Mama Misitu is a communications campaign aiming at improving the governance of Tanzania’s forests and enhancing the legality of forest resources utilization for the benefits of Tanzanians.

The campaign is called Mama Misitu summoning visions of gender participation in conserving, managing and sustainable utilization of forests.

The goal of the campaign is to...

Improve forest governance ensuring that Tanzanian citizens benefit
Where we came from?

In 2008 the Tanzania Forest Working Group (TFWG) coordinated by Tanzania Natural Resource Forum (TNRF) launched the pilot phase of the campaign in response to TRAFFIC’s 2007 report on illegal timber trade, Titled “Forestry, Governance and National Development: lessons learnt from a logging boom in Southern Tanzania.”

This report brought several key issues to light, including revenue shortfalls, large scale corruption, and unsustainable rates of harvesting and loss of biodiversity.

The report recommended community participation in forest management through outreach and advocacy to reduce illegal logging. It is for these reasons that the project takes the form of a campaign and not a conventional project. The pilot phase ran for two years (2009-2011) and lessons from the pilot phase made the Tanzania Forestry Working Group develop this five year implementation phase (2012-2016).

How does the Campaign work?

The campaign believes that, sustainable change comes through well established networking of forest stakeholders. Therefore the campaign builds its ‘win win’ innovative interventions on five clusters so that each stakeholder can simultaneously achieve its goal and support to improving forest governance.

These clusters include:

I. Public debate generated on the need for improved forest governance.

II. National government and government agencies provide more support to improving forest governance and combating forest crime.

III. District authorities and local law enforcement agencies
improving their practice towards good forest governance.

IV. Forest-adjacent communities are aware of forest governance issues and the value of forest products, advocating for their rights, and involved in combating forest crime.

V. Forest based businesses engaged and active in the fight to improve forest governance.

Who do we work with?

The Campaign is coordinated by Tanzania Natural Resource Forum in collaboration with Tanzania Forest Working Group members (TFWG).
Where are we now?

In two years (2012 – 2014), the campaign has reached more than 140,000 communities coming from thirteen districts (Nanyumbu, Masasi, Kilwa, Lindi, Nachingwea, Rufiji, Kisarawe, Kibaha, Mkinga, Kilindi, Muheza, Handeni and Korogwe) within MMC jurisdiction.

There’s improved collaboration amongst partners, communities, private sectors and the Government in the management of forest resources.

The campaign has generated national debates on forest governance whereas communities, private sector and the Government raised their concerns on the need to improve forest governance. Based on this hearing the public-private partnership was observed as one of the key issues for future intervention.

The overall call of the campaign is to ensure forest stakeholders are collaborating with the law enforcement in order to enhance sustainable utilization of forest products.

Currently, the campaign is working with the Ministry of Natural Resources and Tourism (MNRT) to develop popular version of various guidelines related to harvesting on Village Land Forest Reserve (VLFR) and Joint Forest Management (JFM) guidelines to enable village communities and other stakeholders to use these guidelines and actively engage in the Participatory Forest Management (PFM) implementation.

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