



# Innovative Community-Based Teaching Methods: One Health Water Africa (OHWA) Field School 2022 and 2023 Editions



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## INTRODUCTION

Together we can do better, public health requires collective implications. Many pandemics such as COVID-19 have proven that, our public health should be a common concern. More multidisciplinary teams need to be encouraged. The objective of the One Health Water Africa (OHWA) Field school, taking place in Akonolinga, Centre Region, Cameroon, is to investigate One Health issues related to water borne diseases. It is a project working with master's students from three North/South Universities. Two editions have held. By the time the GHF will hold, the third edition's preparations will be in progress

## OBJECTIVE

The objective of the annual One Health Water Africa (OHWA) Field school is to organise a multidisciplinary, multicultural and a diversified team-led working on water borne issues on the Nyong River in Akonolinga, Centre Region of Cameroon.

## MATERIALS AND METHODS

OHWA is a collaboration among a consortium of four institutions: the University of Corsica Pascal Paoli (France), the Universities of Buea, Douala and the French Institute of Sustainable Development (IRD) in Cameroon. The first edition took place 14-25 November 2022; it was a 29-member team; seven Cameroon English speaking students, two French speaking students, ten French students, five supervisors, four field technicians from IRD, altogether nine specialties. They collected data from 134 households and results presented during a restitution ceremony to the community. The work done consisted on testing drinking water at both point of collection and point of storage. 2022 results revealed that water was not suitable to drink, it needed to be purified. Water purification using Moringa powder was then the second edition's objective. This held 10-23 November 2023, bringing together almost eight Cameroon English speaking students, two French speaking students, ten French students, five supervisors, five members of IRD, five speakers and twelve specialties. Water purification technics using moringa kits was proposed to 89 households. The 2024 edition in preparation will mostly work on Malaria as this is endemic in the Akonolinga locality.

## RESULTS

The project has successfully train forty students to work collaboratively in multidisciplinary teams with diversify components. a dozen villages visited; more than 1000 local community dwellers impacted. OHWA has taught water purification using moringa to about 300 people, collaboratively has recorded community's perception towards the method and possibilities to disseminate better. The project has participated in the Yaoundé One Health Forum (YOHF) with six presentations. It has fostered other projects, on youth, education, agricultural entrepreneurship (AGRICOM) and another on One Health issues of stray animals, diseases transmission (TROHIKA). It has fostered closeness in youth from South/North as youth forums will hold during the next edition. It has been presented as a case study during an expert meeting on One Health and Planetary Health in humanitarian settings held in Geneva. Currently two master's students in One Health and infectious disease and antimicrobial resistance are completing research projects based on OHWA previous editions results. Research groups hosting participants are pleased with how they relate to teamwork and their concerns to the inclusiveness of communities in research. Several presentations from OHWA different thematic groups have been submitted for the 2024 Geneva Health Forum. The OHWA field school has inspired a collaborative Masters Online with five Universities: The University of Buea, The University of Ngaoundéré and Université des Montagnes (Cameroon) but also the University of Geneva (Switzerland) and the University of Corsica (France); Teams are eager to implement the third edition.

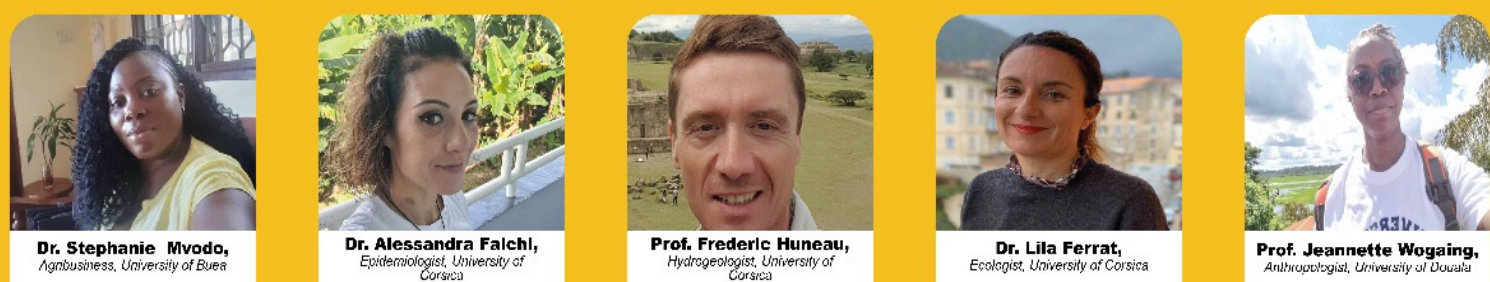


2<sup>nd</sup> Edition Of the International, Multidisciplinary and Collaborative Field School One Health Water Africa (OHWA)

## RESTITUTION CEREMONY

Akonolinga, 22 November 2023

### Supervisors



### Participants



### Équipe IRD

### Speakers



## CONCLUSION

The OHWA Field School is an innovative project to engage communities in co-designing, co-constructing, co-implementing measures related to zoonoses and environmental diseases transmission and looking forward to commonly used natural resources for the benefits of all. After these two editions, possibilities exist for other institutions to join, this will be the consortium's contribution towards the extension of the university of Buea activities in Akonolinga, the project's research area.

**Key words:** collaboration, field school, community engagement, One Health, water related diseases

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