

Unlocking economic value downstream Tugwi Mukosi Dam: a case of wards around the dam in Chivi and Masvingo districts of Zimbabwe

Muromo Francis, Tendai Madhanzi, Forward Dewa, Matunhu J

Abstract

Dams spur economic development especially in drought-prone regions in sub-Saharan Africa. In Zimbabwe, Chiredzi District in the south eastern lowveld, sugar plantations and citrus estates have benefited from dams like Mutirikwi, Tugwi Mukosi, Manjerenje and others. Communal areas around and downstream the dams have not realised any significant direct economic benefit from these water bodies as the water was regarded as private property. This study therefore investigated opportunities for unlocking economic development in wards surrounding the dam in Chivi and Masvingo rural districts. The wards suffer severe food and income insecurity despite them lying on the fringes of Tugwi Mukosi dam, the largest inland dam in Zimbabwe. The qualitative study collected data from the local residents (males and females), local leadership (elected and traditional), business, government departments like the Zimbabwe National Water Authority (ZINWA), National Parks and Wildlife Management Authority, agronomists from a local university, business and other stakeholders. The study established that irrigation, fisheries, tourism and hospitality are some of the benefits that could accrue to the ward given a supportive policy and capital environment. The study recommended an affirmative action for the communities in the wards surrounding and downstream the dam both in Chivi and Masvingo rural districts.

Keywords: Economic Value, Tugwi Mukosi Dam, Ward 28, Chivi Rural District