



Education for farmers – modern equipment and techniques for irrigation.

A problem that most of our rural partners share is water supply during the dry season – for farming that provides food and income, as well as for domestic use. We have been involved in domestic water supply projects, but took a step further by organising training on efficient use of available water, teaching farmers and agricultural resource people about modern knowledge and equipment that will allow them, at their different levels, to improve farming efficiency and incomes.

We partnered with **MASHAV**, Israel's agency for international development and cooperation. **MASHAV** has unrivalled expertise in water management, and efficient irrigation suited to small and medium sized farmers and our local conditions. Two Israeli irrigation experts designed a course and came to Cameroon specifically for this. Forty four people participated, local farming group leaders, Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development and four councils also sent staff - Babessi, Bamenda II, Mbengwi and Ngyen Mbo traditional council, as well as the Mbengwi prison farm managers.

The focus of the course was drip irrigation, suited to our needs because it is not expensive, and uses very little water. Other irrigation options suited to our local conditions were also explained and demonstrated. The benefits of these techniques include higher yields of quality vegetables and fruits, production through out the year, efficient use of water, decreased need for weeding, and greater likelihood of maintaining the productive capacity of the soil. There were lectures, practical work and demonstrations. The training was hosted by the **S.T. Muna Foundation** at their head quarters in Ngyen Mbo, Momo Division, near Bamenda. It was an ideal training venue, the spacious lecture room was bright, comfortable and equipped with modern teaching aids. The hall, courtyard and gardens provided space to relax and mingle, the kitchens provided necessary refreshments, and the grounds a range of sites for practicals and demonstrations.

The participants, who all covered their own costs, were religious in their time-keeping, attendance, and level of participation, sustained for the full ten days – this is clearly technology that is relevant.

In October, as the rains cease, we will come together again to install a drip irrigation system in the village, and use that as a platform to promote wider uptake in the region.

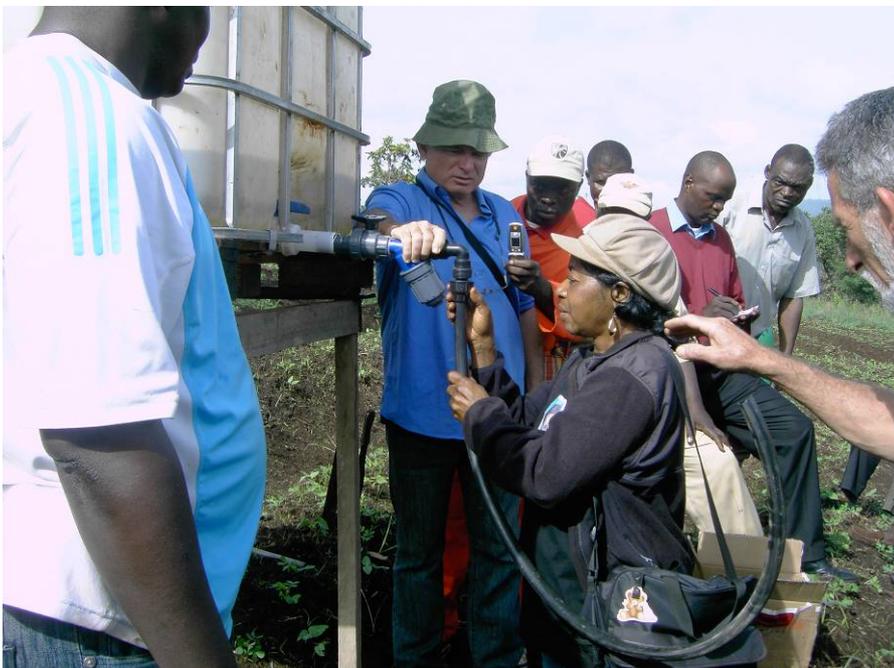


Daily lectures (left)

- Some of the topics in the eight day course were –
- Water harvesting, storing and delivering,
 - Soil – water – plant relationship,
 - Drip Irrigation and drip irrigation technology, Using and maintaining drip irrigation,
 - Irrigation monitoring with soil moisture /tension sensor devices,
 - Water quality with regard to filtration, Fertigation,
 - Salinity impact on crop and soil,
 - Principles of irrigation design.

Soils practical class, comparing texture, root distribution, infiltration, etc, at different points on a slope.

The five groups each presented their observations to the class on subsequent days.



A drip irrigation system was donated to the women's farming cooperative. The equipment was all taken to the fields for practical classes – left, demonstrating connection of the water tank to filter and irrigation pipes.



Demonstrating the supply and drip line pipes



Demonstrating different types of drip line



Mini sprinklers (left)
six different designs
of mini sprinkler
were demonstrated.

Field visit, to
observe how
local sprinkler
use can be
improved,
and the
benefits.





Mr Shlomo, senior lecturer says a few words after the award of certificates and gifts.

Family photo (below)

