



COMMUNITY FORESTRY

AT A GLANCE:

 Technical support for the implementation of local community forest concessions in the Democratic Republic of the Congo

OUR WORK

Community forestry concessions present an opportunity to grant land rights to local communities so they can manage and legally benefit from their natural resources. In Central Africa, this process has been carried out using different approaches in different countries with varying levels of success. The Democratic Republic of the Congo is the most recent country to establish a legal framework to grant community forestry rights. Given that the process is in its critical beginning stages, the U.S. Forest Service's current community forestry activities are focused uniquely in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO

The 2014 Community Forestry Decree enables communities to obtain formal rights to manage local community forestry concessions for a range of uses. This is considered an important opportunity for local communities to obtain legal rights to manage and benefit from their customary lands. To support this process, the U.S. Forest Service worked with the Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development (MEDD) and the World Resources Institute to develop an operational guide outlining the process for the development of simplified management plans for local community forestry concessions. The aim is that application of this guide will support sustainable forest use, promoting both biodiversity conservation and sustainable rural development.

In addition, recognizing the current momentum and motivation by many actors to establish community forestry concessions, the U.S. Forest Service is completing a review of potential economic benefit-sharing models that can be leveraged within these frameworks. This includes training local partners on the application of the Green Value Tool to estimate economic return of different community forestry activities to enable development of realistic business plans for newly established concessions. This review will provide a current state of knowledge to be shared with relevant stakeholders providing a realistic assessment of benefit delivery at the community level.

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