

Action Group on Governance and Environmental Manag: Packaging local climate change knowledge and practice for education and business

Yaounde, CameroonMankon, Cameroon

Eric Ngang

Year Founded:

2008

Organization type:

nonprofit/ngo/citizen sector

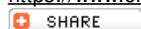
Project Stage:

Growth

Budget:

\$10,000 - \$50,000

Website:

<http://www.freetocharities.org.uk/aggem/>**Facebook:**<https://www.changemakers.com/Aggem%20Cameroon>

- [Income generation](#)
- [Social enterprise](#)
- [Climate change](#)
- [Sustainable agriculture](#)

Project Summary

Elevator Pitch

Concise Summary: Help us pitch this solution! Provide an explanation within 3-4 short sentences.

Developing countries are the most vulnerable to the unavoidable impacts of climate change. However the unsuccessful policies, tools and financial mechanisms to cushion communities have failed to take into consideration local knowledge and practices that offer reliable community adaptation solutions.

WHAT IF - Inspiration: Write one sentence that describes a way that your project dares to ask, "WHAT IF?"

What if local communities harnessed their local knowledge and practices on climate change adaptation and mitigation for business and education opportunities?

About Project

Problem: What problem is this project trying to address?

The highly hailed climate change adaptation solutions to shield households and communities against the unavoidable impacts are currently failing, have sidelined Local Indigenous Knowledge and Practices (LIKPs) that are currently recognised as making significant contribution to community and household adaptation. Seriously considering LIKPS is a significant contribution to the climate change solution and at the same time empowering communities.

Solution: What is the proposed solution? Please be specific!

Harnessing and valuing local indigenous knowledge and practice on climate change mitigation and adaptation used by agrarian communities that can be scaled up to cushion them against the unavoidable impacts of climate change is a significant contribution to addressing the phenomenon. Finding the best options to merge this with scientifically generated data would offer the best opportunity for local agrarian communities to become co-creators of knowledge and practices on climate change mitigation and adaptation. Furthermore, packaging community's knowledge and practices on climate change mitigation and adaptation offers business opportunities through climate tourism and educational opportunities for a wider audience interested in the area.

Awards

Australia Awards Small Grant for project support 2015

Impact: How does it Work

Example: Walk us through a specific example(s) of how this solution makes a difference; include its primary activities.

The once staple food known as "taro" or "cocoyams" serving as a source of carbohydrate and vegetable to a vast majority of communities in Cameroon was devastated by dust plumes that covered the production hotspots in from 2010 due to extremely long dry season. Response from research institutions that were not prepared for this change was slow. The proactive response was to use local indigenous knowledge and practices

of communities including the use of wood ash to preserve the seedlings of these staples for future planning and sprinkling of a concoction of ash during different periods of the growth to prevent the spreading of recurrent pest. These made a difference as the seedlings were more resistant and productivity was on increase.

Impact: What is the impact of the work to date? Also describe the projected future impact for the coming years.

With the data currently generated using locally developed tools, 5 successful public forums attended by local authorities in the climate hotspots and officials from national research institutes in Cameroon have been held. Communities have been very assertive in pressing for the consideration of LIKPs in policy discourse and implementation on climate change mitigation and adaptation. In addition this initiative is accelerating on-farm management, conservation, maintaining crop diversity and sustainability. Participating farmers and communities are using their LIKPs to select and propagate weather and climate resistant genetic resources of staple crops and animals including maize, cocoyams, beans, soya and small ruminants which have improved the food security of 10 participating communities with a population of over 5000 in the climate hotspots in Cameroon.

Spread Strategies: Moving forward, what are the main strategies for scaling impact?

Potential exist for more rigour, so that data generated can be confidently used together scientific data and shared with a wider audience, thus helping farmers especially at household level to continue to produce food in the face of this challenge while contributing to address the phenomenon. Obviously there would be many successful case studies in the world on the use of LIKPs to tackle the phenomenon that are unnoticed. Potential exist to engage in comparative analysis, experiences sharing, in- and between countries with the potential of scaling up while avoiding the pitfalls.

Sustainability

Financial Sustainability Plan: What is this solution’s plan to ensure financial sustainability?

Initially, communities shall be encouraged to engage in joint initiative that results in the production of resilient seeds which are sold to other farmers and the proceeds used to enhance livelihoods. Productivity shall be enhance as a result of planting climate resilient seedlings with sale of extra farm produce through a cooperative ventures resulting in increase funds for communities. The packaging of the local indigenous knowledge and practice

Marketplace: Who else is addressing the problem outlined here? How does the proposed project differ from these approaches?

Many international bodies including the UNFCCC and the IPCC have re-echoed the importance of traditional, local indigenous knowledge and several engagements have been taken but these have hardly moved from paper. There also a number of researchers and renowned institutions including the World Bank and World Food Programme interested in the addressing this problem of poor consideration of LIKPs in climate change discourse and practice. However these have not addressed the business angle of LIKPs including promotion of "climate Tourism" for community empowerment, inherent in this project.

Team

Founding Story

I initiated this project in 2013 after sharing my thoughts on the place of local indigenous and practices on climate change mitigation and adaptation, through a poster presentation at a Conference in Uganda, East Africa attended by over 200 researchers from Africa and abroad. During the session, I shared my experience on working with agrarian communities to find a sustainable solution to the devastation of the staple crop “taro” or “cocoyam’s following a long spell of dry season and dust plumes that spread across Cameroon in 2013. A lot of enthusiasm was generated after my presentation and I thus found a niche, to work with communities to build influence around this subject.

Team

Our team is made of three environment and natural resource managers, one sociologist and anthropologist, and accountant and a secretary all working full time. The members of team have acquired both contextual based experience in Cameroon and through studies, training and experience sharing sessions have gain exposure to other context. This gives a wider perspective on handling this innovative project. The project itself offers further opportunity for experience sharing and learning from different context. This team is expected to learn and grow we engage in the journey of discovery. As the project evolves, we plan to recruit volunteers to work with us as part of policy on skills transfer.

File attachments:

 [grant_agreement_cameroon_tanzania_zambia.pdf](#)

 [resume_eric_ngang.docx](#)

 [local_indigenous_knowledge_and_practice_for_climate_change_mitigation_and_adaptation.jpg](#)

Background

Please confirm how you heard about the Unilever Awards:

Internet search

Please confirm your role in the initiative (eg Founder/co-Founder) and your organisational title:

Founder/CEO

Which of the 8 UN Global Goals (Sustainable Development Goals) pre-selected for this competition does your solution relate most closely to? [select all that apply]

Climate Action.

Please provide examples of any previous entrepreneurial initiatives you have pioneered.

I pioneered the creation of the North West Association of Development Organisations (NWADO) in 2004, an umbrella organisation of over 120 not-for-profit organisations in Cameroon. After four years, the organisation was at a crossroads in search of new orientations to meet the member's expectations. Through a rigorous process of needs identification and prioritisation, I led a team to develop programmes and packages that responded to these needs. One of the things I brought on board was the notion of facilitating the process of the organisation evolving into a social enterprise. Members quickly saw the importance of having a joint conference space rented on fee to members, provision of paid services to members including photocopying and internet, with profits generated used to help the network in its outreach activities and sustaining its operations. Though work was slow and results difficult to achieve that I was dealing with many civil society leaders with diverse organisational interests, I did not lose patience but continued to persevere in this endeavour given that yielded fruits at the end.

Beyond your existing team, who else are you working with to achieve your objectives, eg partners, advisors, mentors?

I have contacted colleagues in Tanzanian Meteorological Organisation in East Africa and the Zambian College of Agriculture working in the same area and we are comparing tools and processes. We are currently using a harmonised tool to harness the local indigenous knowledge and practices and we anticipate publishing a comparative study on the thematic area by the end of 2015. In addition we are working with Dr. Karen McNamara, of the Department of Environment and Geography of the University of Queensland, an authority, working on indigenous knowledge practices on climate change in Australia and the Pacific.

The Australian Government through the Australia Awards Small Grant scheme is supporting us through these processes and we are benefiting from the support of the Australia Awards tea in this project.

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