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## ACP-EU Development Minerals Programme Implemented in partnership with UNDP

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### RETURN TO WORK (RTW) PLAN

### PROGRESS REPORT

*An initiative of the African, Caribbean and Pacific Group of States, financed by the European Union and United Nations Development Programme, and implemented by UNDP.*



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## I. RETURN-TO-WORK PLANS

Return to Work projects are a valuable mechanism for workshop participants' personal and professional development. As part of your sponsorship, you were required to develop a return-to-work plan on a project you would undertake on your return, applying the knowledge and skills gained from workshop to influence change.

This follow-up on the progress of implementation of the return-to-work plan will be used to determine the most successful projects; and subsequently offer a number of selected participants the opportunity to attend future training events.

## II. REPORTING STRUCTURE FOR RETURN-TO-WORK PLANS

To facilitate ease of reporting on the progress of your return to work project, the structure below outlines the key project elements that need to be covered. **Please submit the progress update on the Return to Work Project (RWP)** using the structure provided below.

GENERAL INFORMATION
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<b>Brief description of the project:</b>  In Cameroon nowadays, the demand for clay products especially stoves have being growing steadily in the big cities with huge demands from Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) working with refugees and on Climate Change Initiatives. Clay is transformed into; beads, flower jars, pots, tiles, necklace, bricks and stoves. This activity is one of the main economic activity in Bamessing and involves youths, women and men providing them with self-employment. Women and girls are mostly engage in beads necklace, flower jars and clay pots production. It is a lucrative business especially for girls who drop out from school as a result of pregnancy.  The necklaces that are produced play an important role in the design of the costume of the North West and Western regions of Cameroon. The costume designed with beads are used for marriage and other traditional ceremonies. There is also an increasing used internationally to show case the cultural

identity of Cameroon. Bricks and tiles produced are used locally for construction and decoration of houses.

Our field survey indicate that artisanal mining and transformation into craft works contributes about 4000 USA dollars to a producer's household annually. This accounting to about 75% of household income where 25% comes from farming. The activity also contributes in the conservation of the culture and traditions, Tourism and jobs creation.

Despite the enormous contribution of this activity in improving the livelihood of the Bamessing community and Cameroon as whole, very little attention is paid by development actors and the government in promoting the sector thus leaving the sector with very little external support and with challenges such as; low production to meet up with market demands, ignorance in paying attention on clay works as an income generation activity by community members, poor quality of products, limited skills in clay crafts works, absence of price standardization, ignorance on health and safety issues, Environmental destruction and proper marketing of their products.

In my Return Work Plan I worked closely with artisanal clay miners and craft producers organising them into legalised groups. Two groups were legalised. The goal being to help them identify funding opportunities, create a conducive environment to work and to collaborate effectively with the Local Government (the Council), Sector Ministries such as; Ministry of Industries, Mines and Technological Development whose strategy is to promote the exploration, evaluation and the exploitation of the mineral wealth of the nation, Ministry of Small and Medium-sized Enterprises, and Handicrafts whose strategy is to Promote and Protect Small and Medium Size Enterprises, and the Ministry of Environment, Protection of Nature and Sustainable Development whose strategy is to promote and protect Biodiversity and the Environment.

I believe that with effective collaboration and the formation of synergies with the above local Institutions, it can be very beneficial in promoting the value chain of clay products in generating wealth, tourism and employment for the population of Cameroon as a whole. This ties with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG 1, 5, 8 & 15), Africa Mining Vision; "Transparent, equitable and optimal exploitation of mineral resources to underpin broad-based sustainable growth and socio-economic development" and the ACP-EU Development Minerals and Materials Program.

#### **What were the expected outcomes and what outcomes did you achieve?**

##### **Expected outcomes**

- ✓ Organization of artisanal miners and craft producers into legalized groups
- ✓ Creating an awareness on Health and safety procedures
- ✓ Reduced environmental degradation caused by clay exploitation

##### **Outcomes achieved**

- ✓ Two crafts producers groups legalized,
- ✓ An increase in group memberships,

- ✓ Awareness on health and safety procedures at work,
- ✓ An interest from women and girl to engage on clay craft work as an income generating activity.

**What were the expected outputs and what outputs did you achieve?** Please be specific. For example, if you held a workshop or presentation to share the knowledge you gained during the training workshop: Where was the workshop held? When? How many people attended? What was the gender balance? Please also attach as an appendix any photos or other media.

Two sensitization meetings have been held in the groups and one field visit to the exploitation sites. Two constituents meetings, two meetings on legalisation formalities and four follow-up meeting all in Bamessing village. Prior to the EU-ACP Training workshop, I had started working with one group in Bamessing Village helping the group to obtain a legal status. Ten (10) persons were present in one of the meeting with three (3) women and seven (7) men, all youths. In another meeting 15 persons were present, 5 women and 10 men all still youths. See a photograph on one of the meeting at Fig. 4.

**Please describe the key partnerships and collaborations that you established in your country as well as any joint collaboration with other countries**

With this Return To work Plan, I have been able to establish a collaboration with the Delegations of Mines and Technological Development both at the Regional and Divisional level, Divisional Delegation of Environment, Protection of Nature and Sustainable Development, Traditional Authority of Bamessing and they have all been supporting the project. Negotiations are ongoing with Ndop Council on possibilities of supporting the project.

Contacts and negotiation are also going on with the Ndu Council on possibilities of initiating the developing of the value chain of basalt stones and sand in their Municipality. Ntaba village in Ndu Municipality has the potential of supplying river sand for civil engineering works in the whole of the Sub Division and this is the only community with sand in the Sub-Division.

I have equally identify the potential to link specifically the production of stoves in Bamessing with climate change initiatives. The clay stoves produced in Bamessing have the potential of reducing deforestation which is a contributing factor to climate change considering that about 70% of households in Cameroon rely mostly on the use of the three stone open fire space for cooking (Njong, A.M. & Atemnkeng T.J, 2011). This initiative is also gaining ground with Non-Governmental Organization interested in climate change mitigation and adaptation.

I am also an Australia Award winner and having participated on a Continuous Professional Development course in Australia and South Africa on artisanal and small scale mining, my network opportunities have widen-up beyond Cameroon. The award also gave me the opportunity to belong to a newly created network of Australian awardees called Association of Managing Mine Closures Ambassadors. I recently completed an online course organized by the World Bank, Columbia Center

on Sustainable Investment and Natural Resource Governance Institute which furthermore empowered me in the mining sector and Developing Minerals and Materials in particular.

**What indicators of success have you achieved since the start of implementation?** (Describe the indicators of success in relation to the expected outputs and outcomes)

- ✓ Legalization of two groups have been achieved and this shows the level of commitment among members paving a window of opportunities for collaboration and support from funding organizations. (Legalization certificates available).
- ✓ Increase in group membership indicated by attendance list. Clay producers and miners now understand the importance of belonging to a group and women and girls are engaging in clay works as an income generating activity.
- ✓ Awareness on environment, health and safety at work indicated by their responses in environment, health and safety issues.

**What strategic opportunities have you acted upon that have contributed to the continued success of your project?** (include linkages to sub-regional and regional agendas)

**What opportunities opened up for you personally as a result of your RWP?**

SEED provides consulting services to Local Government Institutions and recently I worked with the Ndu Council in the North West Region of Cameroon, to update the Council Development Plan. The Council Development Plan takes in to consideration the natural resources in the council area that can be used to harness wealth and employment in the council area. Being the Developing Minerals and material fellow, I was able to incorporate basalt stones and sand into the Council Development Plan. This will eventually be a future project for the council.

Negotiations are ongoing with the North West Development Authority (MIDENO) for trainings in the Agriculture production basins in the North West Region on the importance of using improved stoves as a climate change mitigation and adaptation strategy. This will be another window of opportunity for the Bamessing Clay Producers group initiated for the marketing of their stoves.

**Please explain any problems encountered during implementation of your project, highlighting any deviations from the project plans** (Describe the solutions sought for the problems and corrective actions undertaken for the deviations)

- ✓ Some artisanal miners and crafts producers are not willing to belong to a group. A solution for such a situation will be continuous sensitization on the benefits of working as a group.
- ✓ Transport and logistics for frequent follow-up of field activities. An envisage solution will be for the service provider organization (SEED) to seek for funding.

**What specific actions have you undertaken to ensure sustainability of your project?**

Follow-up of group's activities every month through phone calls and field visits after every two months.

**Please describe any future actions in the table below**

ACTION PLAN							
Period Activities	Month 1	Month 2	Month 3	Month 4	Month 5	Month 6	Month 7
<b>Activity 1:</b>	Identification of two clay producers and miner groups in Bamessing Community.						
<b>Activity 2:</b>		Legalization of more clay producers and two clay miner groups.					
<b>Activity 3:</b>			Training on Environment, Health and safety procedures.				
<b>Activity 4:</b>				Training and follow up of four Clay producers groups on book keeping and Marketing of their produce			
<b>Activity 5:</b>					Formation of a Clay Producer Cooperative (Using the		

					four existing groups).		
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**NB:**

1. Please attach any evidence of commendation/award/certificate received as a result of implementing your return-to-work plan

**III. SUBMISSION OF THE PROGRESS UPDATE OF THE RETURN-TO-WORK PLAN**

The progress update of the Return to Work plan should be sent to:

[development.minerals@undp.org](mailto:development.minerals@undp.org).

**Appendix**



**Fig 1:** Neckless made from clay by women in Bamessing





**Fig 2:** Traditional attire worn with the neckless shown above when there are festivals



**Fig 3:** Assorted clay products in Bamessing





**Fig 4:** Meeting with clay producer's group



**Fig 5:** Field visit to clay production sites



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**Fig 6: Clay stoves ready for the market**