Agroforestry bringing hope and restoring landscapes in highlands of NW Cameroon

Riba is a community located in Bui Division in the mountainous North West Region of Cameroon close to Klum-Ijim Mountain Forest. The hillsides of this area have been deforested and degraded by peasant agriculture with a loss of soil fertility and biodiversity. RARC was established 15 years ago to promote a more sustainable tree-based farming system to restore soil fertility, generate income, enhance gender equity, and improve farmer livelihoods through the establishment of a community-funded Rural Resource Centre (RRC) providing training in agroforestry and nursery management, watershed protection, bee-keeping, use of microfinance, and support in the marketing of tree seedlings and farm produce. Capacity building activities have now been extended to 26 of its groups, with an average of 20–30 persons per group.

What did we achieve?

- Rehabilitation of degraded lands through agro-forestry has diversified and improved on-farm vegetation
- Successful adoption of tree-based farming has led to diversification of the farming system and development of an eco-agricultural approach
- The RARC has brought together farmers from 26 communities as well as Non Governmental Organisations
- Rehabilitation of watersheds and marginal lands has improved the availability of water in the community, particularly during the dry season
- Revenues have been reinvested into community infrastructure projects, including a learning and demonstration resource centre with boarding facilities
- Number of farmers planting soil fertiliser trees and other improved indigenous fruit trees species has increased from 208 to 360, and increased crop (wheat and potatoes) yields 2 to 3 folds. Crop yields have increased 2 to 3 folds due to association with soil fertiliser species.
- Tree-based farming has brought about the additional benefit of improved nutrition
- Sales of improved seedlings and honey have generated income for the local community

The Millennium Development Goals

1. Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger
2. Achieve universal primary education
3. Promote gender equality and empower women
4. Reduce child mortality
5. Improve maternal health
6. Combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases
7. Ensure environmental sustainability
8. Develop a global partnership for development

Good Governance

Good governance is about how decisions are taken and implemented in a state. Originally, the connotations of this notion included an efficient public sector, accountability and controls, but also decentralization and transparency. Today, good governance means more. It is not just confined to government actions alone but also encompasses the interaction between government and civil society.