

Co-Creation Practices on Sanitation in the Communities of Cameroon

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This study reports on the current situation of sanitation and the search for an ideal design that practices each of the slum areas in the capital, rural area of local cities, and forest areas in Cameroon, central Africa. This research is conducted in collaboration with Japanese researchers, Cameroonian researchers, local NGOs, and each resident of the communities.

Collaborative research with the local NGO called Tam-Tam Mobile, in the capital city of Yaoundé is focusing on the activities of the local government and residents' organizations regarding efforts to improve hygiene and sanitation in some slum communities. In the slum areas, where nearly 70% of Yaoundé's residents live, the problems of domestic wastewater, toilets and garbage are serious. The local NGO called Mutcare, which is based in Bertoua, the capital of the eastern state Cameroon, has been promoting the spread of WASH in the surrounding rural villages, and as part of its activities, they had been installing toilets in some villages of settled hunter-gatherers. Currently, based on this practice, we are conducting an experimental trial of fruit tree cultivation for effective utilization of the site of the toilets. Similarly, the local NGO called Association Okani based in Bertoua, have been working to protect human rights and improve the living environment of settled hunter-gatherers. They have been asked to try to understand the hygiene/sanitation situation in a wide range of settlements. Especially around the eastern province of Lomie city, we have been conducting joint research on the installation status of toilets and try to understand the patterns of excretion behavior by hunter-gatherers.

On the other hand, since March 2020, due to the impact of the COVID-19 in Cameroon, infection prevention measures have been promoted at all survey sites, and each NGOs has improved public health for each community. And they have continued activities including some campaigns with distribution of necessary supplies. While Japanese researchers are restricted from traveling to Cameroon, we continue to share information and seek joint research through online exchanges. We continue to pursue better sanitation situations in each field in/after COVID-19 with researchers, local organizations, and residents of each community.

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