

Cameroon Education For Sustainable Development Profile

2011 -2015



WWF Cameroon Programme Office

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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Thank you
A big thank you to the Ministry of Basic Education (MINEDUB), the Ministry of Secondary Education (MINESEC), and the Ministry of Environment, Protection of Nature and Sustainable Development (MINEPDED) for the encouragement and support for WWF Cameroon to pilot this initiative in the country.

Special thanks to all the pilot schools – Government High School Loum, Government High School Nyasoso, Government Bilingual High School Muambong, Government Bilingual High School Bangem, Government Bilingual High School Melong, Government Teacher Training College Nkongsamba, Government Teacher Training College Bangem, Government School Mbulle, and Government School Nsoug – for their sustained interest in ESD and relentless collaboration.

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1. INTRODUCTION

UNESCO makes it categorically clear that today the economic growth model has led to environmental degradation, social injustice, and economic inequities and that many education systems support such a model. The advice is that in order to live in a more sustainable world, there is a need to rethink the purpose of our education systems as well as what is learnt, what is tested, and how it is taught. It is indisputable that education is one of several mechanisms available to governments and communities to bring about social transformation for the creation of more stable, more equitable and more resilient societies.

Education, within an Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) framework, can address difficult changes and contemporary challenges—whether environmental, social or economic, or whether they are local or global in scale. Aligning primary and secondary schooling with the purpose of sustainability will help in the creation of an environmentally robust, socially equitable and economically fair world, and ESD is our hope for this type of world.

UNESCO further avers that ESD provides an opportunity for every human being to acquire quality knowledge, skills, attitudes and values necessary to shape a sustainable future. ESD involves including key sustainable development issues in teaching and learning, such as climate change, disaster risk reduction, biodiversity conservation, poverty reduction, and sustainable consumption.

ESD involves the use of participatory teaching and learning methods that motivate and empower learners to shape their behaviour and take action for environmental protection and sustainable development. In other words, it imagining of future scenarios and making decisions

collaboratively, thus learning their way towards a more sustainable future. To achieve this, it helps and motivates learners to view the world through a prism of ecological, societal, and economic problems and prospects, in order to have a holistic understanding for informed decision-making or appropriate action.

Within the context of Cameroon, ESD, as seen by World Wide for Nature (WWF) Cameroon, is aimed at developing in the citizens the kind of knowledge, values and skills that will enable them to make informed and ecologically sensitive decisions in formulating and implementing livelihood improvement and development strategies, in order to contribute to the sustainable development of the country. Its specific objectives are to:

- i) Include the perspectives of targeted local communities in ESD so as to guarantee their support for the implementation of the initiatives in the pilot schools;
- ii) Raise the level of environmental awareness of pilot schools and target communities so as to guarantee their commitment to biodiversity conservation in particular and environmental protection in general;
- iii) Transform ESD pilot schools into ESD model schools by achieving at least 75% implementation of the Whole School Approach (WSA), covering all the six thematic areas, as measured using the WSA Adoption Assessment Tool;
- iv) Integrate ESD into the national educational system characterized by adequate and balanced coverage of environmental and development issues in national curriculums and syllabuses, and
- v) Promote collaboration, networking and exchange of

information and experiences among the ESD pilot schools.

2. HOW IT ALL STARTED

From 2007 to 2010, WWF Coastal Forests programme (WWF CFP) focused on the implementation of Environmental Education (EE) based on a strategy developed during a workshop facilitated by Ekpe Inyang who was then the programme's EE Officer.

Targeting a total of sixty schools (20 in Korup National Park area, 20 in Mount Cameroon National Park area and 20 in the Bakossi Landscape), EE was restricted to working with Nature Clubs in the secondary schools and targeted entire schools in the primary section.

During this period, Ekpe opened communication with Gunilla Elsasser who was in charge of ESD in WWF Sweden. At some point, Gunilla proposed for Ekpe to change from EE to ESD, a more holistic approach that was already gaining currency in many countries.

The opportunity for this change came after Ekpe was invited to an ESD workshop in Uganda in 2010.

Ekpe participated in an ESD workshop in Uganda in 2010 to gain the East African ESD experience



During the workshop, Ekpe observed that ESD was, indeed, a more effective approach in contributing not only to conservation but sustainable development. He engaged Gunilla in a discussion on how to introduce this approach to Cameroon with the necessary support that would make it work.

Finally, ESD was launched in Cameroon during a national sensitization workshop that took place in Yaounde on 18th and 19th of April 2011. The workshop was facilitated by Ekpe, with Gunilla, Per Sund, and Staffan Svanberg of WWF Sweden and Zipporah Musyoki of WWF Kenya as resource persons.

The workshop brought together participants from four Ministries, namely Ministry of Environment and Nature Protection (MINEP) [now Ministry of Environment, Protection of Nature and Sustainable Development (MINEPDED)], Ministry of Forestry and Wildlife (MINFOF), Ministry of Basic Education (MINEDUB), and Ministry of Secondary Education (MINESEC). Participants were exposed to various aspects of ESD: ESD principles and methodologies, ESD policy development process, and experiences from East Africa.



Gunilla engaged participants in discussion during the national launching of ESD in Yaounde to win Government support

All WWF Cameroon's Programme Managers and their key programme staff, as well as the then Conservation Director, National Director, and the Regional Representative participated actively during the workshop. The workshop, which ended with the reading of a communique that demonstrated Government's acceptance of and commitment to the ESD initiative, served as a source of energy for WWF Cameroon to move the process forward.

With enormous support from Gunilla, a lot of time was dedicated to fundraising to ensure effective field implementation of the initiative. Nine pilot schools (Government High School Nyasoso, Government Bilingual High School Muambong, Government Bilingual High School Bangem, Government Bilingual High School Melong, Government High School Loum, Teacher Training College Bangem, Teacher Training College [ENIEG] Nkongsamba, Government School Mbulle, and Government School [EP] Nsoug), selected on the basis of their proximity to protected areas managed by WWF Coastal Forests Programme, were launched to kick-start field ESD activities in January 2012. It is important to note that, for logistical reasons, the number has been reduced from nine to five.

3. OUR FIRST CONCRETE STEPS

3.1 Capacity Building

Capacity building efforts began in 2011 in Limbe when, with the help of two WWF Sweden consultants Staffan and Nils Carlsson, a local Core Team of Trainers (ESD Teacher Coordinators, Divisional Delegates of Primary and Secondary Education, and School Inspectors of Primary Schools) whose areas of jurisdiction lie within the WWF CFP area were introduced to ESD concepts and

methodologies, as well as green entrepreneurship and business planning.

In 2012, Staffan introduced the pilot schools to Locally Relevant Themes (LORETs) and later in the year Ekpe moved the process forward by working more intensively with the schools to develop the early drafts of their LORETs.

In late 2012, a staff of WWF Sweden, Germund Sellgren, introduced the schools to the Whole School Approach (WSA) and in 2013 Ekpe reinforced the training and went further to train the local Core Team of Trainers in entrepreneurship and business planning, resulting in the development of the first business and annual plans for the pilot schools.

In mid-2013 another consultant of WWF Sweden, Mathias Demetriades, introduced a new angle to our ESD approach by placing emphasis on the development of critical and analytical thinking skills for informed conclusions and decision-making, breaking of stereotypes for multi-cultural awareness and respect, and promotion of democracy and human rights for guaranteed equity,

Training of a
Core Team of
Trainers in ESD
for assured
replication and
sustainability of
the initiative



peace, and security. The academic year was rounded off with another elaborate workshop on ESD principles and practice by Ekpe whose main aim was to adequately prepare the Core Team of Trainers to replicate the

training in the pilot schools following an agreed work calendar.

In early 2014, the Pan African Institute for Development – West Africa (PAID-WA) was contracted by WWF Cameroon to help the pilot schools in the revision of their business plans, which resulted in some pilot schools changing their business ideas completely to take advantage of new market trends.

In the later part of 2014, Staffan, together with Ekpe, trained the **Core Team of Trainers** and the staff of WWF Cameroon's ESD implementing partner, **ASYOUSED**, in ESD principles and practice, the procedure and techniques for developing LORETs, and some teaching exercises. In 2015, Staffan further exposed ASYOUSED to a wider range of teaching exercises aimed particularly at helping learners develop **action competence** while Ekpe introduced them to **basic conflict management**.

3.2 ESD Policy Development

The first ESD policy workshop took place in 2012 in Kribi in the Ocean Division of the South Region. The purpose of the workshop was **principally to expose strategically selected representatives of MINEDUB,**



MINEDUB, MINESEC, MINFOF, and MINEPDED representatives in a policy workshop in Kribi to prepare some groundwork for ESD policy development

MINESEC, MINEPDED, and MINFOF to key results of the ESD initiative in Cameroon with a view to winning Government support in the development of favourable policies.

The second policy workshop, also held in Kribi, was in 2013. This workshop laid a more solid foundation for the formulation of ESD policies in Cameroon. It culminated in the publication of the ESD communique drafted during the national launching on Cameroon Tribune, the national newspaper, and in the issuance by MINEDUB and MINESEC of letters encouraging and authorizing WWF Cameroon to carry on with the implementation of ESD in the country. There were accompanying letters to Regional Delegates of Basic and Secondary Education, instructing them to lend their full support to WWF in this initiative.

3.3 ESD Curriculum Development

After the pilot schools had been supported to develop the early drafts of their LORETs, national consultants were recruited and trained by the WWF ESD team in 2013 to further develop the LORETs in collaboration with some key staff of MINEDUB and MINESEC Inspectorates General of Education. The LORETs were later validated in a workshop in Yaounde involving ESD Teacher Coordinators of the pilot schools.

MINEDUB and
MINESEC supported
to embark on ESD-
oriented curriculum
development



The concept of **Nationally Relevant Themes** (NARETs) was presented to the consultants and IGE staffs. These resource persons were then commissioned to conduct a nation-wide research on the environmental and development challenges of all the agro-ecological zones of Cameroon. The data were used in the development of NARETs for Basic and Secondary Education. The NARETs, in turn, provided the basis for the development of ESD-oriented curriculums which were submitted by WWF Cameroon to MINEDUB and MINESEC for consideration.

3.4 Support **To** ESD Pilot Schools

Meaningful logistical support to the pilot schools began in 2012, after the launching of the pilot schools, with school greening – planting of flowers and trees – as the first set of ESD activities. In 2013, the emphasis was on the award of scholarships to students and the development of eco-friendly income-generating activities (IGAs) at the pilot schools, notably poultry, piggery, organic farming, bee farming, and running of school canteens.



Poultry and piggery are some of the ESD best practices of pilot schools used to improve teaching and to address poaching in local communities

In that same year, 2013, pilot schools were encouraged to set up Learners Participation Platforms, otherwise known as Student Governments, to ensure learner participation in decision-making and other school affairs, including monitoring of the IGAs. Pilot schools were also provided with Ventilated Improved Pit (VIP) latrines and gardening and sanitation equipment (wheel barrows, spades, rakes, diggers, digging forks, watering cans, dustbins, etc.) to promote health and sanitation, as well as sustainable agriculture in the pilot schools.

There was inspection of VIP latrines in the ESD pilots schools of the Bakossi Landscape for quality assurance



In order to ensure effective implementation of ESD, the pilot schools were supplied with textbooks and teachers' manuals on environment and ESD. The schools were encouraged to keep these books in their libraries and to make them accessible to teachers and students. ESD Teacher Coordinators were also equipped with computers and printers especially to facilitate reporting on ESD activities.

3.5 Development Of WWF Cameroon ESD Strategy

Driven by the need to articulate and demonstrate the link between ESD and conservation as WWF core business in Cameroon, 2014 was also dedicated to the development of an ESD strategy for WWF Cameroon Country Programme Office (WWF CCPO). This document, scheduled for implementation from 2014 – 2020, highlights the role of various stakeholders in the promotion of the ESD initiative and the contribution of ESD to conservation and sustainable development.

3.6 Partnership With The Civil Society And The Government

To ensure the sustainability of the ESD initiative in Cameroon, there was a need for a national NGO to be brought on board as an implementing partner. In 2014, therefore, WWF Cameroon signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with ASYOUSSED for the latter to help facilitate the implementation of ESD in Cameroon under the supervision of WWF ESD team.

In 2015, WWF ESD team and selected representatives of MINEDUB and MINESEC drafted MoUs which were submitted to the ministries by WWF Cameroon. This prepared the groundwork for more strategic discussions on the need for MINEDUB and MINESEC, as ESD implementing partners, to enter into partnerships with WWF Cameroon. Meanwhile in the same year, WWF Cameroon succeeded in signing an MoU with MINEPDED, the national ESD coordinating partner.

3.7 Implementation Of ESD Research

2015 marked the beginning of a more robust ESD research to assess the effectiveness of the initiative, evaluate its impact on the local communities, and ascertain its contribution to conservation. This research

was conducted by the WWF ESD team, with the pilot schools assisting in conducting household impact surveys.

Preliminary results of the research show that ESD best practices are steadily being adopted by the local communities, and that some of these best practices have provided alternative sources of protein and income to the extent that poaching is reportedly reducing in the area. This reduction in poaching is possibly due to the fact that significant energy is now absorbed away from the anti-conservation activity.

4. WHAT WE HAVE ACHIEVED SO FAR

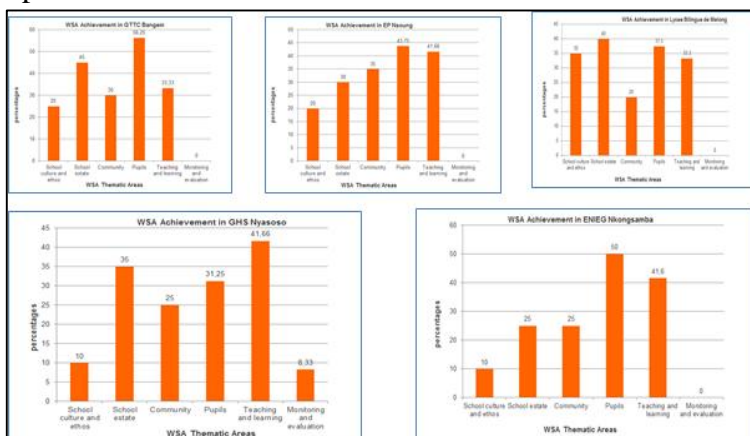
4.1 Teachers And Students Of Pilot Schools With Increased Interest In ESD

Teachers, students and even community members have demonstrated a lot of interest in ESD. Some teachers started teaching environmental and development issues, using the participatory teaching approach, even before their schools' LORETs were validated. In one of the pilot schools – Government Bilingual High School Melong - it was thanks to a proposal by the students that teachers started teaching conservation and development issues even before the early draft of their LORET was produced.

Students have also been taking a number of initiatives at their schools to promote ESD best practices and have served as useful agents of community sensitization and dissemination of the best practices to households. The result is that a good number of households in some communities have not only adopted the ESD best practices for income-generation and environmental quality improvement but have contributed time, labour and advice generously for the promotion of such initiatives at the pilot schools.

4.2 Pilot Schools Making Progress In Whole School Approach

The five retained pilot schools are making some reasonable progress in their adoption of the WSA, with Teacher Training College Bangem taking the lead on an overall achievement score of 33%, followed by Government School Nsoug and Government Bilingual High School Melong with 29%, and Government Teacher Training Collge Nkongsamba and Government High School Nyasoso with 25%. The graphs below show their specific scores in the various WSA thematic areas.



4.3 ESD In National Curriculums And Public Examinations

In 2014, MINESEC integrated ESD into their national curriculums of Secondary, Technical and Teacher Training Institutions. In the same year, questions on conservation, environmental protection, and sustainable development appeared in the public examinations of Primary Schools, Secondary/High Schools, and Teacher Training Colleges. This phenomenon would certainly serve as an additional source of motivation to accelerate the implementation of ESD throughout Cameroon. Below

is a box containing some of the questions.

<p>First School Leaving Certificate Examination</p> <p>Environmental Education, Question 5 (3 marks)</p> <p><i>Climate change is caused by changes in the atmosphere, resulting sometimes to very hot weather. Explain three ways of preventing climate change.</i></p>	<p>GCE Ordinary Level Certificate Examination</p> <p>Geography, Question 7 (b) (4 marks)</p> <p><i>Suggest FOUR possible ways in which the over exploitation of fish resources in Cameroon can be controlled.</i></p>	<p>GCE Advanced Level Certificate Examination</p> <p>Literature, Question 5</p> <p><i>"Nature and man in harmony."</i></p> <p><i>To what extent does this statement reflect Hemingway's concern in The Old Man and the Sea?</i></p>
<p>Teacher's Grade I Certificate Examination</p> <p>Philosophy of Education, Question 1 (4 marks)</p> <p><i>According to scientists, man is destroying his natal land, whereas it is this land that has been feeding him for millenniums now. This poses the problem of environment management as well as sustainable development. Using your knowledge on Philosophy of Education and examples from the school milieu:</i></p> <p>a) Define the following concepts: Sustainable development and Environment protection.</p> <p>b) Show with two examples how to integrate the notion of sustainable development in your class.</p>		

4.4 Partnership Agreements And Support Of ESD In Pilot Schools

With support and coaching from the WWF Cameroon ESD team, ASYOUSÉD succeeded in signing MoUs with three Parent Teacher Associations (PTAs) and two Councils (local Governments) to ensure community support and participation in the implementation of ESD in the pilot schools. The MoU signing also included the endorsement of action plans with roles and contributions of each party clearly spelt out.



ASYOUSÉD Director (right) and the chairman of a PTA (middle) after signing an MoU in the presence of the WWF ESD Team Leader (left)

5. LESSONS LEARNT

5.1 The thematic area of the WSA most readily adopted by schools is the school estate. This is possibly so because of its school beautification potential and the fact that it provides some form of outdoor exercise as well as opportunities for the development of life skills for teachers and students.

5.2 Motivated Core Teams of Trainers is guarantee for the effective implementation of ESD in schools. These teams need not only the knowledge and skills as prerequisites but also logistical support and the enabling environment to ensure their effective performance.

5.3 Working closely with education authorities also at Regional and National levels is critical to achieving national policy support and curriculum re-orientation. These education authorities provide the compass that effectively directs the initiative, the thermometer that measures its effectiveness, and the enabling environment that supports its implementation.

5.4 To successfully implement ESD in schools, there is a strong need to work in rhythm with the school calendar. This means that planning of ESD activities should take cognizance of the school calendar in order to take advantage of relevant school events, avoid clashes with some school important activities as well as scheduling activities that are not implementable during holidays and periods of examinations and teaching practice, in the case of Teacher Training Colleges.

5.5 Irregular visits to schools, especially when teachers' and pupils' motivation is high, can be a source of frustration. It is important to respect agreed work plans

and timing of specific activities, as well as communicate effectively with the pilot schools in order to avoid misinterpretations and misconceptions that may breed conflicts in the future.

6. THE WAY FORWARD

6.1 Building The Capacity Of ASYOUSED

This will include not only technical capacity based on modules outlined in the WWF Cameroon ESD strategy but also institutional capacity to ensure the CSO's effective management of the ESD process in and out of the pilot schools.

6.2 Supporting The Transformation Of Pilot Schools Into Model Schools

Based on school-specific three-year action plans, ASYOUSED will provide logistical and technical support to foster the development of the pilot schools into model schools. Development into model schools means achieving at least 75% in all the thematic areas of the WSA.

6.3 Signing Of MoUs With MINEDUB and MINESEC

With some groundwork already laid, WWF Cameroon will sign MoUs with MINEDUB and MINESEC for mutual commitment to the promotion of ESD in the country through implementation of a joint action plan that will be elaborated.

6.4 Appointment Of Focal Points In MINEDUB, MINESEC, and MINEPDED

WWF Cameroon will coach and support ASYOUSED to advocate for the appointment of Focal Points in these partner ministries. Serving as liaison between the

ministries and WWF Cameroon as well as other international stakeholders such as UNESCO, the role of the Focal Points is to facilitate communication and management of ESD processes within the ministries.

6.5 Facilitating The Establishment Of An ESD Steering Committee

WWF Cameroon will also coach and support ASYOUSÉD to facilitate the establishment of an ESD Steering Committee in Cameroon. This committee, consisting of representatives of the partner Ministries, including the Focal Points, will pilot the affairs of ESD in the country, with MINEPDED as the coordinating ministry. The role of this committee will also include the development of national ESD policies and strategies.

6.6 Upscaling Of ESD To Regional And National Levels

With the encouraging results at the local and national levels, WWF Cameroon will embark on a strategic extension of ESD to other programme areas in order to guarantee its achievement of sustained conservation results.

To achieve nation-wide impacts, WWF Cameroon will upscale ESD to the national level, to facilitate the development of national ESD policies and strategies. The effort will also include building the capacity of a national Core Team of Trainers in ESD concepts, principles, and practices for dissemination throughout the national territory. There will also be systematic improvements of the existing ESD-oriented curriculums and supporting pedagogic guides, as well as development and implementation of the joint action plan.

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2011

ESD was launched
in Cameroon by WWF on
18 – 19 April 2011



13

WWF now supports 13
ESD pilot schools to
eventually develop into
ESD model schools in
Cameroon

3

ESD is currently being
implemented by WWF in 3 of
the 10 Regions of Cameroon

+10,000

ESD already has a good
number of national NGOs
engaged in it, with over
10,000 supporters in
Cameroon

Key Donor

WWF- Sweden/Swedish International
Development Agency (SIDA)



Why we are here

To stop the degradation of the planet's natural environment and
to build a future in which humans live in harmony with nature.