



Ce projet est financé par
l'Union européenne



EcoNorCam

Ecosystème du Nord Cameroun : Vers une Approche Intégrée du Paysage

Partenaires de mise en oeuvre



ECOSYSTEM OF NORTH CAMEROON PROJECT: TOWARDS AN INTEGRATED LANDSCAPE APPROACH (EcoNorCam)

ADAPTING TO CLIMATE CHANGE

Propagating the use of improved fireplaces to reduce pressures
on forest cover and health

SHEET 2



Women using an improved fireplace in the village of Larki

In the northern part of Cameroon, the increasing demand from households for firewood results in strong pressure on wood resources, which are becoming increasingly scarce in this area. The organisation Forêts et Développement Rural (FODER), within the framework of the implementation of the Project Ecosystem of North Cameroon: Towards an Integrated Landscape Approach (EcoNorcam), supports households in the use of improved fireplaces, which is a solution to the sustainable supply of wood energy taking into consideration the preservation of ecosystems and the health of women and children exposed to smoke from closed and poorly ventilated kitchens. As a result, after three years of project implementation (2021–2023), 1093 households living along the Benoue National Park are now using improved fireplaces as an alternative to firewood. This alternative has been propagated in 11 villages along the Benoue National Park (BNP), including Ouro André, Na'ari, Agorma, Dogba, Banda, Larki, Pani, Mboukma, Boulel, Maguienwa and Mayo Sallah.

To guarantee successful awareness-raising, FODER relied on facilitators-instructors and women leaders in the communities. These women leaders, trained in the construction of these improved fireplaces, act as relay agents of the skills acquired in the construction of improved fireplaces in their communities. A total number of 30 trained women act as facilitators for the construction of improved fireplaces in their communities. *«The train-the-trainer approach which we used within the framework of propagating the use of improved fireplaces has been very beneficial for the project. This approach has helped to ensure the sustainability of the action and a more effective propagation. These women leaders are being assisted from the start by facilitators in order to continue to improve their performance in the transmission of skills. We encourage them to train as many women as possible to ensure that the action lasts,»* says BONNE Guissata, EcoNorcam Project Manager.

As part of the awareness-raising campaign,



a poster² and a video in the local language³ showing the stages in constructing improved fireplaces have been produced and are being used to enlighten the communities. Made from local materials, these improved fireplaces account for a 60% decrease in the amount of wood or charcoal used for cooking. Martine DOPNE is one of the beneficiaries of these improved stoves: *«Thanks to FODER, I learned how to make an improved fireplace in May 2021 as part of the EcoNorCam project, and I've been using it ever since. These improved fireplaces are so beneficial to us, starting with wood consumption: I used to burn 4 or 5 bundles of woods with the traditional 4-stone fireplace, but right now I am at two bundles for a week. This reduces the number of times I have to go into the bush to collect wood, and also reduces the impact on our environment. In addition, the improved fireplace cooks faster and retains heat even when the flames are extinguished, which saves me from having to reheat meals.»*

Households account for 1 093 of the improved fireplaces built in the communities. They have understood the need to make their own contribution to reducing desertification in the North of Cameroon, preserving the park's biodiversity and fighting climate change. In other localities, such as LARKI, NA'ARI and AGORMA, the women are demonstrating their ability to make improved fireplaces by innovating other models based on the one they learned from FODER, and are going beyond their locality to spread the word

²<https://forest4dev.org/download/3775/>

³<https://forest4dev.org/watch/econorcam-limportance-des-foyers-ameliores/>

TÉMOIGNAGES

Alimatou ABBO,

President of the Kaoutalde Larki Simplified Cooperative Society (Scoops) and trainer in improved fireplaces

« We used to burn nearly 8 bundles of wood a week for our cooking. Nowadays, we instead use 3 bundles, which significantly reduces our wood consumption, an advantage for us. With just a single piece of wood or two, we can cook our food without any risk of fire accidents. Thanks to the improved fireplaces, we can also cook our food without getting dirty or smelling smoke. I am happy to use improved fireplaces and also happy to train the women in my village to construct these improved fireplaces. Thank you FODER for passing on this knowledge to me and ensuring that I can share it with the women in my village».



Fadimatou IBRAHIM,

Manager of a restaurant in LARKI

«I solely use improved fireplaces in my community restaurant because they allow me to make a lot of profit. Prior to using improved fireplaces, I used to spend quite a lot of money to buy wood for my cooking – CFA francs 1,000 per bundle – and I used between 15 and 20 bundles of wood a week. But since I started using the improved fireplaces, I burn 8 to 10 bundles of wood, which reduces the initial cost of buying bundles of firewood and saves money. Some people might be tempted to think that cooking food on improved fireplaces is slower because they use less firewood, but that's not true. Food gets ready on improved fireplaces just as quickly as it does on conventional fireplaces. In addition to savings on firewood, improved fireplaces retain heat. I can therefore leave my cooking pots on these improved fireplaces, knowing that the



meal will stay hot for a while, permitting me to serve warm meals to my customers. These improved fireplaces are a real revolution for our cooking.»



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This stocktaking sheet was produced within the framework of the project «Ecosystem of North Cameroon: Towards an Integrated Landscape Approach» (EcoNorcam). The contents of this document are the sole responsibility of FODER and can in no way be taken to reflect the position of the European Union and the project's implementing partners



**Constructing of an improved
fireplace in Guidjiba**