A REPORT PRESENTED BY FOEPSUD ON WORLD DAY TO COMBAT DESERTIFICATION AND DROUGHT (WDCD) 2017 EDITION ON THE THEME “CONSERVING LAND FOR SUSTAINABLE LIVELIHOOD” WITH THE SLOGAN “OUR LAND, OUR HOME, OUR FUTURE” TO THE UN CONVENTION TO COMBAT DESERTIFICATION (UNCCD) SECRETARIAT WDCD2017@unccd.int

INTRODUCTION

FOEPSUD celebration of this year is centered on protecting the land for sustainable water supply to local communities that can build resilience against current multi-fold development challenges through sustainable land management practices. This day reminds us of land’s important role in water conservation and purification, hence to add to the sustainability, stability and security of desertification-affected places like the Abongfen forest which constitute two water basins known as water catchment areas.
Devastated Abongfen water catchment on one part of the forest

Investing in the land will create local jobs and give households and communities a fighting chance to live, which will, in turn, strengthen national security and our future prospects for sustainability. Following this year’s slogan “Our land, Our home, Our Future” which is the rallying call for this year’s celebration of the World Day to Combat Desertification on 17 June 2017, some of the ways we celebrated the power that land holds in giving people the opportunity and a future to stay resilient on their home ground is here below. Our activities this year was focussed on tree planting in the Abongfen water catchments in the Kedjom keku Mountain forest.

ACTIVITIES REALISED
Activities that we carryout to celebrate this year WDCD included launching campaign programs (Radio talk, press or awareness raising), Tree planting, Environmental Quiz and exhibition (Award of prizes to Secondary and University levels), Drama sketch, etc.
1. LAUNCHING AND AWARENESS CAMPAIGN PROGRAMS (14/06/2017)
   - Radio Talk at CRTV Bamenda from 5.00am to 7.00am

From left to right is Mr. Julius Neba, Mr. Nnoko Marcel Etomes, Mr. Moma Henry Awah and Mr. Mikes

This radio talk which was part of the sensitization campaign program was passed on air program in CRTV Bamenda, known as “Highlands Morning Show”. Participants in this program included the host journalist: Mr. Julius Neba, Technician: Mr. Deutou Pierre while the guest (experts) came from FOEPSUD (Mr. Nnoko Marcel Etomes), RD MINEPDED NW (Mr. Moma Henry Awah) and a conservationist, Mr. Mikes- coordinator of Kedjom Keku CASUD. This program took place from 5:00 am to 7:00 am on Thursday 14/06/2017.

- **Awareness campaign program**
During the awareness campaign on and before the radio talk, fliers printed (here attached) were distributed, banners posted, symposium, etc. A presentation was done by Mr. Mikes on the official day of celebration which is attached to this report.
The outcomes if we invest in rural lands and unleash their massive job-creating potential are the symposium that we educate the youths in particular before they participated in the environmental quiz

The slogan draws global attention to the central role productive land can play in turning the growing tide of migrants abandoning unproductive land into communities and nations that are stable, secure and sustainable, into the future. The absence of valuable land could preempt unnecessary movements of people, and reduce current and potential conflicts over scarce resources in degrading areas. Sustainable land management offers young people vast opportunities for income generation in sectors such as agriculture, food processing and tourism.

The following can help us reverse the trend in water shortages, poor agricultural land and food security:

- Protecting our water catchments by planting water friendly trees;
- Practicing sustainable agricultural practices: avoid slash and burn agriculture, bush fires and ankara;
- Stop the reclamation of wetlands which are source of fresh water;
- Stop deforestation for fuel wood and create fuel plantations and community forests;
- Plant ornamental trees in towns to green the cities and mitigate the effects of climate change;
- Stop the planting of eucalyptus trees in water catchments and sheds;
- Maintain soil cover by either planting grass or trees to prevent landslides and soil movements due to erosion;
- Containing the spread of cities and population growth;
- Proper waste management to avoid water and soil pollution;
- Implement EIA for all projects and mitigation measures put in place to avoid adverse environmental effects degrading the land;
- Grazing of animals should not exceed the carrying capacity of the land; and
- Plant improved pastures for improved animal production.

2. TREE PLANTING CAMPAIGN AND HIKE 15-16/06/2017)

Planting of trees in a water catchments area in the Abongfen forest-Big Babanki in Tubah Subdivision, Mezam Division, North West Region of Cameroon. After a good sensitization campaign, many other stake holders, youths, student, the concerned community, interested persons, etc, participated in the tree planting exercise.
Arrival in the forest nursery and collection of plants by all who were part of the planting process to the planting site

A brief training was done before the tree planting exercise to train the participant how to plant the trees and care for them. During this time, the community appeal for assistance to train them on nursery management for sustainability.

Tree planting in Abongfen forest

Arrival in the Abongfen forest and group photo in the forest

Two section of the forest were targeted. One of the catchments areas was completely deforested for agriculture while the other was at the beginning. The Abongfen Forest constitutes endemic and endangered species of plants, birds and mammals like Gorilla and Baboons. The forest is found in the Humid Savannah zone of Cameroon where the advancement of desert is a problem to resolve.

Collection of plants and planting
3. VISIT TO KILUM-IJIM MOUNTAIN FOREST & PLANT LIFE SANCTUARY

The Kilum Mountain Range and the Ijim Ridge are in the part of the Western Highlands of Cameroon commonly referred to as the Bamenda Highlands. The Kilum Range (also known as Mount Oku) is situated in Bui Administrative Division in the North West Region. The Ijim Ridge stretches northwest from Mount Oku, starting from the west side of Lake Oku to Kom in Boyo Division. The contiguous Kilum and Ijim Mountain Forests (now known as the Kilum-Ijim Plant Sanctuary) are located between latitude 6°07´N and 6°17´N and Longitude 10°20´E and 10°35´E.
Viewing Lake Oku in the Oku Mountain Forest and Kilum-Ijim Plant life Sanctuary by FOEPSUD (NGO), THE GREENS (NGO) and MINEPDED

4. ENVIRONMENTAL QUIZ

Participants of Quiz for the WDCD 2017 in Bamenda

Students writing the environmental quiz
This quiz is meant for testing the extent to which youths/students understand and care for the Environment. This Quiz took place on Friday 16\textsuperscript{th} June 2017 and was organized in 2 levels being the Secondary school/High school level and University or Higher Institutions level were 39 students participated.

The quiz papers were marked and the results of the first 3 students for each level were proclaimed. These students were invited for their award prizes on the 19\textsuperscript{th} June 2017 since the 17\textsuperscript{th} June was a Saturday not being a working day in Cameroon. The rest were given transportation fare to encourage them participate again.

Hence, the first 3 students for the 2 levels were given but their awards on the day proper for the celebration. The six of them and any other interested students were invited to participate in the tree planting program the next day.
Official launch by HE Governor’s representative; Mr. Nji Joseph - ESCAD (Economic, Social and Cultural Affairs Division) at the North West Region Governor’s office on the 18th June 2017 in Bamenda

- **Drama Sketch**  
The sketch simply demonstrated the crisis a community faced after their forest was seriously devastated. The land could no longer play its productive role for food and especially water, global warming.

- **Presentation**
- **Music of man action on the environment**
- **Presentation of prizes**

The first three for each level was given prize award accordingly.
The six students who stoop low are the winners of this year WDCD 2017 in our community

Other prizes for environmental campaign were also part of the celebration this year to mobilize the pupil’s interest for the environment
**Football trophy**

There was also a football match between us who are coming from outside and the Abongfen community. The Abongfen community won the trophy.

**Conclusion:** Be a part of the solution to the adverse effects of desertification and drought and not a cause of the phenomenon.

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