

Final Evaluation Report

We ask all grant recipients to complete a project evaluation that helps us to gauge the success of your project. This must be sent in **MS Word and not PDF format**. We understand that projects often do not follow the predicted course but knowledge of your experiences is valuable to us and others who may be undertaking similar work – remember that negative experiences are just as valuable as positive ones if they help others to learn from them.

Please DO NOT fill in and submit this form until the project has been completed.

Complete the form in English. Note that the information may be edited before posting on our website.

Please email this report to jane@rufford.org.

Your Details	
Full Name	Rozane Sakou Wandji
Project Title	Community-based involvement in agroforestry and reforestation programs for in-situ conservation around and within the Doume Communal Forest, eastern Cameroon
Application ID	39148-1
Date of this Report	2 nd March 2026

1. Indicate the level of achievement of the project's original objectives and include any relevant comments on factors affecting this.

Objective	Not achieved	Partially achieved	Fully achieved	Comments
<p>Build the capacity of the Communal Forestry Unit Council Managers (CFUC), the Peasants Forest Committee (PFC), and local community leaders to practice and teach agroforestry and landscape reforestation activities</p>				<p>Firstly, focus groups were organised with CFUC and PFC members and local community leaders to raise awareness of the benefits of agroforestry and landscape reforestation. A total of 10 villages were involved, and around 40 participants (including at least 5 CFUC members and 8 PFC members) took part in the discussions. These discussions made it possible to identify motivated leaders and to specify priority capacity-building needs (setting up nurseries, selecting suitable species, planting and monitoring techniques).</p> <p>Secondly, an initial training session brought together 25 identified participants (CFUC, PFC and community leaders). The modules focused on agroforestry systems, nursery planning and management, and the production of quality seedlings for landscape restoration.</p> <p>Thirdly, a second training session brought together 23 participants to learn about reforestation and seed collection techniques, including the selection of mother trees, collection and conservation methods, and plantation monitoring.</p> <p>At the end of these activities, a core group of 15 trained actors was</p>

			<p>organised into a local network. This group now constitutes a relay team capable of practising and teaching agroforestry and reforestation techniques within communities, thereby strengthening institutional and local capacities in a sustainable manner.</p>
<p>Engage and monitor CFUC, PFC and local y leaders in agroforestry with demonstration household plots.</p>			<p>As part of this objective, the effective commitment of the CFUC, the PFC, and community leaders to agroforestry practices has led to the establishment of household nurseries and demonstration plots.</p> <p>Firstly, three nurseries were built in strategically chosen villages corresponding to the three main access routes to the communal forest. This organisation made it possible to cover the entire area concerned and facilitate the participation of local communities. Members of the CFUC, the PFC and at least 6 local leaders were directly involved in setting up and managing the nurseries.</p> <p>Secondly, the nurseries enabled the production of seedlings of priority agroforestry and forest species. Approximately 3,000 seedlings were produced, some of which were used to develop three demonstration plots (one per access zone) and the rest were distributed to around 15 volunteer farmers to monitor their farms. The seedlings were grown for an average of three to five months before being planted.</p> <p>Thirdly, the trained leaders participated in site preparation, planting, and the regular maintenance of the plots (weeding,</p>

				replacing dead plants, and monitoring growth). These plots now serve as practical learning sites for other community members.
Engage and monitor CFUC, PFC and local communities' leaders in landscape forest restoration implementation through reforestation of degraded forest.				<p>As part of this objective, the CFUC, the PFC, and community leaders who were already mobilised were involved in landscape restoration by reforesting at least 10 hectares of degraded forest.</p> <p>The nurseries previously set up produced around 3,000 seedlings of priority forest and agroforestry species. After a three- to five-month growing period, the seedlings were maintained, sorted and prepared for planting. Members of the CFUC, PFC and 20 local leaders participated in the various technical stages.</p> <p>The degraded sites were prepared (delimitation, cleaning and staking), and then the planting operations were carried out collectively. A local monitoring system was set up, including regular maintenance, the replacement of dead plants, and the monitoring of survival and growth rates on the restored plots covering at least 6 hectares.</p> <p>Finally, an evaluation workshop attended by around 30 participants provided an opportunity to share the results, analyse the constraints encountered and strengthen skills in monitoring and adaptive management of forest restoration.</p>

2. Describe the three most important outcomes of your project.

a) Strengthened Local Capacity in Agroforestry and Reforestation Practices

By training the Communal Forestry Unit Council (CFUC), Peasants Forest Committee (PFC), and local community leaders, the project significantly increased local

knowledge and skills in agroforestry and reforestation techniques. Over 40 local leaders were trained to teach and implement sustainable practices, such as managing tree nurseries, collecting seed in the forest, planting high-quality seedlings, and reforesting degraded landscapes. This outcome ensures that knowledge remains within the community, fostering long-term conservation and sustainable land-use practices.

b) Adoption of demonstration agroforestry systems promoting sustainable livelihoods: The establishment and monitoring of agroforestry demonstration plots at the household level has made it possible to introduce concrete and sustainable alternatives to unsustainable agricultural practices, particularly slash-and-burn farming. These plots have served as demonstration and learning sites, facilitating the adoption of systems integrating forest and fruit species of high ecological and socio-economic value. As a result, the project has contributed to improving agricultural productivity, diversifying household incomes and reducing pressure on the communal forest, while strengthening local food security.

c) Through the active involvement of local communities and forest management structures, the project has restored at least 6 hectares of degraded forest within and around the Doumé communal forest. Reforestation, carried out using seedlings produced in community nurseries, targeted endangered forest species in high demand by local populations, thereby helping improve their survival, regeneration, and density. This action strengthens the ecological resilience of forest landscapes, improves ecosystem services (soil, water, carbon storage) and supports sustainable community management of forest resources.

3. Explain any unforeseen difficulties that arose during the project and how these were tackled.

1. Delayed Engagement and Participation

Some local community members, especially in remote areas, were initially hesitant to participate in the focus group discussions and trainings. This was due to a limited understanding of the benefits of agroforestry and reforestation, and concerns about the short-term impact on their livelihoods. To address this, the project team conducted additional awareness-raising campaigns, highlighting the long-term benefits of these activities, such as increased crop yields and improved soil fertility. Local leaders who had already bought into the program were put in a position to help convince reluctant participants. Additionally, the project team rescheduled some focus groups to accommodate the communities' availability, ensuring wider participation.

2. Challenges in Seedling Nursery Establishment

During the construction of tree nurseries, unforeseen logistical challenges, including delays in the delivery of nursery supplies and difficulties accessing certain remote areas due to poor road conditions, slowed the establishment process. Therefore, to tackle this, the project team worked closely with local authorities to improve access to remote villages, utilising alternative routes where necessary. They also sourced some materials locally to expedite the process. Despite these challenges, the nurseries were eventually established, though with some delay.

3. Unfavourable Climatic Conditions

The project faced unexpected climatic challenges, including irregular rainfall patterns, which affected both seedling growth in nurseries and the timing of planting activities. Prolonged dry spells during the early stages of nursery development delayed seedling growth, while heavy rains during the planting period led to soil erosion and waterlogging in some areas. The project was adapted by adjusting the watering schedule and implementing soil conservation measures, such as mulching and contouring, to protect the seedlings. Additionally, the timing of planting activities was revised to align with more favourable weather conditions. Community members were also trained to maintain seedlings in adverse weather conditions, thereby improving survival rates.

4. Describe the involvement of local communities and how they have benefitted from the project.

1. Active Participation in Decision-Making and Training

Local community members, including the Communal Forestry Unit Council (CFUC), the Peasants Forest Committee (PFC), and local leaders, were actively involved in decision-making processes through focus group discussions. These sessions raised awareness about the benefits of reforestation and agroforestry and helped identify interested participants who could take on leadership roles in implementing the project.

Benefit: This participatory approach empowered the community by giving them ownership of the project and enabling them to have a voice in shaping activities according to their needs. Through the training programs, over 20 community leaders were equipped with skills in agroforestry systems, nursery management, seed collection, and reforestation techniques, thereby strengthening their ability to promote sustainable practices in their local communities.

2. Creation of Demonstration Plots and Seedling Nurseries

The project established three demonstration plots and tree nurseries in strategically selected village locations, with community members directly involved in their construction, development, and maintenance. Community members also received seedlings to plant on their farms.

Benefit: The demonstration plots provided hands-on learning experiences, allowing farmers to see firsthand the advantages of agroforestry and reforestation on their lands. In addition to learning from these plots, farmers used the seedlings to improve their agricultural production, enhance soil fertility, and contribute to forest restoration. This direct involvement increased the community's agricultural productivity and sustainability, providing economic and ecological benefits.

3. Employment and Income Opportunities

Community members were engaged in various roles throughout the project, including nursery management, tree planting, and seedling maintenance. The project also distributed seedlings to farmers interested in integrating agroforestry practices on their farms.

Benefit: The project created short-term employment opportunities for community members, particularly in nursery management, site preparation, and planting activities. Over the long term, integrating agroforestry practices improves livelihoods by enhancing agricultural yields and diversifying income sources. The use of high-quality planting materials also means farmers can expect increased productivity and greater resilience to environmental changes.

4. Building Long-Term Conservation Stewards

Through capacity-building workshops and ongoing engagement, local leaders, farmers, and community groups gained the skills to sustain agroforestry and reforestation activities beyond the project duration. This included training in maintaining tree nurseries, collecting seeds, and monitoring tree growth, to ensure ongoing forest restoration and agroforestry expansion.

Benefit: By embedding conservation knowledge within the community, the project created long-term stewards of the environment. These trained individuals can continue to teach and implement sustainable practices, helping to ensure the reforestation of degraded areas and contributing to broader environmental conservation efforts.

5. Are there any plans to continue this work?

Yes, there are plans to continue and expand on the work initiated by the project. The following key areas outline future directions:

1. Expansion of Agroforestry and Reforestation Activities

Building on the success of the initial capacity-building efforts and community engagement, the project plans to extend agroforestry and reforestation activities to additional villages. This will include scaling up the number of demonstration plots and nurseries to cover a larger geographic area, with the aim of restoring more degraded lands and encouraging sustainable farming practices.

2. Continuous Monitoring and Support for Local Communities

The project recognises the need for ongoing monitoring of reforested areas, the survival rate of planted trees, and the effectiveness of agroforestry practices. Regular workshops will be held to provide ongoing support, address emerging challenges, and enhance community members' skills. The project aims to establish a long-term monitoring and evaluation framework that engages community leaders in tracking tree growth and agroforestry outcomes. This will ensure that planted trees are maintained, survival rates are high, and agroforestry systems are productive.

3. Strengthening Partnerships for Sustainable Forest Management

The project aims to forge stronger partnerships with local governments, NGOs, and academic institutions to secure additional funding and technical support. Collaboration with conservation groups and forest management experts will help ensure that the reforestation and agroforestry efforts are sustainable and aligned with broader environmental conservation goals.

4. Community-Led Forest Management Initiatives

There are plans to further empower local communities to take full ownership of forest management through community-led initiatives. These will focus on sustainable land-use planning, monitoring illegal activities such as logging, and developing eco-friendly livelihood opportunities.

6. How do you plan to share the results of your work with others?

As part of this initial Rufford funding, we plan to widely share the project results at local, national and international levels. The primary beneficiaries will be members of the Municipal Council, particularly those from the municipal forestry unit who are not directly involved in the project, as well as those responsible for the municipal forest. A final research report will be sent to them, along with future scientific publications resulting from the project. The results will also be disseminated through scientific presentations at international conferences and academic seminars, in particular by the Master's students involved in the project, whose work will be the subject of public defences. In addition, we will ensure wide dissemination via digital platforms, in particular on the Conservation and Sustainable Natural Resources Management Network (CSNRM-Net) website (www.csnrm-net.org), as well as on ResearchGate and Facebook.

7. Looking ahead, what do you feel are the important next steps?

Looking ahead, several critical next steps are necessary to ensure the project's long-term success and sustainability, as well as to expand its impact. These steps will focus on reinforcing progress, scaling up efforts, and addressing challenges encountered during the project's initial phases. The important next steps include:

1. Sustaining and Expanding Capacity Building: Ongoing Training and Mentorship:
To build on the current capacity-building efforts, it is essential to provide continuous training and mentorship to the Communal Forestry Unit Council Managers (CFUC), the Peasants Forest Committee (PFC), and local leaders. This will ensure they continue improving their skills in agroforestry and reforestation techniques while also developing leadership and teaching capacities. In addition, scaling Training Programs: Expanding the training to additional community members, particularly youth and women, will enhance community ownership of the restoration and reforestation efforts. Engaging more participants will strengthen local capacity and foster broader community participation.

2. Expanding Agroforestry and Reforestation Efforts: Scaling Up Reforestation:
The project should focus on increasing the scale of reforestation activities. Expanding from the current 6 hectares of degraded land to cover additional areas will yield greater ecosystem restoration and carbon sequestration benefits. Diversification of Agroforestry Systems: Encouraging the adoption of diverse agroforestry systems that incorporate a variety of tree and crop species will improve both biodiversity and community resilience. Working closely with farmers to diversify planting systems will enhance food security and help restore degraded landscapes.

3. Strengthening Monitoring and Evaluation Systems:
Long-term Monitoring of Planted Areas: To assess the success of reforestation and agroforestry efforts, it is crucial to establish robust long-term monitoring systems. This includes regular tracking of tree survival rates, growth performance, and ecosystem recovery. Satellite imagery and community-based monitoring systems can be employed to track changes over time. **Measuring Socio-Economic Impact:** Assessing the project's socio-economic benefits for local communities—such as improved livelihoods from agroforestry systems—will provide valuable insights into how the project contributes to community development. This data can also be used to adapt and improve future activities.

4. Strengthening Partnerships and Securing Funding: Securing Additional Funding:
Sustained funding is essential to ensure the continuation and expansion of project activities. Efforts should focus on securing funding from donors, government programs, and conservation organisations to support long-term restoration and community capacity-building.

5. Promoting Policy Engagement and Advocacy: Strengthening Legal Frameworks:
Supporting local communities to have a more active role in decision-making processes related to land use and forest management through legal frameworks can empower them to take ownership of conservation activities, ensuring long-term stewardship.

6. Integrating Climate Adaptation and Resilience Strategies:

Climate-Resilient Agroforestry Systems: Given the changing climate, it is essential to integrate climate adaptation strategies into agroforestry systems. This could involve planting drought-resistant species, creating buffer zones, and incorporating climate-resilient crops that can withstand extreme weather events.

7. Replicating and Scaling the Model to Other Regions:

Replicating Success: The project's model, which integrates community capacity building, agroforestry, and reforestation, can be replicated in other degraded areas. Identifying new sites where similar interventions are needed will allow the project's impact to spread regionally or even nationally.

8. Did you use The Rufford Foundation logo in any materials produced in relation to this project? Did the Foundation receive any publicity during the course of your work?

Yes, the Rufford Foundation logo was used in materials produced in relation to this project. The logo appeared on training manuals, workshop presentations, banners, and other printed materials that were distributed to participants and stakeholders during capacity-building activities. The logo's presence highlighted the Foundation's role as a key supporter of the project.

Additionally, the Rufford Foundation received publicity throughout the work. During community meetings, workshops, and focus group sessions, the Foundation's support was acknowledged, and its contribution to the project was highlighted. The Foundation's involvement was also mentioned in communications with local media and stakeholders, further raising awareness of its role in supporting conservation and community development initiatives.

9. Provide a full list of all the members of your team and their role in the project.

— **Collaborators or resource persons:**

Pr. MBOLO Marie Marguerite (Professor): Former MSc thesis supervisor at the University of Yaounde I, Cameroon. She has given and continues to give us advice on agroforestry, forest ecology and conservation.

Pr FOBANE Jean Louis (Senior lecturer): Specialist in botany and forest ecology. He was helpful in planning the fieldwork and will continue to contribute to the writing of papers, as he is a specialist in agroforestry, botany, and forest ecology.

Dr. Youbi Patrick Herve, Agroforestry Expert. He assisted us in building capacities and implementing Agroforestry Forest demonstration Plots.

Dr. Zekeng Jules Christian is a Conservationist researcher and the CEO of CNSRM-Net NGO. He has given and continues to provide us with advice on forest ecology and conservation. He has also been awarded a Rufford Booster grant, which also included reforestation activities in Angossas Communal Forest. Therefore, to achieve our objective, we had to work closely with him in line with his experiment in this domain.

Dr. CHIMI DJOMO Cédric: Program Manager at Conservation and Sustainable Natural Resources Management Network (CSNRM-NET) and Researcher at the Ministry of Scientific Innovation. A field team member, botanist, and ecologist, he has contributed immensely to mentoring young students and volunteers within the CSNRM-NET organisation.

— Field team

This project contributed to building the capacity of all students and volunteers at the Conservation and Sustainable Natural Resources Management Network (CSNRM-NET) in several areas, namely (i) techniques of selective botanical inventories; (ii) techniques of socio-economic surveys; and (iii) management of human resources during the realisation of the various activities of a project.

Miss SAKOU WANDJI Rozane, a project investigator, MSc student, and volunteer at CSNRM-NET, was a field team member and agroforestry facilitator. She co-facilitated focus group discussions with CFUC, PFC and community leaders, supported training sessions on agroforestry systems and nursery management, and assisted in supervising household demonstration plots. She also contributed to stakeholder coordination during field activities.

Mr. TCHONANG DJOUMBI Bienvenu, PhD student in Plant Ecology and Conservation, served as Assistant Project Manager and technical coordinator. He supported the planning and implementation of focus groups and training sessions (Activity 1), supervised nursery establishment and seedling production (Activities 2 and 3), and contributed to the monitoring of demonstration plots and reforestation sites. He also assisted in data compilation and reporting.

Miss Ameline Clarence Makoutsing Talla, MSc student and volunteer at CSNRM-NET, was a field team member responsible for nursery operations and restoration logistics. She coordinated the establishment of the three nurseries, supervised seedling production and maintenance, and supported site preparation and planting activities for the 6 ha reforestation programme.

Miss NGO NGUE Chimène, MSc student and field team member, contributed to monitoring planted seedlings and assessing growth performance in both

demonstration plots and reforestation sites. Her academic work focused on analysing the performance of selected planted species under restoration conditions.

Miss MBIADA TCHAMBA Ismaëlle, MSc student and field team member, was involved in data collection and analysis on community participation, seedling survival, and restoration monitoring. She contributed to evaluating the socio-ecological outcomes of agroforestry and reforestation interventions.

Miss NITCHEU TCHEUGOUE Sylviane Sorelle, MSc student and field team member, supported species selection, seed collection activities and monitoring of priority native species used in reforestation. Her thesis focused on conservation-relevant species integrated into the restoration programme.

Miss NGUEUTING Isabelle, MSc student and field team member, contributed to community engagement activities, training documentation and evaluation of local capacity strengthening outcomes, including the assessment of knowledge transfer following training workshops.

Mr. TSILE Patrick, Botanist, provided technical expertise in species identification, selection of suitable agroforestry and forest species, and validation of planting material during nursery development and reforestation activities.

Mr. BINDZEME Rostand, local field assistant from Doumé, played a key role in community mobilisation, identification of degraded forest areas, site preparation and traditional ecological knowledge integration. His strong knowledge of local plant species and landscape conditions supported species selection and restoration site implementation.

Two members of the Communal Forestry Unit, 4 representing the 4 forest-peasant communities, and 12 volunteers, mostly involved in restoration activities, were also involved in different activities.

10. Any other comments?

One key takeaway from this project is the vital role that collaboration between local communities and external organisations plays in achieving long-term conservation goals. The engagement of community leaders, local forestry units, and forest committees was fundamental to the project's success, ensuring that the initiatives were both locally relevant and sustainable.

Moreover, the positive response and active participation of community members in agroforestry and reforestation activities suggest strong potential for future scaling and

replication of these initiatives in other areas of the municipality and regions. The project not only improved environmental outcomes but also empowered the local population with skills and knowledge to manage their natural resources sustainably. Looking ahead, there is excitement about continuing this work through expanded partnerships and securing additional funding to extend the benefits achieved thus far.

Finally, the ongoing support and visibility provided by the Rufford Foundation were instrumental in highlighting the importance of sustainable forest management in the region, and their continued backing will be invaluable for future conservation efforts.

**ANNEX – Financial Report
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