

## **Project Update: August 2021**

### **-Continuation of strategy for negotiation of lands to host the restoration activities.**

Land management constitutes a daily problem in local communities of Benin from south to north. Land issue is a recurrent problem in the areas due to loss of soil fertility and practice of extensive agriculture. Indeed, Benin has established its targets of restoring approximately 1.25 million ha of degraded land by 2030, while increasing efforts to avoid further degradation. In Benin, two types of rights characterise land: the customary land right and the modern land right, also known as the registration system. By the way, food security and nutrition reach could also be a reality as those lands would be more productive and contribute to local economy and local population welfare. Moreover, authorities in charge of the National Park of Pendjari with the help of the national Forest Office have made possible a strategy of recovery of the previously abandoned core areas of the park which is used by locals for agriculture or animal rearing. Thus, most of the landowners in the areas practice agroforestry systems which allows them already to keep some fruit producing or medicinally important species in the field. This constitutes in their knowledge an important land part already devoted to agriculture.

Land tenure is critical when women are especially of concern. Indeed, women do not often have the possibility to inherit lands or acquire it directly especially in rural areas even when their father dies. However, they constitute an important component of the marginal group involved in traditional agriculture in the region.

In the continuation of what has started at earlier stages, strategies have been improved to negotiate more lands for ecological restoration especially based on agroforestry species.

### **-Scaling up the revegetation activities based on locally acknowledged and well performing species**

Revegetation activities have been improved especially based on agroforestry species (African baobab, shea trees, African locust beans, etc.). We took advantage from the changing climate (more rains in the northern part) for more seedling planting.

### **-Enhancement of participatory actions through creation and animation of eco clubs in the area**

Eco-clubs have been created for discussion and sharing of ideas regarding ecological restoration, better management of degraded lands, and use of agroforestry species for landscape recovery. A group (forum) is created and often animated with case studies from elsewhere.

### **-Initiation landscape conservation business for those who will be affected by the restoration plan**

Some locals may be affected by the new land management strategies. In the frame of mitigation of such risk, existing activities such as beekeeping have been proposed to those people as alternatives.

**-Reinforcement the proposition and ongoing policy development for limitation of the deforestation and degradation of the areas**

This activity is currently ongoing.



Photo 1: Illustration of a nursery



Photo 2: Illustration of beekeepers in activity