

Ministry of Vocational Training and  
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**Volunteers academy**



## **ENVIRONMENTAL ADVOCACY:**

### **Case study of the Mbankomo Subdivision in Cameroon**

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## **DEDICATION**

To my husband and son:

**AWOUNDJI René**

and

**DONGMO Cephas**

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Before this work could be made, many people played great roles and it will be ingrate for us not thanking them for their work done. As such, we extend our acknowledgement to:

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## **INTRODUCTION**

The devastating impact of climate change on our environment, both locally and globally, has necessitated urgent attention. To address this, we undertook training at the Volunteer Academy to enhance our advocacy skills for climate action. Our focus on has led us to the write a project.

This advocacy project focuses on environmental advocacy, with a specific case study on the Mbarkomo sub-division in the center Region of Cameroon. We will examine the environmental issues affecting this area and propose solutions to mitigate these problems.

Our project aims to provide a comprehensive view of environmental action, highlighting the need for collective efforts to address the growing environmental and climate crises. Through this work, we hope to contribute to a better understanding of environmental advocacy and inspire meaningful change.

Our work is therefore divided into three parts:

I. Environmental Advocacy: This section will provide an overview of environmental advocacy, its importance, and how to address climate change.

II. Case Study: Mbarkomo Subdivision - This section will delve into the specific environmental issues affecting the Mbarkomo subdivision, analyzing the problems and their impacts.

III. Propositions, Solutions, and Actions: In this section, we will propose concrete solutions and actions to mitigate the environmental issues identified in the case study, focusing on climate action and give global solutions.

# **ENVIRONMENTAL ADVOCACY**

## **A. ADVOCACY**

Advocacy refers to the act of supporting or promoting a particular cause, idea, or policy. Advocates work to influence public opinion, policies, and decisions that affect a specific group or issue.

### **i. Key Elements of Advocacy**

1. Identifying a cause: Advocates identify a specific issue or problem that they want to address.
2. Building a case: Advocates gather information, data, and personal stories to build a compelling case for their cause.
3. Influencing decision-makers: Advocates work to influence decision-makers, such as politicians, business leaders, or community leaders, to support their cause.
4. Mobilizing public support: Advocates work to raise awareness and mobilize public support for their cause.
5. Promoting systemic change: Advocates aim to create long-term, systemic change that benefits their cause.

### **ii. Effective Advocacy Skills**

1. Communication: Clearly articulating the cause and its importance.
2. Strategic planning: Developing a well-thought-out plan to achieve advocacy goals.
3. Building relationships: Establishing strong relationships with decision-makers and other stakeholders.

4. Persistence: Continuously pushing for change, even in the face of obstacles.

### **iii. Examples of Advocacy**

1. Environmental advocacy: Advocating for policies to protect the environment and address climate change.
2. Gender equality advocacy: Gender advocacy work to challenge and change discriminatory.
3. Health advocacy: Advocating for access to healthcare and health equity.
4. Human rights advocacy: Advocating for the rights and dignity of marginalized communities.
5. Education advocacy: Advocating for quality education and educational equity.

## **B. Climate change ADVOCACY**

The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) of the United Nations include a specific goal dedicated to combating climate change, known as Goal 13. Goal 13 aims to take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts through several key objectives:

- Strengthening resilience and adaptive capacity to climate-related hazards and natural disasters.
- Integrating climate change measures into national policies, strategies, and planning.
- Improving education, awareness, and individual and institutional capacities regarding climate change mitigation, adaptation, and impact reduction.
- Mobilizing financial resources to support developing countries in their efforts to address climate change.

By achieving Goal 13, we can mitigate the effects of climate change and promote sustainable development worldwide.

Environmental or Climate change advocacy refers to the actions taken by individuals, organizations, and communities to promote awareness, understanding, and action on climate change. Advocates work to influence public opinion, policies, and decisions that affect the environment and climate.

#### i. **Goals of Climate Change Advocacy**

1. **Raise awareness:** Educate the public about the causes, effects, and solutions to climate change.
2. **Influence policy:** Advocate for policies that reduce greenhouse gas emissions, promote renewable energy, and support climate resilience.
3. **Promote individual action:** Encourage individuals to adopt sustainable lifestyles, reduce their carbon footprint, and support climate-friendly practices.
4. **Support climate justice:** Advocate for the rights and interests of vulnerable communities, including low-income neighborhoods, indigenous populations, and small-island developing states.

#### ii. **Strategies for Climate Change Advocacy**

1. **Public education and awareness:** Organize events, campaigns, and media outreach to educate the public about climate change.
2. **Policy advocacy:** Meet with policymakers, submit public comments, and participate in hearings to influence climate policy.
3. **Grassroots organizing:** Build coalitions, mobilize communities, and support local climate initiatives.

4. **Social media and online activism:** Utilize social media platforms, online petitions, and email campaigns to raise awareness and mobilize action.

5. **Collaboration with influencers and celebrities:** Partner with influencers and celebrities to amplify the climate message and reach new audiences.

### **iii. Effective Climate Change Advocacy Tactics**

1. **Use clear and compelling messaging:** Communicate the urgency and importance of climate action in a way that resonates with diverse audiences.

2. **Build a strong narrative:** Use storytelling techniques to illustrate the human impacts of climate change and the benefits of climate action.

3. **Leverage visual content:** Utilize images, videos, and graphics to convey climate information and inspire action.

4. **Engage in respectful dialogue:** Encourage constructive conversation and debate to build bridges and find common ground.

5. **Celebrate successes and progress:** Acknowledge and celebrate climate achievements to build momentum and motivation.

### **iv. Notable Climate Change Advocacy Campaigns**

1. **Fridays for Future:** A global movement of young people striking for climate action.

2. Extinction Rebellion: A non-violent direct-action movement demanding urgent climate action.

3. **The Climate Reality Project:** A global initiative founded by Al Gore to educate and mobilize climate leaders. We were fortunate to participate in this project in 2021.

## **v. Challenges Facing Climate Change Advocacy**

1. **Climate denial and misinformation:** Overcoming false or misleading information about climate change.
2. **Limited public awareness and engagement:** Encouraging more people to take action on climate change.
3. **Inadequate policy and political will:** Pushing for stronger climate policies and greater political commitment.
4. **Climate fatigue and burnout:** Managing the emotional and psychological impacts of climate advocacy work.

Climate change and gender advocacy are closely linked, as women and girls are disproportionately affected by climate change.

## **vi. Climate Change Impacts on Women and Girls**

1. **Increased vulnerability:** Women and girls are more vulnerable to climate-related disasters, such as hurricanes, floods, and droughts.
2. **Limited access to resources:** Women often have limited access to resources, including land, credit, and technology, which can exacerbate their vulnerability to climate change.
3. **Caregiving responsibilities:** Women often bear the primary responsibility for caregiving, which can increase their vulnerability to climate-related stressors.
4. **Health impacts:** Climate change can exacerbate existing health disparities, particularly for women and girls.

## **vii. Gender Advocacy in Climate Change**

1. **Promoting gender equality:** Advocating for gender equality is essential for addressing the disproportionate impacts of climate change on women and girls.

2. **Increasing women's participation:** Encouraging women's participation in climate decision-making processes can help ensure that their needs and perspectives are considered.
3. **Supporting women's climate resilience:** Providing support for women's climate resilience initiatives, such as climate-smart agriculture and disaster risk reduction, can help reduce their vulnerability to climate change.
4. **Addressing climate-related violence:** Addressing climate-related violence, including gender-based violence, is essential for promoting women's safety and security.

#### **viii. Key Strategies for Effective Gender Advocacy in Climate Change**

1. **Mainstreaming gender:** Mainstreaming gender into climate policies and programs can help ensure that gender considerations are integrated into all aspects of climate decision-making.
2. **Supporting women's organizations:** Supporting women's organizations and networks can help amplify women's voices and perspectives in climate decision-making processes.
3. **Promoting climate education and awareness:** Promoting climate education and awareness can help increase women's knowledge and understanding of climate change, enabling them to make informed decisions about their lives and communities.
4. **Advocating for climate finance:** Advocating for climate finance that prioritizes women's needs and perspectives can help ensure that women have access to the resources they need to adapt to climate change.

Advocates play a crucial role in addressing climate change by promoting awareness, influencing policy, and mobilizing action. Here are some key roles of advocates in climate change:

➤ Raising Awareness

1. Educating the public: Advocates inform people about climate change causes, effects, and solutions.
2. Media engagement: Advocates work with media outlets to share climate stories, research, and expert opinions.
3. Community outreach: Advocates engage with local communities, organizations, and businesses to promote climate awareness.

➤ Influencing Policy

1. Lobbying governments: Advocates push for climate policies, laws, and regulations that support emission reductions and adaptation.
2. Participating in international negotiations: Advocates represent civil society in global climate talks, ensuring that voices of vulnerable communities are heard.
3. Supporting climate litigation: Advocates may support legal cases that challenge governments and corporations to act on climate change.

➤ Mobilizing Action

1. Organizing campaigns: Advocates launch campaigns to promote renewable energy, energy efficiency, and sustainable land use.
2. Building coalitions: Advocates collaborate with diverse stakeholders, including businesses, NGOs, and community groups, to amplify their impact.
3. Supporting climate activism: Advocates empower and support grassroots activists, climate strikers, and other movements demanding climate action.

➤ Supporting Climate Justice

## CASE STUDY, MBANKOMO SUBDIVISION

1. Amplifying marginalized voices: Advocates ensure that the concerns and perspectives of vulnerable communities, including indigenous peoples, women, and low-income populations, are represented in climate decision-making.
2. Promoting equitable climate policies: Advocates push for climate policies that prioritize the needs of marginalized communities and ensure a just transition to a low-carbon economy.

### ➤ Providing Expertise

1. Research and analysis: Advocates conduct research, analyze data, and provide expert insights to inform climate policy and decision-making.
2. Technical support: Advocates offer technical assistance to governments, businesses, and communities to support the development and implementation of climate solutions.

By playing these roles, advocates are essential in driving climate action, promoting climate justice, and supporting the transition to a sustainable, low-carbon future. Advocates play a vital role in promoting gender equality by challenging discriminatory norms, policies, and practices, and promoting women's empowerment.

Mbankomo is a town located in the Centre Region of Cameroon. It's situated about 30 kilometers west of Yaoundé, the capital city of Cameroon.

## **A. HUMAN INFLUENCE ON THE ENVIRONMENT AT MBANKOMO**

### **i. Exploitation enterprises:**

Amongst the many enterprises found in this zone, the following enterprises draw our attention. Here are some examples of exploitation enterprises that could be located in Mbarkomo:

**-In the construction industry, Arab Contractor:** this enterprise exploits the stone resources from the surrounding mountains to meet the demand of its public contracts. The Egyptian builder maintains its activities thanks to the region's natural resources.

**-Cana Bois:** this other hand, specializes in wood exploitation and processing. Its factory, located on the Binguela road.

### **ii. urbanization and proximity of Mbarkomo town to Yaoundé:**

As a close town to Yaoundé, Mbarkomo is particularly vulnerable to the effects of climate change. The rapid growth of Yaoundé has led to an influx of people seeking new areas for habitation, resulting in the expansion of settlements into nearby forests.

### **iii. Limited economic opportunities:**

In our country, where economic opportunities are limited, many people in Mbarkomo rely on secondary activities such as logging and woodwork to make a living. Unfortunately, these activities have a devastating impact on our environment.

#### **iv. Poor leaving condition**

The people in the Mbarkomo zone live mostly out of agricultural products. As a result, people do not earn a lot and have less means to afford for good living conditions. For this reason, we fine people building in very risky and swampy areas which are not conducive to build on arrears.

#### **v. Power Outages in Mbarkomo Zone**

The Bangkomo Zone in Cameroon is grappling with a severe power shortage, caused by the enterprise responsible for providing electricity to households. The frequent outages have far-reaching consequences on the environment and residents. The effects are multifaceted.

### **B. EFFECTS OF HUMAN INFLUENCE ON ENVIRONMENT**

The exploitation of natural resources by enterprises has severely damaged the environment, making Bangkomo less livable than it was in previous years. The consequences of climate change, deforestation, and environmental degradation are having a devastating impact on the town and its inhabitants.

**1. Increased atmospheric temperature:** Without electricity, households that use electric cookers resort to firewood or charcoal for cooking. those using electric to in light their homes or enterprises are forced to use traditional lamps or candle there by releasing excessive heat and pollutants into the atmosphere.

**2. Widespread deforestation:** this urbanization has caused widespread deforestation in Bangkomo, as trees are cleared to make way for new homes, businesses, and infrastructure. The increased demand for wood has also fueled the growth of industries such as plywood and furniture manufacturing, further exacerbating deforestation.

**3. Excessive noise pollution:** Exploitation enterprises in the Bangkomo zone, are causing significant environmental problems. These enterprises, responsible for extracting stones for construction, are generating excessive noise pollution, affecting the local indigenous population the most. The noise from explosives used to crack stones not only disrupts daily life but also causes earth tremors, putting nearby homes at risk of structural damage. As a result, residents in the surrounding area face insecurity and constant disturbance.

**4. Cutting down of trees:** The constant cutting down of trees to fuel these industries is not being offset by reforestation efforts, leading to widespread deforestation. This has severe consequences, including rising temperatures, increased flooding, and intense rainfall events.

**5. Frequent and severe weather:** The environmental degradation in Mbankomo is alarming, and the effects of climate change are being felt acutely. We are experiencing more frequent and severe weather events, which is a stark reminder of the urgent need to address these issues and work towards a more sustainable future.

**6. Water scarcity:** Households relying on electric pumps for their wells are forced to abandon them, opting for manual alternatives, which are

often time-consuming and labor-intensive. Women, who bear the primary responsibility for household chores, are disproportionately affected. They must travel long distances to fetch water, adding to their already considerable workload.

This environmental issue demands attention, as it significantly impacts the quality of life for the people of Mbankomo and threatens the longevity of their homes.

## **PROPOSITIONS, SOLUTIONS, AND ACTIONS**

It's essential to recognize that climate change is a global problem requiring collective action. The consequences of climate change, such as rising temperatures, do not discriminate and affect everyone, regardless of their location or background.

Therefore, it's crucial for individuals, communities, organizations, and governments to work together to mitigate the effects of climate change and create a more sustainable future for all.

As a young Cameroonian witnessing the environmental degradation in MBankomo, I've taken it upon myself to become an advocate for climate action. My mission starts with crafting advocacy messages aimed at:

- Convincing individuals and communities to adopt eco-friendly practices**
- Educating people about the devastating impacts of environmental neglect**
- Denouncing malpractices that harm our environment, locally and globally**

Through my advocacy, I hope to inspire change, raise awareness, and promote sustainable living in my community, Cameroon, and beyond.

### **i. Operation one home one tree:**

“Operation One Home One Tree” is a worldwide community-driven initiative aiming to promote environmental sustainability, community engagement, and tree planting. The project seeks to unite individuals, communities, and organizations globally to make a positive impact on the environment. “Operation One Home One Tree” is a community-based initiative aimed at promoting environmental

sustainability, enhancing community engagement, and fostering a culture of tree planting and care.

planting a tree for every home, compensating for the loss of forest cover. Since the land can't be restored to its original forest state, we can utilize the compounds of homes to plant individual trees. This collective effort can help restore our degraded environment and promote a greener, more sustainable future. By integrating trees into urban planning, we can mitigate the effects of climate change and create an eco-friendlier community.

### **Goals of Operation One Home One Tree**

1. To plant at least one tree per household in the community.
2. To raise awareness about the importance of trees in maintaining a healthy environment.
3. To promote community involvement and ownership in environmental conservation.
4. To improve the aesthetic appeal of the community through tree planting.
5. To mobilize community members to participate in tree planting activities.
6. To educate community members on the benefits of tree planting, including climate change mitigation, soil erosion prevention, and air quality improvement.
7. To identify and allocate suitable locations for tree planting in the community.
8. To establish a system for monitoring and maintaining the planted trees.
9. To collaborate with local authorities, schools, and other stakeholders to promote the project's objectives.

### **Expected Outcomes of Operation One Home One Tree**

1. Increased community awareness and participation in environmental conservation.

2. Improved environmental quality through reduced air pollution and increased oxygen production.
3. Enhanced community aesthetics and property values.
4. Strengthened community bonds and social cohesion through collaborative tree planting activities.

By scaling up "Operation One Home One Tree" to a global level, we can make a significant impact on the environment and promote community engagement and sustainability worldwide.

#### ii. **Operation Road refreshment:**

To enhance road refreshment and environmental sustainability by planting trees along the roads of our country. The urban heat effect is a significant concern, particularly on tar roads. When the sun shines directly on these roads, they absorb and radiate heat, contributing to increased temperatures.

Planting trees alongside roads can help mitigate this issue. By providing shade, trees reduce the amount of direct sunlight that reaches the tar road:

#### **Objectives Operation Road refreshment**

1. **Improve Road Safety:** Plant trees at strategic locations to reduce the risk of accidents, provide shade, and create natural barriers.
2. **Environmental Sustainability:** Promote eco-friendly practices, reduce carbon footprint, and increase oxygen production through tree planting.
3. **Community Engagement:** Foster community involvement, raise awareness about road safety and environmental conservation, and encourage collective responsibility.

#### **Benefits Operation Road refreshment \***

1. **Improved Air Quality:** Trees absorb pollutants, reduce carbon dioxide, and produce oxygen, improving air quality for commuters.

**2. Enhanced aesthetic appeal:** Trees along roads can enhance the scenic beauty of our country's landscapes.

**1. Reduce heat emission into the atmosphere and Lower the road surface temperature:** the panting of trees along the road side is a strategy that can help combat urban heat and enhance the overall livability of our cities.

**iii. Educate and inform the younger generation**

To effectively combat climate change, it's crucial to educate and inform the younger generation about its devastating impacts. This can be achieved through environmental education and awareness programs.

One effective methodology is the creation of environmental clubs in primary and secondary schools. These clubs bring together teachers and learners to:

- Advocate for environmental protection
- Practice sustainable habits
- Rebuild ecosystems through tree planting and other initiatives

By engaging young people in environmental activism, we can shape a new generation of climate change leaders and advocates, equipped to drive positive change and protect our planet's future.

**iv. Door-to-door sensitization**

Another effective method for climate change advocacy is door-to-door sensitization, targeting decision-makers, community leaders, and the general public. By educating these influencers, they can, in turn, raise awareness among their constituents.

**v. Empowering indigenous communities**

Empowering indigenous communities through environmental education is crucial. By adopting good practices and changing their behaviour, they can

mitigate the effects of climate change. It's essential to work with local communities to develop sustainable solutions and promote environmental stewardship.

vi. **Targeting decision maker is also essential.**

Decision maker like the government must consider collective interest than personal interest. As such each decision taken regarding climate change must be viewing a long-term perspective.

## CONCLUSION

The environmental issues observed in the Bangkomo zone are just a microcosm of the larger climate change problems faced by Cameroon and the world at large.

It's essential to acknowledge that human actions, rather than natural factors, are primarily responsible for climate change. Our daily habits, though seemingly insignificant, collectively have severe consequences for our health and environment.

It's essential to recognize that climate change is a global problem requiring collective action. The consequences of climate change, such as rising temperatures, do not discriminate and affect everyone, regardless of their location or background.

While our efforts to mitigate climate change are crucial, we acknowledge that they are not a definitive solution. Our goal is to contribute to achieving the United Nations' objective of limiting global warming to 1.5°C or less than 2°C by 2035.

We remain hopeful that our activism and initiatives will be recognized and supported by decision-makers, governments, and local populations. Climate change is a global concern that affects us all, and collective action is necessary to address its far-reaching impacts.