**VANGA COMMUNITY MEMBER VUMILIA NGUVU KAZI-KIWEGU FOLLOW UP**

**Inter1:** introduce yourself before we start.

**Respondent**: my full names are Hamisi Juma Vunde. Am a group member of Kiwegu vumilia Nguvu kazi.

**Inter1**: vumilia Nguvu kazi, where did you get that name?

**Respondent**: vumilia? It just came from the mind.

**Inter1**: are you a member of…

**Respondent**: VAJIKI.

**Inter1**: for the VAJIKI committee? And in the VBF?

**Respondent**: am not a member in the VBF.

**Inter1**: do you know how the VBF is run?

**Respondent**: yes I know

**Inter1**: explain to us.

**Respondent**: First, VBF is a project that came up as a result of research done on the mangroves by organizations like KMFRI. So it was said that we must have a carbon project which is called VBF, Vanga blue forest. We as the VAJIKI members could not manage the carbon project, we had to design a committee so as to manage and run this carbon project while we are there as the mother. We elected the committee within the villages of Vanga, Kiwegu and Jimbo. They elected their chairman, vice chairman and the secretary so as to lead the VBF project, carbon. The truth is that the way they lead us is that everything that is being received from Mark-the white man who is in America, who gives the funds. When these funds are sent, they are received by KMFRI. It is KMFRI that then send the funds to VBF. When the VBF receives the funds, the committee sat down and decides on what amount should be shared to Kiwegu, Jimbo and Vanga. They then inform the whole community of the funds received and ask them, ‘what do you want?’ so it is the community to say, ‘ok construct one class for us, apply paint or install a tap water.’ They decide in that way.

**Inter1**: so, who can we say that he/she runs the VBF project?

**Respondent**: it is Mark. He is the one running it. He is the one who takes the money and brings it.

**Inter1**: Mark brings money. So it is a must that he is the one running it?

**Respondent**: he is there; he must be making a follow up on the funds, because without the following up you will not understand. He is the one looking for funders.

**Inter1**: who runs this project?

**Respondent**: to say the truth, this project… you know, everything must have a person who is ahead of the others who normally identifies the projects and the buyers. So the person who looks for the buyers of carbon is Mark. Once he gets there, then he sent it to us.

**Inter1**: are you the chairman of Nguvu kazi?

**Respondent**: am a member of Nguvu kazi.

**Inter1**: but you are a committee member of VAJIKI?

**Respondent**: am a committee member of VAJIKI.

**Inter1**: what is the relationship between the VBF and the VAJIKI?

**Respondent**: as I have told you, the VBF got the project through the VAJIKI. VAJIKI are the ones who used to protect and conserve the mangroves and also planting. So after getting the carbon project, they involved the VBF committee to manage this project because it was impossible for the VAJIKI committee to manage two projects. So we made our colleagues the managers of the VBF, Vanga blue forest. So we are there as the mother and as the pioneers of this project, as our umbrella. So we relate to one another and we have no conflicts.

**Inter1**: what is it that VBF does not do but it can be done to improve the VBF?

**Inter2**: let’s say for example, there is something that can be done to enhance the growth of VBF, but because it is not currently being done, VBF has remained in the same level.

**Respondent**: how the VBF is currently run, it’s because of what is available. So for the VBF to improve, we should increase the carbon. We currently get the carbon from the 460, so we can increase the hectares so as to have more carbon. We currently have 4428 hectars, but for the carbon, we started with 460 hectares of which we have 250 in Kiwegu, 200 in Sii and 10 in Jimbo.

**Inter1**: what else can be done to improve the VBF?

**Respondent**: another thing that can improve the VBF is that there should be transparency. Everything that will be received, we transparently inform one another. If we conceal other information, even the relationship dies and there will be disagreements. Most people will think that the funds are being misused. But if there will be transparency, then there will be no problem.

**Inter1**: there are those benefits that you receive after selling the carbon. How can the benefits be shared so that it brings fairness?

**Respondent**: according to the meeting I attended in Ukunda, when the benefits are received, they are already divided. There is a share that remains in organizations. There is a share that goes to employee salaries. There is a share of 20% that goes to VAJIKI. There is another share that goes to the three groups; Vanga, Jimbo and Kiwegu. The benefits that will be shared in these three groups, Vanga shall get a bigger share because it is larger, but Jimbo and Kiwegu shall have a similar ratio.

**Inter1**: because they are not bigger?

**Respondent**: yeah, because according to our understanding, we thought that the carbon shall be sold together. (Disruptions from movements of the participants) where did we left?

**Inter1**: the benefits that you get from carbon, how can they be shared?

**Respondent**: we said that, during the meeting with the forest team and the stakeholders in Ukunda, we were told that if it will be produced fairly, we will receive 3 million. So, if we get the three million, it will be divided. There are employees; they will have to be given their salaries. There are scouts; they shall be given their salaries. Then there is the KMFRI organization that gives out the mangrove services, there is something they will get. Then there is 20% that was to be received by VAJIKI who is the mother. Then there was some money that was to be shared, 300,000 for Vanga, 275,000will be allocated to Jimbo and 275,000 will be allocated to Kiwegu. But according to what I see, it’s like it is being received in bits. So it should be spent according to how it is received. If the bits are withrawed or if we can wait until the full amount is received, that is also possible. Have you understood?

**Inter1**: yes. You have said that the half amount that may be sent can be saved until the full amount is received so that it can be shared. Or you share the half amount you might have received.

**Respondent**: according to certain percentages.

**Inter1**: yeah. Percentages. 31, 31 and 38.

**Respondent**: and the VAJIKI should also get a little share.

**Inter1**: and do you think that VAJIKI has currently received any?

**Respondent**: VAJIKI has got nothing.

**Inter1**: why?

**Respondent**: I do not know how the funds are received. But currently, VAJIKI has got nothing.

**Inter1**: and what do you think should be done…?

**Respondent**: the truth is that they should be told that there is a VAJIKI share and it is this one. So that if they do not have an account, they can open one.

**Inter1**: they have no account?

**Respondent**: they have no yet opened an account.

**Inter1**: so if they were to be given the funds, who will be given?

**Respondent**: currently the funds have to remain with the VBF but they have to be informed. Because if the funds are just withrawed, they can be misused.

**Inter1**: and if it gets into someone’s pocket, will it be taken out really?

**Respondent**: into someone’s pocket? It is impossible. They should be informed so that they can open an account. The funds can then be transferred to the other account.

**Inter**: are there funds that are received and they already have a plan to be spent on certain issues, but they end up being spent on other activities?

**Respondent**: no, it has never happened.

**Inter1**: how do you see the VBF in the next 5 years or 10 years?

**Respondent**: according to its current system of operation, in the next 5 years, they shall have taken a step forward. The VBF is managed by the citizen himself /herself I that the citizen is the one responsible for conserving the resource. So we ensure proper conservation of the resource, then there will be more carbon which will be received by the VBF. So in the next 5 years, we will have taken up a bigger step.

**Inter1**: so what do you think shall have changed?

**Respondent**: life in terms of education and health care and even water since there will be water available, the hospital challenges shall have been solved and if the school needs a bore hole it will be constructed. The community needs the things that can be used by all like the hospital, water and education because the funds belong to them.

**Inter1**: the issue of buying medicines may happen yearly and repeatedly. Water installation is also done ones. In school, you may construct a class or buy books which the school may be filled in 2-3years.but we are thinking of 10 years to come. Can you give me the vision of the VBF group in the next 10 years?

**Respondent**: in ten years, we expect much development in every village because every village has its project. We can say that in the next 10years, our road might have been improved. It might have been fixed with carbro to the hospital. If the hospital is in need of medicines we shall have organized with the doctors to request for the medicines. So there will be no problems. If the toilets are inadequate, we shall have fixed them. Because 2-3 toilets in a hospital are not enough. Installing water at one place is also not enough. So in the next 10 years, the villages covered by the carbon project shall have many projects accomplished. Everyone has a different problem. Some are facing difficulties in their pathways. They may want culverts to be constructed. So after 10 years, you can even pass with a vehicle instead of foot.

**Inter1**: and what do you see in the VBF that might hinder the achievements of that vision?

**Respondent**: cooperation. I had already told you that cooperation and transparency are very important things. It’s the VBF to ensure there is transparency. The community should also work hard towards protection and conservation their resources.

**Inter1**: how can the transparency be achieved?

**Respondent**: the citizens should be informed of everything that is being received. They should be called to a meeting and be consulted on what they want.

**Inter1**: are there any ways the project can be fairer?

**Respondent**: they are there because if for example, you have come and involve the community itself about the project they want, will there be conflicts? There will be no problems because the project can have problems if you do not involve them, but if you do so, then the project will have no problems.

**Inter1**: another one?

**Respondent**: as I had told you, they should be transparent.

**Inter1**: and what about the funders… those in the level of Mark and other stakeholders?

**Respondent**: the other stakeholders must know because Mark will get feedback of what we have done. KMFRI also knows whatever we have done because that’s money. How it’s spent should be known.

**Inter1**: so he should make some follow up?

**Respondent**: yeah.

**Inter1**: so we can say that the way the funds are spent once received by the VBF, Mark himself should …

**Respondent**: should be aware of it. He should be aware that it has been received by the VBF, for what purpose and what it has done in each area.

**Inter1**: and how will he be aware of?

**Respondent**: we have employed coordinators, aren’t they have to write reports? They must write a report and sent it to him at the end of every month.

**Inter1**: and the people affected by the VBF?

**Respondent**: there are no people that are affected by the VBF because in the past, people were not aware of what carbon is. They used to go to the trees and do whatever they want, but because they are currently aware of the carbon benefits, nobody is affected.

**Inter1**: have the cutters involved with this?

**Respondent**: they have been involved. VBF used to hold meetings.

**Inter1**: are they in the VAJIKI?

**Respondent**: no, others are not in the VAJIKI. A few are in VAJIKI and these are those in the groups…

**Inter1**: the groups that are under VAJIKI, are the cutters not found in those groups?

**Respondent**: the user groups?

**Inter1**: mmmh, the user groups. Had the cutters joined the groups?

**Respondent**: some have joined in groups. There is fishing. There used to have cutters in the past, but before the action could be taken, they were informed that “we currently have this project and it requires no destruction on the mangroves. So, we should not cut them down…”

**Inter1**: so, because those people had been cutting down trees all those years, their grand fathers had cut down trees…can’t you see that they are being wronged by this project?

**Respondent**: no! No! They have cooled down. You know everything depends on informing everyone that this and this shall bring certain benefits. If you did not inform him/her then he/she will feel disturbed.

**Inter2**: to add on that, these people used to cut trees or firewood for sell so as to get money. Which means that even there was moving on well. Now that they have been banned from cutting trees and the firewood, aren’t they facing difficulties because they have no means to get money?

**Respondent**: no, they are not facing many difficulties because there are other trees, the casuarinas. If they need trees for construction, some have planted casuarinas in their farms. Because they were told that mangroves have not been allowed otherwise they could have been told that in every 20 poles they have to pay a certain amount of money. So until the time it will be allowed, then it will be sold to them, but currently people are using their trees.

**Inter1**: and those who used to cut trees for sell in the past?

**Respondent**: they used to be given a license but currently, there is no even the licensee.

**Inter1**: the forest guard has denied?

**Respondent**: there isn’t since we started this work, but they used to be given a license. So if someone wants to have construction, he/she goes to the licensee who was allowed by the forest department for the people to buy trees from him. But after the ban, there is no licensee cutting down trees. People are now aware, so the buy cement, sand and make their own bricks instead of using the mangrove trees.

**Inter1**: which groups do you think they should be involved with the VBF activities?

**Respondent**: the truth is that these groups are there. there farming groups, fishing groups and others of different types, but they do not complain that much and they are not so concerned about that issue because they know that every benefits received from carbon, will reach every citizen. What he/she knows is that the VAJIKI committee is working and everything that is received; the community shall be called and asked what they need. So they are not worried. If it’s a farmer, he/she is not worried because he/she knows…

**Inter1**: they are not worried. But do they know that there is a group that brings in more funds?

**Respondent**: they know.

**Inter1**: were they informed?

**Respondent**: haven’t I told you that they were informed before? And even during the time when the funds are received, it’s not only the Vumilia group that is being called for a meeting but all the people are called. “Wait for us tomorrow.” So, the whole community, whether you are in the Vumilia group or not, whether you are in the farming group or you are not a member of any group, all the citizens.

**Inter1**: is there any project process that you think it’s not going on well?

**Respondent**: no. this project goes well and if it’s not going well, we are there to supervise. If there are problems we say the truth.

**Inter1**: I have asked that so that if there are issues that are not going well we can correct them.

**Respondent**: ok, so the thing that was not going on well is, if funds have been received by the VBF, it is a right for the VAJIKI committee to be called by the VBF because the VAJIKI committee members are not from Kiwegu or Jimbo only, they are from different areas. There are three from Kiwegu, four from Jimbo and four from Vanga because there more people there. They sum up to almost 13 people, they sit down. They should be called. “we have called you here so as to inform you that we have received this and this and we wanted to reach the citizens down there,” not to share the funds. As the mother, she has to be aware, but not to hear stories at home.

**Inter1**: so there is something like that, has happened.

**Respondent**: yeah. It should be corrected.

**Inter1**: The funds have been received in the VBF but VAJIKI was not informed how much funds were received.

**Respondent**: yeah. We knew it after they have come to the ground…

**Inter1**: the time they have gone to the ground, that’s when you knew.

**Respondent**: yeah. So we want to be informed. Another thing, I have told you there is the sharing. It should follow the procedure as I had told you. The VAJIKI has its share that was planned. So even if the funds cannot meet the percentage given, there should be a certain percentage that is set aside for the VAJIKI. Have you got me?

**Inter1**: yeah. The percentage set aside for the VAJIKI, should be given out to VAJIK.

**Respondent**: yeah, because even them sometimes they may plan for planting activities, they will have to cater for some expenses such as drinking water. Now, where can they get money from? But if there is something, they can just take it.

**Inter1**: do you have any other thing left behind?

**Respondent**: I would like to say that, if the funds are received, they should be placed on a notice board so that any citizen passing by can see that there are funds received and they will be spent on a certain thing.

**Inter1**: I think that’s the end of my questions, unless you have anything to add that will bring fairness in the VBF.

**Respondent**: about fairness in the VBF, is just like I have said earlier, they should be firm, transparent and firm in the sharing.

**Inter1**: everything will be ok there?

**Respondent**: yeah. Had I told you that if we want to develop in the VBF, we should add more areas? Had I told you?

**Inter1**: yeah.

**Respondent**: because we currently have 15 plots. Kiwegu has 11 and then Sii has 4 which sum up to 15, and we have 4428hactares total forest from Jasini, the border between Kenya and Tanzania up to Majoreni. So we are now looking at how it is. People normally say ‘the higher you go the cooler it become.’ So every time you get more carbon from the forests, won’t you get more wealth? Instead of 3 million, won’t you receive six? Won’t you have developments?

**Inter1**: by the time you reach 20 years, you will be selling 10 million.

**Respondent**: mmmh (agreeing).

**Inter1**: It will be like a government now. (Laughing). Thank you so much.

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