

**THE SOUTHERN NEW HAMPSHIRE UNIVERSITY**

**AND**

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**MASTER OF SCIENCE IN COMMUNITY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

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**ASSESSING THE CONTRIBUTION OF DONET TO ENVIRONMENTAL  
CONSERVATION AND TO LIVELIHOODS OF SMALLHOLDER FARMERS  
IN MVUMI MAKULU WARD, DODOMA RURAL DISTRICT**

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### ABSTRACT

This study on “assessing the contribution of DONET to environmental conservation and livelihoods of smallholder farmers” was conducted in Mvumi Makulu ward of the Dodoma Rural District. The study involved a participatory community needs assessment in the study area. The objective of this study was to assess the contribution of DONET in reducing environmental degradation among smallholder farmers, by focusing on livelihood activities support for improved crop and livestock productivity. By using a sample of 120 respondents and 7 key informants, it was found that the demographic and socio-economic factors such as age, gender, income source, farming methods and type of energy used were important predictors of land degradation in the study area.

It was recommended that DONET should direct more efforts to improving the activities upon which the smallholder farmers earn their living and whose the intervention efforts are felt within a short time- farming methods, off-farm activities, energy sources and management skills. Based on recommendations of the study and the community needs assessment, a project on “Capacity Enhancement of Smallholder Farmers for Environmental Conservation and Improved Productivity” was proposed. The implementation of the project is at its early stage.