

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE FAMILY FARM SCHOOLS PLUS AND IFER/IRE

DIOCESE OF KUMBO

(ACADEMIC YEAR 2016/2017)

INTRODUCTION

Family Farm Schools Plus (FFSs+) and IFER are the Rural Vocational Training Centers specialized in Agriculture, Livestock Production, Transformation, Service Provision and Crafts. The Diocese of Kumbo owns five Family Farms Schools Plus across the Diocese: FFS+ Ngondzen, FFS+ Ngarum, FFS+ Mbot, FFS+ Mbiame, FFS+ Banti and One IFER/IRE (*Institute pour la Formation en Entreprenariat Rurale - Institute of Rural Entrepreneurship*)

The *Family Farms Schools Plus* are the First Cycle of this vocational training while IFER/IRE serves as the Second Cycle. In this report, we are going to look at some important statistics about these schools, their activities carried out in the course of last year, the challenges and the attempted solutions, general difficulties and our vision for the year 2017, innovation and updates. We shall end the report with envisage risk and a conclusion.

1. IFER/IRE ((*Institute pour la Formation en Entreprenariat Rurale - Institute of Rural Entrepreneurship*))

We started the 206/2017 academic year with the following enrolment of students: Level One had 25 students (12 boys and 13 girls); Level two registered 19 students (10 boys and 9 girls) and Level Three recorded 16 students (7 boys and 9 girls). Put together, we have presently a total of 60 students in IFER Nkambe (30 boys and 30 girls). With regard to the number of Trainers, there are 8 Trainers in IFER, (5 permanent trainers and 3 part time trainers).

1.1. ACTIVITIES

The following activities have been carried out so far in IFER Nkambe:

- In September, we had recruitment exercise of new students
- As far as the internships are concerned, Level One and Level 2 have had 2 internships and 2 study visits.
- All the students have taken part in practical learning activities
- Level 3 students have registered for the GCE exams and are preparing for the mock examination in the month of October (if possible)
- Level 3 presented topics for their project and have done homographic studies which comprises Chapter One of their project
- Despite the strike, all the students went home with their first and second sequence results
- Trainers are presently following up students in their respective homes
- At the end of the month of October, three IFER trainers successfully defended their projects in Yaounde
- Fourteen students of the second batch defended a certificate and a prize award ceremony on the 26th of November, 2016
- Documents for the Legalization of IFER have been compiled and deposited at the regional delegation of secondary education on the 29th of December, 2016 and are awaiting approval.
- The students of IFER took part in the Agric-show programme, organized by Nkambe Council in December, 2016 and won prizes
- We received many visits from Via Don Bosco representatives, Social Welfare Department, CENEFAC and coworkers from ACOHOLF Family Farm School

1.2. DIFFICULTIES

- Destruction of crops in the demonstration plot by stray animals

- Disruption of classes and activities due to the current strike action in the North West and the South West Regions of Cameroon

1.3. WAY FORWARD AND PROSPECT

Concerning the destruction of the demonstration plot by stray animals, we are going to fortify the fence of the demonstration farm; so as to prevent stray animals from getting in.

Concerning the strike, we hope for a better future and for the mean time, we have sent our students on internship, others are working in there income generating activities at home and follow up is going on.

2. NGARUM FFS+

The Family Farm School Plus of Ngarum started the year with the following numbers of students: In Level One, there were 13 students (5 boys and 8 girls); Level Two equally has 13 students (2 boys and 11 girls) and Level Three has 19 students (10 boys and 9 girls). In total, there are 45 students in Ngarum (17 boys and 28 girls). There are 6 Trainers in Ngarum (3 permanent trainers and 3 part time trainers).

2.1. ACTIVITIES

So far, the following activities have been carried out in the Family Farm School Plus of Ngarum:

- In September, we had sensitization in villages to increase the number of students
- In October, we had training of students on Organic Manure Production and the cultivation of cabbages and tomatoes
- In November, we engaged ourselves in Broiler Birds Production
- We preoccupied ourselves in December in the placement of Level 3 students on internships, follow up and study visits

2.2. DIFFICULTIES

- Disruption of classes and activities due to the current strike action in the North West and the South West Regions of Cameroon
- Destruction of crops in the demonstration farm by stray animals

2.3. WAY FORWARD AND PROSPECT

The same way forward and prospect for the IFER is applicable for Ngarum.

3. MBOT FFS+

The Family Farm School Plus of Mbot has the following number of students: in Level One, there are 20 students (9 boys and 11 girls); in Level Two, there are 14 students (6 boys and 8 girls) and in Level Three, there are 16 students (7 boys and 9 girls). All in all, there are 50 students in Mbot (22 boys and 28 girls). Presently, there are 5 Trainers in Mbot (4 permanent trainers and 1 part time).

3.1. ACTIVITIES

In the course of last year, the Family Farm School Plus of Mbot has carried out the following activities:

- General pedagogical activities
- Practical learning activities in brooding of fowls, gardening and livestock
- Study visits
- Follow up of students for alternance and internship places
- Sequential evaluation

3.2. DIFFICULTIES

- Insufficient textbooks
- No English Dictionaries
- Insufficient seeds for the farm manager
- No duty post allowance for the Director

- Disruption of classes and activities due to the current strike action in the North West and the South West Regions of Cameroon

3.3. WAY FORWARD AND PROSPECT

With regard to the lack of basic text books and Dictionary, it was the task of the CENEFA to provide these text books; since they did not provide, the problem will be handled with the coming into place of the new contract with VIA DON BOSCO – our new partners for 2017/2021 convention. If not, we ourselves will do something about it.

Concerning insufficient seeds, we shall endeavor to response to the school request promptly and the duty allowance of the Director will be taken care of.

4. NGONDZEN FFS+

The enrolment of students in Ngodzen is as follows: There are 8 students in Level One (1 boy and 7 girls); in Level Two, there are 10 students (4 boys and 6 girls) and in Level Three, there are 6 students (2 boys and 4 girls). Summarily, there are 24 students in Ngondzen (7 boys and 17 girls). There are 4 Trainers (3 permanent trainers and 1 part time).

4.1. ACTIVITIES

The following activities have been carried out so far in Ngondzen Family Farm School Plus:

- Sensitization
- Training of students on general subjects (agriculture, livestock and income generating activities)
- Wax extraction
- Candle production
- Cake making
- Oil production
- Follow up of students on internship and during alternance

- Visit to the village head to create more awareness on the pedagogy of the Family Farm Schools Plus
- Improvement on the school garden
- Training of parents on commercial gardening

4.2. DIFFICULTIES

- Poor enrolment
- Slow rate of fees payment
- Poor road network especially during the rainy season
- Noise from the primary school section
- Lack of a permanent site for the school

4.3. WAY FORWARD AND PROSPECTS

We shall continue with sensitization to overcome the problem of poor enrolment and a new Director has been appointed to Ngodzen to help in improving on the enrolment of the school.

Directors have been cautioned to work together with the parents to ensure that all the school fees is paid by the students.

When we eventually have a permanent site for the school in Ngodzen, the problem of noise from the primary school students will be taken care of.

5. MBIAME FFS+

The statistics of students in the Family Farm School Plus of Mbiame is as follows: Lever One has 22 students (12 boys and 10 girls); Level Two has 8 students (6 boys and 2 girls) and Level Three has 22 students (7 boys and 15 girls). Put together, there are 52 students in Mbiame (25 boys and 27 girls). There are 5 permanent Trainers in Mbiame with no part time trainer.

5.1. ACTIVITIES

The following activities have been carried out in Mbiame Family Farm School Plus:

- Opening of the school year Holy Mass
- Sensitization
- Training (Theory and Practicals)
- Animation of research guide
- Follow ups
- Common conclusion of research reports
- Study visits
- Common conclusion of study visits
- Internships
- Guiding the Level 3 students in their end of year projects; titled “*My First Enterprise*”
- Unit work
- One P.T.A meeting and 2 Staff meetings
- Participation in Catholic Education Week
- Some visitors visited the school (local and international)

5.2. DIFFICULTIES

The following difficulties were faced in the course of the year:

- Lack of basic text books for trainers
- Lack of bikes for sensitization and follow ups
- Difficult terrain
- Lack of basic units like poultry, animal farm and piggery for practical learning activities
- Lack of a farm manager
- Lack of a French and Computer Teacher

6.3 WAY FORWARD AND PROSPECT

With regard to the lack of basic units like poultry, the animal farm and piggery in Mbiame, we shall put up these units with time and a farm manager will be employed.

Secondly, with regard to the lack of basic text books, it was the task of the CENEFA to provide these text books; since they did not provide, the problem will be handled with the coming into place of the new contract with VIA DON BOSCO – our new partners for 2017/2021 convention. If not, we shall provide the books ourselves.

6. BAMTI FFS+

Bamti recorded the following number of students during this academic year: In Level One, there are 15 students (4 boys and 11 girls) and in Level Two, there are 14 students (4 boys and 10 girls). In summary, there are 29 students in Bamti (8 boys and 21 girls). There is no Level Three in Bamti because the Family Farm School of Bamti was just newly created – two years ago. There are 5 Trainers (4 permanent trainers and 1 part time).

6.1. ACTIVITIES

The following activities have been carried out in the course of the year:

- Opening of the school year Holy Mass
- 1 P.T.A. meeting and 2 Staff meetings
- Youth training and follow up
- Evaluation of the Four Pillars of the Family Farm Schools by CENEFAC
- Cultivation of garden crops
- Writing of financial and annual reports
- Preparation of research guide
- Meeting with CAMAAY
- Collection of Agroforestry Trees from CAMAAY

6.2. DIFFICULTIES

The following difficulties were faced in the course of the year:

- Shortage of water
- The strike
- Lack of basic units like poultry, animal farm and piggery.

6.3 WAY FORWARD AND PROSPECT

With regard to the lack of basic units like poultry, the animal farm and piggery in Bamti, we intent to diversify the animal farm of Mbiame and start up the poultry, the animal farm and the piggery at Bamti. With this, a farm manager will be employed.

Concerning the problem of lack of water, as part of his annual support to the Family Farm Schools in the Diocese of Kumbo, Mr. Willie, one of our benefactors, has opted to dig two bore holes in Bamti. Secondly, the Social Welfare has promised to provide portable water in Bamti in due time.

7. GENERAL DIFFICULTIES AND OUR VISION

Our major difficulty presently is the current strike which as disrupted most of our school activities and the whole functioning of the system. To this difficulty, we have decided to send some students on internships and others to work in their gardens/income generating activities at home. This is going on effectively and trainers have been charged to follow up students in their respective places of work. Moreover, the Bishop has given us the permission for the Bamti and Mbiame Family Farm Schools to go operation. This will be done and the effectiveness of it monitored.

Our second difficulty is the late response to the requests of the various schools. While thanking the Financial Secretary for the effort he is doing to disburse money for our schools, we appeal strongly that more effort should be added. Many activities in the course of last year and this year have been stagnant and others half done because of the late response to our financial request. Most of the activities of the Family Farm Schools are seasonal and if not

carried on in good time, we risk not carrying out those activities for the whole year and this makes reporting and our accountability a herculean task.

The third general difficulty is the low enrolment of some schools. While schools like Ngarum, IFER and Mbot are on the increase in their enrolment, other schools, especially Ngondzen are on the decrease. The Family Farm School of Ngondzen is the most vulnerable of all and needs special care as far as the enrolment of students is concerned.

Our present vision, among others, is to diversify livestock activities in all our schools. To this effect, we intent to transfer some animals from Mbiame to Bamti and new animals bought for Mbiame. Subsequently, this will be done in other schools.

8. INNOVATIONS AND UPDATES

The Diocese of Kumbo has ended its contract with DISOP Belgium and has entered into a five year convention (2017 – 2021) with VIA DON BOSCO, another Belgian Organization. This convention has already started. However, there is no money as of yet and we shall be depending on pre-financing till when VIA DON BOSCO will make money available.

Moreover, from January 2017, the Agricultural Training Programme (ATP) was merged into the Family Farm Schools Plus of the Diocese. Meaning that, there is no more ATP in the Diocese.

On personnel management, Mr. Tobin Thomas who used to serve in Ngarum and was transferred to Mbiame and Miss Berenice Lukong who used to serve at Ngonzen are no longer working with us – for the good of the organization.

Sr Mercy Muthoni, who used to take care of ATP, FFS+ of Mbiame and FFS+ of Bamti has gone for transfer to their community at Ndu. Presently, she is for holidays at Kenya. When we must have discussed with the Bishop and Fr. Daniel Ache, we intent to make a send-off celebration for her. It will be good if this takes place in the month of March. We

thank her for the service rendered to our department in particular and to the Diocese as a whole.

9. RISK AND CAUTION

Given the fact that the investments for sustainability which were proposed in our new contract with VIA DON BOSCO were all refused, the future of the Family Farm School Plus in the Diocese is at risk. We should be thinking of contacting new partners or involving in some investments for sustainability at the level of the Diocese during these five years.

CONCLUSION

Conclusively, though it has not been very easy to follow up all the activities in these six schools, we have been putting in our utmost with the hope that all will be well with time. I wish to render immense gratitude to the Bishop for his burning zeal in the FFS+ programme and for his assistance and guidance. My heartfelt gratitude goes to Fr Daniel Ache (the Coordinator of the Social Welfare Department) for his guidance and fatherly corrections. I equally thank the Financial Secretary for his collaboration, I thank the Chancellor for his assistance, I thank Sr. Mercy for the wonderful work done in our programme. My unreserved gratitude goes to Mr. Chrysogonus Tanko, Mr. Emmanuel Sengafor and Mr. Joseph Ding.

We apologize for the areas which we failed to catch up with the expectation of the project and the Diocese and we promise to do better in the days ahead.