

## Bafut Watershed Restoration and Protection

### Editorial

*Support small holder farmers*

Through village stays we have come to understand in more detail the real needs of our target group. In 2011 we shall be exploring ways of promoting income generating activities and supporting women to improve on the productivity of their small farm holdings

You can partner with us

Our Contact: [cendep2001@yahoo.com](mailto:cendep2001@yahoo.com) .

Dear Readers,

Our work in conserving the environment usually produces desirable results only in the long term. To mobilize local community members to participate in conservation work demands a lot of tact especially if they do not see immediate benefits accruing to them. The participation of beneficiary communities in project design does not guarantee participation because most often we work with representatives whose views may not necessarily reflect those of the community. Sometimes, local people have conflicting interests over the resources to be conserved and this affects their participation in community activities. This is the background on which we implement many projects, most of which are start up. We have decided to share with you how we work in this environment. We document and share our experiences. By doing this we are able to reflect on and to re-evaluate our achievements and failures, enabling others and ourselves to build on the work already done. By doing so we contribute in developing a framework for knowledge generation and dissemination essential for the improvement of field approaches, practices and activities through lessons learnt.

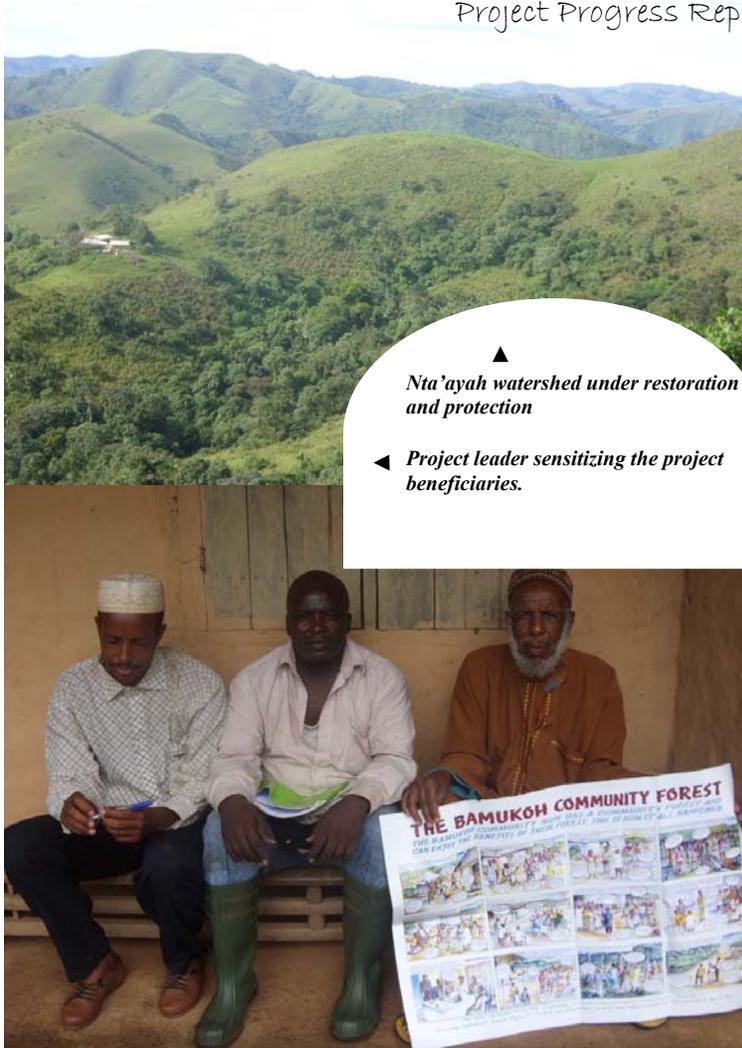
Water is a common resource especially in the grass field areas of Cameroon. It is becoming more and more difficult to obtain due to environmental degradation. Because water is life, there is commitment in protecting it. Thus in many rural communities in Cameroon no activities are allowed in water catchments areas. Despite their sizes, they are important areas for the reintroduction of the native biodiversity. Our work in restoring the biodiversity of degraded watersheds is an example of how we are assisting local communities in Cameroon to take ownership of their conservation initiatives. For example three individual farmers in 2 of our targeted 3 communities have set up private tree nurseries to supply tree seedlings for community forest restoration work. Eleven others have requested assistance in designing their farmland to incorporate analog forestry. Our work has not been without challenges. Some disappointing outcomes have been: some communities not taking good care of their tree nursery leading to the loss of valuable seedlings. The most disappointing outcome was that of a school teacher who converted part of the school tree nursery into a yam farm. This is very unusual for a literate member of the community.

Youndjie Koleoko Gabriel,  
CEO. CENDEP



<b>Summary</b>	Youndjie Koleoko Gabriel, CEO. CENDEP
<b>Project Progress Report</b>	
<b>Analog forestry on individual farms</b>	
<b>Community Voices</b>	

## Project Progress Report



▲  
*Nta'ayah watershed under restoration and protection*

◀ *Project leader sensitizing the project beneficiaries.*

In November and December 2010 our activities were focused on the management of the three community nurseries we established and project-based environmental education activities in schools. We also assisted interested farmers in the design of their farms to include analogue forests in their farm management plan. Nursery management activities were carried out by the community members under the supervision of the community facilitator, Mr. Lawir Felix. So far 731 tree seedlings were transplanted from the seed beds into polythene bags. Only seedlings of some four fast growing species were ready for potting. All the three community tree nurseries were provided with shade to protect the young seedlings from damage by the scorching sun. Regular weeding and watering of seedlings was carried out by the community members

The three communities established a time table to ease the watering of the seedlings. Members of the various forest/water management committees were split into 3 or 4 groups. Each group does watering of the seedlings for one week and then the other takes over. This approach is well respected in two of the three communities.

Five new seed species were acquired and nursed in the various community nurseries as per the table on page 3. The names may not be exact but we are liaising with the Sanannah Botanic Garden (SABOGA) for a proper identification of the species.

### *Environmental Education in Schools*

Only pupils of Government School Adiemokong participated in outdoor activities like potting of mature seedlings in the community tree nursery. In the other schools the pupils were preparing for end of term examinations when the potting was due.

In the coming months they will be taught how to transplant the seedlings into polythene bags and how to harden them up before taking them to the field. This will give room for the children to participate in outdoor activities that they cherish much.

## Community Nurseries

S/N	Tree Species	Community Nursery			Total
		Akofungubah	Adiemokong	Mughie	
1	Maesopsis	250	260	249	759
2	Mellitia conrau	298	287	300	885
3	Entada abyssinica	445	419	455	1319
4	Pittosporum ("Liv ")	823	796	814	2433
5	Polysia fulva	324	412	343	1079
	<b>Total</b>	<b>2140</b>	<b>2174</b>	<b>2161</b>	<b>6475</b>

Many other farmers are still very interested in the incorporating analog forestry in the farms so the farm designs process will continue in the days ahead. The community facilitator was sick and on bed rest. This gave the backup staff, Mr. Isidor the opportunity to test his extension skills. Mr. Isidor is very motivated.

### **The most positive outcomes of our work were:**

- i. Three (3) individual farmers in 2 of the 3 communities (Adiemokong and Akofugubah) were able to use the knowledge acquired in tree nursery establishment and management to set up private nurseries.
- ii. Eleven (11) farmers requested assistance in designing their farmland to incorporate analog forestry. At the beginning we targeted restoration of watershed. It is very interesting that the local people have quickly understood the benefits of analog forestry besides water provision.
- iii. In Mughie some community members have decided to establish individual nurseries to compliment seedlings produced from the community nursery. This action is intended to enable the project to meet its target in seedling production. Generally the local people have maintained their enthusiasm in the project as participation in field activities is very encouraging compared to other areas where we have worked.

### **The most disappointing outcomes of our work**

a. The people of Akofugubah community have not been taking good care of their tree nursery. Some members are not respecting the schedule established to water the seedlings. This led to the death of some of the tree seedlings.

An adamant school teacher in Government School Mughie converted part of the school tree nursery into a yam farm destroying some of the seedlings that were already sprouting. This is very unusual for a literate member of the community. No reason was given for this action.

The community facilitator requested assistance from the office in diagnosing the reasons for the behavior of the Akofugubah community members as well as the Mughie school teacher and Mr. Tanda Godwin Ade visited the project site to provide backstop assistance. Mr. Ade understands the dialect and culture of the people. As a result of Mr. Ade's intervention, Mr. Che Isidor, the project volunteer, has agreed with the school authorities to move the nursery to a new site where the seedlings will be spread for hardening. A teacher from Catholic School Akofugubah, Mr. Nyamyelle George, has committed himself to be watering the seedlings every morning before going for his day's activities. One community member has equally requested for permission for dual usage of the community watering can in his farm as well as in the nursery. In this way he will continue watering the seedlings until a long lasting solution is sought.

### *Analog Forestry on individual farms*

Eleven farmers altogether indicated willingness to incorporate analog forestry in the farms.

Mr. Youndjie Koleoko Gabriel (Project Leader) and other project team members (Periementah K. Ndzefemmegho, Tanda Godwin, Lawir Felix and Isidor Che) assisting farmer in the design of their farms using the analog farm approach. Farmers in the project sites were sensitized by the project leader on the benefits of incorporating analog forestry in the farm management plan. The initial challenges for them included making a decision, providing the time to produce viable tree seedlings that will be incorporated into the farm and managing conflicts with animal breeders whose animals sometimes go astray. The eleven farmers came from the project communities and distributed as follows: Mughie - 3 farmers, Adiemokong - 4 farmers and Akofungubah - 4 farmers. The community facilitator is assisting these farmers to choose the type of tree species that will be planted when the rain comes in April.



*On farm training session on analog forestry farm design with Adiemukong farmers*

### *Issues & planned activities*

The various water/forest management committees have continued reiterating their request for support in legalizing their groups. This is an important issue bordering on the sustainability of the groups as well as the protection of the forests that the communities are establishing.

Women complained that the tools donated for nursery work were tools used by men and not suitable for women. This was taken lightly but the women have continued to raise the issue. In addition to routine nursery management and environmental education in schools, fire tracing shall be done around the water catchments. More farmers will be assisted in the design of their farms so that they can incorporate analog forestry as a component of their land use.

### *Community voices*

“The passing away of the village Head HRH Chief Talah Che of Njimuyah has not altered our acceptance of and support towards the project for even in his calm sleep, he smiles that the end of suffering and scramble for water at public taps is near. We will keep supporting the project even if it means one man standing up for the success of the community nursery.” Ta’a Akombo

“My humble suggestion for a consented effort towards project success will be to set up individual nurseries to help raise the required project target for tree seedlings. For this we humbly request material support from the project initiators, CENDEP.” Mr. Exodus Awah

“We got frustrated as we didn’t have polythene bags to pot the rooted seedlings. As a result we had no option but to convert part of school nursery into yam farm. However, we will collaborate with the Community Facilitator to rebuild our nursery.” Akombo Aaron Che – Head Teacher, G.S Mughie.

“I was very committed clearing my farm so I didn’t have time to help at the community nursery.” Wambong Godwin Neba

News compiled by **Youndjie Koleoko Gabriel** (Project leader)

Contributors: Wirsiy Eric F., Tanda Godwin A., Lawir Felix Y., and Periementah Ndzefemmegho K.

Community voices: Ta’ah Akombo Nsuhbi, Mr. Exodus Awah, Mr. Akombo Aaron che, Wambong Godwin Neba

Pictures taken by Tanda Godwin