



BETTERWORLD CAMEROON

FONDATION BIEN ETRE

BETTERWORLD PERMACULTURE AND CLIMATE CHANGE INITIATIVE

IPC9 Discussion Document



Our Centre builds relations between graduates, government and social enterprise.

We are looking to develop relations with IPC9 supporters who feel they can align with our mission of using environmental protection, sustainable development and international solidarity to create a "Better World" that preserves our natural heritage (Mother Earth) and builds collective dreams of a One World Family.

The International Permaculture Convergence is a window of opportunity for Africa to contribute to global environmental issues and Better World Cameroon (BWC) is in Blantyre to pledge to the Western delegations that we will use our Cameroon One World Linking Association to support cross-border collaboration and using sustainable indigenous knowledge systems in ecological agriculture to adapt Permaculture and climate change initiatives that can put Africa on the global scene alongside international movements working to build a Better World. In our small initiative back home in Cameroon, I try to combine science and traditional farming systems in improving land use, capacity building and mobilizing and sensitizing unemployed graduates and small holder farming groups to facilitate their integration in social enterprise.

My own idea of Permaculture is simply a mix of tree crop agro forestry, landscape gardening and environmental education in schools. My initiative is supported by the Ministry of Environment and Nature Protection and the Department of Community Development in the Ministry of Agriculture.

The Better World Ecological Literacy Centre in the capital city of Yaoundé, where I am working as a volunteer was set up in 1996. It is a post graduate training and research centre which has trained over 60 young people in organic gardening and reconnected them back to the land in towns and villages. It has played a leading role in the sustainable agricultural movement in Cameroon and

contributing in its own modest way to reflections on reversing environmental degradation and the world climate.

We are presently developing an Organizational Development Plan on a Voluntary Service Overseas (VSO) platform which will pay more attention to awareness raising on climate change issues and we are setting an eye on eco tourism as a source of income generation.

The initiative

During a general Assembly of Environmental Science graduates undergoing Permaculture training at Better World Cameroon (BWC), Women business heads and women representatives of local administration held at the B W C Head office at Biyem Assi, Yaounde, on the 23rd September 2008, Problems of Women's rights and their Participation in facing the Food crisis in Cameroon, promoting sustainable development and Governance were top on the agenda.

Participants observed that women's participation in the socio-economic activities of Cameroon and the world at large is very insignificant. All the fifty three young educated Cameroonian girls and women entrepreneurs who took part in the debate on Women and Sustainable Development expressed this worry.

They were also concerned over the poor participation of Cameroonian women in using modern farming techniques and technology to change lives and improve women's situation in Cameroon and many African countries. Women's contribution in ecological agriculture and using indigenous biodiversity actions which mitigate climate change was of major concern to the General Assembly. Other worries were child abuse, violence against women and the world population that is on the decline as a result of the AIDS pandemic and other Health hazards in the third world.

The Assembly deliberated on a very wide range of issues that touched on the lives of the girl child, women, population vis-à-vis development and violence against women, especially when they become widows and also during conflicts. At the end of the general assembly the women resolved to initiate a project that will address the problems of small holder farmer women in sustainable development. As secretary general of the assembly and passionate campaigner on women's issues I decided to take it as a challenge to further research on the violation of women's rights to farming land and the existence of International Human Rights Instruments such as the Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) and the International

Declaration on Violence against women. I was interested in the primordial role of women and the girl child in the development of Cameroon's economy in particular and that of the world at large using organic techniques which are kind to the environment, and women's role as stabilizers of society, conscience of the nation and catalyst of change and reconciliation to design this project 'Better World Permaculture and Climate Change Initiative (BPCCI)' that will address the falling morals of society, the increasing spread of environmental degradation and its effect on the population and the timid participation of women in governance and the socio-politics of Africa.

Creation of the project

As a member of the grassroots Cameroonian NGO called Better World Cameroon, in charge of International cooperation, Women Empowerment & Media Department, I have negotiated to work with the National coordinator of BWC to come up with this project which is meant to salvage the situation of vulnerable women and unemployed youth by finding solutions to the critical issues raised during the General Assembly. Better World Permaculture and Climate Change Initiative abbreviated, BPCCI is conceived in consultation with the Development Team of BWC, The Ministries of Agriculture and Youth affairs and Environment and will be implemented through a General Assembly decision.

AIM

The aim of BPCCI brings together women and the youth of different socio-economic and political backgrounds for purposes of capacity building, active participation in politics, governance and economic development.

OBJECTIVES:

BPCCI will pursue the following objectives:

- 1) Mobilize, sensitize and redynamise women and youth groups to become more participatory in politics and sustainable development, thereby fostering women and the youth's participation in governance, national and international debates.
- 2) Defend and promote the respect of women and children's rights within the ambits of United Nation conventions.
- 3) Advocate and press for the implementation of Agricultural Policies and International Human Rights Instruments, such as the Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) and the right to land.
- 4) Press for policy reforms with respect to the defense, promotion and

strengthening of women and youth employment rights, especially in areas where they are either abused or not recognized at all.

- 5) Contribute in a healthier population growth through the following approaches:
 - a) Assist and educate people living with HIV/AIDS and help the public reduce the risk of HIV infection, its spread and administration of the anti-retroviral drugs.
 - b) Promote environmental care and the prevention of environmental destruction and degradation through campaigns against bushfires, farming along slopes and the destruction of the forest.

ACTIVITIES

BPCCI shall concentrate its activities on women empowerment, youth entrepreneurship, children's rights and environmental education as important factors of development, capacity building, environmental care, charity and other activities related to sustainable development.

The above activities shall be realized through collaboration with experts, consultants and researchers (most of who are found at IPC9) through the following;

- a) Seminars, conferences, and workshops and round table debates on gender issues.
- b) Research on African Women, youth development and Politics through Local, National and International Fora.
- c) Mobilization and sensitization of the population, especially at the grassroots on HIV/AIDS, and immunization as the best means of preventive healthcare.
- d) Capacity building in order to inculcate management and leadership skills in Women small farmer and youth groups.
- e) Radio and Television debates on Women issues and youth unemployment in relation to development, politics and Women's rights.
- f) Train Women and the youth on group dynamics, using new technologies, networking and practice of self-reliance as a way forwarded for women and youth empowerment.

PROJECT PARTNERS

BPCCI shall work with Cameroonian women groups of all works of life and international organizations of IPC9, and other women professional groups and people of tested

character and God fearing. Partnerships will be open to Africans, friends of Africa, Trade Unions, Human Rights groups, Religious groups and other NGOs whose objectives will not be in conflict with those of BPCCI.

All Project Partners shall have an agreement with Better World Cameroon.

ABOUT OUR UMBRELLER GRASSROOTS NGO BETTER WORLD CAMEROON (BWC)

The Better World Vision for Africa is a brain child of Joshua Konkankoh (Environmental Journalist and Social Entrepreneur in Yaoundé, Cameroon).

The project sets goals in poverty reduction, vocational education, natural resource management and appropriate technologies.

It focuses on training for enterprise development for the youth and women, and mainstreams the MDGs in its approach. The concept is based on setting up school/community gardens for environmental education and Permaculture training programmes in every village and town where rural and urban ecological agriculture is practiced for food sovereignty, wildlife protection and climate change mitigation.

Better World pursues two complementary goals:

The first involves efforts to internationalize BPCCI as an indigenous African concept of sustainable development.

The second is to catalyze international cooperation and collective problem solving through Relations Building and Linking of projects and Partnerships.

We believe an African Network of Permaculture Initiatives that can be promoted by IPC9 will offer not only our competencies and substantive indigenous knowledge systems but also our problem solving capacity, solidarity ethics and political reach.

As an initiative based on volunteerism, African Permaculture practitioners and their supporters will build commitment and sustained actions which emphasize participation, public accountability and transparency.

It is our firm conviction that sustained community partnerships for learning between peoples across the world would lead to greater understanding, justice and peace which would enhance the attainment of the Millennium Development Goals for all countries.



SENGE Laura ATABE.

IPC9 Participant from Cameroon.

(My idea is a concept note and I will gladly welcome anyone who can help to develop this into a concrete proposal...so please contact me at convergence!)