

Mapping and Forest Governance

SOUTH-WEST REGION CAMEROUN

IMPLEMENTATION PROCESS



**SUPPORTING COMMUNITY IN THE
MAPPING OF THEIR CUSTOMARY
LANDS AND RESOURCES**

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INTRODUCTION

The Mapping and Forest Governance (MFG) Project in Cameroon is part of a regional programme funded by the British Department for International Development (DfID) that aims to contribute to poverty reduction, sustainable management and improved governance of tropical rainforests in the Congo Basin. This is done through the documentation of forest communities' land tenure and governance systems, and through the promotion and implementation of forest communities' rights to land and forest resources.

The communities in Nguti Subdivision, KUPE MUANENGUBA Division was chosen as one of the communities who benefited from the Project of RAINFOREST FOUNDATION on mapping and forest governance in the Congo Basin and was supported through the mapping process using ACCET methodology.

Context of the project in Nguti Council

Government plans to make Cameroon an emergent economy by 2035 have in recent years led to an upsurge in forest areas being granted to the agro-industries, mining and large infrastructure projects. However, the lack of integrated planning among different ministries has resulted in the allocation of overlapping concessions and jurisdictions, often on land that is used and otherwise claimed by local communities.

This trend is also very noticeable in Nguti Council, where a number of projects are either underway or planned, which place forest-depend communities under unprecedented pressure and pose serious challenges to their rights to forest lands and resources. These are mainly related to forest exploitation, conservation, the agro-industries and infrastructure construction. Nguti Council has around 54 identified communities, but the real number is likely to be much higher.

The area is significantly affected by the Herakles Farms project and there are also a number of individual oil palm plantations. It has 1 new UFA (UFA11-0072), 2 ventes de coupe, 1 council forest (Nguti Council Forest) and 5 proposed community forests. The proposed construction of the Kumba-Mamfé road will also impact the area.

Two protected areas, Banyang Mbo Wildlife Sanctuary and Bakossi National Park, partly extend over Nguti. According to some sources, new boundaries for Bakossi National Park are being negotiated with WWF support that are much less appropriate than the original boundaries of the former Bakossi Mountains Forest Reserve. The new boundary includes many villages that were outside, cuts off key corridors with neighbouring Banyang Mbo

Wildlife Sanctuary and no longer follows natural boundaries, but instead a number of cut lines which are high maintenance and impractical. There are also two proposed integral ecological reserves, Mount Kupe and Muanenguba, but some have pointed out that it is impractical to manage them as integral ecological reserves and that the communities should be supported to renegotiate this proposed status.

Nguti council is marked with high tensions between competing visions of development by economic operators such as Herakles, communities and conservation organisations. The local Administration is particularly sensitive regarding NGO work around Nguti.

GENERAL OBJECTIVE

To support communities in the production of a map showing their livelihood activities there by, promoting their rights in relation to access, use and control of land and resources.

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES

- Present the project to the community
- Identify livelihood activities
- Train local cartographers
- Produce a community map
- Discussed the map with the community
- Strengthened the capacity of the community in promoting their rights to the access of land and resources;

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE MAPPING PROCESS

1. Identification and information phase

During this phase, community that are liable to have future land conflicts particularly communities around forest concession, agro industries, mining zones and protected areas are identified and informed about the project; it aim, objectives and benefits of the project to the local communities.



2. Prospection phase

During this phase the facilitators meet with the entire community and present the project Mapping and Forest Governance in the Congo Basin in details. The community selects indigenes that will be trained as village local cartographers.



3. Formation of focus group

Focus groups are formed; to know the problems that the community is facing especially problems related to land tenure.



4. Ground map elaboration

The entire population show how their community is spatially represented on the ground. This ground map will help the local cartographers to better master their customary lands and resources.



5. Transfer of ground map to a cardboard paper

The ground is later transfer to a cardboard.



6. Training of local cartographers

The local cartographers were trained by the facilitators on:

- What is a map
- Elements, types and uses of a map
- Process in the elaboration of a map
- Orientation on the types of data to collect
- Utilization of GPS tablets in the collection of data



7. Practical on data collection

The local cartographer does more practical, this enable them to have a good mastery of the GPS tablets.



8. Field data collection

Local cartographers ready for field data collection

Local cartographers collecting data on the field



9. Data treatment

Both the local cartographers and the GIS technician treat the collected data and produce the map together. These prevent errors from occurring and even if there are errors, the local cartographers together with the community correct it immediately and the GIS technician intergrade these corrections.



10. Validation of the map

The map produced is projected on a white cloth, and presented to the entire population by the local cartographers.



11. Award of certificates of training to local cartographers

Handing of certificates of training to local cartographers



Handing of the map and necessary document to the village representatives



Community photo at the end of the validation stage



12. Movement of team to the next village



13. Support communities to use the maps

Support missions to communities: AJESH prepares and conducts missions to support communities to analyse the problems they face in relation to land allocation and use, identify community representatives to address these, and formulate and express adequate demands.

Workshop to present maps: Once a certain momentum for this has been built through mapping work and support missions, this workshop will create an opportunity for communities to present their maps and the problems they face and to express their demands in relation to these. This will require a good preparation, including through one or more preliminary trips to communities and a 2 day pre-workshop with community representatives. Clear ToRs will need to be developed both for the workshop and the pre-workshop and sent to FODER and RFUK in advance of the activity. The workshop will also need follow-up through further missions to communities (for restitution in villages, assessing results, discussing next steps, etc.).

14. Monitoring and reporting

The Coordination of AJESH is responsible for a number of monitoring and reporting tasks of various periodicities:

Monthly mapping compilation: AJESH submits to FODER a DVD with the mapping data of the month accompanied by a transfer sheet. When possible, mapping teams will send FODER any data that becomes available in advance of sending the monthly compilation (such as maps in PDF or Word, shape-files, etc.).