



cendep newsletter

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Editorial

In this issue we continue our story on how farmers are grappling with limited resources and technical knowhow to elude poverty, taking the Hands on the Ground Women Group Mapanja as an example.

We also report on the capacity building workshop on the elaboration, implementation and monitoring of PES/REDD+ projects during which the Centre for Environment and Development (CED) shared their experience on their projects in the Congo Basin in view of mobilizing Civil Society Organizations to get involved in the implementation/ monitoring of PES/REDD+ projects in Cameroon following the approval of Cameroon's R-PP and the effectiveness of the allocation of a readiness preparation grant to Cameroon (PC/13/2012/2).

Our analog forestry project in Bafut ended. Project activities were carried out in communities with competing and conflicting interests in watershed resources. **Continued on page 3**

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Plants of the season



Thaumatococcus daniellii, is an understory forest herb found in the Mount Cameroon forests. It is the raw material for the protein sweetener thaumatin, the sweetest naturally occurring substance in the world. Thaumatin crystals are about 2,000-3,000 times sweeter than sucrose and neither allergic nor mutagenic or teratogenic



Monodora brevipes: What do you know about this plant?

Tell us and win a copy of Field Guide To Analog Forestry

Send your response to info@cendep.org or cendep2001@yahoo.com



Editorial (continued from page 1)

Thus we spent considerable time resolving conflicts over communal resource use. We made good progress and believe that forest restoration work can now proceed faster.

During the last SETAC Europe Annual Meeting in Berlin, 360 Euro was collected for the Trees for Life / Trees for Africa campaign supported by UNEP and donated to CENDEP. In the past SETAC made another donation that supported our projects in Bafut and Mbiame in the North West Region of Cameroon.

Lastly we report on our ongoing project with CAME Women and Girls Development Organization (CAWOGIDO). We started a one year project with the support of COMIC Relief. This project is a joint initiative of the CAME Women and Girls Development Organization (CAWOGIDO), London-United Kingdom, Positive Vision (PV), Bamenda-Cameroon and Centre For Nursery Development and Eru Propagation (CENDEP), Limbe-Cameroon. We are doing research, consultation and planning to make stronger our joint project aimed at "Strengthening the farming and entrepreneurial skills of women in Cameroon"

I hope you can find a way to support our work. This needs not be financially; you can do so by spreading the work we do or supporting a farming group of your choice as has been the case by one of our ambassadors with the "Hands on the Ground Women Group", Mapanja. In Bafut we started assisting 50 farmers to establish private analog forests and hope to double the number in 2013. This support consists amongst other things in helping in the design and implementation of their analog forestry plots using the gap analysis.

Wirsy Eric

Knowledge Management Officer, CENDEP Cameroon

CENDEP Newsletter (CN)

CN is a bimonthly update of the field activities of CENDEP.

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This issue is dedicated
to all those who
supported our efforts in
one way or the other in
2012

We look forward to a more
rewarding 2013



CENDEP was set up in 1999 as a farmer group, with the mission of assisting and training farmers in the sustainable production and marketing of non wood forest products. From the beginning CENDEP started working at protecting the environment, using the approach 'protecting the environment through domestication', in other words, protecting threatened and commercial crops by growing them. Today CENDEP works in the North West and South West Regions of Cameroon, focusing principally on plant domestication and on restoring degraded forest lands especially those that serve as watersheds using analog forestry techniques.

The Hands On The Ground Women Group of Mapanja



A typical working day for the group

February 2013, planting started and 2000 cassava cuttings were planted on .2ha of group farm. Cassava cuttings (planting material) were acquired from a neighbouring village, Ekonjo.

We maintained communication with our ambassador who raised concerns (having visited the community in the past) about the overall health of the soils but remained confident that CENDEP would be holistic in her approach, and examine the general ecological soundness of farming methods as a whole.



Permanent vegetative soil cover promoted as way to control erosion and increase soil fertility

Of course, the main thing we are trying to do with the group is to step up cassava production through training on improved techniques of production and processing, quality control, provision of inputs such as planting materials (which CENDEP is sourcing from other farmers) and equipment such as the grinding machine expected from our ambassador, for cassava production.

Through this process we shall teach the women improved farming techniques that they will not only apply on their cassava farms but also on other crops that have a relevance for their livelihoods such as plantains, cocoyams, yams, maize and vegetables. We focus on cassava because it is the desire of the women, has potential in value chain development (possibility to transform into many by-products and could create small rural enterprises in the future)

As an environmental group, CENDEP can only promote practices that will not result in extensive forest clearance. We shall promote a variety of practices that reduce soil fertility loss thereby stabilizing the farmers (reduce shifting cultivation).

Practices like green manuring, alley cropping etc and of course analog forestry shall be promoted.

In terms of networking/exposure of the group, we invited two members of the group for a workshop on “Strengthening the farming and entrepreneurial skills of women in Cameroon” organized as part of a one year project we are carrying out with CAME Women And Girls Development Organization (CAWOGIDO), a UK based charity. This project is support by COMIC Relief.

Workshop participants were farmers, petty traders and some government services working with rural women. The two women from Mapanja were able to learn about the activities of other enterprising women in the Limbe area.

We agreed that the donation would only be made after at least 9 months; time for us to expand the existing farms. This is expected to be slowly done due to the means at our disposal. (Our volunteers work with the women at least once a week; we have difficulty acquiring planting materials etc)

Report compiled by Mr. Melaine Nsaikila

CAPACITY BUILDING WORKSHOP ON THE ELABORATION, IMPLEMENTATION AND MONITORING OF PES/REDD+ PROJECTS IN CAMEROON

From January 14-18, 2013 we participated in a capacity building workshop on the elaboration, implementation and monitoring of PES/REDD+ projects organized by the Centre for Environment and Development (CED). REDD+ is a performance-based system that enables local communities to get financial benefits from their forests. However, these payments:

- are conditional on the outcome of a REDD+ action
- will only be made after demonstration of performance
- will not be made for existing forests but for the reduction of deforestation rates (additionality)
- are for the service of protecting a threatened habitat and the inherent carbon stocks

Cameroon recently submitted a readiness preparation proposal (R-PP) to the World Bank's Forest Carbon Partnership Facility (FCPF) in which one of the planned activities in the R-PP is the development of pilot projects which are supposed to help build-up the national strategy and bring out first lessons from the ground during the next three years.

No objection was received regarding Cameroon's R-PP when the 14-day waiting period ended on Thursday, February 21, 2013. Hence, the resolution to allocate a readiness preparation grant to Cameroon (PC/13/2012/2) became effective

The Centre for Environment and Development already has already elaborated and implemented a pilot project on Payments for Ecosystem Services (PES) and thus had experience. It is this experience the CED used to prepare civil society actors on the understanding of key methodological elements for the elaboration, implementation and monitoring of a REDD+/PES project.

The training targeted fifteen representatives of Cameroon civil society organizations working effectively on natural resources management (especially forest), human rights, climate change and gender

The workshop ended with a field visit to CENDEP where Mr. Wirsy Eric took the opportunity to talk the participants about analog forestry, a technique used in restoring degraded forest lands taking into consideration the needs of the farmer/community and biodiversity.

Analog forestry makes use of three restoration goals:

Ecological succession - Analog forestry uses the natural succession from barren land/grassland to climax forest as a model for agricultural and forestry production. One goal of analog forestry is to speed up the progression of these seral stages.

Mimicking natural forests - By imitating the natural forest structure and related ecological functions with socio-economically valuable species, analog forestry aims to increase production while strengthening forest functions such as watershed protection, soil conservation, habitat provision, biological control, and conservation of genetic resources.

Landscape ecology - The ultimate goal of using analog forestry in a landscape is to develop a network of natural and analogous forest patches to build up the biodiversity and resilience of the landscape, based on the existing vegetation patches in the landscape.

Analog forestry can be used as a tool and methodology to strengthen livelihoods and to increase the biodiversity and ecological resilience of a landscape by making use of natural ecological succession and natural forest functions.

The village of Mapanja, on the slopes of Mount Cameroon, was also visited. The trainees exchange experiences on communal resource management and learnt about the challenges of managing *Prunus africana* at community level in Mount Cameroon



Workshop Participants During Field Visit to Mapanja Village

Picture courtesy of PEW-Buea

End of the analog forestry project in Bafut

The second phase of our analog forestry project in Bafut titled “Analog forestry: pathway for biodiversity conservation and agro-enterprise development in Bafut” that ran from February 1, 2012 to January 31, 2013 was satisfactorily completed.

Conflict resolution was one of the key activities of this project. We worked with one of our local partners, Forest and Agro-forestry Promoters (FAP), with good knowledge on conflict management. They assisted us in identifying and analyzing the causes of the conflicts in the community that were hindering our forest restoration work.

One positive outcome of our collaboration was the recognition of the dialogue committee created to implement the action plan of the “Water Management Dialogue Platform”, by the community. This committee successfully handled some disputes between crop and cattle farmers. They have continued the mediation process, identified and invited non Bororo grazers (another category of grazers) to community events such as the Annual General Assembly Meeting and training workshop on bee keeping organized by CENDEP. The traditional authorities and notables have been made to understand that they are by law members of the commissions created to implement the action plan of the “Water Management Dialogue Platform” and cannot stay away from meetings called by the by the chairperson of the committee. In this way they take part in the making of decisions that affect their subjects.

The community members started resolving their disputes themselves using the people they had elected. This saved them a lot of money. In the past they would invite government officials, some of whom were corrupt, to solve their problems. To displace these officials to the village required resources that only the rich cattle farmers could afford. Mr. Aladji Daoh, the chairperson of the Water Management Dialogue Committee summarised this in the following quote during a meeting that took place in his residence

“I am very happy to receive all of you here in my home for this important meeting at Ntaya. I am particularly happy to see farmers and cattle owners coming together to seek solutions to problems that affect them. We have taken the right step of beginning to seek solutions to our problems rather than waiting for, or calling outsiders to come and bring us more problems. I believe that together we can address the issues of theft of cattle, crop damages and unnecessary friction at community level before seeking outside intervention for issues we cannot manage. Nothing stops us, farmers and cattle owners, from living and working together like brothers and sisters”.

87 farmers were trained on bee keeping as an income generating with a positive impact on biodiversity conservation. At the end of the project we could not link the honey producers to buyers as we had intended because production is still inadequate to attract outside buyers

We still have plans to continue the work we have been doing with the community. This is because the project is far from completed and we have continued to have the support of our friends at SETAC with small donations for tree planting. This means that funds from other sources can go to address more complex issues we come across in our work. We started project activities (first phase) on October 1, 2010. Because we were introducing a new technology, we needed time to convince the local people. This we have been doing and very successfully up to January 31, 2013 because many more people are indicating interest. In the course of our work new challenges such as stray cattle from neighbouring communities came up. These issues need to be managed. We embarked on income generating activities such as bee keeping but in one year we have not done all there is to be done. We have clearly seen the need for a holistic approach in solving the problems of the community and we are exploring possibilities of how to effectively put this on the ground. Please do not hesitate to support us in any way you can.

Report compiled by Mr. YOUNDJIE KOLEOKO GABRIEL (team leader)

SETAC MAKES A DONATION IN SUPPORT OF CENDEP'S TREE PLANTING ACTIVITIES

In September 2011 SETAC made a donation of Euro 1970 that supported our tree planting projects in Bafut and Mbiame in the North West Region of Cameroon. In the course of our activities we produced a video that SETAC would use for fundraising to raise more money for our work on tree planting. As a consequence, during the last SETAC Europe Annual Meeting in Berlin, 360 Euro was collected for the Trees for Life / Trees for Africa campaign supported by UNEP and donated to CENDEP.

Financial support from SETAC has coincidentally always been coming at the end of financial support from the Rufford Small Grants Foundation. This gives us the chance to continue some field activities while negotiating an extension. Results of our analog forestry activities take long to be noticeable.

The grants from SETAC have enabled CENDEP to drop the production of tree seedlings in community nurseries and encouraged individual families to raise small numbers of tree seedlings in their backyards for own use and to sell surpluses to the community for reforestation of communal watersheds. This gives them a financial incentive to participate in communal activities as those who sell seedlings to the community must participate in the planting exercise as well as contribute in the protection of the planted trees.



Project beneficiaries were given the opportunity to produce and sell tree seedlings

In 2012 the SETAC support funded the tree seedling production in our just ended project with support from the Rufford Small Grants Foundation (RSG). The project was carried out in Bafut in the North West Region of Cameroon.

Excerpt from the report to RSG:

“...37 farmers established private tree nurseries in their backyards containing tree species of their choice. They sold some of the tree seedlings to the project and diversified the crops/trees on their farms. The seedlings produced were to meet their needs in conservation, fruit production, medicine, vegetables and beekeeping. 2000 polythene bags were donated enabling them to transplant seedlings from seed beds into bags in view of eventual transplanting in the field. Surplus seedlings were bought with funds donated by one of our partner, SETAC...”

Mr. Akombo Gregory (Herbalist and project beneficiary) has as many as 24 different crops/trees on his young analog forest

Mr. Neba Francis has 38 different species of exotic and indigenous trees on his farmland. During the project period he planted 800 trees as against 300 in 2011. He is currently nursing cocoa to be introduced in his farmland. Apart from the trees he has mounted 4 bee hives.”

The support from SETAC, though small, will assist in the acquisition of seeds and tree nursery materials like polythene bags to enable the farmers to raise more trees both for their own use and for the protection of their watersheds. Our forest restoration initiatives initiated in the North West Region of Cameroon are far from being completed because there was a lot of ground work to be done to guarantee the protection of the planted trees and also because surface areas needing reforestation was substantial. In Mbiame alone there are over 750ha of degraded forest land needing reforestation. We have thus adopted a phased approach with the communities that rely on the availability of funds such as the donation from SETAC.

*Report compiled by Wirsiy Eric Fondzenyuy
Knowledge Management Officer*

Strengthening the strategy to alleviate poverty amongst rural women in Cameroon

On February 1, 2013 we started a one year project with the support of COMIC Relief. This project is a joint initiative of the CAME Women and Girls Development Organization (CAWOGIDO), London- United Kingdom, Positive Vision (PV), Bamenda-Cameroon and Centre For Nursery Development and Eru Propagation (CENDEP), Limbe-Cameroon. We are doing research, consultation and planning to make stronger our joint project aimed at “Strengthening the farming and entrepreneurial skills of women in Cameroon”

Rural women in Cameroon play a dual role of workers and family care providers. This burden is compounded by HIV/AIDS. Because rural girls are disadvantaged in accessing education and training they are unable to gain productive employment at adult age. It is thus important to help the poor rural women to develop and own their own businesses.

In 2012, CAWOGIDO, Positive Vision and CENDEP finalised and submitted a project to address the issue of poverty amongst rural women to COMIC Relief. Upon appraisal of the proposal it was recommended that research, consultation and planning be done with the stakeholders/ beneficiaries. Project activities started with the organization of five workshops in Limbe, Bamenda, Oku, Jakiri and Nkar in the North West and South West Regions of Cameroon. These workshops are part of the process to find out those things that are preventing women from growing in business, growing their farms and hence contributing to unemployment and making them poor. The workshops brought together over 500 participants mostly farmers, and petty traders, traditional authorities and heads of some government services working with rural women.

Some of the expectations of the project are cooperative formation, access to grants, credits, loans by women, establishment of new enterprises by women as well as the expansion of existing ones. During the workshops women recounted their expectations from the project as well as the reasons for them being poor and some even accepting poverty as a “way of life”. In Jakiri and Nkar some of the problems of women related to environmental degradation through poor agricultural practices that had condemned them to the use of costly farming inputs like fertilizers whose prices were increasing every year. Farmer grazier problems resulting from agriculture in pastoral areas was also a problem.

The workshops provided an opportunity for the women to network and show case some of their activities. Support from the local administration was very evident through their presence in the workshops.

*Report compiled by Wirsiy Eric Fondzenyuy
Knowledge Management Officer*



Limbe Workshop Participants



Group Work at the Limbe Workshop



Display of products processed by women in Limbe



Participants at the Jakiri and Nkar Workshop





FOREST HOUSE

- Social enterprise established in 2008
- Processes and markets honey and eru (Gnetum spp) /okok
- Obtains its supplies from small holder farmers located in and around forest areas in North West & South West Regions of Cameroon
- These farmers receive technical support



By buying CENDEP HONEY you will be contributing in:

- Improving the income of local farmers through the development of their honey enterprises
- Maintaining jobs in Forest House
- Protection of the environment through reforestation undertaken by the Forest Management Committee