



community agriculture and environmental protection association – **cameroon**

sustainable, resilient & economic development

CAEPA's roots in agro-forestry will continue as it works within farming and pastoralist communities to seed, grow and plant native trees and shrubs. This will continue to bridge gaps between forest corridors not only to protect the environment, but to also to provide critical forest fodder and food for local people and their livestock. This work will also continue to protect water catchments, preserving the quantity and quality of water available for multi-purpose use (livestock, food crops, human consumption and use) year-round. CAEPA can now also advance its collaboration with farmer and pastoralist communities, primarily strengthening farmer-to-farmer-herder cooperatives and cooperation between the two.

Smallholder farmers, particularly women-headed households lack the profit or capital to invest in improved technologies that would increase their own agro-businesses output on their own. Learning coping strategies to tackle a new disease, late rains or a short harvesting period also happens in isolation. Pooling the collective knowledge and resources of farmers and enabling them to finance and purchase improved technology, such as tractors for plowing, tilling and planting, as well as food/crop harvesting and processing equipment. Farming and herding co-ops can also play a critical role in strengthening farmers' capacities in seed multiplication, storage and banking in order to improve grazing fodder fields and food crop quality and resilience, ensuring better food security following periods of environmental shock.

They can also play a role maintaining current tree nurseries, tree planting and distribution, as well as together increasing market access through shared storage facilities (such as solar powered cooling facilities) and shared crop and product transportation.

While CAEPA has shown much success in developing farming cooperatives and plans to capitalise on this, the challenge of farmer-pastoralist conflict still persists.

To encourage collaboration rather than conflict, CAEPA seeks to develop not only herder-to-herder cooperatives, but also farmer-to-herder asset-sharing cooperatives and market days where farmers and pastoralists can engage in and promote local trade. Additionally, CAEPA will support microcredit schemes, inclusive of continuing to promote and train farmers and pastoralists in beekeeping and introduce biogas production and distribution. Beekeeping is an important aspect of flowering crop plant pollination (bees can be rotated among farmers/crops to increase the pollination of food crops across multiple farms and improve the quality and taste of the honey as a food source), provide a source of energy, and a product that can be processed, packaged and sold, diversifying household income. Since CAEPA has successfully implemented bee keeping in the past, the goal now is to scale-up these efforts and integrate lessons learned in the re-design of these projects to increase the colonization rate; and to rotate the apiaries among farms to improve pollination.

Apiary rotation among farms can also generate income for bee-keepers additional to that made from the processing and sale of honey. Biogas production is a simple way to harvest a natural by-product of livestock rearing, and can provide a source of natural fertilization whereby the slurry from the digester could be shared or sold to farmers to improve crop yields. It can also provide a source of energy in a region that is largely outside of the electrical grid. CAEPA will also introduce goats into cattle-rearing transhumance/pastoralist communities to diversify their production and consumption, and increase their ability to cope with seasonal variability, poor grazing lands and the high water consumption required in raising cattle. Goats provide food security, a capital asset that can be sold in times of crisis; and a profitable agricultural investment capable of providing milk and meat; increasing the protein consumption of both pastoral and small-holder farming households.

helping families thrive in sustainable communities

