



Tropentag, September 18-20, 2019, Kassel

“Filling gaps and removing traps
for sustainable resource management”

Contributions of Home Gardens to Vegetable Biodiversity: A Case Study of Eco-Sustainable Gardens Empowering Minority Women in Cameroon

PRIDE EBILE, NANCY NAHSANG TAGU, JENS NORBERT WÜNSCHE

University of Hohenheim, Inst. of Crop Science, Germany

Abstract

Biodiversity and natural resource management are critical to a sustainable livelihood of many rural communities because they depend highly on their ecosystems. However, the biodiversity of many communities is being threatened by many factors; one such factor is demand driven agricultural systems with an emphasis on high-value monocultures. This agricultural system has negatively affected the biodiversity of many communities thus fragilizing their ecosystems.

With the loss of plant biodiversity in many communities, especially of some indigenous vegetables, this study examined the potential of a garden project to reintroduce some indigenous vegetable crops back into the communities of rural regions in Northwest Cameroon.

Eco-sustainable gardens that empower Mbororo minority women is a home garden project designed to help reduce the dependency of the Mbororo women on their husbands for food and income. The project also has an educational component that is mainly to provide the women with good horticultural management practices and the importance of dietary diversity and nutrition. Three groups of vegetables were planted in the gardens for the following purpose, i) marketable vegetables (fluted pumpkin, waterleaf, chili pepper), ii) nutrient-rich vegetables (aubergine, amaranthus, okra, Chinese cabbage, sweet bitter leaves), and iii) indigenous vegetables (Lalo, Folere, Caricachee).

Many families can depend on a diversity of vitamin rich vegetables for income generation and nutritional food. The project reintroduced and increased the variety of vegetables available within the project communities, adding to the plant biodiversity. The project helped to produce indigenous vegetable seeds that are scarce, and distributed them to many beneficiaries thus promoting the distribution of these vegetables.

Keywords: Biodiversity, home gardens, minority groups, vegetable, women empowerment