

Forest Peoples  
Programme

John Nelson  
July 2007

# Securing indigenous land rights in the Cameroon oil pipeline zone



## **Securing indigenous land rights in the Cameroon oil pipeline zone**

**John Nelson  
Forest Peoples Programme  
July 2007**

The author would like to thank Didier Adrien Amougou (PSEDD), Georges Thierry Handja (CED) and Belmond Tchoumba (CED) for their comments on this briefing.

*The project described in this briefing was made possible through funding from Comic Relief and DFID (UK Department for International Development). The views expressed in the report are those of FPP and do not necessarily reflect those of Comic Relief and DFID.*

Sections of this report may be reproduced provided that acknowledgement is made to the author and Forest Peoples Programme. The map in Annex 1 should not be reproduced without the author's permission.



© Forest Peoples Programme, 2007

Cover photographs: First visit of government delegation to Bagyéli village, 2007  
Bagyéli women and children, pipeline zone, 2007  
Community resource use map, 2007

Photo credits:

John Nelson, except for Bipindi Platform 2005 (PSEDD)

Maps

CED

## Executive summary

### **Indigenous communities secure formal recognition for land rights in the Cameroon pipeline zone, providing a model for national Indigenous Peoples Development Plans in the Congo Basin**

Twenty indigenous Bagyéli communities from Bipindi Arrondissement in the Chad-Cameroon Pipeline Zone have secured formal recognition for their land rights in Cameroon's Ocean Department after six years' effort through a project coordinated by the UK-based Forest Peoples Project (FPP), and working with the Cameroon NGOs the Centre for Environment and Development (CED), and Planet Survey Sustainable Environment and Development (PSEDD). The work was funded by the UK Department for International Development (DFID) and Comic Relief.

Evidence collected during FPP's consultations with communities in 2001 showed that the oil pipeline route impacted on Bagyéli communities: the pipeline crossed Bagyéli land at least five times in the Bipindi area, required some Bagyéli to move the location of their camps, and threatened sacred sites. However, at the time no Bagyéli had received individual compensation since, it was claimed, they were not affected. FPP's consultation found also that the oil company's compensation programme had led directly to increased pressure against Bagyéli land rights from neighbouring Bantu communities, who claimed ownership of the lands that they occupied and used. Based upon those claims the oil company gave compensation to these neighbouring communities instead.

Our research in 2001 found that the original development process for the Indigenous Peoples Plan (IPP) stipulated by World Bank policy had failed to provide culturally meaningful space to enable Bagyéli participation in the design of the IPP. This meant it did not address Bagyéli's main priorities – securing their access to agricultural land, and protecting their customary rights in forests. Instead the IPP focused solely on supporting Bagyéli agricultural, health and education, but without any meaningful participation by Bagyéli in the design, planning or implementation of the work of the Foundation for Environment and Development in Cameroon (FEDEC). FEDEC is responsible for managing a 25-year endowment fund established by the oil company, and which is supposed to finance the IPP, but which after over five years is still failing to involve Bagyéli in its decision-making.

In response to repeated community requests a project was initiated by FPP, CED and PSEDD with 27 local and indigenous communities to empower Bagyéli to engage civil society and defend their rights. Between 2002 and 2007 the project supported consultations and training, inter-communal dialogue, community documentation including participatory resource mapping, new agreements between local people concerning their rights to their lands, and community-managed microprojects, culminating in formal recognition by the government for Bagyéli land rights in June 2007.

The success of this process proves that initiatives delivering concrete results in line with hunter-gatherer community priorities, and which help them secure their rights, are achievable in Cameroon. Indigenous communities from the pipeline zone have shown that they are able and willing to work constructively to resolve long-standing disputes over their rights, as well as to develop and implement projects benefiting their communities. They are now asking for representation in the planning and management of FEDEC, and in all other national initiatives targeting indigenous peoples in Cameroon.

John Nelson  
Forest Peoples Programme

## **Acronyms and Abbreviations**

CED	Centre for Environment and Development
CCPP	Chad Cameroon Pipeline Project
COTCO	Cameroon Oil Transportation Company
CP	Compensation Programme
DFID	Department for International Development
EMP	Environmental Management Plan
FEDEC	Foundation for Environment and Development in Cameroon
FPP	Forest Peoples Project
IPP	Indigenous Peoples Plan
IPDP	Indigenous Peoples Development Plan
OD	Operational Directive [of the World Bank]
PNCM	Campo Ma'an National Park
PNDP	National Participatory Development Programme
PSEDD	Planet Survey Sustainable Environment Development
PSEF	Sectoral Forests and Environment Project

## Contents

<b>Executive Summary .....</b>	<b>i</b>
<b>Acronyms and Abbreviations .....</b>	<b>ii</b>
<b>Pipeline, Peoples and Land.....</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The IPP: A Plan for Indigenous People?.....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>A Project by Indigenous People .....</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Conclusion .....</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>Annex 1: Example of Community Map.....</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>Annex 2: Executive Summary from FPP (2001) Report of Community Consultations .....</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>Notes .....</b>	<b>17</b>

## Pipeline, Peoples and Land

The Chad-Cameron Petroleum Development and Pipeline Project (CCPP) led to the construction of a 1,000 kilometre pipeline from the Doba fields in southern Chad to Kribi in southern Cameroon, using funds from the US operator Exxon-Mobil, along with Petronas from Malaysia, Chevron Texaco in the US, and the International Finance Corporation of the World Bank Group. The southern portion of the pipeline between Lolodorf and Kribi traverses more than 100 kilometres of lands used by indigenous Bagyéli forest communities, along with those of local Bantu farming communities.



Under the terms of the World Bank's Operational Directives, including the Indigenous Peoples Policy then in force (OD 4.20), the Cameroon Oil Transportation Company (COTCO)<sup>1</sup> put in place a Compensation Programme (CP) to help mitigate damages from the pipeline, along with a mandatory indigenous peoples' component. However, consultations by the UK-based Forest Peoples Project (FPP)<sup>2</sup> with communities in 2001 revealed serious complaints by indigenous Bagyéli forest communities about their marginalisation from compensation for damages on their lands traversed by the pipeline.

Evidence collected during FPP's consultations with communities showed that the pipeline route definitely impacted on Bagyéli communities: the pipeline crossed Bagyéli land at least five times in the Bipindi area, required some Bagyéli to move the location of their camps, and threatened sacred sites. However, at the time no Bagyéli received individual compensation since, it was claimed, they were not affected.<sup>3</sup> FPP's consultation found also that the oil company's CP had led directly to increased pressure against Bagyéli land rights from neighbouring Bantu communities, who claimed ownership of the lands that they occupied and used. Based upon those claims COTCO gave compensation to these neighbouring communities instead.

That Bagyéli did not receive individual compensation, and possessed no representation within local institutions were consequences of deep-seated inequalities between local and indigenous

communities that then existed around Bipindi – something that COTCO had failed to take into account adequately during the initial design of the CP. As was put to FPP in 2001:

*Yes we have Bagyéli here. My herd of Bagyéli live in my forests behind my house. They were given to me by my father ... the compensation I received was for damages to my lands and crops, not those of Bagyéli – they are farming and hunting on my lands.<sup>4</sup>*

The compensation given to those farming communities by COTCO for damages on Bagyéli lands directly undermined their customary land tenure in the pipeline zone since it led to claims by others against lands where they had lived – hunted, gathered and, to a lesser extent farmed – for hundreds of years.

In a community west of Bipindi, in 2001 a Bagyéli man told FPP:

*They told us to move camp because the pipeline would pass through here. The white man of the pipeline told us we had to move and that we would get compensation. They asked 'What do you want for moving camp?' We had to build houses, etc., so we asked for money for that. But the Myi [Bantu] who had already moved us out had already taken the compensation.<sup>5</sup>*

Almost all land used by Bantu and Bagyéli between Lolodorf and Kribi is untitled, and subject to customary land tenure rules that have been in operation for many decades. Traditionally the rights of access and use were mutually recognised by Bantu and Bagyéli, and it is this recognition that before the pipeline project had maintained at least some balance between two communities who rely on distinct economic systems to secure their livelihoods.

Bantu communities still rely principally upon agriculture in areas cleared of forest to secure their income, and they also engage in significant capital investments in houses and other storage buildings. The majority of Bagyéli then relied upon hunting and gathering, periodically moving their hunting camps, and some had also started cultivating their own fields. Most still do not make significant cash-based investments in capital assets. Bagyéli forest resources management requires long-term investment in social networks, which confer user rights for particular areas and resources, and also form the basis for the generation and transmission of indigenous knowledge about the use and management of forest resources.

Bagyéli customary law allocates collective access to forest resources through residential units linked through the base camp, village, or through kinship, which often result in complex networks of mutual rights stretching over considerable distances. When Bagyéli move to a distant area, they usually choose one that is near to their kin, where they can make use of this web of rights to forest resources. There are parallels between Bagyéli and Bantu customary property regimes since – from a Bantu perspective – Bagyéli are incorporated into the clans of their Bantu ‘patrons’ and Bagyéli base camps have traditionally been considered – by traditional Bantu leaders supported by the government – as a division of the nearby Bantu village. In principle, villagers and Bagyéli could use the same forest space and resources, although in practice the Bantu tend to use secondary forest, fallow land and cacao plantations more, rather than the high forest (forest which has not been turned over to cultivation, i.e. not field or fallow), and which is traditionally preferred by the Bagyéli.

These property regimes and the Bagyéli livelihood system were not adequately taken into account in COTCO compensation programmes nor, crucially, was the discriminatory nature of the current system of exchange and conflict resolution – which was then dominated by outsiders, or at the very least, non-Bagyéli. Because of the Bagyéli’s weaker economic and political position vis-à-vis their Bantu neighbours, their lands were vulnerable to expropriation

since Bantu were still more numerous and had greater access to and influence with the local government authorities. The pipeline project failed to take this into account. The powerlessness felt by the Bagyéli then was expressed by a comment during FPP's final consultation workshop in March 2001. When the country representative of the World Bank expressed surprise that the Bagyéli did not resist having their land taken from them, a Bagyéli representative explained:

*'They treat us like animals, there is no difference.'*<sup>6</sup>

### **The IPP: A Plan for Indigenous People?**

In line with the World Bank Operational Directive (OD) 4.20 an Indigenous Peoples Plan (IPP) was included in COTCO's Environmental Management Plan (EMP) for the pipeline project.<sup>7</sup> The IPP was supposed to address the needs and welfare particularly of Bagyéli communities living within 2 km of the pipeline route. This was to be funded using proceeds from a 25-year endowment fund established by COTCO, and managed by the Foundation for Environment and Development in Cameroon (FEDEC). FEDEC is charged with ensuring implementation of the IPP, along with two environmental offset projects for the pipeline, Mbam Djerem National Park in the North, and Campo Ma'an National Park to the southeast of Bipindi.

Our research in 2001 found that the original IPP development process had failed to provide culturally meaningful space to enable Bagyéli participation in the design of the IPP.<sup>8</sup> This meant it did not address Bagyéli's main priorities – securing their access to agricultural land, and protecting their customary forest rights. Instead the IPP has continued to focus solely on supporting Bagyéli agricultural, health and education, but without any meaningful participation by Bagyéli in the design, planning or implementation of its projects.<sup>9</sup> Yet the (2003) advice from pipeline project inspectors was very clear:

*It is stressed that they (agriculture, education and health) are only ideas for potential projects and it is up to the concerned populations, Bakola (Bagyéli) and Bantu, to decide which of the projects is relevant to them or to propose others that concern them more than the ones proposed here through informal participation. The scope of the potential programmes will be further defined in the consultation meetings to be implemented as part of this IPP.*<sup>10</sup>

Bagyéli have not been adequately consulted about the IPP or its proposed projects, and are still not represented in the management or board of FEDEC. This is reflected in FEDEC field programmes that do not enable adequate consultation with or participation by Bagyéli in projects targeting their communities. This has been a persistent complaint about the IPP by local Bagyéli for the past five years.

In our 2001 report recommendations<sup>11</sup> FPP emphasized the need to increase Bagyéli's informed participation in the design and implementation of both the CP and IPP, to increase their information base, skills and institutional capacities, and to develop mechanisms to enable constructive engagement of Bagyéli in pipeline process affecting them. These recommendations were in line with OD 4.20 guidelines the World Bank was supposed to apply then, and the current OP 4.10 that is the new World Bank standard.<sup>12</sup> FPP also recommended providing support to communities to secure their land rights, again in line with OD 4.20, and to help them overcome the gross discrimination they faced, since both were clear priorities for Bagyéli communities. However, none of these recommendations were taken up by COTCO or FEDEC, and they are not reflected in local arrangements established by FEDEC with the newly-created NGO called RAPID based in Kribi.<sup>13</sup>



Pipeline during construction

### A Project by Indigenous People

In response to repeated community requests from Bagyéli, in 2002 FPP initiated the project entitled: Reducing Poverty and Promoting Sustainable Livelihoods for Bagyéli Communities in Southwest Cameroon. The project was coordinated by FPP working with Cameroon NGOs the Centre for Environment and Development (CED), and Planet Survey Sustainable Environment and Development (PSEDD). It was funded by the Civil Society Challenge Fund of the UK Department for International Development (DFID) and Comic Relief.

The project was developed with local people and enabled the active participation of 27 Bagyéli and Bantu communities from the pipeline zone between Lolodorf and Kribi in the southern Ocean Department of Cameroon. The goal of the project was to empower local Bagyéli to engage with civil society and defend their rights.

More specifically it aimed to help Bagyéli to:

- protect and promote their land rights, for housing and agricultural lands and adjoining forests where they traditionally hunt, gather, and practice their culture;
- promote institutions enabling informed and equitable dialogue with other stakeholders, including local communities along with government and NGOs;
- document themselves and their situation, and build their negotiation capacities and experience;
- increase their participation in processes affecting them, including the development and implementation of policies and projects.

The main project activities included:

### **1      *Consultations and training***

The project supported extensive consultation and training with local communities about their rights, the oil pipeline project, and the pipeline compensation programme, and participation by community representatives in the World Bank Extractive Industries Review.<sup>14</sup> Over five years hundreds of village level meetings were held with communities so that they could become informed about the project and provide feedback on project design<sup>15</sup> and coordination, to become informed about their rights, and to prepare documentation, including analyses of their own situation,<sup>16</sup> and a published case study.<sup>17</sup>



Project planning, Bipindi 2003



Community meeting, 2004

## **2      *inter-communal dialogue***

The project helped to organise and facilitate dozens of meetings between local and indigenous communities and a series of *arrondissement*-level meetings between them and local government agencies to identify key problems and identify possible solutions, to dialogue regularly and build good working relations, and to agree a common development agenda through a multi-stakeholder platform. Bagyéli land rights were a central feature of these discussions. The Bipindi Platform that this project created is now an essential component of local development planning processes.



Bipindi Platform, 2005

(Photo: PSEDD)

### 3 Community documentation

The project supported participatory mapping with 27 local and indigenous communities to establish historic and actual use of agricultural lands and forests, and community and individual land claims, identifying and helping to resolve competing claims for farming lands, conjoined with the creation of community resource use maps that were ultimately validated by local Community Boards (see example map in Annex 1). The project also piloted efforts to facilitate the provision of identity cards to Bagyéli, an activity eventually adopted by other NGOs including FEDEC as they began working in the region.



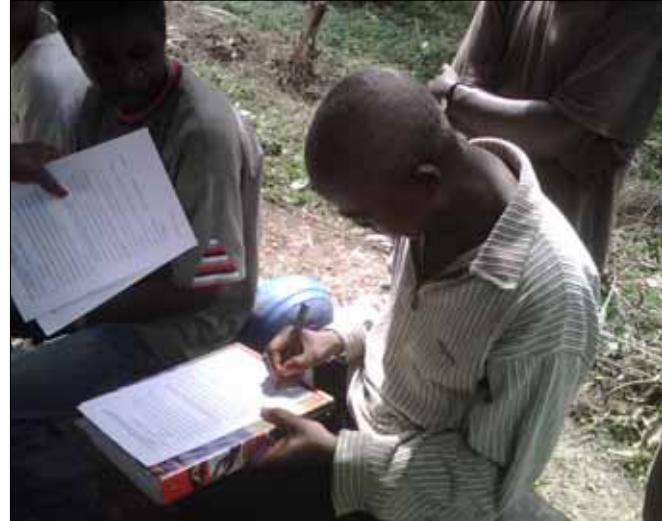
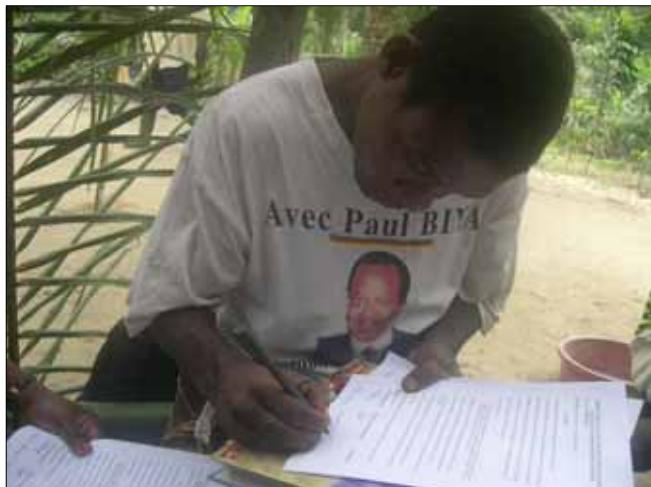
Community discussion to identify key resources to document through mapping, 2005



GPS training and data collection for community resource map, 2006

#### 4    **New agreements**

The project supported negotiations between community leaders, and the development of 20 formal agreements between Bagyéli and Bantu communities over their respective land rights, including the renunciation by local Bantu leaders of hereditary claims over Bagyéli farmlands and formal recognition by them of Bagyéli customary tenure in surrounding forests. The local shift in attitudes influenced by traditional Bantu leaders towards protection of Bagyéli rights was significant.



Community leaders signing formal agreements over land rights backed up by community maps, and witnessed by government representatives, 2007

## 5 Development projects

The project supported village-level microprojects controlled by Bagyéli and which addressed their communities' immediate livelihood needs during the life of the project, while they pursued longer-term objectives, and which are helping them build their capacity and experience to manage projects. This work included the recruitment of Bagyéli field staff to help manage and monitor projects and help to coordinate activities, including meetings, with local Bantu and Bagyéli groups, along with local government administrators. This approach enabled indigenous people to participate meaningfully in the design and implementation of projects targeting their communities.

## 6 Formal recognition for rights

The project culminated in the formalisation and validation by government authorities of 20 inter-communal land agreements between Bagyéli and Bantu communities which recognise Bagyéli villages along with their tenure over local agricultural lands and forests, establishing a precedent to support government recognition of Bagyéli *chefferies*<sup>18</sup>. This would be in line with the recommendations for the Sectoral Forest and Environment Programme (PSFE) in Cameroon now funded by the World Bank.<sup>19</sup> A local government official captured the mood of the changes underway around Bipindi when he spoke in June 2007:

*Due to the construction of the Chad-Cameroon oil pipeline, the marginalisation of Bagyéli was exacerbated. Bagyéli were being prevented from remaining on land where they have been settled for many years, and one could also hear comments such as: "Those people are Pygmies that my father left to me, and if you want to work with them, you must ask my permission first."*

*My dear ladies and gentlemen,*

*We can never say it enough: the Bagyéli are not a bit Cameroonian, but entirely Cameroonian, and due to their number and culture deserve special attention by the Cameroon Government along with the international community. Bagyéli are not the property of one family or some individuals, they are, like all Cameroonian, members of the national community, and equal to all other Cameroon citizens in rights and responsibilities.<sup>20</sup>*



Validating maps and agreements with local leaders and government representatives, 2007

## Conclusion

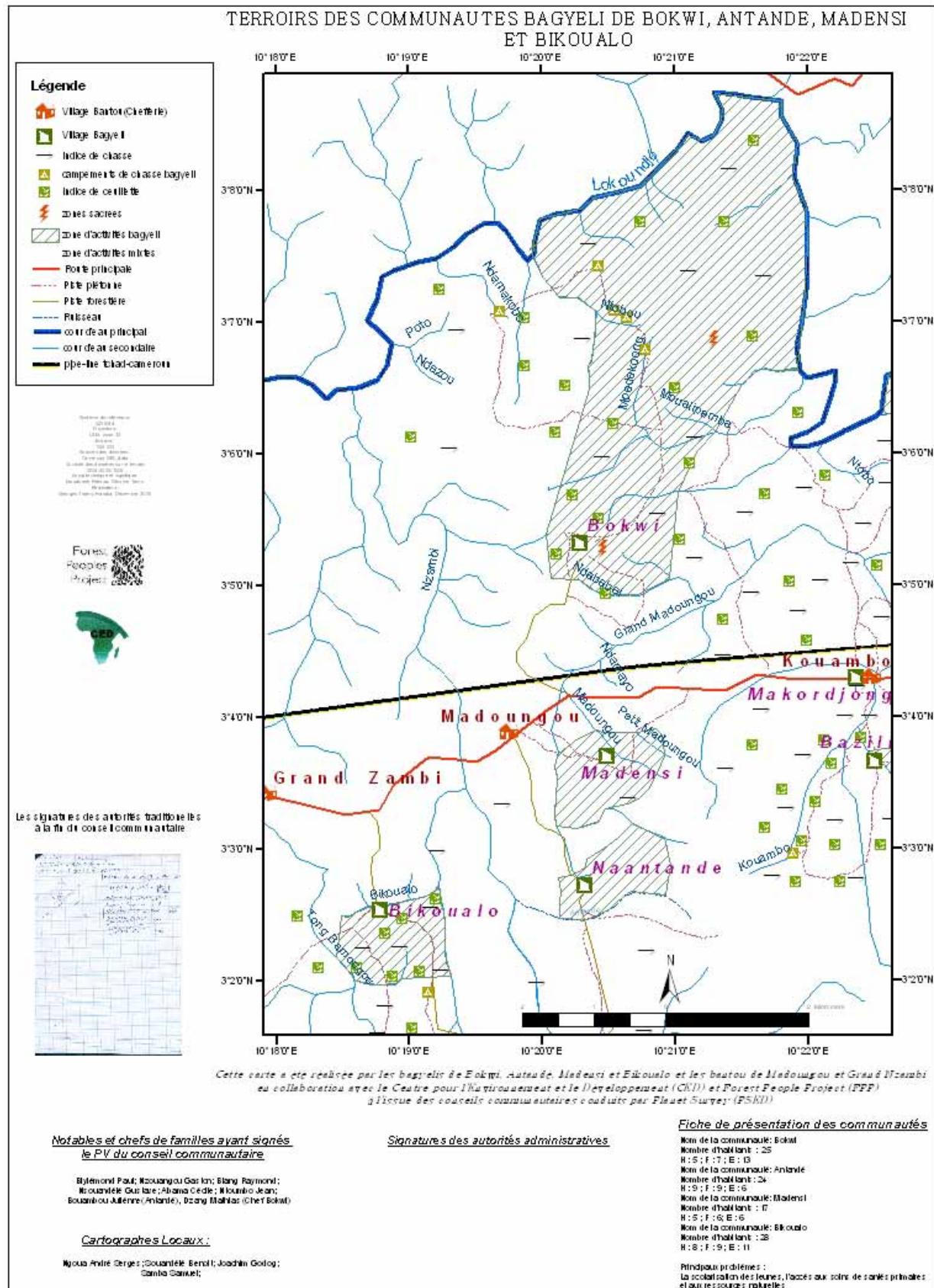
The Chad-Cameroon Oil Pipeline IPP process has been underway for over five years, and despite ongoing concerns about how it functions, and the results<sup>21</sup> FEDEC is at least starting to deliver on some education and health pledges stipulated under the original IPP.<sup>22</sup> The benefits these are generating for Bagyéli in the pipeline zone are much appreciated by communities,<sup>23</sup> but they are not sufficient to justify the serious problems wrought by the oil pipeline project. And the situation has now changed from before. Thanks to the joint project between communities and NGOs described above – which was not funded by the oil pipeline IPP – Bagyéli communities' lands are now more secure than before, with formal backing from the government,<sup>24</sup> and local people are better informed about their rights, and the aims of the oil company IPP targeting their communities. Local and indigenous people from the Bipindi region are now working together to realise other areas for potential collaboration, notably to secure further investments by the government and local NGOs in their local services and infrastructure – through the National Participatory Development Programme (PNDP), for example, which is also supported by the World Bank. The PNDP is already targeting support to Bipindi in the oil pipeline zone along with neighbouring Akom II near Campo Ma'an National Park (PNCM).<sup>25</sup>

PNDP participation in the multi-stakeholder platform this project is still supporting<sup>26</sup> is an important indicator of the importance now attached to a development process in which indigenous people have a meaningful role. Now one of the principle concerns of Bagyéli communities – many now formally recognised<sup>27</sup> – is how to secure their proper role in the elaboration and management of projects targeting their communities, and of policies and laws which affect their rights.<sup>28</sup> These are the challenges that need to be addressed during the next phase of IPP implementation in Cameroon – and in the implementation of other, national Indigenous Peoples Development Plans (IPDPs) that are corollaries of World Bank funding to Cameroon's forest and environment sector.<sup>29</sup> We believe that the dialogue process between Bagyéli and government and civil society that this project has helped to create – in the context of the oil pipeline IPP – can inform and hopefully improve the design and eventual implementation of these two IPDPs, along with those being prepared and implemented in other Congo Basin countries.<sup>30</sup>

Bagyéli communities from the pipeline zone are not yet represented in the management or on board of FEDEC, nor in the planning and management of development actions by RAPID, the brand new NGO based in Kribi, which is currently funded from FEDEC IPP funds to provide support for Bagyéli health, education and agriculture.<sup>31</sup> Local Bagyéli communities' ongoing frustration with FEDEC was raised by community representatives attending the World Bank orientation workshop on OP 4.10 in Yaounde in June 2007.<sup>32</sup> The World Bank's robust presentation of their policy to indigenous participants at this meeting has now raised expectations that something will be done by the World Bank with the Government of Cameroon and COTCO to improve the operations of FEDEC, so that the Government of Cameroon can address the negative social impacts of the oil pipeline.



## Annex 1: Example of Community Map



## **Annex 2: Executive Summary from FPP (2001) Report of Community Consultations<sup>33</sup>**

This report reviews the activities and main findings generated during a participative consultation by the Forest Peoples Project (FPP) with members of Bagyéli 'Pygmy' communities in south-west Cameroon affected by the Chad-Cameroon oil pipeline project. Approval for this project was given in spite of major concerns raised by civil society concerning the potential negative impacts of the project on the poorest people of Chad and Cameroon, including the Bagyéli. The purpose of the recent consultation by FPP was to enable the Bagyéli community to articulate their concerns and aspirations, and to support them to identify capacity-building measures needed to enable them to gain access to the decision-making processes, and participate effectively in the shaping of the pipeline project.

The consultation for this project took a grass-roots approach. Intensive consultations were carried out with affected Bagyéli communities between Lolodorf and Kribi during two field visits in February and March 2001. Forty-two Bagyéli from 10 camps were consulted and discussions held with 29 other key stakeholders, including the World Bank country office, the Société National des Hydrocarbures (SNH) in Yaoundé, COTCO consultants and field managers, and other involved agencies such as Tropenbos at Kribi and the Cameroonian NGO Centre for Environment and Development in Yaoundé. The names of local informants have not been included in this report for their protection.

This work concluded that there is a lack of information access throughout the project's institutional framework, with major information gaps about Bagyéli livelihood systems amongst COTCO staff and consultants, and about the pipeline project amongst the Bagyéli. Inadequate consultation, poor communication between stakeholders and a lack of informed participation by all parties, particularly the Bagyéli who are one of the key stakeholders, has caused confusion at all levels about the construction of the pipeline and the compensation process. Problems with the lack of information stem partly from the inadequate consultation carried out to prepare the pipeline's Indigenous Peoples Plan (IPP) and the Compensation Plan (CP), but also from the daily discrimination faced by the Bagyéli from Bantu farmers and local government structures.

During the FPP consultation the Bagyéli stated that the IPP consultation process, which was supposed to ensure the informed participation of the Bagyéli in the elaboration of the Indigenous Peoples Plan, did not make culturally appropriate space for meaningful dialogue between baseline study consultation teams and the Bagyéli. Our evidence reveals that this process did not allow for their informed participation in the consultation process.

The FPP consultation revealed that at the local level, Bagyéli people lack fundamental information about the pipeline project that should have been made available during the consultation period during the development of the IPP and CP. This was a very surprising finding, given the language of the background studies, the IPP, and the World Bank's Indigenous Peoples Policy (OD 4.20) which stresses the requirement for informed participation by local communities. Questions that are still unanswered for the Bagyéli affected by the pipeline project start with very basic issues, including, for example:

- What is the pipeline?
- Who is due compensation and for what?
- What are the processes for claiming compensation or appealing concerning the lack of compensation?

These are questions that Bagyéli are still posing today, long after the pipeline route has been established and compensation has already been agreed and handed out in their area.

Because of the Bagyéli's weaker economic and political position vis-à-vis their Bantu neighbours, their lands are vulnerable to expropriation by them. With the advent of compensation measures based on land tenure, Bantu have been able to use their greater knowledge of the pipeline process and their prior dominance over the Bagyéli to claim Bagyéli lands as their own and thus capture compensation rightfully due to Bagyéli.

Typically, Bagyéli community members were not aware when the pipeline was coming to their area, or, initially, where it was crossing their lands. In contrast, Bantu community members did know this information and were able to capture compensation payments for damage to Bagyéli lands by claiming those lands as their own. This has led to a progressive erosion of Bagyéli land rights, and is the most serious negative impact of the pipeline project on the Bagyéli thus far.

At other levels of the hierarchy leading up to COTCO headquarters in Douala, there is poor information or contradictory knowledge about particular aspects of the project. These include: the impacts of the project on Bagyéli land tenure and usage; which NGOs are working with Bagyéli and where; the timing of the project implementation; whether or not any Bagyéli have received any compensation; and the appeals process for unresolved compensation claims.

The failure to take account of Bagyéli customary land rights and resource use has skewed the pipeline compensation process from the outset, and the customary land tenure system upon which Bagyéli livelihoods are based does not appear to be recognised in either the IPP or CP.

No Bagyéli have so far received individual compensation by the pipeline project. COTCO managers responsible for implementing the compensation process and those responsible for drawing up the IPP assert that no Bagyéli have received individual compensation because COTCO deliberately ensured that the pipeline did not cross Bagyéli lands or sacred sites. However, evidence collected during this consultation shows that the pipeline crosses Bagyéli land at least five times in the Bipindi area, will have serious negative impacts on Bagyéli forest resources, has required some Bagyéli to move the location of their camps, and threatens sacred sites. More seriously, the pipeline project is causing the erosion of Bagyéli land rights and this is undermining their livelihood system.

Regional compensation also forms part of the overall compensation plan, and is supposed to fill in the gaps left by the process of compensating individual loss. However, the regional compensation plan in the area under consideration by this report will be entirely controlled by the Bantu. Given the inequalities between Bantu and Bagyéli, the regional compensation process is likely to favour the Bantu community while excluding the Bagyéli community.

For both individual and regional compensation, there is an emphasis on the provision of compensation to mitigate losses for those relying on the livelihood system predominantly used by Bantu communities, i.e. one based primarily on agriculture. These measures are a totally inadequate form of compensation for those relying primarily upon a hunting and gathering-based livelihood system.

The IPP development programmes are intended to benefit Bagyéli directly, but in fact have not addressed the needs expressed by the Bagyéli to FPP during the recent consultation. While the IPP states that Bagyéli need agricultural education and training, the Bagyéli have determined that they need to have security of land tenure over their agricultural land, and long-term protection for their customary rights to forest resources.

In conclusion, FPP's community consultation exercise revealed that basic elements of good governance, including informed participation, transparency, fairness and accountability are

being undermined by the pipeline project, causing increased marginalisation of the Bagyéli within civil society in Cameroon.

Future investments to help the Bagyéli overcome this situation should concentrate on enabling them to overcome these key constraints, and supporting their wish to participate fully in Cameroon civil society without giving up their way of life. This means that mechanisms need to be developed to ensure that Bagyéli rights to their lands and way of life are recognised by wider society.

Key measures needed to move the project in the direction of improving conditions for the Bagyéli are:

- increasing the informed participation by Bagyéli communities in future pipeline consultation processes and wider issues;
- building the information base, skills, and institutional capacity of the Bagyéli to protect their interests and engage effectively with Bantu communities, local authorities and other sectors of civil society;
- developing mechanisms for constructive involvement of Bagyéli in national policy development, reform and implementation.

## Notes

<sup>1</sup> COTCO is the local subsidiary company.

<sup>2</sup> Forest Peoples Project is the UK Charitable arm of Forest Peoples Programme.

<sup>3</sup> Nelson, John, Justin Kenrick and Dorothy Jackson (2001) *Report on a Consultation with Bagyéli Pygmy communities impacted by the Chad-Cameroun oil pipeline project*. p 8.

[http://www.forestpeoples.org/documents/ifi\\_igo/ccp\\_bagyeli\\_consult\\_may01\\_eng.shtml](http://www.forestpeoples.org/documents/ifi_igo/ccp_bagyeli_consult_may01_eng.shtml).

<sup>4</sup> Recorded near Bipindi by FPP in 2001.

<sup>5</sup> Nelson et al op. cit. p. 9.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid, p. 12.

<sup>7</sup> IPP Indigenous Peoples Plan, Cameroon Portion, Volume 4. Environmental Management Plan. Houston: COTCO/Esso Pipeline Company.

<sup>8</sup> Planet Survey and CODEBABI (2000) Rapport de l'Enquête sur le Degré d'Implication des Peuples Autochtones dans le cycle du projet Pipeline Tchad-Cameroun. Yaounde: Planet Survey. Also see Griffiths T and M Colchester (2000) Indigenous Peoples, Forests and The World Bank: Policies and Practice. Workshop Report, Washington D.C. 9-10 May 2000. Moreton-in-Marsh: Forest Peoples Programme. Also see Colchester, M (23 October 2002) Written evidence submitted to the House of Commons International Development Committee. [www.forestpeoples.org/briefings](http://www.forestpeoples.org/briefings). Also see [http://www.forestpeoples.org/documents/africa/chad\\_cameroun\\_pipeline\\_fpp\\_let\\_uk\\_sec\\_state\\_12dec02.shtml](http://www.forestpeoples.org/documents/africa/chad_cameroun_pipeline_fpp_let_uk_sec_state_12dec02.shtml)

<sup>9</sup> For example, local Bagyéli builders are not consulted about new designs for Bagyéli houses that the IPP is to construct for them.

<sup>10</sup> Quote from IPP p 49. See Inspection Panel (2003). The World Bank (2003) The Inspection Panel Investigation Report. Cameroon: Petroleum Development Pipeline Project and Petroleum Environmental Capacity Enhancement. Corrigendum. Washington DC: Inspection Panel.

<sup>11</sup> Nelson et. al. op cit.

<sup>12</sup> June 2007. World Bank Orientation Meeting on its Indigenous Peoples Policy OP 4.10. Yaounde. Also see: Independent Community Guide to the World Bank's Indigenous Peoples Policy (OP/BP 4.10) [http://www.forestpeoples.org/documents/ifi\\_igo/wb\\_4\\_10\\_guide\\_may07\\_eng.pdf](http://www.forestpeoples.org/documents/ifi_igo/wb_4_10_guide_may07_eng.pdf).

<sup>13</sup> FEDEC staff previously working on IPP measures have moved, and now work for RAPID instead. Rapid has just signed a new contract with FEDEC to implement the IPP, to the surprise of many local stakeholders, including other NGOs that had been working with Bagyéli in the pipeline zone for many years, but who were not asked to bid.

<sup>14</sup> Nouah, Jeanne, J Gwodog, F Ndiomgbwa, A Noahmvogo, C Mbatsogo, B Tchoumba and A D Amougou (2003) 'Chad-Cameroun: Pushed by the Pipeline'. IN: FPP and TebTebba (2003) *Extracting Promises: Indigenous Peoples, Extractive Industries and The World Bank*. Moreton-in-Marsh: Forest Peoples Programme, and Buguo City: Tebtebba.

[http://www.forestpeoples.org/documents/prv\\_sector/eir/eir\\_internat\\_wshop\\_cameroun\\_case\\_eng.pdf](http://www.forestpeoples.org/documents/prv_sector/eir/eir_internat_wshop_cameroun_case_eng.pdf)

<sup>15</sup> Changes to project started after first year in response to community project evaluation in 2003.

<sup>16</sup> PSEDD.

<sup>17</sup> See Nouah et. al. op. cit.

<sup>18</sup> Third degree *chefferies* are the lowest level of officially-recognised villages in Cameroon.

<sup>19</sup> PNPD 2003. République du Cameroun/MINEF (2003) *Etude sectorielle des impacts sociaux et environnementaux du programme sectoriel forêts et environnement. Rapport principal*. Yaoundé : République du Cameroun. République du Cameroun (2003b) *Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper*. Yaounde : République du Cameroun

<sup>20</sup> Extract from speech of Bipindi *sous-préfet*, Saah Bagyéli community.

<sup>21</sup> Outlined above.

<sup>22</sup> Mainly from directing investments into existing educational and health institutions already targeting support to Bagyéli.

<sup>23</sup> June 2007, op. cit.

<sup>24</sup> Now their main villages are secure, communities may wish to extend discussions about other areas where competing claims prevail.

<sup>25</sup> After other participatory mapping with local Bagyéli by FPP and CED between 2001 and 2003, in 2005 the Government of Cameroon recognized Bagyéli customary rights to hunt and gather in areas of the park which overlapped their traditional territories. This was done via recognition in the government park management plan. The park, which was founded through World Bank GEF funding, was established as one element of the environmental compensation programme for the pipeline project.

<sup>26</sup> FEDEC has not yet joined Bipindi Platform discussions.

<sup>27</sup> Although the government has not yet granted them *chefferie* status which would confer a broader range of rights and responsibilities, and enable them to secure better access to health and education services in their locales.

<sup>28</sup> June 2007, op. cit.

<sup>29</sup> Republic of Cameroon (2003) *Indigenous People Development Plan for the Forest and Environmental Sector Programme*. Yaounde: MINFOF. Republic of Cameroon (2003b) *Indigenous Peoples ("pygmy") Development Plan for the Forest and Environment Sector Programme. Final draft report*. August 2003. Ministry of Environment and Forestry. Republic of Cameroon (2003c) *Indigenous Peoples ("pygmy") Development Plan for the Participatory Community Development Programme. Final report*. June 2003. Ministry of Economic Affairs, Programming and Regional Development.

<sup>30</sup> For example, World Bank funding to environment and forest sector in the Congo Basin is pushing implementation of IPDPs in Gabon and DRC.

<sup>31</sup> Staffed partly by FEDEC staff who were previously involved in FEDEC's projects.

<sup>32</sup> June 2007, op. cit.

<sup>33</sup> Nelson et. al., op. cit.





The Chad-Cameroon Oil Pipeline Project exacerbated conflicts over land in Cameroon, increasing the social and economic marginalisation of indigenous communities.

This briefing describes an FPP project which supported 20 Bagyéli communities to secure recognition for their land rights as part of their ongoing struggle to secure proper compensation for the oil pipeline on their lands.

Forest Peoples Programme  
1c Fosseway Centre, Stratford Road  
Moreton-in-Marsh, GL56 9NQ, UK  
Tel: +44 (0)1608 652893, fax: +44 (0)1608 652878

email: [info@forestpeoples.org](mailto:info@forestpeoples.org)  
<http://www.forestpeoples.org>