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Date of birth: 12th June 1977

Team leader /Environmentalist

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I was born in Kumbo of the North West Region of Cameroon. I did my primary and secondary education there. My grand parents who brought me up were peasant farmers. The diversified non timber forest products harvested from the montane forest surrounding us provided for our needs. We lived a good life but later on as the population increased these services became scarce. Farm land reduced with infrastructural development and became less productive. There was need for chemical fertilizer to increase crop yields from scarce land to meet the food needs of the growing population. The forest that provided services to us diminished and became degraded. This was happening while I pursued my studies. Our grand parents talked about this. I was touched about this as it affected us directly and decided to be a solution to it by undertaking a vocation to work to reverse the situation. I understood that development and environmental protection were two sides of the same coin and needed to be treated as such. I was so interested in natural sciences from primary through secondary school and university. In this line my dream was to be realized. In the primary school, I followed up my rural science classes with keen interest and while in the secondary school I specialized in sciences and was a member of the environmental club all through my stay in secondary school. In the environmental club, we shared ideas on environmental problems that plague the world like climate change, pollution, deforestation, depletion of non renewable natural resources, impacts of chemical farming on environment and energy crisis. We also organized debates on how to solve these environmental challenges. The student body and staff followed up these debates and along with other activities like tree planting, songs, drawings, poems and sketches relating to environmental protection and became aware of the need to get involved in an environmental protection campaign.

When I completed from secondary school in 1996, I had a strong drive to work on environmental issues and so enrolled for a Bachelor of Science course in Environmental Sciences which took a multi-disciplinary approach to solving problems of the developing world and minored in Botany in the University of Buea, Cameroon. I was with the first batch of students on this course and to distinguish myself as a practicing environmentalist, I joined the "The Post" (a national newspaper) as a columnist producing environmental articles on various environmental problems faced by Cameroon and proposing solutions to them while in the university. This helped sensitise the Cameroon public on the environmental problems that plague the nation and proposed simple solutions that were at the reach of all. The green page in the newspaper was sponsored by the German Technical Cooperation (GTZ) working on the Mount Cameroon Project. I was motivated with the comments I received from those who read the newspaper and it pushed me to remain focused. I earned some money from this activity that supported me in my education. During vacation, we organized cultural, sports and sensitisation activities in our various tribes. I went round in the team making presentations on environmental problems that plagued our tribes like bushfires, deforestation, eucalyptus invasion in water catchments, over grazing and many others. On completion from the university, I went straight to practice. In 2001, after leaving the University with a Bachelor's degree, I occupied a position of a Junior environmental consultant in a consultancy firm called F.N&A Development Planning Consultant

where I worked for one year managing environmental problems in development projects. The job was short-lived and I joined Cameroon Wildlife Aid Fund that works with primates in the Mvog Betsi Zoological and Botanical Garden in Yaoundé, Cameroon to work on environmental education. I held this position as volunteer until I got a job in Global Village Cameroon (GVC) as an Energy and Climate Change Campaigner, a position I held for six years. In GVC, I carried out campaigns using advocacy, lobbying and sensitisation to shape the development of dams making sure that displaced people are compensated, resettled and also that the government should invest in decentralized and renewable energy systems like solar, wind, biogas, micro-hydro systems that are environmentally friendly. It was a good campaign with big challenges. We shaped government policies on environment and energy development. We also work to shape multilateral development bank policies. I worked on the following dams: Lom Pangar, Memvele and Nachtigal in Cameroon. This work was done in partnership with international partners like International Rivers, Friends of the Earth, Africa Rivers Network, Bank Information Centre and National Association of Professional Environmentalist-Uganda. National partners were FOCARFE, CED, CARFAD and the government ministries involved. The Lom Pangar dam was to flood some portion of the Deng Deng forest which was rich in gorillas and chimpanzees that were highly under threat for bush meat as villagers poached them and sell to traders who bought and sold in towns. Global Village Cameroon never remained silent to the problem. With a grant from the Rufford Foundation we sought to reverse the situation through environmental education to communities, schools and local leaders in the Deng Deng forest areas. I was part of this campaign. In 2006, I led another environmental education campaign funded by New England Biolabs Foundation in Yaoundé in schools, taking school children to learn about animals in zoos and ran an environmental education programme on the radio for one year. It was very interesting.

Two years to the end of my time in GVC, I worked on forest governance to see how forest communities could benefit more from their forest resources exploited by timber companies and improve on their living standards. I did this along with other responsibilities linked to my job as Energy and Climate Change Campaigner. We worked with all forest stakeholders and sensitised the population on how to fully benefit from their forest royalty. I did some work too on End Oil Aid, a campaign that was aimed at ending fossil fuel subsidies in order to encourage the development of other energy sources like renewable energy. I worked closely with other civil society organizations to shape multilateral development bank policies like World Bank on environment and sustainable development. In my last year in Global Village Cameroon after coming back from an Environmental Leadership Certificate course that I did in the University of California, Berkeley, I engaged in bio fuel campaign in Cameroon to make sure that the many incoming bio fuel investors on bio fuel plantations in Cameroon do not convert agricultural food crop land to bio fuel crop plantation, that food crops should not be converted to bio fuel, that the tropical forest in the Congo Basin should not be cut down to provide land for the planting of bio fuel crops like Jatropha crop and that the cultures, traditions, rights and languages of local people should not be tampered with by bio fuel investors. This campaign gained the support of IUCN Small Grant Programme in the Netherlands that funded a project which I left in GVC. As my days in GVC drew near I was moving from policy to action. A partnership that we developed with Solectrique Cameroun - a solar system installation company - led to the development of a project proposal written by myself for the Lighting Africa-Development Marketplace competition funded by the World Bank. The concept note was selected among 150 others from more than 500 concept notes sent to the World Bank to provide the Nghanha Village in the Adamawa Region with light from solar and potable water through solar pumps. A full proposal was developed and I went to Ghana at the invitation of the World Bank to compete by presenting the project before the World Bank jury. GVC won the competition along with some other fourteen institutions from Sub Saharan Africa. I felt some deep satisfaction for leading this dream to the end and for helping to change lives of some group of people for the better. I am proud that I left GVC while creating a positive change in shaping policies, improving on the standards of living of the less privileged, protecting the environment and developing my capacity to be a catalyst for sustainable development wherever I find myself. I am grateful that GVC gave me the opportunity to work with them and grow.

My work in GVC took me to many places like countries, regions and villages where I learned much by sharing in the experiences, skills and knowledge of many people to develop my critical thinking mind. I was invited to participate in the Africa Rivers Network skill share meeting in Nairobi, Kenya in 2005 where we

looked at campaign strategies to promote renewable energy and reduce the impacts of dams on the environment and dam affected people. I also participated in the United Nations Environment Programme organized event on Gaining Public Acceptance on dams. I participated in the African Ministerial Conference on Hydropower and Sustainable Development under World Bank invitation to shape hydropower development in Africa. I represented the Cameroon civil society in the meeting. In the course of my work, I got a scholarship to do an environmental leadership course in the University of California, Berkeley. This programme had participants (mid-career professionals) recruited from all over the globe with an average intake of about 40 each year. It was there that I learned much about bio fuel from lectures and practical examples shared on bio fuel development and impacts. What attracted my attention much was the fact that large virgin forest in tropical regions like south America (the Amazon Basin is one of the lungs of the Earth) were cut down to give way for bio fuel crop plantations. I became so interested in it especially as Cameroon falls in the tropical forest region (the Congo Basin is another lung of the Earth) that hosts much of the rich tropical forest. I was again motivated to do this when the Environmental Leadership Program (ELP) alumni quarterly published newsletter asked alumni to prepare articles on bio fuel activities in their various countries. In this environmental leadership course I created many partnerships, joined networks and learned much from the teaching staff and the professionals who came from all over the globe. I also went to Accra Ghana to participant in a World Bank expedition and competition on Lighting Africa-Development Marketplace where different renewable energy systems were open to the public. These events and many more carried out in Cameroon were so enriching to my professional career.

After leaving Global Village Cameroon I reshaped my vision and decided to go in for field based action activities that will impact the lives of local people directly and fight poverty. I still hope to do the same things that I did, but more as a service provider. To do this well, I saw the need to go back to the University for a Professional Masters on Environmental Rehabilitation and Restoration to build my capacity and learn more how to carryout research in order to meet the field challenges. My interest now is on agro-forestry, organic farming, biogas production and popularisation of the technology to rural communities, small hydropower systems, windmill, solar systems, improving on children's welfare, fighting for their rights and interest and fighting climate change through the planting of trees. I have done some work in this line especially on integrated organic farming, biogas production, agro-forestry and learned more on renewable energy systems like windmill at the Strategic Humanitarian Services (SHUMAS) Organic Farming Training Centre during my internship from August to October 2009. I have also in this line created an initiative which is non profit making called Cameroon Gender and Environment Watch (CAMGEW) to pursue my new vision, where I will try to make the world a better place for all people and make sure that the future generation have their own share of the natural cake-Mother-Earth.

Qualifications

Bachelor of Science (Hons) - University of Buea, Cameroon.

Certificate on Environmental Leadership, Sustainable Environmental Management - University of California, Berkeley, USA.

Internships

Bamenda Highland Forest Project on water catchment management - Mar 1999

Kumbo Water Authority on Kumbo water catchments - April/May 2000

Biogas Production and Integrated Organic Farming in Strategic Humanitarian Services Biofarm Centre in Kumbo, NW Cameroon - Oct 2009 - See REPORT.

Publications and reports

Cameroonians get involved in bio fuel plant cultivations; A myth or solution to poverty, the energy crisis, a fuel price rise, unemployments, environmental degradation and climate change

What future for our rivers and livelihood sources - focus on Cameroon

In whose interest? - The Lom Pangar Dam and energy sector development in the Cameroon - with Terri Hathaway of International Rivers Network and Nikki Reisch of Bank Information Centre

Civil society involvement in water, energy and dams issues in Cameroon - Voices from the ground

The participation of civil society in hydropower development in Cameroon

Transboundary conservation for peace, justice and sustainable development in the Congo Basin

Compensation rates still a cause for concern in Lom Pangar Dam Project

Evaluation of the achievement in the sensitisation and consultation of the population during the environmental impact assessment phase of the Lom Pangar Dam project - with Nongni Bakker of Global Village Cameroon

Impact of eucalyptus trees on catchment areas: The case of Kumbo Central - Dissertation for the award of B.Sc in Environmental Science, University of Buea.

Cameroon and global food crisis

Positioning of Cameroon with global climate change and its impacts

Employment

F.N & A Development Planning Consultant - Position: Environmental Management Consultant (January 2001-October 2003)

Cameroon Wildlife Fund operating in the Mvog-Betsi Zoo Yaounde Cameroon and Mfou National Park - Position Environmental educationalist (volunteer) (June 2003-june 2004)

Global Village Cameroon (GVC) - Position Energy and Climate Change Campaigner (June 2004- 2009)

RESPONSIBILITIES IN GVC:

- Advocating and lobbying policy makers to put up sustainable policies in the energy and environment sector in the country. www.globalvillagecam.org
- Studying the impact of existing dams in meeting energy needs, in improving on local people's livelihood and in promoting sustainable development. www.globalvillagecam.org and www.internationalrivers.org
- Promoting renewable energy use in Cameroon as an alternative energy source which is more people-centred www.globalvillagecam.org
- Executing the REECIPES project funded by European Union to gather data on existing and potential energy sources, energy production, transportation, distribution and its efficiency and effectiveness. This project is aimed at seeking ways to promote renewable energy in Cameroon. We pray it should enter into the implementing phase.
- Leading in the campaign on the Lom Pangar dam project proposed by the government in the East Province of Cameroon (through lobbying and advocacy activities which involved stakeholders and the sensitisation of local people on the impacts of dams on their livelihood) and whose environmental impact assessment is at its final stage. We worked to make sure that this large dam meets the recommendations of the World Commission on Dams report. <http://www.globalvillagecam.org/>
- Engaged in the on-going dialogue initiated by Global Village Cameroon to know how multinational companies and corporations in Cameroon like AES SONEL and ALUCAM benefit the Cameroon public. Carrying out the execution of an Environmental Education programme in the Deng Deng forest with schools, traditional rulers and the communities that live in and around its vicinity to bring behavioural change from poaching and over exploitation of forest resources to sustainable management of the forest funded by Rufford Small Grants www.rufford.org
- Carrying out environmental sensitisation with schools in Yaounde by building students and pupils capacity to tackle environmental issues and carrying them to the Mvog-Betsi Zoological and Botanical Garden to have a practical experience of a conservation project and develop environmentally friendly activities for presentation in University of Yaounde I Radio (RADIO CAMPUS) to sensitise other students and the public on environmental issues. Funded by New England Biolabs Foundation.
- Executed a project funded by the Max and Anna Levinson Foundation through Global Village Cameroon to

campaign for the protection of the Deng Deng forest from being flooded by the proposed Lom Pangar dam in the region. We worked with the various stakeholders like decision makers like French Development Agency, World Bank, the government and the population and their representatives to make sure that the rights and interest of Deng Deng forest community and biodiversity be protected.

- Capacity building of populations for the management and prevention of flood risks: case of Nkolibok quarter, Yaoundé funded by ProVention Research & Action Grants between 2007-2008.

Cameroon Gender and Environment Watch - Position: Team leader/ Environmentalist (Jan 2009 till now)

RESPONSIBILITIES IN CAMGEW

- v Carryout administrative duties for CAMGEW
- v Environmental education in schools
- v Preparing information for website
- v Project conception and writing
- v Environmental activity development

KEY SEMINARS AND WORKSHOPS ATTENDED

- Attended a World Bank funded "Lighting Africa Development Marketplace 2008 Global Business Conference and project competition for modern lighting in Accra, Ghana on May 6-8, 2008" in Sub-Saharan Africa. Here, I won the competition to provide modern energy to the rural village of Nghanha in Cameroon from solar after preparing a good project proposal. This was under invitation by World Bank to compete as finalist. See www.lightingafrica.org
- African rivers Network meeting held in Nairobi, Kenya from 2nd to 4th October 2005 with the aim of promoting sustainable development in the energy sector, strategising on how to move the World Commission on Dams (WCD) recommendations forward, promote renewable energy projects in Africa as a best energy option which is environmentally friendly, people-centred, efficient and can best meet the needs of rural people and looking for the possibilities of using African rivers sustainably. See website: www.nape.or.ug
- Attended a UNEP organised workshop on Gaining Public Acceptance under the Dam and Development Project (DDP) in United Nation Centre in Nairobi, Kenya on the 5th of October 2005. www.unep.org
- Took part in the consultation meeting in Yaoundé, Cameroon on the validation of National Action Plan for Poverty Reduction in the rural areas of Cameroon in December 2005.
- Represented the civil society of Cameroon in the African Ministerial Conference on Hydropower and Sustainable development from the 6th to 9th of March 2006 in Johannesburg, South Africa see website www.hydropowerconference.org
- International seminar on Micro hydropower for Central Africa-Innovations and Exchange organised by ADEID in Bafoussam, Cameroon on the 26th to 28th of October 2006 attended by participants from the national and international level.

My VIDEO INTERVIEW AT THE ENVIRONMENTAL LEADERSHIP PROGRAM IN THE UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA

http://nature.berkeley.edu/blogs/news/2007/09/video_elp_participants_discuss.php Global environmental ambassadors discussing the impact of the University of California, Berkeley's unique leadership program July 2007.

MEMBERSHIP

- 1 Africa Rivers Network ARN
- 2 Global Village Energy Partnership GVEP
- 3 International Network of Small Hydropower INSHP. China
- 4 ELP Alumni Network for fellows from Environmental Leadership Program, University of California, Berkeley

OTHER SKILLS: -Computer literate, driving

HOBBIES: -Gardening, listening to news, athletics; Reading journals on development, social, environment, culture, energy and gender issues

