

## September 2008 news – *trees, bringing people together, for common good.*

### ***Successes***

Njangsang (below left) and Camwood trees (right) planted in Oshie have established well. A new baby prevented our technician from making the planned trek to Oshie in August, to share his enthusiasm and knowledge of silviculture with farmers there, as planned - but as soon as his family is stable we hope this will happen.



### ***Eru farming.***

Several nursery groups have moved forward with their eru farming initiatives - using the handbooks, and training to start propagating Eru. They have taken cuttings from seedlings bought in Limbe Botanic Garden, and are nursing these in their propagators (right). The Befang group which has a history of not being very united, is leading this, they seem to have become more unified after realising that Benakuma was referred to as the 'main cvp nursery'. When the groups are working together, teaching other villages the techniques they themselves have learned and mastered, then UNAFAS will have achieved its goal.



Local schools are becoming involved with the community projects, as our teachers saw during summer clubs that they ran in four areas during August: >200 children attended the clubs, each venue attracting participants from neighbouring villages (click here to link to the report CVP Education *Holiday classes and holiday clubs*). Many trees have been planted on school compounds in the last two years, it is good to see school nurseries being set up, and doing well - meaning that the kids are truly learning, and practicing positive Conservation Values.



Befang children visit the village nursery during their CVP summer school (above). Their own, school nursery (left)



Youth Week (February) 2009 will see a new, UNAFAS CVP sponsored, inter-school competition – for the best maintained school compound and school nursery. As well as a quiz to follow up on holiday club activities and messages.

## *Expanding beyond the villages*

Plans are to start reforestation of water catchments, and woodland on common lands next year. It will take some organising, as the sites are far from where people live the catchments, serve multiple communities, and there will be a lot of work involved in preparing, fencing and then maintaining the planting sites. Fire breaks will also have to be maintained as it is annual fires in the grassland that have progressively reduced the forest. The trees will also have to be transported from the nurseries, which for maintenance purposes are located accessible to villages, but not the planned planting



sites. We have just sent 5000 poly bags of different sizes to Menchum, and more will follow in October. This will help the nurseries to maintain their stock (timber species at Modele above) and grow it up to a size more suitable for planting out in remoter areas next year.



Cashew seedlings (above left) at Benekuma main nursery, and two other sites experimenting with locally collected seeds of Bush Mango (above right) and timber species (right).



This work in Menchum has been a North West Province pilot for UNAFAS CVP, and one that is going well. It was inspired by our past achievements in North Cameroon, an area with very different conditions, culture and dynamics, and our priority now is to share widely the experience and successes of both. We need to show others that whether there is external support or not, there is so much that they can do themselves, together, locally, to solve their various problems and improve living standards. Trees are a good place to start.