

Presentation given at the Katoomba XV Meeting entitled

## **Integrated Solutions: Water, Biodiversity and Terrestrial Carbon in West Africa**

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# **West Africa Katoomba Meeting Payments for Ecosystem Services in West Africa**

Regional Challenges and  
Opportunities for Pro-poor REDD  
Kyeretwie Opoku, Civic Response  
7 October 2009

# Introduction

- “Poverty” = Structural Poverty resulting from exploitative social processes driving climate change
- Region = African communities – greatest victims of exploitation and marginalisation. Clear objective goal is to get out of structural poverty.
- REDD – Aspirational global scheme to enable north-south flow of resources to mitigate climate change through land use and forestry interventions - at present no clarity regarding quantum, source, destination, mediation or specific utilisation of fund

# REDD Opportunities I

- We get to live - bringing the 20% forest emissions reduction capacity into play is critical for avoiding climate and societal chaos by 2050 which is global warming is a condition for survival.
- Depends on real assault on climate change – and massive changes in energy economy and Northern and other elite consumption patterns

# REDD Opportunities II

- We get another (probably last) chance at “adaptation” – i.e. a new international order suitable for an unstable climate
  - improved awareness of rootedness of all production in natural world + limits of growth, social interdependence, recklessness and pointlessness of dominant capitalist development paradigms and relationships (especially concessions regime)
  - Chances to innovate in enterprise and markets – realising value for production (payments).
  - We can address long-standing distortions in global political economy
    - N-S
    - Urban-rural

# Challenges for the REDD community

- Huge distrust in international community responses to structural poverty affects “pro-poor REDD”
  - no shortage of valuable products / services from South (oil & gas, minerals, miracle bio-products)
  - Issue is not products but relationships that contextualise production
- International community & REDD proponents must demonstrate:
  - sense of urgency about climate
  - understand continuity of climate change with existing socio-economic crises
  - willingness to address structural poverty by structural redistribution of wealth
  - transcendence of quick fix mentality
  - Go beyond payments

# Challenges for the poor

- We must:
  - Strengthen organisation
  - Strengthen policy campaign capacity
  - Strengthen engagement platform building
  - Strengthen listening capacity of the international community

Thank You