

**INTERNATIONAL TROPICAL TIMBER ORGANIZATION**

**ITTO PROJECT 27/94 Rev. 2 (F)**

**"WOMEN AND TROPICAL FOREST DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM"**

**EX-POST EVALUATION REPORT**

**Prepared for the ITTO**

**by**

**DR. JAMES K. GASANA**

**LAUSANNE, April 2002**

### List of abbreviations and acronyms

DWM	31 <sup>st</sup> December Women's Movement
ITTA	International Tropical Timber Agreement
ITTO	International Tropical Timber Organization
NGO	Non Governmental Organization
NTFP	Non-timber forest product
PIC	Project implementation committee
PSC	Project steering committee
TFU	Tropical Forest Update.

## **PART I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

### **1 BACKGROUND INFORMATION ABOUT THE PROJECT**

This report presents the results, conclusions and recommendations of the ex-post evaluation of project 27/94 Rev. 2 (F) "Women and Tropical Forestry Development Program". The project started on 1<sup>st</sup> April 1995 and had duration of 51 months. The purpose of the project was: (1) to enable women to establish and sustainably manage nurseries for NTFPs, timber and fruit trees to supply community-based 31<sup>st</sup> December's Women Movement (DWM) and private sector tropical reforestation initiatives; (2) to demonstrate the potential for women to support tropical reforestation; (3) to encourage the involvement of women in West African sub-regional consultation on tropical reforestation; (4) to support the establishment of community-based NTFP, timber and fruit tree plantations through an extension program; and (5) to create employment opportunities for women. As a follow-up to this project, DWM implements Project PD 49/98 Rev. 1 (F) "Participatory tropical development by women in indigenous communities".

### **2 EVALUATION PURPOSE**

The purpose of this ex-post evaluation was to assess the project's effects, impacts and lessons learnt, and to recommend follow-up measures for the sustainability of those effects and impacts.

### **3 SCOPE OF THE EVALUATION**

This evaluation was conducted in February 2002 on the request of the ITTO Secretariat following the decision by the Committee on Reforestation and Forest Management in May/June 2001, to carry out an ex-post evaluation of PD 27/94 Rev. 2 (F). The scope and focus of the evaluation are to determine the impact and effects of this project. The terms of reference given to the evaluator, as specified in Appendix to the "Special Service Agreement" include the following points:

- To assess the current status of the tree nurseries established under the project, their management and their contribution to the reforestation of the area;
- To determine the maintenance status of the nurseries and the extent of women participation in nursery management;

- To assess the impact of the extension program organized by the NGO 31<sup>st</sup> December's Women Movement (DWM) on reforestation activities;
- To determine the potential role of DWM in promoting community-based plantation of timber and non-timber forest products in the area;
- To assess the extent of involvement of local communities and the private sector, in particular concession holders, in the reforestation program;
- To determine the effectiveness of information dissemination of project results;
- To define and assess implementation efficiency, including technical, financial and managerial aspects;
- To recommend follow-up actions in order to enhance the utilization of project results;
- Taking into account the results of the evaluation, make an overall assessment of the project's relative success or failure to summarize the key lessons learnt, and identify any issues or problems which should be taken into account in designing and implementing similar projects in future;
- To prepare the evaluation in accordance with the references for the Project Evaluation Report, as contained in the ITTO Manual for Project Monitoring, Review and Evaluation; to assess the project's contribution to the relevant ITTA (1987, 1994) and relevant ITTO Action Plans, and ITTO Objective Year 2000.

#### **4. EFFICIENCY AND OPERATIONAL ASPECTS**

The project was implemented under a partnership of the Forestry Department of Ghana with DWM. It was very efficient and was a success in technical, managerial and financial aspects. It was executed in a professional manner and had the support of both Executing Agencies. The minimum project reporting has been produced as required by standard rules of ITTO. The audit reports allow concluding that, budget-wise, the project has been cost effective, and the resources allocated to it have been adequately used to implement its activities. Although the project sent the financial report to ITTO, the evaluator could not look at the cost effectiveness of each output because that report was not made available to him.

The successful implementation of the project is largely due to the excellent cooperation between the Forestry Department and DWM. The success is also due to the guidance given by Project implementation committee, its steering committee, and the enthusiasm and strong commitment of the staff members and the DWM regional,

district and zone organizers who carried out an immense awareness building and mobilization work at grassroots level.

## 5. **EFFECTIVENESS**

The analysis of the project design showed serious weaknesses in the definition of approaches, strategies and objectives that ought to have been corrected in the earlier stages of its implementation. In the very beginning, the project was not prepared on the basis of a social survey, and did not include such an important exercise in its activities. Although it is implicitly a highly gender sensitive scheme, there was no gender analysis to identify key operational women related issues in reforestation, and to describe their socioeconomic needs and the specific gender related constraints to meet them. Concerning the logical framework, there was a considerable mismatch between the development objectives, the specific objectives, the outputs and the activities. These weaknesses were obviously a major handicap for a fully effective management of the project.

Furthermore, participatory development requires a vision and strategies on a longer-term horizon, instead of planning project phases of short duration. In this regard, the project design should have given more emphasis on developing processes instead of focusing on activities. In a process approach, for a project facing socio-cultural constraints to effect changes, how the outputs are reached is more important than the outputs themselves, and the focus must be on the internal social dynamics generated in beneficiary communities.

The impression from the reports and field observations is that, with a few exceptions, the project delivered at the activity level. Indeed there are impressive performances in the implementation of most technical and physical results, while there are varying degrees of under-achievements of many outputs and specific objectives. This situation is certainly due to the above-mentioned problems in the project design, and it justified its revision in the early beginning of the implementation. Furthermore, as the project did not deliver at outputs and objectives levels, the objective evaluation of achievements is made difficult by the lack of data from a monitoring and evaluation system, as this was not set up. To appreciate the effects and impacts, the evaluator relied mostly on field observations, interviews with beneficiaries and project staff, to complement the information from project reports.

The overall impression given by the technical and physical achievements of the project is largely positive, given the scale of operation and the duration of the project. All the stakeholders interviewed, in the Administration, private sector and at grassroots level, made a similar appraisal. The implementation rates of most activities, as it will be shown later, are high particularly in seedling production and reforestation. The weaknesses found are mostly due to the lack of effectiveness of the conceptual framework. This success can be attributed to the partnership between the Forestry Department and DWM, to the dedication of the project's staff and to the commitment of DWM leadership at levels.

## **6 IMPACT**

### **6.1 Findings on the effects of the project**

Women are collectively planning and managing a reforestation program through DWM, with impressive results. This is not yet achieved at the District or local community level, where further capacity building is required. Concerning income generation, the plantations are still too young to have a significant economic impact where timber is the objective of production. However many beneficiaries got considerable socioeconomic benefits from intercropping practice in young plantations in the first 3 years. Many expressed the need of assistance in the form of credit to develop local activities with a quicker economic return while they wait for the harvest of the trees, or to increase productivity, by means of agricultural implements for example.

Although there is no doubt on the potential of the plantations to improve the standard of living of women and rural communities, it is perhaps still early to make an appreciation of how much the impact will be. What can be said is that if beneficiaries have taken seriously the responsibility of planting and managing their plantations, it is because they see good socio-economic prospects for their communities. The most visible impact is the creation of assets which did not exist before. It is also the harvests from intercropping, and the gathering of firewood which is already alleviating the burden of firewood collection for women in the Volta Region. What is certain is that the time spent by women on firewood collection will be reduced in the future. Also the project helped create potential sources of income from trees, particularly where they were scarce in the savanna regions. There are good prospects of sales of firewood and NTFPs.

Although the plantations do not yet provide income, there are important socioeconomic benefits derived from intercropping in all the regions, and fuel-wood production in older plantations created in the savannah zones. In all the cases, there is a concrete creation of community assets representing a potential source of income. Beneficiaries are aware of the potential of income generation from the plantations, and the communities expressed the desire to pursue the planting effort.

## **6.2 Overall post-project situation**

The project achieved a considerable mobilization of beneficiaries and their communities behind its objectives, and there is a great ownership of its achievements. It is obviously a case of women's participation in development processes. However, there is still need to develop a coherent approach to allow this participation to cover all the aspects of design, implementation and evaluation of the project's activities. There are still a number of obstacles in the post project situation. Selling seedlings remains difficult in spite of the increased awareness and planting needs. However there is a potential demand for seedlings when the national reforestation program will be implemented. This will give a new opportunity to women to get contracts to produce seedlings for sale. Where longer rotation species have been promoted, sustainability of plantation management will depend on the diversification of income generating activities. This requires developing a credit system, first as a revolving fund in the framework of Project PD 49/98 Rev. 1 (F), then as an important activity in subsequent phases. Perhaps the factor that is most limiting for further progress in community-based reforestation is access of women to land. The project is at the limit of what it can achieve, and only government intervention can bring about improvements.

## **6.3 Unexpected effects and impacts**

The unexpected impacts include the following:

- DWM succeeded in giving a high political profile to the project and to the effort of the beneficiaries, and the project captured the political attention at the national level, to the need of integrating women in forestry;
- Other women's organizations and other NGOs are applying the extension methods applied by the project for reforestation;

- Similarly the Government has launched a national tree program aiming at planting 20,000 ha per annum, using the project's experience with community reforestation;
- The practice of intercropping in plantations served as a powerful incentive for reforestation and maintenance of young plantations;
- The taungya system practiced on Forest Reserves in the High Forest zone has demonstrated a potential of forest stewardship, but this needs to be reinforced by a clear official statement on the sharing of future timber harvest between the State, the customary authority and the women who planted.
- There has been capacity building for foresters involved in the project. They improved their extension approach and learned how to conduct dialogue with beneficiaries. This contributed to strengthening the confidence of the communities.

#### **6.4 Contribution to the ITTA objectives and ITTO Action Plan**

The project is in conformity with the objectives outlined in article 1 of the ITTA 1983, and meets particularly the objective (a) that aims at providing "an effective framework for cooperation and consultation on all relevant aspects of tropical timber economy through workshops on reforestation, the objective (c) that aims at supporting "research and development which improves forest management and wood use through research into NTFP cultivation, and objective (f) that aims at encouraging "tropical timber reforestation and forest management through support to community-based and private sector tropical reforestation initiatives". It meets the criteria outlined in article 26 of the same ITTA, as it contributes to the production of industrial tropical timber in Ghana and to its exports, and has potential positive economic returns in relation to its costs.

In relation to the ITTO Action Plan, the project relates to the following activities:

- Field demonstration projects where sustainable production of timber and non-timber products may be combined;
- Promoting and financing demonstration projects for different management models, and regional/sub-regional networks of such projects;
- Helping to finance exchange visits and workshop participation by technical personnel.

By contributing to reduce pressure on Ghana's forests, the project also contributes to the achievement of the ITTO Objective 2000, because it enhances the country's capacity to achieve the goal of exporting timber products that is harvested only from sustainably managed forests. However, in the savannah regions the focus is more on firewood production, and may be outside ITTO's objectives if planting of timber production species were not stepped up.

## **7. CONCLUSIONS OF THE EVALUATION**

### **7.1 Implementation efficiency and project effectiveness**

The appreciation of the evaluation regarding efficiency and effectiveness is positive. The efforts and resources have not been wasted. Implementation efficiency was relatively high. Through training and awareness building activities, the project has contributed to the successful implementation of reforestation. As far as technical and physical achievements are concerned, the project performed well in motivating women in communities to create woodlots. The highest achievements were observed with physical and technical outputs, with ratings higher than 100%. Many other outputs had no provisional targets, and another few do not seem to have been achieved. If measured as the relationship between ITTO's inputs and the project's outputs, efficiency is undoubtedly high. However there is a lack of data to establish cost-effectiveness of seedling production and plantation establishment. To correct this problem, all the costs of the project, including women's voluntary labor and the contributions of the Forest Department, should be considered. Whether the costs of producing seedlings and planting trees are not too high would depend on the availability of such data.

### **7.2 Overall assessment of successes and failures**

The project's design had serious weaknesses that ought to have been corrected in the earlier stages of its implementation. Its scope was too wide in relation to the number of development objectives (two) and specific objectives (five). Furthermore, participatory development requires developing a vision and developing strategies on a longer-term horizon, instead of planning project phases of short duration. However the project design did not develop a gender strategy, based on a detailed gender analysis. As a consequence of the design

imperfections, the impact and performance of the project cannot be measured "objectively". In spite of these problems, field observations and interviews of stakeholders allow to give credit to the project for the considerable success in the empowerment and participation of women, as well as in developing their skills in seedling production and reforestation. In these areas DWM has clearly demonstrated a comparative advantage in the involvement of women.

### **7.3 Alternative design of the project**

The choice of women as primary beneficiaries of the project was and remains justified. Indeed women have structural disadvantages and particular constraints as far access to forest resources and their use is concerned. As community based forestry and rural development are processes with a long implementation period, the project should be redesigned to cover a sufficient duration as far as the strategy and scope of activities are concerned, putting an emphasis on process development. Therefore the development objective should not change for each follow-up project. For PD 27/94 Re. 2 (F), its follow-up PD 49/98 Rev. 1 (F) "Participatory tropical development by women in indigenous communities", or any other related future follow-up projects, there should be one unifying vision translated into one development objective. For successive projects, strategies should emphasize the development of processes. Its specific objectives and outputs need to be better defined. A gender approach needs to be defined, and for this a gender analysis should be carried out in order to establish a solid foundation for the continuation of project's activities in the future. For this, the project should conduct surveys to prepare a baseline and a monitoring system it lacked to assess its impacts, and which the on-going project PD 49/98 Rev. 1 (F) is still lacking.

## 8. RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings of the evaluation, the following recommendations have been drawn:

### **To the Project**

- Systematize the experiences and lessons learnt and publish them; the analysis should provide inputs in the national reforestation and gender related policy processes.
- Design a strategy for the promotion of commercial tree seedling production, and of devolution of nursery management to independent women's groups.
- A study on the real cost of seedling production should be conducted, as one of the basis for the recommendation of a seedling marketing strategy.
- The implementing agencies should continue their efforts of securing more land for women.
- Put in place a monitoring and evaluation system, and carry out a survey of impact of the project before planning any follow-up action at the completion of Project PD 49/98 Rev. 1 (F).
- As the impacts of the project in form of social change cannot be achieved in one or two phases project, a longer-term strategy, including the phasing out considerations, should be designed towards the end of PD 49/98 Rev. 1 (F). The reflection should be based on a socioeconomic baseline and a gender analysis in the project implementation regions.
- Planning of any future follow-up action should be designed by a team comprising experts with socio-cultural skills in order address gender issues in relation community institutions and project implementation goals and approaches.
- Strengthen the capacity of beneficiaries to plan, implement, monitor and evaluate their activities.

- Test a small-scale credit system to support women's projects in their communities, by means of a revolving fund in the framework of Project PD 49/98 Rev. 1 (F), and use the results to plan credit system activities in future phases.

**To the project's implementing agencies**

- Elaborate a memorandum of understanding between the Forestry Department and DWM on the roles and responsibilities in the implementation of the Project's Phase II and future phases.
- Include in the project skills in socio-economics to meet its challenges
- Propose to the Government a framework for determining the seedling prices to be practiced by rural development operations. Such prices should not be lower than the cost of their production.
- Consider recommending to the Government lessons and experiences from the project as inputs in the national policy formulation processes on reforestation and gender.
- Revise the organization chart of the project to further improve cooperation between DWM and the Forestry Department, putting emphasis on information on operational aspects.

**To ITTO**

- For projects where social and cultural factors must be taken into account to reach the expected changes, project design teams should include experts with socio-cultural and gender analysis skills wherever necessary.
- For such projects, implementation emphasis should be put on initiating or strengthening development processes.
- Projects targeting rural communities, particularly those that have to empower certain sociologically weaker groups, may reach their objectives if the government agencies promoting them relinquish their implementation responsibilities to NGOs. ITTO should promote such a partnership and publicize its experiences.

## **PART II. MAIN TEXT**

### **1. PROJECT CONTEXT**

#### **1.1 Project Rationale and Background**

Although women are actively engaged in the use of forest resources in Ghana, the role they can play in their sustainable management was not duly recognized in policies and in forestry practice. The need to pay attention to this role arose with the results obtained from a workshop financed by ITTO through the project PD 119/91 Rev. 1 (F) "Workshop on Women and Forestry: A look at African experiences in the sustainable development of tropical forests". This workshop which provided a forum for women in Ghana and from other African countries, and critically analyzed the role of women's involvement in forestry and recommended, among other things, the designing of a program at a country or regional level, to provide women with training and other assistance required for their involvement in sustainable management of forests. This recommendation was in line with Ghana's forest policies, particularly those aiming at promoting conservation and tree planting on farms to counteract fuel-wood shortage and ecological degradation and deterioration. For this Ghana submitted to ITTO the project PD 27/94 Rev. 2 (F) as a follow-up to PD 119/91 Rev. 1 (F), in order to implement the ideas and the recommendations developed in the Workshop.

The analysis of the project document leads to three hypotheses underlying the concept of the project. The first is that a reforestation program can help improve the livelihoods of rural women by enhancing their involvement in the creation and management of tree plantations. The second is that a separate forestry program targeting women may advance their position in creation, management and use of tree plantations. The third concerns a paradigm of aid delivery to rural communities: it was considered that the implementation of a reforestation project by a government agency in cooperation with a national NGO can lead to success by mobilizing rural women and communities to establish woodlots for production of timber. In the logic of these hypothesis, the beneficiaries of the project were mostly rural women, but also individuals, groups, DWM and other NGOs engaged in rural forestry activities, the Forestry Department and private sector operators.

The project was implemented by the Forestry Department of the Ministry of Lands and Forestry, in cooperation with the 31<sup>st</sup> December Women's Movement (DWM). DWM is an NGO which is dedicated to the mobilization of Ghanaian women at national level and to secure a political space for their socioeconomic empowerment. It implements projects that aim at integrating women in the mainstream of socioeconomic and cultural development. This is done through sensitization, workshops, training and extension services. DWM has therefore acquired a large experience in the mobilization of women for community development activities. Its membership of nearly 1.5 million makes it a force that can work effectively to influence policies and practices that impact women as far as their development is concerned.

The project was implemented in three ecological regions, which are High Forest, guinea savannah, and coastal savannah. It started on 1<sup>st</sup> April 1995. Although the planned duration was 48 months, there was an extension of 6 months to allow it to fully complete its activities. The total cost was US \$ 714,823.-, with the following sources: ITTO: US \$ 694,823.-; Government of Ghana: US \$ 20,000.- A follow-up project was financed by ITTO and is under implementation as PD 49/98 Rev. 1 (F) "Participatory tropical development by women in indigenous communities".

## **1.2 Development Objectives**

The development objectives of PD 27/94 Rev. 2 (F) were described as follows:

- 1) Support community-based and private sector tropical reforestation so as to alleviate pressure on existing tropical forest resources and to improve the standard of living of women and rural communities;
- 2) Involve women in the development of the country's forest resources.

## **1.3 Specific Objectives**

The specific objectives of the project were the following:

- 1) Enable women to establish and sustainably manage nurseries for NTFPs, timber and fruit trees to supply community-based DWM and private sector tropical reforestation initiatives;
- 2) Demonstrate the potential for women to support tropical reforestation;

- 3) Encourage the involvement of women in West African sub-regional consultation on tropical reforestation;
- 4) Support the establishment of community-based NTFP, timber and fruit tree plantations through an extension program;
- 5) Create employment opportunities for women.

#### **1.4 Planned Outputs**

The planned outputs for the project were the following:

##### **Outputs for specific objective 1:**

- 3 nurseries established and operated on a sustainable basis by DWM;

##### **Outputs for specific objective 2:**

- Demonstration NTFP, fruit and timber tree plantations established in the 3 regions;
- West African sub-regional workshop on reforestation held;
- Extension program developed and operated by DWM.

##### **Outputs for specific objective 3:**

- West African sub-regional workshop on reforestation held;
- Extension program developed and operated by DWM.

##### **Outputs for specific objective 4:**

- Extension program developed and operated by DWM;
- Demonstration NTFP, fruit and timber tree plantations established in the 3 regions;
- Increased knowledge about the cultivation of NTFPs.

##### **Outputs for specific objective 5:**

- 3 nurseries established and operated on a sustainable basis by DWM;
- Extension program developed and operated by DWM.

#### **1.5 Work plan and Inputs**

##### **1.5.1 Planned project activities were as follows:**

**Output 1: 3 nurseries established and operated on a sustainable basis by DWM**

- Start-up workshop for nursery project (covering project planning, nursery design and construction, nursery operations and plantation establishment for DWM);
- Site acquisition and nursery construction in Greater Accra, Ashanti and Northern Region;
- Market demand survey for NTFPs, fruit and timber tree seedlings and products in each of the 3 ecological zones;
- Preparation of nursery operation and financial plans;
- Nursery operations, ex. Seed collection, seedling production, snail raising;
- On-the-job training by Forestry Department in nursery establishment and management.

**Output 2: Extension program developed and operated by DWM**

- Start-up workshop for reforestation extension program (covering planning and training in extension activities);
- Preparation of an extension program plan;
- Hire of an extension expert.

**Output 3: Demonstration NTFP, fruit and timber tree plantations established in the 3 regions**

- Demonstration areas in each region;
- Education and awareness campaign on community reforestation.

**Output 4: West African sub-regional workshop on reforestation held**

- Organization of the end of project West African sub-regional workshop.

**Output 5: Nursery marketing and distribution capability established**

- Establishment of seedling distribution and marketing service;
- Market demand survey for NTFPs, fruit and timber tree seedlings and products in each of the 3 ecological zones.

**Output 6: Increased knowledge about the cultivation of NTFPs**

- Research into the cultivation of NTFPs and indigenous tree species.

**Output 7: Information on the cultivation of NTFPs disseminated through production of a manual and presented at meetings and workshops**

- Contract for the production of manuals on NTFP cultivation;
- Organization of the end of project West African sub-regional Workshop.

**1.5.2 Planned inputs**

**1.5.2.1 ITTO inputs**

**Personnel**

- Project coordinator;
- Nursery staff: 3 managers, 3 sales assistants, 40 laborers, 6 security men, 3 drivers.

**Sub-contracts**

- 6 months sub-contract forest extension specialist;
- 8 months economist and market survey team
- Research into NTFP cultivation

**Capital items**

- Construction of three nurseries;
- Equipment for 3 nurseries: tractor, pickup, 7-ton truck, furnishings of nursery, office equipment for 3 nurseries;
- Vehicles: 3 motorcycles and 6 push bikes
- 3 training rooms at each nursery;
- Teaching and promotional aids, audio-visual equipment (slide projector, video camera, video deck, television, overhead projector).

**Consumable items**

- Nursery supplies shade nettings, tools, pesticides, consumables (seeds, polypots, soil, fertilizer)
- Vehicle operation and maintenance

**Miscellaneous**

- Budget for 6 training courses and seed collection;
- Budget for operation of 3 nurseries and seed collection

- Establishment of 3 demonstration plots: site, clearance, labor, demarcation, planting;
- End of project sub-regional workshop;
- Production of publicity materials and publications.

**ITTO services**

- Monitoring and evaluation

**1.5.2.2 Government of Ghana inputs**

**Personnel**

- 3 nursery advisors;
- Senior professional on the Project steering committee

**Capital items**

Land for project nurseries and water supply.

**1.5.2.3 DWM inputs**

**Personnel**

- 20 volunteers for extension and publicity campaigns
- Network and personnel for seedling distribution;
- Organizers for end of project workshop.

**1.6 ITTO/ITTA context**

The project is in conformity with the objectives outlined in article 1 of the ITTA 1983, and meets particularly the objective (a) that aims at providing "an effective framework for cooperation and consultation on all relevant aspects of tropical timber economy through workshops on reforestation, the objective (c) that aims at supporting "research and development which improves forest management and wood use through research into NTFP cultivation, and objective (f) that aims at encouraging "tropical timber reforestation and forest management through support to community-based and private sector tropical reforestation initiatives". It meets the criteria outlined in article 26 of the same ITTA, as it contributes to the production of

industrial tropical timber in Ghana and to its exports, and has potential positive economic returns in relation to its costs.

In relation to the ITTO Action Plan, the project relates to the following activities:

- Field demonstration projects where sustainable production of timber and non-timber products may be combined;
- Promoting and financing demonstration projects for different management models, and regional/sub-regional networks of such projects;
- Help to finance exchange visits and workshop participation by technical personnel.

By contributing to reduce pressure on Ghana's forests, the project also contributes to the achievement of the ITTO Objective 2000, because it enhances the country's capacity to achieve the goal of exporting timber products that is harvested only from sustainably managed forests.

## **2. EVALUATION SCOPE AND FOCUS**

This evaluation was conducted in February 2002 on the request of the ITTO Secretariat following the decision by the Committee on Reforestation and Forest Management in May/June 2001, to carry out an ex-post evaluation of PD 27/94 Rev. 2 (F). The purpose, scope and focus of this ex-post evaluation are specified in the terms of reference as follows:

- 1) To assess the current status of the tree nurseries established under the project, their management and their contribution to the reforestation of the area;
- 2) To determine the maintenance status of the nurseries and the extent of women participation in nursery management;
- 3) To assess the impact of the extension program organized by the NGO 31<sup>st</sup> December's Women Movement (DWM) on reforestation activities;
- 4) To determine the potential role of DWM in promoting community-based plantation of timber and non-timber forest products in the area;
- 5) To assess the extent of involvement of local communities and the private sector, in particular concession holders, in the reforestation program;
- 6) To determine the effectiveness of information dissemination of project results;

- 7) To define and assess implementation efficiency, including technical, financial and managerial aspects;
- 8) To recommend follow-up actions in order to enhance the utilization of project results;
- 9) Taking into account the results of the evaluation, make an overall assessment of the project's relative success or failure to summarize the key lessons learnt, and identify any issues or problems which should be taken into account in designing and implementing similar projects in future;
- 10) To prepare the evaluation in accordance with the references for the Project Evaluation Report, as contained in the ITTO Manual for Project Monitoring, Review and Evaluation; to assess the project's contribution to the relevant ITTA (1987, 1994) and relevant ITTO Action Plans, and ITTO Objective Year 2000;
- 11) To prepare an article for possible publication in the ITTO Tropical Forest Update (TFU), in consultation with the editor, containing an overview of the project and summarizing the lessons learned from the evaluation work;
- 12) The evaluation work shall be conducted in such a way as to answer the questions identified in the ex-post evaluation checklist provided in the ITTO Manual for Project Monitoring, Review and Evaluation (page 29).

### 3 EVALUATION METHODOLOGY

The evaluation started by a deskwork consisting in the analysis of the project concept, strategies and logical framework in the project document. This was followed by a visit in Ghana to meet and discuss with the project management staff, the representatives of the Executing agencies, the project beneficiaries and its other key stakeholders, and to analyze project documents. The work in Ghana started with briefing meetings with project, officials of the Ghana Administration and leaders of DWM, as follows:

#### *Project Management*

- Mrs. Edith Abruquah, Project Coordinator.

#### *31<sup>st</sup> December Women's Movement*

- Mrs. Nana Konadu Agyeman Rawlings, President of 31<sup>st</sup> DWM,
- Miss Sherry Ayittey, Project and Finance Coordinator of the DWM and Chairperson of the Project Implementation Committee.

- Ms. Rejoice Juliet A. Ahiable.

*Forestry Commission, Forest Services Division*

- M. J.E. Otoo, Director of Operations.

*Ministry of Environment, Science and Technology*

- M. Edward O. Nsenkyire, Chief Director.

This was followed by field visits in Ashanti Region, Volta Region and to the Achimota Nursery, Accra, to interview the beneficiaries on the achievements and impacts of the project, and the perceived changes and needs, and to interview regional stakeholders. The interviewees were the following:

*Ashanti Region: Stakeholder of the private sector*

- M. Amin Samuel Zacca, Kumasi Logging & Lumber Co. Ltd (KLLC).

*Ashanti Region: DWM organizers and project beneficiaries*

- Ms. Agnes Obeng, DWM Regional Organizer, Ashanti Region,
- Ms. Veronica Antwi-Adjei, ITTO Project coordinator Ashanti Region,
- Evelyn Asare Konadu, Asante Akim South District DWM Organizer,
- Ernestina Fenning, DWM Organizer, and Sophia Annang, Secretary, Begoro District.

*Ashanti Region: Kumasi Regional Forest Office*

- M. Alexander A. Boadu, Regional manager,
- M. Edward Obiaw, Environmental conservation manager,
- M. Alex Asare, Manager, Collaborative forest management.

*Volta Region*

- Ms. Evelyn J.Y. Goni, DWM Regional Chairperson and South Tomgu District Organizer,
- Chief Torgbe Amusu IV, Alesikpe,
- Mrs. Patience Kwame, Akatsi District Organizer.

In field visits, the Project Coordinator, Mrs Abruquah, and a representative of DWM, Ms. Ahiable, accompanied the evaluator. In Ashanti Region, he visited Kumasi

Logging and Lumber Ltd and its plantations, Kumasi Nursery, Abuonem District Assembly Junior Secondary School (Kumasi), Bankame Community plantation (Asante Akim South District), Peseato Community Nursery and plantations in the Forest Reserve (Begoro District). In Volta Region, the evaluator visited community plantations in South Tomgu District at Dzetorkwe, Alesikpe, Agorhome, Kpenu and Agbakope, and in Akatsi District at Adikame and Kpodzivil. In Accra he visited the Achimota Nursery.

The evaluation had a fairly good cross-section of the project's achievements, in a diversity of ecological and socio-cultural conditions. In the interviews, the evaluator focused on aspects of interest to the evaluation of impacts, to social and economic constraints of beneficiaries and to their needs for the future.

The visit in Ghana was concluded with debriefing meetings, with Ghana Administration officials, the DWM leaders, as follows:

*Forestry Commission*

- M. A.S.K. Boachie-Dapaah, Chief Executive, Forestry Commission;
- M. E.P.K Dzuboku, Director Operations, Forest Services Division.

*31<sup>st</sup> December Women's Movement*

- Mrs. Nana Konadu Agyeman Rawlings, President of 31<sup>st</sup> DWM,
- Miss Sherry Ayithey, Project and Finance Coordinator of the DWM and Chairperson of the Project Implementation Committee.
- Ms. Rejoice Juliet A. Ahiable.

The impressions from the field visit and the project's documents are the basis for this report.

## **4. FINDINGS AND LESSONS LEARNT**

### **4.1 Efficiency**

#### **4.1.1 Project implementation**

As mentioned above, the project was implemented under a partnership of Forestry Department of Ghana with DWM. It had a Steering Committee (PSC) comprising representatives of the ITTO, the Ministry of Lands and Forestry, and the Forestry Department. It had also a Project Implementation Committee (PIC) consisting of representatives from DWM, the Ministry of Lands and Forestry, the Chief Conservator of Forests, the Project coordinator and counter-part coordinator. The counter-part Project coordinator was provided by the Forestry Department. The weak point to underline is the lack of an agreement or any document of understanding between the two executing agencies, describing their roles, their mutual responsibilities and relations as far as the implementation of the project is concerned.

The implementation of the project was very efficient and was a success in technical, and managerial aspects. It was executed in a professional manner and had the support of both Executing Agencies. The minimum project reporting has been produced as required by standard rules of ITTO. The audit reports allow concluding that, budget-wise, the project has been cost effective, and the resources allocated to it have been adequately used to implement its activities. Although the project sent the financial report to ITTO, the evaluator could not look at the cost effectiveness of each output because that report was not made available to him.

The successful implementation of the project is largely due to the excellent cooperation between the Forestry Department and DWM. The success is also due to the guidance given by both the PIC and the PSC, and the enthusiasm and strong commitment of the staff members and the DWM regional, district and zone organizers who carried out an immense awareness building and mobilization work at grassroots level.

#### **4.1.2 *Input allocation***

The project implementation was carried out following the ITTO's rules and procedures. Both the ITTO and the implementing agencies have complied with their obligations by providing their respective inputs. In addition to projects inputs described in the project document, there was considerable contribution of members of DWM in terms of unpaid labor employed in nursery operations and in the establishment and management of DWM plantations. The Forestry Department also contributed in reinforcing the project logistics by providing transport for seedlings

and other material. The evaluator considers that these contributions should have been included in the project document under respective budget sources.

## 4.2 Project effectiveness

### 4.2.1 *Preliminary remarks on the coherence of the project design*

The evaluator looked at the project's strategy and logical framework in order to be able to objectively assess the achievement of its specific objectives and its outputs, and to appreciate the effects and impacts and its contribution to the development objective. The analysis of the project design showed serious weaknesses in the definition of approaches, strategies and objectives that ought to have been corrected in the earlier stages of its implementation. In the very beginning, the project was not prepared on the basis of a social survey, and did not include such an important exercise in its activities. Although it is implicitly a highly gender sensitive scheme, there was no gender analysis to identify key operational women related issues in reforestation, and to describe their socioeconomic needs and the specific gender related constraints to meet them. Such a weakness is important to underline for a project which was implemented in a large diversity of geographical, social and cultural conditions.

Concerning the logical framework, there was a considerable mismatch between the development objectives, the specific objectives, the outputs and the activities. The number of the specific objectives is quite impressive compared to the number of outputs. The project document did not show the linkages among the elements of the logical matrix at different levels. The evaluator made an attempt to restructure these components in order to establish logical links between them. The result, validated with the project coordination, is indicated in Appendix I. It allows illustrating the following:

- The definition of development and specific objectives needed to be tighter and more concise;
- Specific objectives were not assigned to any of the development objectives, and similarly outputs were not assigned to specific objectives;
- The specific objectives "*Demonstrate the potential for women to support tropical reforestation*" and "*Create employment opportunities for women*" do not have

corresponding outputs and activities. Indeed they ought to be considered as impacts;

- In several cases the same activity may be written under different outputs;
- The output "*Nursery marketing and distribution capability established*" does not have corresponding activities;
- Most indicators are just quantified activities or targets and do not allow appreciating the qualitative achievements and impacts;
- The assumptions at the level of development objectives are lacking, and the project had not foreseen the external factors that would influence their achievement.

These weaknesses were obviously a major handicap for a fully effective management of the project. They did not allow the good idea behind the project to be adequately translated into realistic and achievable objectives. For such a weak design, the scope of the project was too wide in relation to the number of development objectives (2) and specific objectives (5).

Furthermore, participatory development requires a vision and strategies on a longer-term horizon, instead of planning project phases of short duration. In this regard, the project design should have given more emphasis on developing processes instead of focusing on activities. In a process approach, for a project facing socio-cultural constraints to effect changes, how the outputs are reached is more important than the outputs themselves, and the focus must be on the internal social dynamics generated in beneficiary communities.

#### **4.2.2 *Achievement of outputs and objectives***

The impression from the reports and field observations is that, with a few exceptions, the project delivered at the activity level. Indeed there are impressive performances in the implementation of most technical and physical results, while there are varying degrees of under-achievements of many outputs and specific objectives. This situation is certainly due to the above-mentioned problems in the project design, and it justified its revision in the early beginning of the implementation. Furthermore, as the project did not deliver at outputs and objectives levels, the objective evaluation of achievements is made difficult by the lack of data from a monitoring and evaluation system, as this was not set up. To appreciate the effects and impacts, the evaluator

relied mostly on field observations, interviews with beneficiaries and project staff, to complement the information from project reports.

The overall impression given by the technical and physical achievements of the project is largely positive, given the scale of operation and the duration of the project. All the stakeholders interviewed, in the Administration, private sector and at grassroots level, made a similar appraisal. The implementation rates of most activities, as it will be shown later, are high particularly in seedling production and reforestation. The weaknesses found are mostly due to the lack of effectiveness of the conceptual framework. This success can be attributed to the partnership between the Forestry Department and DWM, to the dedication of the project's staff and to the commitment of DWM leadership at levels.

#### **4.2.3 *Effectiveness of information dissemination***

The project disseminated information through newsletters, newspapers, television, manuals, and workshops. There was an excellent article "*A Reforestation Movement in Ghana*" in ITTO's TFU written by E. Abruquah, Project Coordinator. However most technical information was limited to required ITTO and workshop reporting. This consisted mainly in describing the execution of the activities of the project, and they do not give an account of the social changes that have taken place. As it would be expected from the problems of project design, reporting focused on what the project has done and on the analysis of relevant developmental changes on the beneficiaries. The information on the project's performance as far as specific objectives are concerned remains insufficient, and there is no measure of impacts as far as the contribution to development objectives is concerned. Although the success of the project is undoubtedly very high, and this evaluation cannot rate its achievements below what was reported, reporting to ITTO has been only positive. The key impediments to achieving the planned performances and impacts were not discussed. There is no evidence that the project carried out any systematic work on systematizing for publication its rich experiences. Such systematization could serve in planning future phases of the project as well as other national policy and development processes.

### **4.3 Impacts and effects**

#### **4.3.1 *Findings in relation to indicators***

#### 4.3.1.1 Measurement of output achievement

*Indicator for output: "3 nurseries established and operated on a sustainable basis by DWM": Nursery constructed and operational within 6 months of project start-up in Greater Accra; 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> nursery within 15 months in Ashanti and in Northern Region; capacity of Accra Nursery: 800,000 seedlings; Ashanti and Northern Region: 400,000 seedlings; self-financed by the end of project period.*

Three nurseries were established in the 3 ecological regions as planned, and produced a total of 1,943,937 seedlings. Furthermore, the central nurseries supported the creation of 36 secondary community nurseries which produced a total of 100,000 seedlings. The data on total seedling production per species in different ecological zones provided in Table 1 show that the objective of producing a total of 1,600,000 seedlings was achieved at 128%. All the seedlings were distributed for planting and the survival rate ranged between 60-95%.

From the field interviews it was obvious that the central nurseries contributed effectively to the reforestation by communities. However they have not been managed as a business. The unit costs of producing seedlings are not known, as there was no record of the women's voluntary labor which played an important role in production.

The status of the 3 central nurseries is not yet clear as they are still managed by DWM, and there is no strategy for their devolution to independent beneficiary groups. Furthermore, even if devolution were to take place, the current practices of free distribution of seedlings by some development NGOs represents an important disincentive to operate commercial nurseries. A better formula would have been for the project to play a transitory role of intermediary buyer of seedlings under a contractual arrangement with DWM members, until conditions for total devolution are met.

The evaluator visited the Kumasi and the Achimota central nurseries, and the women's nursery at Peseato, and observed that the maintenance status is satisfactory. However the former was somehow under capacity, although there are plans for its expansion. Women's participation in nursery management is impressive, and their commitment involved an important voluntary labor which has not been duly recorded.

Table 1: Seedling production in the 3 project central nurseries

Species	Coastal Savanna Zone	High Forest Zone	Guinea Savanna Zone	Total
<i>Senna siamea</i>	200,552	56,200	225,932	482,694
<i>Acacia spp.</i>	148,002	-	58,031	206,033
<i>Khaya senegalensis</i>	33,000	-	49,200	82,200
<i>Tripl. scleroxylon</i>	-	15,200	-	15,200
<i>Terminalia superba</i>	-	18,006	-	18,006
<i>Terminalia ivorensis</i>	-	12,033	-	12,033
<i>Maclura excelsa</i>	-	4,503	-	4,503
<i>Tetrapleura</i>	-	6,880	-	6,880
<i>Anac. occidentale</i>	27,052	2,000	24,020	53,072
Coconut	880	-	-	880
Citrus	9,863	5,300	500	15,663
<i>Mangifera indica</i>	6,523	1,050	8,600	16,173
<i>Leuc. leucacephala</i>	63,800	-	31,631	95,431
<i>Tectona grandis</i>	408,763	283,200	12,202	703,865
<i>Eucalyptus spp.</i>	76,500	-	18,004	94,504
Black berries	2,200	-	-	2,200
<i>Albizzia lebbek</i>	83,650	-	-	83,650
<i>E. angolense</i>	-	10,100	-	10,100
<i>Cedrela odorata</i>	-	21,000	-	21,000
<i>Aningeria robusta</i>	-	3,550	-	3,550
<i>Ceiba pentandra</i>	-	12,300	-	12,300
Avocado	3,200	500	-	3,700
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,063,985</b>	<b>451,832</b>	<b>428,120</b>	<b>1,943,937</b>

As a result of lack of costing data, it is not yet possible to appreciate the sustainability of plant production if the nurseries were to be run as a commercial business. Another factor that does not allow drawing immediate conclusions on sustainability is the practice of distribution of free seedlings by development NGOs.

**Indicator for output "Extension program developed and operated by DWM":**  
**Year 1: 50 ha planted; year 3: 150 ha; year 4: 150 ha in community-based**

*plantations established by women's groups and rural communities (year 1: 100,000; year 2: 300,000; year 3: 300,000).*

DWM carried out a spectacular mobilization work to implement the activities of the project. It rallied the women to undertake responsibilities in creating plantations on plots made available to them on or near their community lands. With DWM extension effort, the total areas planted add up to approximately 765 ha (450 ha in Coastal savannah zone, 180 ha in High Forest zone, and 135 ha in guinea savannah zone). This represents 219% of the planned target. The data on planted areas in respective regions is incomplete and a format has been designed to collect such information for compilation. The woodlots have not been marked on a map, at least as dots, in order to localize them in the future.

The project provided seedlings free of charge to women for planting. In some districts it provided tilling material to prepare the reforestation land. The value of these subsidies has not been reported, and their impact on replicability of the reforestation experience elsewhere is not known. DWM backed the project's efforts by negotiations with chiefs on behalf of women to obtain reforestation lands, and with the Forest Department to obtain rights to plant trees and practice the taungya system of State's Forest Reserves.

In the interviews with officials at national and regional levels there were very positive comments on the extension effort carried out by DWM. It demonstrated that cooperation between a government agency and an NGO had considerable advantage in working for rural development. The evaluator was impressed by the quality of the plantations created and maintained by women. Allowing beneficiaries to practice intercropping in newly created plantations or the taungya system in forest reserves served as a powerful reforestation incentive.

*Indicator for output: "Demonstration NTFP, fruit and timber tree plantations established in the 3 regions": Demonstration tree and NTFP plantations established in the Accra by the end of the 1st year and in Ashanti and Northern by the end of 2<sup>nd</sup> year.*

The demonstration tree and NTFP plantations were successfully established in the 3 ecological regions as planned, and cover a total area of 29 ha (see details in Table 2). However, there is no information on the impact of these demonstration plantations as

far as adoption by communities is concerned. The indicator itself does not reveal how the project was expected to measure whether the demonstration plots are meeting their purpose. Although the demonstration plantations are supposed to serve as examples for interested people to emulate, it is not clear from the project document what these plantations had to demonstrate, and there is no concept of a demonstration model. The evaluator even questions the necessity of such models. Using instead successful communities themselves as models for other communities would certainly lead to more rapid adoption and higher impact.

Table 2: Demonstration tree and NTFP plantations

Ecological zone	Area (ha)	Species	Others
Coastal savannah	11	<i>Senna siamea</i> (3 ha), <i>Anacardium occidentale</i> (5 ha), Citrus (3 ha)	Blackberries, mushrooms, snails
High Forest	13	<i>Triplochiton scleroxylon</i>	Mushrooms, snails
Guinea savannah	5	<i>Senna siamea</i>	Mushrooms, snails
Total	29		

***Indicator for output "West African sub-regional workshop on reforestation held":  
West African sub-regional workshop to be held in August 1998.***

The sub-regional workshop was held between 6-8 April 1999. In addition to 70 Ghanaian participants there were 17 women participants from 7 West African countries. A report on workshop results was produced and was widely distributed.

***Indicator for output "Marketing and distribution capability established": 50% of nursery output sold to private sector.***

There are no records of the achievement of this output as the marketing and distribution capability was not established as planned. Indeed for such an important activity there was no concept of a marketing strategy. Distribution remained largely marginal as far the private sector is concerned, and prices were very low. The involvement of the private sector has not been as implied in the above indicator. The expectation was that timber industries that carry out reforestation activities could constitute a market for seedlings. The relations for seedling supply were established with two companies in Kumasi Region. To one of them the project supplies up to

60,000 seedlings per year at a unit price of 500 to 1,000 Cedis, in addition to assistance it provides in kind to the nursery. The target of 50% nursery production sold to the private sector could not be reached because the seedlings from the project's nurseries faced the problem created by distribution of seedlings practiced by other development operations.

*Indicator for output "Increased knowledge about the cultivation of NTFPs":  
Research on NTFP cultivation to begin by month 4; early results by end of year 1.*

The planned research had to identify technologies and innovations which would facilitate NTFP cultivation for higher rural income. As far as this output is concerned, the project collected data on NTFPs and conducted a training for DWM women on the identification, cultivation and management of NTFPs (rattans, climbers, wrapping leaves, etc.). The project was not effective on the "research" as understood in the above indicator as far as cultivation of NTFPs is concerned. It should also be noted that as it appears in the project document, the planned research was not a response to clearly defined needs of the beneficiaries. This output remains important for a project which aims at improving women's income. The research on NTFPs can support the extension work for reforestation in the future.

*Indicator for output "Information on the cultivation of NTFPs disseminated through production of a manual and presented at meetings and workshops":  
Manual on cultivation of NTFPs published by the end of year 2.*

The manual on cultivation of NTFPs was published and disseminated to all 10 regions of Ghana. The workshop on NTFPs cultivation and identification was held.

#### **4.3.1.2 Measurement of performance**

*Performance indicator for specific objective "Enable women to establish and sustainably manage nurseries for NTFPs, timber and fruit trees to supply community-based DWM and private sector tropical reforestation initiatives": 3 regional nurseries run by women (31<sup>st</sup> DWM); seedling supplied to meet 31<sup>st</sup> DWM, rural and private sector demand.*

As already mentioned above, 3 nurseries were established in the Guinea savannah, High Forest and Coastal Savannah zones, to produce seedlings of the species

indicated in Table 3. To enable women to manage the nurseries, 40 women were trained in various nursery techniques and 70 DWM members were trained in forest extension. The project document did not provide any target for the relative proportion of seedling production for each species. Similarly there were no targets for the training of women. It is therefore difficult to assess the performance of the project.

Table 3: Tree species established in the 3 ecological areas of the project

Type of species	Coastal savannah	High Forest	Guinea Savannah
Wood production	<i>Senna siamea</i> , <i>Eucalyptus spp.</i> , <i>Albizzia lebbek</i>	<i>Aningeria robusta</i> , <i>Cedrela odorata</i> , <i>Ceiba pentandra</i> , <i>Entendrophragma angolense</i> , <i>Tectona grandis</i> , <i>Terminalia superba</i> , <i>Triplochiton scleroxylon</i>	<i>Acacia spp.</i> , <i>Albizzia lebbek</i> , <i>Eucalyptus spp.</i>
Fruit production	<i>Citrus</i> , <i>Anacardium occidentale</i> , <i>Mangifera indica</i>		<i>Anacardium occidentale</i> , <i>Mangifera indica</i> .

In the understanding of the evaluator, women in their communities were expected to manage the nurseries themselves. However, this activity is still organized by DWM, and there seems to be a lack of separation between women as beneficiaries and DWM as their organizer. Thus if devolution of the nurseries had to take place, women in their communities would still need assistance from DWM.

***Performance indicator for specific objective "Demonstrate the potential for women to support tropical reforestation": End of project workshop on reforestation and nursery management; demonstration plots established.***

In spite of the irrelevancy of the chosen indicator, the evaluator was impressed by the local ownership of the project's results, and the strong commitment to the project's objectives. All this testifies to the potential for women to support reforestation. Although the planned workshop took place, the project did not present any detailed analysis on gender issues that are specific to its work contexts and are based on its experience.

The most positive change noted by the evaluator in relation to the potential of women to support tropical reforestation is the consolidation of their aspirations vis-à-vis the forest resources. The new plantations have catalyzed their need of further support to have access to land and credit. In most communities visited, women expressed concern on how to further enhance the link of their plantations to other needs of the community. The most pressing needs mentioned concern education facilities for their children and health, which can be met with enhanced with immediate income, as compared to the income from trees that will be cut in a more remote future.

However, DWM and the project should also try an additional option of catalyzing the emergence of women as socially and economically autonomous groups participating in the project as beneficiaries. In the view of the evaluator, a development project targeting only women would have its full meaning if it manages to catalyze their need to organize themselves as independent persons or production groups.

*Performance indicator for specific objective "Encourage the involvement of women in West African sub-regional consultation on tropical reforestation": End of project workshop on reforestation and nursery management; start-up workshop for 31<sup>st</sup> DWM.*

The planned workshops took place as planned, but as indicators they are not sufficient to measure the project's performance in encouraging the involvement of women in the desired consultations. In spite of the irrelevancy of the chosen indicator, the project became a reference for many other countries in the region.

*Performance indicator for specific objective "Support the establishment of community-based NTFP, timber and fruit tree plantations through an extension program": Community plantations established.*

Concerning tree plantation establishment and cultivation of NTFPs, the project had positive results. The evaluator had the opportunity to see plantations of teak and other species in Ashanti Region, and community woodlots for fuel-wood production in the Volta Region. The results of tree plantations in all the project zones are spectacular. DWM played an important role in promoting community-based reforestation for the production of timber and non-timber products. As it was already mentioned, it carried out negotiation with chiefs and the Forestry Department to provide land for reforestation. Furthermore the project trained 30 women in plantation management,

35 in techniques of budding and grafting of citrus, mangos and avocados, 35 in mushroom cultivation and snail rearing, and 50 in the identification, collection and cultivation of NTFPs. Although there are no reported data on the impact of these trainings, the evaluator observed the quality of plantations and had interesting discussion with women who were pruning their plantations and who appreciated their newly acquired skills. Again for lack of data, the achievements on NTFPs could not be assessed.

*Performance indicator for specific objective "Create employment opportunities for women": Nursery and marketing jobs created.*

Although the creation of employment opportunities for women was one of the specific objectives of the project, its design did not include explicit outputs and respective employment creation activities. The indicator chosen for this objective lacks targets, and there are no data to assess the performance. Due to the lack of a system to monitor the impacts of the project, there are no data on the number of jobs it helped create. However, the impact on income generation can be inferred from the field interviews. The newly acquired techniques of grafting provoked an increase in the demand of fruit species alongside tree seedlings. This presents a new opportunity for income generation. For employment opportunities and income generation, nurseries do not appear yet to constitute a viable activity as far as tree seedlings are concerned.

#### **4.3.1.3 Measurement of impact**

*Impact indicator for development objective "Support community-based and private sector tropical reforestation so as to alleviate pressure on existing tropical forest resources and to improve the standard of living of women and rural communities": Rural communities planning and managing reforestation activities in coastal savannah, High Forest and guinea savannah zones and private sector procuring seedlings from project nurseries for reforestation. Income generating opportunities created through seedling production and reforestation activities; NTFPs produced for household consumption.*

It is evident that collectively, i.e. through DWM, women are planning and managing a reforestation program with impressive results. However if what was meant by the

above indicator is women at the District or local community level, then the objective is not yet achieved, and it would require further capacity building.

Concerning income generation, the plantations are still too young to have a significant economic impact where timber is the objective of production. However several interviewees said they got considerable socioeconomic benefits from intercropping practice in young plantations in the first 3 years. Many expressed the need of assistance in the form of credit to develop local activities with a quicker economic return while they wait for the harvest of the trees, or to increase productivity, by means of agricultural implements for example.

Although there is no doubt on the potential of the plantations to improve the standard of living of women and rural communities, it is perhaps still early to make an appreciation of how much the impact will be. What can be said is that if beneficiaries have taken seriously the responsibility of planting and managing their plantations, it is because they see good socio-economic prospects for their communities. The most visible impact is the creation of assets which did not exist before. It is also the harvests from intercropping, and the gathering of firewood which is already alleviating the burden of firewood collection for women in the Volta Region. What is certain is that the time spent by women on firewood collection will be reduced in the future. Also the project helped create potential sources of income from trees, particularly where they were scarce in the savanna regions. There are good prospects of sales of firewood and NTFPs.

As it was already shown above, the results on the interaction with the private sector for reforestation are limited. The project established relations with only two timber companies in the Ashanti Region. The evaluator visited one of them. He had a positive appreciation of the cooperation with DWM and the project, and saw an enormous potential of what can be achieved in the future.

As it was already mentioned, plantations are still too young to provide income. However, there are important socioeconomic benefits derived from intercropping in all the regions, and fuel-wood production in older plantations created in the savannah zones. In all the cases, there is a concrete creation of community assets representing a potential source of income. Beneficiaries are aware of the potential of income generation from the plantations, and the communities expressed the desire to pursue the planting effort. Many interviewees told the evaluator that this income will help

women to meet the costs of schooling for their children. Based on this information, the evaluator believes that the project has good prospects for achieving income related objectives, provided DWM defines a strategy to provide the necessary advisory services.

*Impact indicator for development objective "Involve women in the development of the country's forest resources": Women planning and implementing reforestation initiative.*

Women have been successfully involved in implementation activities. They have not been sufficiently involved in the project planning process, nor in the monitoring and evaluation of their activities. There is no evidence to show that women have been sufficiently involved in the analysis of the results and impacts of the project. As it was mentioned above, if what was meant by the above indicator is women at the District or local community level, then the objective is only achieved for implementation of reforestation, and it would require further capacity building to develop skills in planning. Indeed the project document did not make any mention of the strategy to promote participatory diagnosis, planning, monitoring and evaluation.

#### **4.3.2 Overall post-project situation**

The project achieved a considerable mobilization of beneficiaries and their communities behind its objectives, and there is a great ownership of its achievements. It is obviously a case of women's participation in development processes. However, there is still need to develop a coherent approach to allow this participation to cover all the aspects of design, implementation and evaluation of the project's activities. There are still a number of obstacles in the post project situation. Selling seedlings remains difficult in spite of the increased awareness and planting needs. However there is a potential demand for seedling when the national reforestation program will be implemented. This will give a new opportunity to women to get contracts to produce seedlings for sale. Where longer rotation species have been promoted, sustainability of plantation management will depend on the diversification of income generating activities. This requires developing a credit system, first as a revolving fund in the framework of Project PD 49/98 Rev. 1 (F), then as an important activity in subsequent phases. Perhaps the factor that is most limiting for further progress in community-based reforestation is access of women to land. The project is at the limit

of what it can achieve, and only government intervention can bring about improvements.

#### **4.3.3 *Unexpected effects and impacts***

Unexpected impacts are still difficult to appreciate as the project did not take them into account in its reporting, and did not have a monitoring and evaluation system. However the most obvious impact is that the project captured the political attention at the national level, to the need of integrating women in forestry. DWM succeeded in giving a high political profile to the project and to the effort of the beneficiaries. The other unexpected effects of project PD 27/94 Rev. 2 (F) may be summarized as follows:

- Other women's organizations and other NGOs are applying the extension methods applied by the project for reforestation;
- Similarly the Government has launched a national tree program aiming at planting 20,000 ha per annum, using the project's experience with community reforestation;
- The practice of intercropping in plantations served as a powerful incentive for reforestation and maintenance of young plantations;
- The taungya system practiced on Forest Reserves in the High Forest zone has demonstrated a potential of forest stewardship, but this needs to be reinforced by a clear official statement on the sharing of future timber harvest between the State, the customary authority and the women who planted.
- There has been capacity building for foresters involved in the project. They improved their extension approach and learned how to conduct dialogue with beneficiaries. This contributed to strengthening the confidence of the communities.

#### **4.3.4 *Contribution to the ITTA objectives and ITTO Action Plan***

The project is in conformity with the objectives outlined in article 1 of the ITTA 1983, and meets particularly the objective (a) that aims at providing "an effective framework for cooperation and consultation on all relevant aspects of tropical timber economy through workshops on reforestation, the objective (c) that aims at supporting "research and development which improves forest management and wood use through research into NTFP cultivation, and objective (f) that aims at encouraging

"tropical timber reforestation and forest management through support to community-based and private sector tropical reforestation initiatives". It meets the criteria outlined in article 26 of the same ITTA, as it contributes to the production of industrial tropical timber in Ghana and to its exports, and has potential positive economic returns in relation to its costs.

In relation to the ITTO Action Plan, the project relates to the following activities:

- Field demonstration projects where sustainable production of timber and non-timber products may be combined;
- Promoting and financing demonstration projects for different management models, and regional/sub-regional networks of such projects;
- Helping to finance exchange visits and workshop participation by technical personnel.

By contributing to reduce pressure on Ghana's forests, the project also contributes to the achievement of the ITTO Objective 2000, because it enhances the country's capacity to achieve the goal of exporting timber products that is harvested only from sustainably managed forests. However, in the savannah regions the focus is more on firewood production, and may be outside ITTO's objectives if planting of timber production species were not stepped up.

#### **4.4 Lessons learnt**

The most important lessons learnt from the experience realized with the implementation of project PD 27/94 Rev. 2 (F) are:

- The project demonstrated the usefulness of government partnership with an NGO for reforestation and community development. The cooperation strategy DWM/Forest Department allowed to make use of DWM's experience in community mobilization.
- The gateway activities which address priority needs and concerns of communities, such as intercropping and NTFPs, have constituted a key success factor for the project to reach its objectives.

- Mobilization of women for reforestation has a lot of merits in terms of creating communities assets. However it may not lead to fundamental changes in the existing gender biases as far as access to land is concerned. If women in the community are not seen as co-participants in natural resource management, a reforestation extension targeting only their group may rather add a new segregated role of tending tree plantations to their burden.
- Consequently, a gender approach starting from the identification of women's needs and constraints for meeting them may lead to better results. Indeed the best gender approach should aim at establishing women's participation in forestry as a right and a means to expand their options, and at recognizing that women must be at an equal position in access to land resources and in decision-making processes regarding community resource management and use.

### **PART III. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

#### **1. CONCLUSIONS**

##### **1.1 Implementation efficiency and project effectiveness**

The project focus is on a high priority area for Ghana and on high priority needs for the primary beneficiaries, the women of the 31<sup>st</sup> DWM and their respective communities. It was implemented by highly dedicated women, with a strong commitment to the accomplishment of its goals for the general benefit of the country and the advancement of the communities concerned. The two implementing agencies have demonstrated an adequate management capacity, and their services are highly appreciated by the beneficiaries. Thanks to the key role played by DWM in the implementation of the project, the position of women in the management of tropical forestry got a high profile on the national level.

The conclusion of the evaluation regarding efficiency and effectiveness are positive. The efforts and resources have not been wasted. Implementation efficiency was relatively high. Through training and awareness building activities, the project has contributed to the successful implementation of reforestation. As far technical and physical achievements are concerned, the project performed well in motivating women in communities to create woodlots. The highest achievements were observed with physical and technical outputs, with ratings higher than 100%. Many other

outputs had no provisional targets, and another few do not seem to have been achieved.

If measured as the relationship between ITTO's inputs and the project's outputs, efficiency is undoubtedly high. However there is a lack of data to establish cost-effectiveness of seedling production and plantation establishment. To correct this problem, all the costs of the project, including women's voluntary labor and the contributions of the Forest Department, should be considered. Whether the costs of producing seedlings and planting trees are not too high would depend on the availability of such data.

## **1.2 Overall assessment of successes and failures**

The design of the project had serious weaknesses that ought to have been corrected in the earlier stages of its implementation. The definition of higher objectives needed to be tighter and more concise. The indicators of impact and performance are weak and there was no design of a monitoring system. The assumptions at the level of development and specific objectives are lacking, and the project had not foreseen the external factors that would influence its success such as the access to land for reforestation. Some outputs lack activities for their implementations, and there are more specific objectives than outputs. The scope of the project was too wide in relation to the number of development objectives (two) and specific objectives (five). Furthermore, participatory development requires developing a vision and developing strategies on a longer-term horizon, instead of planning project phases of short duration. However the project design did not develop a gender strategy, based on a detailed gender analysis. As shown above, the overall idea of the project was relevant as it corresponded and still corresponds to the needs of communities, women in particular. However, the project did not describe strategies and approaches that could allow translating the project idea into clear objectives, outputs and activities. The situation was not sufficiently improved in the document of Phase II for project PD 49/98 Rev. 1 (F) "Participatory tropical forest development by women in indigenous communities". This document even modified at a certain extent the higher objectives of the original project.

As a consequence of the design imperfections, the impact and performance of the project cannot be measured "objectively". Although the information on activities

implementation is available, it does not allow appreciating what these activities have achieved as far as contributing to project's higher objectives is concerned.

In spite of these problems, field observations and interviews of stakeholders allow to give credit to the project for the considerable success in the empowerment and participation of women, as well as in developing their skills in seedling production and reforestation. In these areas DWM has clearly demonstrated a comparative advantage in the involvement of women. However, success in capacity building would have been even greater if the beneficiaries had been adequately involved in the conception and design of the project, and in the evaluation of its effects and impacts.

Overall, the project has had an impressive impact in such a relatively short time. Its results do augur for the socioeconomic impact on rural populations in general and women in particular. Although this impact is not yet measurable, the project succeeded in reaching women in their communities, and it enjoys a high level of community ownership all over the three regions of its action. The communities benefited from the project in many ways. The reforestation extension allowed women to acquire new skills in seedlings and NTFPs production, tree planting and plantation tending. In addition to income derived from crop harvests from intercropping, communities had new assets in form of plantations. There is also a positive ecological impact due to the reforestation of degraded areas in the High Forest, and to regeneration of biomass in grassland areas. Indeed the project is a success reforesting degraded areas in the High Forest region and in creating tree plantation assets in the savanna regions.

### **1.3 Overall assessment of successes and failures**

Although the project is a success in mobilizing the support of women to implement the national reforestation policy, it failed to methodically address the gender biases that impede women's development. Apart from workshop activities, there is no evidence of how the project facilitated women's participation in the national processes of reforestation policy formulation or policy review. Furthermore, there is no evidence of the project's impact on policy at the national level.

Also on the failure side, the project did not put an emphasis on the monitoring of its effects and impacts. Although the woodlots created are impressive, there are no reliable data on effectively planted areas for each region and species. Similarly there

are no reliable data on the number of beneficiaries. It becomes therefore difficult to establish an average planted area per beneficiary community or per beneficiary woman. However there is an on-going effort to properly document the lacking information on planted areas and number of beneficiaries.

The maintenance of big central nurseries might have slowed the spread of seedling production and nursery management skills. Its cost effectiveness as well as its effectiveness in satisfying the needs of eccentric communities are not obvious.

Perhaps a failure of considerable importance is the lack of a profound reflection on major gender issues regarding women's participation in forestry. While the project has laid the basis for participation aiming at improving the living standards of women in their communities, it did not develop any strategy for participation aiming at enhancing the status of women in their communities vis-à-vis the access, management and use of natural resources.

### **1.3 Alternative design of the project**

The choice of women as primary beneficiaries of the project was and remains justified. Indeed women have structural disadvantages and particular constraints as far access to forest resources and their use is concerned. As community based forestry and rural development are processes with a long implementation period, the project should be redesigned to cover a sufficient duration as far as the strategy and scope of activities are concerned, putting an emphasis on process development. Therefore the development objective should not change for each follow-up project. For PD 27/94 Re. 2 (F), its follow-up PD 49/98 Rev. 1 (F) "Participatory tropical development by women in indigenous communities", or any other related future follow-up projects. For successive projects, strategies should emphasize the development of processes. Its specific objectives and outputs need to be better defined. A gender approach needs to be defined, and for this a gender analysis should be carried out in order to establish a solid foundation for the continuation of project's activities in the future. For this, the project should conduct surveys to prepare a baseline and a monitoring system it lacked to assess its impacts, and that the on-going project PD 49/98 Rev. 1 (F) is still lacking.

## 2 RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings of the evaluation, the following recommendations have been drawn:

### **To the Project**

- Systematize the experiences and lessons learnt and publish them; the analysis should provide inputs in the national reforestation and gender related policy processes.
- Design a strategy for the promotion of commercial tree seedling production, and of devolution of nursery management to independent women's groups.
- A study on the real cost of seedling production should be conducted, as one of the basis for the recommendation of a seedling marketing strategy.
- The implementing agencies should continue their efforts of securing more land for women.
- Put in place a monitoring and evaluation system, and carry out a survey of impact of the project before planning any follow-up action at the completion of project PD 49/98 Rev. 1 (F).
- As the impacts of the project in form of social change cannot be achieved in one or two phases project, a longer term strategy, including the phasing out considerations, should be designed towards the end of PD 49/98 Rev. 1 (F). The reflection should be based on a socioeconomic baseline and a gender analysis in the project implementation regions.
- Planning of any future follow-up action should be designed by a team comprising experts with socio-cultural skills in order address gender issues in relation community institutions and project implementation goals and approaches.
- Strengthen the capacity of beneficiaries to plan, implement, monitor and evaluate their activities.

- Test a small-scale credit system to support women's projects in their communities, by means of a revolving in the framework of Project PD 49/98 Rev. 1 (F), and use the results to plan credit system activities in future phases.

**To the project's implementing agencies**

- Elaborate a memorandum of understanding between the Forestry Department and DWM on the roles and responsibilities in the implementation of the Project's Phase II and future phases.
- Include in the project skills in socio-economics to meet its challenges.
- Propose to the Government a framework for determining the seedling prices to be practiced by rural development operations. Such prices should not be lower than the cost of their production.
- Consider recommending to the Government lessons and experiences from the project as inputs in the national policy formulation processes on reforestation and gender.
- Revise the organization chart of the project to further improve cooperation between DWM and the Forestry Department, putting emphasis on information on operational aspects.

**To ITTO**

- For projects where social and cultural factors must be taken into account to reach the expected changes, project design teams should include experts with socio-cultural and gender analysis skills wherever necessary.
- For such projects, implementation emphasis should be put on initiating or strengthening development processes.
- Projects targeting rural communities, particularly those that have to empower certain sociologically weaker groups, may reach their objectives if government agencies promoting them relinquish their implementation responsibilities to NGOs. ITTO should promote such a partnership and publicize its experiences.

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## APPENDIX

### OBJECTIVES, OUTPUTS AND ACTIVITIES OF THE PROJECT RESTRUCTURED

#### Development objectives

1. Support to community-based and private sector tropical reforestation so as to alleviate pressure on existing tropical forest resources and to improve the standard of living of women and rural communities;
2. Involve women in the development of the country's forest resources.

#### Specific objectives

- 1.1 Enable women to establish and sustainably manage nurseries for NTFPs, timber and fruit trees to supply community-based DMW and private sector reforestation initiatives;
- 1.2 Support the establishment of community-based NTFP, timber and fruit tree plantations through an extension program;
- 2.1 Demonstrate the potential for women to support tropical reforestation;
- 2.2 Encourage the involvement of women in West African sub-regional consultation on tropical reforestation;
- 2.3 Create employment opportunities for women.

#### Outputs

- 1.1.1 3 nurseries established and operated on a sustainable basis by the 31<sup>st</sup> DWM;
- 1.1.2 Nursery marketing and distribution capability established;
- 1.2.1 Demonstration NTFP, fruit and timber tree plantations established in the 3 regions;
- 1.2.2 Extension program developed and operated by DWM;
- 1.2.3 Increased knowledge about the cultivation of NTFPs;
- 2.1 (?)
- 2.2.1 West African sub-regional workshop on reforestation held;
- 2.3 (?).

#### Activities

##### Specific objective 11

*Output 1113 Nurseries established and operated on a sustainable basis by the 31<sup>st</sup> DWM*

- A1.1.1.1 Start-up workshop for nursery project
- A1.1.1.2 Site acquisition and nursery construction in Greater Accra, Ashanti and

Northern Region

- A1.1.1.3 Market demand survey for NTFPs, fruit and timber tree seedlings and products in each of the 3 ecological zones
- A1.1.1.4 Preparation of nursery operation and financial plans
- A1.1.1.5 Nursery operations
- A1.1.1.6 On-job training by Forestry Dept. in nursery establishment and management
- A1.1.1.7 Establishment of seedling distribution and marketing service

***Output 1.1.2 Nursery marketing and distribution capability established***

***Specific objective 1.2***

***Output 1.2.1 Demons. NTFP, fruit and timber tree plantations established in the 3 regions***

- A1.2.1.1 Demonstration areas in each region
- A1.2.1.2 Education and awareness campaign on community reforestation

***Output 1.2.2 Extension program developed and operated by DWM***

- A1.2.2.1 Start-up workshop for reforestation extension program
- A1.2.2.2 Preparation of an extension plan
- A1.2.2.3 Hire of extension expert

***Output 1.2.3 Increased knowledge about the cultivation of NTFPs***

- A1.2.3.1 Research into the cultivation of NTFPs and indigenous tree species
- A1.2.3.2 Contract for the production of manuals on NTFP cultivation
- A1.2.3.3 "Information on the cultivation of NTFPs disseminated through production of a manual and presented at meetings and workshops"

***Specific objective 2.1***

?

***Specific objective 2.2***

***Output 2.2.1 West African sub-regional workshop on reforestation held***

- A2.2.1.1 Organization of the end of project West African sub-regional workshop

***Specific objective 2.3***

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