

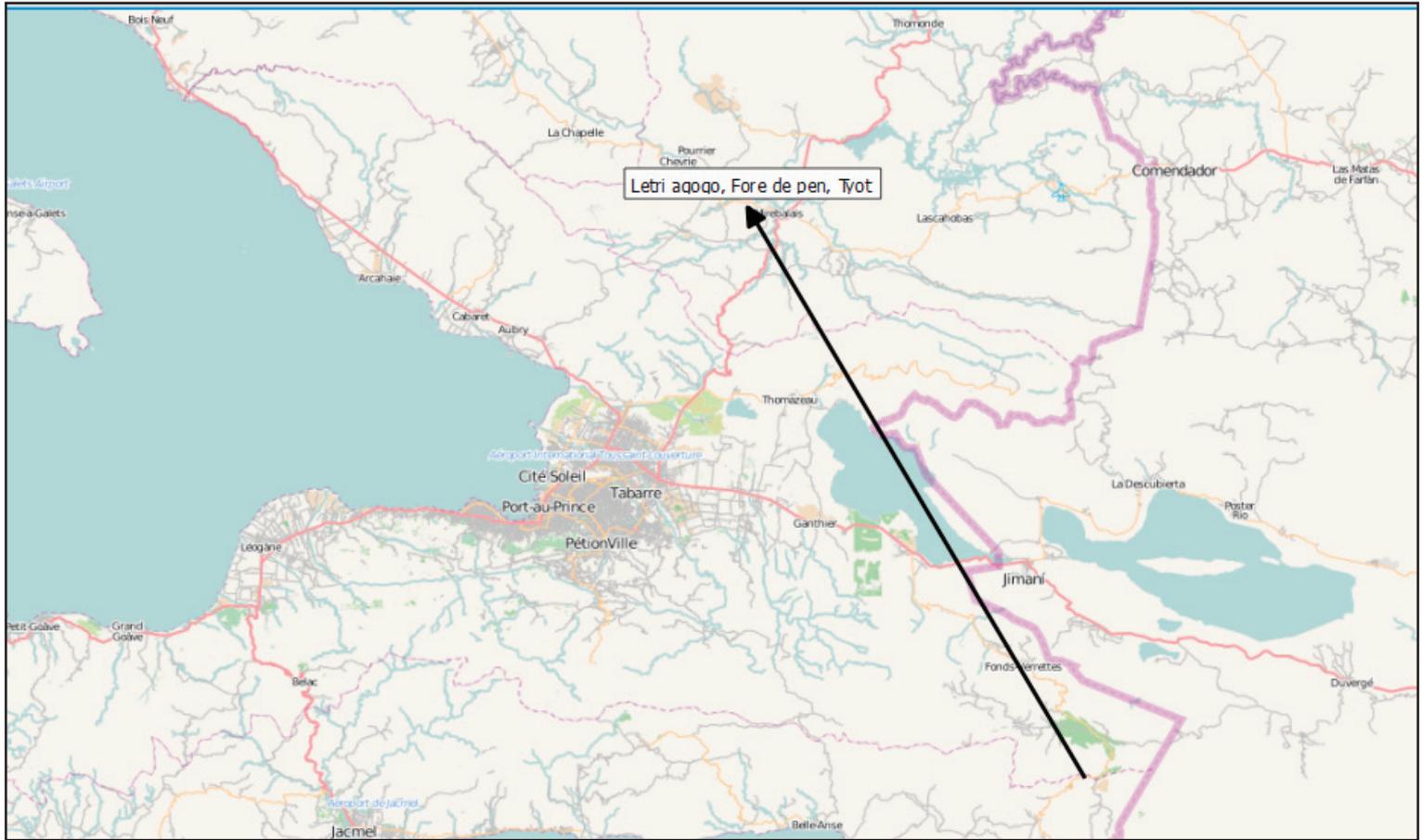


Let Agogo is a national franchise that treats and sells the milk produced by local farmers. In the communities surrounding the Foredepen Natural REserve, Let Agogo plays an important role in the promotion and creation of an alternative livelihood to avoid further deforestation of the reserve.



What can other communities learn from Let Agogo Tyot?

* Production and commercialization of milk



History of the community

Tyot (Thiotte) is a community in the northeast corner of the Sud-Est province, and lies on the southern border of Foredepen (Foret des Pins), one of Haiti's few protected forests. Due to livelihood strains in the area, however, many people living in the community felt they had no choice but to cut down trees to make money to get by. This is a great challenge because the state cannot invest in enough guards to survey the forest, so another, more permanent solution had to be found.

Summary of the work

Let Agogo is a national franchise of Haitian dairy farms that collect and sterilize milk from local cows to be resold in-country; it was founded by a Haitian NGO called Veterimed. In 2005, it teamed up with an association of Haitian agronomists called Gwoup 73 to look at the deforestation problem in Foredepen and its surrounding communities. They decided that a way to discourage deforestation was to promote an alternative livelihood in the rural community, establishing a Let Agogo Franchise as a creative way of fighting deforestation.

They established a Let Agogo franchise which would buy milk from the local farmers, analyse it, sterilise it, and package it into bottles to be sold locally. It was run by a team of 6 people from the community, and after an initial investment in equipment and training, the center was left to provide for itself.

At first, the center was only able to purchase 5 gallons of milk a day from local farmers, but after a short period of time they were able to purchase 25 gallons a day. They were able to further scale up when in 2008, they won a contract with a national program to be able to provide milk to 2 local state schools, and a year later 4 more schools were added. By this point they were purchasing 60 gallons a day.

They had scaled up to the point that they were buying regularly for over 100 dairy farmers, and producing milk became so profitable that the farmers formed an association. This means that there were 100 people who may have otherwise been forced to cut down trees to provide for their families, but are now making a decent living by producing dairy. This by no means has solved the deforestation problem in Foredepen, but it is a sustainable and creative way of fighting it.





What can other communities learn from Let Agogo, Tyot?

Let Agogo has a great deal of experience in the processing and sterilization of milk for schools and markets: this means they know not only the techniques for sterilizing and evaluating the quality of safe milk, but how to produce and commercialize a local product. They also have advice and knowledge on how to raise dairy cows in a way that they produce milk of high quantity and quality. And overall, they have a strategy on how to fight deforestation with livelihoods approaches.

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