



## Citizen Voices 4 Change

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Congo Basin Forest  
Monitoring Project

# CV4C Webinar Series Programme

## Achievements, reflections and food for thought

22-26 February 2021 • 10:00am-12:00pm (UK time)

The Citizen Voices for Change (CV4C) project was implemented from January 2017 to December 2020 with the funding support of the European Union (EU) and the UK Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office (FCDO). Much has been accomplished and learnt in terms of strengthening the scope, quality and impact of independent forest monitoring in the Congo Basin.

There is much to reflect on, much to share and much to celebrate, around the impact of Citizen Voices for Change in the Congo Basin. To mark the end of the project, a series of online webinars will be hosted by the Centre for International Development and Training (CIDT) of the University of Wolverhampton, the Field Legality Advisory Group (FLAG), the World Resources Institute (WRI) and the five national implementing partners: *Centre pour l'Environnement et le Développement (CED)*, *Forêts et Développement Rural (FODER)*, *Brainforest*, *Cercle d'Appui à la Gestion Durable des Forêts (CADGF)*, *Observatoire de la Gouvernance Forestière (OGF)*, *Centre pour l'Information Environnementale et le Développement Durable (CIEDD)*.

Scheduled during the week of 22 – 26 February 2021, these webinars will offer a platform for exchange of experience and lessons between project partners and with external stakeholders.

The objectives of the daily webinar are to:

- demonstrate and share project achievements;
- reflect on the challenges of the project;
- share key lessons learned from the project;
- facilitate discussions on how to integrate the gains of the project into future actions.

Every day a different theme will be the focus of experience-sharing from key players involved in collecting information and evidence on logging and forest exploitation in Cameroon, the Central African Republic, Congo Brazzaville, Democratic Republic of Congo and Gabon. Five practitioner panels will share results and lessons from their engagement in strengthening the scope, quality and impact of independent forest monitoring in the Congo Basin along the following themes:

### Themes and sessions

**Feb 22:** A means to an end or an end in itself?: The challenges of Organisational Development

**Feb 23:** Independent Forest Monitoring: Lessons learned and perspectives on target audiences and data quality

**Feb 24:** Strength in numbers: the power of networks and coalitions of interest

**Feb 25:** Closing the circle: Engagement with law enforcement agencies, the judiciary and the media

**Feb 26:** 'A tale of two illegalities': Synergies between wildlife protection and forest governance

Simultaneous English-French interpretation will be available.

Register via Zoom: <https://bit.ly/3ryi0CW>



Foreign, Commonwealth  
& Development Office



# THEMES AND SESSIONS

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**Day 1 • 22<sup>nd</sup> February 2021 • 10:00am-12:00pm (UK time)**

## Welcome and opening remarks

**Ella Haruna (CIDT, University of Wolverhampton)**

Welcome address and overview of CV4C project

**Thomas Pichet (FCDO FGMC Programme)**

Keynote address

**TBC (Congo Basin Forest Partnership)**

Keynote address

## Theme 1

### A means to an end or an end in itself? The challenges of Organisational Development

Over the last two decades, Organisational Development (OD) has gradually emerged as the best springboard for ensuring the sustainability of non-state actors, including African civil society organisations. Despite the relative progress of organisational in the Congo Basin over the last ten years, it remains rather marginal, especially for environmental civil society organisations. At the same time, these organisations face many challenges that fundamentally affect their sustainability. To address these challenges, the CV4C project has devoted substantial effort on organisational development, driven by theory of change that more robust and resilient civil society organisations are also more effective in monitoring natural resource choices and policies. This webinar takes the lessons from the project as a starting point for further reflection on three essential components of organisational sustainability: financial sustainability, inclusion and human resource management.

## PROGRAMME

**Teodyl Nkuintchua, Session Chair and Moderator**

**Amelie Nkontchou (FODER, Cameroon)**

Sustainable financing of independent monitoring organisations in the Congo Basin: What can be done to make it work?

**Igerha Bampa (OGF, DRC), Laurence Wete Soh (FODER, Cameroon)**

Gender Mainstreaming in independent monitoring organisations in the Congo Basin: Experiences, challenges and lessons learned

**Olivier Meye (Brainforest, Gabon)**

Strategic Planning: from Plan to Action

**Guest speaker: Mireille Kayijamahe (Well Grounded, France)**

Organisational Development in the Congo Basin. Opportunities, challenges reflections from more than 10 years' experience

**Day 2 • 23<sup>rd</sup> February 2021 • 10:00am-12:00pm (UK time) • Theme 2**

## Independent Forest Monitoring: Lessons learned and perspectives on target audiences and data quality

Since the inception of the CV4C in 2016, CSO members of the consortium have been striving to set up robust quality mechanisms to improve Independent Forest Monitoring (IFM) efficiency, efficacy and credibility, in order to enhance transparency and accountability in the fight against illegal logging. These efforts led to the creation and testing of a number of quality assurance instruments at various scales. For example, at organisational level through SNOIE in Cameroon by FODER, and development of internal Quality Management Systems (QMS) in DRC by OGF. A good example of quality on both a national and a regional level by FLAG, and at the international level - the Open Timber Portal by World Resources Institute and FLEGT WATCH by CIDT. These models respond to demands at the start of the project from users of IFM information and various stakeholders, who expressed the need for IFM as an approach to be more standardised, replicable, efficient and credible. From the onset, the project actively sought to address these concerns. The purpose of this webinar session is to share experiences on how the project has responded to these concerns by developing and implementing a number of instruments and tools. The session will focus on the emerging results achieved during the course of the project including the potential for scaling up and embedding the tools and instruments.

### PROGRAMME

**Symphorien Azantsa, Session Chair and Moderator**

**Serge Bondo Kayembe (OGF, DRC)**

Setting up the Quality Management System (QMS) and the Open Timber Portal (OTP): Opportunities for improving the quality of the mandated IFM

**Jean Cyrille Owada (FLAG, Cameroon)**

Ability of the innovative Verified Quality Management System (VQM) to strengthen the IM processes

**Angeline Kamden Modgo, Justin Kamga (FODER, Cameroon)**

Quality management of the IFM: The experience of SNOIE

**Achille Djeagou (WRI, DRC)**

The Quality and scope of IFM data for due diligence processes

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**Day 3 • 24<sup>th</sup> February 2021 • 10:00am-12:00pm (UK time) • Theme 3**

## Strength in numbers: the power of networks and coalitions of interest

The CV4C project believes that creating and maintaining strong links between IFM and advocacy nationally and internationally is critical in the face of inertia and a lack of response from officials to ensure that the evidence generated is used by decision-makers for law enforcement. Regional IFM platforms are well-placed to support both national advocacy networks and regional and international advocacy movements through strengthening voice, capacity-building and participation. This theme presents the various ways in which networks within and across the region have supported and acted as vehicles for project activity. This includes national platforms (e.g. RENOI, SNOIE network in Cameroon and the nascent SNOIE network in Congo-Brazzaville) and the role of the regional platform 'Plateforme Africaine de l'Observation Indépendante' (PAOI) – or the African independent monitoring platform. The panel will look at the role of networks in building civil society capacity and in advocacy/influencing.

### PROGRAMME

**Stephany Kersten, Session Chair and Moderator**

**Essyot LUBALA (OGF, DRC)**

National Network for IFM in the DRC: Challenges and opportunities

**Laurent Yangueta (CIEDD, CAR)**

Synergies between IFM and other State institutions: experience of the Consultation Platform for the fight against environmental crimes

**Serge Moukouri (FLAG, Cameroon)**

Challenges and opportunities facing IFM networks at the regional level: the case of the PAOI

**Day 4 • 25<sup>th</sup> February 2021 • 10:00am-12:00pm (UK time) • Theme 4**

## **Closing the circle: Engagement with law enforcement agencies, the judiciary and the media**

Independent monitoring is an important instrument for improving forest governance in the Congo Basin for improving forest governance, transparency and the participation of non-state actors, in particular civil society organisations, rural populations and the media in the sustainable management of forests. IFM also has significant potential to contribute to law enforcement. In addition, the actions of IFM in the Congo Basin are increasingly aimed at strengthening synergies between the authorities in charge of law enforcement for an effective fight against illegal forestry. This theme aims to share the experiences of the CV4C project in the engagement of the media as well as the judicial authorities in the monitoring and repression of forest offences. It also draws lessons from the challenges of involving these authorities in identifying possible avenues for solutions.

### **PROGRAMME**

**Virginie Vergnes, Session Chair and Moderator**

**Fiston Mabonzi**

Independent monitoring and influence of the engagement of law enforcement agencies, the judiciary and the media: experiences of civil society in the DRC

**Flora Lamero, Rache Ngo Nwaha, Lore Souhe**

Increasing the role of the media in natural resources governance: Where do we want to go and how? Experiences, lessons and perspectives

**Laurence Wete Soh, Horline Njiké**

Challenges of involving the judiciary in the fight against illegal logging in Cameroon: what are the possible solutions?

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**Day 5 • 26<sup>th</sup> February 2021 • 10:00am-12:00pm (UK time) • Theme 5**

## **‘A tale of two illegalities’: Synergies between wildlife protection and forest governance**

The Congo Basin countries grappling with the challenges of forest illegality are equally ill-equipped to respond to the challenges of wildlife trafficking and organised crime. The international wildlife trade includes hundreds of millions of plant and animal specimens, estimated at billions of dollars annually. Grand scale illegality in the forest sector, poaching, ivory trade, illegal trade of bush meat and protected species, represent significant threats not only to forests, wildlife and ecosystems, but to regional development and security. Inadequate responses can be linked to a range of factors: inadequate legislation for wildlife offences; lack of recognition of wildlife crime as a priority crime leads to absence of strategic, tactical or operational focus; poor understanding of demand for and actors involved in the trade of illicit wildlife products; and lack of trained staff with the expertise and skills in specialist investigation techniques. This is exacerbated by porous borders and ineffective border controls; inadequate collaboration and information sharing between enforcement agencies; inadequate systems for intelligence gathering, analysis and use; lack of effective cooperation at local/ national/ regional/ international levels in information/intelligence exchange; grand and petty corruption in the agencies, and weak law enforcement management and monitoring capacity. This theme aims at exploring the synergies between wildlife crimes, and forestry crimes in the Congo Basin, from both a legal and a practical perspective. The theme will briefly present the project’s outputs: two Nexus studies from Cameroon and CAR, and a regional legal study.

### **PROGRAMME**

**Willy Laywer (TBC), Session Chair and Moderator**

**Samuel Nguiffo**

The judge and the forest in Central Africa: why illegal logging persist and intensifies in the Congo Basin countries?

**Ghislain Fomou**

Review of operational systems to combat illegal logging and wildlife exploitation in Cameroon

**Bienvenu Kemanda-Yogo**

Illegal exploitation of wildlife and timber in CAR: links, origins and purposes

## Day 5

# Closing remarks

**Dr Aurelian Mbzibain (CIDT, University of Wolverhampton)**

Closing address by representative of CV4C project

**Mathieu Auger Schwartzberg (Task Team Leader, Agence Française de Développement)**

Closing address by representative of development partner

**Prof Philip Dearden (University of Wolverhampton)**

Closing address by representative of the University of Wolverhampton

## CV4C Impact Stories

To coincide with the CV4C webinar series we are publishing a set of impact stories from the project countries.

### **Financial Health: Republic of the Congo**

#### **Replenishing the State's coffers**

The painstaking work of a tiny team of independent forest monitors truly pays off.

### **Judicial Transparency: Central African Republic** **Pulled from oblivion: Toward transparent enforcement of the Central African Republic's forest law framework**

By rehabilitating forest monitoring and judicial transparency, CIEDD has created the tools that CAR's forest administration needs to succeed.

### **Justice: Gabon**

#### **Impunity is not what it used to be: 17 communities stand up to logging companies**

Gabonese NGO Brainforest has used the rigorous data collected through its independent forest monitoring activities to support community litigation – and to win.

### **Peer-to-peer learning: Cameroon**

#### **A Regional Toolbox: FLAG develops critical instruments to empower independent monitors of forestry activity**

For the actors who inspect the timber sector in the Congo Basin sub-region, the Field Legality Advisory Group (FLAG) serves as a vital technical resource.

### **Synergy of methods: Democratic Republic of Congo**

#### **Casting a wide net to control illegal logging in the Democratic Republic of Congo**

OGF has helped to enhance the quality of independent forest monitoring and sparked the creation of RENOI-RDC, a network that relies on the synergy of different methods to tackle illegal logging.

### **Gender responsiveness: Congo Basin**

#### **Pulling together: Integrating gender in Congo Basin forest governance**

A transboundary project demonstrates how to benefit from greater gender responsiveness in policy-making and throughout the project cycle.

### **Gender responsiveness case studies:**

#### **Turbulence ahead**

Across the Congo Basin, civil society groups are using CV4C tools to craft and implement more inclusive policies and programmes.



For more information about the CV4C project please visit:

[www.cidt.org.uk/cv4c](http://www.cidt.org.uk/cv4c)