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**REPORT ON COMPLETED PROJECTS, PRE-PROJECTS  
AND BWP-RELATED ACTIVITIES**

**IN THE FIELD OF REFORESTATION AND FOREST MANAGEMENT**



**REPORT ON COMPLETED PROJECTS AND PRE-PROJECTS IN THE FIELD OF  
REFORESTATION AND FOREST MANAGEMENT**

**(A) COMPLETED PROJECTS**

None.

**(B) COMPLETED PRE-PROJECTS**

**(1) PPD 201/21 Rev.1 (F) Study for Capacity Building of Private and Community Tree Farmers in Benin**

Budget and Funding Sources:

Total Budget:		US\$	89,200
ITTO Budget:		US\$	65,000
The government of USA:	US\$	65,000	
Benin (CPDRN):		US\$	24,200

Implementing Agency: CENTER FOR THE PROMOTION OF LOCAL DEVELOPMENT AND SUSTAINABLE MANAGEMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES (*CENTRE DE PROMOTION DU DÉVELOPPEMENT LOCAL ET DE GESTION DURABLE DES RESSOURCES NATURELLES—CPDRN*)

Collaborating Agency: GENERAL DIRECTORATE OF WATER, FORESTS AND HUNTING (*DIRECTION GÉNÉRALE DES EAUX, FORÊTS ET CHASSE—DGEFC*)

Period of Approval: September 2021

Starting Date and Duration: April 2022 / 10 months

**I. Introduction**

This 10-month pre-project was approved in September 2021 through the electronic approval system and it was partially financed with an amount of US\$65,000 (instead of US\$81,984) during the ITTC-55 in November 2022, thanks to the generous contribution of the Government of USA. The pre-project was revised to readjust the implementation costs to the secured amount of US\$65,000 and the revised version was approved through the electronic no-objection process in February 2022. The Pre-project Agreement had been signed by all parties in March 2022, and the first disbursement of ITTO funds was made in April 2022. As an acceptable version of the completion report was received in April 2023, the operation period had lasted 13 months instead of 10 months as initially designed by the implementing agency (CPDRN).

**II. Pre-project Objective**

The pre-project development objective was to contribute to the sustainable management of private forests in Benin to improve the living conditions of local populations. The specific objective of this pre-project was to collect data with a view to developing a capacity-building project for private and community tree farmers in southern Benin. The main expected outputs which had contributed to achieve the pre-project specific objective were the following: (i) baseline information on private and community plantations made available; (ii) a capacity-building project for private and community tree farmers in southern Benin was developed in a participatory process with the involvement of relevant stakeholders.

**III. Pre-project Achievements and Outputs**

Based on the pre-project completion report, the main achievements and outputs resulting from the implementation of this pre-project can be mainly summarized as follows:

- The validated consultant reports on the inventory study of private and community forest plantations, as well as on socio-economic aspects, were made available for providing data and information needed to develop a project proposal to be submitted in the ITTO project cycle, in due time,
- The needs regarding the capacity-building for private and community tree farmers in southern Benin had been identified, gathered and analyzed in the abovementioned consultant reports,
- A project proposal was developed in a participatory process while considering the findings of studies carried out by consultants in the pre-project implementation. The draft project proposal, developed through the implementation of his pre-project will be subject to review by relevant stakeholders during a technical workshop to be held by the end of the pre-project implementation. However, it was not formally submitted because Benin was not eligible to the ITTO project cycle 2023 due to the arrears of contribution to the ITTO administrative account.

#### **IV. Outcomes and Impacts**

The development of this pre-project was justified by the lack of data hindering the possibility of developing a full project proposal directly. The lack of reliable and recent data on plantations under private and local community ownership, and the non-availability of material and financial resources were all major handicaps. Reliable, concrete data derived from studies carried out by consultants were made available in order to develop a project proposal, in which it could be possible to define strategies to ensure consistency and synergy between all ongoing actions on reforestation in Southern Benin.

The pre-project had been implemented by a multidisciplinary team composed of foresters, geographer/cartographer socio-economist, while ensuring the participation of relevant local stakeholders. A series of consultations had been held to promote local ownership of actions in order to strengthen private plantation management, while proposing the ways and means to address the potential barriers to cooperation among the stakeholders in the target area of the future project. The members of the multidisciplinary team coordination committees of associations of private and community forest stakeholders had played an active role in the realization of the pre-project achievements. They participated in the various consultation meetings for information sharing on main ideas selected for the development of the future project which could contribute to providing support to their forestry-related activities in Southern Benin.

#### **V. Lessons Learnt and sustainability**

During the pre-project implementation, there were no events or problems that could have a significant impact on the achievement of the associated outputs already achieved by the specific objective, while having an impact on the pre-project budget. No critical situation arose during the pre-project execution, as the gathering and travel restrictions linked the COVID-19 pandemic had been lifted by the Government of Benin.

During the stakeholder identification phase, consultation sessions were held with relevant stakeholders allowing the implementation of this pre-project to bring them together to identify their weaknesses and needs in terms of project planning and forest management and to strengthen cohesion within their associations and groups through successive consultations. Along the process, the will of stakeholders had been reinforced to give a new dynamic to the forestry sector, which was considered in the development of the future project proposal, with the involvement of relevant stakeholders from the private forest sector of Southern Benin. Private forest plantations in southern Benin, as important source of fuelwood and timber products, had been poorly managed by owners. Thus, the project developed through the pre-project implementation could contribute to address the problem of poor forest management and promote the sustainable forest management good practices of private forest plantations in Southern Benin.

#### **VI. Concluding Remarks**

As the ITTO Secretariat received the pre-project completion report, as well as a satisfactory final financial audit report, the Committee may wish to declare the pre-project PPD 201/21 Rev.1 (F) as completed. Soft copies of reports can be made available, upon written request, by the Secretariat.

**(C) COMPLETED BIENNIAL WORK PROGRAMME-BASED ACTIVITIES**

**(1) PP-A/54-331 Enhancing Conservation and Sustainable Management of Teak Forests and Legal and Sustainable Wood Supply Chains in the Greater Mekong Sub-region**

Budget and Funding Sources:

Total Budget:		US\$	1,236,250
ITTO Budget:		US\$	1,236,250
The government of Germany (BMEL):	US\$	1,236,250	

Implementing Agency: The Kasetsart University, Thailand  
Forestry Administration, Cambodia  
National Agriculture and Forestry Research Institute, Lao PDR  
Forest Department, Myanmar  
Vietnamese Academy of Forest Sciences, Vietnam

Starting Date and Duration: January 2019 / Planned: 36 months & Actual: 42 months

Approved Revised Dates of Project Completion: Approved by BMEL on 21 September 2021

**I. Introduction**

ITTO has been supporting teak related projects with a focus on genetic resources conservation, seed production and sustainable management of natural and planted teak forests in Africa, Asia and Latin America since the 1990s. In 2016, an ex-post evaluation of the thematic group on teak was conducted by IUFRO, assessing previous ITTO-supported teak projects. Building on the lessons from this evaluation, and with the support from the German Federal Ministry of Food and Agriculture (BMEL), this project was developed. The project's primary aim was to assist governments, local communities, and smallholders in enhancing natural and plantation teak forest management, production and marketing. This effort facilitated the establishment of legal and sustainable wood supply chains, contributing to the national economy's growth and improving the livelihoods of local communities in the Greater Mekong Sub-region.

**II. Project Objective**

The project aimed to promote legal and sustainable teak supply chains, involving local communities, smallholders, and government entities in the Greater Mekong Sub-region. It provided an opportunity for Cambodia, Lao PDR, Myanmar, Thailand, and Vietnam to enhance their capacities for sustainable forest management and align with their strategic objectives and policies for teak forest resource development, crucial for livelihood enhancement and ecological preservation.

The project had three outputs as below:

Output 1: The conservation of teak genetic resources, sustainable management and use of natural teak forests and market accesses of teak from legal sources have been improved

Output 2: Community-based and smallholders teak forest management and agroforestry systems have been strengthened with improved legal and sustainable supply chains

Output 3: Regional and international collaboration, information sharing and knowledge management, networking, policy development and outreach on the sustainable management of teak forests, including sustainable use of teak genetic resources have been strengthened.

**III. Project Achievements and Outputs**

The implementation of the project towards achieving outputs complies with the verifiable indicators specified in the Logical Framework Matrix of the project document. The project's achievements of each output are summarized as follows:

**Output 1: The conservation of teak genetic resources, sustainable management and use of natural teak forests and market accesses of teak from legal sources have been improved**

- Established demonstration plots for sustainable teak forest management systems and pilot silvicultural systems in the five participating countries as follows:

No	Name	Location	Role in supply chains
<b>Cambodia</b>			
1	Han Chey Mountain (10 plots, 625 m2 each)	Kampong Seam District, Kampong Cham Province	Community-based wood harvesting and processing.
2	Teak silvicultural practice (12 plots; 625 m2 each)	Kampong Spue Province	Demonstration for tinning, pruning and growth estimation. Teak seed orchard, Teak seedling production and propagation, wood harvesting and processing.
<b>Lao PDR</b>			
1	Ban Hoay Khod, Number 3 and Nakha villages	Xieng Ngeing District, Luang Prabang Province	Teak seed source from plantation (170 mother trees)
2	Na Sak, Kengsao and Sisa-ard village	Paklai District, Xayabuly Province	Natural teak seed source (100 mother trees at Thong Khang and 178 mother trees at Huay Khod)
3	Namsuang Forestry Research Centre, Vientiane Capital	Naxaythong District, Vientiane Capital	Seeds supplies, 210 trees, 7 provinances.
<b>Myanmar</b>			
1	Teak Clonal Seed Orchard at Moe Swe Research Station No.5	Oattarathiri Township, Nay Pyi Taw	Silvicultural practices, supply of quality seeds and genetic resources
2	Teak based Agroforestry Demonstration Plot	Oaktwin Township, Bago Region	Agroforestry practices, supply of quality seeds
3	Teak-based Agroforestry Plots with Community-Forestry User Group	Moe Swe area	Teak-based Forest user group in Teak-based agroforestry plots
4	Teak Planting Stocks and Assisted Natural Regeneration Trial Plot	Ngalike Reserve Forest	The trial plot composed of 11 subplots
5	Establishment of Progeny Test Plantation	Compartment 17, Ngaleik Reserve Forest, near Nay Pyi Taw	Testing genetic characteristics of candidate plus trees using as clones in gene bank plantations
6	Teak Gene Bank Plantation has established	Compartment 17, Ngaleik Reserve Forest, near Nay Pyi Taw	Gene bank plantation were collected from 40 clones of four different populations
<b>Thailand</b>			
1	Mae Ka Silvicultural Research Station	Mae Ka district, Phayao Province	Teak seed orchard, preparation of good material

No	Name	Location	Role in supply chains
	Three teak clonal tests were established to support the demonstration lot at Maegar SRS.	The seedlings derived from the clonal test were planted at 3 experiment sites: 1) Dong Lan SRS, Khon Kaen Province, 2) Krueng Krawia Forest Plantation in Kanchanaburi Province, and 3) Thung Kwien Forest Plantation in Lampang Province	
2	Ngao Silvicultural Research Station	Ngao district, Lampang Province	Teak seedling production and smallholder networking
3	Smallholder Teak Plantation (Mr. Suchat Poolkerd)	Hang Chat district, Lampang Province	Demonstration for thinning, pruning and growth estimation
4	Khunmae Kummae Teak Plantation	Rongkwang District, Phrae Province	harvesting demonstration
5	Community-based teak plantation (enterprise)	Nan province	Community-based wood harvesting and processing through C&I and CoC
<b>Vietnam</b>			
1	Dong Nai Teak Plantation	Teak Plantation	Teak seed source
2	Son La Teak Plantation	Son La Province	Teak seed source
3	Thanh Hoa	Thanh Hoa	Seed production

- A review and analysis of opportunities for improved market accesses of teak wood and teak products from legal and sustainable sources were carried out in Myanmar. The final report covered an overview of wood production and trade in Myanmar, offering general recommendations applicable to the five participating countries.
- To conserving teak genetic variation through improved management of existing seed production areas, seed orchards, and provenance/progeny trials in Lao PDR, Myanmar and Thailand were enhanced. In Lao PDR, 170 mother trees were selected in Xayabuly Province, with two teak seed sources established in Upland Agricultural Research Center (Thong Khang village 100 trees and Huay Khod village 178 mother trees). In Myanmar, the Demonstration Plot No 5 Research Station in Ottara District was selected for teak genetics resources (16.2 ha) and progeny trial (1.6 ha). In addition, a Teak Provenance Trial (0.92 ha) was established at compartment No. 9 in Ngalike Reserved Forest. In Thailand, information on more than 600 mother teak trees or plus trees across the country was gathered and mapped. Good quality teak stocks of 104 clones were used for propagation and clonal tests in two demonstrations areas.

**Output 2. Community-based and smallholders teak forest management and agroforestry systems have been strengthened with improved legal and sustainable supply chains**

- Demonstration plots and field training supported local communities and smallholders in the five participating countries on (1) seed production/nursery techniques, (2) silvicultural practices and improved stand management, and (3) minimizing harvesting loss, efficient transport and processing of teak round wood, and (4) supply chains control and marketing.
- Teak value chain analysis (VCA) of smallholders was carried out to increase access of primary processing industry to capital and market information. The analysis covered Thailand and Viet Nam, with the 1st virtual Teak Value Chain Analysis (VCA) Training Workshop hosted by the Vietnamese Academy of Forest Science (VAFS) in February 2022 and the 2nd Teak Value Chain Analysis (VCA) training workshop (Physical Workshop) in June 2022 at VAFS office in Ha Noi.
- A teak-based forest user groups for the sustainable use of teak forest resources and agroforestry was established in Myanmar, with seven forest user group members selected for the teak-based agroforestry program in Moe Swe area.

- Policy options empowering local communities and smallholders in planted teak and teak management and agroforestry systems to support sustainable livelihood programs were reviewed. Policy briefs were published in the bi-monthly ITTO Teak Newsletters <http://www.teaknet.org/itto-teak-mekong>.

**Output 3. Regional and international collaboration, information sharing and knowledge management, networking, policy development and outreach on the sustainable management of teak forests, including the sustainable use of teak genetic resources have been strengthened**

- Outreach and training materials on the conservation and sustainable management of teak forests and legal and sustainable supply chain were prepared in collaboration with research institutions, NGOs, and development partners to support regional forest policy development. These materials were disseminated through national TV programmes, articles in national newspapers, journals, and bulletins. A book titled “Teak in Mekong for a Sustainable Future” was jointly prepared by participating countries’ experts and invited scientists.
- Two regional teak workshops facilitated policy dialogue, information sharing and knowledge management, stakeholder consultations, promoting regional cooperation on sustainable management of teak forests and legal and sustainable supply chains. The 1<sup>st</sup> workshop in Yangon, Myanmar covered the topics of country reports, in-situ and ex-situ conservation of teak resources, sustainable management of teak forests, roles of smallholders and communities in natural teak forests management, legality and sustainability in teak supply chains in Mekong. The 2<sup>nd</sup> Regional Workshop in Bangkok focused on the role of the value-added teak products in the evolving Green Economy in the countries of the Mekong region.
- Teak networking in the Mekong Sub-region was facilitated. Twenty (20) bi-monthly ITTO Teak Mekong Newsletters were published. Collaboration increased with organizations such as TEAKNET, FAO, IUFRO, JIRCAS, IGES, AFoCO, Japan Forestry Agency and private companies such as TRC in Brazil, TEAK Farm in Cambodia, and YSG in Sabah Malaysia.
- 17 experts from the participating countries attended the 4th World Teak Conference (5-8 September 2022, Ghana). The project outputs and lessons learned were presented and shared at the conference. A special session on “ITTO Teak in Mekong Session” was organized.
- Thailand organized a Post-4th WTC Seminar on 27 September 2022 to share the lessons learned from the 4th WTC in Ghana with relevant agencies, the private sector, and individual interested in teak.

**IV. Outcomes and Impacts**

The project actively collaborated with primary and secondary stakeholders in the five participating countries. Cooperation with relevant agencies and interested individuals facilitated through the established teak networking that enables consultations and discussions on organizational and technical matters. Two regional teak workshops and one national teak forum in Lao PDR and a technical seminar facilitated stakeholder consultations and knowledge sharing, including best management practices, innovative approaches and new technologies with research organizations, multilateral and bilateral development partners and NGOs. A number of training sessions with hundreds of participants were arranged to increase the capacity of relevant agencies, communities and individuals.

The project performance was made in accordance with each year’s work plan. However, the implementation of some field activities was slow due to the prolonged COVID-19 pandemic in the region. However, the approved extension of the project term has enabled all priority activities completed, leading to the realization of the establishment of demonstration plots and the extension of international outreach activities via international fora. The project participation with stakeholders, including private companies and communities was facilitated by a series of training workshops in all the five countries. The project partners and beneficiaries engaged actively with the project’s activities actively applied lessons learned.

Achievements included the establishment of demonstration plots throughout the processed of legal supply chains (e.g., good seedling production, smallholder and commercial plantations, legal teak harvesting and minimize loss, and wood certification), capacity building of government staff and local farmers in the participating countries. The trained participants become trainers in their respective countries.

The project outputs were shared in on various platforms such as webinars, regional workshops and international fora. With the collective efforts of the project staff and invited experts involved in various aspects of the conservation, plantation, management of teak forests as well as processing and trade of teak products, a new book entitled “Teak in Mekong for a Sustainable Future”, was published and launched at the 4th WTC



and provides a valuable reference for the sustainable development of the teak sector in the Mekong region and beyond.

## V. Lessons Learnt and sustainability

Key lessons learned from the implementation of the project include the following:

- The conservation of teak genetic resources in natural teak forests (in-situ conservation) and ex-situ conservation (seed orchards or seed sources) is crucial for maintaining genetic diversity in natural and plantation teak forests.
- Natural teak forests in Thailand, Myanmar and Lao PDR display a high genetic diversity and Myanmar and Thailand have a long history of more than 100 years of establishing and managing teak plantations. However, good quality seedlings are not widely used for teak plantations due to a lack of understanding and higher costs.
- Teak value chains involve various stakeholders from teak growers, middlemen, sawmill owners, furniture/wood production producers, furniture/wood production sellers, and consumers. The value chains analysis (VCA) analysed the interaction among these stakeholders and benefits allocation among various players. However, there is a need for more VCA in the participating countries.
- Despite their origin, Mekong countries have lower teak yield and longer rotation periods compared to Africa and Latin America.
- Participation of a wide range of stakeholders is essential for ensuring the sustainability of the project. Ongoing efforts to raise awareness related to teak genetic variation and conservation for local communities and the private sector.
- The COVID-19 pandemic substantially affected the planned physical activities in all the participating countries during early 2020-mid 2021, but webinars and online communications helped mitigate the effects.
- Regular meetings of the Project Steering Committee with the participation of all the executing agency staff and project partners were crucial for making momentum and collaborative decision-making.

## VI. Concluding Remarks

The project significantly contributes to the sustainable management of teak forests in Cambodia, Lao PDR, Myanmar, Thailand and Vietnam in the Mekong region within a regional cooperation framework. Through the successful organization of the Inception Workshop and the last 4 PSC meetings, the RFD, Kasetsart University as well as the other four executing agencies effectively implemented the planned activities, such as establishing demonstration plots, conducting a series of capacity building workshops and disseminating knowledge, and expanding outreach to smallholders.

As the ITTO Secretariat received this BWP-related Activity completion report, as well as a satisfactory final financial audit report, the Committee may consider declaring the BWP-related Activity PP-A/54-331 as completed. Soft copies of reports are available, upon request, by the Secretariat.

### (2) **PP-A/56-341A Support for Women's Groups with the Restoration of Forest Landscapes in the Prefectures of Blitta and Lacs, Togo – Phase II**

Budget and Funding Sources:

Total Budget:		US\$	103,331
ITTO Budget:		US\$	89,581
Soka Gakkai (SG):	US\$	89,581	
REFACOF:		US\$	13,750

Implementing Agency: African Women's Network for Community Management of Forests (REFACOF, in French acronym)

Starting Date and Duration: April 2022 / 12 months

## I. Introduction

This 12-month BWP-related Activity is funded as part of the Third Programme Line (PL3) titled “*Forest Landscape Restoration and Resilient Livelihoods*” under the Programmatic Approach of the new financing architecture which is subject to a pilot phase implementation in conformity with some appropriate provisions of Decision 8(LV) calling upon the ITTO Secretariat to play a more proactive role in seeking new funding avenues and partners for the funding of ITTO’s work. This second phase of the BWP Activity was fully funded by Soka Gakkai (SG), in January 2022, after a successful consultation process between ITTO and SG, based on the concept note and profile-document prepared by the implementing agency (REFACOF) in compliance with the framework and requirements of the financial donor (SG). The Memorandum of understanding (MoU) governing the implementation of this second phase of the BWP Activity has been duly signed process by all parties (Government of Togo, REFACOF-Togo, Implementing Agency and ITTO Secretariat) in March 2022, and the disbursement of the first installment of ITTO funds was made in April 2022. As an acceptable version of the completion report was received in June 2023, the operation period had lasted 14 months instead of 12 initially designed by the implementing agency (REFACOF) in the profile-document and detailed action plan.

## II. Project Objective

The second phase of this BWP-related Activity aimed at consolidating and sustaining the support to women’s groups in two of Togo’s poorest Prefectures of Blitta and Lacs, where forest restoration and enrichment planting will take place on identified plots made available by the chieftaincy of two villages (Agouegan village of Lacs Prefecture and Pagala-gare village of Blitta Prefecture). It specifically intended to contribute to food security, meeting their needs in fuel energy and to generate income from wood and non-wood forests products, including food crops derived from agroforestry activities, while empowering women groups involved in the implementation of the second phase of this BWP Activity.

## III. Project Achievements and Outputs

Based on the completion report and most recent information from the implementing agency (REFACOF), the achievements and outputs regarding the implementation of this BWP-related Activity can be mainly summarized as follows:

- the technical and material capacities of 50 women from 7 groups of villages had been strengthened for seedling production, reforestation and agroforestry activities,
- 20 ha of forest and agroforestry plantations established during Phase I had been maintained and protected,
- 5 ha of new Taungya-type plantations and 10 ha of agroforests had been established women organized in local associations,
- the technical and material capacities of 100 women from 7 groups had been strengthened for the development of income-generating activities (IGA), as a source of livelihood for local communities.

The members of women groups had been the main beneficiaries of the outcomes of this BWP-related Activity while being involved in its ground implementation. They effectively participated in the various stages of activities carried out, such as: training in nursery seedling production techniques enabling them to produce and maintain 28,940 seedlings of 14 tree species themselves, reforestation and agroforestry for the restoration of degraded forest landscapes in the target areas of the Prefectures of Blitta and Lacs. Details of production by site and species are shown in the table below:

<b>AGOUEGAN sites</b>		<b>PAGALA-GARE sites</b>	
<b>Species</b>	<b>Number of seedlings</b>	<b>Species</b>	<b>Number of seedlings</b>
<i>Acacia auriculiformis</i>	2 490	<i>Acacia auriculiformis</i>	2 000
<i>Citrus x limon</i>	265	<i>Albizia chevalerie</i>	1 500
<i>Khaya senegalensis</i>	720	<i>Albizia lebeck</i>	1 000
<i>Senna siamea</i>	3 900	<i>Anarcadium occidentale</i>	800
<i>Terminalia superba</i>	315	<i>Citrus x limon</i>	500
		<i>Citrus x sinensis</i>	400
		<i>Gmelina arborea</i>	2 700
		<i>Khaya senegalensis</i>	5 600
		<i>Parkia biglobosa</i>	500
		<i>Samanea saman</i>	1 200
		<i>Senna siamea</i>	2 500

		<i>Sterculia foetida</i>	600
		<i>Tectona grandis</i>	750
		<i>Terminalia superba</i>	1 200
<b>Total AGOUEGAN</b>	<b>7 690</b>	<b>Total PAGALA-GARE</b>	<b>21 250</b>
<b>TOTAL Total seedlings produced: 28 940</b>			

As mentioned above, these tree seedlings were used for the creation of 5 ha of forest plantations using the Taungya method and 10 ha of agroforests. The various tasks related to the establishment of forest plantations and agroforests (clearing, picketing, holing, burial, maintenance and protection) were organized under the leadership of women's groups. The crops associated with the plants were maize, cassava and soybeans. The production of these food crops contributed to the food security of the women involved in the project implementation and their communities, while being also a source livelihood.

The local administrative and traditional authorities, in the Prefectures of Blitta and Lacs, had been sensitized through the awareness campaign carried out by REFACOF-Togo. These authorities have associated women members of REFACOF-TOGO in the celebration of the National Tree Day of 2022 and 2023, during which women's groups have reforested 1 ha of land with *Cola gigantea*, *Khaya seneganesis*, *Terminalia superba*, *Antiaris africana*, *Azelia africana*, *Diospyros mespiliformis*, *Vitellaria paradoxa*, in Pagala-Gare and Aguegan villages.

In January 2023, the funding partner (Soka Gakkai) visited the sites where the achievements of the Phase 1 and Phase 2 of BWP-related Activity PP-A/56-341 are located. During her stay, Soka Gakkai's team met with administrative and traditional authorities and also had exchange sessions with women's groups. Some women from Agouegan actively participated in the shooting of a short film made by the Soka Gakkai film crew alongside the coordinator of REFACOF-Togo (Mrs. Lydia AMAH ATUTONU) and the President of REFACOF (Mrs. Cécile NDJEBET). A top story on the achievements of the Phase 1 and Phase 2 of BWP-related Activity PP-A/56-341 was published on ITTO website on 27 February 2023 ([https://www.itto.int/news/2023/02/27/soka\\_gakkai\\_makes\\_video\\_on\\_itto\\_initiative\\_to\\_restore\\_landscapes\\_in\\_togo\\_by\\_empowering\\_women/](https://www.itto.int/news/2023/02/27/soka_gakkai_makes_video_on_itto_initiative_to_restore_landscapes_in_togo_by_empowering_women/)) while providing the link for accessing the short video summarizing these achievements ([https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9\\_0VY0U1ITU](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9_0VY0U1ITU)), as well as a link for an article published in a Japanese daily newspaper (Seikyo Shimibun) for information sharing with Japanese people ([https://www.itto.int/direct/topics/topics\\_pdf\\_download/topics\\_id=7387&no=1&file\\_ext=.pdf?v=](https://www.itto.int/direct/topics/topics_pdf_download/topics_id=7387&no=1&file_ext=.pdf?v=)).

#### **IV. Outcomes and Impacts**

Phase 2 of PP-A/56-341 contributed to consolidate the achievements of Phase 1 with regard to the restoration of degraded areas and local socio-economic development. It has enabled the continuation and diversification of technical and material capacity-building activities for beneficiary women's groups, which are now able to produce seedlings, create plantations, process agricultural products (gari, tapioca and coconut oil production) and conserve fish products (fish smoking).

The implementation of the Phase 2 of PP-A/56-341 was carried out by REFACOF-Togo, with the support of the REFACOF regional coordination and the ITTO Focal Point in Togo. At the beginning of the implementation, a sensitization mission was carried out in both target prefectures to exchange with the local administrative and traditional authorities on the objectives of the Phase 2 of PP-A/56-341. Thus, the administrative and traditional authorities were informed about the importance of restoring forest landscapes degraded by human activities.

The women's training sessions organized on nursery for seedlings production and reforestation techniques contributed to the transfer of knowledge and techniques allowing women's groups to be efficient during the execution of the Phase of PP-A/56-341. Regarding the choice of tree species, it was made by mutual agreement with the beneficiaries based on the speed of tree growth and the multiplicity of uses of these trees for the benefit of women groups. Similarly, food crops associated with trees in forest plantations had been chosen by women's groups, to cover their food needs and contribute to the food security of their communities. Restoration of degraded forest landscape associated with food crops had not been only a factor in the fight against deforestation, but also an asset for improving food security and household livelihoods for women groups with a larger social impacts in their communities.

#### **V. Lessons Learnt and sustainability**

The main lessons learnt from the implementation of the Phase 2 of PP-A/56-341 could be summarized as follows:

- Women can effectively contribute to the restoration of degraded and deforested lands in their localities through their own initiatives,
- Reforestation associated with food crops is not only a factor in the fight against deforestation and climate change but also an asset for improving food security and household incomes,
- Land availability and security for women remain important and essential elements in the creation of sustainable forest and agroforestry plantations,
- The creation of wood energy forest plantations is an effective response to the thorny problems of lack of firewood,
- agroforestry systems effectively contribute to the restoration of degraded or permanently degraded forest ecosystems,
- Diversifying income-generating activities not only empowers women financially, but also reduces pressure on forest resources, a factor conducive to the restoration of degraded areas.

Regarding the sustainability of the achievements of the Phase 2 of PP-A/56-341, it could be supported by three following main reasons:

- Organizational sustainability of women groups: women groups involved in the implementation of the Phase 2 of PP-A/56-341 had been well organized while having common interests. They will be able to make use of the skills acquired, namely seedling production, reforestation and agroforestry techniques; as well as the techniques of making gari and tapioca. The acquisition of equipment for the development of income-generating activities such as coconut oil production, fish smoking, etc. would contribute to strengthen the cohesion of women groups for long-term processing of agricultural products with a view to diversifying their sources of income. The renewal of food crops in agroforestry plantations will facilitate the maintenance of established agroforestry plantations with a view ensuring their normal growth,
- land sustainability: the women groups of Pagala-Gare village have property rights over the land they use to establish agroforestry plantations, as well as the women groups of Agouegan village also have property rights over the lands they use for the restoration of degraded forest landscapes,
- administrative sustainability: women groups had been supported by the central and decentralized administrative authorities during the implementation of the Phase of PP-A/56-341.

The Phase 3 of this BWP-related Activity had been prepared by REFACOF and funded by the same financial donor (Soka Gakkai), with the aim to consolidate and sustain the achievements of REFACOF-Togo's women groups, during the implementation of the Phase 1 and Phase 2 of PP-A/56-341, in Togo's Blitta and Lacs Prefectures. The disbursement of the first installment of ITTO funds required for the commencement of the implementation of the Phase 3 will be made after the signing of the memorandum of understanding by all contracting parties (REFACOF-Togo, REFACOF, Ministry of Environment and Forest resources of Togo and ITTO).

## **VI. Concluding Remarks**

As the ITTO Secretariat received this BWP-related Activity completion report, as well as a satisfactory final financial audit report, the Committee may wish to declare the BWP-related Activity PP-A/56-341 as completed. Soft copies of reports can be made available, upon written request, by the Secretariat.