

# Supplementary Materials: Investigating the Role of the Local Community as Co-Managers of the Mount Cameroon National Park Conservation Project

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## Interview Transcript

GIZ: *"If we involve local communities in the participation of forest activity, it will lead to sustainable development. But in Cameroon, we are at the initial stage to really involve communities in REDD+ issues. Moreover, Cameroon has a very hierarchical structure. So it will take a long time for communities to see that they are empowered enough to participate. In the long run it will certainly lead to sustainable development if other problems like migration are also addressed."*

LC: *"We need financial assistance and training to do large scale farming."*

LC: *"It is better they employ us the indigenous people because we know and understand the forest better."*

LC: *"We have also asked them to employ the village boys who know more about the forest because they live there, but they refused."*

LC: *"There is no light, no good road, no health centre, no bank or credit union, but there are private money lenders. Only two houses have lights, no pipe-water. We travel to other villages to fetch water very far from here. We are not motivated. We need microfinance, institutions, schools to train us, we need jobs."*

LC: *"We are just praying that the REDD+ should put into practice all their conservation ideas. We love the national park too, we love the conservation programme, but we are not happy with the way they are treating us. Our cry is that we need employment, we must not work only on the mountain, and we can work anywhere else. We just need a job and a salary at the end of the month."*

GIZ: *"It is a top-down approach, not a bottom-top. So it is not the community asking for more involvement in the park management, it is coming from the park service trying to involve more local stakeholders because we see more benefit in involving the communities."*

National: *"We involve the local community in identifying the key drivers of deforestation and land degradation.... local communities are involved in carbon sequestration like CED."*

Sub-national: *"We are implementing collaborative management approach, whereby, we mobilise the community towards appropriate measures. We try to involve the community as partners and the villagers can tell you how involved they are."*

Sub-national: *"The clusters are divided by natural boundaries; by hills, rivers etc. ... It enables the conservation members to really know the boundaries ... We employ local community here to demarcate the boundary. ...they (boundary tracers) inform other members of community that any activities on certain areas are illegal. Illegal activities are reported and the park service takes necessary actions. They choose the people who are going to work in this activity and they are actually paid. The village committee send three members each to present what have been done."*

Sub-national: *"We are implementing a collaborative management approach, where, those who are elements of the community development explain about conservation and development. The park was created as a motivator for development... We are assisting villagers to come out with conservation development agreement. We assisted the villages to carry out the 'agro-ecological socio-economic assessment' to know what the villages are really doing to earn a living, what they are collecting in the forest, how they use the forest, what are their problems."*

Sub-national: *"We have to sensitise the communities and negotiate with them. Based on funds available, we can select one or two micro-projects to be funded. It is after this that we can add it in the document of*

conservation development agreement. It is this document that segregates conservation activities and defines also the responsibilities in the park and conservation development agreement. Stating clearly how we can assist the community by building roads, buying cassava machine etc. So we do not just impose..."

Sub-national: "We are working within the framework of MCNP. This park was created in December 2009 with the objectives to ensure sustainable management. The MCNP is peculiar in plants and animals species and also to promote aqua-tourism which is one big objective in this forest projects... One of our responsibilities now is to see, how we can put in place structures for park management. We are looking at the park and activities of the surrounding park... these 41 villages already give you an idea of the pressure around this area. It has a human population of more than 100,000 and a surface area of 58,178 ha. So it is a big challenge to take this responsibility."

Sub-national: "The Park has a lot of protective units like the collaboration management unit which does a lot of patrol to ensure that no illegal activity is done."

Local-group: "MOCAP was created in 2005 before the national park was created. We started with 13 villages.... After the creation of MCNP, we had about 31 villages that registered with MOCAP."

Local-group: "They cannot harvest it as they used to harvest because it was unsustainable. But now they have to plant the trees and harvest with a specific method which we are training them and only specific trees are harvested though strenuous."

LC: "We are falling down trees, but we are also planting and preserving some particular trees species."

LC: "We are the ones preserving the forest. If we have to rate ourselves in the involvement in forest activity, we would earn 4/5."



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