



**– International Fund for Agricultural Development –
– Identifying and sharing innovation in Western and Central Africa –**

– Small-scale chicken-feed production –

I. Context

1. Name of the innovation

Small-scale chicken-feed production

2. Country – Region

Cameroon: Komdamba village, Lékié Department, Central Province

3. Organization

Support Service for Local Development Initiatives in Cameroon (SAILD) and Association for the Promotion of African Community-Driven Initiatives (APICA)

4. Who is the innovator?

SAILD and APICA

5. Actors involved

Farmers, SAILD and APICA

6. Starting date

1992

7. Type of innovation

Technical

II. Key concepts

8. Summary

Komdamba is the site of an experiment in the on-farm production of feed by farmers, for whom it is a way of diversifying their activities by rearing poultry in order to improve their socio-economic condition. The activity enables them to produce at a minimal cost and thus to become leaders in the local poultry market. It is supported by two local NGOs, SAILD and APICA, in terms of the organization of farmers, the building of technical skills, finance and materials. There are now several working poultry farms belonging to such farmers, who are organized into common initiative groups and draw considerable income from their activities. Each group member has his or her own hen coop in which he or she rears 300 to 500 broilers per batch, three times a year. This organization enables the farmers to improve their production and supply their product on a contractual basis to wholesale purchasers from the various markets of Yaoundé, the capital.

9. What problems does this innovation seek to solve?

- High price of feed on the market
- Economic disadvantages compared with production in towns (due to the high selling price of the farmers' chickens)

10. Factors for successful replication

- Low cost of initial investment in materials (wood, matting, land) for building poultry rearing structures
- Possibility for rural inhabitants to produce some of the inputs (cereals, tubers) for feeding chickens at a minimal cost
- Small-scale poultry farming is a short-cycle investment with the possibility of ensuring a steady, short-term income
- Poultry farming produces good manure for fertilizing fields

11. Main results

It is calculated that in rearing a batch of 250 broiler fowls, allowing for a realistic mortality rate of 5 per cent, profits can be doubled when the farmer produces his or her own feed from maize and soybeans grown on his or her own land. Using farm-produced feed, the cost price of a chicken is about CFAF 1,400, compared with more than CFAF 1,800 when the feed is purchased. In Cameroon's poultry sector, when the production cost of a chicken is CFAF 1,400, it leaves the farmer considerable room for manoeuvre, for he or she can sell it for CFAF 1,800 and make a substantial profit (CFAF 400 per unit). It should be noted that at CFAF 1,800 per unit, middlemen travel out to the villages to purchase the chickens, which they then sell in the towns at between CFAF 2,300 and 2,500. This makes the farmer's job easier, for he or she can then concentrate on production and not lose time with marketing – and the farmers of Komdamba have thus negotiated contracts with these middlemen. Small-scale poultry farming also provides the farmers with droppings, which are excellent organic fertilizer for their fields. The poultry reared in this first set of batches on four farms produced about 8 t of manure. If the farmers had sold the manure at CFAF 10 per kilogram, they would have made an additional profit of CFAF 80,000.

12. Target group(s)

Small farmers; mixed farmers; and women

13. Difficulties encountered

14. Financial aspects

The economic performance of all the farms taken together is interesting. Out of 1,728 chicks, 1,678 finished chickens were sold for a total of CFAF 3,011,100. Total expenses were CFAF 2,503,820, giving a total profit of CFAF 507,208 for the four farms, or an average income of CFAF 126,820 per farm for 45 to 50 days' activity. This is an attractive proposition for farmers, who devote only about one hour per day to it, so that it does not impinge on their other farm activities.

III. Technical aspects

15. Making the feed

1. *Material and equipment required:* a maize mill, a clean space (a smooth cement floor or a plastic sheet), shovels, buckets, a small set of scales if possible and a rotating drum or large saucepan (to cook or grill the soybeans).

2. *Formulas:* the formulas recommended to the farmers are calculated according to the Pearson Square and combine maize, soybeans and a 10 per cent commercial concentrate for vitamins, essential amino acids and microminerals. The maize and soybeans are produced by the farmers, while the 10 per cent concentrate is provided by the programme.

3. *Processing materials before mixing:* before they are mixed, the raw materials are processed by cooking the soybeans, drying the cooked soybeans, and grinding the soybeans and maize, either finely or coarsely, depending on the present stage in the chickens' growth.

4. *Mixing techniques:* on the ground and in a rotating drum.

5. *Monitoring the farms:* the farms are regularly monitored, with three phases in this process: (i) supervision of the early development of the chicks with assistance during administration of medicines and/or vaccines on the first day; (ii) a mid-term visit to the farms on the 21st day to assess the performance of the chickens; and (iii) a visit to the farms on the 42nd day and establishment of the definitive balance sheet for the batch.

Four types of data sheet are used for this purpose: (i) the farm data sheet, which the farmer fills in every day until the end of the rearing period; (ii) the weekly monitoring data sheet to collect zoo-economic data on the livestock being reared; (iii) the accounting data sheet to list all expenses attributable to the batch being reared; and (iv) the preventive health care data sheet to provide the farmer with daily guidance on the treatment and vaccinations to be administered to the chickens.

IV. Further information

16. Key contacts

Name	Organization	E-mail
Marie-Martine Yobol Director, SAILD-CDDR Regional Coordinator, SICAC	CDDR/SAILD BP 11955 Yaoundé Tel/Fax (237) 221 26 88	cddr@saild.org

17. Internet link

<http://www.sicac.org>

18. Key documents (document title + link or contact or address)