

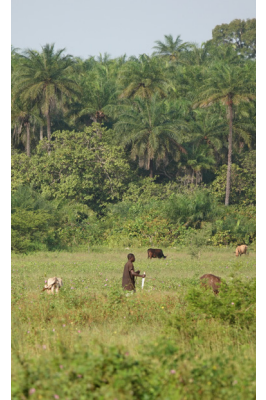


FOR AN AFRICAN CIVIL SOCIETY

AT THE HEART OF ENVIRONMENTAL ACTION

**CAPITALIZATION OF SMALL - SCALE INITIATIVES
PROGRAMME (PPI)**

20 YEARS OF SUPPORT FOR
NATURE CONSERVATION (2006 - 2025)



PPI

SMALL-SCALE INITIATIVES PROGRAMME (PPI)

**PROTECT
PARTICIPATE
INNOVATE**



GLOSSARY

In this brochure, the following terms refer to:

“PPI”:

Small-Scale Initiatives Programme
 (“Programme de Petites Initiatives”)

“CSO”:

Civil society organisation
 (charity, NGO, foundation, etc.).

CREDITS:

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FOR AN AFRICAN CIVIL SOCIETY

AT THE HEART OF
ENVIRONMENTAL ACTION

For 20 years, the Small - Scale Initiatives Programme (PPI) has been supporting civil society in West and Central Africa that is active in nature conservation and improving local living conditions. Launched in 2006 by the FFEM and managed by the French Committee of the IUCN, the initiative is unique in its kind. Through grants averaging €30,000 and local support, the PPI helps to strengthen grassroots organisations, increase their legitimacy in public debate and support innovation in favour of the environment and socio-economic development.

HELPING THE PRESERVATION OF BIODIVERSITY

TAKE ROOT

In Africa, biodiversity is deteriorating rapidly. Public environmental policies, if they emerge, must be ambitious. To meet the continent's major challenges, civil society has a role to play and is supported in this by Small Scale Initiatives Programme (PPI).

THE EROSION OF BIODIVERSITY IS GETTING WORSE IN CENTRAL AND WEST AFRICA

Across Africa, more than 60% of the rural population depends directly on natural goods and services. However, various scenarios highlight that threats to biodiversity continue to intensify and that the acceleration of wildlife loss on land and in the oceans continues at an alarming rate. Year after year, available environmental indicators confirm the continuing deterioration of biodiversity, particularly in West and Central Africa, which are home to some of the world's richest ecosystems (tropical forests, wetlands, etc.). These consequences are significant for humanity, and it is becoming increasingly urgent to halt the erosion of biodiversity, which is endangering people's living conditions and development.

ENVIRONMENTAL POLICIES TO BE ENCOURAGED

Since the 2000s, environmental issues in Africa have become an increasingly important element of the public debate. Most African states have adopted public environmental policies and action strategies. Despite these steps, public instruments for protecting biodiversity remain ineffective in the face of the extinction of animal populations and the overexploitation of natural resources.

A DEVELOPING CIVIL SOCIETY

Thanks to growing awareness among African citizens of environmental issues, the number of Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) has grown considerably in recent years and local initiatives from independent actors (NGOs, charities and other groups) have emerged. Young and inexperienced in terms of technique, finance, and political influence, these CSOs require appropriate support to strengthen their actions on the ground and their collaboration with public services. This has been the purpose of PPI for some fifteen years.

PPI NURTURE

THE BREEDING GROUND FOR AN INNOVATIVE CIVIL SOCIETY

The PPI directly supports African civil society organisations involved in nature conservation. It helps to strengthen their professionalism and influence on environmental issues, while funding field projects that promote biodiversity conservation, combat climate change and improve territorial governance, for the long-term benefit of local communities.

COLLECTIVE EFFORTS THAT ARE BEARING FRUIT

After 20 years of existence, 8 out of 10 organisations supported by the PPI are still active. The programme responds qualitatively to the local priorities of the countries of intervention in terms of biodiversity conservation, capacity building and local economic development. The projects funded are achieving satisfactory to very satisfactory results on the ground, despite multiple obstacles, including complex security contexts and health crises such as the Covid-19 pandemic. This is proof of the effectiveness of the PPI, but also of the resilience of local organisations. In 2025, the PPI will enter its seventh phase for a period of five years.

EXPANDING SUPPORT SOLUTIONS

Several financing options are now available. First, there is a 'new partners' window to enable new emerging CSOs, the core target of the PPI, to get started. This is complemented by a 'long-standing partners' financing window to continue supporting and strengthening recognised CSOs. To address major global challenges (climate change, food security, socio-economic development, etc.) while preserving biodiversity, the PPI is also promoting nature-based solutions and nature restoration. An Organisational Development Support Fund (FADO) is now available to the PPI's historical partners, while a dedicated window for CSO networks will promote partnerships for nature conservation.



SOME PPI RESULTS

ECOSYSTEMS



More than
500,000
hectares classified
as protected areas
or under improved
management



251
strengthened
governance
structures

SPECIES

150

conservation
projects for an iconic
species have been
completed



25 endangered species
whose conservation has been
improved



LOCAL DEVELOPMENT

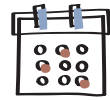


25 green value
chains developed
through 193 projects





PPI IN FIGURES



Launched in
2006

20 years of service



Across **28 COUNTRIES**
in **West and Central Africa**

including Cape Verde, Benin, Cameroon, etc.



Managed by the French Committee
of the **IUCN** (Paris)



€19.7

million in subsidies,
57% of which is paid directly to CSOs



326

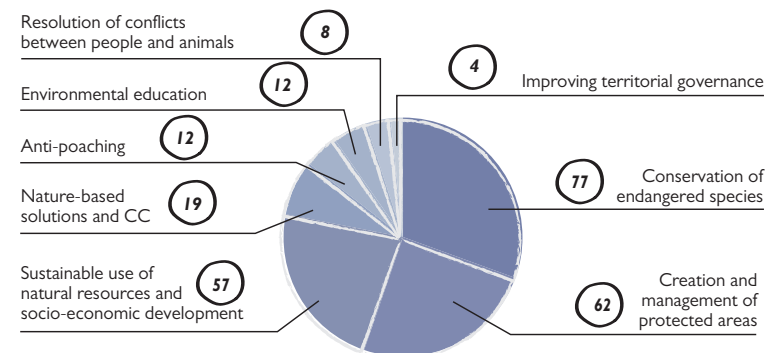
funded projects
undertaken by 214 CSOs



€32,000

per project
average grant

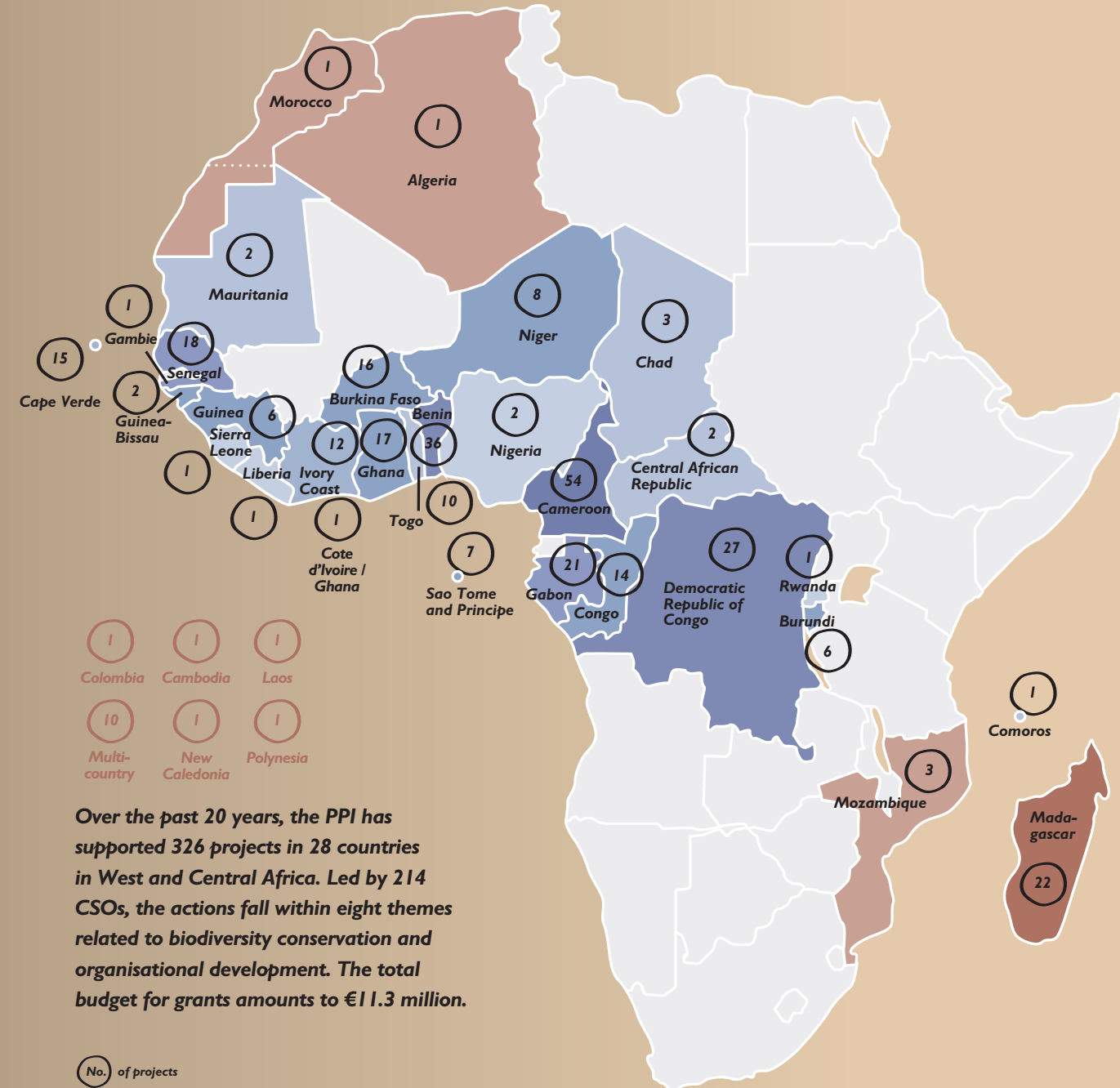
TOPICS



*number = number of
projects related to the theme

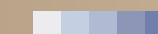
TERRITORIES

ATLAS OF PPI



Over the past 20 years, the PPI has supported 326 projects in 28 countries in West and Central Africa. Led by 214 CSOs, the actions fall within eight themes related to biodiversity conservation and organisational development. The total budget for grants amounts to €11.3 million.

No. of projects



*the darker the colour, the more projects there are

These countries correspond to PPI phase 1 and PPI 2 (2006 - 2011) because since 2011 the PPI only concerns West and Central Africa.

A PROGRAMME

AS CLOSE AS POSSIBLE TO THE PEOPLE

BOOSTING POTENTIAL

Promoting the emergence of young groups full of energy and ideas for nature requires first of all that they have access to initial funding. For these organisations, this support is much more than a financial boost. Having their creativity and dynamism recognised in their country enhances their motivation and their confidence.

CULTIVATING GOODWILL

To help CSOs sustain their commitment, PPI place people at the heart of the system. In each project, the PPI establish a relationship of trust through regular meetings with partners. If necessary, the PPI work with young leaders who build connections with local populations. Aware of the unsustainable nature of some of their practices, it often aspire to use more nature-friendly alternatives and want to contribute to solutions.

REFINING KNOWLEDGE

It is in this climate of transparency and proximity that organisations benefit from tailor-made support. This addresses both the implementation of the project and the development of the organisation itself. The "PPI label" is a guarantee of seriousness for CSOs and generally opens doors to other future sources of financing.

PROMOTING DIALOGUE

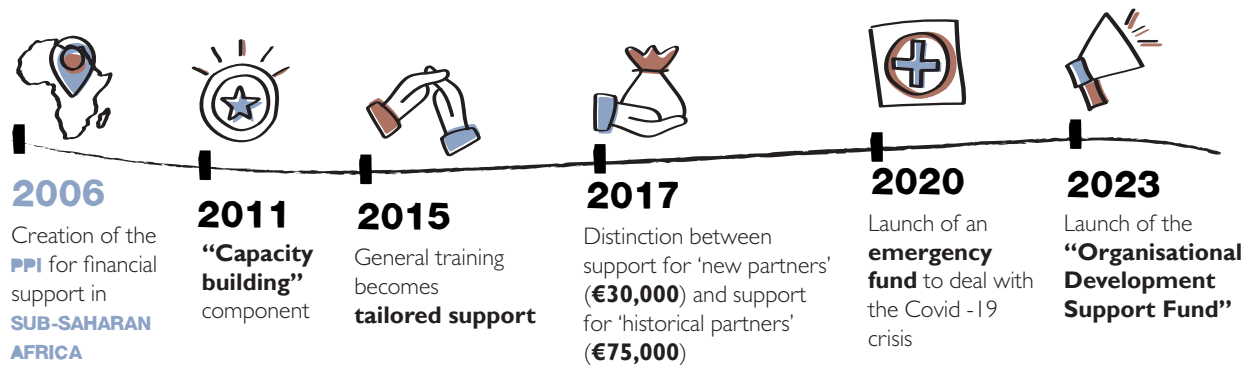
All these processes cannot succeed without high-quality synergy, whether between programme coordinators and CSOs or between PPI and their partners, such as public authorities. Finally, exchanging best practices between peers and supporting the construction of networks of practitioners are also strong components of PPI.

“**THE PPIs CREDO**

THE UNIQUE STRENGTH OF PPI REMAINS IN ITS PRECISE AND SPECIFIC CAPACITY-BUILDING ACTIONS AND IN THE PROGRESSIVE AND ADAPTED SUPPORT FOR CSOs WITH A VIEW TO GUIDING THEM TOWARDS INDEPENDENCE IN THE CONSERVATION OF NATURE.

SCALABLE PROGRAMME

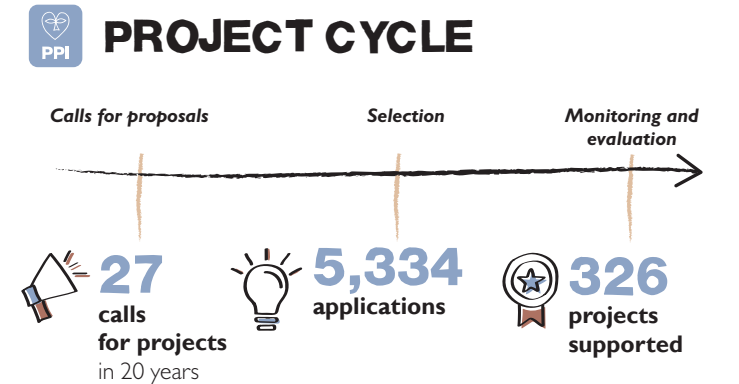
TO SUPPORT THE RISE OF CIVIL SOCIETY



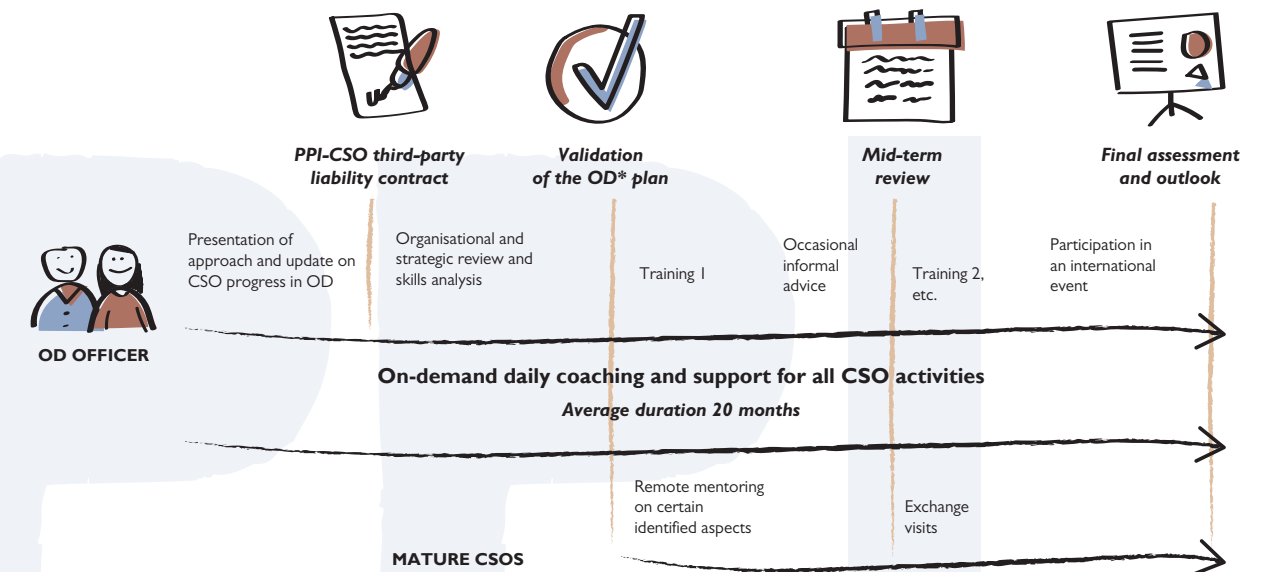
THE SUPPORT ADAPTS

TO THE UNIQUE NATURE OF EACH CSO

To help organisations succeed in their actions on the ground and in wielding political influence, PPI provide financial, technical, organisational and strategic support. Based on a diagnostic review highlighting specific needs, a tailored learning plan and individualised coaching are deployed. At the end of the PPI pathway, the connection is maintained and support continues in a more distant manner.



LEARNING PLAN



*OD = Organisational Development

THE CSOs HOLD THE KEYS TO SUSTAINABLE SOLUTIONS

BUILDING TRUST IN CIVIL SOCIETY

With initial funding, CSOs can demonstrate their value to local communities and institutional partners. However, to ensure that ownership of projects by the majority of stakeholders is sustainable, organisations are encouraged throughout their PPI journey to free their thinking and express their unique potential. To this end, the coordinator's support plays a fundamental role: they help CSOs identify issues, in the contexts they alone can understand, and develop appropriate responses. With limited budgets, the organizations must be resourceful to best meet the needs identified. This involvement rooted in local reality is essential to obtain the consent of the populations involved in the initiatives as soon as possible.

BIODIVERSITY ADVOCACY

Thanks to their clear results on the ground, civil society actors are increasingly visible in their countries and, as far as the older ones are concerned, recognised as legitimate by the authorities. This institutional anchoring is an essential lever for sustainability, enabling them to integrate national conservation and local development mechanisms. Specific support is provided to the most experienced CSOs to strengthen their advocacy initiatives, while others are gradually made aware of their political role. The PPI has also facilitated their participation in the global dialogue on conservation by involving them in international events such as the COPs on biodiversity and the IUCN World Conservation Congresses. As a result, civil society in the supported countries is gradually becoming more structured and increasingly influencing public debate on environmental issues on the African continent.

“

THE PPI SUPPORTED US IN GETTING OFFICIAL RECOGNITION FROM THE MINISTRY. [...] IN 2024, WE RESUBMITTED THE APPLICATION TO THE MINISTER, AND IT FINALLY WORKED WITH THE MINISTRY OF FORESTS.

Xavier NDJAMO - TUBE AWU, Cameroun



RENATURA CONGO, AN INSPIRING HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION

Created in Congo-Brazzaville in 2005, Renatura Congo works to preserve sea turtles and their habitats. Among the first organizations supported by the PPI, the CSO now reflects the success of the programme: having received initial support of a few thousand euros, the structure now manages major projects financed by European funds. A leading national player in biodiversity conservation, the association is also committed to professionalising local CSOs.

THE CSOs SHARE THEIR EXPERTISE TO MOVE FORWARD TOGETHER

CONNECTING TO BUILD NETWORKS

By joining the PPI, each organisation becomes part of a network of practitioners from its region or who are working on the same issue. Thanks to this membership, the CSOs can have discussions with other players about approaches, contacts, news, etc. This "peer capitalisation" on best practices helps enrich knowledge and skills.

ESCALATING DEMAND TO PPI

These networks and communities are also a source of feedback useful for improving PPI. To catalyse efforts to protect nature, programmes must work internally, between PPI and with partners to promote increasingly transversal dialogues around methodologies, strategies and technologies that work.



PPI hosts jointly with partners remote presentations of initiatives to spread new ideas and build new bridges.

“

THE NGO SEKAKOH, WHICH WORKS ON THE CONSERVATION OF GREAT APES IN CAMEROON, JOINED THE ALLIANCE FOR THE CONSERVATION OF GREAT APES IN CENTRAL AFRICA (A-GSAC) CREATED IN 2015. THE PPI WAS A DRIVING FORCE FOR US ALL AS WE BUILT THIS PLATFORM.

Denis NYUGHIA - SEKAKOH, Cameroon

THE CSOs SPREAD THEIR IDEAS:

- **The beekeeping caravan (2015):** peer learning of sustainable beekeeping between 6 associations in West Africa.
- **The SIREN application:** adapting this mobile application for interactive monitoring in Cameroon to work with gorillas in the DRC.
- **Management of 'voluntary nature reserves':** dissemination of best practices for the creation and management of community protected areas in Côte d'Ivoire between YVEO and ACB-CI.
- **Participatory mapping:** dissemination of the participatory mapping methodology combining conventional methods and GPS self-monitoring by local communities and the SIGPR created by the NADA organisation in Gabon.

CSOs FREE UP THEIR RESOURCES FOR ENVIRONMENTAL ACTION

TESTING A FIRST PROJECT

The vast majority of PPI partner CSOs believe that the support meets their needs very well. Firstly because the programmes allow them to implement an initial project, despite their small size and sometimes lack of past projects. Then, the PPI help them to consolidate in order to continue their action over the longer term.

WITH A TAILOR-MADE PROGRAMME

While the scale and duration of financing are among the primary limits of PPI, the access conditions, simplified administrative procedures and technical support offered are seen as very positive.

FOR A SUCCESSFUL LONG-TERM EXPERIENCE

At the start of the process, the "PPI"-labelled CSOs are already preparing other applications for funding from other donors. They also say they have a long-term commitment to local conservation authorities. Their work with PPI thus contributes to changes in the regulatory framework for preserving biodiversity.

“

THE PPI FULLY INTEGRATES ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT AS A CRUCIAL ELEMENT OF CSO STRENGTHENING.

Mamadou KARAMA - AGEREF, Burkina Faso

“

IF WE HAD NOT BEEN SUPPORTED BY THE PPI, WE WOULD NOT HAVE OBTAINED CO-FINANCING. DURING THE SELECTION PHASE, WE HAD NO FINANCIAL PARTNERS, BUT THE PPI PUT US IN TOUCH WITH STRATEGIC CONTACTS.

Savana NNANG OBIANG - NADA, Gabon

PPI COLLABORATE WITH OTHERS PARTNERS

To increase the success of CSOs in promoting biodiversity conservation, the PPI, as part of its 5th and 6th phases (2017-2025), has developed partnerships with other donors (CEPF, IUCN NL, IUCN PACO, Noé, etc.). This collaboration has made it possible to expand the programme's financial, thematic and geographical scope and to share approaches and tools.

THE CSOs WORK WITH PPI TOWARDS ACHIEVING FULL MATURITY

Learning is at the very heart of PPI. This support concerns the project, but also the professionalisation of the structure. The goal is to help uncover the intrinsic vision of the CSO.

A CLOSE RELATIONSHIP, EVEN BEFORE SELECTION.

While each organisation may be supported by a coordinator during its PPI journey, it may also be supported prior to its selection and upon its exit from the programme. Contributions to financial management, project development and strategic planning are particularly useful. By going above and beyond conservation objectives through this "organizational coaching", CSOs learn to function effectively and thrive through gradually acquired experience.

À LA CARTE TRAINING

Carefully developed support plans for each beneficiary are immediately used to improve the organisational, managerial and strategic capacities of the structure as well as the technical and administrative supervision of projects. The result is a much-appreciated maturation of qualitative and sustainable projects. Thus, the majority of CSOs believe that PPI meet their needs in terms of organisational support. The implementation of strategic plans corresponds to their long-term vision.

“

I THINK THAT THE PPI IS VERY USEFUL IN THE SENSE THAT IT'S NOT JUST GOING TO GIVE MONEY TO FUND CONSERVATION PROJECTS, THEY ARE ALSO GOING TO HELP THE CHARITY GROW (...) AND THEIR HELP HAS BEEN VERY USEFUL FOR US TO RETHINK OUR IDEAS AND GET THE BEST OUT OF THEM.

Caleb OFORI BOATENG - HERP, Ghana



PPI IS INSPIRED BY THE PSYCHOLOGY OF CHANGE

PPI support now also covers aspects relating to the psychology of change and the political positioning of CSOs in their specific contexts. The programme also seeks to help them better understand the psychological and contextual aspects of the beneficiaries of their projects, in order to more closely support these key actors of change within their local areas. These are approaches that coordinators apply in their relationship with CSOs. According to Thomas Bacha, PPI OD officer in Central Africa, **"since the start of our capacity building activities in 2011, my concern has always been to seek a position as a facilitator of our partners' thinking, rather than an expert providing ready-made solutions, in particular technical solutions, to the problems in the field or the organizational functioning of our partners. No one is better placed than these players to identify the obstacles to their progress."**

GOING FURTHER WITH SUSTAINABILITY

Ultimately, the objectives of support from PPI are to sustain environmental protection actions through the consolidation of the CSOs that lead them. A challenge that is not always easy to meet, after support lasting 20 months on average. At the end of the programme, the efforts must come together to strengthen the sustainability of organisations.

CONTINUE PROFESSIONALISATION

An organisation has every chance of succeeding in its launch, with the initial investment of a director or a solid core of committed and sometimes even visionary founders. However, they must quickly build a team with more organisational capabilities to ensure its sustainability in the event of a change in leadership. These people must be competent and properly paid to avoid turnover, which hinders the development of the organization.



SUSTAINING FUNDING BEYOND PPI

PPI encourage partners to plan and mobilise funds from other donors as soon as projects begin so that the action can continue.

DEVELOPING ALLIANCES BETWEEN CSOs

Connecting the CSOs together is also a factor in collaboration (often more so than competition) because opportunities can be shared and common strategies put in place. If this proves relevant, partnerships can also be made with the private sector for consulting, impact studies, the co-development of more eco-responsible sectors, etc.

SPEAKING UP FOR CITIZENS

Preserving biodiversity isn't just based on financial resources and technical responses. Civil society organizations can act as go-betweens to mobilize citizens in changing their behaviour. They therefore have the opportunity to play the role of "local spokesperson" - sometimes on the national level - for the collective effort and see the appeal in cultivating this position permanently.

SHARING BEST PRACTICES

CSO FEEDBACKS

Be clear about your needs to receive better support and commit to improving weaknesses as the programme progresses.

Develop your own organisational capabilities including human resources, administrative and financial management capabilities, while nurturing a shared vision and values guiding the organisation.

Very early on, consider the sustainability of your structure, at all levels, so that it lasts beyond the departure of its founder, the end of funding or its exit from the programme.

Diversify sources of funding to avoid a relationship of dependence on your funder and seek financing methods that are complementary to the projects (sale of products, organisation of events, sponsorship, donations, ecotourism, etc.)

Accept the time needed to train, strengthen and mature their strategy, teams and solutions in the medium and long term: co-building a civil society to achieve a paradigm shift requires the establishment of sustainable partnerships that respond to logics that CSOs will have considered and chosen.

PPI FEEDBACK

Focus on local organisations that have the ability to adapt and understand realities on the ground and therefore potentially offer solutions that larger bodies will not necessarily have.

Invest in these small, reactive, flexible and resilient CSOs and learn how to grow them while remaining on a human scale so that they become more legitimate players in their countries and encourage their replication in other territories.

Position ourselves as a facilitator of the approach initiated by the CSOs which are true partners in biodiversity conservation.

Offer financing arrangements (amount and duration) tailored to the needs of CSOs and support their expansion.

Encourage networking between beneficiaries for knowledge sharing; this allows actors to optimise their governance and strategies around communities of practice, to echo multiple small initiatives with politicians, and through this, to influence wider debates for a collective response to environmental issues.



THE STRENGTH OF THE PPI LIES IN ITS ABILITY TO IDENTIFY LOCAL ORGANISATIONS IN CENTRAL AND WEST AFRICA AND SUPPORT THEM ON A DAILY BASIS TO ACHIEVE A LASTING IMPACT ON NATURE CONSERVATION.

Malika DREYFUSS,
Hans Wilsdorf Foundation



LOCAL ANCHORING IS THE TRUE STRENGTH OF THE PPI. THE FACT THAT THE ACTIONS SUPPORTED ARE ROOTED IN THE KNOWLEDGE, NEEDS AND CHOICES OF THE COMMUNITIES IS A GUARANTEE OF SUSTAINABILITY. FURTHERMORE, THIS SUPPORT FOR LOCAL DYNAMICS UNQUESTIONABLY LEGITIMISES THE AMBITION TO PROTECT THE BIODIVERSITY AND ECOSYSTEMS OF THESE TERRITORIES, AS THIS IS NOT PART OF A 'NEO-COLONIAL' VISION IMPOSED FROM OUTSIDE, BUT RESPONDS TO THE ASPIRATIONS OF THE PEOPLE WHO LIVE THERE.

Nicolas ROSSIN,
French Global Environment Facility
www.ffem.fr



ONE OF THE MAIN STRENGTHS OF NATIONAL ORGANISATIONS IS THE LEGITIMACY THEY ENJOY AMONG CITIZENS AND AUTHORITIES, WHICH ENABLES THEM TO PROPOSE CREDIBLE SOLUTIONS TAILORED TO ENVIRONMENTAL AND SOCIAL ISSUES.

Nicolas SALAÜN,
IUCN French Committee
www.uicn.fr



THE STRENGTH OF THE PPI LIES IN ITS LOCALISED, TAILOR-MADE SUPPORT. EACH ORGANISATION RECEIVES SUPPORT THAT IS SPECIFIC TO ITS NEEDS.

Xavier NDAJMO,
Tubé Awu Cameroun
PPI partner since 2018

<https://tubeawu.org/>

To learn more :

Capitalisation film - Directed by : Eric Mounier
[Pour une société civile africaine au cœur de l'action environnementale](#)

20th anniversary film of the PPI
Directed by : Eric Mounier
[20 ans du PPI au Sénégal](#)

WITH THE LONG-STANDING SUPPORT OF THE FFEM



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PARTICIPATE
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