

PROJECT REPORT 2003

Project Title: Business Development and Environmental Management on the Obudu Plateau and Plains, Cross River State, Nigeria

**Submitted by the African Research Association's community action project:
Development in Nigeria**



Grant No.: 1010-0941

Grant Description: Support for environmental enterprises and conservation initiatives in south eastern Nigeria

Period of Report: 01 February 2001 – 31 December 2003

**By Tracey L. Draper
Project Director**

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Tracey L. Draper', is written over a light blue rectangular background.

18 March 2003

Contents

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	3
1.0 PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION	4
PROJECT CONTEXT AND INTRODUCTION	4
OUTPUT	5
<i>Community Forestry</i>	5
<i>Alternative Livelihoods</i>	6
<i>Adult Literacy</i>	7
<i>Research Achievements</i>	8
<i>HIV/AIDS</i>	9
2.0 CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT	10
CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT WITH COMMUNITY PARTNERS	10
IMMEDIATE BENEFITS TO DIN	11
ANTICIPATED ON-GOING OR LONGER-TERM BENEFITS	13
3.0 PROJECT ASSESSMENT	14
SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES	14
EXTENT TO WHICH PROJECT OBJECTIVES WERE ATTAINED	14
OBJECTIVES NOT ATTAINED	15
PROBLEMS ENCOUNTERED IN PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION	15
STEPS TAKEN TO ADDRESS PROBLEMS	17
PRINCIPAL STRENGTHS OF PROJECT	18
PRINCIPAL WEAKNESSES OF PROJECT	19
LESSONS LEARNED FROM PROJECT	19
4.0 FUTURE POSSIBILITIES	21
Appendix One: Specific Outputs	23

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Development in Nigeria (DIN) would like to acknowledge the support provided by Ford Foundation West Africa, in support of this very large forest conservation and micro-enterprise project on Obudu Plateau and Plains, including the tropical forest edge. This support has not only enabled DIN to work directly with rural communities in support of forest conservation and poverty alleviation, it has also ensured that DIN staff have some of the best experience and skills in community development and conservation interventions in Cross River State.

DIN would also like to thank all its community partners in 16 different villages and settlements for their efforts, enthusiasm and support.

DIN is grateful to the African Research Association for support and guidance.

Finally, DIN would also like to thank all project staff for their tireless efforts, often under difficult circumstances, in achieving the various outputs under this project.

1.0 PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION

PROJECT CONTEXT AND INTRODUCTION

- .1 This project follows a smaller pilot project, also funded by the Ford Foundation West Africa, which aimed to encourage environmentally linked micro-enterprise development on Obudu Plateau. The key objective of this larger project is to replicate successes from the pilot project on Obudu Plateau and Plains, including the tropical forest edge.
- .2 Research by the African Research Association's community action project Development in Nigeria (DIN), between 1996 and 1999, highlighted the dependency of women and youth on non timber forest products (NTFPs), where bush mango (*Irvingia gabonensis*) and afang (*Gnetum africana*) can generate up to 78% of household cash income in some rural villages close to roads. Many of the households surveyed in study villages had annual cash incomes ranging from \$41.00 to \$77.00, far below the 1999 Nigerian average of \$230.00. Incomes in more isolated montane and plains villages were far lower. This research highlighted the need for income generation and micro-enterprise development.
- .3 Research has also highlighted the level of marginalisation by Fulani pastoralists on the Obudu plains and the prevalence of conflict between pastoralists and Christian cultivators.
- .4 In addition to low incomes and poverty issues, the rare cloud montane forests of Obudu Plateau (the last remaining cloud montane forests in West Africa) were experiencing degradation through conversion to agriculture, village encroachment, fire and some illegal logging activities. Tropical forests on the plains were more threatened by illegal logging on a larger scale as well as conversion to agriculture and village encroachment.
- .5 The small pilot project supported by Ford Foundation West Africa highlighted the potential to raise household incomes through promoting micro-enterprises and alternative sources of livelihood, particularly for women and youth who have greater dependence on forests for their livelihoods. Pilot projects also demonstrated the potential for conflict resolution between Fulani pastoralists and Christian cultivators on the Obudu Plains.
- .6 This project aims to address the problems of poverty and deforestation, which were highlighted in DIN's research. Therefore various environmentally linked micro-enterprises were further developed to support rural communities, particularly women and youth. The project

also developed methodologies for the domestication of bush mango and afang. Poverty was also addressed through an adult literacy programme, which was also central to conflict resolution efforts. However most importantly, this project aimed to replicate successes from the Plateau on the Obudu Plains and vice versa. In total, 16 communities have benefited from this Ford Foundation funded project.

- .7 The projects were co-ordinated from two sites: Obudu Cattle Ranch on the Obudu Plateau; and Bateriko on the plains, also at the edge of tropical rainforest. An office in Obudu was established to improve communication links and to more effectively co-ordinate field programmes at the two main sites. The field programmes were also supported by research and documentation at DIN's small Research, Documentation and Policy Unit, based in Calabar. This unit is able to monitor progress and feed results back to field managers and front line staff; and to disseminate information to other NGOs, the Forestry Commission, the Ministry of Agriculture, CREPA, etc, for their better informed decision making.

OUTPUT

See Appendix One for specific results.

Community Forestry

- .8 Deforestation rates highlighted the need for improved environmental management. DIN is addressing this issue through a community forestry programme, targeting 7 communities where there were obvious stresses on the environment. These communities include Okpazange, Okwa-mu, Keji-ku and Anape on Obudu Plateau and Bateriko, Bakum and Okwabang along the tropical forest edge.
- .9 The Forest Management Committee (FMC) on Obudu Plateau, comprising representatives from various Obudu Plateau communities, was supported through training and other capacity development activities, such as facilitating meetings, forest advocacy and through developing linkages with the wider Cross River State Community Forestry Programme, supported by the Cross River State Forestry Commission (CRSFC) and DFID. FMC meetings were held monthly at the DIN office. DIN also supported networking and provided small allowances to enable the FMC to function up to October 2002. The FMC is now becoming more independent, with DIN gradually withdrawing direct support to promote sustainability. The FMC is also in the process of registering with Obanliku Local Government Area as a CBO.
- .10 Capacity has also been developed through forest advocacy training, environmental education and training in nursery, regeneration and NTFP domestication technologies. Training targets women, youth and school groups in particular. Domestication of afang and bush mango was considered a priority because of the dependency on these products for cash income. Nurseries have produced seedlings used for forest

regeneration and the establishment of community woodlots for fuel and building timber.

- .11 The project is improving environmental management and knowledge amongst the communities targeted. DIN is also building upon this knowledge through support from the CIDA funded One Sky Capacity Development Project in Cross River State. However, on Obudu Plateau, DIN has also intensified its forest advocacy and awareness campaigning under this Ford Foundation funded project with the onset of the fire season in October 2003.

Alternative Livelihoods

- .12 As stated in 1.1 and 1.6 above, the main objective of this project was to introduce environmentally linked micro-enterprises for income generation. Micro-enterprises fall under the alternative livelihoods programme developed by DIN and include the following: honey production, potato cultivation, market gardening and livestock rearing. Smaller enterprises include puff-puff frying, fish pie frying and soap making.
- .13 Beekeeping and honey production has been the most successful of all introduced enterprises, with over 60 farmers earning a total income of N 250,000 so far. Its success now requires little material input from DIN, although DIN still provides extension services for support and follow up. New bee keeping groups are also benefiting from the training provided within their community. For example, three community bee keepers are able to train other community groups in honey production. Not only has this project been successful in terms of income generation, new honey producing technologies are more sustainable and less destructive to forests. Bee keeping groups in tropical forest-edge communities, on the Obudu plains, in Bateriko, Bakum and Bebi (including the retired Nigerian Serviceman's League in Bateriko) are still waiting for hives to be colonised successfully, without any absconding. These groups will benefit from income generation once the hives have been successfully colonised. Beekeeping extension services have also intensified up to December 2003, to the higher production communities of Emale and Iyindeve, to monitor the progress of the newly formed bee keeping CBO.
- .14 Potato production on the temperate Obudu Plateau has also been successful, generating about N 546,000 for the community over two years. However compared with honey production, potato cultivation is far more labour intensive and has been dependent on the Obudu Cattle Ranch Protea Hotel for most sales. Input costs are also quite high due to the purchase of superior varieties of seed from Bamenda at US\$ 1.00 per kg (one kg of seed produced on average between 10 to 14kg of ware), however community groups are currently contributing 25% of this cost. Market gardening has shown much less potential for income

- generation however, women have found market gardens very useful for home consumption.
- .15 Livestock production, though not yet realising large revenues, has been quite successful. Hybrid kids and lambs are currently in production, demonstrating the potential of this micro-enterprise, crossing northern and southern goats and sheep to increase native livestock size for greater protein production, which is particularly popular with women's groups. The main difficulty has been in motivating women to look after livestock and tether them to ensure they are not destructive. DIN is still monitoring the progress of the Bateriko women and Fulani women in Kundeve. Both groups are receiving support in animal health and maintenance. The DIN demonstration livestock project was handed over to the Okpazange women in July 2003, who now manage the project independently but with management support provided by DIN through its Community Liaison Assistants (CLAs).
 - .16 Broiler production, though generating good incomes, is very labour and cost intensive, especially on Obudu Plateau, which is more isolated and heating is required to keep broilers warm. Because it is a very high cost activity, it is only practical for the group to raise broilers when there is a guaranteed market, i.e. Protea Hotels, Obudu Plateau, which has been purchasing broilers in 2003.

Adult Literacy

- .17 Adult literacy classes were developed in Anape, Utanga, Amana and Bebi. Utanga, Amana and Bebi communities were targeted because of the large Fulani populations in those communities. Classes in these communities were taught by Fulani instructors. In total, there were 97 enrolments in the various classes.
- .18 Adult literacy was considered important for addressing poverty and improved environmental management. Most importantly, it targeted Fulani women, who are the most marginalised of the communities targeted under this project.
- .19 Mixed classes of Fulani and local cultivators (Becheve) in Amana have contributed to conflict resolution between the two groups. Fulani women have enabled Becheve women to access loans from the Fulani community, supporting them in small scale business establishment.
- .20 Classes in Utanga have resulted in 3 women enrolling in teacher training courses and 5 women in formal school education. 2 women were able to secure employment in a government primary school. Women participating have acknowledged the confidence classes have given them and cited their improved ability to help their husbands plan their activities as an example, now that they can read basic words, understand clocks and calendars and basic numeracy.
- .21 Adult literacy classes incorporated an adult learning programme covering not only numeracy and literacy in English and Fulfulde, but

also agriculture and environmental education. These classes continued until November 2003.

Research Achievements

- .22 DIN has always been guided by research. This project continues to develop research, updating socio-economic data in addition to participatory rural appraisal in Bakum, Okwabang, Okpazange, Anape with a needs assessment in Bebi. Results of these surveys have been presented back to communities.
- .23 As part of DIN's monitoring and evaluation, the Research, Documentation and Policy Unit (RDPU) has documented the success of the potato project on Obudu Plateau and women's income generation in Bateriko (see attached reports). Data has been collected on indigenous plant uses with the production of a centralised list of useful plants. This information will be used in support of community forestry and NTFP domestication, with the aim of income generation. A fuelwood survey was also conducted in 2002, to ascertain distances covered by women in search of fuelwood in the communities of Bakum, Bateriko, Okwabang, Utanga, Amana, Okpazange and Keji-ku. Poor women are especially affected by shrinking forests and the growing distance between their homes and fuelwood supplies. An additional survey was carried out in August 2003, which highlighted that 3000 tonnes of fuelwood are currently harvested per annum.
- .24 A series of Hunters and Herbalists Workshops were conducted between 2001 and 2003. The final workshop report is attached with this report¹. The workshop developed a communiqué highlighting key recommendations from the workshop including a focus on alternative livelihoods and poverty alleviation, the establishment of botanical gardens to preserve key medicinal species and the formation of associations between hunters and herbalists.
- .25 To monitor DIN's conflict resolution efforts, two surveys have been conducted into the nature of conflict along Obudu Plains. The nature of conflict changed in 2002/03 due to changing political circumstances, with Fulani pastoralists being evicted from Obudu Plateau as part of the Cross River State Government's tourism developments. This has changed the situation on the Plains, where many Fulani are now relocating to. An important finding in the report highlights that Fulani themselves realise the need for organising into recognised groups, to ensure they have a stronger voice. This final research, carried out in September 2003 will guide DIN's work with marginalised Fulani communities in the future.

¹ Reports from the first two workshops held in 2001 and 2002 have already been forwarded to Ford Foundation West Africa.

HIV/AIDS

- .26 HIV/AIDS awareness campaigns are targeted at various sectors of the community including youth groups, churches, women and community leaders. HIV/AIDS is considered an important component of DIN's poverty alleviation and cuts across adult literacy, community forestry and alternative livelihoods programmes. Key outputs include six staff receiving training in HIV/AIDS awareness, 18 workshops targeting secondary school students in Utanga, Bateriko, Okwabang, Bakum and Obudu Plateau and one workshop targeting primary school teachers in Bateriko. Regular awareness talks were conducted at various churches throughout the duration of the project. A HIV/AIDS awareness youth group on Obudu Plateau has drafted a constitution to strengthen their group and promote more effective campaigning.

2.0 CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT

CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT WITH COMMUNITY PARTNERS

- .1 Community partners benefited from training under different parts of the project. In general, workshops have covered a diverse range of topics including new technologies and business development, participatory rural appraisal, HIV/AIDS awareness and bee hive construction.
- .2 Under this project, DIN also embarked on a 'training of trainers' programme, so community members (including women trained in functional literacy by the Ford funded project) are now able to train other communities in beekeeping, potato cultivation, NTFP domestication, animal health, market gardening and conduct HIV/AIDS awareness campaigns. This programme is still ongoing.
- .3 Another important component of capacity development is the organisation of community individuals into groups. This has been particularly successful with beekeepers, women and the Obudu Plateau FMC. Iyindeve beekeepers (men) have formed a legally registered CBO with Obanliku LGA, after drafting their own constitution with assistance from DIN Community Liaison Assistants and DIN's Legal Advisor. Okpazange women have also drafted a constitution and are awaiting registration with Obanliku LGA; the FMC is also in the process of registering as a CBO. All groups hope that CBO status will enable them to take charge of their own development, by applying for small grants from donors such as UNDP. Okpazange women in particular, are aiming to be more economically empowered and building on the benefits of potato cultivation, market gardening and their goat project. Other groups also hoping to draft a constitution are Women's Unity Group in Bateriko, the Bakum Women Group, Bakum and a FMC in Ubong (a community where DIN has commenced alternative livelihood and community forestry replication).
- .4 Groups with the capacity to develop constitutions and register as CBOs have benefited significantly from training and support provided under this project. DIN staff have been providing training in basic accountability procedures such as holding meetings, minute taking, financial recording, basic cost-benefit analyses and recording data. Women's groups have also benefited from leadership training. External consultants have provided training in diverse topics such as bamboo irrigation for dry season potato cultivation, soap making, food processing (puff-puff frying), business development, organic pesticides and composting.
- .5 Two business development workshops were conducted in 2001 and 2002. The second in 2002 was a 5 day workshop, conducted with a consultant from Winrock International with the following objectives:
 - ? To train partners in business initiatives; and

- ? To introduce concepts of improved marketing, fair pricing and value adding.
- The following were outcomes of the workshop:
- ? Groups participated in a needs assessment, where problems and constraints were identified with respect to marketing their produce.
- ? DIN learned that lack of start up capital, high transportation costs, inadequate storage facilities and low/unstable prices were all constraints for community micro-enterprises.
- ? A key recommendation was for DIN to consider a micro-credit scheme and transportation support to community partners.
- ? Groups should move towards forming co-operatives.

IMMEDIATE BENEFITS TO DIN

- .6 DIN has benefited primarily through the staff development made available under this Ford funded project, with DIN now having some of the best trained and experienced personnel in Cross River State. Staff are gender balanced and DIN now has the highest percentage of female staff at all levels of any NGO in the State.
- .7 In the first year of the project, staff benefited from the same training as community partners including new technologies (i.e. budding and grafting, NTFP domestication, composting, agriculture and forestry extension); business development and accountability principles; and HIV/AIDS awareness. In the second year of the project, 8 management staff were able to attend external courses covering management theory, project planning, budgeting and staff appraisal as well as Geographic Information Systems (GIS). Other staff received computer training, HIV/AIDS awareness, leadership training and participatory approaches to learning (particularly for adult literacy instructors). Staff also benefited from an exchange visit to Akassa (Bayelsa State), to view the work of NGOs in participatory micro-enterprise development. Strengthening the skills of our staff has reduced the dependency on external consultants to carry out various training and capacity development with our community partners; and increased our capacity to carry out more effective and intensive training of community partners and CBOs. Finally, all front line extension staff and managers were given an extensive one week participatory rural appraisal course in January 2003. Computer training, extension services, project management and technical training are still ongoing in house.
- .8 Infrastructural capacity has also improved with the purchase of five PCs and printers. The project has enabled the opening of a head office in Obudu town. The office functions as a strategic head quarters, being conveniently located between key project sites on Obudu Plateau and Obudu Plains/Bateriko. Obudu also has the advantage of being a town with electricity, however irregular, and access to main roads, public transport, and major markets in important staple crop and farm produce receiver centres as Makurdi, the capital of neighbouring

Benue State. The new office in Obudu town has enabled DIN to be more 'visible' in northern Cross River State. Generators were also purchased for DIN offices. Finally the Ford funded project has supported the purchase of necessary office furniture, covered rents (particularly expensive on Obudu Plateau) and covered accommodation costs for staff where necessary.

- .9 DIN has also undergone major organisational change for greater efficiency and efficacy. There is a new Project Director partnership of Ms Tracey L. Draper (community forestry specialist from UK), Project Director, and Ms Agnes Ingwu (an agriculture specialist promoted from within DIN) to the new position of Counterpart Project Director. The African Research Association has also benefited from Dr Caroline Ifeka, the former Project Director, acting as Special Advisor. A new organisational structure was developed, clarifying the roles of Project Co-ordinators based on Obudu Plateau and Bateriko. This change has improved planning systems within DIN and greatly improved co-ordination.
- .10 As stated in 1.22 above, DIN's work is directed by research findings. The Ford funded project has assisted DIN to develop the Research, Documentation and Policy Unit (RDPU). The RDPU, based in Calabar to make the most of email facilities and other forms of communication, is playing an integral role in DIN's research, documentation and monitoring. The unit opened with a single staff in May 2002 and combines networking with research and documentation. Importantly, the unit is strategically placed to influence policy through research findings. For example, the RDPU organised the third Hunters and Herbalists workshop in June 2003 and has since been promoting recommendations made by hunters and herbalists themselves with relevant government departments, including the Cross River State Forestry Commission. As part of the RDPU's research, the unit also specialises in GIS, adding an extra dimension to DIN's research skills.
- .11 DIN underwent a strategic review process in September 2002, which highlighted capacity gaps. It also served as an indirect evaluation of this project. The process involved a review of DIN's activities and impacts with community partners using various PRA tools, including SWOT analysis, semi-structured interviews, brainstorming, focus group discussions and formal questionnaires. The review also involved a critical analysis of what went well, what did not go well and what could be done in the future. The findings of the SWOT analysis were used to determine the key themes relevant to both DIN and community partners and potential future projects. A strategic plan (2003 -2006) was developed based on this information² (see attached reports).

² Please note that while the research for the strategic plan was part of this Ford funded project, the document was actually printed with funds provided by CIDA under the One Sky Capacity Development Project.

ANTICIPATED ON-GOING OR LONGER-TERM BENEFITS

- .12 The skills developed in staff will provide longer term benefits. Currently, DIN has some of the most experienced and capable staff in alternative livelihoods, community forestry and research in Cross River State. In particular, DIN is strong in gender mainstreaming and planning unlike many other conservation NGOs. This has ensured that DIN is attractive to international donors for both forest conservation and poverty alleviation projects. This development has only been possible through the experience gained during this project supported by Ford Foundation West Africa. As a result, DIN is a key partner in the CIDA funded One Sky Capacity Development Project, which supports alternative livelihoods and community forestry work in Bateriko and on Obudu Plateau (to a lesser extent). DIN is also attracting further interest from CIDA, independently of the One Sky project. DIN has been chosen by Leventis Foundation to promote community capacity development and natural resource management in Bashu and Boje. DIN has also attracted funding from Cordaid to implement a forest monitoring project, promoting village economic development through micro-enterprise and research. Additional support is expected from IUCN. Finally, DIN has been chosen as the implementing agency for a Fauna and Flora International (UK) community forestry project targeting 15 communities surrounding Afi Mountain Wildlife Sanctuary. Both DIN and Fauna and Flora International are awaiting a decision on funding by DFID.
- .13 DIN will also benefit long term by the acquisition of capital equipment made possible under this project, including computer equipment, a project vehicle and other necessary equipment such as generators.

3.0 PROJECT ASSESSMENT

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES

- .1 To reduce NGO donor dependency and community aid dependency by encouraging partnership ventures between NGO and community groups.
- .2 To expand potato, honey, fattened livestock and domesticated NTFP output so supply to value-adding business ventures is sustained.
- .3 To establish with community partners micro-business ventures in 4 products – potatoes, sweet potatoes, honey, small livestock and selected NTFPs – and train hunters in photography of montane forest flora and fauna for sale to Ranch hotel visitors.
- .4 To back up these business initiatives by extending DIN's adult literacy training to pastoralist women and girls.
- .5 To strengthen the NGOs organisational capacity to do the proposed work by equipping DIN with electronic technology, logistical support and efficient office management; by facilitating Board reorganisation to promote fund raising; by inviting VSO and Ford Foundation to send private sector and business development trainers.
- .6 To record the experience in a guide to participatory research and activities for strengthening community resource management capacity, so the study could be a model for replication elsewhere by government and NGOs. To analyse the experience in an international conference on deforestation, the state and economic development to be hosted by DIN and another Ford Foundation grantee (CCDI, Lagos).

EXTENT TO WHICH PROJECT OBJECTIVES WERE ATTAINED

- .7 DIN has been addressing all of the above objectives within the project with many notable successes (see appendix one). Firstly, DIN is starting to attract further funding through increased skills and expertise, making the organisation more sustainable. The project has enabled the generation of some income, which has been fed back directly into the project although this income has been quite small. The project has also successfully strengthened DIN's organisational capacity through staff development and capital investment. DIN's directors are communicating more effectively with the Board of Directors, which has also undergone change and reorganisation.
- .8 Aid dependency has been reduced in some communities, particularly amongst the bee farmers. Some micro-enterprise projects have so far succeeded in generating significant incomes for community groups and are showing great potential for the future.
- .9 Adult literacy has been successfully extended to include Fulani women and girls in Utanga, Amana and Bebi.
- .10 The potato, beekeeping, livestock and NTFP projects have been expanded and business plans developed to further improve micro-enterprises. Group capacities have been strengthened and more

partners are in the process of forming legally registered CBOs, for greater empowerment.

- .11 DIN has also produced a guide to participatory research and activities to strengthen community resource management capacity (see attached reports).

OBJECTIVES NOT ATTAINED

- .12 There were certain objectives not attained under the project. Principally these were: to train hunters in photography of montane forest flora and fauna for sale to tourists who visit the Ranch Resort; to develop sweet potato cultivation as a micro-enterprise; and to organise an international forest conservation conference. The reasons for not achieving these objectives are outlined below.

PROBLEMS ENCOUNTERED IN PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION

- .13 Various factors have influenced the success of micro-enterprise development and value adding ventures. Assumptions were made during the project planning phase regarding the Ranch Hotel Resort, which was to provide a market outlet for many of the environmentally linked micro-enterprises. Unfortunately the Hotel did not officially start operations until November 2002. The Hotel is now making a big difference to the small scale ventures, providing an easy market for broilers and potatoes. However because of uncertainty in the tourism industry in Cross River State, it was not considered feasible to train hunters in photography, given that those already available with these skills were generating little or no income. Another problem with reliance on the Ranch Resort is its instability. Although it was quite busy during the build up to the Federal and State elections in April 2003, the Hotel has received very little clientele since, reducing dramatically the market for potatoes and broilers.
- .14 Despite the lack of clientele, the Cross River State Government has continued to develop the Hotel Resort and this has significantly increased wage labour employment opportunities for the communities of Obudu Plateau. DIN's small scale projects could not compete with the income provided through wage labour. For example, at one stage the Resort was employing about 120 people for N 400 per day to plant grass on a 9 hole golf course development. Many women neglected their DIN supported projects to earn this cash. This meant that many of the projects deteriorated from March onwards with some groups on Obudu Plateau. This was a source of disappointment to DIN extension staff, who had successfully worked with these groups in the past.
- .15 Sweet potato cultivation was promoted under a value adding scheme, where sweet potato flour could be used in the production of puff-puff. However the Becheve community on Obudu Plateau largely found sweet potato puff-puff unpalatable. This may have been a reason for the community not wanting to source for seed or provide labour for

the project; the community wanted DIN to do all the work. However DIN felt that without any community input, it would no longer be a community project and was not pursued. Sweet potato was however, cultivated in DIN's demonstration farm but for reasons mentioned above, it was not as popular or as successful as other crops including potato and cabbage.

- .16 Isolation from markets and a lack of access to capital also affects value adding processes. Although value adding was promoted during business development workshops, and community partners understood the benefits of value adding, access to markets was a major hindrance. Community partners were fortunate to be able to sell potato ware and broilers to the Ranch Resort Hotel, however guests in the hotel were largely political, organising rallies and not typical tourists with an interest in local crafts and produce. This affected value adding for honey production, where there was no real market for honey sold in jars with locally made raffia labels. In general poor access to markets meant that incomes realised were smaller than expected, leaving less to invest in value adding. This is showing more potential along Obudu Plains however, where communities are not as isolated from markets.
- .17 Community conflict has also been experienced during project implementation. Various communities were very much aware of developments in other communities DIN worked with and often wanted the same benefits. For example, all communities expected DIN to run an adult literacy programme. All communities also expected DIN to employ large numbers from the community. Both of these were not possible but often caused friction between DIN and partners. One of the more difficult problems was encountered in Bebi, where DIN targeted a small group of Fulani women and girls for adult literacy. The leaders of the Bebi farming community would not allow DIN to work with the Fulani group unless an adult literacy programme was also established for the Christian cultivators in the community. Although not specifically a target group, DIN chose to comply to reduce the conflict, otherwise the community would not provide a building or land to work with Fulani. These classes are ongoing.
- .18 Internal community conflicts are also a continual problem with elites trying to capture benefits. Prominent individuals with power often created problems when they felt they were not getting any benefit from DIN's presence. Their power meant that they could unsettle programmes and cause difficulties for DIN extension staff. These problems and the ensuing negotiations were time consuming and often hindered progress.
- .19 Community motivation and dependency were also issues in some groups, where expectations were high and groups expected DIN to do all the work or provide inputs other than start up and basic support. It is a very slow process to remove dependency and high expectations. Some community partners still have high expectations after showing

- early enthusiasm, however this is reducing as time goes on. DIN has now developed key skills in expectation management.
- .20 Recent fuel and rent increases and government salary increases created financial pressures for DIN. DIN salaries had to increase in line with other NGOs and the Government in order to keep staff, however DIN staff are still among the lowest paid in the NGO sector in Cross River State. Fuel prices also doubled the cost of transport to Obudu Plateau. These have greatly added to administrative expenses.
- .22 Although adult literacy classes were developed in Amana, Utanga and Bebi, this was not particularly well co-ordinated and although instructors received training, their overall impact is questionable (despite some notable successes). This is an area which DIN wishes to develop further as it has the potential to provide marginalised Fulani women with real benefits and empowerment through literacy. Adult literacy classes were halted in November 2003 to review and evaluate the programme.
- .23 The forest conservation conference was not achieved because of time constraints. The extent of other projects, research and documentation, meant it was has not been possible to organise a conference on such a large scale, although there was correspondence between DIN and CCDI regarding the conference.
- .24 Accounting problems within DIN hampered the efficient and effective management of this project in 2003. The DIN Project Accountant was relieved of his duties in April 2003 due to his inability to cope with the complexity of the project. A new accountant willing to reside in Obudu was not found until August 2003. The DIN Project Director was also in the UK from August to January 1 2004, making it difficult for the new accountant to make rapid progress. This absence was forced due to funding issues.

STEPS TAKEN TO ADDRESS PROBLEMS

- .25 Business development workshops addressed problems of market access and isolation. It was acknowledged that access to capital was required to make micro-enterprise more sustainable. DIN has now applied for assistance from CIDA to start a pilot project with one of the stronger community partners (Okpazange Women's Group), aiming to support their small micro-savings scheme, which will impact on the success of their micro-enterprise activities. The Cross River State Government has also proposed plans for further development with a promise of jobs and a large micro-credit facility on Obudu Plateau, where DIN's micro-enterprise development has been particularly intensive. While the Government is investing so much on Obudu Plateau, DIN has been focusing on communities along the plains whilst continuing to monitor developments and support strong and active groups on the Plateau. The Plains communities are also closer to markets and therefore the potential for success is greater.

- .26 Community conflict is difficult to address, however DIN has ensured that conflict resolution has always been a priority where necessary. In the case of Bebi, DIN is working with Bebi cultivators in market gardening, which now involves a few Fulani women and beekeeping with youth. DIN must continue to ensure that capacity is developed in both communities, where intervention is required.
- .27 Internal conflict and benefit capturing by elites is also difficult to address. DIN tries to ensure that elites are part of all communication and involved in projects in some way, i.e. attending meetings, workshops, consultations, etc. It does not remove competition but it does mitigate the perceptions of being ignored or by-passed. Motivating communities and building trust is a long term activity. DIN constantly states clearly what it can and cannot achieve. It also passes on the same message of long term benefits through acquiring new skills. Exchange visits are also used for motivation.
- .28 The adult literacy programme has been completely reviewed and new funding will be sourced to employ a co-ordinator and a consultant who can design a recognised curriculum. Targets must be set with participants reaching a particular level within a given time period. Participants must also be grouped according to ability, which was another failing of DIN's adult literacy programme. These steps will be taken in future to ensure DIN's programme is up to an acceptable standard, and achieving desired results for the majority, not just a minority of participants.
- .29 In terms of accounting, the new Project Accountant has introduced a coding system for budget line items, project sites and donor funds. She is also in the process of computerising the accounts to speed up management decision making. The Project Director has also returned and is working with the new accountant to ensure such accounting problems do not happen again, with this and future DIN projects.

PRINCIPAL STRENGTHS OF PROJECT

- .30 The principal strength of this project is that it has enabled DIN to replicate widely through northern Cross River State. It also provided the ground work for DIN to identify which projects are more appropriate and where intervention is necessary. For example, the Obudu Plateau community place a very high priority on wage labour, however a micro-savings programme will probably be successful with strong groups there. Beekeeping and honey production is more successful in warmer areas of the plains as well as Iyindeve and Emale on the warmer slopes of Obudu Plateau. Market gardening is more successful on the tropical forest edge, where the variety of vegetables grown is greater.
- .31 The project has enabled much research, which has supported DIN's work. The project also allows for adequate monitoring through

documenting DIN's progress. It is rare for projects to allow time for adequate monitoring and evaluation.

- .32 The project has provided DIN with a wealth of experience, building the organisation's capacity and ensuring it is one of the most experienced NGOs in the field of forest conservation and micro-enterprise development.

PRINCIPAL WEAKNESSES

- .33 The principal weakness was the initial assumption of the Hotel Ranch Resort development. This development happened too late to be effective and although it is providing wage labour and a market for some products, there are very few tourists to the resort, making tourist related activities and value adding unfeasible. Access to markets is a major hurdle for community partners to overcome and this was also underestimated in the project.
- .34 Transport costs and the isolation of Obudu Plateau were not adequately factored into the project. This also impacted on the success of micro-enterprises on the Plateau, where transport to the closest markets of Amana and Utanga was still very expensive leaving women/youth relying on the discretion of commercial drivers to transport their produce. These issues and more have been addressed in the final Business Development Workshop Report, 2003.

LESSONS LEARNED FROM PROJECT

- .35 The first lesson is to acknowledge that community partners need access to start-up capital if their micro-enterprises are going to provide real income. DIN is currently analysing the more successful micro-enterprises and community partners and is conducting a micro-credit feasibility study with funding from CIDA under the One Sky Capacity Development Project. Community partners have stated throughout the project that they need credit to develop their ventures and utilise the skills they have gained through workshops and training. This project is showing that perhaps support for rotating savings and credit must go together with micro-enterprise development.
- .36 Transport costs need to be supported if key products, including potatoes and vegetables are to be marketed in hotels in Calabar and Ikom.
- .37 Adult literacy requires a specific format for it to be effective, developed by an expert in adult education. The programme requires specific indicators of progress and success, to ensure that participants are getting value for the time they are giving up.
- .38 The FMC on Obudu Plateau needs a forest management plan to provide direction in forest management. This is currently being developed with the DIN Director who has expertise in community forestry. Whilst much of this is continuing under this Ford Funded

project, new work is also being supported by the One Sky capacity development project.

- .39 Conflict resolution requires an excellent understanding of the nature of the conflict. Unfortunately Cross River State Government plans changed this conflict by evicting Fulani pastoralists from Obudu Plateau, creating greater tension on the Plains. Therefore a further study was required to understand the nature of this conflict in two villages – Bebi and Kundeve, where tension is greatest.

4.0 FUTURE POSSIBILITIES

.1 DIN has a number of possibilities for developing its community forestry programme beyond the close of this project. Some forest management and conservation activities are now being supported under the One Sky Capacity Development Project. This includes the development of a Community Forest Management Plan with the Obudu Plateau FMC, using research and information gained from this Ford funded project. In the past the FMC has been supported in key conservation activities by DIN and this project, but a more formal plan, developed with key stakeholders, will empower them to implement specific agreed conservation strategies. DIN has already completed extensive research into the importance of agriculture as well as forestry for the Obudu Community. This will be used in developing the plan. However DIN is also aware that increasing government intervention on Obudu Plateau may impact further on its own programmes on the Obudu Plateau.

DIN aims to secure funding for similar interventions on the Obudu Plains, in tropical edge communities as this work will need to be continued when the Ford Foundation funds are exhausted. Already DIN is working with the Bashu community to implement their Community Forest Management Plan, developed with the Cross River State Forestry Commission (CRSFC). This project will strengthen further, the relationship between DIN and the CRSFC. DIN will support the Bashu community in attempting to implement sustainable harvesting practices. If it is successful, it will only be the second community to attempt to do so in Cross River State.

Finally, DIN's community forestry expertise will be further developed as the implementing agency for a large Fauna and Flora International community forestry project, targeting 15 communities surrounding the Afi Mountain Wildlife Sanctuary. It is hoped that funding will be provided by DFID. This project will also raise DIN's profile.

.2 Research, monitoring and evaluation has highlighted that micro-enterprise projects will be more successful if incorporated with rotating savings and credit schemes. There are a few options for DIN. One is to pilot the success of a micro-savings scheme on Obudu Plateau before moving directly into micro-credit. DIN's feasibility studies (August – October 2003) in Ohong, Bateriko and Boje have highlighted that micro-credit can be particularly successful in these communities if combined with training and monitoring. In terms of micro-enterprises, DIN is also developing larger projects, including a palm oil processing mill in Bateriko with a proposal for a second processing mill in Boje. Both communities highlighted palm oil processing as high priorities for the community. The Bateriko women are also developing a strategy for managing processing waste from the mill to increase income.

- .3 DIN has already applied to CIDA for funding to support key activities in community capacity development, community forestry and adult literacy specifically targeting Fulani pastoralists. Because all Fulani cattle have been evicted from the Obudu Plateau, greater conflict along the Obudu Plains is expected and this is an area where DIN feels further intervention is required. The increase in Fulani and cattle has contributed to both Fulani – Fulani conflict and also to Fulani – farmer conflict. Other than applying for funding to support adult literacy and some small scale enterprises with Fulani pastoralists, no other funding has been sourced. DIN believes that capacity development under a programme of civil society strengthening is required to support Fulani pastoralists and mitigate conflict. DIN will continue to source for a small grant to organise Fulani pastoralists into groups and give legal advice to ensure they understand the process of paying rents to farmers and other legal obligations.
- .4 At present, adult literacy is an area which has great potential if properly co-ordinated. DIN is already sourcing funding for a consultant to design an adequate curriculum with targets and indicators of progress. If funding is secured, a co-ordinator will be employed to ensure the curriculum is adhered to and to support adult literacy instructors. If successful, this programme can be extended into more villages along Obudu Plains, linking in with capacity development and conflict resolution efforts with Fulani pastoralists and Christian cultivators.

By Tracey L. Draper
Project Director



18 March 2003

APPENDIX ONE

Specific Outputs: Business Development and Environmental Management on the Obudu Plateau and Plains, Cross River State, Nigeria³

1.0 COMMUNITY FORESTRY

Forest Protection and Reforestation

- ? 12 protected forest patches fire traced annually from 2001 on Obudu Plateau by the Forest Management Committee (FMC) and supported by DIN (training, allowances and equipment) under the project.
- ? Bakum youth (60) organised voluntary fire tracing in 2002.
- ? Fire tracing workshops throughout the project targeting 7 communities on Obudu Plateau and along the tropical forest edge targeting over 300 individuals, including the Plateau FMC.
- ? In 2001 and 2002, FMC meetings were facilitated by DIN. DIN also provided a small allowance to assist the Plateau FMC under the project. This support was phased out towards the end of 2002 and the FMC encouraged to be more self sufficient through income generating activities. DIN is currently in the process of developing a community forest management plan with the FMC, whilst the FMC are developing a constitution to become a legally registered CBO.
- ? Plateau FMC has been carrying out fortnightly forest surveillance with capacity support and training provided under the project.
- ? The project enabled further development of two DIN nurseries in Bateriko and Obudu Plateau. The project also enabled the establishment of four community nurseries. Throughout the project, DIN's two nurseries have raised over 20,400 seedlings of 70 different species while four community nurseries (Anape, Bakum, Okpazange and Okwabang) have raised 5870 seedlings of 12 different species.
- ? Community woodlots have been established in Bateriko (0.5ha) and Okwabang (1ha).
- ? In total, the project has supported the planting of 15,120 seedlings for woodlot establishment and enrichment planting in degraded sites, involving over 400 community members throughout the project. The village of Bateriko also impose sanctions on those who do not turn up for tree planting.
- ? Community members in the 7 communities including school conservation clubs in Bateriko and Obudu Plateau were trained and involved in tree seed collection throughout the project.

³ Throughout this appendix referred to as 'the project'

- ? Okpazange and Anape nurseries have now been handed over to the communities for complete management and maintenance, reducing DIN's input to a monitoring role.
- ? A forest advocacy programme was developed, including environmental education in the schools of Obudu Plateau, Bateriko and Okwabang. Forest advocacy covered the importance of forests, the need for regeneration planting and raising seedlings and the dangers of fires.
- ? A forest consultant was hired to assess forest regeneration of various protected patches on Obudu Plateau. The consultant also carried out a review on the communities' perceptions towards DIN's impact. DIN is still awaiting the completed report.

NTFPs

- ? Technologies for the domestication of afang (*Gnetum Africana*) introduced in 2001. Grafting and budding techniques also introduced for bush mango (*Irvingia gabonensis*) to reduce fruiting times.
- ? In total 500 afang cuttings were propagated while 120 improved bush mango seedlings raised.
- ? Other species introduced for domestication included moi-moi leaves (*Thaumatococcus daniellii*), Ibaba (*mucuna pruriens*) and Cashew (*Tetracarpidum conophorum*).
- ? 8 improved varieties of citrus and sweet mango were introduced into both community and DIN nurseries.
- ? Two women's groups and 12 individuals trained in afang domestication and bush mango grafting and budding. Bakum women's group established their own afang domestication project following the training received.

2.0 ALTERNATIVE LIVELIHOODS

Bee Keeping

- ? Beekeeping commenced on Obudu Plateau and was replicated along the Obudu Plains and tropical forest edge in 2002. In total, beekeeping and honey production has been established in the following communities: Anape, Emale, Iyindeve, Okpazange, Keji-ku, Bebi, Bakum and Bateriko. The lower lying villages have had more success in honey production due to more favourable climatic conditions.
- ? Community hives have produced about 977 litres of honey with Iyindeve hives being the most successful due to its location on the warmer northern slopes. This has generated a total of about N250,000 (approx US\$ 1900.00) over the two years for participating farmers.
- ? 62 bee farmers have been trained but not all have had their hives colonised. DIN has provided inputs such as frame and pot hives, smokers and bee suits.

- ? Iyindeve bee farmers have formerly registered with Obanliku Local Government Area as a CBO, after developing their own constitution.
- ? Bateriko and Bakum beekeeping commenced towards the end of 2002 and training was provided by the most successful woman beekeeper on Obudu Plateau. There are now 3 community beekeeping trainers, who can provide training rather than DIN providing these services.

Market Gardening

- ? Market gardening has had mixed success, depending very much on the capacity of the women groups.
- ? DIN's demonstration plots on Obudu Plateau and Bateriko have been successful in growing a variety of vegetables including: carrots, tomatoes, cucumber, sweet pepper, chilli pepper, fluted pumpkin, amaranthus, huckleberry, waterleaf, cabbage, sweet potato, lettuce, beans, strawberry and rhubarb.
- ? The large variety of vegetables demonstrated enabled DIN to realise an income of under N50,000 (approx. US\$ 380.00) over the two years of the project.
- ? Women's market gardens were established in Okwabang, Bakum, Bateriko, Bebi, Okpazange and Keji-ku. However revenues for women were very small as virtually all of the produce was used for home consumption. Total sales records for women's groups total just over N 5,000.
- ? In total about 80 women have been trained in market gardening and composting techniques in DIN's demonstration gardens.

Livestock

- ? DIN's demonstration livestock projects on Obudu Plateau consisted of goats, sheep, poultry and rabbits.
- ? Both goat and sheep projects introduced new breeds by introducing larger northern billy goats and rams to breed with smaller local varieties. This introduced a 'new' product for women's groups into the local market.
- ? Following on from successful demonstration projects, DIN introduced goats and sheep to women's groups in Okpazange, Bateriko, Kundeve (Fulani women) and nomadic Fulani groups on Obudu Plateau.
- ? The goat project was introduced as a *passing on the offspring* project, which started with Fulani women on Obudu Plateau and has been replicated in Okpazange and Bateriko. The sheep project has been replicated with Fulani women in Kundeve. DIN's demonstration project realised an income of N 10,800
- ? Okpazange women are the only community group so far to generate income (N 5,000); projects in Bateriko and Kundeve are less than 12 months old and are waiting for kids and lambs to develop.

- ? In total, Okpazange women have 15 goats, Kundeve (Fulani) women have 10 sheep and Bateriko women have 5 goats. The nomadic Fulani women of Obudu Plateau had their goats stolen.
- ? The DIN demonstration livestock project has been handed to Okpazange women, who have now combined it with their own small goat project.
- ? Training was provided for all women's groups in basic tethering techniques and animal health. Women groups are now skilled at administering basic injections and recognising symptoms of illness.
- ? The Okevi Ikwow women commenced a broiler project, realising a total revenue of N 130,700, with an overall profit of N 58,000, which the group are planning to invest back into the project. However, Protea Hotels is the main market for broiler sales.

Potato Cultivation

- ? Potato cultivation was supported on Obudu Plateau only, with women groups, youth groups and individual farmers from Anape, Okpazange, Keji-ku, Okwa-mu and nomadic Fulani communities on Obudu Plateau.
- ? Over the two years, 14 tonnes of potato were produced and sold for an average of N 50 per kg, realising a revenue of approximately N 700,000 (approx. US\$ 5,380), of which about N 546,000 (US\$ 4,200) was generated by the community. Protea Hotels was the main market for potato sales.
- ? Extensive training has been provided for over 70 women and youth throughout the project in potato cultivation techniques and basic plant protection, with an introduction to common diseases such as potato blight.

Other Micro-enterprise Development

- ? Training in puff-puff production, fish pie production and soap making was attended by women from four communities on Obudu Plateau. Three women are now frying puff-puff on a daily basis on Obudu Plateau. Although some women have commenced production of these products, there is no information on the incomes they have received.