

## Gemma Stanbridge joins NDEF

2Way Development, a UK based non government organisation that specialises in placing long term volunteers has arranged and placed Gemma Stanbridge at the service of NDEF. It would be recalled that Gemma is the second volunteer placed at NDEF by 2Way Development since we started partnership in September 2006 when Jonathan Philips started work with NDEF. We said a sad farewell to Johnathon who returned to the UK in December and wish him every success in his career. He was a valid part of the NDEF team and contributed to the our new re focused NDEF.

Gemma Stanbridge is an economics graduate, with strong interpersonal skills and good administrative/organisational skills. She has promotion and sales experience and has worked with other NGO's, such as the World Wildlife Fund in generating sponsorship. She has also worked with logistical issues relating to the food industry such as in buying fresh produce, coordinating stock requirements of stores and working with food suppliers which directly relate to her potential role in NDEF.

Gemma's experience in economics and business administration, sales, promotion and fundraising work, as well as her work in the food industry makes her highly suitable for a role with NDEF while continuing the work that Jonathan started. Her assignment runs for at least three months.

## A fresh start for NDEF's Activities

The National Development Foundation (NDEF) Cameroon has restructured its activities in order to keep a strong focus and have a greater impact on beneficiaries. The pages below summarise the new NDEF that has been operating since January 2007.

## The New NDEF and Work

### *Mission Statement*

A not-for-profit, non-religious and apolitical NGO that strives to empower 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.

### *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**

#### *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
- Micro entrepreneurs

## Present Geographical Coverage

North West Province

**3 Divisions: Menchum, Momo & Mezam**

## A Proactive Road Map to work with Groups

### Objective

Farmer groups are empowered and they use acquired skills to increase farm incomes and improve livelihoods following the adoption of sustainable agricultural practices.

### Step 1. Technological Support

### Step 2. Managerial Support

### Step 3. Group Nursery Development

1. Trainees from NDEF workshops use acquired techniques to train their group members and establish a central nursery for the group (i.e. from where they will get good planting materials for field planting or for sale).

2. NDEF works with them to be sure that it is done well. A plan to follow up progress is then drawn up with the group and defines respective tasks to be completed by Group and NDEF before next visit.

### Step 4. Farm Establishment

- Planning on the set up of the farm
- Choosing interested varieties
- Deciding on the mode of intercropping
- Adopting erosion control measures (vetiver grass, contouring, ...)
- Integration of leguminous/nitrogen trees, fertilizer trees, bee loving trees...
- General preparations
- Field planting and management

### Step 5. Integration of Bee Farming Practices

- Ø Introduction of bee farming activities
- Ø Construction of beehives

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- Ø Apiary development
- Ø Placement of hives
- Ø Management

### Step 6. Harvesting & Marketing

Honey, Plantains/bananas, Fruits, Medicinal plants, Foodstuffs, Preservation techniques and Selective Marketing.

### Step 7. Processing & Marketing

Transforming some produce to add value and increase variety; honey by-products (wax, oils, polish . . .); flour from plantains & tubers; Starch, garri, etc, from cassavas; wine, jam and whisky from banana/plantains; barks and leaves of medicinal plants processed into consumable forms.

The role of NDEF is quite important both in the techniques involved and in the provision of appropriate equipment. NDEF may also have to open up channels of distribution after helping a collection of groups to establish a central sales point.

## NDEF Reduces Farmer Groups

NDEF has decided to reduce the number of groups they are working with. While many groups have remained, some have been dropped, while other groups are on a waiting list, and their status will depend their performances in the early part of the year. By the middle of 2007, we will make our final selection. The main reason for this reduction is to enable NDEF to have a strong focus, and pay particular attention to the remaining proactive members rather than over stretching our resources and achieving little. NDEF has limited resources and feel this is the most efficient way to use them. This will also enable us to break new grounds in other villages. Our lone criteria of selecting groups solely depends on the groups dedication and ability to work cohesively together.

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Contact: Tel 723 27 67, 777 19 77, [ndefcameroon@yahoo.com](mailto:ndefcameroon@yahoo.com), Website: [www.ndefcameroon.org](http://www.ndefcameroon.org)