

# Lessons Learned in Exploring Linkages Between Food Security, Nutrition and Conservation through PHE in the Jengi Forest, Southeast Cameroon

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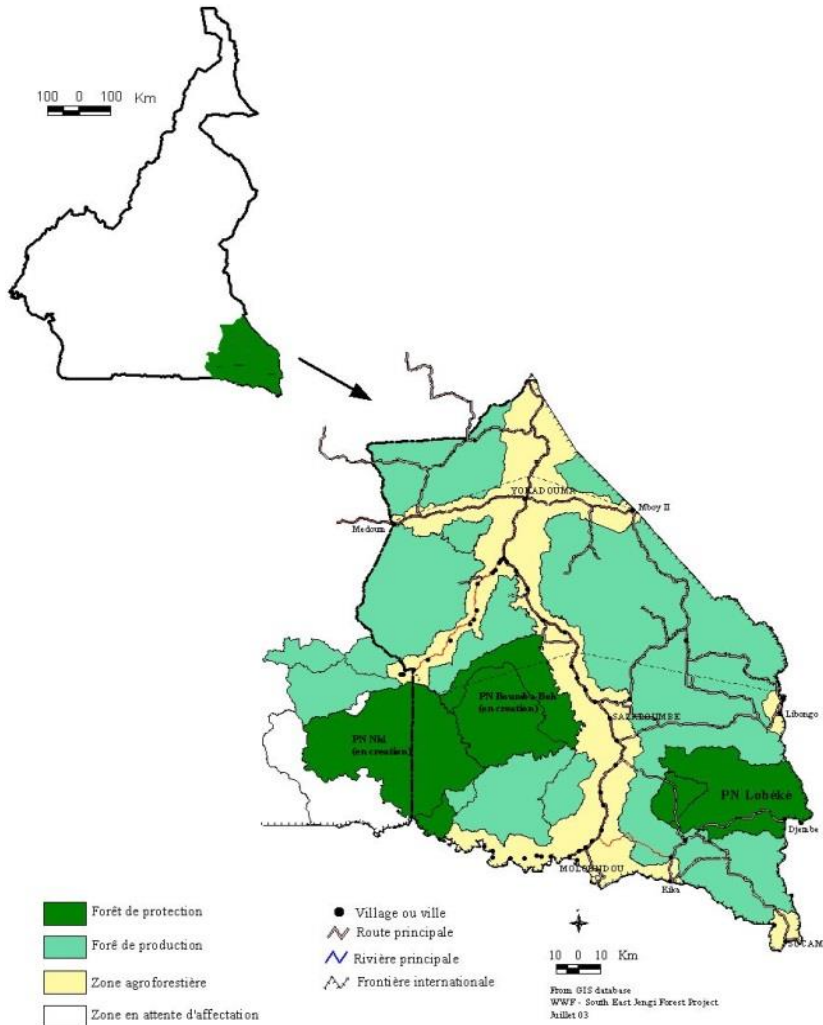


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# Context

Lobeke National Park (LNP), Jengi Forest, Southeast Cameroon

- Part of the Sangha Tri-National Protected Area Network;
- Remote area very rich in biodiversity;
- Under high poaching and logging pressure;
- Buffer zones of LNP include 28 communities (mainly of Baka (IPs) and Bantou people);
- Population lives in high poverty; many lack access to basic health services, to safe drinking water, to economic opportunities;
- Forest concessions in the area provide some benefits for infrastructure development;
- Along side the conservation program, funding for PHE and WASH initiatives has been present for 7 years.



# Pilot Project Objectives

- Explore the linkages that exist between current PHE practices in the project area and biodiversity conservation while integrating nutrition and food security dimensions
- Improve family health and wellbeing through adoption of best behaviors promoted through PHE, including sustainable agriculture, nutrition and food security



## Pilot Project - Main Activities

- Training of Health and Environment Scouts (HES) and School Clubs, local NGOs and government partners on PHE messages and best practices
- Train women focal points to facilitate mothers' groups sessions on nutrition, food prep. demonstrations with support from health staff
- Collaborative work with local partners (CSOs/LNGOs, government - Health, Agriculture, Education and Forest/Water Ministries)
- HES conduct mass campaigns and small group demonstration sessions on integrated PHE messages and best practices; technical assistance for household latrines; promoting WASH concepts
- Provide technical support to communities (including women's groups) in the various PHE cross-sectors



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# Main Accomplishments – Spring 2018

- Refresher training of 36 Health and Environment Scouts on integration of PHE with nutrition/food security
- 30+ School Clubs developed an action plan – Hygiene, sanitation and environment
- Trained 30 women focal points on nutrition and food security
- Reached over 500 women - Awareness on nutrition, feeding practices, food security, including practical workshops
- Conducted over 20 large-scale campaigns on integrated PHE messages and best practices - nutrition/food security, WASH, family planning, natural resources management.
- Support 14 young student farmers to implement micro-projects



# Lessons Learned

The activities related to nutrition & food security, family planning and sustainable agriculture have enabled the identification of cross-cutting solutions relating to **biodiversity conservation** and **sustainable development** in communities living in the buffer zone of LNP



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# Lessons Learned - General

- Engagement and commitment of local authorities, village chiefs, government partners is necessary for community participation
- It's essential to conduct assessments on the knowledge, attitude, beliefs of communities relating to PHE sectors, to target activities
- The fight against malnutrition and food insecurity engages community conservation discourses – it can be efficient tool for positive actions against poaching
- More in-depth research into the cultural beliefs and taboos of IPs on family planning practices is necessary to better target awareness campaigns to reach them and help address the high rates of teenage pregnancies



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# Lessons Learned – Nutrition & Food Security

- The cultural food taboos among the IPs are challenging to address; practical demonstrations help in getting them to adopt best practices
- Involvement of household heads – most often men – is essential for a successful nutrition and food security program, for lasting solutions
- Nutritional inputs based on local foods help prevent malnutrition at low cost and have positive impact on promoting HH gardens/orchards; opportunity to provide to teach sustainable agricultural techniques



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# Lesson Learned – Sustainable Agriculture

- Targeting women's interests/capacity in agroforestry, small animal husbandry, improving entrepreneurship skills helps promote women's empowerment and their engagement in NRM decision making
- Using improved corn and soybean cultivars progressively promotes off-season crops and diversifies sources of income, which in turn help alleviate poaching problems relating to lack of livelihoods
- Promoting youth initiatives to involve them at all levels of the food system and facilitating access to land/resources needs to be prioritized, they are dynamic and are the leaders of tomorrow



# Thank You!

