

The Strategies of People

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Zooming the strategies of people

The world is witnessing food and fertilizer price hypes. The impact of this phenomenon in Africa where poverty is embedded (Bhagavan, 1999) is even graver. The phenomenon in Africa has translated itself into very complex livelihoods strategies which in many ways affect ownership and legality of resources including land and other assets affixed to land.

In Cameroon for instance, unemployed youths in Bobende, Batoke and Idenau have been driven to harvest palm nuts from the palm estates of the Cameroon Development Corporation (CDC). While this has created ways to earn incomes like via the production of local palm oil, it has also shrunk the revenues of CDC that owns the palm trees. They input to grow and manage trees whose fruits are cut and sold by third parties.

Other segments of the population have witnessed a dramatic trimming of their protein intake because of difficulties in buying concentrates for poultry, for pig food etc or even corn that has also seen high prices as an incidence of the incapacity of small scale animal raisers to afford industrially produced animal food. A bag of fowl feed in December 2008, reached 18,000 Francs CFA in Limbe, Cameroon thereby reducing even further protein dependencies in Cameroon where a kilogram of red meat already costs up to 2500 Francs CFA.

Goat Keepers on their part need to develop new methods of raising their animals in Africa. The shrinking of range lands caused by human activities is a major trend in Africa as well as the impact of climate change which has only favoured resilient species of natural vegetation much to the detriment of keepers of herbivores (Bemus, 1971, Bemus, 1981, Bonte et al., 1981). Many have besought in West Africa, to keeping these animals at home and to feeding them with Elephant grass or almost as omnivores (*Based on*

Investigative report on Goats by the African Centre for Community and Development, 12/2008). The need to introduce GMOs in Africa is questioned by arguments that it leads to enhancement of monocultures, the loss of bio-diversity and the reshaping of nutritional preferences of communities (Aristide, 2000) These new livelihoods platforms born out of mutations in traditional livelihoods strategies, offer not only a broad-base arena for development debates but give insight as to best ways of helping or supporting Third World economies in their poverty reduction schemes and in sustaining poor livelihoods which are also affected by the present Global Financial and Economic crises. These poor economies and livelihoods ironically may also be the worst segments to be affected by climate change. They however, may also be the best resources for enhancing carbon traps via forest conservation schemes.

It is for the necessity to understand and use livelihoods approaches as entry points for development management (Toner and Franks, 2006) that the African Centre for Community and Development focussed its December edition of *Global Partnership Tower* on issues related to resilient strategies for survival whether they are legal or illegal. In bringing out the latter strategies, it is possible to achieve a better understanding of informal economies while learning (Shepherd, 1998; Bond, 1999) will be reiterated as the new orientation of development management.

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Why illegal harvesters cannot resist C.D.C palms in Cameroon

Many people living in camps and villages around C.D.C palm estates in the South West of Cameroon have found it almost impossible not to harvest palm nuts illegally from the plantations of the above giant agro-industrial corporation. This trend which can also be seen in SOCAPALM Estates in parts of Littoral province, is done by individuals or collectively by households and groups of people with common interests. They strategise for life by harvesting C.D.C nuts illegally in order to produce local palm oil for sale via unsophisticated milling devices created out of sticks, bags referred to as “Mukata” locally and twines. They also consume the nuts in their homes in “Banga Soup” or sell them unmilled to other clients.

This December 2008, as Director of the African Centre for Community and Development, I caught up with the Molongo family living in Mile 8 Batoke to gather their motivations for producing alternative local palm oil from illegally harvested C.D.C palm nuts. Worth noting, this family’s members are also keepers of pigs and have created a mixture of palm nut residues and other edible plants for feeding their animals as well. Like many other families in the area, they gave the following points as drivers to their livelihoods strategies:

- Firstly, they pointed the lack of alternative avenues of employment and argued that despite their lack of palm trees they saw palm oil harvesting for sale and palm oil milling as unavoidable income bringing strategies for survival. Many also claimed despite legal contentions that they were hired by C.D.C in planting these palm trees hence must be partakers in the consumption of ripe fruits.

- Their proximity to C.D.C estates was also given as a motivating factor for villagers around Bobende, Batoke and Idenau etc for illegal harvesting of C.D.C palm nuts. They linked proximity to porous estates accessible from their neighbouring villages and farms hence unprotected.
- More so, they insisted poverty was deep in these areas of Cameroon. As coastal villages Idenau and Batoke for instance, were witnessing a threat to their fishing livelihoods (*Global Partnership Tower* Vol.10 Issue: 1 p. 4) enhanced by unsustainable twin trawling methods which have led to the destruction of fish nurseries, scarcity and unemployment thereby favouring even more illegal palm nut harvesting.
- They also argued that palm nuts were used in the preparation of “Banga Soup” their traditional meal which was eaten routinely. They also reiterated the fact that palm nuts could be used in making “Mayanga” a local medicinal oil widely used in Cameroon as treatment for colds, convulsion and chest pain and alleged to be helpful in the treatment of heart diseases.
- More so, they mixed the chaffs from pounding palm nuts with other plants to make their own formula for growing pigs which they said contributes to their households’ protein base and also to their incomes.

From these responses the following points could be made:

- That many livelihoods in the informal economy and around C.D.C palm estates despite the tediousness of sustaining them have an element of illegality. With palm oil-based livelihoods in Bobende, Batoke and Idenau, the illegality is

harvesting from C.D.C owned plantations and bribing of C.D.C guards when illegal harvesters are apprehended.

- Informal economies and households in them are generally diverse (Hall and Midgley, 2004). For instance, the Molongo family produces palm oil from C.D.C palms and raises pigs for household needs and the market. Indeed, tasks are also based on roles. For example women are the sellers of palm oil after stronger and usually younger men have done the pounding and compressing of boiled palm nuts which is physically tenuous. Women also partake in the selection of quality palm nuts for milling in the initial state. Men were also identified to be responsible for the cleaning of pig stiles and the pricing of animals for sale. They were also responsible for slaughtering animals for household consumption. Pricing of animals and the sale of palm oil can sometimes be allocated to children when the father or mother and other family members are called to the regular needs of family farms away from home.
- These points also reiterate the need for structures. The need for effective legal institutions to define ownership (Barlow, 1958) especially as many C.D.C estates are alleged to have been leased not sold by village communities to C.D.C.
- More so, there must be alternative platforms for employing illegal palm nut harvesters or professional institutions to drive them into other lucrative ventures. Schemes to enhance diversification of incomes in the area should be encouraged. An example could be raising goats, cattle and sheep in some parts of C.D.C plantations especially as most have extensive acreage of cover-crops and elephant grass where these animals can graze.

- Another policy could be leasing of land by government to local palm oil producer and village synergies so that they plant their palms, produce oil to sustain their families and avoid harvesting C.D.C palm nuts illegally. This calls for state and local council subsidies or private sector investments in to sectors like local initiatives for planting palm trees. This is vital as almost all local meals in Cameroon and many parts of West Africa are prepared with palm oil.

With an elaborate policy for tackling poverty induced illegal harvesting of palm nuts, there are possible positive incidences that will flow in Cameroon. They include diversification of incomes around poverty stricken areas around C.D.C. Palm estates (*such policies can be replicated around PAMOL and SOCAPALM estates*), improvement of local educational base via training of illegal palm nut dealers, reduction of stealing, enhancement of protein consumption if livestock keeping is industrially introduced in and around C.D.C plantations, supplementing fish scarcity and jobless fishermen with palm tree planting and palm oil making there of etc. With such a programme, it may be possible to resist C.D.C palm nuts which as of now are almost controlled by informal third parties.

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Goats are too scarce for comfort

The African Centre for Community and Development in December 2008 conducted an independent investigation following complaints about growing scarcity of goats in communities around Fako Division, Cameroon.

The investigation took us to villages like Isokolo, Ngeme, Batoke, Debunscha and Idenau along the West Coast of Limbe to Mile 4, Wotutu, Mokunda and Bojongo on the slopes of Mount Cameroon. It also included C.D.C camps of Karata, Ngeme to as far as Cipio close to Idenau. According to responses from over 30 goat keeping individuals and households, goats and their meat were getting scarcer for the following reasons:

- A reduction in grazing land caused by rapid urbanisation, climate change (Floret et al., 1979), over-grazing (Lamprey, 1983) and other human activities including slash and burn farming practices, increase settler populations on grazing land etc. These points have led to difficulties in keeping goats as they are tied very far from their owners and exposed to straying and goat thieves. Tying animals further from their permanent abode has been argued to make goat keeping burdensome as owners of animals have to trek long distances to bring their animals home. Their tasks are harder when they deal in many animals. It should also be noted that diminishing range lands is also a phenomenon in the Great Lakes (Dyson-Hudson, 1966) and West Africa (Bonte et al., 1981). This phenomenon is engineered there by increase cereal cultivation on range lands to the detriment of pastoral nomadism.

- 90% of all goat keeping individuals and families contacted by the African Centre for Community and Development complained of the very hard policies of municipal authorities on keepers. They alleged that municipal authorities regularly caught stray goats and requested up to 5000 Francs CFA per goat from keepers before the animals were returned. The keepers argued that such practices were deterrents to goat keeping as most goat owners were poor. They also stated that when their goats were in captivity at the Urban or rural councils they were exposed to diseases from sick goats, crossing from inferior pedigree or even miscarriages from aggressive males. Many of them also lose weight and become less attractive to buyers as they are scarcely fed thereby enhancing more the difficulties of poor goat keepers. The Municipal authorities on their part asserted that stray goats destroy the farms of people living in these communities. They insisted that the graver issue was small scale goat keeping which did not match present demand for goat meat borne out of road side grilling in major cities like Douala and Limbe. In Limbe for instance several goats are slaughtered and grilled by Turbo in New Town market every day. The African Centre for Community and Development also found out that pepper soup goat meat has been sold by a Nigerian settler in the Limbe market for over 25 years now.
- Despite efforts by Heifer Cameroon to distribute cheap animals to individuals and communities in order to step up protein consumption in the area, many households and individuals still don't know of such schemes and are reluctant to engage in goat keeping after failed attempts.

- More so, veterinary services available to keepers were alleged to be marginal. Goat keepers have to cover long distances and endure high transportation costs from villages like Batoke, Idenau, Bojongo, Mokunda, Ngeme camp, Cipio Camp to Urban centres like Limbe, Buea, Tiko and Mutengene to cure or vaccinate their animals. This increased their inputs resulting to high prices for goats and their meat which many argue is unaffordable by many potential buyers.

From these responses the following policy stand points surfaced:

- Goat Meat is scarce and expensive in the South West province of Cameroon.
- Production of goat meat in the area must be stepped up to meet demand as supply dependencies from West province were insufficient, time consuming and equally expensive.
- Pastoral goat keeping and the use of ropes to tie goats in grazing grounds are getting rudimentary for the dispensations of Urban Fako. There must be thus alternative means of keeping goats especially in urban areas facing shrinking range lands. These alternatives should be followed by modifications in the food that is given to goats (Diallo and Wagenaar, 1981; Arrey, 2008) so as to adapt to topographic and climatic changes in Fako. Another option will be to create land for industrial cultivation of elephant grass widely consumed by goats in order to sustain demand from home –grown goat keepers or instigate renting of rangelands for feeding animals by owners who cannot afford land or who stay away from grazing grounds. This is viable as Fako Division is blessed with rich volcanic soils from the still active Mount Cameroon. Many goat keepers it must be stated,

now give their goats peeled plantains skins, plantain leaves and even left over household food in order to supplement “goat-grass” scarcity.

- Local goat keepers are veritable managers not armatures (Arrey, 2008; Bemus, 1981) and must be involved seriously in the design and implementation of Agricultural policies in the region so as to arrive at participatory learning-based solutions supported by contemporary process-oriented development thinking.

Without these moves, scarcity of goat meat in Fako could be considered too grave for comfort. People of this region consume goat meat grilled in the road side, in pepper soup or as part of bridal meals during traditional marriages. Goats are also given with dowry among the Bakweri, Isubu, Bimbia of Fako and other settler populations like the Bayang, Bameta and Mankon. They are necessary to supplement growing scarcity of red meat and fish in Fako (*Global Partnership Tower*.Vol. 10 Issue: 1) and diversify incomes in the region. It is thus an imperative for government, municipal authorities, Civil Society Organisations, goat keeping communities and individuals to form working synergies and partnerships in order to identify common problems in goat keeping in the region and to design sustainable and holistic policies to redress the present scarcity. This will best work with an inventory on local goat species and keepers in the region, replicating or learning from tested practices in animal production in other livestock systems like Sahelian Africa (Le Houerou, 1981) plus the stepping up of interventions to monitor the scale and markets in goats and the products linked to them in Fako and Cameroon.

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What are some positive points for home-grown goats?

With growing scarcity of grazing land in many parts of Africa (Lamprey, 1983) and in Fako, Cameroon in particular, many goat keeping households have altered (Arrey, 2008) their historical shepherding of animals to graze outside in rangelands to feeding them in doors. Following responses from 30 goat keeping individuals and households in Fako by the African Centre for Community and Development

(<http://www.africancentreforcommunity.com>) in December 2008, the following

strategies and best practices are now common among goat keeping stakeholders in the region:

- Firstly elephant grass is commonly harvested and tied into bundles. These bundles are taken indoors to goat herds and are made to hang from above so that the goats can pull the grass like in traditional range lands around Fako Division.
- Water is also carried to the goats who when left to wander for food where recently facing growing water scarcity caused by human encroachment of natural spaces for rain-fed standing water. Water is gotten from the supplies of Cameroon's National Water Board (SNEC) which is expensive and from rivers and the rain during rainy season.

The keeping of goats with the simple methods above has arguably led to the following advantages:

- Greater proximity between animals and their owners. With such a relation, it is easier to identify illnesses and diseases faster as owners come in contact with their animals several times in a day to give them water or grass. These contacts can

also help in rapid identification of pregnant pedigree and separate them from worrying Billy-goats.

- More so, goat dung can easily be collected and used as manure for household vegetable farms as well as for growing Elephant grass mostly eaten by goats in Fako Cameroon. Elephant grass it should be noted is very resistant and grow year round if it is watered and on fertile soil. Worth noting again is the fact that growing grass for animal food has been tested with the Zero Grazing Concept in East Africa which uses Napier grass to feed animals in-doors.
- More over, catching animals for sales is easier as they are no longer pursued over long distances as with un-tied goats in order to be taken to the market or to be presented to a home buyer. This reduces time wasting and the labour of the goat keeper.

Finally raising of goats in-doors is vital in supplementing expensive unaffordable red meat. This is vital as goat meat is scarce but needed in traditional rituals and libations like in the “Motio” (war dance) among the Bakweri of Fako where it is slaughtered and its blood drank or for traditional marriages among the Bayang, Ejagam and Oroko tribes in Cameroon and the Igbo and Yoruba of Nigeria just to mention these few. With the soaring price of red meat in Cameroon and Africa, it is thus an imperative to encourage schemes that support in door growing of goats especially in urban areas tempered by high levels of urbanisation, climate change, rapid population growth, and high goat-meat demand. Protein deficiencies in urban ghettos (Hall and Midgley, 2004) are a major reason why in-door goat farming must be stepped up especially in Urban Fako so as to better the livelihoods of people.

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Above a man pets his pregnant she-goat in Bobende, Cameroon. Home-grown goats are closer to their owners hence when sick can easily be noticed. Picture is by Arrey Mbongaya Ivo.

How food needs hamper conservation around Mount Fako

There have always been questions of whether poverty with its incidences and conservation of nature do not conflict. Attempts have been made to create platforms or trade-offs where both can work without ending definitely the livelihoods choices dependent on nature hence affected by conservation policies. However around the bio-diversity rich Mount Fako forest area in Cameroon, food needs may slowly be hampering forest conservation. This trend is enhanced by the poor state of other livelihoods choices like fishing in the area which have forced many more to forest exploitation. To understand this assertion the following points must be noted:

- The region is witnessing a decline in fish harvesting caused by poor fishing methods and the conversion of artisan fishermen in to other professions. The drive towards education has been a major factor to the latter trend.
- More so high meat prices have encouraged poor people towards hunting of wild animals. A kilogramme of red meat in Fako Division reached 2,500 francs CFA in December 2008. Rudimentary pastoral nomadism and high and better offers for cattle from neighbouring countries like Gabon have also be given as causes of red meat scarcity in Cameroon. More so, the presence of several middlemen from cattle owners to consumers have led to high cattle prices at the end as buyers at different levels of the market chain have added price to make profit before the meat finally reaches final consumers.
- Alternatives like goats are scarce and production has dropped recently due to high demand for road side grilling and arguably un-industrial techniques for production. Administrative rules have also been listed as deterrents to goat

keeping (following investigation on goat keeping by the African Centre for Community and Development in 2008).

- High fertiliser and food prices have deterred agriculture and driven people towards the harvesting of non-timber forest products as a livelihood option. This has led to over exploitation in some cases and threats of extinction in some rare species.
- More so, village communities sharing boundaries with conserved areas challenge conservators on forest ownership including the species in the forest. They consider forest exploitation a right and conservators intruders there by minimising the work of the latter.
- Besides conserved areas around Mount Fako are very porous and border exploiting communities. It is very easy for instance for hunters to move in and out of conserved areas from Batoke, Bamboko etc

Like most parts of Sub-Saharan Africa (Bhagavan, 1999) poverty is embedded in the Mount Cameroon Forest area forcing more users to forest exploitation as a livelihood strategy (FAO, 1995; FAO, 1997, Arrey, 2008). Bush meat harvesting has been intensified and small scale activities like bird hunting has become wider in dimension there by affecting conservation in the area. For conservation in Fako, South West province Cameroon to work the following actions must be imperatives:

- Establishing a means to monitor Bush Meat market (Ndoye et al, 1997) activities and operations in order to measure the extent of exploitation which is vital in identification of over-exploited and rare species.

- Making an inventory of wild species is vital in establishing which species can continually be exploited, conserved or domesticated.
- Generating sustainable traditional hunting techniques and knowledge systems will help to bring harvesters, conservators and consumers on a holistic platform for positive conservation and sustainable livelihoods deliveries.
- Creating synergies with local NGOs, Conservation and funding actors is necessary to boost social capital to participate and also to identify resistant blocks for possible negotiations, inclusion or exclusion in development policy.
- Alternative proteins like cane rats and snails must be widely produced especially as the latter are fast breeders and can best suit Cameroon's growing population which stood at 16.1 million in 2004.

It is thus safe to intimate that conservation in and around Mount Fako is hampered by the food needs of the people but can conservation itself be hampering the food needs of the people? The best way might be tackling the food needs of Fako people and the needs for conservation as independent and again interrelated in order to create links vital for inclusive interventions aimed at forest development management for Fako, Cameroon and Africa. Even better policies must consider ecological friendly hunting, sustainability and conservation as workable (Hammet and Chamberlain, 1998; Hammett, 1999) and not absolutely opposed.

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Civet cat hunted down for its meat from Batoke Cameroon. Picture is courtesy of Arrey Mbongaya Ivo.

Pastoral Nomads are veritable managers not armatures.

Summary: This article explores areas to justify the fact that pastoral nomads are pro-active managers not passive and incapable of managing their livelihoods as depicted in the many development findings. It argues that they are responsible for strategic planning like the kind of animals they keep to how they can resist natural catastrophes. It prescribes holism as a way of understanding their work and also in helping them overcome their difficulties. It is based on academic research.

Many scientists have often not differentiated settled subsistence husbandry systems or profit making pastoral systems from pastoralisms as a form of livelihoods. Pastoralism as a form of livelihood is unsettled and intended to be a way of resisting shocks and stresses imposed by climate, vegetation etc constrains on the communities that practice them (Bonte et al, 1981).

Historically, man started domestication of animals about 10, 000 years ago (Zenner, 1963) and has evolved with time and science to different forms of efficient domestication techniques today. So too has pastoral nomadism as a livelihood option. To consider therefore why pastoral nomads can be considered evolved local managers the following points are important:

- They are not a sporadic bunch or merely reactive but proactive people who plan, pre-empt climatic and other fall-outs and then move their herds or families dependent on these animals so as to sustain their livelihoods choices (Floret et al., 1982). Some of these fall outs include factors like the annual rainfall in a given area and time which has been noted to impact on primary production (Lomasson, 1947), soil fertility for grazing, vegetation cover, topography or drought.

- They choose the animals they keep to suit their natural terrains. Studies have also shown that these choices also constitute a major reason for the variances in pastoralisms across Africa for instance where it is possible to differentiate practice among Tuaregs, Teda, Fulani, Hamitic or Nilotic (Dyson-Hudson, 1966; Diallo and Wagenaar, 1981).
- Some pastoral communities also plant drought resistant edible trees as a way of resisting drought while others like in Northern Africa have witnessed a growing use of concentrate feeds as supplemental to natural feeds (Le Houerou, 1980a).
- Many pastoralists have also realised that over grazing for long periods affects the productivity of land and hence animal populations (Lamprey, 1983). These managerial realisations have led to a switch to other animal types in certain areas. An example of such a switch is among the Saburu pastoralists who are now raising camels and small live stocks like goats away from their traditional cattle unsustainable for their now over-grazed land in Northern Kenya.

However Pastoralism as a form of livelihoods is facing great threats. The threats include;

- The increase in animal productions following efficient vaccination campaigns of 1950s with a corresponding reduction of range land (Bernus, 1981) due to increase human activity like urbanisation, climate change etc which have impacted negatively on pastoral livelihoods as man and animals are competing over the same spaces.
- More over, cereal production has also doubled in Sahelian Africa at the detriment of pastoral rangeland. This situation is also seen to occur among East African pastoral communities (ILCA, 1978).

- Also, pastoral livelihoods are caught up in the divide of whether they should engineer their animals with modern scientific methods for more births or just to continue with traditional science of pastoral nomadism. This is particularly serious as birth rates for pastoral cattle are very low and hardly reach 60% (Diallo and Wagenaar 1981; Wilson et al, 1981).
- More so, studies of these livelihoods as entry points to development management may only just be receiving some stimulus recently, with academic recognition of a paradigm shift from classical projects (Shepherd, 1998) to learning processes like livelihoods (Bond, 1999).

Adding holism to studies about pastoral livelihoods via various livelihood frameworks (Scoones, 1998) and more research might just be the necessary input to put pastoral managers on the development stage as effective managers. Despite the time needed for such a processual approach, it is clear and safe to say pastoral nomads are effective managers, not blind and not armatures.

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Strategies within strategies?

This document has effectively demonstrated that livelihoods strategies are practical people-based options to resist shocks and stresses (Chambers and Conway, 1992). These strategies can be mediated by cultures, histories, institutions, resources and technologies hence the relevance of studying intervention environments in modern project and programme management (Cusworth and Franks, 1993). However the document has further justified the points that:

- New strategies are sprouting following changes in the regular pathologies of certain livelihoods systems. Be it small scale goat keeping or pastoral nomadism in Africa, actors are faced with their known strategies and new strategies to overcome mutations like climate change, urbanisation, embedded poverty, increase in cereal cultivation on range lands, over-grazing etc
- More so many new strategies tend to be generally livelihoods-friendly not to impact as more shocks and stresses on certain livelihoods. Take goat keeping in Cameroon where in-door growing of animals has not replaced small scale goat keeping but is a trend that may in the long run shape this livelihood option without necessary leading to abandonment. So too is the situation with Saburu pastoralists who prefer small animals like goats now to their historical cattle as a way to tackle the effects of their over-grazed land in Northern Kenya. This is not to mean that certain stresses on livelihoods do not lead to abandonment as it will be contrary to the movements mentioned earlier from say fishing in the West coast of Limbe Cameroon to hunting in the Mount Cameroon region. New strategies and abandonment depend on the realities affecting particular livelihoods systems.
- More over, this document has demonstrated that new trends within livelihoods must be understood, traced and documented in order to better policies aimed at poverty reduction or development management especially in Africa. This calls for a processual dimension to projects (Toner and Franks, 2006) and even the use of subjective well being (Arrey, 2008) and objective well being analyses so as to achieve better policies in development management. Livelihoods must thus be

studied and this can be best when the poor and the people are the focus of development research and interventions.

- More so, partnerships are invaluable for better social policy delivery and even for poverty reduction schemes (Sullivan and Skelcher, 2002). There must be platforms for instance between C.D.C and illegal palm nut harvesters from Bobende, Idenau, Batoke etc or between villagers and conservators around mount Fako forest region on best ways to sustain their red-oil milling, fishing and forest livelihoods and enhance conservation of nature too. This calls for holism in development processes and the need to buttress the culture of bottom-top participatory synergies and partnerships in development policy delivery. Representatives from CIGs, traditional councils, people and local radios must be active in policies that seek to better their livelihoods choices.
- Conscious efforts must be made to better the state of institutions and technologies in Fako, Cameroon and Africa. Better veterinary services and decentralisation of units especially in remote areas will impact positively on goat keeping as owners will not have to increase costs by travelling very far to vaccinate or cure sick animals. More Schools and training programmes may draw those who abandon certain livelihoods options into other lucrative ventures. Diversification of incomes it should be noted can not be achieved just by government. The C.D.C can for instance use some land from her palm plantations to grow goats and curb scarcity or grow cane rats to supplement protein needs in the region. It is also possible to rent out land to illegal palm nut harvesting synergies and villages to grow their own palms and prevent dependency on nuts they do not own. This however will be best if the judiciary in Cameroon for instance can deter false ownership of goods and services and promote a business and development environment. This is necessary as patrimonialism and corruption (Arrey, 2008) has been brought up as major reasons for slow market entries into Sub-Saharan Africa.
- Documenting and encouraging traditional knowledge systems will help in identifying tested livelihoods strategies over time (Chambers and Conway, 1992) which is vital in understanding people's resilience to shocks and stresses or to

changes etc. It may also help conservation as best hunting practices which people have used sustainably over time can be mainstreamed to prevent over-exploitation of certain animals with rudimentary and unsustainable methods. It can also help policies towards domestication of certain wild species as the people of forest communities for instance are likely to know best the life styles of animals that live within these forests.

People are thus managers as they strategise to survive with the resources they have. Many people however, despite being good managers are facing new trends and new challenges in and around their choices for survival hence the need why strategies and new strategies must be shaped into processes for development. Processes take time and do not intimate the finite collapse of time-bound interventions (Cusworth and Franks, 1993) but a systemic shift from rigid and inflexible platforms to cross-cultural, cultural, multi-sectoral, sectoral, learning, complex and simple policies which are inclusive, broad-based, people-oriented and poor in focus in order to better lives on earth. That this will need strategic planning only reiterates the fact that livelihoods are strategies over time and must be understood and studied to better development management. America was not built in a day and may not be broken down in a day as well.

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Hunted civet cat above, being dried as bush meat for household needs in Isokolo Cameroon.

Picture is courtesy of Arrey Mbongaya Ivo. The meat is dried with forest wood and plantain stems.

More Pictures below courtesy of Arrey Mbongaya Ivo



Pictures above are of illegal palm nut harvesters and local oil millers in Mile 8, Batoke. Pictures are by Arrey Mbongaya Ivo



Above right, palm nuts being squashed in to red oil with locally made devices of sticks, twines and "Mukata" bags by the Molongo family in Batoke, Cameroon. Left, they keep pigs on a formula from palm nuts and other edible plants as part of their family's livelihood strategies. Pictures are courtesy of Arrey Mbongaya Ivo.



Above goats being fed indoors in Isokolo, Limbe II Municipality. Below the Director of the African Centre for Community and Development Arrey Mbongaya Ivo conducts field work on goat keeping following complaints on goat meat scarcity in Fako and South West province in December 2008. ©2008 African Centre for Community and Development.



To justify whether goats were necessary supplements to expensive red meat, the Director of the African Centre for Community and Development Arrey Mbongaya Ivo visited cattle markets in

New Town and Mutengene to talk to dealers on the reasons behind price hypes etc ©2008

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Left above Arrey Mbongaya Ivo feels cattle in New Town while right a young cattle dealer reiterates the problems they face before an African Centre for Community and Development camera managed by Arrey Mbongaya Ivo. Below Arrey Mbongaya Ivo holds a predatory bird, the catch of a young hunter (right below) from the West Coast of Limbe. "Bush Meat" is an alternative to expensive red meat. In Fako, Cameroon.



Fishing livelihoods are also affected by scarcity of fish, rudimentary methods and lack of continuity due to changes in career preferences of artisan fishing families. With these changes many will be driven to farming or bush meat hunting in forest areas of Fako. Children who take

scaling fish as a profession in coastal communities (below) may also have to abandon their choice for alternative choices. Pictures below are courtesy of Arrey Mbongaya Ivo in 2008. ©2008 African Centre for Community and Development.



Pictures above were taken in Down Beach courtesy of Arrey Mbongaya Ivo in 2008.

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