

NDEF Cameroon

National Development Foundation

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NDEF CAMEROON
2006
ACTIVITY REPORT

Mission Statement

The National Development Foundation (NDEF) is a not-for-profit, non-religious and apolitical Association that works with rural communities *empowering smallholder farmers to work and reduce the vulnerability of their households to food, health and income insecurity while ensuring environmental conservation through the use of improved technologies and sustainable agricultural practices.*

Motivation

The North West Province of Cameroon is a vibrant, scenic region abundant in natural resources and human activity. Yet, poverty and restricted livelihoods are widespread and decades of development efforts have had only a limited impact in solving these problems. Additionally, population growth and inefficient resource utilisation are rapidly depleting the natural resources of the local environment, creating potential barriers to future development efforts.

NDEF believes that there is scope for both the alleviation of poverty and more sustainable use of existing resources. However, given the decentralized and fragmented nature of agriculture, industry and commerce in the region this can only be achieved on the micro-level. Large government projects are unlikely to have the desirable characteristics or necessary penetration to have a long-term impact on livelihoods or the environment. Instead, by providing incentives, encouragement and support to groups and communities, the subtle line between economic stagnation and progress can be crossed. Growth miracles should not be expected, but providing there is a degree of forward movement, momentum and the role of expectations can assure the longer-term and broader impact of NDEF's activities.

Core objectives

- ∅ To provide support to rural communities in realizing their aspirations, in particular the alleviation of poverty and the improvement of livelihoods and life opportunities.
- ∅ To provide support that is consistent with the long-term objectivities of local, national and international communities, entailing awareness and promotion of sustainable solutions, both for communities and their environments.
- ∅ To undertake the above objectives through a *participatory* and *empowering* approach to development.
- ∅ For NDEF to be an effective and respected voice of rural community needs and priorities.

Activities

(Provision of technical and managerial support to target groups)

i) Technological Trainings on:

- Rapid propagation of high value tree species (fruits, medicinal & timber)
- Rapid multiplication of improved banana/plantain suckers
- Bee Farming practices
- Practice of integrated farming systems

ii) Managerial trainings on:

- Group Management or Dynamics
- Leadership
- Accounts/Record keeping
- Basic Marketing Principles

Target Population

- Common Initiative Groups of farmers (CIGs)
- Micro entrepreneurs
- Village Development Committees

A Message from the President

Dear stakeholders of the National Development Foundation (NDEF), it is the end of yet another year of development work under the canopy of NDEF in Cameroon. The year has registered some successes and setbacks as well; and left many challenges to be addressed, as well as opportunities for us to take advantages of, in 2007.

The following pages will epitomise our work in 2006 and make a brief projection of our work into 2007.

First, on the staff situation, there were many changes both at the office level and at the level of field projects. Inefficient staff were replaced and some other staff moved to continue their carriers elsewhere. Prominent on the list of new staff is a UK Volunteer, Jonathan Philips, who has to be with NDEF for six to twelve months. His role has been quite useful in refocusing the strategy of NDEF and ameliorating our overall management procedures.

Geographically, we increased our area of work to include Momo Division. We had a major training workshop in Tree Domestication in Agroforestry in Sang Village and trained nine groups of farmers on how to rapidly propagate high value tree species for integration into their farms. Two of the field nurseries established thereafter won prizes at the 2006 ICRAF organised Best Nursery Award Competition in Yaounde.

In 2006, ICRAF began to surmount our problem of mobility as we hitherto relied on public transport services to carry out field activities. We have now been able to minimise to a certain degree the inconveniences usually characterising the use of public transport services. ICRAF

made available to NDEF a Yamaha AG100 motor cycle for the follow up of field projects. It has been quite useful. This notwithstanding, there is still a dire need for NDEF to possess an all-weather vehicle in order to better access some impassable roads especially in the rainy season. Moreover, it has always been difficult to transport planting materials for field planting on a motor cycle.

In 2006, we mostly concentrated on strengthening some ongoing partnerships with stakeholders and made new contacts which are hopefully going to materialise in 2007. We did receive three requests from the South West Province for our services to be extended to that part of the country. We could not however do it given that our resources are still limited.

On a sad note, I announce with regret the collapse of one of our farm houses in Okomanjang farm due to turbulent winds. Still on the same bad side of things, our mills house in Bawock was brought down alongside other property in the area following an uprising launched by the neighbouring Bali Village on the Bawocks regarding a boundary problem. Both structures will have to be reconstructed in 2007.

It is my fervent wish that 2007 brings with it lots of blessings, development and relief to poor rural communities. We have mapped a better strategy for our work in 2007 and wish to implore you to remind steadfast to NDEF so that we could jointly deliver quality services to our clientele. Your usual support in all forms is indispensable.

Nkeng Pius
President

Activities realized in 2006

A fresh start for NDEF's offices

In April, NDEF moved its office from Musang to Mile 8 Mankon, just after IRAD. The new location has created a more spacious and effective working environment, as well as providing the opportunity to develop a central nursery that can receive the full attention of NDEF staff. The nursery has flourished since its initial construction, and now boasts extensive infrastructure:

- Two large shades
- One giant propagator
- One non-mist propagator for rooting of cuttings
- Two greenhouses for plantain multiplication



A section of NDEF's Bamenda nursery

Over the course of the year, the office staff of NDEF has also changed dramatically. Our long-term friends Madams Grace and Julian and Mr Eugene are pursuing their respective careers with other organisations, and have been replaced by Aseh Godwill, who joined NDEF in October. In September, Jonathan Phillips, a volunteer from the UK, also joined the staff.

Another major administrative development was the founding of NDEF's website, www.ndefcameroon.org. This will be a resource for our partners and potential collaborators to find out more about NDEF's work. We are grateful for Free to Charities, a UK charity, which hosts the site.

Continued investment in Okomanjang Farm

Following the acquisition of land in Okomanjang village, Menchum Division in 2005, NDEF in-



The entrance to Okomanjang Farm

vested a lot of time and resources in 2006 to ensure that the farm can function as a best practice centre for local farmers' groups. In particular, the farm is integrating a range of activities in order to generate more sources of income from the same size plot.

Major activities this year have included:

- the integration of plantains, pepper, pineapple, soya beans and maize throughout much of the farm;
- the nursing of grafted, rooted and marcotted fruit trees in the farm's nursery in preparation for planting in 2007;
- The construction of over 30 beehives, which have had a high colonization rate.

Crops harvested at the farm during the year include corn, soya beans, plantains, pineapples and paw-paw. Apart from supplying high quality foodstuffs to the local population, these activities also act as a source of income to support NDEF's agricultural extension activities.

One setback suffered at the farm was the collapse of the partially-constructed farm building in December during high winds. Renewed efforts will be made to complete the structure before the wet season begins next year.

In October 2006, Aneng Eric and Teneng Edwin joined NDEF as permanent workers at the farm. Their skills and dedication will be essential to continued success in 2007. They took over from Messrs William Achu and Daniel Khan.

Scaling-up of tree domestication training

In 2006, NDEF intensified its role as a major partner of the World Agroforestry Centre for dissemi-



Farmers practise the technique of grafting

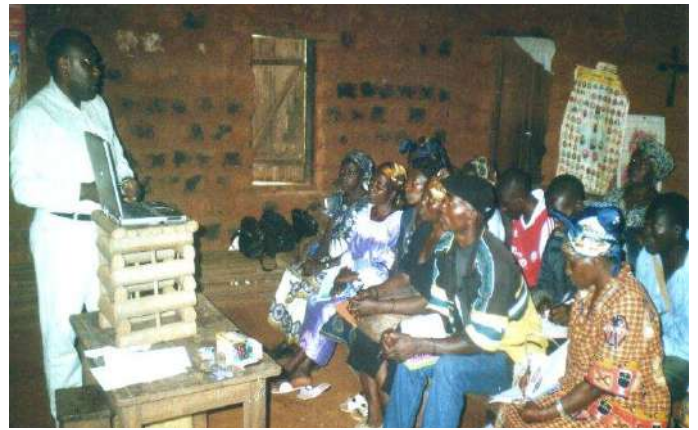
nating tree domestication techniques to rural communities and farmers' groups.

A major event was a three-day training programme carried out in Sang (Momo Division) with 9 Common Initiative Groups and in collaboration with the Mbengwi Area Food Crop Cooperative. Participants learnt how to construct propagators and how to carry out grafting, rooting and marcotting of high value fruit trees. NDEF has followed-up this training with multiple follow-up visits. Within the next 12 months, the results of the groups' activities should be ready for planting. However, follow-up activities will in the future be focussed on only the most committed groups since there has been some apathy among certain groups. One propagator was constructed in Ngwokwong.

In Menchum Division, two farmers' groups were trained in marcotting techniques, and NDEF has high hopes for a group of young farmers in Okomanjang Village, who have just joined the tree domestication train enthusiastically.



NDEF Staff harvesting marcots



Training farmers with the aid of a laptop in Sang Village

In Mezam Division, a propagator was constructed in Bafut and many marcots were harvested and placed into it. Follow-up support was also provided to groups in Bawock and Pinyin Villages.

Establishment of Bawock nursery and demonstration farm

Following the example of the Okomanjang farm, but on a smaller scale, NDEF's Bawock demonstration farm operates a best practice centre for integrated farming in Mezam Division. Food crops such as corn and beans have been integrated with fruit trees, plantains and agroforestry trees (that provide benefits for soil fertility such as *Grevillea Robusta* and *Prunus Africana*) were planted.

The placement of bee-hives throughout the farm in 2007 will also permit honey products to be harvested. A nursery at the site, operated jointly by NDEF and local groups, also supports agroforestry activities and will act as a major source of improved planting materials in the region. It is anticipated that in 2007 additional training and awareness-raising of improved agricultural techniques will be carried out at the farm.

Training on rapid multiplication of improved banana and plantain suckers

In September, NDEF was host to a training workshop on the rapid multiplication of high quality banana and plantain suckers. The workshop was undertaken in collaboration with the facilitator, Ms. Chiatoh Emelda, and the Round Enterprise Common Initiative Group (RECIG).



Volunteers at NDEF prepare plantain suckers for multiplication

In the future, NDEF hopes to extend its newly-acquired knowledge in this domain to the farmers' groups with which it works. The benefits should be significant—not only does rapid multiplication allow high yielding plantains to be planted in order to raise the income they can provide, but the technique also ensures suckers are pest and disease free.

Acquisition of motorcycle from ICRAF

Following many years of struggle with public transport that has served to greatly constrain NDEF's activities, NDEF obtained a motorcycle for staff use. The generous donor was the World Agroforestry Centre, and the bike will be used principally to support the extension of tree domestication activities to the numerous farmers' groups with which NDEF works in the North-West Province.



Ann Degrande hands over the keys and papers to NDEF President, Nkeng Pius

Social support provided to students and young orphans

Two major outreach activities have been undertaken by NDEF in 2006. The first, in May, consisted of the distribution of academic prizes to the students of GHS Kwang, Pinyin, who had made particularly strong efforts and performed well. The highly-successful event was attended by 2000 students and 40 teachers and parents.

The second event, in September, was conducted in Menka Village, Pinyin. Writing materials and textbooks were distributed to young orphans in order to support their effective education. Given funding constraints, NDEF's support has so far been unable to also support the school fees of these orphans.

Both events were made possible by NDEF's long time partner, Motherland Academy International of Japan, which delivered a container of goods for the general support of NDEF's activities.

NDEF takes up seat on G.S. Mesaw School Council

NDEF is a permanent member of the School Council of G.S. Mesaw-Pinyin. So when the Council requested NDEF to spearhead efforts to construct permanent facilities for the school to replace their temporary facilities, currently in the Mesaw Fon's Palace, NDEF was more than willing to oblige. Following consultations with the Headmaster and the School Council, NDEF developed a project proposal that would meet the needs of the pupils and teachers and obtained a pro-forma invoice for the construction works. An application was then presented to the British High Commission in Yaounde, who received it enthusiastically. Its fate is expected in 2007.

NDEF E-Newsletter

In order to improve on the marketing of NDEF and its activities, we instituted an e-mail newsletter so as to keep our stakeholders abreast with our work. It is a review of our work for the last three months and a highlight of some major forthcoming activities. The first three issues have been successfully produced and circulated. The little problem is that many of our clients in the rural areas do not have access to the newsletter because we are unable to produce hard copies for them.

Partners and Collaborators

International NGOs and research institutes

- **World Agroforestry Centre (ICRAF)**—Now NDEF's principal partner for agricultural activities, ICRAF's objectives of spreading the benefits of sustainable agroforestry to the poorest parts of Cameroon has proved highly compatible with NDEF's goals of poverty alleviation. In March, NDEF joined other partners of ICRAF in Yaounde in a regional meeting to map out a new strategy for ICRAF-AHT. Apart from sponsoring a training in tree domestication in Sang in May, ICRAF also provides support for NDEF to follow up the groups trained in the techniques of vegetative propagation. Besides, ICRAF also launched a Best Nursery Award aimed at motivating the groups trained in the above techniques. Two groups working with NDEF did win prizes at the national jamboree that took place in Yaounde in December. ICRAF has provided important support to NDEF's activities in 2006, and more extensive cooperation is envisaged in 2007 on agroforestry activities.

International Institute of Tropical Agriculture (IITA)—through the provision of improved planting materials and technical support, IITA is an important partner of NDEF. Activities here include the rapid multiplication of plantain/banana suckers, improved cassava cuttings and yam sets. In March, IITA organised a Collaborators' workshop in PRTC Mfonta, with three objectives: (1) Review progress and constraints in germplasm dissemination since 2004 within and beyond agreed plans (spillovers); (2) Explore new opportunities for future collaboration and improved technologies, and (3) Plan for 2006-2007 with respect to issues raised in (1) and

(2). Of course, NDEF took up two seats at the workshop.

- **The Motherland Academy International**—whose financial and material support have been invaluable to the continuation and growth of NDEF's activities generally.
- **Technical Center for Agricultural and Rural Cooperation (CTA)** — whose invaluable regular information updates through useful publications have greatly contributed to the success of our work. They have (as in the past) supplied our library with quite a good number of important titles related to our work.
- **African Network for Agriculture, Agroforestry & Natural Resources Education (ANAFE)**—jointly organised a training workshop with MIFACIG and the University of Dschang whereby two staff of NDEF were trained on Agroforestry Trees Propagation Techniques in Belo, April.
- **Europe-Third World Association (ETW)** — had started work with NDEF by providing food processing equipment to add value to foodstuffs in rural communities. Although we did not have any major activity for this year, we hope that new grounds would be broken in 2007.

North-West NGO Networks

- **North-West Association of Development Organizations (NWADO)**—This is a forum that brings together civil society organisations in the North West Province for information sharing, sharing of experiences, collaboration while avoiding duplication of efforts and waste of resources. A major activity

here was the organisation of the civil society open day in October which was the pinnacle of the network's success and provided a forum for the sharing of experiences between development actors, state and non-state actors. NDEF's stand was a major attraction as many participants were marvelled on the techniques of rapid multiplication of high value fruit trees and plantain suckers. A lot of orders were placed for the products.

- **Network for Sustainable Agriculture**

Dissemination and exchange of best practices in sustainable agriculture. Use of practices which are environmentally friendly.

- **Network of Agricultural Development and Adaptive Research**—four organisations formed NADAR in July with the objective of collecting and implementing agricultural innovations from research institutes. NDEF was one of the pioneer organisations of the network.

Other Partner Organisations

- **Round Enterprise Common Initiative Group**—cooperation has focused on the joint hosting of training on rapid plantain multiplication.

- **Free to Charities**—provides essential support for NDEF's marketing by hosting and updating our website periodically.

- **Mixed Farming Group (MIFACIG)** — jointly organised a training workshop with MIFACIG and the University of Dschang whereby two staff of NDEF were trained on Agroforestry Trees Propagation Techniques in Belo, April. Also worked with them to assist NDEF carry out a training workshop in Sang Village (Momo Division) in May.

- **University of Dschang, Cameroon** — jointly organised a training workshop with MIFACIG and the University of Dschang whereby two staff of NDEF were trained on Agroforestry Trees Propagation Techniques in Belo, April.

- **Mbengwi Area Food Crop Cooperative (MAFCCO)** —as an experienced partner working in Momo Division mostly on cassava, MAFCCO spearheaded the arrangements for NDEF's penetration into Momo Division for the agroforestry programme.

- **2Way Development** — A London-based organisation that searches and places long term volunteers at the disposal of host organisations. 2Way Development provides independent, professional support to both volunteers and host organisations in the arrangement of 3-18 month skilled voluntary placements all over the world, in all sectors of work. NDEF has a UK Volunteer, Jonathan Phillips through 2Way Development. It is hoped that before he leaves NDEF, a replacement from 2Way Development will enter his shoes to continue with the good work being carried on.

List of Common Initiative Groups that NDEF worked with in 2006

	Village	Name of Group
1	Bafut	Fruit Trees Mixed Farming Group, Bafut
2	Bafut	Nsye Ni Nde
3	Bawock	Fed-Fed Farming Group, Bawock
4	Bawock	Fumju Mixed Farming Group, Bawock
5	Bawock	Matter Horn Women Farming Group, Bawock
6	Bawock	Mbutu Group, Bawock
7	Bawock	Tchi-Tchia'a Farming Group, Bawock
8	Bawock	Netad Mixed Farming Group, Bawock
9	Bawock	Young Farmers CIG, Bawock
10	Momo	Guzang Mixed Farming Group
11	Momo	Bessi-Fomukong Mixed Farming Group
12	Momo	Unity for Progress Mixed Farming Group
13	Momo	Kai Women Farming Group
14	Momo	Sang Mixed Farming Group
15	Momo	Njinezi Mixed Farming Group
16	Momo	Bongob Mixed Farming Group
17	Okomanjang	Lulum Farming Group, Okomanjang
18	Okomanjang	Baboam Poultry Group, Okomanjang
19	Okomanjang	Budjab-Cassava Farming Group Okomanjang
20	Okomanjang	Young Farmers Group
21	Pinyin	Pinyin Sustainable Farming System
22	Pinyin	Nteme Women's Group, Pinyin
23	Pinyin	Meshi Trial Farming Group
24	Pinyin	Friends of Trees, Water and Life, Pinyin
25	Pinyin	Bizzaneh Group, Pinyin
26	Santa	Mbei Community Forest Farming Group
27	Santa	Munung II Mixed Farming Group, Mile 12
28	Santa	Mbaghalem Farming Group, Mile 2 Njong, Mawenjang
29	Santa	Green Mixed Farming Group, Soshi Quarter

Brief Plan of Action for 2007

Renewing our strategic focus

Like all organisations, NGOs need to ensure that they effectively meet their objectives, and moreover that they know what their objectives are. In the last quarter, preparations have been made to refocus NDEF's activities on the objective of alleviating rural poverty through two related activities:

1. **Disseminating improved agricultural techniques.** In particular, the focus is on integrating a range of techniques and ensuring they are sustainable.
2. **Supporting micro-enterprises** that grow on the back of these agricultural techniques. In particular, this includes facilitating the increase of food production, processing, preservation and marketing. Micro financing facilities will be made available where the need is felt.

Working with farmers' groups to generate more sources of income from their plots, and with other micro-entrepreneurs to add more value and develop new income sources, the livelihood prospects of households can be improved.

Achieving this vision requires a big effort in a number of areas:

- Obtaining 'core funding' for these activities in order to achieve a degree of stability for NDEF's finances, and, of course, work schedules.
- Developing demonstration farms and processing centres in rural localities that can raise awareness of improved techniques while serving as training centres.
- Increasing the administrative capacity of the organisation to monitor fi-

nances, manage projects and evaluate impact. This entails staff training and increasing and improved working practices.

- Sensitising the farmers' groups with which we work to our new objectives, and consulting on how we can work with them in the future.
- Developing new ideas and services in relation to micro-enterprise development including managerial and financial training for better functioning of groups.
- Reducing or eliminating the social support activities so far carried out by the organisation, except for projects with directed resources.

Our partners' support in achieving this renewal is greatly anticipated.

Demonstration Farms

While initial efforts on these farms have laid a foundation for progress, three activities will be essential for success in both raising income and training farmers' groups in 2007:

1. Integration of additional techniques into the farm. Medicinal plants, improved corn and the planting of high value and improved materials will be important.
2. Expansion of existing techniques. In particular, the establishment of larger plantain plots and the extension of the apiary are of priority.
3. Initiation of training activities. More groups need to be selected in the area to benefit from the investment, and training sessions need to be held at regular time-periods.