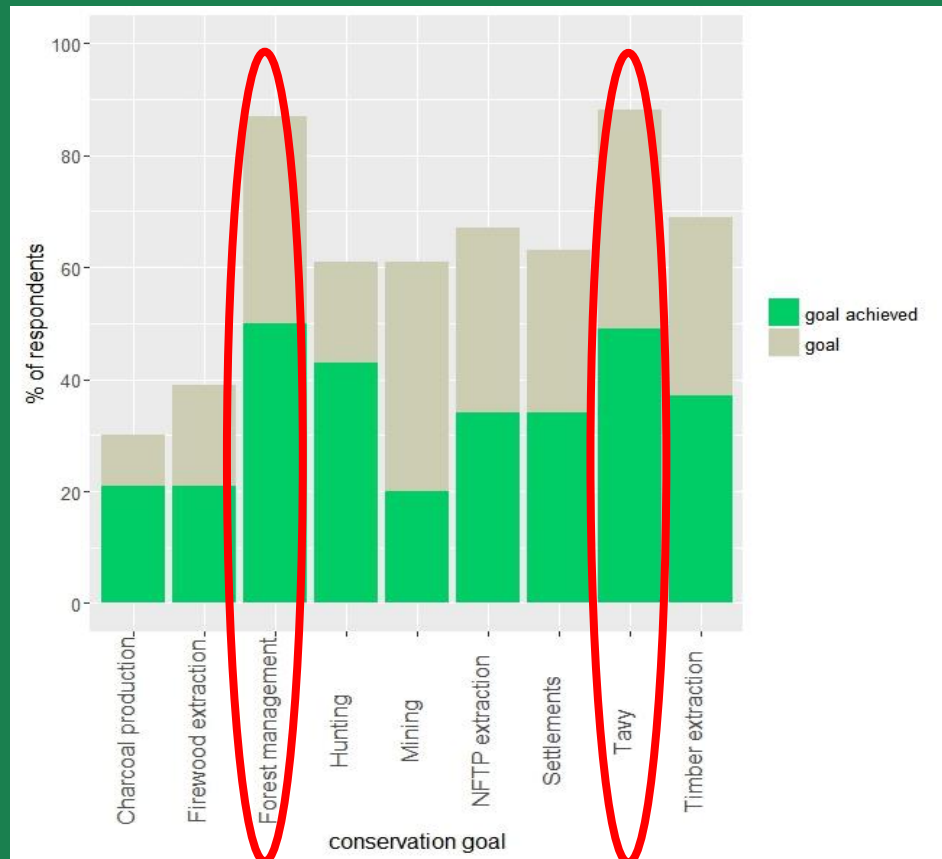
Most participants did not perceive any negative impacts

Variable	% of participants
No negative outcomes from project	91%
No tension among project beneficiaries and non-beneficiaries within the same community	89%
No tension among communities that received projects and those that didn't	95%

In addition, 78% said they thought that project benefits were distributed equally among project participants

RESULTS

5. What was the perceived impact of livelihood projects on conservation outcomes?



- Most participants thought the microprojects had specific conservation goals
- Many also thought the projects helped advance these conservation goals
- Especially improving forest management and reducing tavy



CONCLUSIONS

- Overall, these results suggest that these small-scale projects have the potential to contribute to both livelihood and conservation outcomes and can potentially have long-term impacts.
- Small-scale livelihood projects varied greatly in their ability to deliver benefits to communities. However, some projects delivered important livelihood benefits over multiple years.
- The type of project implemented affected the delivery of livelihood projects.
- Interestingly, most participants felt that the projects did contribute to forest conservation outcomes, irrespective of the type of project implemented.



IMPLICATIONS

- Understanding local perspectives of project outcomes is important for determining if projects meet local expectations and needs, and for ensuring community support.
- Projects need to be carefully designed and implemented to ensure they address the needs of rural communities and deliver the intended livelihood and conservation benefits.
- Rigorous monitoring and evaluation are key for ensuring benefit delivery and for identifying factors associated with project success.
- When possible, quantitative assessments of project costs and benefits should also be carried out to provide donors, policy makers and practitioners with the information they need to implement successful and cost-effective investments.



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