

## An Assessment of Horizontal Accountability in Community Based Natural Resource Management (CBNRM) in Namibia and Botswana

**Mupeta C. Patricia**<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>School of Natural Resources & Environment, University of Florida, Gainesville, FL USA

The past two decades has seen a paradigm shift in the conservation of the world's natural resources. The development of Community Based Natural Resource Management (CBNRM) has been one of the main responses to this in Sub Saharan Africa. CBNRM has enabled national governments in developing countries to turn to local-level common property institutions as new policy thrust to decentralize governance of the environment. After two decades of CBNRM implementation in Southern Africa, it has scored some successes and failures. One of the recurring challenges CBNRM implementation faces in Southern Africa is governance at the local community level. A lack of downward accountability of community leaders, low levels of participation in decision making and elite capture of financial and social benefits have recurred in almost all CBNRM programs. In an effort to begin to understand how governance influences CBNRM performance, this study examined horizontal accountability in CBNRM in Botswana and Namibia. The study shows that in Botswana, horizontal accountability is relatively weak, and both financial and natural resource information is not filtering from the elected leaders to the constituents. In Namibia, however, the results show that horizontal accountability is evident in the flow of financial information from the leaders to the constituents. However, information on natural resources is not getting to the constituents. The study shows the importance in examining horizontal accountability as a form of governance and how it affects the management of common property resources and that in CBNRM, it should be further investigated and compared across communities.

Key words: Governance, horizontal accountability, community based natural resource management.

Contact Information: Patricia C. Mupeta. School of Natural Resources & Environment, University of Florida, Gainesville, FL USA. Email: pcmupeta@ufl.edu