

THE COORDINATION DILEMMA AGAINST SUSTAINABLE CHARCOAL VALUE CHAIN IN TANZANIA

1.0 Introduction

In 2020, charcoal production in Tanzania was estimated at 1.9 million tonnes per year with a Gross Value Added of TZS 2.1 trillion contributing about 44% of the forest sector GDP. Charcoal generates revenues of about USD 1 billion per annum and supports the livelihoods of people along the value chain. Charcoal is the largest source of household energy for cooking in urban areas in Tanzania, as it is considered relatively available, affordable, and easy to transport, distribute, and store. It is estimated that 85% of Tanzania's population relies on biomass energy. Cooking energy is the leading usage of biomass in households compared to other sectors such as building, and agro-based industries. 96% of the respondents in Dar es Salaam City use charcoal as a main source of energy¹. The forest biomass energy sources (woodfuels) in Tanzania come from forests, the Ministry of Natural Resources and Tourism (MNRT) particularly the Forestry and Beekeeping Division (FBD) is the custodian of the resource. Tanzania Forest Service (TFS) is mandated to manage forests under the central government (forest reserves and general land forests). Local government authorities (districts and villages) manage local government forest reserves and forests under Village Land Forest Reserves respectively. Analysis of power relations and coordination for sustainable charcoal production and trade-motivated formulation of this Policy Brief.

2.0 Methodology

This Policy Brief is based on a study entitled 'Analysis of Related Policies and Legal Framework Hindering Sustainable Charcoal Value Chain Promotion in Tanzania' that was financed by European Union through the TaTEDO-Sustainable Energy Services Organization (TaTEDO-SES0). Considering the allocated time for the study, the main methods used were literature review and consultations with some key informants including relevant government ministries, development partners, NGOs, private sector, and representatives of people involved in various nodes of the charcoal value.



3.0 Key Findings and Policy Implications

- There are several national-level institutions that are dealing with charcoal. The main actors in this context are the Vice President's Office (VPO), Ministry of Energy (MoE), Ministry of Natural Resources and Tourism (MNRT), Ministry of Industry, Trade and Investment (MITI), Ministry of Works and Transport (MWT), and President Office -Regional Administration and Local Governments (PO-RALG). The VPO is more concerned with the environmental consequences of charcoal production and use. The MoE is more focused on the demand side of charcoal as cooking energy. The MNRT is focusing on the supply side and trade of charcoal. MITI deals with SMEs, mandated to develop standards and regulate the exportation of charcoal and weights and measures of products including charcoal. MWT regulates transportation. PO-RALG deals with production, CESS collection, conservation, and community livelihoods. Each of these key stakeholders develops and implements their policies and legal frameworks in isolation without adequate consideration of other actors. This has resulted in remarkable contradictory policies and coordination challenges.
- There is persistent power tension between stakeholders that are implementing sustainable charcoal. This was also earlier observed by UNIQUE (2018) and continues to persist. Stakeholders feel that TFS is anti-community forestry. On the other hand, TFS alleged that villagers, through CBFM guidelines, are given excessive power with the limited technical capability to manage the

¹ Nuru, F., Msalilwa, U., Mbwambo, L. and Balama, C. (2015). Assessment of household charcoal consumption in urban areas: the case of Dar es Salaam City, Tanzania, *Tanzania Journal of Forestry and Nature Conservation*,

forests, particularly for charcoal production and trade, and in many cases, the power is abused causing forest destruction. The negative power relations could arise from the past when CBFM Guidelines allowed villages to make decisions on forest harvesting applications in their areas of jurisdictions and if positive issue harvesting licenses. However, this was revoked by the GN No. 417 of 2019 on the Forest Regulations.



- Despite high surveillance coordinated by the TFS country-wide, inefficient charcoal production persists and is cited as one of the key drivers of forest degradation and deforestation nationally.
- The MNRT invested time and resources to prepare and publish the National Charcoal Strategy and Action Plan, however, the document is shelved and has not been implemented since 2021. However, among the existing strategies at the national level that are supportive of the national clean energy strategy is the National charcoal strategy.
- There is a serious misconception that implementation of the National Charcoal Strategy and Action Plan shall gainsay the current national focus on clean cooking energy spearheaded by the 2024 - 2034 National Clean Energy Strategy. This is grossly cited as one of the reasons shelved the National Charcoal Strategy and Action Plan. The energy policy is skewed toward modern energy (electricity, petroleum products, and natural gas). As charcoal is still nationally used for cooking especially in urban areas, the Policy could recognize and develop strategies to ensure its sustainability through efficient utilization.

- The National Forest Policy 1998 does not put forward statements to coordinate and sustain charcoal business along the value chain. As the policy is the main instrument guiding the harvesting of the raw materials for charcoal making, it should ensure that the business is well coordinated.
- There are various policies and laws that oversee sustainable natural resources production. However, the uncoordinated policies/legal frameworks on production and trade hinder the sustainable management of charcoal value chains.
- The National Agriculture Policy of 2013 is silent on the competing land uses between agriculture and forest development. Agriculture in particular shifting cultivation is the main contributor to deforestation and yet so far there are no policy directives from agriculture to control the clearing of forests for agricultural activities. Implementation of the policy has not been effective in reducing deforestation leading to unregulated charcoal business in the presence of agricultural development.

Policy Recommendations

- Work to reduce contradictory policies and coordination challenges on sustainable charcoal implementation.
- Organize discussions between stakeholders and TFS to create a common understanding about the sustainable charcoal harvest and its implementation.
- TFS should increase surveillance in the production sites for the purpose of ensuring that harvesting guidelines including efficient technologies are applied.
- It is important to implement the National Charcoal Strategy and Action Plan because it puts forward strategies and actions needed to coordinate various actors along the charcoal value chain.
- Since a huge amount of forests is annually cleared for the purpose of agricultural development. The trees harvested are used to produce charcoal applying inefficient technologies. Therefore, the National Agriculture Policy of 2013 should among other issues aim to reduce competition between agricultural land uses and forest development.

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