

Menchum Valley tree planting, Oct. '07.

Rainy season landslides on the steep hillsides of Menchum Valley made some of our sites inaccessible during September.

Several visits to Befang, which is on the 'main' road, have been possible, where a very successful little nursery is now established, due to the hard work and vision of Ndi Augustin (below).



Augustin was resolute, that the best site was on an area of land controlled by the local department of agriculture, and he pushed until he had permission to use this. It has good soil, is next to a stream that provides water all year around, close to the road, but secluded, and with room to expand – the latter was important because, 'we will expand right over in that direction', he said. Augustin and his friend Tabefor Peter fenced the area, they made ridges, sowed the seeds and have kept the area clean and weeded. They now have seedlings of njangsanga and country onion (spices), mahogany (timber) and gum Arabic (soil improver and source of gum), all thriving.



The hard work, success and vision of these young men has generated much interest in the village, and even encouraged early group members to return.

Njangsanga
Ricinodendron heudelotii



Bush onion, *Afrostryax species*

Augustin and Peter were persistent, since meeting us, in their requests that we teach them how to 'grow flowers' – ornamental plants. They said there is a demand, particularly from people building homes in the next town. Located as they are on the main road (poor though it is), they see ornamental plants as a means of generating income. We collected cuttings, rootstock and suckers of a dozen species, and gave them these, along with lessons on the basic relevant theory and practice of propagation.

Whether it is the soil, climate or green fingers, needless to say, their 'flowers' are doing well. If some are sold we will all be thrilled, if not, we will rest content knowing that the boys have a reserve plan to make their own village of Befang more attractive.