Charcoal production

How does it work?

Villge Forest Resrves: rights to harvest timber products
Land use planning
Village council committees
Harvesting licenses
Income used for infrastructure & social services
Village members employed: production and transportation

In a nutshell..

Charcoal is the primary source of cooking energy in urban areas.
Charcoal production also causes widespread forest degradation.
Charcoal is an easily produced, low-cost forest product, with untapped potential to provide sustainable revenue flows from community managed forests.
With signficant innovation charcoal production can help preserve forests.

Financial viability

Projections: demand will exceed supply.
Low barriers to entry.
Low start-up costs (apart from the VLFRs establishment).
Production requires little technical ability.
Trade remains informal.
Certification together with a lack of market information are barriers into the formal market.
Traditional and inefficient production techniques limit revenue potential.

Four keys to success

1. Far from urban areas to curb illegal harvesting.
2. Forest management service providers to help establish VLFRs and land use plans.
3. Diversification: village councils set aside land for beekeeping and NTFPs.
4. Can offer an interim income while historically over harvested and degraded woodlands recover.

Advantages & strengths

- Flexible arrangements that are quick to set up
- Competitively priced energy source
- Low barriers to entry
- Low technical requirements

Enabling context

- Enabling legislation & policy framework
- Economic liberalization policies
- COnflicting mandates
- Weak regulation
- Uncertain govt. support

Supporters & partnerships

NGOs & development agencies
Government agencies
Technology partners

Risks & uncertainties

The delivery of land rights and power transfers is concerning

Expertise required for the technical nature of land use planning remains a barrier for VLFRs establishment

The agriculture opportunity cost remains a significant threat to charcoal production.

Illegal activity diffucult to regulate