



CAMEROON GENDER AND ENVIRONMENT WATCH (CAMGEW)

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MID TERM EVALUATION WORKSHOP REPORT

of project titled

***Participatory Oku Community Forest Management through forest
regeneration and apiculture for livelihood improvement.***

On

26th APRIL 2014 at Manchok-Oku-Cameroon

Funded by

French Global Fund for Environment (PPI-FFEM-IUCN)



Picture taken during the evaluation workshop with Delegate for MINEPIA- Oku making a presentation on bee farming and Oku White Honey

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ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMES

CAMGEW- Cameroon Gender and Environment Watch

CBOs - Community Based Organisations

FMIs - Forest Management Institutions

KIWAHA - Kilum Ijim White Honey Association

MINEPIA - Ministry of Livestock, Fisheries and Animal Industry

MINFOF- Ministry of Forestry and Wildlife

OCR- Oku Community Radio

OHCS- Oku Honey Cooperative Society

PPI-FFEM – Small Initiative Programme of French Global Fund for Environment

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

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INTRODUCTION

Cameroon Gender and Environment Watch (CAMGEW) an organization based in Oku-Cameroon organized an evaluation workshop on the 26th April 2014 at her conference hall in Manchok-Oku. This evaluation workshop started from 9 am and ended at 5 pm. It was attended by community members living around the Oku Community forest found in Kilum Mountain Forest and forest stakeholders in this area. It involved in bee farmers in the forest, forest users and all stakeholders.

CAMGEW received funds from PPI-FFEM of the IUCN French Committee in July 2013 to execute a project titled “*Participatory Oku Community Forest Management through forest regeneration and apiculture for livelihood improvement*”. This project had as objective to regenerate in the Oku Community Forest at compartment III of Emfve-Mii Forest Management Institution (FMI) with 6000 native forest trees of *Prunus africana*. *Prunus* was chosen for forest regeneration because it is a native tree species of the Oku Community Forest, it is watershed friendly, bee loving, medicinal and income generating as it is used in pharmaceuticals to produce treatment for prostate cancer.

The second objective was to promote apiculture. At least 120 people were to be trained on bee farming and provided 200 beehives. The construction, mounting, colonizing and distribution of 200 hives was to be done using a participatory approach with community members. The last objective was to sensitize communities especially school students and youth groups about environmental issues in the Oku community Forest.

Following these objectives and the timeline of the project, an evaluation meeting was organised with community members and beneficiaries to know the progress of the project. The meeting was attended by the Divisional Officer for Oku Sub Division, the representative of the Fon (King) of Oku- ebchio Fai Ndifon Soom, the Home front President of the Oku Cultural and Development Association (OCDA), the Oku Council Project Development Officer representing the Mayor for Oku Council, the Sub Divisional Delegate of MINEPIA, forest users and bee farmers.

Workshop objectives

The evaluation workshop had as objectives the following:

- To assess the rate of survival of planted trees in the forest and identify the problems that plague the forest
- To evaluate the colonisation rate of beehives given to trained persons (in Mboh, Mbockenghas, Kevu-Lang, Manchok and Nkali-Din).
- Look at project successes, challenges and discuss the way forward.

METHODOLOGY

The meeting started at 11:00 a.m. with a word of Prayer from Ndukong Augustine a participant and Oku Delegate for MINEPIA. The Director of CAMGEW and project leader -Wirsiy Emmanuel Binyuy presented the project and CAMGEW activities related to forest regeneration and apiculture to the participants. In two years, CAMGEW had planted 17000 *Prunus africana* trees in Compartment III of the EMFVU-MII Community Forest, CAMGEW had also organised 9 bee farming training workshops (4 in 2012 under World Bank project and 5 in 2013 and 2014 under PPI-FFEM project) with 338 people trained. Environmental education programs aimed at protecting and conserving the forest were also organised through Oku Community Radio and in the field with students. This included visits to the Oku forest, CAMGEW nursery, the lake and the summit of Mt Oku. The project leader indicated that World Bank funds were used to bring all interested bee farmers to Elak to attend the bee farming training. The PPI-FFEM funds were used to train bee farmers on the ground in their

various localities around the Oku Community Forests in Nchii- Mbockenghas, Kejem-Mawes-Mboh and Upper Shinga-Kevu.

Representatives of trained bee farmers from various training areas were called to present the trend of project activities in their various communities. They were also supposed to report on number of beehives colonised, number of beehives added to those donated, number of bee farming trainings organised after receiving training as trainers of trainers. Presentations were made by representatives of each village on bee farming and by forest users on the state of the forest.

PROJECT REPORT PRESENTATION

Presentation of Bee Farming Activities

Reports were presented by representatives from each trained community and other members of the community added missing points from the presentations. Presentations were made as follows;

1. Mbockenghas (Nchii Community Forest)

Presentation was made by Kwanteng Yufenyuy from Mbockenghas. He started by thanking CAMGEW for the bee training she organised and the hives that she distributed to the participants in Mbockenghas. He reported that the trained community members were engaged in bee farming. He said that 40 more people had gotten involved in bee keeping since CAMGEW training. 32 people had been trained by CAMGEW and 40 hives were distributed to these beneficiaries. He said 14 beehives had already been colonised. He added that beehive colonisation was not a big problem. The problem lied in transporting the colonised beehives to the forest. Their forest was very far from the homes and degraded. They saw the need for forest regeneration to be carried.

The village head for Mbockenghas-Yumbi Fidelis who was also a beneficiary of the bee farming activity thanked CAMGEW for supporting them in capacity building on bee farming. He said that people newly trained on bee farming were fully engaged. He reiterated that the Oku honey was certified and needed that the quantity should be increased but that their forest had been degraded and now has only ferns growing in their forest. He pointed out that they had problems getting materials to produce white honey.

2. Kevu – Lang (Upper Shinga Community Forest)

Nkwan Jonas Yorkwei reported on behalf of the bee farmers in Upper Shinga Community Forest area. He thanked CAMGEW for her initiatives in training and distribution of hives to the trained members. He said that many people have engaged in bee farming in their community. He also reported that out of the 32 hives that were distributed to them, 10 had already colonised.

Songang Amos of Lang confirmed his report and said that the forest in Upper Shinga faced no problem except for the fact that at the beginning of every rainy season, people from Ijim forest set fire on the forest for pasture. This disturbed bee farming as it burn hives.

3. Mboh (Kejem-Mawes Community Forest)

On behalf of the beneficiaries in this Community, Koinban Peter Tokor said that of the 40 hives distributed to them, 9 had already colonised. Following the training, 3 bee farming groups were created in Mboh (*Mboh bee farmers, Kenseng Bee Farmers and Bainkong ebtang Bee Farmers*) 3 hives had colonised from each group. Many more hives had been constructed after the training. Women had engaged in bee farming and some of their hives were colonised. He said that their hives will surely colonise after the honey harvesting season in the Kilum forest. He also reported that the forest was healthy around Mboh and firewood fetchers were not harvesting fresh wood from their forest.

Tatah Margaret said that two weeks after bee farming training was carried out only 7 had already colonised but this week the number went up to 9. She said that the newly trained members were seriously engaged in the activity and during market days there is construction of hives by community members in Mboh.

Konseh Daniel Sama of Mboh got up and said that there was no fresh wood cutting in Mboh. He said that the threats posed in Kejem-Mawes were that of wood carvers who were destroying the forest by harvesting good wood for carving from the forest close to Jiyane Compartment of the forest in Mboh. He said that these carving activities were carried on “country Sundays”. He also said goats were also rampant in the forest.

4. Manchok (Emfve-Mii Community Forest)

Lukong Augustine was chosen by the Manchok bee farming beneficiary community to talk on their behalf. He presented himself as a new bee farmer who was introduced into bee farming by the training organised by CAMGEW. He reported that following the training organised by CAMGEW, 40 hives were distributed to the 30 participants. He said that, he was lucky to have received 2hives. He said that he had mounted his 2 hives that were already colonised and that a total of 7 hives had already been colonised by the beneficiaries of their community. His 2 colonised hivesmotivated him and he bought an additional 24 personal hives and mounted for colonisation and that 12 had already colonised. He made mention of the fact that the only problem that bee farmers in Manchok were facing was the transportation of hives to colonisation sites at Mbam. He said they were happy with the work of CAMGEW and that like Oliver Twist they are asking for more bee farming trainings. Berri Elisabeth of Manchok said that 1 of her hives colonised after the follow-up activity organised by CAMGEW. This increased the number of colonised hives to 8 for the Manchok Community.

5. Nkali-Din Noni (neighbouring village where colonisation is done)

Presentations for Nkali-Din was made by Tangiri Peter Leo. He first of all thanked CAMGEW for training their community members. He said that from the presentation of the project, they were not included as a beneficiary community but that the project came to their community as manner from heaven. He said that after the training, 65 hives were distributed in their community to the 55 persons that were trained. All these hives had already been mounted for colonisation and 10 were already colonised. He said after receiving training, they have been greatly involved in bee farming activities. 46 new hives had been constructed by some beneficiaries. He also added that they were proud to say that their program was the best despite the fact that they were the last. They promised CAMGEW to follow-up the project to a successful end.

On agroforestry trees, which were distributed to them, he said that they were germinating. But that they had the Prunus tree species that did not germinate. The Director of CAMGEW- Wirsiy Emmanuel immediately told him that it was the case with Prunus africana. That it took between 6 - 7 weeks to germinate.

Kebuh Nilian supported his team member by saying that they could be facing problems in bee farming because they were new in the activity but that when they acquaint themselves in this activity they will excel. He said that in Nkali they have been working in groups so that they could easily transmit knowledge to other members. He also added that they had also been organising awareness programs on bee farming and its importance and that the inhabitants of Nkali were welcoming the idea.

Crowning of Bee Farming Reports from the beneficiary communities

The Sub Divisional Delegate for MINEPIA Oku- Ndukong Augustine who was also one of the beneficiaries of the Manchok community stood and welcomed all the participants in the workshop. He reminded all the participants that bee farming was one of the main activities of MINEPIA. He said the

Minister for MINEPIA had taken the apiculture sector at heart especially the Oku White Honey that had been made a Geographical Indication Product.

He proceeded to say that in Oku there was a problem of statistics of honey and its bi-products. He said that bee farmers should endeavour to furnish the Delegation with statistics. He said that honey was scarce in the market not because there were not producing but simply because many people had not gotten engaged in the activity.

In relation to the absence of statistics, he said this was a big barrier to meaningful development in the Oku White Honey sector. He urged groups and individuals producing honey to provide statistics. He said that the OHCS could not provide all the data. He said that wax, propolis, and other bi products are generally lost since we do not have production statistics. If the tonnage of honey was known, we could know the quantity of wax that could be produced in Oku.

Honey is a source of livelihood improvement but we had a serious problem with small ruminants in the forest like goats and sheep. These small ruminants' brows and graze on grass and tree barks. He called on the traditional authority and council to act in terms of sanctions and arrest animals that stray into the forest. He called on farmers to make paddocks to better manage their animals. Answering to problem of statistics raised by the Delegate of MINEPIA-Oku, Ebchio Fai Ndifon Soom representing the Traditional Authority said the problem arose because honey producers and farmers were not organised. He said that there was a need for farmers to be organised into farming associations.

REPORT OF FOREST REGENERATION

The forest regeneration activity was presented by Ngum Jai Raymond of CAMGEW. It was revealed to the participants at the workshop that CAMGEW had planted 17000 trees of *Prunus africana* in Compartment III of EMFVU-MII Community forest. He said the trees planted were doing well and called on all forest users to continue taking care of the planted trees. He said CAMGEW received funds from PPI-FFEM in 2013 to plant 6000 trees of *Prunus* but planted 6600 trees finally with the participation of the community. The government of Cameroon through MINFOF also gave CAMGEW a grant in 2013 to plant 3000 trees in this forest and CAMGEW planted 3400 trees. One third of these trees were destroyed by goats living in the forest and CAMGEW had to replace the destroyed trees at her cost. A total of 10000 trees of *Prunus africana* a native tree of this forest were planted in 2013. Raymond ended by saying that these trees were under threat by goats, hunters, firewood fetchers but bee farmers but CAMGEW through her regular visit to the forest and radio programmes at the Oku Community Radio will tackle these threats. Problems affecting the forest were raised by participants who were mostly forest users.

- **Shang Hypolite**

He said that the problems affecting the forest were a concern to all. He called on all the users to take care of the trees planted to regenerate the forest. He identified the cutting of fresh wood as a serious problem in the forest especially carapas.

- **Yorkwei Jackari**

He identified himself like a firewood fetcher and said that the greatest forest degradation was being caused by children and students. He said children cut down trees just because it had shaded its leaves. He said that it was the responsibility of parents to advice their children on the importance of conserving the forest. However, he admitted that some parents were also cutting down fresh trees.

- **John Njong Ngong**

He added that apart from children destroying the forest there are also rat hunters who were destroying the forest. They cleared paths and this destroyed young trees that are regenerating the forest.

- **Konseh Daniel Sama**

He identified a forest problem peculiar to the forest at Mboh and Kesotin. He said that carvers encroached the forest from Jiyane to cut down trees and carve during traditional Sunday days when people do not visit the forest. He said they had finished the soft the soft wood available in the Jiyane compartment of Kejem-Mawes community forest and were now expanding to other parts of the forest. He also identified the harm caused by children as they fell down young and wet trees. He finally identified the presence of goats in the forest as a problem. He called on grazers to remove their goats and sheep from the forest.

Clarifications made on some points raised in the forest sector

1. **Yaah Nying** a traditional female leader said that there has not been any serious fire disaster in the Oku Community forest thanks to the work of CAMGEW. She encouraged those bee farmers especially the ones that had hives in the forest to practice the modern methods of bee farming which include honey harvesting during the day using bee smokers and bee suits. This goes along way to reduce the occurrence of bush fires. She also identified forest users as those who smoked in the forest as a cause of bushfire and said that if they should avoid smoking in the forest.

She called on women to educate their children and other women especially those that had farms besides the forest to avoid burning their farms because fire from these farms easily spread to the forest. She called for the confinement of goats at the summit of the Kilum where it was appropriate for grazing. There they will not destroy trees.

2. **Fai Ndishangong Thaddeus** agreed on the fact that the government of Cameroon takes the forest as a serious matter because it is the lives of the people. Concerning the Oku Community Forest, he said that the Court of First Instance at Kumbo-Bui Division, had ruled out that animals should remain at the top of the Kilum. The forest was given to community by the government and the condition for use was that it should be sustainably used. In cases were it is not well used, government can rule out community use of the forest. He concluded that Oku was the gift of the forest. We needed to be careful with the forest and remove all goats from the forest and any other activity that threatens the forest.
3. **Chiatch Castro** (Council Representative) said the delegate for MINFOF visited the Forest at Mboh and observed that farmers had trespassed into the forest for farmland. When these farmers were asked why, they said that they were asked by a farming group to experiment a new potato species. He added that the forest was important because it acted like a base for research for many students. He also said the council was developing a strategy to solve the problem of goats and remove all exotic trees from the forest.

RESOLUTIONS TAKEN AFTER THE EVALUATION MEETING

- **Yaah Nying** said that there should be no exploitation of Prunus from the Oku Community Forest we needed to concentrate on regeneration. In cases where defaulters were found it will be good to apply sanctions.
- **The representative of the Traditional authority** said the forest was very important. Sanctions will be given to defaulters. He added that the Traditional authority had suspended the functioning of FMIs. He added that however they will be calling back the leaders of the FMIs to reorganise them. He declared that without the forest there will be no honey. He pledged that the Traditional authority will cooperate with other organisations in handling forest issues.

- **The President of OCDA** took the floor and said giving out correct information is prior to any actions. The government is not ignorant and laws set by her will be reinforced.
- The Sub Divisional Delegate of MINEPIA said like it is done with fishing, a season for wood fetching should be organised yearly and the rest of the time the forest should be allowed to regenerate. This way it will be possible to control the problem of fresh wood fetching.
- **Tatah Margaret of Mboh** also added that financial sanction should be given on forest defaulters saying that during the Kilum-Ijim Forest Project, defaulters were taken to the Traditional authority and the Divisional Officer for punishment.
- **The Council Development Officer** acknowledged the fact that the Oku Council had observed the activities of CAMGEW and that they were going a long way to improve community living standards. He also said that the Council was working out a Memorandum of Understanding with CAMGEW. He said 2.000.000 FCFA had been allocated for bee farming training in the municipality by the government this year. He ended up pledging total cooperation between the Council and CAMGEW.
- **The Divisional Officer** for Oku ended the evaluation session by highly recommending the inter sub divisional the need for similar activities that are inter sub divisional. He applauded the activities of of CAMGEW in the honey sector that goes in this line. He said the problem of honey produced will soon be handled with the construction of cooperative house. He said that the problems in the forest needed to be solved with some conjugated action because of its sensitive nature that they government is aware. He said he will not allow anybody or person to encroach into the forest. He called on the Traditional authority to take actions against all forest law defaulters. He said to the Council representative that if a plan is elaborated for the forest management then the authority will give its support to reinforce it especially to check stray animals. He concluded by saying that we needed community support in information sharing and promoting development and success of existing projects. The community role is vital and its importance in participation in development action is indispensable. He ended by saying that forest destruction could be due to poverty but that poverty alleviation was a collective issue and needed to be handled collectively.

CONCLUSION

The evaluation meeting attended by 32 persons, was highly appreciated by the participants. Participants were able to share information and since then CAMGEW and community members have started working on developing a route map for the best sites and periods of colonisation around the Oku area. We were also able to appreciate the various problems affecting the forest and together agree on the possible actions to take against the forest defaulters.



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Saturday April 26th 2014

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