

BNRCC Quarterly Newsletter
Special Issue

This special issue of our newsletter is to celebrate the project's extensive communications achievements: The official launch of BNRCC Climate Change Documentary in Nigeria and the 3rd edition of Media Forum on Climate Change. The event holds on Wednesday, March 9, 2011 at Rockview Hotel, Abuja, Nigeria.

*** Please visit our website to download case studies on climate change community based adaptation pilot projects in Nigeria and full story on our regional climate change knowledge transfer workshops.

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YOUR FEEDBACK IS WELCOME

The BNRCC newsletter invites correspondence from interested stakeholders.

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BNRCC

BUILDING NIGERIA'S RESPONSE TO CLIMATE CHANGE

LOCAL ACTION ON CLIMATE CHANGE

Quarterly Newsletter

March 2011

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Canadian International
Development Agency

Agence canadienne de
développement international



Nigerian Environmental Study/Action Team

BNRCC Pilot Project Secures Additional EU Funding in Bauchi State

With shorter, unpredictable rainy seasons and increasing daily heat, water scarcity is becoming an even greater concern in northern Nigeria. In the small community of Billeri (population 5000), a well 150-metres deep used during the dry season, demonstrates the impacts of an arid climate.

Situated in the guinea, savanna zone in Bauchi State, this community of Fulani, Kanuri, and Hausa people has seen a decline in crop productivity, a loss of biodiversity including and fewer livelihood options for farm families, due to climate change. Unpredictable rainfall

patterns, extreme heat, more drought, and increased frequency of destructive windstorms are now common events for this community.

Farmers that used to harvest forty bags of cow peas, acknowledge that their harvest is so sparse now that they can hardly fill ten bags - a drastic reduction when you consider that the average family in Billeri is between 5-10 people in size. Men and women believe the harsh environment is contributing to increases in health related problems, including higher rates of infections and heat-related diseases.



Water fetched from the 150 meter dug well in Billeri community.

When community members were asked what intervention was most required to ease their hardships, the answer came quickly: "they could bring us water". With such an evident need, a team from Abubakar Tafawa Balewa University (ATBU), in collaboration with Bauchi State Agricultural Department Program (BSADP), in partnership with the Building Nigeria's Response to Climate Change (BNRCC) project, set out to help the Billeri community adapt to their harsh reality. In 15 communities and 8 States across Nigeria, BNRCC pilot projects are designed to test adaptation options on a small-scale in order to strengthen the resilience of communities to climate change and increase their adaptive capacity. The

projects are meant to provide lessons learned from the field to develop practical approaches to community-based adaptation to climate change, which can then be implemented on a larger scale.

In October 2010, using momentum from the BNRCC project and proving that a pilot project's reach can be extended, the ATBU team successfully secured additional EU funding of 17.2 Million Naira. This funding will be used to drill a borehole 150m deep, to purchase a submersible pump, generator set, fencing for the facility, two animal water troughs, and to build a twenty-thousand liter overhead tank with ten tap heads. ATBU will use the remaining funds to train the community on maintenance and use of the facility. Billeri families use approximately 20 buckets of water per day for domestic chores like cooking and bathing, as well as farming and agricultural needs. The arduous task of pulling up these heavy pails from the well 150-metres deep, falls mainly on the youth in the village. Hand-after-hand, with a rustic system of levers and ropes, an entire day can be spent pulling up water from what seems like the depths of the earth. For some families the strength of an ox is used to hoist up the water.



Billeri community member pulling water from a 150 meter dug well.

"We might walk 5km to fetch water. There is no time for school. The thirst for water is much."

Hauwau, female youth, Billeri Coomunity, Bauchi State



Billeri community member using cows to fetch water from a 150 meter dug well.

In early discussions with the community, it was obvious that farmers and their crops were suffering due to unpredictable rains. As a result, ATBU introduced weather forecasting tools and drought resistant seeds to twenty beneficiaries. These farmers were provided and trained to use a weather forecasting tool, a device that helps farmers determine the best time for planting and harvesting based on rainfall predictions. Although only twenty farmers actually received the tool, the information and recommendations from the forecaster were shared widely, benefitting the greater community. The forecaster proved useful in planning farm operations such as fertilizer application. If a farmer applied fertilizer before heavy rains, then serious loss of the nutrients, through leaching, would occur; use of the forecaster provided information about whether or not it was safe to apply fertilizer. One challenge in the future, however, will be the cost consideration of

buying these forecasters.

Experimenting with a number of drought resistant or early-maturing seeds, ATBU provided farmers in Billeri with improved varieties of millet, cowpea, and sorghum. In dry ecological zones, the need for early-maturing seeds (that need less water to mature) is critical with our changing climate and shorter rainy seasons. Local varieties of millet normally mature in 80 days, whereas the improved seed can mature in about 40 days, half the time. The local variety of cowpea may need approximately 65 days to mature, but the improved variety can be ready for harvest in about 40 days, helping families and farmers stave off hunger normally associated with the planting season. While families enjoyed the taste of the food produced by these new seed varieties, one major challenge in the future, will be obtaining these seeds. Cost is not the issue, but an absence of extension services that reach this community may prove an obstacle to obtaining the early-maturing seed varieties.

While pilot projects are small by nature, ATBU has proven that their reach can be wide. Through the strategic involvement of local government at every step of the project, and working with BSADP, members of the Billeri community are more empowered and feel they have a stronger voice to affect change in the future. Empowering a community is crucial to ensure a strong and sustainable relationship between community and government that can be felt long after a pilot project ends.

"Crop yield is diminishing every year.

Families are buying their food now, instead of going to farm to harvest. There is less food. Life is harder today"

Aisha Audu, 87-year old, Billeri Community, Bauchi State.

Goodwill Message

Notes for a goodwill message by Mr. David Ross, Counsellor (Development) and Head of Cooperation, Canadian High Commission, Abuja, Nigeria at the Opening Session of the Third Lagos State Summit on Climate Change, February 8, 2010

Your Excellency, The Honourable Governor of Lagos State.

Your Excellency, The Honourable Deputy Governor of Lagos State.

The Honourable Commissioner for The Environment.

Other Distinguished Representatives of government.

Other invited Guests

Ladies and Gentlemen:

It is a pleasure for me to be here on behalf of the Canadian International Development Agency and the Canadian High Commission in Abuja at the opening of this, the Third Lagos State Summit on Climate Change.

We fully appreciate the efforts of the Government of Nigeria and the Government of the State of Lagos in addressing climate change issues. Also, The Federal Ministry of The Environment is playing an active role in guiding a national process addressing climate change issues. More particularly, the Special Climate Change Unit is leading a program to increase the visibility of climate change issues within the country.

The Government of the state of Lagos must also be commended for its progressive role in taking action on climate change. This Climate Change Summit, the third of its kind, is only one manifestation of the state's interest in, and leadership on, this critical issue.

The Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) is pleased to have been an

early donor to climate change activities in this country. Our earlier project supported the capacity building of our local partner - the Nigeria Environmental Study/Action Team (NEST). We are proud that our support contributed to helping nest achieve its objectives.

The current CIDA-funded project 'Building Nigeria's Response to Climate Change' is managed by NEST, CUSO-VSO and Marbek Resource Consultants of Canada. The project is assisting the Government of Nigeria to achieve more effective governance related to climate change, thereby enhancing Nigeria's efforts to achieve equitable and sustainable natural resource management and poverty reduction.

In addition, the project supports seven pilot projects in fifteen communities, including here in the state of Lagos. (we are helping the Lagos State Government in the development of a state climate change adaptation policy). Community based organizations are also being strengthened in order to carry out project interventions and to propose, plan and implement adaptation activities. Finally the project is working on a National Adaptation Strategy and Plan of Action which we hope will inform the government of Nigeria in its ongoing work in this area.

Climate change affects all of us. If collectively we fail to address the serious issues involved, each and every one of us will face the consequences.

Thus I wish you every success with your discussions over the next three days and look forward to reviewing your recommendations and your final communiqué.

Thank you.

Pilot projects host regional knowledge sharing workshops

To begin the new year with an emphasis on communications between government, local communities and civil society organizations, Building Nigeria's Response to Climate Change project (BNRCC) held *Knowledge Sharing Workshops* one in Makurdi, Benue State, on January 18th, and one in Calabar, Cross River State, on January 20th, 2011.

BNRCC Pilot Project partners, who have been working for up to two years on community-based climate change adaptation initiatives, gathered together at these regional workshops to demonstrate their results and the lessons learned from their respective projects. Community representatives from each pilot project were invited as resource people to share personal success stories from their communities. Local government and State policy makers and local and national media were also in attendance to discuss, inspire and contribute to linkages between communities, local and State governments and civil society organizations.

The main objective of the workshop was to encourage sustainability for BNRCC pilot projects and utilize the lessons learned for future pilot projects. BNRCC has always advocated involving government at all stages of a project. Mr. Samuel Udeh, from the Benue State planning office implored the organizations in the room "to inform and

communicate with State planning offices early in a project's phase. This will allow for sustainability both for the NGO, the community and the project itself."

In Makurdi, the workshop's success was recognized from the outset when Mr. Usman H. Dukku, a member of the BNRCC Project Steering Committee and a NEST Board member, declared that simply organizing such a "workshop has already closed the communication gap" between community and local government. Professor Saminu Ibrahim, head of the BNRCC pilot project managed by ATBU, Bauchi, echoed the sentiments and emphasized one of the most important lessons learned: "there is a need for synergy and integration at every stage of the project from planning to implementation."

Participating in the Calabar workshop, on behalf of the Honourable Commissioner of the Ministry of Environment, Cross River State, Omotunde A. Ivara Esu, presented a paper discussing relevant policy expectations/requirements from community-based climate change adaptation projects. In particular she stressed that Calabar is very interested in tree planting and tree conservation practices and she commended BNRCC and its partners for holding a workshop with the intention of "working together to achieve similar goals."



Participants at Makurdi Regional Workshop

The workshop culminated with group work where participants gathered together to discuss possible policy recommendations from their respective pilot projects. Groups consisted of members of government, such as Barr. Mrs. Josephine Efiom, Executive Chairwoman, Akpabuyo Local Government, sitting with academics like, Dr. I.J. Ekpoh from the Department of Geography and Regional Planning, University of Calabar, along with BNRCC pilot project partners, and community representatives.

These diverse groups exemplified the aim of the BNRCC workshop bringing people together so that the knowledge gained can be shared and will continue to flow between organizations across all levels of society.

NEST, from Ibadan, which is implementing the BNRCC project, will be holding a National Workshop in Abuja in June 2011 to continue the knowledge sharing and to promote dialogue between communities, civil society organizations and national policy makers.

"We had problems of water in the community and we had problems getting the attention of the government.

The BNRCC project helped us with both these issues." -

Nimlam M. Liman, Kwaikong, Plateau State