



**Green
Development
Advocates**

For a Green Congo Basin

2017

ANNUAL



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2017, a year at the service of grassroots communities

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FOREWORD

2 017 was a year in which GDA experienced a remarkable increase in its activities. GDA's activities in 2017 were geared towards securing community lands through community forests, improving community livelihoods, promoting sustainable forest management in a bid to fight against climate change as well as advocating for the respect of the rights of indigenous communities to their lands and forests in the South and South West regions of Cameroon.

Despite the constraints encountered in this respect, these activities have paved the way for the creation of more partnerships and the development of new initiatives so as to better address the socio-economic as well as environmental challenges, local and indigenous communities face.

We extend our profound gratitude to all our technical and financial partners whose contributions/support were instrumental in making our endeavors a success, and we are committed to work better for the protection of the environment and the betterment of the local and indigenous peoples' lives.

Presentation of Green Development Advocates

Organizational Profile

GDA is a Civil Society Organization (CSO) under Cameroonian law, created in 2009 by a multidisciplinary group of former NGO executives working in the same sector of activity. It was legalized on June 30, 2011 and strives for development that is respectful of social and environmental requirements/standards.

Our mission

GDA's mission is to contribute to the sustainable development of African tropical forests in the respect of the culture, rights, interests and needs of African peoples with special focus given to the situation of the indigenous forest peoples known as pygmies.

Our objectives

- ♦ Promote good environmental governance.
- ♦ Integrate the consideration of the environment into local development initiatives and into the policies of modern actors (states, aid agencies, the private sector, etc.).
- ♦ Make available to the mostly poor and vulnerable population alternative judicial services legal assistance, defence and protection of socio-economic rights of citizens).
- ♦ Strengthen the capacity of civil society actors in the field of environmental protection and advocacy.
- ♦ To provide indigenous peoples and other threatened populations with support for self-promotion that respects their environment and culture;
- ♦ Inform, educate and raise awareness on environmental and human rights issues;
- ♦ Contribute to the sustainable management of natural resources and the fight against climate change.
- ♦ Promote the mainstreaming of gender and minorities in the implementation of development policies and programmes.

Our Intervention strategy

- ⇒ Development of partnerships with local and indigenous communities, public institutions, international organizations, civil society organizations and companies working for the protection of the environment and human rights.
- ⇒ Emphasis on outreach and pro-activity.
- ⇒ Networking the association to strengthen its capacity for action and its effectiveness.
- ⇒ Permanent recycling of members and staff through trainings, seminars, exchange meetings.

Structure of GDA

The General Assembly

The General Assembly is the supreme body of the organization and includes all members of the association. It elects for a period of three (3) years at most five (5) administrators who constitute the administrative body of the organization. Unless otherwise decided by the General Assembly, the election is held by correspondence with the Executive Secretariat.

Board of Directors and its Bureau

The Board of Directors has all the powers to make decisions relating to the administration of the Association in accordance with the provisions of the statutes. Its members exercise their mandate on a personal and free basis and elects its President, Vice-President and appoints an Executive Secretary.

The board meets when convened by its President or the Executive Secretary of the Association and holds two ordinary sessions each year and may meet in extraordinary session at the request of either the President or half of its members, addressed to the President or the Executive Secretary. The agenda is indicated on the summons and decisions are taken by a majority of the members present or representatives. No member present can receive more than two powers and in case of a tie, the President has the casting vote. The Board of Directors appoints from among its members three members to form a Bureau which represents it and ensures the execution of its policy in the interval of its sessions; this office is composed of the President of the Vice-president and the Executive Secretary.

The Exécutive Secrétariat

The Executive Secretariat is the management and coordinating body of the Association, which it runs. The Executive Secretary is appointed by the Board of Directors. And his term of office is three years renewable. He is responsible for the management of the association before the Board of Directors and its bureau and submits to them the programmes, action plans, budget details and the audit report of an external audit to the Association.

PROJECTS

During the year 2017, GDA was able to implement different projects in the South and South-West regions of Cameroon with the support of its partners which are:

Project title : Promoting Community Entrepreneurship

Project area : Nkolenyeng, South Region – Cameroon

Partner : Global Greengrants Fund, Association des Femmes, Hommes et Amis de Nkolenyeng (AFHAN)

This project aims to promote entrepreneurship at the local level. To achieve this, GDA was inspired by the experience of ¹Muhammad Yunus to establish and set up a rotating fund for financing sustainable income generating activities/micro-projects. We have also strengthened the capacities of these populations on the development of micro-projects and the maintenance of small accounts.



Capacity building on community micro projects elaboration



¹Mohammad Yunus in 1976 founded the Grameen Bank, which is the first micro-credit institution which lends money to farmers and rural poor excluded from the traditional banking system

Through this project, about 120 inhabitants of Nkolenyeng divided into 15 groups of confidence could carry out activities such as the rehabilitation of palm plantations, the purchase of pesticides and inputs for cocoa cultivation, production and marketing of local wine, small businesses, the production of bread. The head of this village BIFANE Emmanuel tells us that "thanks to the micro credit scheme set up by GDA I was able to borrow some money to revive my palm plantation, which had been abandoned for years. The money borrowed was used to pay for the land clearing of my plantation and its first harvest was 500 litres of palm oil that I sold in town and refunded the loan."



His Majesty BIFANE Emmanuel presenting the proceeds from his palm plantation to the Programme Coordinator of GDA

"The funds enabled me to produce local wine which was sold at Djoum and now I can fully pay the hospital bills of my children and I when we get sick unlike before when I had to beg the doctor to treat us on credit. The microcredit scheme has been of great help to our village, my children went to school this year with all the notebooks and texts books and I paid for their tuition fees" says Ms. Paulette.

In addition, this project has contributed to strengthening links and cohesion in the village. Indeed, as specified by Michel AVILI fund manager "every 10th of the month, the whole meets to discuss on the merits of the micro-credit. This is the time when people pay back the money lent and others submit their projects to apply for the loan. At this meeting, we also take the opportunity to talk about other things pertaining to the village."

Project title : Impact monitoring of the Sangmelima-Djoum-Mintom highway construction project on Baka Communities

Project areas : Djoum, Mintom, Sangmelima

Partners : Global Greengrants Fund, ADEBAKA, ABAGUENI, ABAWONI

With funding from a number of donors, including BADEA, BID, ADB, the Saudi Development Fund, the Kuwait Fund Cameroon in the Republic of Congo have taken on to link their two capitals by a 651 km cross-border road from Sangmelima in Cameroon to Ouessou in the Republic of Congo. This road crosses the community lands of the Baka indigenous people and will have a sudden effect on the space and way of life of these peoples.



Project partners presenting results of data collected

This project aimed to document the impacts of the road construction on the Bakas. Moreover this road has affected more than 700 people in 14 villages between Sangmelima - Djoum - Mintom . There is destruction of houses, farmland, sacred sites, tombs and the entire displacement of some Baka villages such as in Doum.

There is also a lack of consultation coupled with low/default compensation. Mr. Aba'a Simon of Abing village exposed that he received 20,000 FCFA as compensation for his plantain plantation estimated at more than 200 feet. This is the same situation in which Mrs. Haman Wena Jacqueline received 50,000 francs for the destruction of her house. In Adjap, a village of more than 50 people received 100,000 for the destruction of thirty (30) feet of oil palm plantation in the community.

We extended the activities of this project to Mintom notably in the Baka village of Nkoulemboula. There, the village community of about 50 people is threatened with eviction due to the discovery of a limestone deposit in the area that will enter into operation shortly.



Our interviews revealed that the community was neither consulted nor appropriately informed. A mother from the village said: "People came to tell us that because of the exploitation of the limestone that is next to our village, we had to leave without telling us where we should go. This is our village our parents are buried here, we have our houses here what are we going to do if we are chased from here?"

Project title : Securing the rights of forest communities against land grabbing in the Ndian and Kupe Muanenguba divisions of the South-West region-Cameroon

Duration: 12 months

Project areas : Mundemba, Toko, Nguti

Partners : New England Biolabs Foundation (NEBF), Ajemalebu Self Help (AJESH), Struggle to Economize Future Environments (SEFE)

To help secure community lands around the Nta Ali, Bayang Mbo, Rumpi Hills and Bakossi National Park reserves in the Southwest region against threats from the expansion of agro-industrial plantations, GDA with support from NEBF organized an information and sensitization campaign of the communities of Kupe Muanenguba and Ndian divisions to promote the legal instruments that protects natural space including that of creating a community forest provided for by the Forest Law of 1994 and its implementing texts.



Sensitization meeting in Osirayib



Visit at the residence of the sub-divisional officer for Nguti

The project successfully impacted five (05) communities directly: three (03) in the Ndian division namely; Ndiba in the Mundemba sub division and Bweme Ngolo and Meangwe in the Toko sub division and two (2) in the Kupe Muanenguba division namely; Talangaye and Osirayib in the Nguti sub division with an estimated population of 500 inhabitants. It is worth noting that at the end of this project, Talangaye community expressed the desire to be supported by the project team in the process of acquiring a community forest.



*Sensitization meeting
in Talangaye*



*Divisional Delegation of
Forestry and Wildlife
for Ndian*

Project title : Supporting the Bagyelis of Lokoundje in becoming autonomous and resilient to climate change

Duration : 18 months

Project areas : Lokoundje sub division-Bivouba, Mintende, Nkaguet

Partners : Global Environment Facility-Small Grants Programme of the UNDP, Association Reveil des Femmes Autochtones

This project aims to contribute to securing traditional lands and to empower Bagyeli villages Bivouda, Mintende and Nkaguet of Lokoundjé sub-division of the Ocean Division. More specifically, the aim is to strengthen recognition as a step in securing the traditional/ancestral lands of the Bagyeli populations of the Bivouda, Mintende and Nkaguet villages of Lokoundjé for the preservation of biodiversity and their culture; contribute to mitigate the adverse effects of climate change through reforestation and strengthening the use of sustainable practices by the Bagyeli.



Working session at Bivouba



Working session in Mintende

After 06 months of project implementation, we have organized awareness campaigns that have touched about 120 Bagyeli, set up 04 nurseries comprising 10.000 cocoa seedlings for Bivouba, 2500 seedlings for each of the two other villages namely Nkaguet and Mintende, to be planted on 10 hectares of land that will be used for reforestation through cocoa agroforestry and a propagator for the production of plantains and bananas with a production capacity of 500 shoots. 78 people were trained in sustainable agriculture techniques subsequently 58 people trained in cocoa including 24 women and 34 men and 13 trained in plantain and banana multiplication techniques including 7 women and 6 men.



Mise Setting up of cocoa nurseries at Nkaguet and Mintende



Training on the Plants Stems Fragments (PIF) technique at Bivouba

Other interventions / technical support

MEETINGS AND WORKSHOPS

In the course of 2017, GDA took part in meetings organized within the framework of the networks and platforms in which it is a member namely:

- The 56th and 57th General Assemblies of the Pygmies Concerted Action Research Network (RACOPY) held respectively on July 6 and 7 in Bertoua organized by Association OKANI and on October 26 and 27 in Yokadouma organized by CEFAID .



56th RACOPY General Assembly, Bertoua (Family photo)

- The sensitization and training workshop on Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs) and other metals to reduce their risks for man and the environment in Cameroon, organized by the Center for Research and Education for Development (CREPD) in September 2017 at Edéa, a project sponsored by Global Environment Facility-Small Grants Programme (GEF-SGP), Cameroon.

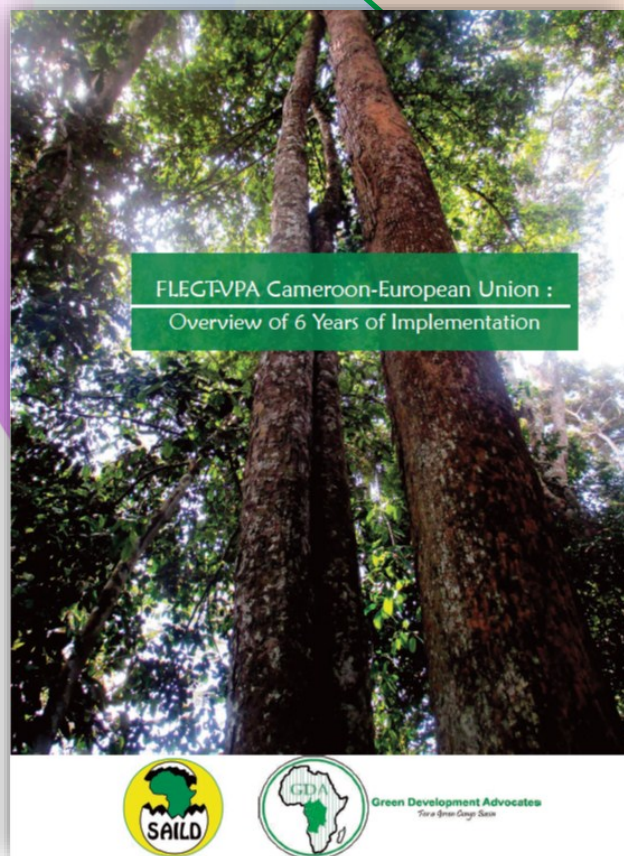
- The workshop to close the project to improve the livelihoods of the Bedzang pygmies of the Tikar plain organized by Centre d'Appui aux Femmes et aux Ruraux (CAFER) in October at Ngambe Tikar to share the results obtained and lessons learnt, during which GDA represented RACOPY.
- The Community and Forest Platform (CFP) workshop organized by Centre pour l'Environnement et le Développement (CED) on November 01, 02 and 03 in Yaounde under the theme *'Acting on the challenges of the VPA: Illegal exploitation and change in forest cover within the framework of non-forest investments'*.
- The Capacity Building Workshop for Policy Makers, Civil Society, and advocacy networks on rights-based approaches and pro-poor principles in REDD + on December 19, 20 and 21 in Akono-Ngoumou organized by IUCN, Cameroon, where GDA also represented RACOPY.



*IUCN Workshop,
Akono-Ngoumou*

Publications

In collaboration with the Support Service for Local Initiatives (SAILD), two briefing notes were produced; the first published in February 2017 titled: APV-FLEGT Cameroon - European Union : look at 06 years of implementation; the second in June 2017 under the title APV-FLEGT Cameroon-European Union At the crossroads, FLEGT-XIT or FLEGT+. These two documents analyze the causes of the delay observed in the implementation of the Cameroon VPA and makes concrete proposals for the maintenance, improvement and effectiveness of the VPA



HUMANS RESOURCES

The above-mentioned achievements would not have existed without the involvement of the staff of the organization, in this case:

NAME	FUNCTION
Aristide CHACGOM	Jurist, Programme Coordinator
Anne-Marie ASSEMBE,	Administrative and Financial Officer
Benoit NDAMEU	Technical Adviser/Fund raising
David TEKEU	Accountant
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Laetitia MAGOUA	Project Assistant
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PARTNERS

All the initiatives undertaken by GDA would not have been possible without the support of our technical and financial partners who from the start trusted us. Our gratitude goes particularly to the following organizations :





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