

BEE FARMING TRAINING WORKSHOP REPORT

CAMEROON GENDER AND ENVIRONMENT WATCH
(CAMGEW)

Act Locally, Think Globally



TITLE

A REPORT OF A PRACTICAL BEE FARMING TRAINING WORKSHOP ORGANISED BY CAMEROON GENDER AND ENVIRONMENT WATCH (CAMGEW) ON 30TH and 31ST JANUARY 2012 AT OKU, BUI DIVISION OF CAMEROON

DATE & PLACE:

30TH and 31ST JANUARY 2012 AT OKU, BUI DIVISION OF CAMEROON

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A Report on a Practical Bee Farming Training Workshop organized by Cameroon Gender and Environment Watch (CAMGEW) on 30TH and 31ST January 2012 at Oku, Bui Division of Cameroon

Presenting Cameroon Gender and Environment Watch (CAMGEW)

Cameroon Gender and Environment Watch (CAMGEW) is a non profit created in October 2007 with authorisation number N° 000998/RDA/JO6/BAPP to solve environmental and women's problems in Cameroon. CAMGEW works locally and thinks globally, integrating gender in solving environmental problems in Cameroon. CAMGEW believes that the future of our mother planet-earth is in our hands and also that the planet can be sustained by putting social and environmental justice at the centre of development. CAMGEW seeks to achieve her objectives by liaising with other like minded organisations worldwide. She has resolved to function according to core values of honesty, engagement and dedication in total respect of its constitution. CAMGEW has as **vision** "Changing lives of women, children and communities while protecting the environment and as **mission** to fight poverty; promote sound environmental management, gender balance and economic sustainable development.

Presenting project

CAMGEW won the World Bank organised Development Market Place Competition in Cameroon on good governance in the forestry, health and education sector in July 2011. The project CAMGEW submitted was titled 'Oku Community Forest Management for Benefit Sharing'. This project is to train 120 persons from groups (especially women groups) and schools on bee farming, provide them with 200 colonised beehives at subsidised rates. The project is to nurse and plant 7000 trees in the Oku Community forest. This bee farming training workshop is in this line. Considering that the participation of forest community in forest management is part of forest governance, CAMGEW through this project engages local people to own beehives in the forest after receiving training for them to better manage the forest. Ownership of hives by people in Oku will push them to guide against bushfire and forest destruction as they protect beehives as source of income. Bee farming will give them a source of livelihood from the sell of honey harvested and make them see the importance to protect the forest. Oku white honey is already being considered as a Geographical Indication Product and it is hoped that the market for this honey will be secured.

CAMGEW is not only interested to train those who are involved already in bee farming, she is interested to have new groups who know nothing about bee farming trained and provided with colonised bee hives that will give them a source of livelihoods and make them see the need participate in the protection of the forest.

In a long run CAMGEW hope to continue to work with trained groups in a network to maintain and increase their number of beehives in the forest, assist in honey harvesting, processing and marketing.

Introduction

CAMGEW organized a 2 day bee farming training workshop in Oku with resource person from Oku Honey Cooperative Society and in collaboration with Sub-Delegation of the Ministry of Livestock, Fisheries and Animal Industry.

Present at the training were:

- The Director of CAMGEW, Wirsiy Emmanuel Binyuy who acted as facilitator and his assistant Jine Pamela Yufenyuy taking care of logistics;
- The Chief of Veterinary Centre, Elak-Oku, Chung Hilda
- The Manager of Oku Honey Cooperative Society, Bang George who was a trainer and did honey harvesting;
- Soh Amos Wanyu, member of Oku Honey Cooperative Society who was a trainer and did honey harvesting;
- Koimban Peter, Simon Ntama, Soh Simon, Joseph Mnkong, Chongwan Ephraim and Ngum Francis Ngek did practical lessons on beehive construction;
- Representatives of Common Initiative Groups, schools, churches and groups with no legalisation.

Bee farming training workshop objectives

The main objective of this training was to build the capacity of groups, schools and religious denominations in Oku on bee farming principles; beehive construction, mounting and colonization; and honey harvesting and processing. The other objectives were to give community members the opportunity to participate in Oku Community Forest management for sustainable development. Honey produced from the forest will be a source of income for the groups. CAMGEW believed that if community members receive training on bee farming and own bee hives in the forest they will abstain from bushfire and forest degradation and see the forest as a life sustaining resource. The criteria of involving only groups and promoting group ownership of beehives was to promote unity and solidarity in the community.

Methodology used

The groups in the community were informed about the training and criteria for selection through announcements in Oku Community Radio, Churches, and posters. Registration forms were made available to groups in the CAMGEW-Oku office, Oku Honey Cooperative Society and Oku Sub-Delegation of the Ministry of Livestock, Fisheries and Animal Industry for ease accessibility. The training was done in the Oku language. Oku local beehives were chosen for the practical training because the popular Kenyan Top Bar Hives do not do well in the Oku forest. The Oku local beehives have readily available local materials for its construction. The principles of bee farming were taught the first day in class. This involved life cycle of a bee; bee colony; beehive; bee products; apiary; beehive construction and mounting procedures; honey harvesting and processing procedures; and the types of pests that attack bees in hives. Practical work was done on the second day of the training. In the morning participants went for honey harvesting in the Oku Honey Cooperative Society apiary in a small forest. All the participants took part in the harvesting where they received practical lessons. Bee suits were used to do the harvesting. This was followed by beehive construction. The 64 participants were divided

into 6 groups and each group had a trainer on practical beehive construction. At the end of this exercise, 6 beehives were constructed. The workshop ended with the processing exercise of harvested honey into pure honey and by-product. The by-product could be process to wax, candles, honey drinks, etc. Training started each day at 8:00 am and ended at 4:30 pm daily. Each participant received a bee farming training manual produced by CAMGEW with technical support from the Oku Honey Cooperative Society that has skills in bee farming training; beehive construction and mounting; honey harvesting and processing; and marketing. The team spirit that reign between trainers themselves and with facilitator was applauded by participants at the end of the training during workshop evaluation.

Activities

Day 1

The first day involved theoretical lessons on the life cycle of a bee; bee colony; beehive; bee products; apiary; beehive construction and mounting procedures; honey harvesting and processing procedures; and the types of pests that attach bees in hives. Bang George did training on the principles of bee farming while Soh Amos did training on the procedures of beehive construction and mounting, types of beehives and the best hive for bee farming in Oku; honey harvesting and processing; and types of pests that attack bees. These were key points in the theory lessons on the first day of training.

Day 2

The second day of the training was full of practical work. Participants did practical work on beehive construction and mounting and honey harvesting. Six trainers on bee hive construction took part. Team work was the spirit found in the workshop.

Challenges

CAMGEW has received a large number of applications from groups willing to take part in the training. The community is enthusiastic about the activity but the number of participants budgeted for in each training was 30. Our first training had 64 participants from 20 groups. This number was too high and we could not send some people home who came only on that day. This seems to be the situation that will reign in all the training but we are trying to handle it.

CAMGEW has constructed 200 beehives that are to be carried to Mbam, a neighboring village for colonization before the hives are carried to the forest for mounting. Colonisation is not also an easy task as most areas where colonization takes place in Mbam are beside rivers in valleys where bushfire is common and cattle move around a randomly. Choosing sites for beehive installation for colonization need a lot of precautionary measures. 200 beehives seem small if in the first training workshop CAMGEW has had 20 groups trained. CAMGEW is to carryout 3 more workshops.

Conclusion

The project as of now is going on smoothly. One good thing CAMGEW staff were happy about is the participatory nature of participants in the workshop. You could see old mothers and fathers who do not know how to speak English raise their hands and ask a question or share their knowledge on bee farming. The manager of Oku Honey

Cooperative Society said this was the first time a workshop took place with the use of the Oku local language. CAMGEW is proud she made this happened. The project team is also steady in the project execution and the way forward is positive. The remaining 3 trainings should record the same success as we forecast.

Please find below workshop pictures with brief explanation



Theoretical lessons presented by trainers on bee farming



Lessons offered by trainer (in bee suit) on procedure of honey harvesting



Class lessons were offered in a lively manner



Participants starting the construction of a beehive using our method of learning by doing



Beehive construction trainer teaching participants how to construct a beehive.



Women participating fully in beehive construction exercise



Participants' learning-by-doing



Participant participating in the tying of hive with grass to protect it



Group 1 finishes the construction of their beehive



Group 2 with their finished beehive



Group 3 with their completed beehive



Group 4 with their completed beehive



Group 5 with their completed beehive



Group 6 with their constructed beehive



General picture of participants and trainers with the 6 constructed hives



Participants and trainers in the forest with beehives (called apiary)



Participants with bee suits around the beehive ready for harvesting



Participants with bee suits around the beehive ready for harvesting



Participants with bee suits and smoker around the beehive ready for harvesting



Trainer and participants harvesting honey. Trainer (Bang) is use to doing harvesting without a bee suit



Participants with honey combs after harvesting



Participants with honey combs after harvesting



Participants with honey combs after harvesting



Participants receives lessons on smoker use in honey harvesting



Participants receive lessons on honey combs in the forest



Participants receive lessons on honey combs in the forest



Participants receive lessons on honey combs in the forest



Lessons on honey processing (Trainer with wax a by-product of honey)