



This GEF Small Grants Programme

IVORY COAST: Project Title: Protection of Mangroves through the Creation of a Firewood Plantation

Project No: CIV/SGP/OP4/Y2/CORE/08/02

Grantee: Association pour le Reboisement de Bingerville (ARB)

Location: Anan, Bingerville, Ivory Coast

SGP Contribution: USD\$ 21,694

Cash Co-Financing: USD\$ 2,000

In-Kind Co-Financing: USD \$ 1,000

Project Duration: 12/2008 - 11/2009

Number of people served: 120

Focal area: Climate Change

Background

Anan is a fishing village, bordering the Ebrie Lagoon, in the town of Bingerville, approximately **15 miles from Abidjan**. In recent years, the village of Anan has experienced a severe depletion of its fish stock. Participatory diagnosis showed that the root cause of this depletion is the inadvertent destruction of mangroves for firewood needs. Indeed, the production of “Attieké” (semolina of cassava), a staple food in Ivory Coast, requires large amounts of firewood. The goal of the project was to support the restoration of the mangrove ecosystem by the local community by using the previous experience of similar GEF SGP projects done elsewhere in the country.

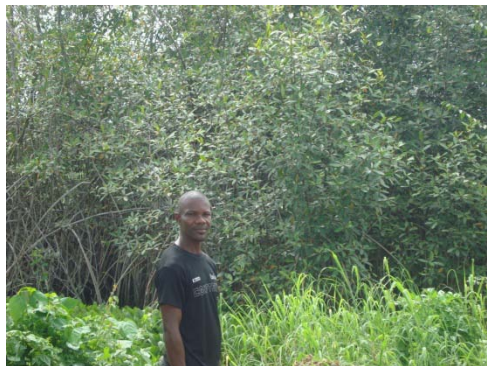
Project Objectives and Key Activities

The project aimed to contribute to the protection and restoration of the mangroves ecosystem. For this purpose, the community received training in mangrove restoration practices and promoted the plantation of fast growing trees (*acacia mangium*) as an alternative to meet energy needs. To date, ten miles of mangrove have been restored and 75 hectares of *acacia mangium* have been planted along with cassava. In addition, the project supported the construction of 75 improved stoves as an efficient alternative energy solution.

Environmental Impact

Ten miles of mangrove forest were restored along the edge of the Ebrie lagoon, and several fish nurseries are being developed along these mangroves. A firewood park of *acacia mangium* provided the village with firewood during the past three years by using the wood produced by the pruning of the branches. Recently, the woodlot was sold and individual family plantations have been created in an effort to provide firewood for energy consumption needs, improve land degradation and continue to preserve the mangrove ecosystem.





Socio-Economic Impact

Through this project, 15 community members trained in mangrove management and *acacia mangium* planting have created their own *acacia mangium* plantation and sell the pruned branches as firewood. This activity generates US\$600 to US\$900 dollars per year per person. The project also enabled the women of the community to reduce firewood expenses through the use of improved cooking stoves. This represents a reduction of up to US\$124 dollars per month per household.

Policy Impact & Replication

The *acacia mangium* plantation of Bingerville was visited by several master students in Economics and Sustainable Development of CERAP (Centre for Research and Actions for Peace) in collaboration with the University of Abidjan and has served as a demonstration site of this sustainable practice.

Due to the success of this good practice, as demonstrated by the project, several mayors around the country have organized an association of forestry municipalities to replicate the project by setting up *acacia mangium* plantations, with support from other donors.

Gender Mainstreaming

Ninety women participated in this project and their contributions were fundamental in assessing the energy needs of the community as well as their reliance on firewood. Their active engagement led the project to include improved cooking stoves as an alternative energy solution. During project implementation, ten women were trained on how to build improved cooking stoves and five women trained in *acacia mangium* and mangrove planting.

The women have also played a large role by providing support in project implementation through water supply and nursery creation. The reduction in firewood expenses allowed them to increase their business in Attié production. As a result of the project, the women of the community gained self confidence and social status and now feel more empowered to participate and create their own solutions.

Lessons learned

The experience of this project in Bingerville demonstrates that deforestation linked to firewood supply for urban areas is becoming an increasingly significant problem in Côte d'Ivoire. The GEF SGP's successful experience in creating a firewood park in the suburban area (like Bingerville) demonstrates that this model can be a solution for sustainable firewood management in urban areas, while also generating income for poverty alleviation. In coastal zones, these firewood parks can also contribute to preserve the mangrove ecosystem and increase the awareness of the communities involved.