
[Tanzania: local people benefit from forest products](#)

Corruption and incapacity among forestry officials, as well as the activity of illegal loggers, timber product dealers and sawmillers are responsible for the disappearance and degradation of Tanzania's forests (see WRM Bulletins 27 and 29). This not only means the destruction of a valuable ecosystem in a tropical region but also the loss of the source of resources and incomes for forest dwellers and forest dependent people.

A recent research performed by G.C. Monela, G.C. Kajembe, A.R.S. Kaoneka, and G. Kowero of the Sokaine University of Agriculture shows that honey, charcoal, fuelwood, and wild fruits contribute with 58% of farmers' cash incomes in six villages from the Dodoma region, the peri-urban area near Morogoro, and the Kilosa District. Those results, together with findings from a rapid rural appraisal conducted in the same location, are presented in the book 'Household Livelihood Strategies in the Miombo Woodlands, Emerging Trends'.

Honey alone accounted for one third of all cash income in those villages. Farmers in the peri-urban area, which had greater access to markets, produced more charcoal, which represented 38% of their total cash income. Women have increasingly become involved in many of these activities, particularly in the peri-urban area.

The results from this study confirm the findings of a previous survey of seven administrative regions (conducted by Munishi et al.), that found that two thirds of all Tanzanian households obtained at least 15% of their incomes from forest products. Both studies make clear how important traditional forest knowledge and practices are for the survival and well being of local communities. They also show once again that forests are not only a source of roundwood for a few companies, but a rich source of products that can benefit local people.

Those interested in receiving a free electronic copy of the above referred paper or who would like to send comments to the authors, please write to Godwin Kowero at g.kowero@cgjar.org .

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