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AGRICULTURAL MARKETING

IN THE NORTHWEST PROVINCE,

UNITED REPUBLIC OF CAMERCON

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In its present form this study is a compendium of draft reports on marketing research undertaken in the Northwest Province of the United Republic of Cameroon between June and October, 1979.

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The sort of study outlined in the above-mentioned PIO/T was invited into the Northwest Cameroon by the Ministry of Agriculture's Direction des Co-operatives et Services de Mutualite (Co-op/MNT), through the intercession of the Agriculture and Rural Development division of the United States Agency for International Development in Cameroon. It is our hope that the findings contained herein will be of maximum use to these accomodating hosts.

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AGRICULTURAL MARKETING IN THE NORTHWEST PROVINCE: SUMMARY AND PRELIMINARY SYNTHESIS

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Bureau of Development Support
Office of Rural Development and
Development Administration
Agency for International Development

Summary Format

This summary evaluation will attempt to synthesize the findings of the various specialists--whose contributions follow--in an evolutionary perspective. The constraints on market access that have been identified in the individual papers cannot be overcome unless their origins are understood. For this reason, constraints are not presented as a list, but rather in the context of the causal and historical relationships that produced them. No attempt is made to cite a particular specialist. Frequently, several findings figure simultaneously in a single statement in this summary. This blending of disciplinary skills into a unitary conclusion has been a methodological objective of this case study from the outset.

Employment in Trade

The most striking feature of the marketing system in the Northwest Province, particularly when viewed in a West African perspective, is the relatively small number of producers engaged as part-time retailers in trade. The most obvious explanation for this difference might seem to lie in the mountainous isolation of the area. On account of the terrain, the costs of moving goods in and out of the High Plateau zone have always always been high. Only commodities that could not be produced elsewhere and commanded a premium were moved out of the zone into other markets.

Pre-Colonial Trade - Apparently few commodities were grown for trade in the pre-colonial period. Kola nuts--in high demand to the arid north of the Plateau--were produced in abundance and traded for cloth and salt. From south of the Plateau the demand was primarily for slaves, and, later, for plantation

labor. That the High Plateau had this labor to offer can be attributed both to the salubrious climate at that altitude, and to the relative geographic isolation that protected the Highlands from earlier slave merchant raiders.

It appears that the introduction of maize cultivation in the Plateau in the post-Portuguese period allowed the population to expand. The indigenous staple food crops (sorghum, millet, African yam) are not as successful at High Plateau altitudes as maize (or as New World Xanthasoma--cocoyam--at Momo division altitude). Refugees from slave raids could feed themselves more reliably on the High Plateau with a maize based agriculture. Nevertheless, with high population growth it was inevitable that slave raiders would follow these refugees onto the High Plateau.

Meanwhile, the competition for good land on the Plateau had led to the formation of chieftaincies that could guarantee tenure security. The chiefdoms that were most successful in this respect were those that could control producers across a major ecological boundary. The borders of Kom, Bafut, Mankon (with its Meta connections), and Bali all ran from maize producing highlands to oil palm producing valleys to the south. Likewise, on the other side of the Plateau, Wiya and Nso were able to control maize, raffia, and kola producing zones simultaneously.

With this geographic control, trade could be also rigidly controlled by the chieftaincy. In several chiefdoms the Fon's "market bag" had to be rented for trading expedition to take place. The tree crops producing much of this trade wealth were not inherited by the brothers or sons of the planters, but reverted to the discretion of the lineage elder of the planter who had been designated by the Fon to attend at his court.

It was not so much that one could not trade without approval by a powerful chieftaincy, it was just that the risks of being traded, of becoming a slave, were greater without such approval. Wars generated slaves that were marketed through the warrior/trading secret societies of the chieftaincy. Loyal subjects of the chief were not, of course, traded.

The constant threat of Fulani slave raiding and the empire building activities from north of the Plateau favored strong administration of trade by the paramilitary organizations of the chieftaincy, even though the slave generating expansion efforts of Nso, as with Bamun to the east, were instrumental in forestalling Fulani attempts to generate slave trade through their own expansion into the Plateau.

There was less of a demand for women as slaves; their labor could be exploited equally effectively when they were wives. This has had implications for the producing/marketing style that followed. With so much of the long distance trading activity controlled by the male, secret societies of the chieftaincy, there was little employment alternative for the women but to remain on their farms and hand over their tradable income to their husbands. The fact that a lone male on a farm was more vulnerable to removal as a slave than a lone female was, may also have favored this particular sexual division of labor.

Colonial Trade- After the German conquest, the High Plateau remained primarily a source of labor (now for the plantations to the south) rather than of produce. The conquered chieftaincies were able to re-establish some of their power by facilitating this labor recruitment process. The more Spartan warrior organizations of Bali, which were unique in that lineage membership was not a criterion of membership, were mobilized by the Germans as henchmen. Hence, after the establishment of PAX GERMANICA it remained risky for a small producer or petty trader to travel too far afield on a marketing venture.

Throughout the colonial period few roads were built to the Bamenda Highlands. When coffee production finally spread from the francophone West Province to the anglophone Northwest, there was a shortage of coffee buyers. Even Greek traders who had penetrated the lowland cocoa producing areas did not venture to the High Plateau to buy coffee. To prevent the Northwest coffee from being marketed through the French controlled West Province, the British hastily organized co-operatives in the Northwest.

Co-operatives and the Federal Period - The co-operative structure duplicated the pre-colonial pattern of indigeneous government presiding over major marketing activities. In fact, it was not long before first-level co-operatives were organized into unions that, in many cases, corresponded to their jurisdictions of the pre-colonial chiefdoms. But the co-operatives offered more opportunities for more producers (male) to become involved in marketing activities than they had as members of the chief's secret societies in the pre-colonial period.

With the growth of coffee co-operatives, however, there was little stimulus for male labor, freed from the burden of

defense and plantation work, to assist females in producing food crops for a wider market. Men had increased three crop specialization (kola to the northeast, oil palm to the southwest; and raffia, plantain and banana everywhere) with the cessation of warfare in the colonial period. But excess labor was absorbed by the southern plantations to the point that women's food producing responsibilities, far from being alleviated, were intensified. The spread of coffee as a male-managed, market-oriented tree crop solidly perpetuated the rigorous sexual division of labor. In fact, to the degree that coffee trees took over fields nearer home (like the home compound, coffee trees need to be set on well-drained ground), women had to walk further in order to cultivate adequate subsistence for the family. Furthermore, frequently women will assist, if not totally supplant, the men in pruning and weeding the coffee. Thus, the spread of the coffee economy has placed more demand on a woman's time, leaving little time for travel to marketplaces or marketing employment.

The extent to which women's co-operatives have reversed, or are likely to reverse, this trend is given careful treatment in a latter section of this report.

The United Republic: the Baffousam - Bamenda Road

The importance of the recent all-weather link between Bamenda and the West Province cannot be overstated. Surplus crop production has increased significantly as shown by the production and marketing statistics cited in the economics sections of this report. This road has allowed the Northwest to compete with production from the ecologically similar West Province for southern markets.

However, the indications are that employment in trade has not been proportionally stimulated. Rather, larger, urban-based merchants are extending their activities up the marketing chain, engaging a minimum number of local buying agents. Producers are not moving further down the marketing chain to trade with each other and to take advantage of reciprocal ecological advantages for certain crops. This lack of market aggressiveness by the local population remains one of the key concerns in trying to understand the role of market participants and the resultant impact on producer income. I will review our findings on the influence of trader organizations, producer organizations, demand structure, and storage and handling technology on this characteristic of the marketing system before evaluating the possible role of market interventions (co-opera-

tives, credit unions, etc.) in correcting it.

Trader Organizations

Just as one is struck with the small proportion (by West African standards) of producer/retailers (particularly female) in the Northwest, one also notes the absence of ethnically exclusive associations among the long distance traders. To be sure, industrial imports from Nigeria are handled almost exclusively by Ibos; Bamileke from the West Province dominate small stock, particularly goat, purchases in the Northwest; and while butchers are almost all Hausa, or conveniently identified as such--Hausa Muslims have a reputation for handling only sanitary meat--the major cattle traders appear to come from diverse ethnic backgrounds.

This relative lack of any ethnically controlled specialization must be attributed to the relative low profitability of trade in the Northwest Province. Where the traders' margins are highest (potatoes, vegetables, and livestock), so are the risks. Most of the traders in the Northwest are there because it is their home, not because of the trading opportunities. Even the heavily capitalized Bamileke traders from the next Province, besides trading real estate in Bamenda, only come into the Northwest to purchase small stock. The unpopular but active Ibo have confined much of their trading interest to industrial imports. For other commodities, far from seeking to exclude a competitor, a Northwest trader cheerfully tolerates competition. He is more interested in an increased volume of trade serving to stimulate production and thereby lowering producer prices, and in investments in transport infrastructure, than he is threatened by the danger of having to outbid a competitor.

This trader knows that a large percentage of food crops spoil before they can be sold. He also knows that this producer is unlikely, for spatial and organizational reasons, to find or to reach alternative market places. The producer, for the same reasons, is unlikely (except perhaps around Bamenda) to take a step down the market chain towards the consumer. The limited marketing outlets lead to uneven coverage in the rural hinterland and therefore to periodic scarcities and price fluctuations. These events in turn dissuade the small producer from intensifying commitment to the commercial sector.

This uneven coverage raises transport costs. Without any guarantee of a timely backhaul load, the transporter is obliged to raise rates. As distances increase, trader margins also rise. The margin is as wide as the deals the trader can make are infrequent. He understands, however, that if the volume of trade would increase, transport costs could fall,

and that, even with smaller margins, total profit would increase. Therefore he tolerates the entrance of new trader capital into the system. Only if transport costs to the lucrative and nearby Nigerian market were reduced would the issue of producer bargaining power begin to make itself felt in the trader's calculation profit. Demand for produce in the Cameroon is not so high that the Northwest merchant runs across more competitors than he can handle.

A structural change in this situation could possibly be achieved if merchant credit were targeted on those petty traders purchasing foodstuffs in the Northwest. Such credit could capitalize them sufficiently to be able to effectively store cyclically high demand produce (maize, potatoes, beans) against periods of glut at the centers of consumption. In the present system the opportunity cost of capital is too high for them to want to tie up their investments in food stores long enough to achieve this advantage. FONADER and Credit Union loans to such merchants, however, while accelerating trade, have not lead to the pursuit of such a storage strategy. In a later section of this summary I will discuss whether or not accelerated storage-marketing linkage might not be most effectively managed by the co-operatives.

Producer Organizations

We have seen how the average producer has been kept by the sexual division of labor and other aspects of local-level political organization from a more active participation in marketing activities. In the pre-colonial period, political, and, hence, physical survival depended on the almost continuous consociation of male warrior groups and secret societies. The pressure towards migrant labor in the colonial period and coffee production in the post-colonial era perpetuated the male separation from food producing activities. Equally, women remained isolated from the sphere of majority marketing activities. Men, for their part, have only been likely to participate in food production in groups, varying in scale and legality from the njangi rotating credit associations to the credit unions and co-operatives, rather than as individual entrepreneurs. The latter more often appear out of the educated class, or from subgroups of Muslim merchants.

These historical constraints on female participation in marketing have not been as unnecessary as is implied by the popular view of women breaking their backs in the fields while men pass the afternoon drinking mimbo. For every male over forty passing the afternoon talking with his peers, there has been at least one under forty engaged as a member of a communal

youth society in preparing a field, bringing in a harvest, or erecting a building (frequently the chief's palace). These communal work groups still play an important role in breaking labor bottlenecks for both the male and female farming enterprises, as no technological alternatives are available. The organization, networking, disciplining, and, often, the precise disposition of these communal work groups is adjudicated at great fairness in these male, afternoon discussion sessions. Women farmers may choose which youth groups to invite or hire onto their farms, and when it is to be done, but the social networks underlying the organization and solidarity of these work groups are fine-tuned by the male elders in their informal meetings.

In the past these group discussions were probably productive, in-as-much as an optimal distribution of the labor force was effected as a result. Recently, of course, much of that labor has disappeared, however temporarily, to the cities or plantations, leaving little labor to be allocated. However, an equally important function performed by these informal male group meetings has been land allocation. Elder males, many of whom have earned idleness as leaders of the land-holding lineages, plan land use at the community or even chieftaincy level . Empowered to make usufructory decisions for lineage land, these elders can use their afternnon discussions sessions to allocate land according to household need and ability, as well as to the soil and ecological characteristics.

This land assignment function of informal male meetings has become increasingly important as the demand for prime, acessible farmland has accelerated. What is now taking place is a relatively sophisticated attempt by an increasingly marginalized producer class to retain control over their farmland. Through these informal discussions, lineage elders are able to carefully adjudicate the allocation of lineage land between lineage members and certain strangers, so that few of either are able to alienate a parcel of this corporate property by obtaining an official land deed. The dangers that this land alienation process poses to the bulk of the farming population, who are unlikely to be able to obtain any of these written deeds for themselves, is keenly perceived. The time spent in land-use decisions, particularly in-so-far as it perpetuates a sexual division of labor in agriculture, and, therefore, a low level of market orientation and participation, should be evaluated in the wider framework of increasing landlessness in the more densely populated sections of the Province. For the farming majority that has both financial and procedural difficulty

in obtaining land deeds, lineage solidarity, with all the discussion time that is required, is often their best hope for retaining equitable access to desirable and accessible farming space.

Resettlement to areas where farming land is not in such great demand is conceivable, but the costs of breaking with communal labor networks that have been carefully elaborated over the generations are high. These costs of resettlement could be reduced if some technological alternative to communal work groups for meeting seasonal labor bottlenecks were available.

Demand Structure & Purchasing Power

One of the objectives of the interdisciplinary methodology attempt in this study was a consideration of the relationship between increased supply from the rural hinterland and the generation of income there. In the economic system involving the Northwest Province, where the site of effective demand remains primarily urban, aggregate demand is low. Market linkages and trader networks are tilted in favor of urban purchasing power, with rural to rural, producer to consumer linkages found only in the immediate vicinity of an urban center such as Bamenda. The rural population closer to Bamenda is better served by more proximate rural market locations than equally dense rural populations elsewhere in the Province. This difference can be related to the greater rural purchasing power, and the consequent agricultural specialization, in the Bamenda suburbs.

The marketing system elsewhere in the Province does not engender either pricing alternatives or rural to rural exchanges such as to increase producer purchasing power. Little in the colonial and post-colonial marketing history of the Province has altered this pattern of centralizing trade around the seat of local political authority. Marketing in pre-colonial times led most often from the seat of a chiefdom directly to a border market rather than to an adjacent chiefdom. Trading was handled by male groups organized around the chief, so that diplomacy could be combined with marketing. Consequently, trade rarely took place between politically defined exchange centers. As much of the Province's post-colonial wealth has been earned from coffee, and as this wealth has circulated outside of the system of rural marketplaces, there has been little post-colonial inducement to the development of a classical hexagonal network of exchange points to supplant the long-standing dendritic connections.

Diminishing rural purchasing power has all the standard symptoms of underdevelopment: Declining nutrition (a DS/N household consumption survey was undertaken in a village in Momo division simultaneously with this study, but no exact findings are yet available) leading to declining health and energy for production initiatives. What is more specific to the Northwest, however, is the way in which such rural surplus income as there is gets channeled back into urban-oriented pursuits (schooling, real estate, shops, craft enterprises, etc.), rather than back into farm production. Even when women have surplus income from crop sales, that income more often goes into school fees, rising household expenditures, or is given to husbands rather than being spent on farm inputs. This trend can only partly be attributed to the lack of price incentives for those farm inputs. Men controlling this surplus income can only respond to price incentives for coffee, rice (in some areas), and, marginally, banana/plantain production. Price incentives would have to be significantly larger for them to direct any income toward investments in the broad range of crops that women cultivate.

National and regional demand for Northwest produce is given much attention in the middle section of this report. The growing demand for Northwest livestock is most conspicious. Price rises for meat are the result of increased demand, not of increased costs from overgrazing and farmer/grazier disputes. This demand pull is less likely to be a key factor in price rises of the food commodities given the amount that remains unsold and unconsumed over the course of a year. Some of the rise in the price of these food commodities can be attributed to increasing costs of production. Under these circumstances, there is a slight danger of producer prices falling if the amount and timing of the supply of the higher demand crops (potatoes, beans, vegetables, and to a lesser extent, maize) were to meet the urban demand. Likewise, in-as-much as supply shortcomings are more attributable to storage rather than production blockages, cultivating this urban demand for far away Northwest produce will not immediately serve to raise the price of the latter. But the increase in volume handled, even at present prices, will lead to gains in producer incomes.

The key regional planning question, however, is whether this projected co-ordination of supply and demand through improved storage technology and management will also lead to: (1) Increased employment in marketing, and therefore to greater rural purchasing power, so that investments in rural production

become more regular; or only to (2) A greater scale of operations for the small number of long distance traders already handling the bulk of Northwest produce. Only the first of these developments would rectify those market imperfections resulting from the paucity and lack of flexibility of the Provinces, formal and informal, marketing personnel.

Again, it has not been our finding that imperfections of supply meeting demand are due to production constraints on that supply. Larger farms producing on a more efficient scale have not proved to be too much more competitive than the small farm.

Co-operatives, Credit Unions and Market Interventions

A separate feasibility report is being prepared on the precise optimal articulation between the co-operative structures and the marketing system of which this is a baseline study. Therefore, we have only sought to draw some lessons from the past experience of this articulation.

It has already been noted how much the vitality of the coffee and women's co-operatives can be explained by the absence of other opportunities for employment in marketing. Factors of spatial isolation and economic organization have been cited as constraints on these opportunities. A further constraint is related to the reluctance of the major traders to invest in elaborate storage and processing infrastructure. Private mill operators (even the larger scale Bamenda rice millers) conduct their business separately from their trader clients. However large their operations, these traders prefer to keep their assets maximally liquid and are reluctant to invest in fixed capital in marketing, except, perhaps, in trucks. Urban real estate and urban enterprise are considered safer refuges for this merchant capital.

Under these circumstances, a substantial argument could be made for the introduction of innovations in marketing infrastructure through the co-operative organizations--if that structure could be brought to meet certain managerial standards.* Part of this argument would have to include an evaluation of the co-operatives' ability to gain marketing contracts for the additional produce they are handling, since it is clear that at projected demand levels this additional produce will not automatically be absorbed. If a case could be made for such an ability, then a special organizational strategy for articulating with producers would have to be worked out for each

*See report submitted by R. Shillinglaw to USAID for details.

commodity according to that commodity's production, processing and storage characteristics. Points of departure for each of the higher-demand food commodities might be listed as follows:

1. Purchasing and storing potatoes against periods of peak demand would be an elaborate technological and managerial feat which only the co-operatives might be organized on the appropriate scale to perform; but even then, only after restructuring their own management incentives, and after substantial (subsidized) investments in storage technology and management training have been made.

   Furthermore, even with such a subsidized storage advantage, the co-operatives could not compete with the private trade by retailing these potatoes. They would have to be flexible in exploiting market opportunities in order to develop regular marketing contracts with regular buyers. The price and reliability of these contracts would have to be such that these buyers would not be induced to open bidding between the co-operatives and the private suppliers each time that they needed potatoes.

2. The high demand vegetable crops (tomatoes, cabbages, etc.) would be even trickier to store against those more frequent times when demand exceeds supply, and evacuation of surplus stock to the unsaturated expatriate market might prove more feasible. Expatriate truck farms in the West Province targeted on this market are presumably proof of this. Again, maybe only the co-operatives and not the private African trader or small farmer would be efficiently capitalized to compete with these expatriate agribusinesses.

3. The growing demand for Northwest beans is also conspicuous (as a protein alternative to increasingly expensive meat), but because storage of these beans is not too technologically complex, it is hard to see how the co-operatives with their expensive employee time could compete with the private trade here.

4. The threshold between on-farm maize storage and that which the cumbersome co-operatives could offer also seems to favor the farmer. Inspecting stocks for spoiled, weeviled morsels prior to storing it is an even more labor intensive process than potato inspections. Thus

even if the scale and present instability of the maize trade were found to favor some co-operative involvement, it might make more sense to store the produce of discrete producer groups separately, without going to the expense of inspecting it, and then holding these groups accountable for spoilage. Thus the labor intensive inspection process would not have to be assumed by the co-operative management.

5. Rice has proved to be a bit of a problem for most of the co-operatives handling it. For one thing, the costs of producing, processing, and marketing it have not proved competitive with certain grades of imported rice. However, the co-operatives claim that with the proper grading and hulling equipment they could compete. This sort of equipment is not being obtained by private sector rice processors. Furthermore, when rice hulling is performed on a large enough scale--as could be done at the co-operative level--it could become attractive for the poultry enterprise in the West Provinces to come and purchase the bran by-products.

It is the firmest finding of this study, however, that the best food marketing opportunity for the co-operatives in the Northwest is with livestock fattened for the late dry season, when meat prices are high and availability low. The CAM/CUUL credit unions and even FONADER are finding loans to cattle traders attractive. But it is the farmers who are in the best position for producing livestock forage for the dry season livestock fattening. The usual problems with such schemes are:

(1) The extension overhead for establishing the proper timing for the proper feeding ration is high;
(2) Inputs of mineral supplements have to be available in a timely fashion;
(3) Such investments of labor (forage) and finance (feed supplements) in a single animal is risky without a guarantee of veterinary support;
(4) Local livestock buyers know that fattened animals have to be sold promptly, so they are willing to wait out small farmer fatteners in order to get better prices.

In the Northwest these constraints are not as serious as elsewhere in West Africa because the existing co-operative structure is suited to overcoming some of them. For example:

1. Farmers who are already members of co-operatives are already involved in a system in the extension of farm interests: Adding livestock feeding inputs to those already being extended should not incur too much additional expenditure;

2. The well-established relations between the farmer and the co-operative might be more likely to lead to the timely provision of mineral supplements than if relations have to be initiated with an extension service for the fattening scheme;

3. The co-operative could stock pile the necessary veterinary supplies to reduce animal loss risks to the fattener. At present such supplies are in such great demand from the veterinary service that they are apparently not regularly available to producers. Furthermore, the co-operative could impose an insurance fee on each participant in the fattening scheme to overcome the impact or any risk on the individual participant.

4. The co-operative could truck some of these fattened stock directly to the consumption centers to insure that local traders purchase the rest of them at their weight value.

Regional Planning

Overall livestock production increases, however, will require some thorough-going land use planning. The costs and benefits of using given areas of land for livestock or farming should be carefully examined, and top priority should be given to the land tenure reforms necessary to effecting this optimal land use. It seems clear that range management for cattle herds could be most effectively pursued if the grazier had secure land tenure claims, both in appropriate hillside pasture for the rainy season and in bottom land pasture for the dry season.

The coordination of this ecologically sound transhumance with overall land use planning is emphasized here, because in assessing the demand for commodities produced in the Northwest Province, we have found livestock predominant. However, at present, an insufficient proportion of the rural population is engaged in the production of this high demand commodity. Yet this fact should not lead planners to neglect livestock, but rather to focus on the sorts of sedentary fattening schemes mentioned above.

As far as crop commodities are concerned, it is our finding that marketing linkages could, at least initially, provide as much stimulus to production as would most presently proposed interventions in the production process itself. The development of these marketing linkages, as should be clear from what follows, will require the careful spatial planning of infrastructural support and the careful sociological planning of credit support.

Chapter I:

ECONOMIC PARAMETERS OF AGRICULTURAL MARKETING IN THE NORTHWEST PROVINCE, CAMEROONS

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INTRODUCTION

Objectives:

There are three major objectives of this portion of the Northwest Marketing study:

1) To assess the supply of and demand for major agricultural commodities in the Northwest Province.
2) To evaluate the foodcrop marketing system and describe various problems faced by the participants in that system.
3) To study co-operative involvement in foodstuff marketing operations.

This is obviously an undertaking of a broad nature and, given the constraints of time and information available, some areas can be covered in greater detail than others. However, we hope that information presented here, as well as the evident gaps, can serve as the basis for further marketing studies in the Northwest Province.

Methodology:

Information for this report was gathered in a number of ways. First, numerous government officials were contacted and interviewed. They were very helpful in making available the existing quantitative data and also providing more qualitative impressions of marketing problems in the Northwest 1). Second, a number of traders, farmers, and co-operative members were interviewed informally. The reliability of the information obtained in this type of setting comes mainly from the type of rapport developed between the researcher and the

1) I would like to thank in particular: Mr. A. N. Atanga, Mr. M. N. Mosi, and Mr. Thomas Tata.

person interviewed. In this respect, local Peace Corps volunteers, co-operative officials, and research assistants were of great help in establishing an atmosphere of confidence. Third, we tried a somewhat more formal questionnaire technique in Bali-Kumbat over a three-week period. This approach did prove moderately successful, although its statistical reliability suffers from the small sample size and the time constraint which prevented adequate pre-testing of the questionnaire. Finally, many government documents and other reports were consulted to give a better overall picture of agricultural production and marketing in the area.

I would like to thank the government and co-operative officials, Peace Corps Volunteers, and Northwest residents who provided patient explanations and generous assistance during our three months of work in the area.

NORTHWEST PROVINCE

Divisions and Major Towns

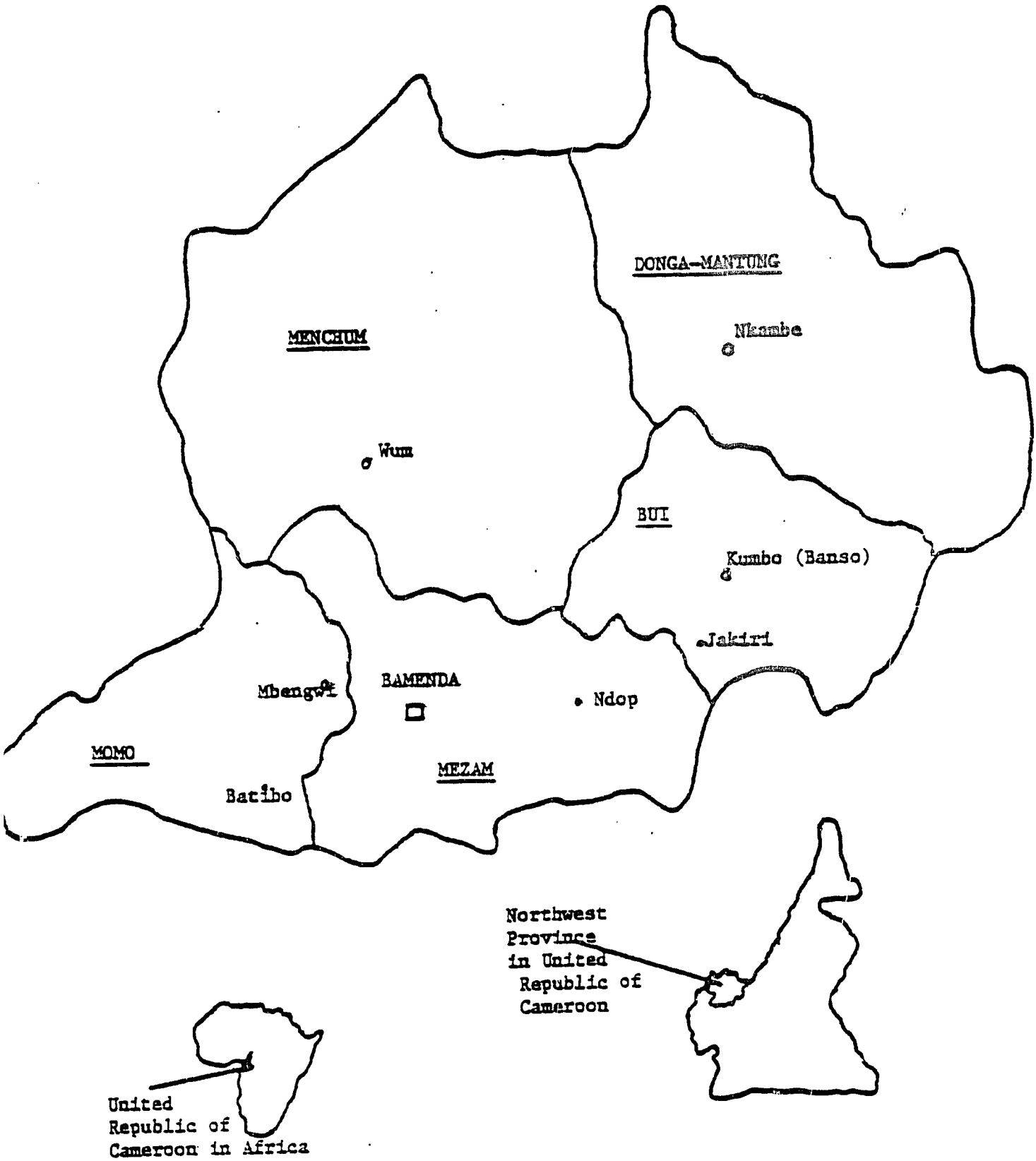
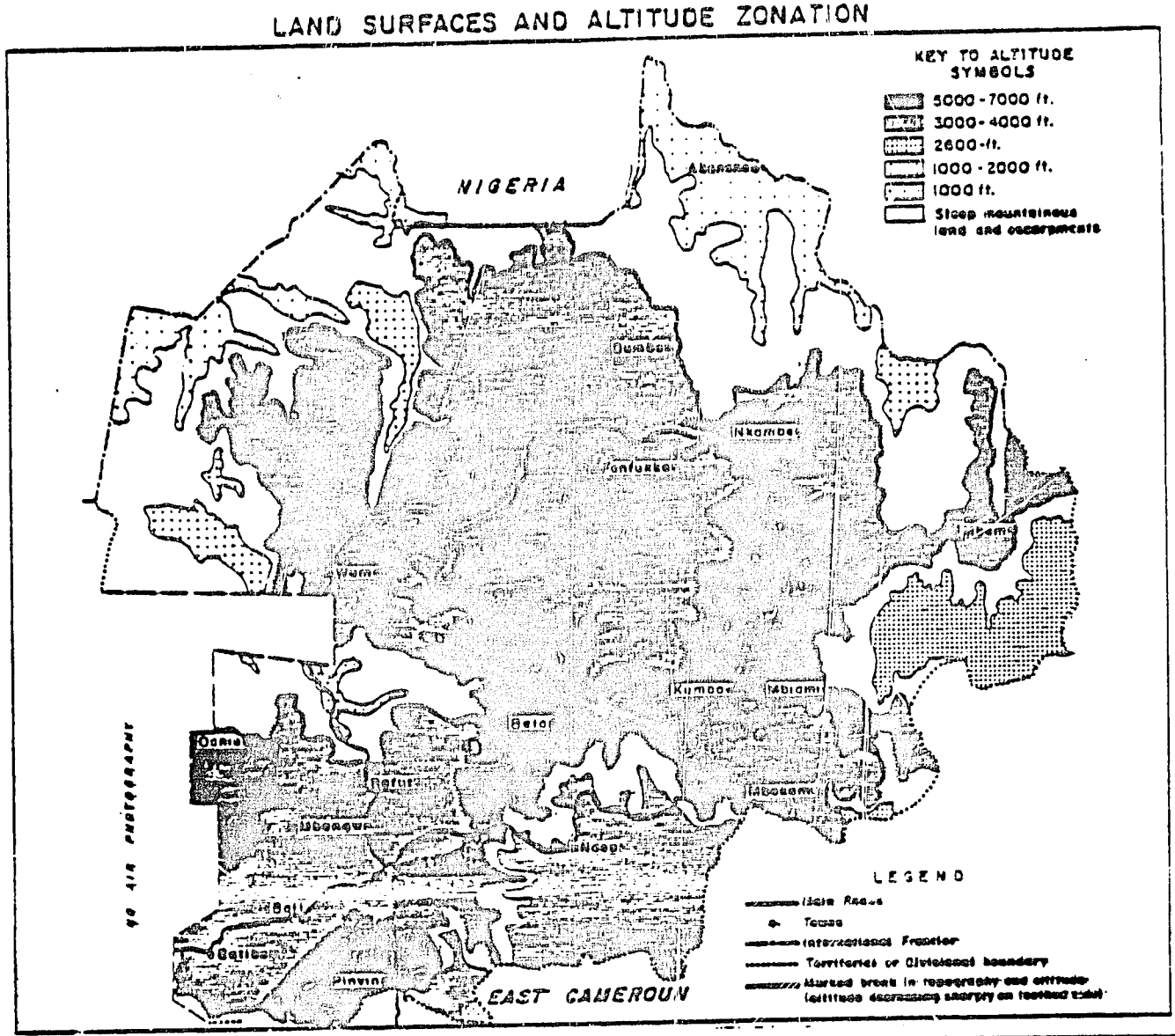
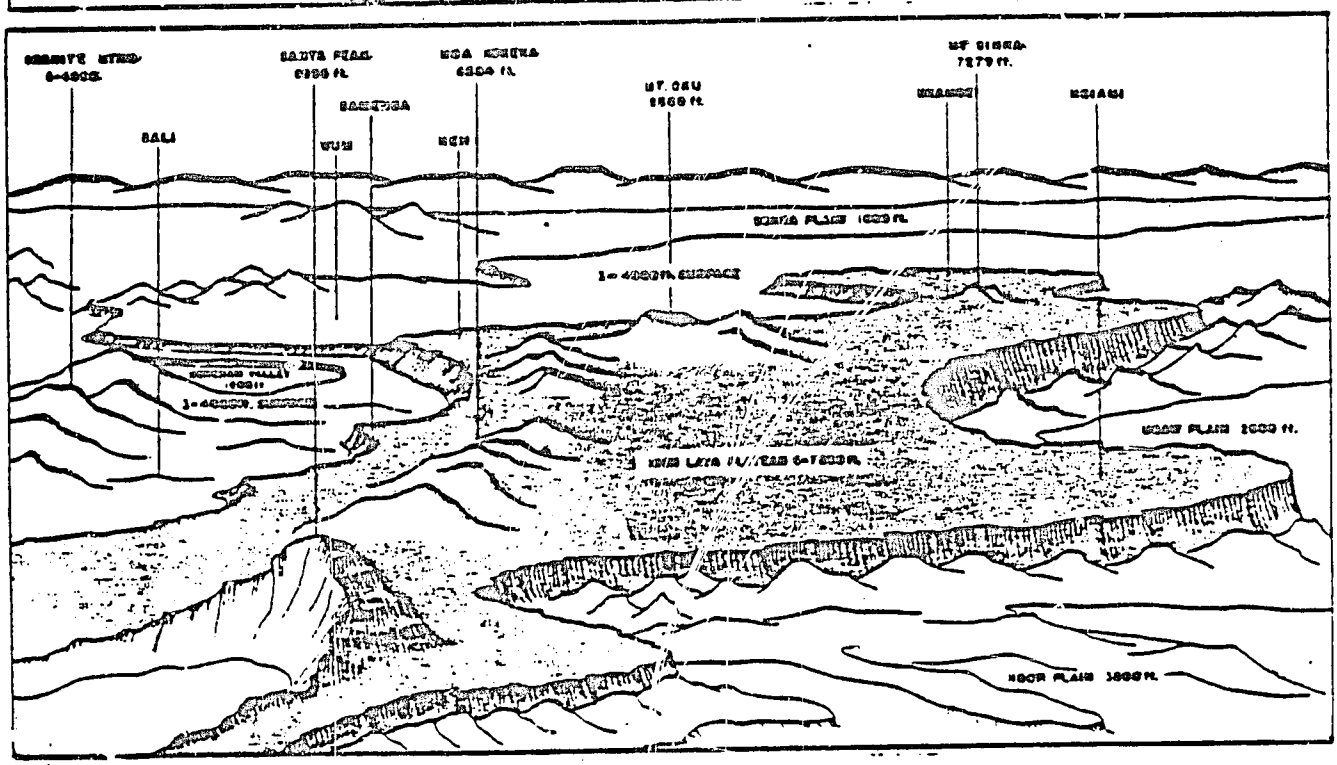


Fig. 5

THE BAMENDA AREA

LAND SURFACES AND ALTITUDE ZONATION





Source: Hawkins - Soils & Ecology of West Cameroon, p. 13

FOODCROP PRODUCTION IN THE NORTHWEST PROVINCE

Physical Environment:

The Northwest Province produces a wide variety of both tropical and temperate-zone agricultural commodities. Both climatic and geographic factors contribute to the diversity of crop production.

Rainfall varies from slightly over 50 inches per annum in Babungo on the N'dop plain to over 154 inches in Mbande north of Nkambe. (See map 8, "Provisional Rainfall-Temperature Map", Hawkins)

Table 1 - Selected Average Annual Rainfall

Town	Average Annual Rainfall	Inches (mm)
Mbande	154	(3,912mm)
Kom	133	(3,378mm)
Wum	109	(2,769mm)
Bamenda	98	(2,489mm)
Nkambe	95	(2,413mm)
Mbengwi	87	(2,210mm)
Kumbo (Banso)	72	(1,829mm)
N'Dop	60	(1,524mm)
Babungo	53	(1,346mm)

Source: Map 8, Hawkins, The Soils and Ecology of West Cameroon, FAO, 1965.

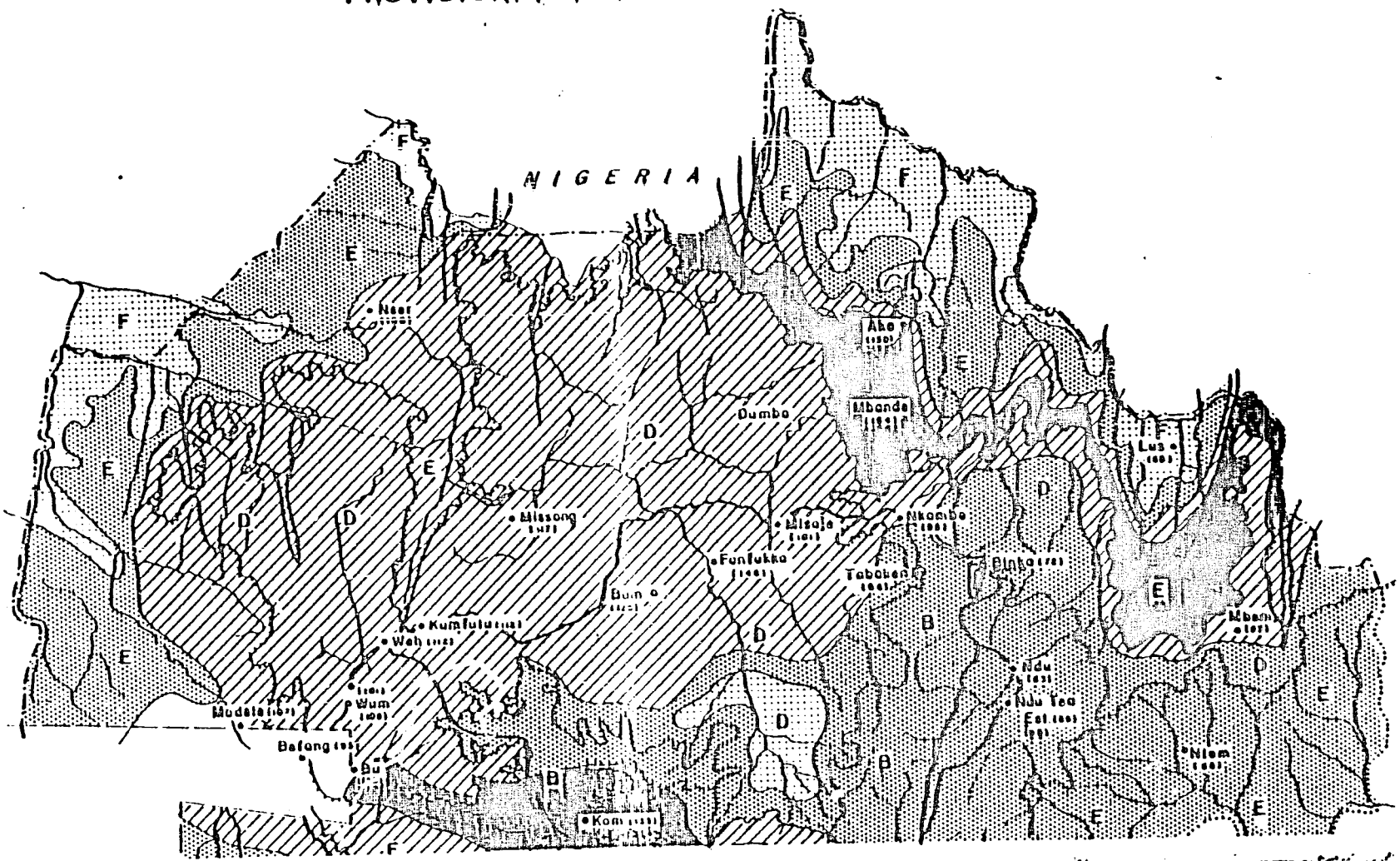
Rain generally falls from April to October with a short, cool dry season in November and December and a hot dry season from January to March.

Average temperature also varies a great deal, mostly as a function of altitude, which ranges from 2,300 feet above sea level (700m) to 9,876 feet (3,011m) on top of Mount Oku.

MAP 8

THE BAMENDA AREA

PROVISIONAL RAINFALL-TEMPERATURE MAP



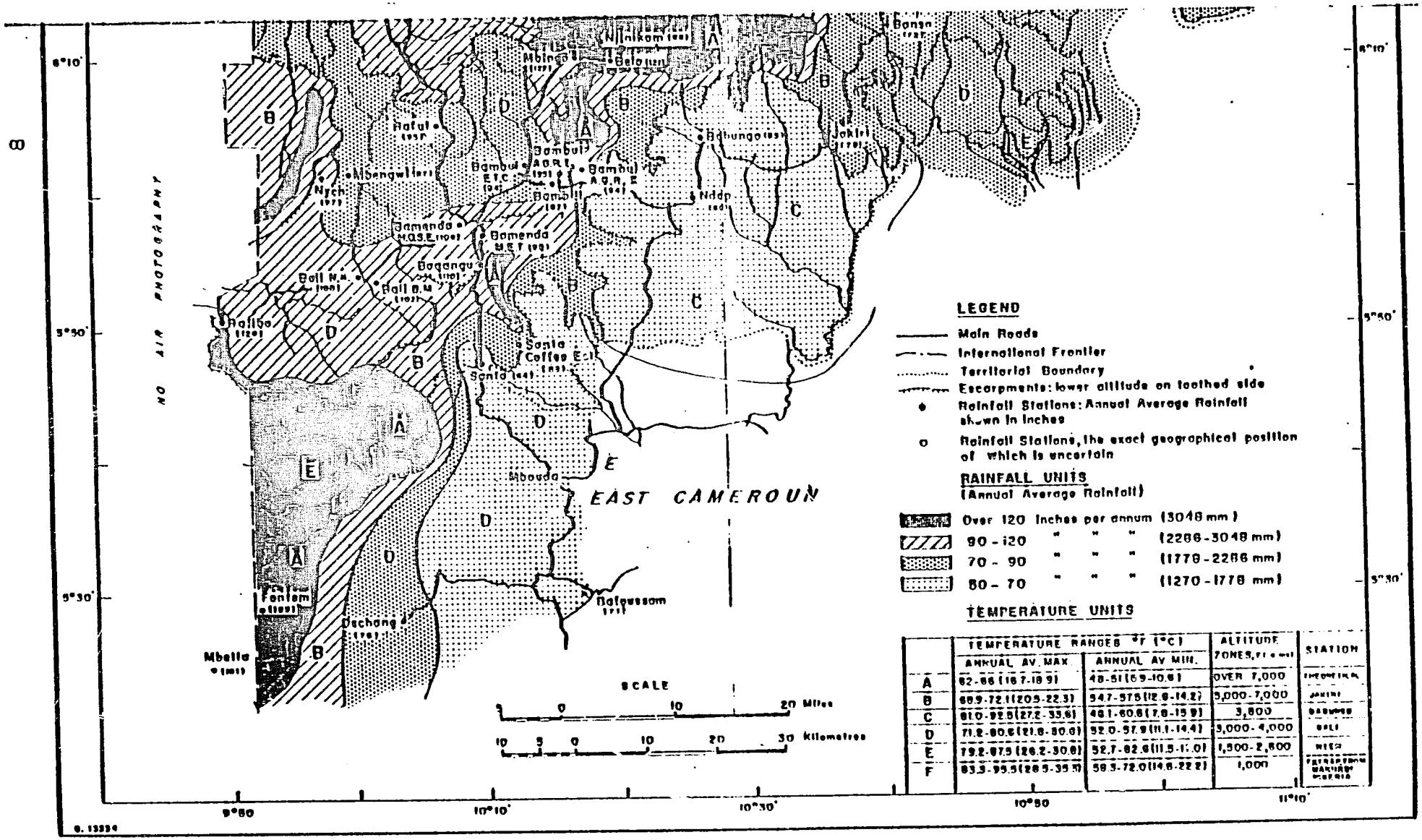

NO AIR PHOTOGRAPHY
EAST CAMEROUN
Banso
Nikom
Mbingo
Belonn
Bafut
Mbengwi
Nych
Bambui
Bambui A.G.R.I.
Bambui A.G.R.E.
Bambui E.T.C.
Bambui
Bambuno
Jakiri
Ndop
Bamenda M.G.S.E.
Bamenda M.E.T.
Bagangu
Bali N.M.
Bali B.M.
Santa Coffee Est.
Santa
Mbouda
Fontem
Dschang
Mbalta
Bafoussam
SCALE
0 10 20 Miles
10 5 0 10 20 30 Kilometres
8°10'
5°50'
5°30'
9°50
10°10'
10°30'
10°50
11°10'
LEGEND
Main Roads
International Frontier
Territorial Boundary
Escarpments: lower altitude on toothed side
Rainfall Stations: Annual Average Rainfall shown in inches
Rainfall Stations, the exact geographical position of which is uncertain
RAINFALL UNITS
(Annual Average Rainfall)
Over 120 inches per annum (3048 mm)
90 - 120 " " " (2286-3048 mm)
70 - 90 " " " (1778-2286 mm)
60 - 70 " " " (1270-1778 mm)
TEMPERATURE UNITS
TEMPERATURE RANGES °F (°C)
ANNUAL AV. MAX.
ANNUAL AV. MIN.
ALTITUDE ZONES
STATION
A 62-66 (16.7-18.9) 48-51 (8.9-10.6) OVER 7,000
B 68.9-72 (20.5-22.3) 54.7-57.5 (12.6-14.2) 5,000-7,000
C 81.0-92.5 (27.2-33.6) 48.1-60.8 (7.8-15.9) 3,800
D 71.2-80.6 (21.8-30.6) 52.0-57.9 (11.1-14.4) 3,000-4,000
E 79.2-87.5 (26.2-30.8) 52.7-62.6 (11.5-16.0) 1,500-2,600
F 83.5-95.5 (28.5-35.3) 58.3-72.0 (14.6-22.2) 1,000

Table 2 - Altitude Zones and Average Temperature Ranges

Station	Altitude Zone (ft.)	Temperature Ranges oF (oC) Annual Ave. Min.	Annual Ave. Max
Kom	over 7,000	48-51 (8.9-10.6)	62-66 (16.7-18.9)
Kumbo (Banso)	5,000-7,000	54-58 (12.6-14.2)	69-72 (20.5-22.3)
Babungo	3,800	46-61 (7.8-15.9)	81-92 (27.2-33.6)
Bali	3,000-4,000	52-54 (11.1-14.4)	71-80 (21.8-30.8)
Ntem	1,500-2,600	53-63 (11.5-17.0	79-87 (26.2-30.8)

Source: Hawkins, op. cit., Map 8

The result of the variability in rainfall, temperature, and altitude is the existence of a number of distinctive climatic zones (See map 2, "A Provisional Climatic Zonation", Hawkins). In the Kom area, the climate can be characterized as cold, cloudy, and misty. Average annual rainfall is high, and the terrain mountainous. Coffee and foodcrop cultivation often take place on relatively steep hillsides.

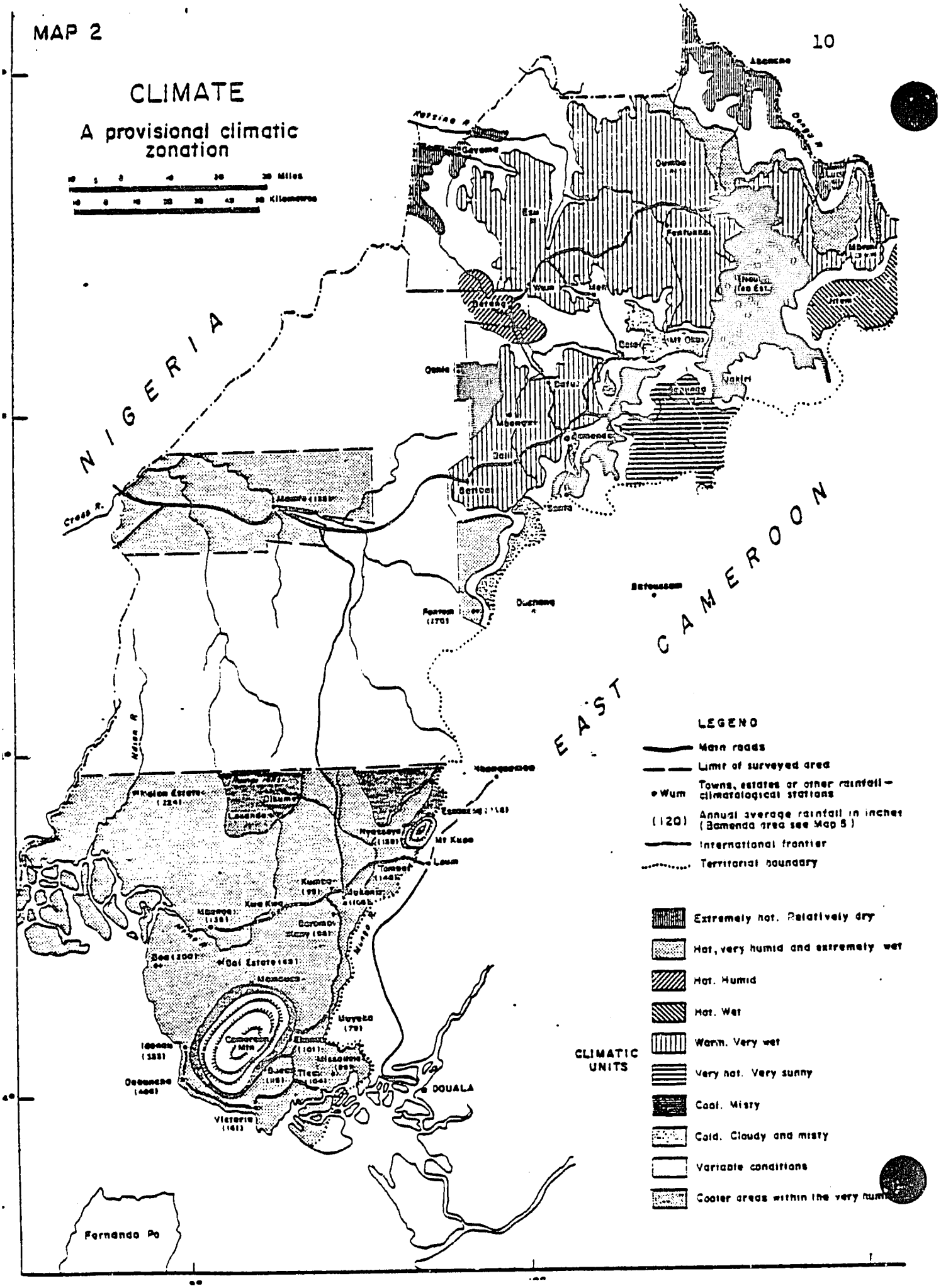
In the Banso (Kumbo) area, the climate is relatively cool and misty, with rainfall between 70-90 inches annually. The terrain ranges from hilly to mountainous. The region between Wum and Nkambe is also hilly or mountainous but on average, is at a lower altitude and with higher rainfall, the climate characterized as warm and very wet.

Moving down from the predominantly hilly terrain, there are several high plain areas particularly suited to agriculture. Much of the land in Mezam Division - on the N'dop plain and around Bamenda - and in the Momo Division comes under this category, with a hot and sunny climate. N'dop plain, however, has a lower average annual rainfall then the area around Bamenda.

MAP 2

CLIMATE

A provisional climatic zonation



Finally, there are a number of low-lying areas with a very hot and humid climate. These include the Mbaw plain area east of Banso, the Abonshe plain region, North of Nkambe, and some flat areas in Momo Division. There are also hot, humid valleys cutting deeply into otherwise mountainous regions, particularly in Bui and Mechum Divisions.

It is important to keep the diversity of the area in mind. These factors are fundamental in explaining land use patterns, divisional population density, cropping patterns, the difficulties of transport, widely varying crop yields, the distribution of divisional prosperity, etc. Of course, these factors also interact with the human environment, and this interaction must also be taken into account for a fuller understanding of the area.

Land Use:

With a land area of approximately 1,780,000 hectares, the Northwest Province has 3,8% of the national land area, with 9.1% of the nation's land under cultivation.

Table 3 - Agricultural Land in N.W.P. and Cameroon

Land Use	Total Hectarage		Hectarage Cultivated		Developed Hectarage	
Area	No	% of Nat'l	No	% of Nat'l	No	% of Nat'l
Northwest	1,780,100	3.8%	134,418	9.1%	158,094	10.2
Cameroon	46,551,100	100	1,480,558	100	1,533,457	100

Source: 1972/73 Agricultural Census.

It is estimated that present land use in the Northwest Province is as follows:

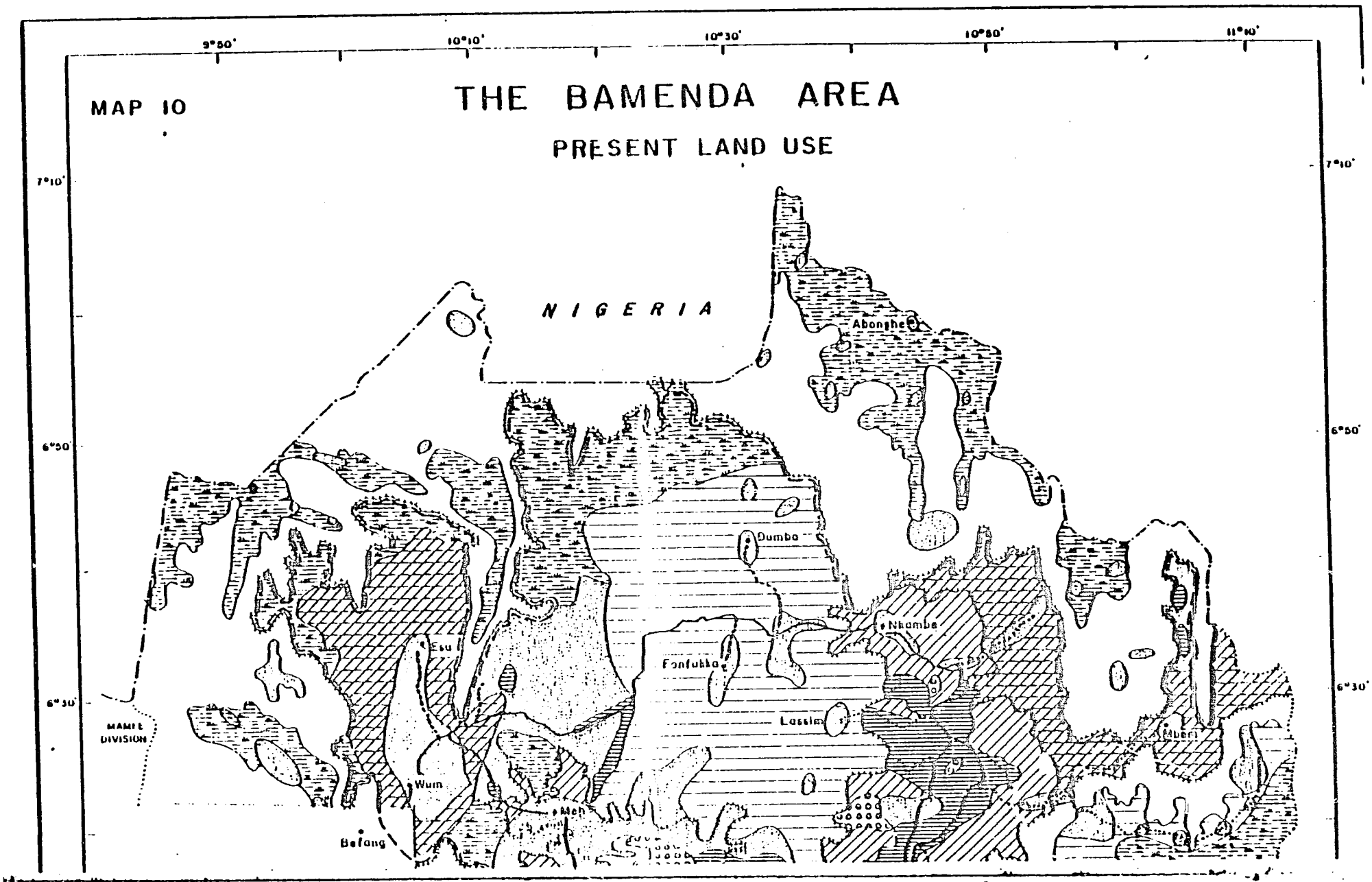
Table 4 - Land Use in Northwest Province

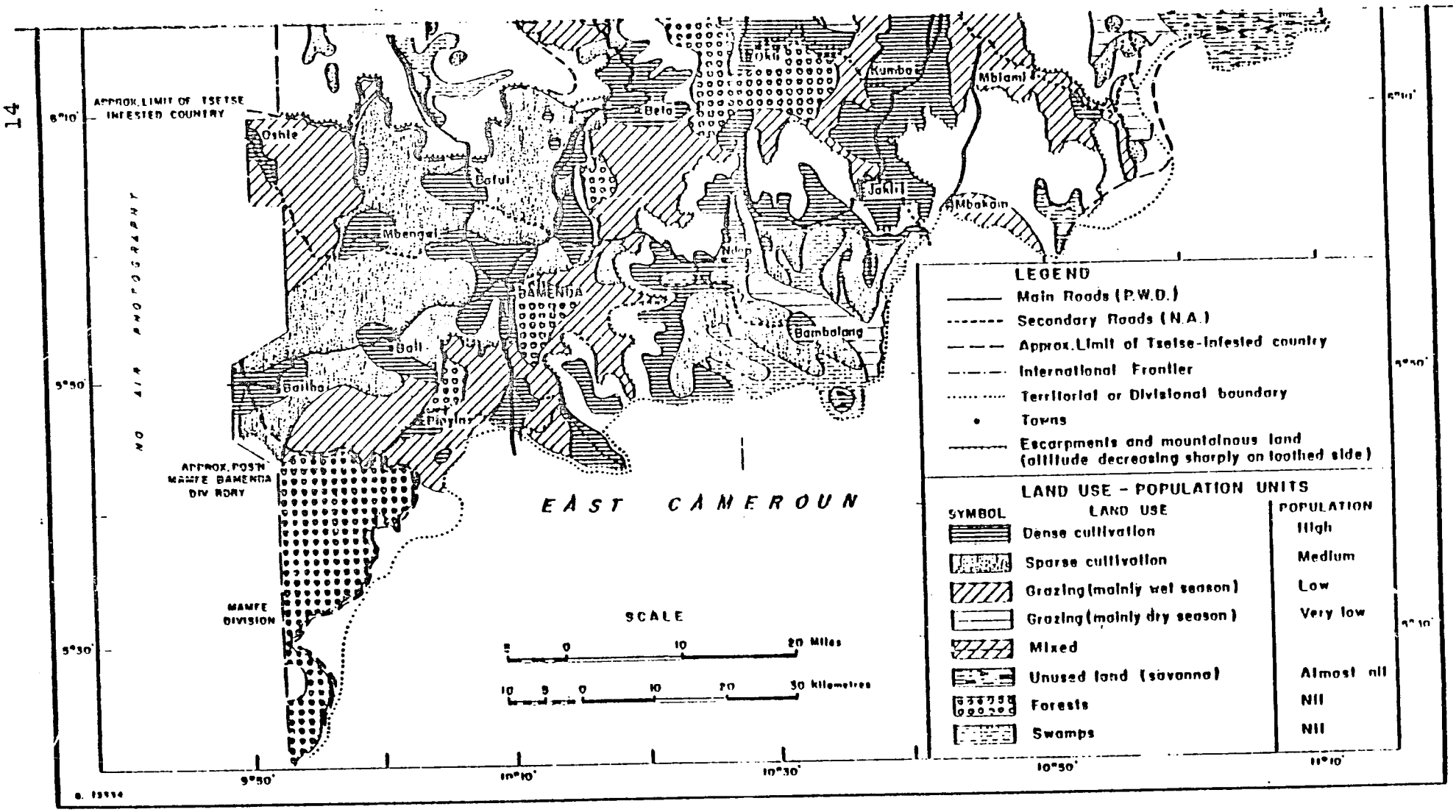
Cultivated Land	-	10.6%
Developed Agric. Land	-	11.0%
Forest Reserves	-	7.0%
Grazing Land	-	59.1%
Other (urban, swamps unused)	-	12.3%

Source: Provincial Delégation of Agriculture

The relatively large amount of developed agricultural land not cultivated (left fallow) derives from the cultural practices of traditional farming in the Northwest. Traditionally, an area was cleared and foodcrops were planted without the use of fertilizer until declining fertility became a problem on that plot. Then, another plot was cleared and planted, leaving the first plot to lie fallow for a number of years. Recently, however, due to a growing scarcity of land, land is left fallow for a shorter period and a general decline in fertility has been mentioned as a problem in the Province, although there is little evidence indicating the seriousness of this problem. Grazing land represents a large proportion of the province. There has been increasing competition between farmers and herders for land. 1)

1) See John Holtzman, John Staatz, and Michael Weber, Livestock Marketing in Northwest Province, USAID/Yaounde, 1979, for further discussion of this problem.


MAP 10
THE BAMENDA AREA
PRESENT LAND USE
9°50'
10°10'
10°30'
10°50'
11°10'
7°10'
6°50'
6°30'
NIGERIA
Abongshe
Dumbo
Nkamba
Esu
Fontubka
Lassim
Mbem
Wum
Men
Befang
MAMFE DIVISION


APPROX. LIMIT OF TSETSE INFESTED COUNTRY
NO AIR PHOTOGRAPHY
Oshie
Bafut
Mbengai
BAMENDA
Bali
Bailha
Pinyin
Bela
Boku
Kumba
Mbiami
Jakiri
Mbakam
Bambalang
APPROX. POSN MAMFE BAMENDA DIV BDRY
MAMFE DIVISION
EAST CAMEROUN
SCALE
20 Miles
30 kilometres
LEGEND
Main Roads (P.W.D.)
Secondary Roads (N.A.)
Approx. Limit of Tsetse-infested country
International Frontier
Territorial or Divisional boundary
Towns
Escarpments and mountainous land (altitude decreasing sharply on foothed side)
LAND USE - POPULATION UNITS
SYMBOL
LAND USE
POPULATION
Dense cultivation
High
Sparse cultivation
Medium
Grazing (mainly wet season)
Low
Grazing (mainly dry season)
Very low
Mixed
Unused land (savanna)
Almost nil
Forests
Nil
Swamps
Nil
9°50'
10°10'
10°30'
10°50'
11°10'
6°10'
5°50'
5°30'

A number of areas could be opened up for greater agricultural production if better roads were built to them. Ministry of Agriculture officials in the Northwest estimate that it would be possible to more than double the area of land under cultivation, without affecting the areas used for cattle grazing, assuming the use of improved production techniques 1), the availability of sufficient labor, and the opening up of new areas.

Agricultural Demographics:

The Northwest Province is one of the most densely populated areas of the country, second only to the Western Province. As can be seen in Table 5, the average population density is much higher than the national average. The Northwest Province's population also has a significantly higher percentage of people in rural areas than the national average.

Table 5 - Urban & Rural Population - N.W.P. and Cameroon

	Number	% of Nat'l	Number	% of Prov. or Nat'l	Number	% of Prov. or Nat'l	Density Innab/ Km^2
Northwest	980,531	12.8	146,099	14.9	834,432	85.1	52.9
Cameroon	7,663,246	100	2,153,372	28.1	5,509,873	71.9	15.3

Source: Note Annuelle de Statistique, 1977. Population figures for the Northwest are an update on the figure for the 1976 census.

A further breakdown shows that there is a wide range of population densities within the province. Mezam Division has by far the highest population density, at 104 inhabitants/km^2, with Menchum Division coming in with the lowest figure, at 30.2 inhab./Km^2.

1) Provincial Delegation of Agriculture for N.W.P., Evaluation of Agricultural Development, 1959/60 - 1979/80, Bamenda, 1979

Table 6 - Population Density in Northwest by Division

Divisin	Total Population		Surface Area		Population Density
	No.	%	(Km^2)	%	Inhab./Km^2
Total	914,912	100	17,300	100	52.9
Bui	142,015	15.5	2,300	13.3	61.7
Donga-Mantum	172,712	19.9	4,280	24.7	40.4
Menchum	183,055	20.0	6,060	35.0	30.2
Mezam	298,911	32.7	2,870	16.6	104.2
Momo	118,219	12.9	1,790	10.3	66.0

Source: Rensensement General, 1976, Vol. I, Tome 3, p. 96

Table 7 provides an indication of the distribution of the number of farms, rural population, surface area cultivated, and farm size within the province. Mezam Division has the largest number of farms, the greatest number of people on farms and active agricultural workers, the greatest area of cultivated land, and a larger than average farm size. It is hardly surprising that Mezam, then, is the most important producer of foodstuffs in the Province . Average provincial farm size is 1.22 hectares/farm, although this ranges from an average .70 hectares in Momo Division to an average 1.5 hectares in Menchum Division. (See Table 7)

Not only is there a wide range of average farms sizes between divisions, but also a broad distribution of individual farm size within the Province. Table 8 gives the number of farms and total surface area cultivated within a range of farms size from less than .25 hectares to up to 10 hectares. (See Table 8).

Table 7 - Population and Farm Distribution - N.W.P.

Area	Number of Farms		Population Residing on Farms		Active Workers on Farms		Surface Area Cultivated		Ave. Farm Size
	Number	% of N.W.P.	Number	% of N.W.P.	Number	% of N.W.P.	Ha	% of N.W.P.	
Northwest	110,242	100	709,144	100	314,636	100	134,349	100	1.22
Mezam	36,141	32.8	227,205	32.0	93,331	29.7	51,349	38.2	1.42
Momo	15,432	14.0	106,728	15.1	49,420	15.7	10,823	8.1	.70
Donga-Mantung	18,610	16.9	126,782	17.9	53,938	17.1	19,779	14.7	1.06
Menchum	16,766	15.2	135,132	19.0	64,295	20.4	25,182	18.7	1.50
Bui	23,293	21.1	113,297	16.0	53,652	17.1	27,284	20.3	1.17

Source: 1972/73 Agricultural Census, p. 360

Table 8 - Distribution of Farm Size

	Cultivated Area (Area)											
	Less than 25	25-50	50-75	75-100	100-150	150-200	200-250	250-300	300-400	400-500	500-1000	Total
No. of Farms	11,623	17,342	14,756	15,139	22,519	10,766	6,553	4,279	4,676	769	1,820	110,242
%	10.5	15.7	13.4	13.7	20.4	9.8	5.9	3.9	4.2	.7	1.7	100
Surface Area Cultivated	1,685	6,630	9,180	13,089	27,589	18,864	14,511	11,755	15,924	3,253	11,938	
%	1.3	4.9	6.8	9.7	20.5	14.0	10.8	8.7	11.8	2.4	8.9	100

Source: 1972/73 Agriculture Census, p. 178

It is interesting to note that while only 26.2% of the farms are over 1.5 hectares, they account for some 56.6% of the land actually cultivated.

Certainly, some of the farms under .25 hectares are essentially gardens cultivated by people in Bamenda and other towns. Also, there may be a smaller number of people cultivating the smaller farms. In any case, there does seem to be a wide distribution of farm sizes, at both the individual and divisional levels.

It is important to bear this in mind when designing strategies to improve marketing. Various categories of farmers and the various divisions will be affected differently by a given marketing intervention strategy. Obviously, the larger farmers and more productive divisions with more agricultural surplus have a greater interest in market improvements, than do the smaller, subsistence farmers and divisions producing mostly for local consumption. This problem will be discussed later, but it is important to think of the Northwest Province not as a homogeneous unit, but one with a stratified and differentiated rural sector.

Farm Size and Market Participation:

Farm size is positively related to the level of market participation, at both the provincial level and for the individual farmer. As a whole the Northwest Province, with an average farm size of 1.22 hectares, is considerably less involved in commercial agriculture then Cameroon as a whole, with an average farm size of 1.59 hectares, as is shown in Table 9.

Table 9 - Type of Cultivation by Area - N.W.P. & Cameroon

	Commercial Cultivation	Mixed Cultivation Predominantly Commerical	Mixed Cultivation	Subsistance Cultivation Only	Total
Northwest - Ha	622	30,979	32,701	93,792	158,094
%	.4	19.6	20.7	59.3	100
Cameroon - Ha	60,824	479,420	260,978	752,234	1,553,457
%	3.9	30.9	16.8	48.4	100

Source: 1972/73 Agricultural Census.

Only 20% of the surface area cultivated in the Northwest is for exclusively or predominantly commercial purposes, as compared to some 35% for Cameroon as a whole.

When the level of marketing activity is broken down by farm size, the figures also indicate a positive relationship, although to a lesser extent for the Northwest Province than for Cameroon. (See Table 10).

As farm size increases, so does the area of production aimed at growing a marketable surplus. This is not a surprising finding but it does provide support for the idea that farmers with agricultural surpluses would probably be more interested in market improvement than small, subsistence farmers.

Production System for Foodcrops:

We cannot attempt to provide an exhaustive discussion of the agricultural techniques used in the Northwest. However, it is useful to briefly discuss agricultural techniques and examine several broad indicators of the level of agricultural development.

The farming methods used in the Northwest Province are still very traditional. Generally, foodcrop production takes place on a number of

Table 10 - Distribution of Farms According to Size and Principal Orientation

		Area Cultivated (Ares)													
		Less than 50		50-100		100-200		200-300		300-500		More than 500		Total	
		No. of Farms	%	No. of Farms	%	No. of Farms	%	No. of Farms	%	No. of Farms	%	No. of Farms	%	No. of Farms	%
N	Home Consumption	28,148	97.2	28,582	95.6	32,295	97.0	10,313	95.2	4,852	89.1	1,680	92.3	105,870	96.0
W	Marketed	817	2.8	1,313	4.4	990	3.0	519	4.8	593	10.9	140	7.7	4,372	4.0
P	Total	28,965	100	29,895	100	33,285	100	10,832	100	5,445	100	1,820	100	110,242	100
C	Home Consumption	171,880	92.9	191,156	90.9	252,213	89.3	113,372	90.4	79,382	87.8	26,686	81.8	834,689	90.1
A	Marketed	13,151	7.1	18,954	9.1	30,117	10.7	12,072	9.6	10,965	12.1	5,947	18.2	91,206	9.9
M	Total	185,031	100	210,110	100	282,330	100	125,444	100	90,347	100	32,633	100	925,895	100

Source: 1972/73 Agricultural Census, P. 331 & 337

small plots scattered in different areas, the sum of which is considered to be a farm. Within a plot, ridges are formed and several crops are planted on the ridge. This method of intercropping is widely practiced for subsistence foodcrops, except for rice which is cultivated in pure stands. 1)

Intercropping can be seen as a method of risk minimization, which is probably the best description of the primary goal of the small, subsistence farmer, who is concerned with producing sufficient amounts of each type of crop needed to assure the family's existence. Intercropping is a way of maximizing the utilization of each plot of cleared land. It also retains soil fertility longer than simple mono-cropping without rotation. It remains a feasible and rational method of production as long as there is enough fallow land available to move on to when declining fertility reduces the output of an intensively cultivated plot of land. Judging from the large amount of land classified as "developed agricultural land" (but not in use) in the 1972/73 Agricultural Census, it has generally been possible to do this, although competition for land is becoming more intense. (See chapter on Land Tenure for more information).

It is necessary to point out that the distinction between "developed' (fallow) and "cultivated" agricultural land is often a matter of the degree of cropping intensity. Land that is considered "fallow" often

1) For a somewhat more complete description of production techniques is one area of the Northwest, see Wilson Tafon's report on Bali-Kumbat, Annex 1.

has some stalks of cassava, plantains, or other crops still growing on it. Hence, the Agricultural Census makes the distinction not between "developed" and "cultivated" land, but between sparsely and densely cultivated land. This distinction, along with the widespread intercropping, makes it very difficult to obtain reliable figures on the amount of pure hectarage planted in a certain crop. Hence, all hectarage (and production) figures must be treated with caution.

The major agricultural tools used in the Northwest are very basic: a short hoe and a machete. Table 11 gives estimates for the proportion of farms having various pieces of agricultural equipment.

Table 11 - Agricultural Technology

Agricultural Implement	Proportion of Farms with Equipment (%)	Fixed Installations	Proportion of Farms with Equipment (%)
Hoe	99.2	Drying Room	2.6
Knife (Machete)	98.8	Drying Floor	9.9
Axe	70.5	Shed	11.9
Shovel	30.0	Granary(Loft)	51.5
Pickaxe	19.8	Silo	1.5
Sickle	4.7		
Saw	11.0		
Shears	8.2		
Seeder	2.5		
Rake	2.8		
Wheelbarrow	1.2		
Watering Can	1.2		

Source: 1972/73 Agricultural Census, p. 255

The Agricultural Census (p. 257) shows that only 1% of the farms used sprayers in the Northwest, as compared with 15.4% in Cameroon as

a whole. There are a small number of tractors in the Northwest, but most of these belong either to the government or to heavily subsidized development programs such as the U.N.V.D.A. and W.A.D.A. Animal traction is being encouraged in the Province, but its use is not yet widespread, despite efforts at W.A.D.A. to train a number of young farmers in the use of oxen.

The use of chemical fertilizer or manure is limited largely to cash crops (coffee and rice), with foodcrops grown with little or no fertilization. However, in most categories, fertilization rates compare favorably with those for Cameroon as a whole, particularly for the use of manure (See Table 12).

Table 12 - Fertilizer Use in N.W.P. and Cameroon

	Percentage of Plots							
	Manure		Chemical Fertilizer		Manure & Chemical Fertilizer		No Fertilizer	
Type of Farming	N.W.P.	Camer	N.W.P.	Camer.	N.W.P.	Camer	N.W.P.	Camer
Commercial Cultivation Only	23.1	7.2	2.8	25.6	3.1	4.8	71.0	62.4
Mixed Cultivation-Predominantly Commercial	37.9	4.5	6.6	10.3	15.8	6.7	39.7	78.5
Mixed Cultivation	33.3	9.4	5.5	9.5	7.2	22.4	54.0	58.7
Subsistence Cultivation Only	10.0	7.4	0.2	0.9	0.2	0.9	89.7	90.9
Total	20.1		2.5	6.2	4.6	6.3	72.9	80.7

Source: 1972/73 Agricultural Census, p. 315 and 317

Efforts are being made to improve the level of farm education and increase the use of modern agricultural inputs, but much is left to be done, particularly in the area of agricultural education for women, who do the large majority of foodcrop cultivation. It is generally accepted that larger farmers are more willing to adopt new agricultural techniques, but this may be all the more reason to step up efforts to improve the productivity of the smaller farmer, particularly the women.

Employment & Income in Agriculture and Trade:

Agriculture is by for the most important source of income in the Northwest Province. The 1976 Population Census provides details of the structure of employment in the Province.

Table 13 gives a general idea of the work activities. Several items are of particular interest in this table. First, the rate of unemployment as derived from the ratio of the number of unemployed people with experience plus those looking for work for the first time to the total active population, is 10.4%, which compares to the reported national unemployment rate of 6.1% (which breaks down as follows:

Table 13 - Employment Structure - N.W.P.

	Number	% of Total Population age 6 & over
Total Pop. age 6 and Older	716,500	100
Active Population	312,904	43.7
Occupied Persons	280,344	39.1
Persons unemployed (with previous experience)	3,317	.5
Persons looking for work for 1st time	29,243	4.1
Inactive Population of which:	362,867	50.6
Housewives	97,764	13.7
Students	194,672	27.2
Others	70,431	9.8
Undetermined	40,729	5.7

Source: Rencesement General, 1976, p. 126, Vol. I, Tome 3

for the urban sector, 12.2%, and for the rural sector 4.3%). This is most likely a function of a rural exodus towards the urban centers. Second, we note the large number of housewives who are considered member of the inactive population. It is easier to accept urban housewives, who comprise some 16% of the housewives in the Province, under this category. However, most rural housewives also work on the farm, as well as take care of their houses. Hence, the recorded number of active people working in agriculture may tend to be underestimated. This is confirmed when examining the breakdown of employment among the active population.

As is shown in Table 14, the number of people involved in agriculture is 211,984 or 6.7% of the total active population. Provincial agricultural officials, however, estimate a population of 400,000 working in agriculture. Unfortunately missing from the Census figure is any estimate of number of agricultural wage laborers.

Table 14 - Structure of Employment for Active Population - N.W.P. and Cameroon

Employment	Northwest			Cameroon	
	Number	% of N.W.P. Total	N.W.P. Total as % of Nat'l Total in Sector	Number	% of Cameroon Total
Total Active population	312,904	100	11.3	2,757,899	100
1. Liberal & Scientific Professions	7,468	2.4	11.2	66,973	2.4
2. Legislators & Top Civil Servants	127	.04	4.7	2,699	0.1
3. Admin. Personnel	3,355	1.1	6.4	52,060	1.9
4. Commercial Sellers	8,413	2.7	9.5	88,649	3.2
5. Hotel & Service Workers	5,834	1.9	10.7	54,755	2.0
6. Farmers, Fishermen, Hunters	211,984	67.7	10.4	2,032,136	73.6
7. Non-Agricul. Workers and Drivers	43,202	13.8	13.9	311,035	11.3
8. Looking for 1st time	29,243	9.3	23.8	123,045	4.5
9. Undetermined	3,278	1.06	12.3	26,547	1.0

Source: Rencensement General, Vol. I, Tome 3, p. 138

There are probably two reasons for this. First, many agricultural laborers migrate in from other areas and would not be counted as part of the Northwest's labor force. Second, many are part-time agricultural workers who either have small farms and hire out to larger farmers or who work in other occupations, often in town. The former category is often women who need to earn extra money and the latter, young men who cannot find full-time employment in towns. Farmers in the Northwest complain of the difficulty in finding laborers. At the same time, agricultural work is tedious and low-paid, with payment sometimes only in the form of food for the day. Farmers reported paying farm labor at the rate of 250-300 CFAF/day, although some work was paid on a piece basis.

The trading sector is one of the larger employers of people in the non-farming wage sector, second only to the category of non-agricultural manual labor and drivers. It is difficult to know how many people in sector work selling only manufactured goods and how many deal in agricultural commodities. The figures almost certainly underestimate the number of people involved in the marketing of agricultural products, given the large number of farmers who retail their goods and of those who buy goods from other farmers and assemble them for traders or in some other way act as intermediaries in the marketing system 1). Also, a large number of unemployed young men turn to trade as the only way of earning an income while looking for other employment 2). It is probably safe to say that there are at least 10,000 people involved in agricultural trade, not counting the farmers/traders.

1) See Chapter on "Structure and Performance of Agricultural Marketing".
2) This is a phenomenon occurring all over Cameroon. See Arouna, N'Sangou, Secteur Refuge et Developpement Economique au Cameroon ISH No. 6, 1977.

One of the areas not covered in the existing population statistics is rural income distribution by Province. There are some estimates for average income figures in the Northwest Province, but their statistical validity is questionable. One possible starting point for understanding rural income distribution is to look at the national per capita income figures. (See Table 15).

Although nominal per capita income in current value grew at an average annual rate of 12.1% from 1969/70 to 1976/77, real per capita income in constant value grew at a rate of only 1.2%. The average per capita statistic does not capture the fact that average urban income is higher than average rural income, and that urban incomes are undoubtedly more apt to keep pace with inflation than rural income.

Estimates for the Northwest Province per capita income are lower than the national average. World Bank figures for 1971/72 estimate average national rural income at 18,750 CFAF, and for the Western Highlands, of which the Northwest Province is a part, at between 15,000 - 17,500 CFAF per capita. These figures for rural income are well below the national average of 51,597 CFAF in 1971/72 1). In 1974, an ILO expert calculated average income to be 73,600 CFAF per farm family 2), or 12,266 per person assuming an average family size of six people 3). Another way of estimating rural income is by using national accounts. The contribution of agriculture (food & export crops) to the 1976 national GDP, 174 billion CFAF, can be divided the estimated 1976

1) World Bank, Agricultural Sector Survey, 1973
2) Rhashid Ahmad, Economics of Rural Living in Nso and Ndu, p. 45
3) Agricultural Rural Deviopment Statistics, USAID, 1979

Table 15 - Progression of Per Capita Income - 1969-1977

	69/70	70/71	71/72	72/73	73/74	74/75	75/76	76/77	Total Increase %	Annual Rate of Increase %
Total GDP (current CFAF billion)	300.4	321.3	355.9	400.5	492.6	580.2	661.7	790.9	163	14.8
Per Capita GDP (current CFAF)	45,719	47,726	51,597	56,669	68,027	78,200	87,044	101,542	122	12.1
Total GDP (constant CFAF billions)	300.4	309.4	322.8	327.5	342.1	359.7	366.6	392.1	30	3.9
Per Capita GDP (constant CFAF)	45,719	45,959	46,798	46,339	47,243	48,481	48,225	49,737	8.7	1.2
GDP Deflator (Implicit)	100	104	110	122	144	161	180	204	104	10.72

Source: Note Annuelle de Statistique, 1977, p. 203-205

national rural population, giving a figure of 26,788 CFAF per capita annual cash income. Finally, taking the 1978 minimum wage for agricultural work in a Zone III area, 8,200 CFA francs per month, (98,400 CFAF annually), and dividing by an average family size of six, we get 16,400 CFAF per capita cash income. Given the wide range of estimates, it is perhaps safe it say the average annual per capita income in rural areas of the Northwest Province is between 15,000 - 25,000 CFAF. Urban incomes in the Province are somewhat higher.

Income Distribution

It is also necessary to look at the distribution of income within the Province. In an ILO study, which gives an average family income of 73,600 CFAF, there were 62% of the families surveyed earning less than 50,000 CFAF.

Table 16 - Distribution of Families According to Annual Income - NSO Area

Annual Income (CFAF)	No. of Families	%
Less than 50,000	63	62
50,000 - 100,000	20	20
100,000 - 150,000	6	6
150,000 - 200,000	4	4
200,000 - 250,000	3	3
250,000 and above	5	5
Total	101	100

Source: Economics of Rural Living in Nso & Ndu, p. 53.

Given the large number of farms in the Northwest below the Provincial average (at least 40% c.f. Table 8) and the amount of land cultivated by those farms (23% approximately), it is likely that a significant number of people fall well below the average per capita income in the province. Combined with the different levels of income between division, this has important implication as to the growth of purchasing power in the Northwest Province. Substantial growth of the internal market may be seriously constrained by the lack of effective demand within the province. This is substantiated by the team finding that the areas most poorly served by the market infrastructure were those areas with the lowest level of observed economic development 1). The number of goods available in smaller, outlying villages and in the less prosperous dividions was substantially fewer than in areas with a greater level of effective demand towns, larger villages, and the more prosperous divisions. The increase of rural incomes, particularly among the disadvantaged groups, is a necessary, although not sufficient, condition for improving the standard of living in the Northwest Province.

It is very difficult to obtain data on the income of commercial traders either from official reports or from interviews with traders, who are understandably reluctant to talk about their personal incomes. However, we can assume that reasonably successful traders earn at least the minimum monthly salary for workers in the tertiary sector for Zone II

1) See Chapter on "Structure and Performance of Agricultural Marketing".

(small towns), or 10585 - 12,200 CFAF. We can also assume that there is uneven distribution of income within the trading sector.

Before completing this sector on employment in agriculture, it is important to emphasize several points. First, it is the women who carry out most of the cultivation of foodcrops. Men are concerned mostly with cash crops and often maintain larger than average farms by marrying more than one wife. Men, at least in several areas, have become more involved with foodcrop production, particularly as it proves to be more remunerative. To a certain extent, men constitute an underutilized source of labor on the farm. Second, a large number of young men and women are migrating towards urban areas, due in large part to changing aspirations and to a perceived lack of economic opportunity or sufficient remuneration for agricultural work. This is found to have serious effects on the availability of labor for agriculture. This problem must be countered by letting agricultural wages rise to retain more labor into the sector, or by introducing techniques designed to improve agricultural productivity. As long as the returns in foodcrop farming are low, there will be an outflow of labor in the sector, as well as limited reinvestment in agriculture.

Agricultural Production

The Northwest Province is for the most part self-sufficient in the production of basic foodstuffs. With the value of total agricultural production in the Province at approximately 32 billion CFA francs (see Table 18), agriculture provides over 65% of the gross domestic

product for the Northwest Province, which has been estimated at over 50 billion CFA francs 1). The Province accounts for over 18% of the value agricultural production in the Cameroonian economy (valued at 174.5 billion CFAF in 1976/77).

The Northwest makes an important contribution to the nation food-crop production. Agricultural census results show that the Northwest cultivates 29.3% of the country's hectarage of beans, 27.4% of the area in maize, 20.4% of irish potatoes hectarage, 19.8% of the area in sweet potatoes, and 18.2% of the national hectarage in yams (See Table 17). Over 30% of the arabica coffee hectarage is in the Northwest, as well as 64.6% of the national hectarage in tea. Other important foodcrops include cassava, cocoyams, groundnuts and tomatoes.

Mezam Division is by for the most important producing area in the Province. The majority of bananas, plantains, cassava are produced here, as well as large amounts of vegetables such as tomatoes and cabbage. The area has the province's best transportation infrastructure, the highest population density, and the strongest demand for marketed foodstuffs.

The other divisions all produce the basic foodcrops, but there is some crop specialization in the Province. Bui Division is particularly strong in the production of irish potatoes and beans. Donga/Mantung produces large amounts of cocoyams (macabo), maize, and beans. It is an major area of cattle production. Menchum Division is also an major

1) See Rural Development in the Northwest Province, Final Proposals, Govts. of Cameroon & Federal Republic of Germany, 1979, p. 5.

Table 17 - Agricultural Production in Northwest Province

	Area (ha) a)	% of Nat'l Hect. b)	Production (Metric Tons) a)	Ave. Yield (kg/ha.) a)	% of Total Hectarage in N.W.P. c)				
					Nkram	Bui	Menchum	Donga/Mantung	Momo
1. Arabica Coffee	32,550	30.1	9,808	300	35.2	28.9	20.0	10.4	5.5
2. Robusta Coffee	2,520	1.4	349	138	9.5	-	11.8	8.0	70.7
3. Tea	608	64.6	880	1,450	-	-	-	100	-
4. Plantains	4,352	6.2	39,170	9,000	65.3	5.5	17.7	4.8	6.7
5. Bananas	5,770	1.4	63,420	11,000	83.2	1.2	12.5	1.5	1.6
6. Rice	1,390	8.8	2,230	1,600	35.0	12.3	35.0	11.8	5.9
7. Maize	105,510	27.4	84,410	800	17.1	19.6	25.5	36.0	1.8
8. Cocoyams (Taro)	17,030	17.7	85,140	5,000	32.4	1.3	48.2	0.3	17.8
9. Cocoyams (Macabo)	11,350	17.7	45,410	4,000	34.0	0.1	11.5	0.3	54.1
10. Cassava	14,910	8.7	223,630	15,000 d)	63.0	3.5	20.3	2.1	11.1
11. Sweet Potatoes	2,790	19.8	22,320	8,000	16.5	0.9	47.8	3.0	31.8
12. Irish Potatoes	2,260	20.4	11,320	5,000	5.8	93.5	0.2	0.2	1.3
13. Yams	6,720	18.2	26,870	4,000	43.4	1.6	2.8	3.6	48.6
14. Onions	53	1.2	220	4,150	100	-	-	-	-
15. Groundnuts	30,860	10.5	12,340	400	45.3	10.7	32.0	9.8	2.2
16. Beans	33,800	29.3	33,800	1,000	20.7	27.0	13.7	37.2	1.4
17. Okra	130	1.0	150	1,150	31.9	7.7	44.2	10.1	6.1
18. Tomatoes	130	15.0	260	2,000	67.7	4.4	8.7	6.1	13.1
19. Sugar Cane	420	5.4	12,620	30,000	35.3	5.3	26.4	28.6	4.4
20. Pineapples	200	5.9	2,360	15,000	67.5	3.4	4.9	6.0	19.3
21. Cabbages	110	n.a.	628.2	5,700	73.3	9.5	9.0	4.5	3.7
22. Oil Palm	3,110	n.a.	1,555,000 lits	500 lits	9.6	0.3	28.9	13.0	48.2

Sources:

a) Figures from Provincial Delegation's, Evaluation of Agricultural Development from 1959/60 - 1979/80, which uses the 1972/73 Agricultural Census figures ("dense column) as the basis for its estimates, projecting forward to 1978/79 at a 5% annual increase.

b) Calculated from 1972/73 Agricultural Census, using "dense" column.

c) Calculated from 1978/79 Production Figures published by the Provincial Office of Agricultural Statistics for Northwest.

n.a. - Not available

d) The yield figure used by Provincial Delegation is much higher than the 3,000-4,000 Kg/Ha. estimate found in national agricultural statistics. However, given the way in which hectarage is calculated for this table, total production figures for cassava are within an acceptable range, if somewhat on the high side.

Table 18 - Value of Agricultural Production Marketed in N.W.P. and Exported

Crop	Production (M. Tons) a)	CFA/Kg Ave. Price 1978	(000,000 CFA) Value of Production	% of Total Export a)	Est. Quantity of Export (t.)	(000,000 CFA) Value of Exports	% of Total Sold in N.W.P. b)	Est. Quantity of N.W.P. (t.)	(000,000 CFA) Value of N.W.P. Goods	Total % Marketed c)	Est. Quanity of Goods Sold	(000,000 CFA) Value of Goods Sold
1. Arabica Coffee	9,808	300	2,942	100	9,808	2,942	0	-	-	100	9,808	2,942
2. Robusta Coffee	349	280	97	100	349	97	0	-	-	100	349	97
3. Tea	880	n.a.	n.a.	60	530	n.a.	40	350	n.a.	100	880	n.a.
4. Plantains	39,170	30	1,175	-	-	-	85	33,294	999	85	33,294	999
5. Bananas	63,420	33	2,093	-	-	-	95	60,249	1,988	95	60,249	1,988
6. Rice	2,230	110	245.3	30	669	73.6	50	1,115	123	80	1,784	196.6
7. Maize	84,410	40	3,376	10	8,441	338	10	8,441	338	20	16,882	675
8. Cocoyams (Taro)	85,140	48	4,087	-	-	-	50	42,570	2,044	50	42,570	2,044
9. Cocoyams (Macabo)	45,410	48	2,180	-	-	-	80	36,328	1,744	80	36,328	1,744
10. Cassava	223,630	25	5,591	-	-	-	40	89,452	2,236	40	89,452	2,236
11. Sweet Potatoes	22,320	40	893	-	-	-	85	18,972	759	85	18,972	759
12. Irish Potatoes	11,320	71	804	40	4,528	322	30	3,396	241	70	7,924	563
13. Yams	26,870	101	2,714	-	-	-	75	20,152	2,036	75	20,152	2,036
14. Onions	220	100	22	10	22	2.2	80	176	17.6	90	198	19.8
15. Groundnuts	12,340	174	2,147	10	1,234	215	65	80,230	1,396	75	92,580	1,610
16. Beans	33,800	100	3,380	20	6,760	676	45	15,210	1,521	65	21,970	2,197
17. Okra	150	141	21	-	-	-	40	60	8.4	40	60	8.4
18. Tomatoes	260	88	23	15	39	3.5	80	208	18.4	95	247	21.9
19. Sugar Cane	12,620	n.a.	n.a.	-	-	-	95	11,989	n.a.	95	11,989	n.a.
20. Pineapple	2,960	30	88	-	-	-	70	2,072	61.6	70	2,072	61.6
21. Cabbages	628.2	51	32	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	40	251	12.8
22. Oil Palm	1,555,000 Lits.	192	298	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	90	1,399,500 lits.	268
Total	-	-	32,208	-	-	4,669	-	-	15,531	-	-	20,479

Sources:

a) Based on figures from Provincial Delegation's, Evaluation of Agricultural Development From 1959/60 - 1979/80.

b) Calculated by subtracting percentage estimates for exports from percentage estimate for amount of the total marketed.

c) Based on 1978/79 Production Figures published by the Provincial Office of Agricultural Statistics for the Northwest.

n.a. - Not Available

supplier of cattle, and grows important percentages of the Province's cocoyams, sweet potatoes, maize, and groundnuts. Momo Division, the Province's smallest in terms of population and land area, has relatively large hectarages of cocoyams, yams, sweet potatoes, and pineapples.

Each division is generally self-sufficient in the production of basic foodcrops consumed. Inter-divisional trade is one of the weaker areas of the marketing system. Hence, local diet are determined largely by local production. Dietary patterns will be further discussed in the section on foodcrop consumption and demand.

Examining agricultural production in value terms provide further insight into the relative importance of the various foodcrops, as well as some information about the structure of foodcrop marketing. In value term, the most important crops produced in the Northwest are as follows:

	Crop	Value (Mil. CFAF)
1.	Cassava	5,591
2.	Cocoyams (Taro)	4,087
3.	Beans	3,380
4.	Maize	3,376
5.	Coffee (Arabica)	2,942
6.	Yams	2,714
7.	Cocoyams (Macabo)	2,180
8.	Groundnuts	2,147
9.	Bananas	2,093

Source: Table 18

The most important exports of the Province in value terms are:

Crop	Value (Mil. CFAF)
1. Coffee (Arabica)	2,942
2. Beans	676
3. Maize	338
4. Irish Potatoes	322
5. Groundnuts	215
6. Coffee (Robusta)	97
7. Rice	73.6

Source: Table 18

The major crops marketed within the Northwest Province in value terms are:

Crop	Value (Mil. CFAF)
1. Cassava	2,236
2. Cocoyams (Taro)	2,044
3. Yams	2,036
4. Bananas	1,988
5. Cocoyams (Macabo)	1,744
6. Beans	1,521
7. Groundnuts	1,396
8. Plantains	999
9. Sweet Potatoes	759
10. Maize	338
11. Irish Potatoes	241

Source: Table 18

In aggregate terms, the market values of total agricultural production and the crops marketed are:

	Value (Mil. CFAF)	% of Total
Total Agricultural Production	32,208	100
Total Marketed Production	20,479	63.6
Total Marketed in N.W.P.	15,531	48.2
Total Exported	4,669	14.5

Source: Table 18

The aggregate figures present a picture of agricultural marketing that is somewhat surprising in view of the subsistence level of agriculture that is generally thought to characterize the Northwest Province. With over 60% of the agricultural production being commercialized and the internal market carrying almost 50% of the total production (and over 75% of the total marketed production), participation in the market seems to be an important facet of the Northwest's economy.

It is possible that percentage figures used to calculate the aggregate values of produce marketed overestimate the actual amount marketed. Indeed, there are no official studies to my knowledge that have actually tried to measure aggregate commodity flows, and the existing aggregate estimates are based on the opinions of Northwest agricultural officials. Project members observed the export of goods such plantains, bananas, and tubers, all of which are listed in provincial statistics as not being exported at all. Yet, the figures would seem to provide orders of magnitude and the relative importance of the various crops in the marketing system

The 1972/73 Agricultural Census provides another piece of evidence as to the level of market participation. (See Table 19). If we assume that the percentages of farms in the "Sold or Home-Consumption" catagory are generally the larger farms with a good deal of surplus to sell, then it is plausible that the amount commercialized could be in the range suggested by the aggregate marketing figures.

Over of the serious problems in the statistics available for the Northwest is the lack of a time series showing the differences in pro-

Table 19 - Distribution of Farms According to the Utilization of Their Production in N.W.P.

Crop	% of Farms				
	Farms Not Producing Crop	Sold Completely	Home Consumption Only	Sold or Home Consumption	Total
Coffee	20.6	79.3	-	-	100
Plantains	15.5	-	39.8	44.7	100
Bananas	16.9	-	38.9	44.2	100
Rice	97.1	-	0.4	2.5	100
Maize	4.9	-	50.6	44.4	100
Cocoyams	6.0	-	61.5	32.5	100
Cassava	27.4	-	33.6	39.0	100
Yams	30.6	-	43.4	26.0	100
Groundnuts	37.6	-	21.1	41.3	100
Vegetables	10.9	-	63.4	25.7	100
Fruits	23.4	-	32.5	44.1	100
Palm Wine, raphia	47.8	-	17.6	34.5	100
Palm Oil	67.7	0.1	14.4	17.8	100
Chicken & Eggs	22.7	1.0	21.5	54.8	100

Source: 1972/73 Agricultural Census, p. 329

deduction from one year to the next. Obviously, there are good harvest and bad harvests. The existing time series of annual production does not accurately reflect this, however, since they are merely backwards and forward projections based on steady 5% annual growth using average yields and 1972/73 Agricultural Census figures as a starting point. This makes it impossible to empirically calculate the effect of prices on production. It has generally been shown that African farmers response to increased prices for their crops with increased production. However, price elasticities of supply for subsistence food crops are generally lower than for commercial crops. 1)

In general, agricultural officials in the Northwest are optimistic about the future of agricultural production in the area. They predict annual average production increases of 7% after 1981 up to 8% after 1990. This increase is expected to come mainly from better yields per hectare due to better farmer education, improved cultural practices, intensified plant protection, increase in the use of fertilizer for both foodcrops and export crops, intensified activities of agricultural development organizations (including the proposed Northwest Rural

1) Krishna in a study of India found that subsistence food crops had a price elasticity of supply of .1, while cash crops such as cotton and jute had an elasticity of .7. See Tomek & Robinson, Agricultural Product Prices.

Development Project), better credit institutions, more organized marketing, and better prices for export crops 1). It is perhaps overly optimistic to expect these improvements to occur quickly in the Northwest, despite the dynamism of the people there. Leaving aside the difficulties of technically achieving a 7% per annum increase in agricultural production, the ability of the market to absorb such large increases - without prices falling to level that would discourage production - would largely determine the extent to which it would actually happen.

Agricultural Prices

Prices for agricultural commodities in a competitive market situation fluctuate widely, usually much more so than non-farm goods. The principal cause of this instability is the biological character of agricultural production, although the determination of prices for agricultural goods is the result of a number of interrelated factors. In general, "the frequency and magnitude of price changes under purely competitive market conditions depend (1) on the frequency and magnitude of shifts in demand and supply and (2) on the elasticities (more specifically, the slopes) of the demand and supply functions. Wide price fluctuations over short periods of time can be expected if both demand and supply schedules have steep slopes (are relatively inelastic)

1) Provincial Delegation of Agriculture for Northwest, Perspectives of Agricultural Development in the Northwest Province to year 2,000, 1979

and if either demand or supply changes sharply from period to period." 1) Although the existing data do not allow the empirical determination of demand and supply elasticities for the Northwest Province, we can characterize the area as producing agricultural commodities for which there is an inelastic demand and a supply which changes from season to season. Hence, it is not surprising to find a wide variability in the prices of agricultural commodities in the Northwest.

Of course, not all the assumptions of the perfectly competitive market 1) hold true in the Northwest's foodstuff market, and imperfections in the market may cause prices to fluctuate even more widely. Hence, lack of complete information by buyers and sellers in the system, seasonal difficulties in the transportation sector, lack of sufficient suitable crop storage, and widely fluctuating demand for exports from the Province may provide an explanation for some of the price variability. It should be clear, however, that even if these imperfections in the market were removed, the considerable price variation inherent to agricultural commodity markets would remain. Marketing specialists working in Afric

1) Tomek & Robinson, Agricultural Product Prices, p. 85

1) A purely competitive market assumes:

a) The number of buyers and sellers is sufficiently large so that no individual can perceptibly influence price by his decision to buy or sell.
b) The product is sufficiently homogereous so that the product of one firm is essentially a "perfect" substitute for that of another firm, "perfect" here implying perfect knowledge by buyers and sellers, complete divisibility of the product, and perfect mobility of the product within the market.
c) There are no artificial restrictions on demand, supply, or prices such as government intervention or collision among firms.
d) Mobility of resources and products exists in the economy, e.g. a new firm should be free to enter the industry.

- Taken from Tomek & Robinson, op. cit., p. 80

have generally found that given the tasks that marketing systems in Africa are asked to perform and given the infrastructural problems in most rural areas in Africa, the markets are "not performing badly". 1) This seems to be the case for the Northwest Province, or at least we can accept this as a working hypothesis.

Price Control

Although the government has been concerned about the rise of food crops prices over the past few years, effective government control of prices in the foodstuff market of the Northwest is quite limited. Officially, upper price limits are fixed (valeurs mercuriales) annually at the national and provincial level. Practically, such administered prices are set mostly at the national level for manufactured goods, imported goods, and for certain agricultural commodities such as coffee, cocoa, and rice.

At the provincial level, a commission is responsible for setting such price levels. However, it has not met for several years in the Northwest Province. According to Northwest officials, there is little local political support for such a system and judging from the state of agricultural statistics in the area, it would be difficult to make a serious economic evaluation to guide such a price-setting policy.

1) Jone, William O., "Measuring the Effectiveness of Agricultural Marketing in Contributing to Economic Development: Some African Examples", Food Research Institute Studies, Vol. IX, No. 3, 1970.

The price control service in the Northwest does monitor the prices of manufactured and imported goods, and has the capacity to levy fines on merchants charging above the officially set prices and margins for these goods. The foodstuff market, however, generally receives very little effective government intervention.

Histotical Trends & Seasonal Patterns in Agricultural Prices

Agricultural prices observed through time are the result of a mixture of seasonal cyclical trend, and irregular factors. The price data vavailable was not sufficient in analyse cyclical price behavior nor to do more than speculate on the irregular factors influencing price. A reasonably complete time series of retail agricultural commodity prices dating from 1971 was made available by the Provincial Office of Statistics in Bamenda, allowing the calculation of annual prices and seasonal indices. Several words of caution about the reliability of these statistics must be made. First, there are a number of gaps in the data. For example, no prices were collected by the Office of Statistics in 1976, as all available staff members were involved in the National Census. Second, there is the possibility that errors were introduced in the price data by the conversion of the prices of goods sold by local volume measure into CFA francs per kilogram. The technique used by the Statistics Office was to send a staff member out to bargain for goods at the Bamenda market, then to bring the purchased goods back to be weighed to get a per kilogram prices. With different people bargaining

for produce and with new scales being used after 1976, it is difficult to know what sort of biases many have been introduced into the price data. Finally, although interest was expressed by the Statistics Office in regularly collecting price data in market throughout the Province, sufficient resources have not been available to do this. Consequently, the prices pertain only to the Bamenda market, which is a daily urban market quite different from the periodic rural markets. Only a few years of price data were available for markets other than Bamenda, collected by development project economists or divisional statistical offices. Hence, it is difficult to conclusively compare historical price movements and seasonal fluctuations between different markets in the Northwest. With these difficulties and deficiencies in mind, we can proceed to analyze the available price information.

Long Term Trends

Long term price trends are associated with general inflation, changes in tastes and preferences ,in population and income, government price policy, and technological changes in production. Although it is not possible to determine empirically the importance of these various factors in recent price trends for the Northwest, general conclusions can be reached as to their relative importance. Examination of Table 20, a series of annual retail prices of foodstuffs in Bamenda in current prices, shows that for most goods, prices have risen considerably over the past nine years, with the greatest increases in price occurring over the last four years. An index of current prices

Table 20 - Annual Retail Foodstuff Prices in Bamenda, 1971 - 1979 (Current CFAF/Kg.)

CROP	YEAR				a)	b)		c)	d)
	1971	1972	1973	1974	1975	1976	1977	1978	1979
1. Arabica Coffee (e)	170	165	175	170	170	185	225	275	300
2. Robusta Coffee e)	125	125	125	130	135	145	195	250	280
3. Plantains	12	12	14	15	18	20	31	30	21
4. Bananas	12	13	12	14	21	20	26	33	29
5. Rice	67	57	87	124	n.a.	n.a.	105	110	123
6. Maize	16	25	20	17	51	56	47	n.a.	46
7. Cocoyams (Taro/Macabo)	17	17	16	20	24	n.a.	40	48	40
8. Cassava	9	9	10	11	13	n.a.	23	25	25
9. Sweet Potatoes	12	12	14	16	n.a.	n.a.	33	40	31
10. Irish Potatoes	33	36	35	29	42	51	53	71	72
11. Yams	73	70	75	83	55	45	84	101	58
12. Onions	105	108	133	136	104	200	209	100	199
13. Goundnuts	n.a.	67	62	107	174	n.a.	176	174	185
14. Beans (white)	49	67	57	85	98	n.a.	119	150	99
15. Okra	99	94	83	104	212	n.a.	86	141	317
16. Tomatoes	84	85	74	75	86	n.a.	86	88	116
17. Pineapple	n.a.	16	17	19	28	n.a.	30	30	36
18. Cabbage	19	23	20	21	n.a.	50	62	51	51
19. Palm Oil (Litre)	n.a.	95	90	128	n.a.	n.a.	170	192	202
20. Salt	n.a.	43	43	55	n.a.	n.a.	86	109	87
21. Local Eggs (one)	n.a.	13	15	15	n.a.	n.a.	20	25	30
22. Dried Crayfish	396	433	638	604	562	n.a.	663	1,033	1,181

Source: Ministry of Economics and Planning, Provincial Office of Statistics, Northwest Province, Bamenda. Retail prices are simple averages of bi-monthly recordings.

a) Based on prices collected during first five months of 1975.

b) No prices were collected by the Provincial Office in Bamenda during 1976, as all staff members were working on the national census. Available 1976 prices were taken from the records of the Bamenda Cooperative Vegetable Society, (BCVS).

c) Based on prices collected January - August, 1978

d) Based on prices collected March - September, 1979

e) IMF, Cameroon - Recent Economic Developments, 1979. Price paid to producer.

n.a. - Not Available

(100 = 1971) in Table 21 allow us to compare price changes among commodities more easily.

The average annual increase in current prices for the twenty-two commodities presented in Table 21 is 11.1%. This compares to an 11.4% annual increase in the general consumer price index computed for middle-income Cameroonian families in Yaounde, and to an annual 12.7% increase in a composite index of retail food prices in Yaounde. [1] In general, food prices in Bamenda have been rising almost as fast as the overall increase in prices in the capital, although not as quickly as its food prices. Inflation of the "demand-pull" type, where the demand for farm products outpaces the growth in supply, is probably the major reason for increasing food prices in the Northwest.

A number of commodities have risen at a rate higher than that of inflation. These include maize (15.6%), cocoyams (14.6%), cassava (15.4%), sweet potatoes (15.9%), groundnuts (16.1%), and cabbage (15.8%). The rise in price of the tropical root crops and cabbage can be attributed to increasing urban demand for these products, par icularly from lower income sections of the urban population. There has also recently been a serious cocoyam blight in major producing areas of the Northwest, which has caused supply difficulties.

1) Similar indices for Douala, or Bamenda are unfortunately not calculated.

Table 21 - Indexed Annual Retail Foodstuff Prices in Bamenda 1971 - 1979 (Current CFAF/Kg.)

CROP	YEAR									Ave. Annual Increase (%) a)
	1971	1972	1973	1974	1975	1976	1977	1978	1979	
1. Arabica Coffee	100	97	103	100	100	109	132	162	176	7.3
2. Robusta Coffee	100	100	100	104	108	116	156	200	224	10.5
3. Plantains	100	100	117	125	150	167	258	250	175	11.4
4. Bananas	100	108	100	117	175	67	217	275	242	12.2
5. Rice	100	85	130	185	-	-	157	164	184	7.6
6. Maize	100	156	125	106	319	350	294	-	288	15.6
7. Cocoyams (Taro/Macabo)	100	100	94	118	141	-	235	282	235	14.6
8. Cassava	100	100	111	122	144	-	256	278	278	15.4
9. Sweet Potatoes	100	100	117	133	-	-	275	333	258	15.9
10. Irish Potatoes	100	109	106	88	127	155	161	215	218	10.9
11. Yams	100	96	103	114	75	62	115	138	73	-0.4
12. Onions	100	103	127	130	99	190	199	95	190	6.0
13. Groundnuts	-	100	93	160	260	-	263	260	276	16.1
14. Beans (white)	100	137	116	173	200	-	243	306	202	11.4
15. Okra	100	95	84	105	214	-	87	142	320	10.4
16. Tomatoes	100	101	88	89	102	-	102	105	138	3.1
17. Pineapple	-	100	106	119	175	-	189	188	225	11.7
18. Cabbage	100	121	105	111	-	263	326	268	268	15.8
19. Palm Oil (Litre)	-	100	95	135	-	-	179	202	213	11.9
20. Salt	-	100	100	128	-	-	200	253	202	13.1
21. Local Eggs (one)	-	100	115	115	-	-	154	192	231	11.2
22. Dried Crayfish	100	109	161	153	142	-	167	261	298	12.1
General Consumer Price Index b)	100	105	116	136	155	170	195	220	231	11.4
Annual Increase - %	-	5.0	10.5	17.2	13.9	9.7	14.7	12.8	5.0	-
Food Price Index b)	100	112	123	140	162	181	223	249	257	12.7
Annual Increase Food Prices - %	-	12.0	9.8	13.8	15.7	11.7	23.2	11.7	3.2	-

Source: Table 20 , Price Indices (Moderate-Income Families in Yaounde) from Bulletin Mensuel de Statistique, 1979 indices based on Jan - Aug.

a) Trends based on semi-log regression of the form: $\log Y = a + b x$

b) Prices indices in this table use 1971 = 100. Calculated from series using 1968 = 100.

It is more difficult to explain the greater than average rise in corn and groundnut prices. Below average harvests in 1976 and 1977 did increase prices considerably in those years, and prices decreased somewhat with better harvests in 1978 and 1979. Increased urban demand locally may also have contributed to high prices for corn and groundnuts.

Lower than average annual prices increases occurred among commodities including arabia coffee (7.3%), rice (7.6%), yams (-0.4%), onions (6.0%), and tomatoes (3.1%). The relatively low prices increases of tomatoes and onions can probably be explained by increasing local supply and by large imports of these commodities (tomatoes from Western Province and onions from France). Prices for yams have decreased on average over the past nine years. This is due most likely to a decline in demand, given the high price of yams relative to other tubers, with consumers switching to cassava, or to rice and wheat in urban areas. 1)

Prices for rice and arabica coffee are subject to government price-setting. Stiff competition from imported rice has kept prices down, as well as a government policy of limiting the price rise of this increasingly important urban food source. Prices paid to coffee producers are determined nationally and Northwest farmers complained about the slowness of the government to increase producer prices.

Demand-pull inflation is probably in major cause of retail price increases in Bamenda, although supply and demand considerations may swamp the effects of inflation for individual commodities. Increasing

1) James T. Goering, Tropical Root Crops and Rural Development, 1979, p. 16

Urbanization in the Northwest and other areas, as well as rising urban incomes, have contributed to increased demand for foodstuffs in urban areas. Changing tastes and consumption patterns in urban areas have also influenced demand for foodstuffs, with urban consumers switching to a certain extent from tubers to cereals. Changing taste are probably less of an influence in the Northwest than in other parts of the country, given the province's lower than average level of urbanization. Changes in agricultural technology are also of limited influence on recent price trends, given the limited use of fertilizer on foodcrops and the relatively constant use of manual agricultural techniques.

The climatic influence affecting the size of harvest remains the major determined of price in any given year. The examination of a deflated price series does give an idea of year-to-year price variability. (See Table 22). It is a problem, however, to choose a good deflator. For lack of an rural price index, we have used the composite food index computed for Yaoundo. This series undoubtedly overestimates the rate of inflation for Bamenda food prices, and hence underestimates the real (constant CFAF) prices of foodcrops.

Annual foodcrops - particularly grains and vegetables - exhibit the greatest price variation from one year to the next. Tubers and fruits show less annual variation, although real prices for these crops have tended to steadily increase. Constant CFA franc prices paid for coffee and rice have steadily declined.

Table 22 - Deflated Annual Retail Foodstuff Prices in Bamenda: 1971-1979 (Constant CFAF-Eq.)

CROP	YEAR								
	1971	1972	1973	1974	1975	1976	1977	1978	1979
1. Arabica Coffee a)	170	157	151	125	110	109	115	125	130
2. Robusta Coffee a)	125	119	108	96	88	85	100	114	121
3. Plantains	12	10.7	11.4	10.7	11.F	11.0	13.9	12.0	8.2
4. Tannnas	12	11.6	9.8	10	13	11.0	11.7	13.3	11.3
5. Rice	67	60	71	89	-	-	47.1	44.2	47.9
6. Maize	16	22.3	16.3	12.1	31.5	30.9	21.1	-	17.9
7. Cocoyams (Taro/Macabo	17	15.2	13.0	14.3	14.8	-	17.9	19.3	15.6
8. Cassava	9	8.	8.1	7.9	8.0	-	10.3	10.0	9.7
9. Sweet Potatoes	12	10.7	11.4	11.4	-	-	14.8	16.1	12.1
10. Irish Potatoes	33	32.1	28.5	20.7	25.9	28.2	23.8	28.5	28.0
11. Yams	73	62	61	59	33.9	24.9	37.7	40.6	22.6
12. Onions	105	96	108	97	64.	110	94	40.2	77
13. Groundnuts	n.a.	60	50	76	107	-	79	70	72.0
14. Beans (white)	49	60	46.3	61	60.	-	53	60.	38.5
15. Okra	99	84	67	74	131	-	38.6	57	123
16. Tomatoes	84	76	60	54	53.	-	38.6	35.3	45.1
17. Pineapple	n.a.	14.3	13.8	13.6	17.3	-	13.5	12.0	14.0
18. Cabbage	19	20.5	16.3	15.0	-	27.6	27.8	20.5	19.8
19. Palm Oil (liter)	n.a.	85	73	91	-	-	76	77.	79
20. Salt	n.a.	38.4	35	39	-	-	38.6	43.8	33.9
21. Local Eggs (one)	n.a.	11.6	12.2	10.7	-	-	9.0	10.0	11.7
22. Dried Crayfish	396	387	518	431	347	-	297	414	460
Food Price Index	100	112	123	140	162	181	223	249	257
General Consumer Price Index	100	105	116	136	155	170	195	220	231

Source: Table 20 , deflated by the Food Price Index for Middle-Income Cameroonian Families in Yaoundé. Prices indices from various issues of Bulletin Mensuel de Statistique.

a) Deflated by General Consumer Price Index.

Table 22a - Indexed Annual Retail Foodstuff Prices in Bamenda: 1971-1979 (Constant CFAF/Kg.)

CROP	YEAR								
	1971	1972	1973	1974	1975	1976	1977	1978	1979
1. Arabica Coffee	100	92	89	73	65	64	68	73	76
2 Robusta Coffee	100	95	86	77	70	68	80	91	97
3. Plantains	100	89	95	89	92	92	116	100	68
4. Bananas	100	97	82	83	108	92	97	111	94
5. Rice	100	90	106	133	-	-	70	66	72
6. Maize	100	140	102	76	197	193	132	-	112
7. Cocoyams (Taro/Macabo)	100	89	76	84	87	-	105	113	92
8. Cassava	100	89	90	88	89	-	114	111	108
9. Sweet Potatoes	100	89	95	95	-	-	123	134	101
10. Irish Potatoes	100	97	86	63	78	85	72	86	84
11. Yams	100	85	84	81	46	34	52	56	31
12. Onions	100	91	10[illegible]	92	61	105	89	38	73
13. Goundnuts	-	100	8[illegible]	127	178	-	131	117	120
14. Beans (white)	100	122	94	124	122	-	108	122	79
15. Okra	100	85	67	75	132	-	39	58	124
16. Tomatoes	100	90	71	64	63	-	46	42	54
17. Pineapple	-	100	96	95	121	-	94	84	98
18. Cabbage	100	108	86	79	-	145	146	168	164
19. Palm Oil (liter)	-	100	86	107	-	-	89	91	93
20. Salt	-	100	91	102	-	-	100	114	88
21. Local Eggs (one)	-	100	105	92	-	-	78	86	101
22. Dried Crayfish	100	98	131	109	94	[illegible]	75	105	116
Food Price Index	100	112	123	140	162	181	223	249	257
General Consumer Price Index	100	105	116	136	155	170	195	220	231

Source: Table 22

It is difficult to draw conclusions about the welfare implications of this time series of agricultural prices in constant CFAF for several reasons. First of all, this is a series of retail prices, not the prices paid to producers, which depend on primary supply and derived demand factors. Second, we lack information about the rise in real prices of paid by farmers for necessary household and agricultural inputs. Third, individual farmer income is affected differently according to the degree of market participation and ability of the farmer to produce crops for which prices are rising the most rapidly.

It is possible to reach several general conclusions from these time series. First, annual supply variability, particularly among grains and vegetables, does seem to affect retail prices. Market prices go down in good harvest years, which may mean that substantial production increases - due, for example, to a successful project aimed at improving production - would lower the price of a given commodity unless new market outlets were found. Since the demand for most agricultural commodities in relatively inelastic, a price decrease of an important crop could lower farmer income. Second, if present trends in current prices continue, resources will shift towards increased food production and away from coffee production, unless measures are taken to increase the profitability of producing coffee. Given the projected decline of prices in the coffee market over the next five years, unless the government is willing to lower its share of revenue out of each kilogram of coffee exported, it may be difficult to increase or

or even maintain the present price paid to coffee producers. Sufficient increases in farmgate prices for foodcrops would increase the profitability of the sector, encouraging greater production. From the viewpoint of food self-sufficiency and increasing rural incomes, the price rise is desirable. From the viewpoint of the urban consumer, this is obviously undesirable, particularly if wages do not rise to keep up with inflation. Balancing the interests of rural producers and urban consumers is a difficult task for all governments. In many developing countries, the urban consumers have been able to exert a strong political influence to keep food prices low, to the detriment of the rural agricultural sector. Among other things, the development of the foodcrop sector in the Northwest will require sufficient returns to farmers to act as an incentive to increased production.

Seasonal Price Variation

The seasonal price pattern of a particular crop depends on intra-seasonal supply and demand and on storage costs over the season. The usual price pattern for storable agricultural commodities is a season low at harvest time, with prices rising over the year, reaching a season high in the months preceding the new harvest. Simple inspection of the quarterly, retail prices of twelve foodcrops (Table 23) confirms this general pattern, although exceptions to the pattern are numerous. Crops harvested during several periods throughout the year - plantains, bananas, and tubers such as cocoyam, cassava, and yams - show less

Table 23 - QUARTERLY RETAIL FOODSTUFF PRICES IN BAMENDA - 1971-1979 (Current CFAF/Kg.)

CROP	YEAR AND QUARTER																																			
	1971				1972				1973				1974				1975				1976 a)				1977				1978				1979		
	1st Qrt	2nd Qrt	3rd Qrt	4th Qrt	1st Qrt	2nd Qrt	3rd Qrt	4th Qrt	1st Qrt	2nd Qrt	3rd Qrt	4th Qrt	1st Qrt	2nd Qrt	3rd Qrt	4th Qrt	1st Qrt	2nd Qrt	3rd Qrt	4th Qrt	1st Qrt	2nd Qrt	3rd Qrt	4th Qrt	1st Qrt	2nd Qrt	3rd Qrt	4th Qrt	1st Qrt	2nd Qrt	3rd Qrt	4th Qrt	1st Qrt	2nd Qrt	3rd Qrt
Plantains	11	12	13	12	11	13	12	13	11	14	16	13	14	12	17	18	17	19	na	na	na	na	na	na	29	30	38	27	25	27	39	na	16	24	24
Bananas	10	12	12	12	14	13	13	13	10	12	13	13	11	12	15	17	18	23	na	na	na	na	na	na	23	22	30	27	31	30	39	na	25	30	32
Maize	17	16	15	16	22	33	26	18	23	22	16	20	16	17	16	19	44	58	na	na	47	72	52	45	39	na	73	76	54	65	na	50	36	51	51
Cocoyams (Taro/ Macabo)	17	16	21	16	17	17	18	17	17	16	15	16	18	18	21	24	20	27	na	na	na	na	na	na	30	34	49	47	46	51	47	na	34	42	45
Cassava	9	8	10	8	10	9	10	8	9	11	10	9	na	13	8	12	11	14	na	na	na	na	na	na	24	25	na	19	25	29	20	na	27	23	24
Irish Potatoes	42	36	25	36	42	37	31	50	49	38	26	28	34	26	26	30	40	43	na	na	50	48	50	55	52	59	49	50	125	56	33	na	73	76	67
Yams	64	71	81	74	66	72	85	58	83	67	75	74	65	93	83	96	62	48	na	na	na	na	na	na	114	94	77	51	69	132	na	na	57	na	59
Groundnuts	na	133	na	53	64	71	66	65	56	62	61	70	78	109	120	121	164	183	na	na	na	na	na	na	184	202	na	141	175	173	175	na	189	179	188
Beans	48	51	48	48	53	72	72	72	49	51	65	63	66	78	95	101	104	91	na	na	na	na	na	na	148	156	75	98	133	159	159	na	148	156	75
Tomatoes	na	na	na	na	78	84	70	108	92	78	67	58	65	66	70	101	84	88	na	na	na	na	na	na	76	78	87	103	99	77	88	na	90	132	127
Rice (Local)	79	70	63	55	52	50	54	72	85	83	85	93	93	119	150	136	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	105	105	105	105	91	103	102	110	125	115	130
Palm Oil	103	90	99	101	103	91	92	92	85	86	91	108	108	103	131	172	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	120	140	250	na	202	173	200	na	212	189	204

Source: Ministry of Economics and Planning, Provincial Office of Statistics, Northwest Province, Bamenda. No prices collected in 1976

a) 1976 prices for Maize and Irish Potatoes from Bamenda Cooperative Vegetable Society, as well as 1977, 1978 prices for rice

n.a. - Not Available

regular seasonal price variation throughout the year than crops harvested once, such as maize (although some areas do grow two crops a year) and groundnuts. A regular pattern is less discernable for tomatoes, rice, and palm oil, the local production of which receives heavy competition from imports. To understand these patterns in greater depth, it is useful to examine monthly seasonal indices computed for six representative crops.

The computation of these seasonal indices was accomplished using a standard 12-month moving average technique. There were gaps in the data, and indices could usually not be computed for 1975 or 1976. Once indices were computed for each year, an average was taken for a given month in the various years, omitting the highest and lowest values as being dominated by irregular factors. The results of the computations are presented in Table 24.

Five Year Average
Table 24 - Seasonal Indices for Selected Agricultural Commodities in N.W.P..

Crop	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	High Month	Low Month	Range of Index (%)
Irish Potatoes	103	133	140	151	82	72	80	83	74	93	83	105	Apr	Jun	79
Maize	91	90	94	112	115	131	123	100	90	84	84	86	Jun	Oct	47
Beans	85	93	99	102	105	111	98	110	104	101	100	90	Jun	Jan	26
Ground-nuts	99	102	102	112	107	102	101	97	91	93	99	96	Apr.	Sep	21
Tomatoes	103	97	96	97	97	95	90	95	94	103	112	118	Dec	Jul	28
Cocoyams	103	89	90	95	99	99	103	104	100	115	107	94	Oct	Feb	25

Source: Own calculations . Prices from Provincial Office of Statistics.

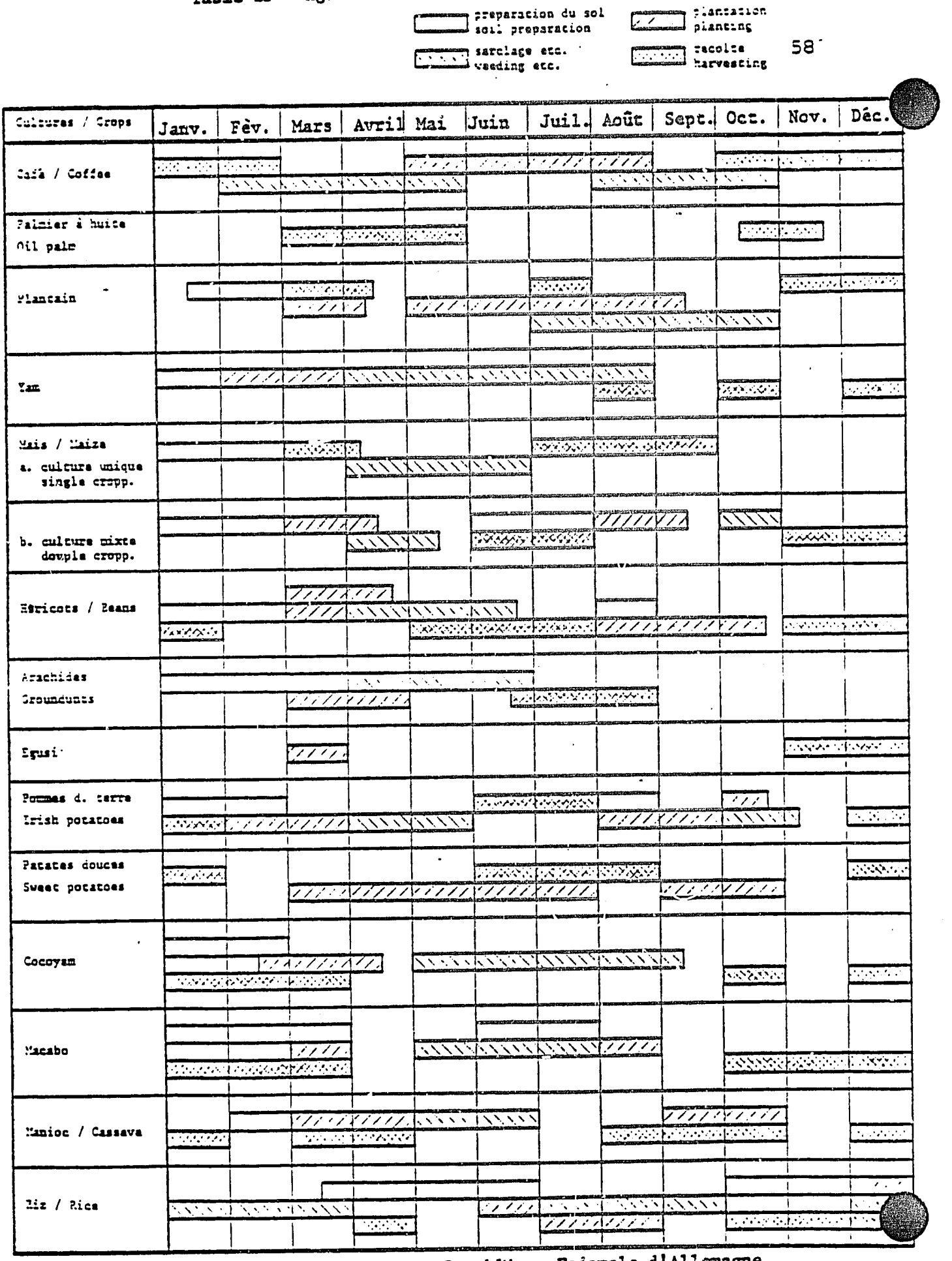
In general, we see that average price fluctuations during the season correspond quite closely with the agricultural calendar. (See Table 25). Average annual price fluctuation is greatest for irish potatoes, with a 79% difference between the seasonal high and low. This wide range of price is explained in large part by the high cost of storage, including losses of at least 15-20%. [1] Maize has the second highest range of annual price variation, at 47% between the seasonal high and low. Storage losses for maize (15-20%) are lower than for irish potatoes, but higher than average demand in bad harvest years contributes to price variability.

The estimated range of the seasonal index for tomatoes is 28%. Prices are steady during the summer harvest and rise sharply until the winter harvest comes into the market. Beans and groundnuts, crops that store reasonably well, have ranges of 26% and 21% respectively. Beans are harvested several times during the year, and the availibility of different types of beans keeps the range of seasonal price variation relatively low. Cocoyams are somewhat difficult to store, but several harvest periods during the year keep annual average price variation to 25%.

Seasonal variation within a given year can differ considerably from the average seasonal

1) See Rich Butler, Grain & Tuber Storage at the Farm Level, Peace Corps, Cameroon, 1979.

Table 25 - Agricultural Calendar



Source: Republique Unie du Cameroun, Republique Federale d'Allemagne, Developpement Rural dans la Province du Nord-Ouest Etude de Factibilite-Annexes, 1978, p. 49.

index(See Table 26).

Table 26 - Annual Ranges of Seasonal Indices (%)

Year	Irish Potatoes	Maize	Beans	Groundnuts	Tomatoes	Cocoyams
1972	116	91	33	31	72	16
1973	64	38	56	19	62	36
1974	62	40	31	98	55	42
1976	-	96	-	-	-	-
1977	71	54	73	90	51	74
1978	163	-	58	104	49	44

Source: Own Calculations

The average annual range of prices relatives in Bamenda is considerably higher than the range of the seasonal index, as is shown in Table 27.

Table 27 - Range of Annual Seasonal Indices & Average Seasonal Index

Crop	Annual Ranges (5 years)				Ave. Seasonal Index Range
	Lowest	Highest	Standard Deviation	Mean	
Irish Potatoes	60.9	176.6	43.8	94.9	78.9
Maize	79.7	175.9	28.0	63.6	46.9
Beans	56.0	107.4	17.8	50.2	25.4
Goundnuts	75.8	128.1	13.5	38.8	21.1
Tomatoes	68.4	140.3	9.34	57.6	27.5
Cocoyams	62.7	136.6	20.7	42.3	25.6

Source: Own Calculations

The widely differing annual price ranges and patterns of price behavior suggest the market system is subject to much irregular fluctuation. Difficulties in the transportation sector is one source of this fluctuation. The condition of the roads during rainy season increases the cost of transport substantially, and in many more remote areas, makes the evacuation of crops expensive and sometimes physically impossible.

Lack of accurate information about the size of the crop and the location of the largest marketable stocks also increases price fluctuations, although traders do have information networkds that allow for the general determination of supply.

Uncertainities in export demand also contribute to price fluctuations. For example, traders in Bamenda one year sold large quantities of corn to an outside trader, and they purchased heavily the next year in anticipation of the trader's return. However, the man did not come back, and some traders were caught with much larger than normal stocks.

The few years of time-series data for other markets indicate that prices fluctuate more widely than in Bamenda. The determination of price in rural markets seems to be determined by urban demand, and by local supply. If the supply of a good in a particular market is small, the good's price will rise. But, we hypothesize that price determination is also a function of the number of traders present in a given market. If an unusual number of traders are present in a market, prices will rise. When few traders are present, prices will go down. This is a problem particularly in areas poorly served by the transport system. Traders may only come irregularly and few in number, buying produce from the farmers at very low prices. Farmers in these areas, hence, have little incentive to increase production when they are not sure to be able to market their goods.

Marketing Chains

A general model of trading chains for the Northwest Province has been presented in the chapter on, "The Organization of Distribution". Several further comments can be made about other marketing agents in the Northwest, along with more remarks concerning trade out of the province.

First Point of Sale:

As previously identified, the first point-of-sale usually takes place either in rural producer markets or directly on the farm. Purchases are made by a number of different agents. At the farm, they may be made by local assemblers under agreement to sell to a particular trader, by local assemblers who plan to sell at a nearby market, or by the hired agents of traders who travel in different areas to purchase from the farmers. At rural markets, buyers may include traders with wholesale and/or retail operations in urban areas within the Northwest or elsewhere, local agents who assemble and sell to traders from outside, local consumers, and occasionally, consumers from outside the local area.

These first points-of-sale account for the great majority of the produce marketed in rural areas. Traders interviewed in the Northwest estimated that approximately 25% of the produce is purchased at the farm by local assemblers or buying agents. The remainder is bought in rural markets, except for a small percentage purchased by cooperatives and development organizations. The purchase of produce by these groups takes place in several ways.

The Bamenda Cooperative Vegetable Society (BCVS) sends its vehicles to collection points on a fairly regular schedule. Vegetables are taken on consignment by the BCVS, and a farmer's account is credited after damages and a 20% commission are deducted. Other foodstuffs (cocoyam, corn, grain, etc.) are purchased with cash directly from producers. The BCVS operates mostly in the Mezam and Momo Division, and despite a turnover of 46 million CFA francs in 1978, accounts for very small amount of the food marketed in the Northwest.

The UNVDA is another group which collects produce - rice, in this case - from collection point to which farmers have brought their goods. This heavily subsidized development society guarantees a market for its farmers, although some farmers sell their paddy rice to traders. A few farmers take their paddy to be processed by private hullers in Bamenda and sold to local traders. However, the risk involved discourages farmers, most of whom settle for the guaranteed UNVDA price of 42.5 CFAF/kilogram.

The UNVDA has been accumulating large stocks of rice in paddy form. This could create a major cash flow problem for the project unless efforts at marketing are increased. When traders in Douala were asked if they stocked any rice from N'Dop, most responded negatively. Traders did inquire as to how they might obtain some in Douala. With no ready stocks in Douala, the traders were not interested. UNVDA officials are hoping to make major sales to institutions, and also requesting further government tariff protection for local rice, but efforts to create better channels of distribution in urban centers may be necessary.

Several co-operatives - particularly Nso and Nkambe Women's Cooperatives - purchase foodcrops directly from farmer/members/. Volume, however, is small and women have complained that cooperative vehicles come neither often nor regularly.

Producers who live close to Bamenda may enter the market to retail their goods. A few of the producers interviewed have developed links with local institutions, supplying restaurants and schools with vegetables and fruits. This, however, is not typical of most farmers, since these producers have their own transportation and hire considerable amounts of labor to work their farms. One also holds a salaried position in government.

In general, trading chains are relatively short, and there is little evidence of marked inefficiency in handling. Some traders did complain about the problems of obtaining capital with which to purchase goods. The capital of the traders interviewed had generally been obtained through local savings associations or through the trader's family. There was little evidence of large traders monopolizing markets. Increased credit to traders may be useful in promoting some larger trading operations, particularly if the Northwest begins to export foodstuffs in larger quantities. However, the present ease of entrance into the trade sector promotes competition and keeps operating costs low.

External Trade:

Douala and urban areas in the Southwest serve as major points of export for the Northwest's agricultural goods. Only a few goods - Irish potatoes and beans - are sent to Yaounde, with traders citing high transport costs and stiff competition as the major disincentives to trade with the

capital. The newly-built road from Bamenda to Bafoussam will encourage exports out of the Northwest by improving the Province's competitive position, particularly vis-à-vis the West Province. According to Transport Union officials, the basic official transport rate Bamenda-Douala (346km) is 6,500 CFAF/ton, although this rate can be higher or lower according to the produce carried. Transport rates from Bafoussam to Douala (266Km) are at least 20% lower, and from N'Kong-Samba to Douala (145Km), 50-60% lower. Before the new road was built to Bafoussam, transport costs from Bamenda to Douala were sometimes 50% higher than costs from Bafoussam.

Much of the produce transported to Douala is purchased and loaded directly at rural markets in major producing areas. Transport cost from rural markets to Bamenda (300-500 CFA/bag) is often equal to or more than the cost of transport from Bamenda to Douala (300-400 CFAF/bag). Costs of transport from rural markets to Bamenda during rainy season are on average 25-50% higher than the dry season rate. This may even be higher when the roads are in particularly bad condition, with transporters charging at rates which compensate for increased transport time- large trucks are often stopped for hours behind rain gates - and greater risk. The effective carrying capacity of trucks during rainy season also decreases.

Larger traders will charter 12-ton trucks to carry goods from the Northwest to Douala. Smaller traders will band together in groups of 3 or 4 to fill up a 12-ton truck. Trucks and traders often leave in the evening, and travel all night to arrive in Douala by early morning. If the market is moving well, the produce is sold quickly and traders can return to the Northwest the same day. When the Douala markets are moving more slowly, traders may be forced to store goods there for several days.

Traders usually sell to one or two wholesalers, but sometimes try to sell to retailers who purchase directly from the truck.

Table 28 estimates the costs and returns for a load of Irish potatoes purchased in Banso and sold in Douala. The data were distilled from discussions with several traders and other informed sources, and are presented here as an example of possible costs and returns. The present example does not include the cost of licensing [1] and assumes that the trader buys the potatoes in the Banso market himself and does not pay any assemblers. The net return to othe trader for his labor and investment is 174,300 CFA francs, or 15.3% return, expressed as a percent of total sales receipts.

Table 29 – Breakdown of Trader's Cost
(Excluding Potato Purchase Cost)

Cost Item	Cost (CFAF)	Cost as % Trader Cost
Transport	135,000	62.6
Losses	37,500	17.3
Market Fees	15,000	7.0
Handling	11,250	5.2
Trader Transport, Meals, Lodging	7,800	3.6
Storage	7,500	3.5
Cost of Capital	1,650	.8
Total	215,700	100.0

Source: Table 28

Table 29 gives a breakdown of costs excluding the costs of potato purchase. Transportation is a major expense to the trader at 62.6% of trader cost. Even a small percentage (5%) loss makes it an important cost item (17.3%) for the trader. Other cost items are within a modest range. The costs and returns in trading can vary widely according to

1) Reliable information was difficult to obtain, and hence has been omitted as a cost.

Estimated Average

Table 28 - Costs and Returns of Irish Potato Trade: Banso-Douala

Cost Item	Total Cost	(100 Kg) Cost per Bag	% of Total Cost
1. Cost of Buying 150 Bags of Irish Potatoes	750,000	5,000	77.8
2. Market Fees-Banso	15,000	100	1.5
3. Handling Charges-Banso	3,750	25	.4
4. Transport-Banso-Douala	135,000	900	14.0
5. Handling-Douala	7,500	50	.8
6. Storage-Douala (50 CFA/sack/2days) for 75 sacks	7,500	50	.8
7. Losses 5% X 750,000 CFA	37,500	250	3.8
8. Return Transport for Trader-Douala-Banso	3,800	25	.4
9. Trader Lodging & Meals-Douala	4,000	27	.4
10. Cost of Capital (750,000 X 20% X .011)	1,650	4	.1
- Total Cost	965,700	6,438	100
- Return from Sale of 142.5 Bags in Douala (8,000 CFA/bag)	1,140,000	7,600	-
- Net Return to Trader	174,300	1,162	-

Source: Own Calculations using estimates made by traders.

the price differential between markets, size of losses, and the cost of labor, transport, maintenance, and storage. DEmand in the urban markets fluctuates, as does the supply of goods coming into the market. Hence, the prices vary widely in large urban markets, although less than in rural markets. The traders interviewed suggested that their business was risky, and sometimes they made money and sometimes they lost.

Market and Margins in Douala:

The market system in Douala is large and complex, with five major markets and numerous smaller markets and small retailers. Wholesale dealers buy many of the agricultural commodities coming into the city and distribute them to retailers who sell in the major markets or in neighborhood markets

A survey of Douala's markets done by Panafrican Development Institute students in 1977 1) estimated average margins for retail and wholesale merchants. The average margins were as follows:

Table 30 - Average Wholesale & Retail Margins - Douala

Product	Wholesale Margin %	Retail Margin %	Total Margin %
Cocoyams	35	15	50
Maize	21.8	28.8	50.6
Plantain	38.4	22.5	53.4
Groundnuts	20.	25	45

Source: Bonduelle, Enquete ..., p. 22

1) Jo Bonduelle, Enquete Sur La Commercialisation des Produits Vivviers dans la Ville de Douala, PAID, 1977.

The study notes that margins for less perishable crops such as maize and groundnuts are sometimes 15-20% lower than the averages shown above. Discussions with Douala merchants suggest that there are seasonal gluts of produce on the Douala market, and that in general, commerce in foodstuffs in Douala is highly competitive. Traders from the Northwest who go to Douala seemed to be fairly well-informed of prices there and of how well the market was moving. Information about the market is generally passed by word-of-mouth among traders.

Other markets outside of the Northwest include Nigeria and the Southwest Province. Small quantities of vegetable are exported out of the country to UDEAC Countries. While not illegal, exports of foodstuffs from Cameroon to neighboring countries in recent years have not been encouraged by the government. Historically, the Northwest Province had a fairly active trade with Nigeria. According to a 1965 SEDES study,[1] maize, groundnut oil, and palm oil were imported from Nigeria, and rice and colanuts were exported from the Northwest to Nigeria. Much of the trade went through Mamfé in the Southwest Province.

Today, trade with Nigeria is considerably smaller, and Mamfé has declined in economic importance. Traders in the Northwest, however, report that some trade goes on with Nigeria, principally over routes in the Northern part of the Province. One of the principal routes is through Nwa to Gembu in Nigeria. The road is in very poor condition and suitable

1) Societe d'Etudes Pour le Developpement Economique et Social (SEDES), Circuits Commerciaux de Produits et Bieans Essentiels, Yaounde, 1965 Tome V.

only for 4-wheel drive vehicles. Exports from the Northwest to Nigeria consist mainly of cattle, corn, and rice. Manufactured goods account for the major portion of imports from Nigeria.

Licenses are granted to conduct trade with Nigeria, but there are reportedly only three people with licenses in Donga-Mantung Division. The licenses are somewhat difficult to obtain; one trader reported that it took him two years to obtain a license, and he had to deal with both the Ministry of Economy and Plan and the Ministry of Transport. A senior government official in Donga-Mantung said that he was prepared to help people obtain licenses, but his major concern was to assure sufficient food supplies for the people of the division.

Transport costs to Nigeria for foodstuffs are high - 3,000 CFAF per bag of corn or rice. Cattle are trekked across the border. Although prices for foodstuffs are quite high in Nigeria, [1] transports costs reduce profit margins. Traders reported clearing 500-1,500 CFAF per bag of corn, a net return of 8-20%, assuming a initial investment of 3,000 CFAF per bag of corn. Most traders sell foodstuffs and use the money to buy manufactured goods to bring back to Cameroon. According to traders, two vehicles (carrying up to 10 bags of produce per vehicle) leave from Ndu for Gembu daily in the dry season, with vehicles leaving more irregularly in the rainy season.

1) The following December, 1979 prices in Nigeria were reported by the USDA Agricultural Attaché in Lagos -

Corn	- 86 CFAF/Kg.	Cocoyam	- 143 CFAF/Kg.
Cassava	- 142 CFAF/Kg.	Groundnuts	- 149 CFAF/Kg.
Potatoes	- 214 CFAF/Kg.	Beans	- 393 CFAF/Kg.

1 N = 357 CFAF

The export of fruits and vegetables out of the country is carried on by several trading firms based in Douala. According to the officers of one company, the major growing areas are in the West Province, but their refrigerator truck occasionally comes up to Bamenda to buy vegetables when demand is high. The vegetables are trucked to Douala, then put on planes to UDEAC countries and sometimes to France. The major clients of the company are European wholesalers supplying restaurants, and retailers catering to the expatriate communities in Central African countries. The marketing manager of the firm buys largely as a function of orders placed by customers over the telephone or by telegraph. The calculated cost of running a refrigerator truck from Bafoussam is approximately 15 CFAF/kilogram, or 180,000 CFAF for a 12-ton load. The cost of a new refrigerator truck was reported to be approximately 40 million CFAF.

Several Cameroonian traders interviewed also exported foodstuffs and vegetables, principally to Gabon. Their major purchases are made in the West Province. Highly perishable goods are sent by air freight to Gabon at a rate of 100-125 CFAF per kilogram. More bulky goods are sent by boat in large containers renting at 250,000 - 300,000 CFAF. The produce is marketed in Gabon by agents working with the Cameroonian exporters.

Dietary patterns in the Northwest vary according to local production, income class, consumer preference, etc. Corn is a major staple food in many parts of the province. Tubers also make up a large part of the diet, although corn is often the preferred source of carbohydrates. Beans, groundnuts, and dark,leafy vegetables are important sources of protein. Meat and eggs are also protein sources, but the relatively high cost of these products keeps per capita consumption down, particularly among lower income groups. Despite calculations fraught with difficulty, it is instructive to estimate per capita consumption using aggregate production figures.

In Table 31, we use figures for total human and animal consumption from the estimates of the Provincial Delegation of Agriculture, which take into account exports out of the province. Daily per capita consumption in grams is then estimated, using an average storage loss figure of 5 percent and then adjusting for standard loss in preparation by commodity. The amount of food fed to animals comes largely from spoilage and waste in preparation, although some food in the province is purchased for the purpose of feeding animals.

Interpretation of the data requires caution. The per capita consumption figures are annual averages and tell us nothing about seasonal dietary patterns or differences in consumption between income groups. The reliability of the figures depends heavily on the aggregate production figures, some of which are of doubtful accuracy. For example, the

TABLE 31

HUMAN AND ANIMAL CONSUMPTION OF AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTS IN N.W.P.

Crop	Use	Estimated Human Consumption		Estimated Per Capita Consumption		Est. Animal Consumption	
		qty.m.tons	% of Tot Prod	Edib. part. gm/day	Est.% loss in prep.	Qty (m.tons)	% of Total Pop.
1. Plantains		37,210	95	64	34	1,960	5
2. Bananas		57,080	90	98	34	6,340	10
3. Rice		1,110	50	3[a]	--	440	20
4. Maize		67,530	80	158	10	4,220	5
5. Cocoyams (Taro)		76,620	90	167	16	8,510	10
6. Cocoyams (Macabo)		36,330	80	80	16	9,080	20
7. Cassava		190,090	85	371	25	33,540	15
8. Sweet Potatoes		21,200	95	43	21	1,120	5
9. Irish Potatoes		6,790	60	15	15	---	-
10. Yams		25,520	95	55	16	1,340	5
11. Onions		240	90	.6[a]	--	---	-
12. Groundnuts		8,640	70	20	10	6,170	5
13. Beans		27,040	80	66	5	---	-
14. Okra		150	100	.4	--	---	-
15. Tomatoes		200	80	.5[a]	--	20	5
16. Sugarcane		12,610	100	28	15	---	-
17. Pineapples		29,600	100	65	15	---	-
18. Cabbages		314	50	.8	--	---	-

Source: Provincial Delegation of Agriculture for Northwest, Evaluation of Agricultural Development from 1959/60-1979/80, and own calculations.

[a] Figures do not account for substantial imports into the Northwest.

production figures for corn seem somewhat low, [1] and those for cassava quite high.

The data point to the importance of maize and particularly tubers in the diet. Tubers are a cheap source of calories relative to corn, and consumed widely. We would argure that lower income groups consume large quantities of tubers, and that people switch to more corn as their income increases.

Bean consumption appears to be quite high and serves as a source of protein, substituting for meat, for which prices have risen greatly. Indeed, it has been estimated that per capita beef consumption has gone down in recent years.[2] If beef prices continue to rise as quickly, there may be an increasing switch to beans and groundnuts as sources of protein.

Consumption of tomatoes, onions and rice is underestimated in the table, since imports into the Province are not included in production figures. Consumption of fresh tomatoes has grown in recent years, and people in urban areas are beginning to consume more "European" vegetables. Rice remains more or less a luxury food in rural areas, consumed during holiday periods and other special occasions. However, increasing amounts

1) A study done by SATEC, Etude des Perspectives de Developpement de la Production et de la Transformation du Mais, p. 50, gives a consumption figure of 282 grams/day for the Northwest, with a national average of 123 grams/day. The study also suggests that rural consumption of maize is 20-30 percent lower than urban consumption in the Northwest.

2) See Holtzman, Staatz, and Weber, op. cit., p. 36

of rice are being consumed in urban areas in the Northwest and throughout Cameroon.[1)]

In general, there is little evidence of any acute undernutrition in the Northwest. The National Nutrition Survey suggests that there is some chronic undernutrition among young children, although this is due to reasons other than the lack of food per se.[2)] There is probably a lack of protein in the diet, particularly among the rural population and low income classes in urban areas. However, it would appear that the level of caloric intake among the population as a whole is adequate.

Demand and Market Prospects for Foodstuffs

Demand for agricultural products is generally considered to be influenced by

1. consumer income and its distribution
2. population size and its distribution by age, geographic area, etc.
3. prices and availability of other commodities
4. consumer tastes and preferences...[3)]

1) Republique Unie du Cameroun, Ministere de l'Economie et du Plan, Etude de Previsions de la Production et de la Consommation de Riz au Cameroun, 1975-1985, no publishing date.

2) United Republic of Cameroon, National Nutrition Survey, 1978. The survey reports the prevalence of chronic undernutrition (under 90 per cent height for age of reference median) among children aged 3-59 months in the Northwest Province as 24.2 percent, as compared to a national average of 22 percent.

3) Tomek & Robinson, Agricultural Product Prices, p. 14

For most agricultural commodities, an increase in a consumer's income will increase the consumption of a particular good if it is a "normal" good. If the good is considered "inferior", then an increase in income will decrease the consumption of that good because people will shift to more preferred goods. The consumption of a highly preferred good will increase more than a less preferred good, given a certain percentage increase in income. Hence, the income elasticity of demand for beef is generally higher than for potatoes. 1) Although income elasticity figures have not been calculated for the Northwest, some figures do exist for middle-income families in Yaoundé. (See Table 32). The figures generally indicate that as real income in urban areas in the Northwest grows, demand for maize will grow faster than the demand for tubers. How much the demand for food grows depends upon, among other things, how fast real income grows. With the 1.2% annual growth of real per capita income in Cameroon, we would not expect local demand for food to grow very much more than the rate of growth of the population. Assuming an annual population growth of 2.5% and an annual growth in real per capita income of 1% and holding relative prices constant, we would predict a growth in demand for foodstuffs of not more than 3.0% annually, the local market alone would not be able to absorb such increases without a drop in prices or increase in exports out of the province. Even with

1) In the United States the income of elasticity of beef is calculated at .29, and for potatoes, .12. This means that for a 10% increase in income, beef consumption will increase by 2.9% and potato consumption by 1.2%. Note that income elasticities for manufactured goods are considerably higher than for agricultural goods. Hence, as average real income rises, demand for manufactured goods increases more rapidly than for farm goods.

TABLE 32

INCOME ELASTICITIES FOR SELECTED FOOD ITEMS CONSUMED BY MIDDLE INCOME FAMILIES IN YAOUNDE

COMMODITY	INCOME ELASTICITY
Expenditure on: Total Food	0.59
Processed Food Products	0.51
Bread	0.8T
Cereals	0.59
Non-cereal staples	0.29
Tubers - Plantains	0.22
Beer	0.89
Wine and Spirits	1.52

Source: Arouna, N'Sangou, Offre et Demande des Produits Virriers dans la Region de Yaounde, p. 48-54

a more realistic production projection of 4-5%, there would be excess supplies coming onto the local market.

Demand for a given commodity also depends on its own price and the prices of other related commodities. Generally, the own price elasticity of demand for agricultural goods is considered inelastic; hence, for a ten percent decrease in the price of a commodity, demand for that commodity will increase by much less than 10%. This would suggest, for example, that a modest price decrease in the price of maize might not clear the local market of excess supply (unless the price dropped low enough to encourage more significant feeding of maize to animals). At the same time, the consumption of cereals, would increase more for a given decrease in price than would the consumption of tubers, because of the higher price elasticity of demand for cereals.

Relative prices of related commodities also determine demand. If the price of rice were to go down considerably relative to the price of maize, then rice consumption in the Northwest would increase. There are several problems, however, in the rice market. First, the price of rice remains high relative to tother sources of calories, and is not likely to drop, given the high production costs of local rice and the government policy of protecting Cameroonian rice production from competition by a tariff on imported rice. Second, consumers seem to prefer the longer grained imported rice to local rice. This creates a difficult situation for the increased marketing of local rice. Unless rice imports are limited by higher tariff barriers or quantity restric-

tions, local rice will have trouble competing with imports. At the same time, substantially increased rice consumption would come largely from a decrease in the relative price of rice. This would either need to come from lowered costs of local production - difficult to do quickly - or allowing in more imported rice at a lower price, which would make it even harder to market the local rice. Given the level of income in the Northwest, the expansion of the local rice market is not encouraging. [1] The largest increases in the consumption of rice are projected for the urban centers of Douala and Yaounde. However, greater efforts to market Northwest rice in these areas must be made by lowering production and processing costs, developing better distribution channels, obtaining contractual arrangements with institutions, and reducing the selling price of local rice when necessary to reduce stocks.

In general, the demand prospects on the local market appear to be best for maize, beans, and groundnuts, although demand should not grow a great deal more than population. Demand for tubers should reain at its present level (which is significant in the Northwest), and decline as per capita income increases. The local demand for vegetables is growing somewhat, particularly for tomatoes, although the market is confined largely to Bamenda and does not represent a significant portion of the total agricultural market.

1) Recent studies have shown that the problems of efficiency in rice production are not unique to the Northwest, but are found throughout West Africa. The "Political Economy of Rice in West Africa: A Summary of Principal Results" by Food Research Institute, Stanford University and West Africa Rice Development Association, 1979 prepared under USAID contract, AID/afr-C-1235.

Markets Outside the Northwest Province

We do not have sufficient information to do a detailed analysis of demand prospects in markets outside of the Northwest. This is subject that deserves further research, given the potential for export out of the Northwest Province. However, a number of general comments can be made about the possibilities of greater exports of foodstuffs out of the Province.

Markets in Douala and the Southwest are the most obvious areas for expansion of food exports out of the Northwest. Lowering transport costs will be a key element in allowing the Northwest to take advantage of increasing urban demand. The profitability of trade between the Northwest and Douala is seasonal; i.e. sometimes the price differential between the rural market in the Northwest and the Douala market is not high enough to overcome the cost of transport. Hence, the lowering of transport costs, particularly from major rural assembly markets, would allow the Northwest to successfully export its crops for a greater period of the year. Better storage in the Northwest, particularly of Irish potatoes and maize, would allow the province to take better advantage of the seasonal price fluctuations in Douala.

Traders from the Northwest suggest that the agricultural products that move well in Douala include Irish potatoes, beans, maize and cabbage. But, once again we must emphasize that seasonal gluts in Douala sometimes make it difficult to trade profitably out of the Northwest, particularly in maize and beans.

At present, it is estimated that the West Province accounts for some 90% of the maize that is traded across provincial borders, and hence, is the major supplier of both Douala and Yaounde. National demand for maize in urban areas is projected to grow at a rate of 4.3 - 5.9% annually. 1) If national annual production grows at only 4.0%, it is possible that there will be shortages of maize in urban areas. However, this depends largely on the success of presently planned projects aimed at increasing production in the West and Northwest. In general, preliminary World Bank projections suggest that with the high rate of urbanization in the country, there may be some food shortages in the urban areas in 5-10 years. 2) Hence, we can hypothesize in the future, Northwest market prospects in urban areas are relatively good, although for the moment, a rapid expansion of trade may not be possible.

It is difficult to assess the extent to which there may be opportunities for foodstuff export to neighboring African countries. Price levels in Gabon and Nigeria are higher than in Cameroon, although recent figures for Nigeria suggest that they are not inordinately high. 3) The scope for the expansion of trade may be limited by several factors. First, it is not clear that the country has a competitive advantage in all foodstuffs. For example, the price of maize

1) SATEC, op. cit., p. 49

2) IBRD, Mission de Reconnaissances Agricoles au Cameroun, unofficial draft copy, 1979.

3) Prices figures for Gabon were not available at the time of publication.

from the Northwest has recently been more than 50% more expensive than the world price of maize.[1] It is not clear, then, that Nigeria would be willing to import large quantities of Cameroonian maize when maize could be purchased on the world market for a much lower price. There may, however, be some trade opportunities to areas farther away from the coast such as eastern Nigeria, Tchad, and the Central African Republic. Export possibilities for other food crops need to be further investigated.

The second possible limination on the export of food crops may be a concern to avoid food shortages and higher prices in Cameroon. It would be necessary to carefully control the export of foodstuffs according to local supply if these problems are to be avoided. This control might be organized and carried out by an organization such as the cooperatives. In any case, the export of foodstuffs, if well organized, could be a viable way of encouraging more production in the Northwest without lowering the price paid to the producer.

1) SATEC, op. cit., p. VXIII

Conclusions:

According to the evidence available, the marketing system in the Northwest Province works reasonably well. Large amounts of agricultural commodities are moved through the system. Local traders compete with each other and their margins seem reasonable, given the losses and risks involving in trading. Average seasonal price fluctuations correspond generally to seasonal availibilities. Information about economic conditions travels through the system and prices generally reflect changing conditions of supply and demand. Market fees and taxes are not excessive. Marketing chains are relatively short and there is little evidence of gross inefficiency in handling.

Of course, for every general indictor of a reasonably well functioning marketing system, there is also a problem or an inefficiency. Storage losses are not inconsequential. Traders may have an advantage in bargaining with farmers in areas poorly served by the transportation infrastructure and where fewer traders are willing or able to go. Seasonal price fluctuations from one year to the next can change dramatically. Information may move only slowly through the system. Market fees are rising to meet the increased costs of market infrastructure. Economies of scale in handling are often not exploited. More isolated areas of the Province are relatively poorly served by the marketing system, both in terms of the distribution of goods or regular evacuation of produce.

Despite these problems, we would argue that basic problem of food marketing in the Northwest is not the system itself, but rather the present lack of opportunity for expansion of the market, either within the Province or without. Locally, given the level of effective demand and the relatively saturated foodstuff market, the possibilities for expansion are limited. Farmers do not want to produce more unless they can sell their increased production for a "reasonable" price nor should they.

The relative isolation of the Province from major urban consuming areas - at least until very recently - has further limited the expansion of the foodstuff market. As urban consumers are increasingly linked to rural producers through the transport network, the economic incentives should exist for farmers to produce more, for traders to invest more in storage and efficient handling, for local councils to improve marketplaces, and for government in invest more in information dissemination and data gathering. Hence, improving the transportation network should be an important priority in the effort to increase the opportunities of market expansion for the Northwest. As the transport system improves, so should the incentives for improved marketing. Of course, there is nothing automatic about this process. Efforts should be made to assure regular supplier to customers under contract. Capital should be made available to traders for the improvement of storage facilities and systems of produce handling. Increased efforts should be made to educate farmers in storage techniques.

Increase in production must go hand-in-hand with improved marketing. Otherwise, one runs the risk of unsold produce, discouraged producers, and a subsequent decline in production. At the same time, an increased level of marketing activity implies that farmers must be more responsive to consumer demand and to assuming a regular supply of goods. This may mean a movement towards larger, more specialized farming units dependent on the market. If this the case, efforts must be made in insure the livehood of those farmers who, because of unequal access to land or capital, cannot expand production to reap the benefits of better marketing arrangements. This problem is partinularly important in developing countries where employment in the modern sector cannot absorb large numbers of people.

The successful development of the Northwest Province lies not only developing marketing and production, but also in fostering equality of access to the gains of such development.

MARKET INTERVENTIONS AND COOPERATIVE INVOLVEMENT

We have suggested in our chapter on the economic aspects of agricultural production and marketing in the Northwest that the problems of foodcrop marketing in the Province can be attributed in large part to the lack of opportunity for expansion of the foodcrop market. Locally, this is due to lack of effective demand in many areas, to the slow growth of real per capita income, and to the relative inelasticity of demand for agricultural products. The relative isolation of the Province from major urban consuming areas due to high transport costs has limited the expansion of inter-provincial trade. The latter situation is beginning to improve with the completion of the all-weather road from Bafoussam to Bamenda, and will improve even more as new farm-to-market roads are built and existing feeder roads are better maintained and made passable throughout the year. We think that to a certain extent the present marketing system will grow and adapt as improvements in the physical infrastructure are made. Yet, several important questions remain. First, what can be done to facilitate marketing improvements, and by whom? Second, how can cooperatives become successfully involved in the marketing of foodcrops? These questions are difficult ones to answer, particularly given the broad range activities that comprise marketing, which can be defined as including, "assembly, transport, sorting, cleaning, grading, storage, packing, initial processing, looking for suppliers, looking for outlets, financing the holding of produce between the time that the producer is paid and when it is bought by the consumer,

taking the risk of holding produce until an outlet is found, adapting it to consumer tastes, informing them of its availability and quality, presenting it in convenient sized lots, and all other operations involved in bringing goods from the producer to the final consumer."[1] For some commodities, marketing does not involve all of these activities, but any group or individual involved in marketing must be prepared for a sometimes complicated and risky operation. We cannot hope to provide a detailed plan of action for government interventions or cooperative involvement. Rather, we will attempt to make some suggestions that will require much further discussion and planning to be translated into action. Many people in the North-west Province have an intimate knowledge of the problems of marketing. These include private traders, government agricultural officials, cooperative officials—especially those who have been involved in the present foodcrop marketing operations, and members and officials of the Bamenda Cooperative Vegetable Society (BCVS). Certainly their experience and expertise would be a major input into the actual planning of marketing interventions. Improvements in marketing must be carefully coordinated with increases in production. Hence, producers—women in most cases—must also be involved in the planning and implementation process. For marketing improvements to be feasibly undertaken, farmers must be willing and able to respond to needs of the consumer, which may imply an increasing specialization of production and the use of improved techniques of cultivation, harvesting, and storage.

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[1] J.C. Abbott, Marketing—Its Role in Increased Productivity, FAO Basic Study No. 4, 1962, p 5.

Production and Marketing

One of the most important aspects of marketing is the ability to assure customers of a reasonably regular supply of goods. This is particularly important in the case where contracts are signed to supply institutions on a regular basis. For example, the BCVS was forced to buy produce on the Bamenda market to fulfill contracts because its regular producer groups could not supply enough.[1]

Regular supplies must also be obtained at a competitive price. Again, we can point to the experience of the BCVS, which lost several contracts when institutions decided they could generally obtain better prices in the market. A knowledge of where supplies can be obtained at a good price is an essential part of a marketing operation. This is not always easy in the Northwest Province, as prices do tend to vary considerably between markets. A group trading in foodstuffs must be flexible and knowledgeable enough to make purchases in surplus areas when necessary, particularly when its own producer groups cannot supply sufficient amounts of a needed commodity.

One strategy of assuring the regular supply of a commodity would be to encourage the specialization of production according to regional comparative advantage. It is likely that, if markets were reasonably assured, farmers would be willing to specialize in one or two food crops for the market in addition to their subsistence production. This is particularly important for villages in marginal areas which are isolated by

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[1] See J.B.G. Bomers, The Bamenda Cooperative Vegetable Society, Ltd., the Past, the Present, and the Future Potential, Cooperative Department, 1973 AND A. Van Wulfften Palthe, A Report on the Bamenda Cooperative Vegetable Society, Organisation of Netherlands Volunteers, 1977.

poor roads and sporadically visited by traders because of greater per unit costs of marketing, high risk, and low volume. Specialization would facilitate the ability of these villages to attain sufficient volume to allow for bulking operations. Of course, the poor roads are in large part the major problem for these areas. Until transportation at a reasonable cost can be assured, it will be very difficult for these villages to break out of the vicious circle in which producers are not assured of a market, receive low prices when they can sell their goods, and hence have no economic incentive to produce more.

Transport

It is obvious that better roads which assure the regularity of transport are absolutely essential to greater participation in the market, particularly for perishable foodcrops. Improvement of the roads must be a shared responsibility of the national government and local communities. From the viewpoint of financial feasibility, cooperatives can hardly be expected to supply regular transport to remote areas, given the low volume produced in these areas and the high risk involved. On the other hand, cooperatives might be able to target several remote areas for regular evacuation. The financial ability of the cooperatives to do this would depend on the profitability of its operation in the more accessible areas.

The cost of cooperative vehicle operation has generally been quite high. Unless cooperatives can operate their vehicles on a relatively full-time basis, handling large volumes of commodities, it may be cheaper to hire private transport. Cooperatives should resist the temptation of purchasing more vehicles for foodstuff marketing until the volume of turnover warrants such purchases.

Storage

Adequate storage is an important aspect in improving marketing in the Northwest. From a financial viewpoint, storage is undertaken because it is expected that the costs of storage will be less than the expected gain from selling goods at a later date. Some individual farmers may undertake storage for this speculative motive, while others store simply because they wish to assure themselves of a sufficient food and seed supply through the next year. Larger farmers with more commercially oriented operations are probably more willing than smaller farmers to invest in improved storage methods. Cooperatives would want to store generally for speculative reasons. However, if cooperatives were better able to guarantee markets for farmers by storing at harvest and marketing produce later, covering the costs of storage might be a sufficient goal.

There are a number of problems as to how cooperatives should become involved in storage. First, there are substantial risks involved in any large-scale storage operation. Seasonal price fluctuations in the Northwest

can vary widely from one year to the next. For example, the annual range of the seasonal price index for corn was 91% in 1972 and 38% in 1973. For groundnuts, the range was 19% in 1973 and 98% in 1974. This kind of variation makes it difficult to predict what sort of return might be made on storage. However, if storage operating costs were kept lower than an average seasonal range, then a storage program over time should be financially viable.

Trial programs undertaken in 1977-1978 by the Bamenda Cooperative Association suggest that storage operating costs were approximately 30% of total costs. Corn was purchased that year at an average of 35 FCFA/kilogram, and sold at an average of 54 FCFA/kilogram, a 54% increase in price. Two methods of storage were tried: one using jute bags and the other with silo storage. Net returns to the two were 7.0% and 6.9% respectively. Grain storage specialists[1] working in the Northwest have generally recommended that the jute bag method be used, since transporting and wholesaling are done in bag lots and risks are lower than with silo storage.

Location of storage units would depend largely on the volume of cooperative foodstuff marketing and the nature of the program in terms of risk bearing. Centralized storage operations for corn in the Northwest Province have been plagued by insufficient quantities and the difficulties of transport.[2] . Storage facilities should probably be no more centralized

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[1] Thanks to Mr. Richard Butler and Mr. Mark Krause, U.S. Peace Corps Grain Storage Advisors to the NWCA, for providing information about storage problems in the Northwest Province.

[2] The final report (1977) of the Grain Storage Project of the Federation of Evangelical Churches and Missions in Cameroon states that seven 26-tons silos were built in the Northwest but never used.

than the Union level until the scale of operations of the NWCA warrants further investment in larger units. Improved storage facilities at the farm level should also be encouraged by the cooperatives, which could provide technical assistance and insecticides to interested farmers.

The arrangements under which the risks of marketing are shared would also influence the nature of a storage operation. Farmers would most likely not be willing to use the coffee-type of bonus system for foodcrops. Most farmers interviewed depended on the revenue from foodcrop sales for daily cash needs, and would not be willing to take anything less than the market price for their produce even if there was a bonus to be paid later. This would imply that financing for a foodcrops program would need to be such that it could pay at or above market prices to producers at the time of collection, as well as bear the risks of storage under price uncertainty. A fund would need to be available to finance the operation—either built up from profits in the foodstuffs program, or available from other sources such as banks or credit unions.

Several groups in the Northwest Province—most significantly the UNVDA and the Nso Cooperative Union—have accumulated large stocks of rice. To avoid the costly build-up of large stocks, storage operations should be undertaken as a function of the cooperative's ability to market the stored goods. Aggressive marketing measures must be taken if stocks do accumulate, including price reductions to move stocks, discounts to

large purchasers, and an active search for institutional buyers. Some of these measures have been implemented by the Nso Cooperative Union, and rice stocks are reportedly being reduced.

Development of Inter-Provincial Trade

The build-up of rice stocks serves as an example of moving too quickly into a marketing operation without reasonably assured outlets. Cooperatives cannot rely on local markets to absorb large production increases, given the slow growth of local demand and the intense competition from traders. The greatest opportunity for sales growth will eventually come from inter-provincial trade, as urban areas grow and transportation networks are improved. There may also be room for the expansion of trade with neighboring countries, if favorable political and economic conditions prevail.

Cooperative involvement in these longer-distance marketing operations is certainly not without risk. There is competition from traders as well as from producing areas in other provinces. Also, prices in the market, particularly in Douala, may not always be high enough to make trading worthwhile. It is essential that sufficient storage be available to allow cooperatives the flexibility to take advantage of seasonal price fluctuations in distant markets.

As was suggested for producers, one strategy for cooperative marketing would be to specialize in a few markets: "If a cooperative handles only a small portion of the total volume being marketed, it exerts little

influence on distribution among market areas. The practice, then, is to attempt to develop a few market areas intensively, hoping competitors will do the same."[1] More research needs to be conducted to further determine prospective demand, size of external markets, and where to concentrate sales.

The creation of a marketing service at the level of the Northwest Cooperative Association has been under discussion for some time. This would seem essential if the cooperative becomes heavily involved in foodstuff marketing. The major task of such a service would be to search for market outlets, make contracts with institutions and other buyers, and disseminate information about products from the Northwest. Someone in the service should have good contacts in the business community, and could be paid partly on a commission basis. Another member of the marketing service could collect information on levels of production, prices, and market potential, as well as conduct studies on optimal storage, transport, handling, and pricing practices. In any case, it is vital that local cooperative officials understand that concerted efforts at marketing be made. Improved training to equip cooperative workers with the skills necessary for foodstuff marketing would be essential to a successful program.

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[1] Abrahamsen, Martin and Scroggs, Claud (eds), Agricultural Cooperation, Selected Readings, University of Minnesota Press, Minneapolis, 1963, p. 71.

Involvement in export operations of foodstuffs could potentially be one of the most useful cooperative programs. A problem with exporting foodstuffs to neighboring countries might be the creation of food shortages in the Province, with a resultant rise in food prices in local markets. Granting a quasi-monopoly on food exports to cooperatives would be one way of controlling the flow of foodstuffs out of the Province, assuming that unauthorized private trade was also effectively controlled. This would give cooperatives a situation in which they could take advantage of economies of scale and control over a certain segment of the market.[1]

The political situation in the country is such that increased trade in foodstuffs with neighboring countries may be possible, although it is most likely that such international trade arrangements will take some time. Cooperatives, however, may want to begin to lobby for increased trade by applying for export licenses and putting forth proposals concerning the improvement of transportation links with neighboring countries. Again, thi is an area deserving considerable further research and discussion.

The extent to which cooperatives can compete successfully with private traders remains an open question. It depends on the degree to which cooperatives can organize efficiently, utilize transportation effectively, exploit economies of scale, and react quickly to changing market conditions. On the one hand, cooperatives should try to avoid high fixed costs initially by renting storage space rather than building new facilities and by hiring transport rather than investing heavily in new vehicles. On the other hand,

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[1] Abbott, op. cit., p. 94, suggests that cooperatives are "most effective [illegible] physical control can be exercised over produce at one point in the market[illegible] chain."

cooperatives must be willing to invest sufficient resources in marketing to allow foodstuff operations a reasonable chance of success. Personnel must be trained and hired to work in the foodstuff marketing operation. Communication networks must be set up to allow marketing managers to react quickly to trading opportunities. Feasible methods of financing and risk-sharing must be developed.

Cooperatives should probably try to avoid direct competition with private traders locally. Rather, they should concentrate on institutional buyers and long distance marketing. Cooperatives should also develop contacts with private traders. We talked to several exporters in Douala who were quite interested in working with cooperatives to develop export possibilities.

Although most interventions discussed in this section have been concerned with cooperatives, we do not mean to imply that private trade should be discouraged. To the contrary, government may need to take steps to assist traders. Making credit available to traders would be one possible intervention. Improving wholesale facilities in urban areas would also be of assistance to the private sector. Improving government crop reporting services and market news services would be of use to both private traders and cooperatives.

In conclusion, we can say that there is some scope for cooperative involvement in foodstuff marketing, although the operation is not without risk. The experiences of the women's cooperatives and the BCVS must be taken into account in the design of a more ambitious program. Fixed costs should be kept to a minimum as the program expands. Marketing efforts should expand

as both a function of increased production and market demand. A cooperative marketing program, in addition to being financially viable, must provide services to farmers in the form of fair prices and assured markets. This is not an easy task and must be undertaken with care.

Chapter II:

THE STRUCTURE AND PERFORMANCE OF AGRICULTURAL MARKETING IN THE NORTHWEST PROVINCE, CAMEROONS

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I. Research Objectives

Although market geography is primarily concerned with the spatial dimensions of commercial exchange, a detailed analysis of a marketing system should relate spatial structure to a variety of economic indices and variables. Accordingly I have modified the original objectives in the "Scope of Work" and will undertake a comprehensive analysis of the structure and performance of foodstuff markets in the Northwest.

Because of the modest levels of rural supply and demand, most commercial exchanges in the Bamenda area occur within a unitary system of market places which meet on alternate days of a market week, offer buying and selling facilities for almost all rural produce and consumption items, and organize the flow of commodities between rural and urban demand points. Accordingly, the analysis of structure and performance in such a periodic marketing system must proceed on two levels: that of the macro-system of market place location and that of the micro-systems of specific commodity distributions.

A) Locational Characteristics

1) Locational structure

The salient structural characteristics of the overall

marketing system will be identified through an investigation of three features: hierarchy, spacing, and periodicity.

a) Hierarchy. Hierarchical ordering of centers is a common feature of regional economic systems, even under conditions of low productivity. Periodic market places are distributed and interlinked in space and time with respect to the different range of functions and products that each may offer. Such differences usually allow market places to be sorted into a limited number of ranks, on the basis of which a hierarchy can be formulated.

b) Spacing. The basic characteristics of locational patterning are identified by recording the number of markets of various ranks that are present within the region and its divisions, by measuring the distances between markets of the same and different orders, and by charting the alignments of markets with respect to their position in the hierarchy.

c) Periodicity. Additional characteristics of market structure are revealed by the relation of hierarchical differences and spatial distances to the frequency and sequencing of market meetings over the weekly cycle.

Hierarchical, spatial and temporal patterns, once identified, will be compiled to formulate a unitary market location structure. Investigation into the causes and consequences of this structure in terms of the regional economy

will be carried out by relating market location patterns to the patterns of transportation, population distribution, economic specialization, and administrative organization.

2) Locational performance

An estimation of how well the marketing system serves the actual demands of the region and helps to generate economic growth will be attempted by comparing the observed locational structure to theoretical models built on postulates of perfect competition. Specific performance indices to be investigated will focus on:

a) accessibility, or the ease with which rural residents in various localities can deliver their produce and obtain the various goods and services available within the system;

b) competitiveness, or the degree to which the absolute spacing and relative positioning and timing of markets of different orders allows rural customers to sell produce for fair prices and obtain goods at reasonable cost.

B) Commodity Distribution

Analysis of the structure and performance of "markets" for specific agricultural commodities will entail a discussion of the geographical and organizational networks through which each commodity flows.

1) Geographical networks

Although the hierarchical system of market places provides a basic framework for the flow of produce, specific commodities are channeled along different paths, according to differences in supply distribution, distances traversed and economies-of-scale. Treatment of the distribution structure for different commodities will incorporate a description of:

a) the hierarchical flow of each commodity through the system;

b) the range of distribution;

c) the relative role of higher and lower ranking centers as demand and redistribution points.

The assessment of the performance of each chain will focus on analyzing the degree to which quantities and prices are mutually adjusted at different points to effect an efficient linkage of supply and demand. Ideally, price and quantity adjustment should be compared over space (by analyzing variation among market places), and over time[1] (by analyzing seasonal variation).

2) Organizational networks

The final and most basic form of structural analysis is obtained by investigation of trading chains and the microeconomy of the small scale traders who organize

various aspects of commodity distribution. Treatment of organizational structure will incorporate investigation of

a) the number and range of functions of trading units responsible for different aspects of the distribution of each commodity;

b) the overall marketing costs which accrue along the marketing chain, i.e., transport costs, fees and profits;

c) the details of cooperation, collusion and competition among trading units.

Assessment of performance on this level will focus on the relationship between existing modes of competition and cooperation and the costs of marketing rural produce and consumption items.

Summary of Market Performance Indices

I. Market Places

1. Ease of access for rural households in various subdivisions of the region.
2. Degree of competition among market places.

II. Commodity Markets

A. Geographical networks

1. Quantity and price adjustment over space.
2. Quantity and price adjustment over time.

B. Organizational networks

1. Degree of competitiveness among trading firms
2. Assessment of marketing costs and efficiency and equity of distribution.

II. Research Methodology

Research was carried out in the Northwest Province during July and August, 1979. Prior to arrival in the field, I visited Graham Hollier, a geographer at the University of Strathclyde, who had studied the marketing system in the Northwest during 1974-75. He gave me a series of gazeteers and a map which provided details on location, periodicity and hierarchical ordering of all the markets in the Northwest. Hollier listed approximately 300 markets, 59 of which he identified as being of major importance in the regional flow of commodities. I realized that it would be impossible to survey more than a small sample of these markets during the research period, so I decided to use Hollier's material to formulate the basic regional structure of market place location, which will comprise Section III of this report, and to select a small number of markets within which to analyze commodity flow patterns in detail. On the basis of my own surveys and on informal observation, I conclude that the salient features of the system have not changed since 1975 and that Hollier's observations are still applicable. I have made some modifications in his ranking scheme, however.

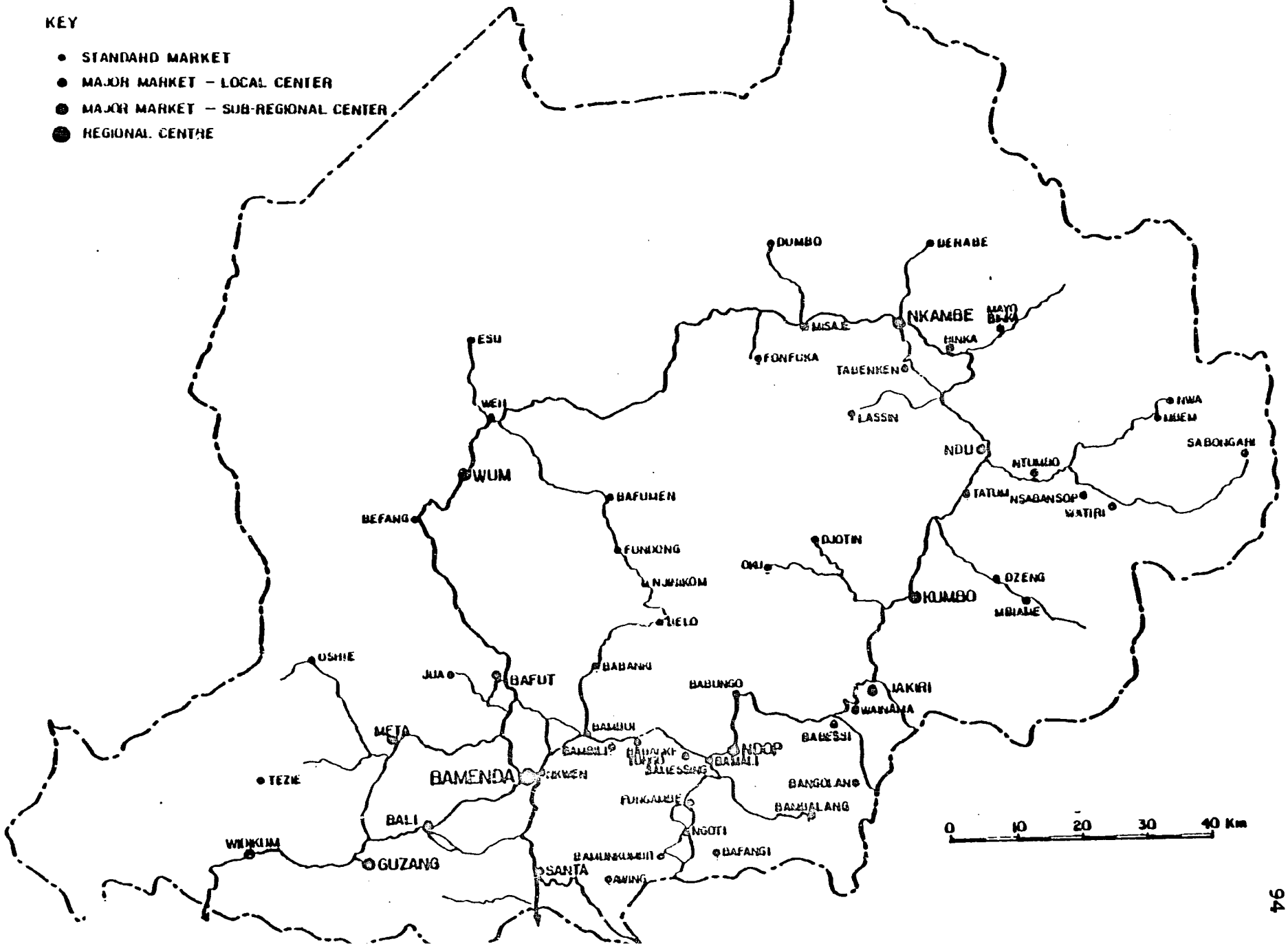
Upon arrival in the field I selected a sample of market places on the understanding that it would be better

to survey an entire group of contiguous and interrelated markets than to select a random or representative sample from the entire region. Accordingly I began with Bamenda, the central market of the system, and surveyed all the important markets within a 35-kilometer radius, including Mankon and Nlawen, (the two markets in Bamenda), Meta, Bali, Guzang, Santa, Bambui, Bambili, Babanki-Tungo, Babanki, and Bafut (see Figure I). I had originally planned for other team members to survey the Wum and Kumbo subdivisions so that broader generalizations and internal comparisons could be attempted. However, the agricultural economist working in Wum specialized in cattle marketing (as did two colleagues who joined him), and a fourth agricultural economist did not arrive until August, too late to really provide detailed material for this section of the report. The anthropologist in Kumbo has provided me with her surveys, but time constraints do not allow me to analyze her material for the report at this stage.

Each market was visited twice during the course of research. Surveys included a general census of all items available for sale in the market and a detailed investigation of quantities, prices and flows of selected food commodities. These included:

1) the basic starchy staples: cocoyam (Colocasia and Xanthesoma), Irish potatoes, corn, plantain, gari

FIGURE 1
MARKETS OF THE NORTHWEST PROVINCE
(Based on a map constructed by G. Hollier)



(grated manioc), rice and several varieties of beans;

2) selected condiments widely used in sauces: palm oil, tomatoes, cabbages, and fish.

Quantity information was collected for all items by roughly estimating the volumes and weights of goods visibly displayed in the market according to local measures.[2] Prices of cocoyam, corn, potatoes, rice, gari, palm oil and fish were obtained by one of my research assistants, who posed as a consumer and bargained for the price. Prices of other commodities were not collected because they either could not be standardized or were not widely available in all markets.

Information on flows was collected by an assistant who enumerated the cargoes and destinations of all vehicles which left the market site during the course of the market day. Transport surveys were also compiled from records of the transport syndicate which maintains records on cargoes leaving Bamenda and Kumbo, which were too numerous to be covered by the usual method.

Further information on distribution was collected from surveying a sample of traders in situ in the market place, from which detailed information on trading chains could be derived. Questions included:

1) quantities available for sale

2) What is your trading role (producer, trader, retailer, wholesaler)?

3) Where did you buy produce?

4) From whom (a producer or a trader)?

5) Where will you sell produce?

6) To whom (trader or consumer)?

7) In which other markets do you buy/sell?

8) Where do you reside?

9) What mode of transport do you use?

10) What were your transport costs?

Some respondents were questioned in more detail about subsidiary economic activities if time permitted.

Respondents were generally cooperative, and information fell into a consistent pattern and cross-checked well with data produced from transport surveys. Difficulties in the Mankon market were encountered because the continuous daily activity, the erratic nature of deliveries and the formidable size of the market made quantity estimation impossible, given the manpower and time available.

The surveys undertaken provided information to formulate flows, prices, quantities and marketing chains for the area surveyed, and yielded some information about areas not surveyed, but linked into the locality. Total regional coverage would have provided a sounder data base and would have given a better indication of outflows to other regions, but such information could not have been collected in less than six

months. Data on seasonality is also lacking, another limitation of the time scope of the research.

In-depth surveys were also undertaken in the Mankon market on the assumption that Bamenda merchants' activities would be more extensive and encompassing than those of rurally based traders. The merchants were interviewed in an open-ended format as to

1. their occupation histories;
2. their transaction arrangements;
3. their marketing costs;
4. their modes of informal and formal cooperation with other traders.

In addition to the market surveys, a producer household survey was constructed to elicit general market use patterns, and several villages were sampled in order to construct an intra-regional comparison of market access. (Only the background information will be utilized in this report.) Survey questions included:

1) What crops and domestic manufactures are produced for sale and for home consumption?

2) Which are men's and which are women's?

3) For each commodity sold:

   a. Where do you sell [on farm, in market, in coop]?

   b. What are your transport arrangements and costs?

c. To whom do you sell?

d. Details of commercial relationships.

4) During the last week, for each crop:

a. How much did you offer for sale?

b. How much did you sell?

c. For how much?

d. What did you do with the unsold portion, if any?

5) What other income activities are you engaged in?

6) What types of goods do you normally purchase?

7) Where do you usually buy them?

8) Over the last week, what did you buy, where, at what price?

9) When did you last make a trip? To where?

10) What was the purpose of the trip? Did you make any purchases during the trip?

In addition to data contributed by Professor Hollier and gathered in field surveys and interviews, extensive use was made of the 1976 Population Census and the ONAREST Atlas Regional, Ouest II.

III. The Marketing System

A) Background

The Northwest Province's mountainous terrain has been both a hindrance and an asset for regional development. On the one hand, it has made transport and communication extremely difficult; on the other, it offers a healthy climate and a varied environment. The region's relief forms a intermixture of mountains, escarpments, valleys, plains, and plateaus that defies simple description. There is, however, a basic pattern of altitude zones running in a southwest to northeast axis. A central mountainous spine runs from the Bamboutou mountains in the West Province through Santa and the Babanki-Tungo area to reach a summit of 3,000 meters at Mt. Oku (see Figure 1). It continues to the north of Kumbo, through Ndu and turns towards Nkambe, where it descends below 1,500 meters. The central axis is flanked by high altitude plains between 1,000 and 1,500 meters, the most extensive being the Ndop Plain and the Ngemba Plain, approximately bounded by Bamenda, Bafut, Meta and Guzang. Lower lying plains and river valleys compose a third zone, which runs from the Southwest Province through Widekum and continues west of Bafut and Wum, expanding through the extreme north of the province. Another low lying area, the Mbaw Plain, extends eastward below Ndu (Champaud 1973).

The different zones support specialized agricultural activities. Palm oil is the major specialization of lower lying areas, especially in the southwest. Cocoyam is dominant in the Ngemba plain. Potatoes and beans are specialties in the highlands around Santa, Babanki-Tungo, Kumbo and Ndu. Recently, truck farming has been undertaken in a high altitude zone running west and northeast of Santa. Rice farming has been established in the lower lying basins of the Montchum valley, northwest of Bafut and on the Ndop and Mbaw plains. Corn and manioc are fairly ubiquitous, although corn production is most intensive around Ndop, Jakiri, Kumbo and Ndu, and manioc, in the Ndop and Ngemba Plains. Coffee, the region's main cash crop, is widely cultivated, but is grown more successfully in the higher areas.

The transport system is laid out along a major axis, running from the Southwest Province, through Widikum, Bamenda, Ndop, Kumbo, and Nkambe, thereby cutting across all the major environmental zones. From Nkambe the road loops back to Bamenda through Wum and Bafut, but this portion is not as heavily travelled as the main axis. Numerous feeder networks link up to the central trunk line. Another major line connects Bamenda to the major towns of the West Province and to Douala, and since being paved in 1976-77 has become the major channel for external communication. Another route

from Jakiri connects the eastern part of the Province to Foumban.

Except for the Bamenda-Douala link all roads are laterite-surfaced. The Bamenda loop is well maintained but the Bamenda-Widikum-Mamfe road is in poor condition, especially to the west of Guzang where it is often blocked by landslides. Feeder roads are usually accessible only to land rovers and are almost impassable in the rainy season.

Transport is provided by individual transport owners, organized into a government-sponsored syndicate, which sets rates and terms under government approval. The current rate is 6.5 CFA/km/100 kg. for produce and 6.5 CFA/km for each rider. However, transporters may often charge higher fees especially in the rainy season and in situations where transport is scarce. A general scarcity of vehicles is apparent and many unauthorized vehicles, including official government trucks, carry cargo on a commercial basis. Operating costs are high because of heavy wear and tear on vehicles and because of the practice of detaining large vehicles at rain gates for four hours after every rain. Accidents due to loss of traction on steep and slippery surfaces seem common.

The Northwest's population of approximately one million has attained the second highest density, 55/km^2, of the country. It is very unevenly distributed, being

heavily concentrated in the southern half of the region along the main communication axis. Although closely interrelated to the pattern of communication, density is also dependent upon altitude. Statistical analysis has shown substantial concentration of population in the 1,000-1,500 meter level, which is perhaps an artifact of health or soil factors (Champaud 1973).

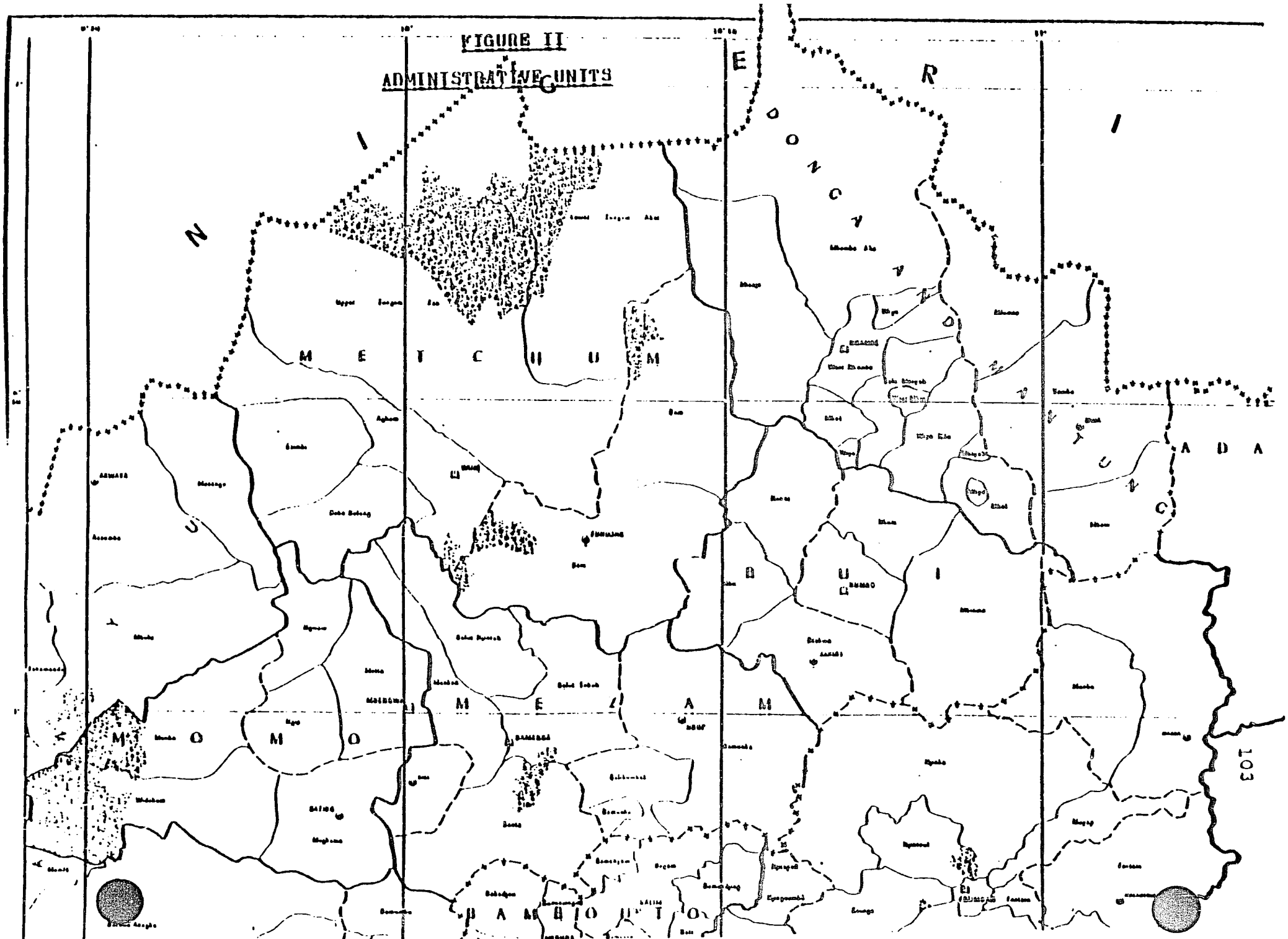
Unlike many areas of West Africa, the rural population is not clustered into nuclear villages. Individual farmsteads are dispersed over the landscape.

Settlement clusters are organized into villages headed by chiefs or fon, whose residences along with market sites comprise the village centers. Larger towns are strung out over the routeways and Bamenda constitutes the only really nucleated town in the region.

Villages are organized into approximately forty area council units, the lowest level administrative district. In some cases (Banso, Kom, Bum, and Bali) these units correspond to centralized traditional political groups, but the rest are artifacts of native authority districts established by the British.. Councils are grouped into subdivisions (arrondisements), pairs of which make up each of the five divisions (départments) of the province (See Fig.II) Administration is highly centralized. Central government

FIGURE II

ADMINISTRATIVE UNITS



appointees and civil servants are responsible for policy at the provincial, divisional and subdivisional levels. Area councils are elected but de facto control is assumed by government appointed secretaries. Substantial control and intrastructural investment is concentrated in Bamenda, the provincial capitol.

B. Market Administration

No attempt was made to trace the history of the marketing system, although it is obvious that the location pattern is of substantial antiquity. Almost every village has some type of market place but only a fraction of centers have attained significant commercial importance. Most markets seem to serve generalized socio-political functions, providing the local fons the occasion to make public pronouncements and the residents to entertain themselves in bars and njangi[3] houses that encircle the market sites.

Although markets are instituted by village communities, administration is in the hands of area councils, which collect tolls from producers and traders on market days. Fees are also collected for the use of open sheds or lock-up stalls. In Bamenda and other markets with concrete structures these are collected by the area council. More makeshift stalls in less developed sites are constructed by individuals who receive fees for their use. The provincial government

also exacts fees from the markets by issuing licences (patentes) to an evermore inclusive list of full-time traders. It also attempts to control the price of manufactures sold in the markets.

C. Market Hierarchy

Hollier proposes a sixfold hierarchy to classify the market places into ranks according to somewhat impressionistic criteria (Hollier 1975a:ii). These in turn fall into two classes: markets which assume importance as centers of intra-regional and inter-regional trade, rank 1-3, in addition to Bamenda, and markets of only local importance ranks 4-6. Hollier placed 59 markets in the former class and approximately 250 in the latter. Following his classification I will deal only with the class 1 markets in this report but I will use a somewhat different ranking system based on my own, equally impressionistic, observations.[4]

All 59 markets in the higher order class commonly serve as points at which agricultural producers sell their goods to wholesalers from consumption centers within and outside of the region. They also supply the basic range of regular consumption items. Different ranks within the class differ primarily in degree according to size and range of goods available but there are some discrete differences marked by redistributive flows of some commodities between

lower and higher order markets in the scheme.[5]

1. Regional center. The Mankon market in Bamenda is the only market in this category. It is a daily market, but has a major meeting every Saturday, when well over a thousand sellers will attend. A great variety of manufactures are available, some of which--electric blenders, radios, phonograph records--are available in no other markets of the system. It also acts as a major wholesale distribution point for some commodities sold widely throughout the region.

2. Subregional centers. This category includes Kumbo and Guzang and possibly Ndop, Nkambe and Wum. (Because of the somewhat tentative nature of this classification I aggregate ranks 2 and 3 into "major markets" in some parts of the following discussion.) These markets meet on a set day during the market week and contain several hundred sellers. They have relatively large sections devoted to the sale of manufactures and provide more variety than do lower ranking centers. Their characteristic feature is that they act as redistribution points for some flows between subregions and for distribution of some goods to smaller dependent markets. Thus Guzang coordinates exchanges between its immediate hinterland, Widekum, Bali, and to a lesser extent Meta, and is also an important center for wholesaling beans, which are purchased by merchants from the Southwest. Kumbo serves as

a redistribution point for Bui and parts of Donga-Mantung Divisions and bulks corn, potatoes, and beans from this hinterland for sale to merchants from Bamenda and from other regions.

3. Local centers. This rank differs from the former more in degree than in kind, but the markets classified within it tend not to serve redistributive functions. They differ from lower order markets in size and in the range of manufactures sold. Their hinterlands incorporate those of lower order centers for consumer purchases of special manufactured items, particularly clothing, which are not widely available in small markets.

4. Standard markets. These markets contain approximately 100 sellers and constitute the basic rural exchange points for the sale of agricultural produce and the purchase of regularly consumed items.

The hierarchy of markets of different ranks is related to the general urban hierarchy in the region. Thus there is an approximate correspondence between the rank of a town's market place, its position in the administrative hierarchy, and its population.

Thus Bamenda is both the administrative and commercial center of the region; all but three of the twelve rank 2 and

3 markets are located within or just outside of divisional or subdivisional capitals. Other hierarchies tend to correspond. Bamenda has a large central business district with an innumerable variety of stores, crafts and small industries. All major markets have contiguous areas of retail stores specializing in dry goods, stationery, drugs, tailoring, photography, radio repair, and sometimes bicycles. Standard market sites do not usually provide many shopping facilities outside the market.

D. Basic Location Structure

The structure of market location will be analyzed from two perspectives: that of the general incidence of markets in respect to population and that of the specific alignment of markets into a system.

Table I summarizes the incidence of markets and major markets (ranks 1-3 collectively) in each division and subdivision and compares the average population and area[6] served by markets in each unit. In the cases of Mentchum, Mezam and Momo divisions, subdivisional breakdowns are given because these administrative areas tend to enclose networks of inter-related markets. In Bui and Donga-Mantung divisions, subdivisions are more arbitrarily delimited and breakdowns are accordingly not given. There is still, however, some discrepancy between administrative

TABLE I

DISTRIBUTION OF MARKET PLACES IN THE NORTHWEST PROVINCE

Political Unit	Population	Area (km^2)	Density	Total Mkts.	Major Mkts*	Market Pop'n	Maj. Mkt. Pop'n	Market Area	(r**)	Maj. Mkt. Area	(r)
NORTHWEST	980,531	17,937	55	59	13	16,619	75,425	304	(10)	1308	(21)
Bui	151,744	2,218	68	9	2	16,860	75,872	246	(9)	1109	(19)
Donga-Mantung	184,516	4,279	43	14	2	13,180	92,258	306	(10)	2140	(26)
Mentchum	198,452	6,601	32	9	1	22,050	198,452	678	(15)	6106	(44)
Wum	107,387	4,512	24	5	1	21,477	107,387	902	(17)	4512	(38)
Fundong	91,065	1,592	57	4	0	22,766	---	398	(11)	--	
Mezam	319,504	2,914	110	22	5	14,523	63,901	132	(6)	583	(14)
Bamenda	220,720	1,792	123	11	4	20,065	55,180	163	(7)	448	(12)
Ndop	98,784	1,117	88	11	1	8,980	98,784	102	(6)	1117	(19)
Momo	126,315	2,420	52	5	3	25,263	42,105	484	(12)	807	(16)
Mbengwi	69,719	928	75	3	1	23,240	69,719	309	(10)	928	(17)
Batibo	56,596	1,492	38	2	2	28,298	28,298	746	(15)	746	(15)

*including Mankon market

**r - average radius of market area

and economic boundaries. Fonfuka in Mentchum division is part of a network of markets located in Donga-Mantung, as in Lassin, which is administratively in Bui.

For the region as a whole there are 59 commercially significant markets, each serving an average population of 16,619 within an average radius of 10 km. There are 13 major markets, each of which serves an average population of 75,425 within an average radius of 21 km. The ratio of major markets to standard markets to villages (minor markets) approximates a 1:3:6 ratio. Although this indicates a distribution that allows each access to markets at all levels for much of the rural population, subregional breakdowns indicate a great deal of intra-regional variation.

Mezam division has the greatest density of markets and is best provided with commercial services. In Bamenda subdivision the average radius of a market hinterland is 7 km. indicating that few rural residents have to travel more than two hours to make their weekly sales and purchases. Four major centers, Bamenda, Santa, Bali and Bafut contain hinterlands within average radius of 12 km. which involves a three-hour walk or short taxi ride for the more remote households. In Ndop subdivision, the average radius of a market hinterland is 6 km. There is, however, only a single major market, in Ndop town, and a major to standard market

ratio of 1:10, indicating a "primate pattern." However, Ndop's hinterland radius of 19 km. is fairly standard and residents of the subdivision also have access to Bamenda, Santa and Jakiri for major purchases.

Bui division exhibits a market incidence pattern that closely approximates the regional average for both standard and major markets. Donga-Mantung in spite of its relative remoteness shows an average incidence of markets but a small number of major markets, indicated by a low major to standard market ratio 1:6 and one of the largest radii of major market hinterlands in the region, 26 km. Access to markets providing manufactures would seem especially difficult for residents in the northeast of the division.

In Mentchum division access varies according to subdivision. Fundong division provides average accessibility to standard markets but contains no major market. The Wum subdivision, comprising the largest area of any in the province, is the most undeveloped in terms of commercial services. The average radius of a market hinterland is 17 km. and the actual clustering of markets around Wum indicates that more remote rural residents would have to spend more than a day to visit a market and return home. Wum is the only major market in the subdivision, and would seem to be

inaccessible to remote residents of its extensive hinterland.

In Momo each subdivision shows a different access pattern. Market incidence in Mbengwi subdivision is more or less standard. In Batibo subdivision there are only two markets with average hinterland radii of 15 km., well in excess of the average for the province. However, both are major markets, indicating that the populations living near Guzang and Widikum and along the road from Widikum to Bali are very well served by the system but that those in the far west have very poor commercial opportunities, especially since there are no nearby centers in the neighboring Southwest Province.

The differences in market incidence and accessibility among the different subdivisions can be understood in terms of differences in population density, as is indicated in Table II. This relationship is even better demonstrated if divisions are grouped into density categories of 80+, 40-80 and 0-40 as indicated by broken lines in the table. It is easily explained by the fact that markets occur more frequently in higher density areas because of the economies-of-scale provided and that they are sparser in low density areas because they require larger hinterlands to provide the necessary number of users. Although it is possible to argue for a reverse causation,

Table II

RELATION BETWEEN POPULATION DENSITY
AND SIZE OF MARKET HINTERLANDS*

Division or Subdivision	Pop. Density	Market r	Major Market r
Bamenda	123/km^2	7 km.	12 km.
Ndop	88	6	19
Mbengwi	75	10	17
Bui	68	9	19
Fundong	57	11	x
Donga-Mantung	43	10	26
Batibo	38	15	15
Wum	24	17	38
Northwest	55/km^2	10 km.	21 km.

*Pearson's r between population density and market radius is .84, $p < .01$.

that better infrastructure influences population concentration, the correlation between altitude and population density mentioned above would indicate that ecological factors are primarily responsible for density, which in turn influence the nature of infrastructure.

A geographical plotting of density and market access areas allows us to summarize intraregional variation in terms of three areas:

1) a core area of dense population and a high degree of accessibility to marketing and other services in Mezam division, around Bamenda and Ndop;

2) an intermediate area of average density and market accessibility in parts of Momo, Bui and Donga-Mantung, lying along the main transport axis;

3) a peripheral area of low density and poor accessibility incorporating the northern and western parts of the province lying above a line joining Widikum, Meta, Bafut and Nkambe.

The intraregional inequities of market location are also evident in the pattern of market alignment which more clearly indicates the nature of core and peripheral differences than the aggregate statistics already discussed. Bamenda constitutes the center of the system and a core marketing area surrounding it is delimited by a circle of markets, which approximate a circumference 17 km (36 km

by road) from the center (see Table III). Four major markets, Santa, Bali, Meta, and Bafut lie almost exactly on the circle on a network of roads radiating from Bamenda. According to this pattern, major marketing nodes should also occur in the Bambui, Bambili, Babanki-Tungo area and at Babanki. The absence of a major market in the former instance is explained by the competition among three villages located near the node. (Bambili was the first village to have a market, but subsequently the fons of the other two villages established markets "so that they could make proclamations to their subjects"). The presence of only a standard market at Babanki remains unexplained.

The marketing system spreads out from the core along the main transport axis from Widikum to Nkambe. Nine major and 11 standard markets lie along this axis. The spacing and alteration of markets of different ranks along the road approximates a consistent pattern. Regional and sub-regional centers (ranks 1 and 2) occur regularly at an average distance of 36 km. or 56 km. by road (see Table IIIB). Local major centers (rank 3) tend to occupy the interstices between higher ranking markets and provide for the occurrence of a major market every 21 km, 31 km. by road. Similarly standard markets (rank 4) occupy the interstices between major markets and provide for the occurrence of a market

TABLE III

MARKET SPACING

A. Bamenda Ring

Market	Rank	Road Distance to Bamenda	Direct Distance
Bali	3	24km	17km
Santa	3	24	15
Bambili	4	16	14
Babanki	4	32	20
Bafut	3	24	15
Meta	3	35	21
Average		26	17

B. Main Axis

1. Regional and Subregional Centers.

Market	Rank	Road Distance	Direct Distance
Guzang	2		
Bamenda	1	45	30
Ndop	2	47	32
Kumbo	2	64	37
Nkambe	2	69	43
Average		56	36

2. Major Centers.

Market	Rank	Road Distance	Direct Distance
Widekum	3		
Guzang	2	21	18
Bali	3	22	11
Bamenda	1	24	17
Ndop	2	47	32
Jakiri	3	41	23
Kumbo	2	23	16
Ndu	3	34	25
Nkambe	2	35	24
Average		31	21

3. All Markets.

Market	Rank	Road Distance	Direct Distance
Widikum	3		
Guzang	2	21	18
Bali	3	22	11
Bamenda	1	24	17
Bambui	4	12	11
Bambili	4	4	4
Babanki-Tungo	4	4	4
Bamessing	4	14	8
Bamali	4	5	4
Ndop	2	8	5
Babungo	4	8	7
Babessi	4	16	14
Wainama	4	11	5
Jakiri	3	7	5
Kumbo	2	23	16
Tatum	4	24	18
Ndu	3	10	7
Binka	4	24	16
Nkambe	2	11	9
Average		14	10

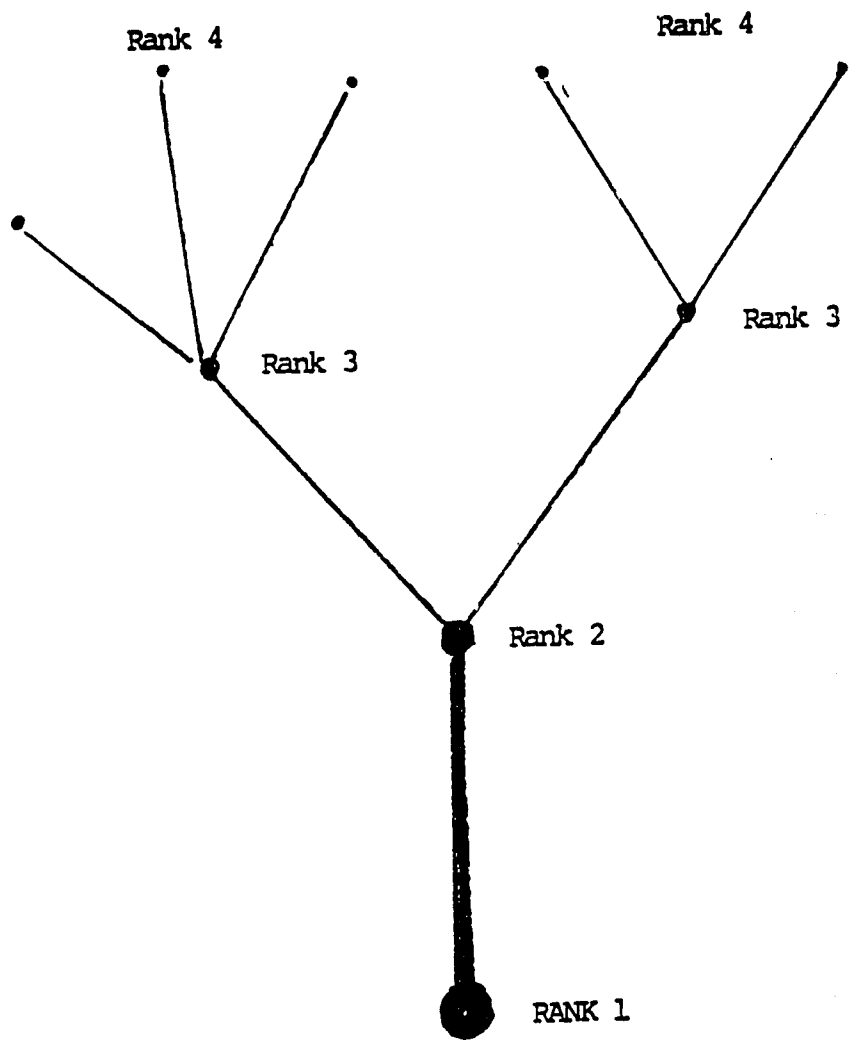
of any rank every 10 km., 14 km. by road. The regularity of spacing and alteration is not fully exhibited in the actual distribution, however. Between Widikum and Bamenda no standard markets occur and major markets are more closely spaced. Between Bamenda and Jakiri there is a proliferation of standard markets and major markets are more distantly spaced. Between Kumbo and Nkambe a more regular alternation is observable.

Taken together the core and axis of the system contain the major portion of the region's marketing services: 20/59 of its markets and 12/13 of its major markets. The rest of the system is linked into the major infrastructure through rather sparse networks of feeder roads which tend to branch from the locations of major markets. Standard markets occur along these routes and at their terminii.

The pattern of market location in the Northwest Province can be summarized in terms of a "dendritic system," a standard location model identified in many underdeveloped and dependent regions (see Figure III). Route and market alignments follow a tree and branch pattern. A major trunk line extends from a major service center and markets of descending rank, offering ever more limited ranges of services, occupying successive branch points and route terminii. However, the Bamenda alignment differs from

FIGURE III

MODEL OF A DENDRITIC MARKETING SYSTEM
(FOUR RANK HIERARCHY)



the dendritic pattern in one respect. Whereas distance from the center is correlated with a decay of services in the model, the main road axis in the Northwest provides a regular alternation in the ranks of markets located along it. Further implications of correspondence to this model and differences from it will be discussed in the concluding portion of this section.

D. Periodicity

The pattern of market day synchronization is rather straightforward and unrevealing. Most markets meet on one day of an eight-day cycle. However, eight markets do meet on a European weekday, six of them on Saturday. Bamenda is the only daily market, but it too is substantially more active on Saturday. Eight-day weeks are widely recorded in West Africa and no theories have been put forward to account for differences in week lengths. The frequency of meetings seems adequate but in a few centers "small markets," three to five days after the main market day, have been instituted.

No systematic synchronization of groups of markets is apparent. This random patterning probably results from a tendency for customers to regularly use only a single market. However, one principle is evident: markets meeting on the same day in the cycle are spaced farther apart

than markets which do not (see Table IV). Thus neighboring markets tend to avoid direct competition. This "avoidance" seems to be imposed by administrative authority, as shown in the case of competition among Bambui, Bambili and Babanki-Tungo. All three markets used to meet on the same day, but the Bafut Area Council pressured Bamili to change its day and to provide a more regular alternation of activity, especially for the council's toll collectors. The distance statistics also indicate that standard markets tend to avoid same day competition with major markets.

E. Assessment

The main structural features of the location pattern outlined in subsection C can be evaluated in terms of standard models of accessibility and competition set forward by central place theorists. An ideal model was proposed by Christaller and has been applied to periodic marketing systems by Skinner (1964) and Smith (1976). Given a region with uniform geographical and population characteristics, markets should be spaced uniformly and their hinterlands should be bounded off in hexagonal areas. Uniform spacing should apply at each level of a hierarchy so markets at successively higher ranks should be farther apart and their hinterlands should form successively larger

Table IV

COMPARISON OF TEMPORAL AND LOCATIONAL SPACING PATTERNS

Meeting on:	Average Distance to Nearest Neighbour	
	For All Markets	For Major Markets
Same day	29.8	35.5
Preceding day	19.4	20.8
Succeeding day	20.5	19.1
Two days prior	20.5	25.2
Two days after	21.5	28.5
Three days prior	22.6	23.2
Three days after	21.4	20.8
Four days apart	25.5	26.9
Average distance to actual nearest neighbour	8.2	9.2

hexagons, inclusive of those of lower ranking markets. Interconnecting routes should form a grid. Given these highly regular conditions, the following benefits should result:

1) Commercial services provided by markets of each hierarchical rank will be widely accessible over the region.

2) Transport costs for market users will be minimized.

3) Smaller centers will occur equidistant from sets of competing higher ranking centers.

4) Intraregional inequities will be minimized.

A dendritic model has been formulated to characterize a system with contrasting features (Johnson 1970). The region is divided into core and peripheral areas. Market centers and transport routes follow a tree-and-branch alighment along which market ranks and commercial services decrease from core to periphery. Consequently,

1) there are substantial differences in market accessibility between core and peripheral areas as well as between city and country;

2) transport costs are substantially increased for peripheral areas;

3) large centers have exclusive control over flows to and from lower ranking centers;

4) intraregional inequities increase over time.

The interpretation of market location patterns in the Northwest Province requires some modification of standard views about the contrasting models discussed.

In the major details of subdivisional differences and of market alignment patterns the structure closely conforms to the characteristics of a dendritic model. A core area clearly emerges around Bamenda and along the main transport route. A peripheral area tapped by branch routes extends away from the core area and receives lower levels of service at higher costs. However, the extent of the importance of regional inequality must be measured against two conditions:

1. Dendritic patterns have been associated with dependent economies in which a colonizing power has created an infrastructure which contributes to the appropriation of rural surplus while offering a minimal level of rural service. In the absence of historical documentation in the Northwest, an alternative interpretation of the location pattern can be put forward. Core and peripheral subregions have very different population patterns. Basic ecological factors seem to have generated higher population densities along the main transport axis and better services in this zone seem closely related to economies-of-scale created by higher densities. Consequently, a major proportion of the provincial population is located near the main marketing centers.

2. The sequence of markets of different ranks along the main transport axis does not decrease directly with

distance from Bamenda. Ranks tend to alternate. Consequently, complete ranges of marketing services are made available throughout the major habitation zone.

Recognition of these two conditions indicates that in the context of population distribution, markets appear to be uniformly and competitively spaced. However, the population distribution itself presents an additional set of development problems.

1. The proportion of rural residents that is peripherally located is clearly in a disadvantaged situation.

2. Major areas of the province, especially in Wum subdivision, remain in a vicious cycle of low density and poor services, marked by an expecially high out-migration rate (Ardener 1960).

3. Several high density areas located off the main axis, particularly in the Oku-Djotin and the Oshie areas, are subject to the same limitations as low density areas.

NOTES

1. The research period did not allow for collection of data over different seasons.

2. The standard measure was one headload, eqivalent to 36 litres and weighing 25kg.

3. Informal rotating credit and drinking societies.

4. An objective ranking would be dependent upon collection of full censuses for all markets in the region.

5. Flow information will be presented in Section IV.

6. Average areas are compared in terms of average radii (r) of areas on the assumption that they will be more or less circular. Actual areas will differ somewhat from circular forms. Market spacing can be computed by doubling the figure for radii. Thus for the Province as a whole markets occur every 20km over the landscape on the average.

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IV COMMODITY FLOWS

Analysis of market location patterns does identify some gross characteristics of the marketing process, but more detailed consideration of the actual flow of commodities through the system is needed in order to fully understand the relationship between market structure and production and consumption patterns. This section will investigate the basic geography of commodity flows and will be divided into four sub-sections: Agricultural Production and Consumption, Commodity Flow Patterns, Quantity and Price Variation, Assessment.

A. Agricultural Production and Consumption

Agricultural production is primarily oriented to the cultivation of starchy staples which include: cocoyam, corn, Irish potatoes, manioc (cassava), plantain and rice. Cocoyam and corn are the basic staples. Cocoyam is the main staple in the southern and western parts of the province, and corn in the north and east. Both are eaten as a thick paste, along with a sauce composed of several condiment and protein items including palm oil, salt, vegetables, beans, beef and fish. Potato is an important staple in the higher areas above 1500 meters. Cassava, grated and dried to produce gari, is a complementary item as is plantain, and both are widely produced in the province. Rice, a specialized crop of the lower-lying

valleys and basins, is eaten only on special occasions, such as Christmas.

Production of starchy staples is the responsibility of women and is undertaken primarily for subsistence. Women will plan production on the basis of family needs and will sell produce only when a domestic surplus is available. They will make purchases of these items very rarely. Production of gari, plantain and rice is more commercially oriented. In many areas women will manufacture gari as a cash commodity, often purchasing cassava from neighbors when they are not harvesting their own. Plantain and rice are men's crops and are grown primarily for sale.

Palm oil forms the basis of all types of sauces and is a major purchase item in the domestic economy throughout the province. Palm trees grow only in lower-lying areas below 1,000 meters. The southwest of the province is the major area for the cultivation of palm nuts and the domestic manufacture of oil. As with almost all cash crops its cultivation, processing and sale are in the hands of men.

Vegetables and beans include a large variety of items, most of which are produced and consumed within the household. Recently commercial production of "European" vegetables, including tomatoes and cabbages, has been introduced into some highland areas. The urban areas are the primary consumption

points, although rural households located in or near major production zones may occasionally purchase items for consumption.

Animal proteins are basic rural purchase items. Beef is the more important. Fulani herdsmen throughout the region market their cattle through butchers in every market place. Fish comes from two different areas: the coast and Bambalang, the marketing centre for a large lake on the Ndop Plain. The Ministry of Agriculture has been developing fish ponds in many areas of the province but no fish from these sources were recorded in the market places during the survey period.

B. Commodity Flows

Basic information on market to market flows is presented in Table V: A - I, for the basic commodities discussed. The table is a compilation of separate sets of data gathered in transport and market surveys. Table VI presents a summary compilation of flows in terms of movements between hierarchical levels[1] and between the province and other areas of the country. Rice and fish flows are presented in Table VI only, since they can be fully described in hierarchical terms. It should be noted that the data were gathered from a small sample of markets in July 1979 and do not as such completely describe flows for

TABLE V
WEEKLY COMMODITY FLOWS

A. COCOYAM (100kg)

Origin	Destination: Bamenda	SW Prov.	Lit. Prov.	TOTAL
Bali	33			33
Guzang	19	5	6	30
Meta	30	3		33
Bafut	22			22
Babanki	13			13
Bambui	18		6	24
Bambili	15			15
Oshie	39			39
TOTAL	189	8	12	209

B. CORN (100kg)

Origin:	Destination: Bambili	Wum	Bamenda	SW	Lit.	Nigeria	TOTAL
Bali		6	6				12
Bambui			5		5		10
Babanki-Tungo	4		1				5
Bali Kumbat		ND	8	ND	ND		8
Babessi		ND	21	ND	ND		21
Kumbo				4	4	14	22
Ndu		ND	20	ND	ND	ND	20
Bamenda				3			3
TOTAL	4	6	61	7	9	14	101
OUTFLOW			3				3
ADJUSTED TOTAL	4	6	58	7	9	14	98

C. GARI (100kg)

Origin:	Destination: Santa	Bambui	Bambili	Widikum	Wum	Bamenda	SW	Lit.	TOTAL
Santa						1		7	8
Bali					5	45			50
Guzang				4			2		6
Meta						4	1		5
Bafut		3	2			65			70
Babanki-Tungo			2			8			10
Awing	2						ND	ND	2
Babessi						10	ND	ND	10
Bamenda							15	14	29
TOTAL	2	3	4	4	5	133	18	21	190
OUTFLOW	2+					29			31
ADJUSTED TOTAL	0	3	4	4	5	104	18	21	159

D. PLANTAIN (100kg)

Origin:	Destination: Santa	Bamenda	TOTAL
Bali		13	13
Bafut		11	11
Babanki		13	13
Bambui		26	26
Bambili		4	4
West Prov.		6	66
TOTAL	6	127	133

E. POTATOES (100kg)

Origin:	Destination: Bambili	Bamenda	West	SW	Lit	Yaounde	TOTAL
Santa		1		2	6	7	16
Babanki-Tungo	3	27					30
Bambili		12					12
Kumbo		110	56	143	288	39	636
Bamenda					138		138
TOTAL	3	150	56	145	432	46	832
OUTFLOW	3+	138					141
ADJUSTED TOTAL	0	12	56	145	432	46	691

F. PALM OIL (Gallons)

Origin	Destination Santa	Bali	Guzang	Babanki	Bambui	Bambili	Babanki Tungo	Bamenda	SW	TOTAL
Widikum	170		260		70			2600		3100
Guzang	55	820					50	180	20	1125
Meta	55						25	400	65	545
Bafut				90						90
SW						45		4000		4045
Bamenda				90	40	45				175
TOTAL	280	820	260	180	110	90	75	7180	85	9080
OUTFLOW			260+					175		435
ADJUSTED TOTAL	280	820	000	180	110	90	75	7005		8545

F. BEANS (100kg)

Origin:	Destination: Bali	Guzang	Meta	Bafut	Babanki	Bambui	Bambili	Widikum	Bamenda	SW	Lit	TOTAL
Meta									1	6		7
Guzang								4	2	1		7
Awing-	1								3	ND		4
Santa									4	184	26	214
Kumbo									45	ND	ND	54
Ndu		9								18		27
Bamenda	1		3	1	1	2	1					
TOTAL	2	9	3	1	1	2	1	4	55	209	26	313
OUTFLOW		7	1						27			35
ADJUSTED TOTAL	2	2	2	1	1	2	1	4	28	209	26	278

G. TOMATOES (kg)

Origin:	Destination: Bali	Guzang	Meta	Bafut	Bamenda	TOTAL
Bambili					500[a]	500
Santa					600	600
West					2000	2000
Bamenda	50	50	50	50		200
TOTAL	50	50	50	50	3100	3300
OUTFLOW					200	200
ADJUSTED TOTAL	50	50	50	50	2900	3100

H. CABBAGE (100kg)

Origin:	Destination: Bamenda	West	SW	Lit	TOTAL
Santa	2	2	1	11	16
Bambili	2[a]				2
TOTAL	4	2	1	11	18

[a]. Marketed through the Bamenda Cooperative Vegetable Society.

TABLE VI
FLOW HIERARCHIES (PERCENTAGES)

Commodity:	Direction of flow: Rural to Rural	Bamenda to Rural	External to Rural	Rural to Bamenda	Rural to External	Bamenda to External	External to Bamenda	TOTAL (100%) Flows (in tons)
Cocoyam	00	00	00	90	10	00	00	20.9
Corn	11	00	00	56	25	03	00	10.1
Gari	09	00	00	70	05	15	00	19.0
Plantain	00	00	05	50	00	00	45	13.3
Potatoes	<1	00	00	18	65	17	00	83.2
Rice	00	100	00	a	a	a	a	2.4
Palm Oil	17	02	<1	35	01	00	44	41.3
Beans	04	03	00	18	69	06	00	31.3
Tomatoes	00	06	00	33	00	00	61	3.3
Cabbages	00	00	00	22	88	00	00	1.8
Lake Fish	100	00	00	a	a	00	00	1.5
Ocean Fish	00	100	00	00	00	00	a	2.0

a. Substantial flows are present but were not indicated in survey. Table indicates pattern of rural distribution only.

the province as a whole or average annual patterns. Generalizations formulated from these data are instructive but should be viewed as hypotheses rather than demonstrated conclusions. Significant gaps in the data are indicated by "ND" in the Tables.

Except for gari and rice, starchy staples are sold in headload lots in the nearest market to the producing household. Sales are normally made to urban traders, but consumer purchases are made by local residents, usually non-farmers, and to urban residents,[2] who visit rural markets for household supplies. Gari is sold by the cup to traders, who measure out entire headloads cup by cup, and to local consumers. Rice is sold unhulled either through cooperative marketing societies or to private traders.[3]

Movements of cocoyam, corn, gari and plantain are fairly similar and will be described together. Flows are almost exclusively rural to urban, and Bamenda is the primary consumption centre, accounting for approximately 75% of all domestic purchases outside the market of origin.[4] Flows outside the region account for 20% of the total, approximately two-thirds passing directly from producer to consumer markets and one-third being rechannelled through the Bamenda market. Rural to rural flows are of little importance. Some maize is shipped directly from rural markets to Num and Njinikom (not indicated in table) primarily for Fulani consumers; some gari moves from producer

markets to nearby consumer markets as well. There is no indication of any redistributive flow to rural markets through Bamenda, although corn traders in Bamenda indicate that they sell to traders from Wum and Njinikom in the dry season. The only imports of starches involve plantain from Mbounda in the West Province to Bamenda and to Santa, which is directly across the provincial boundary.

Irish potatoes exhibit a fairly distinctive flow pattern, passing from Kumbo, in the middle of the main production zone, directly to the main external consumption points, of which Douala is the most important. Some of Kumbo's produce along with a smaller amount from Bubanki-Tungo is rechannelled through Bamenda, for sale to Douala traders. Santa, a smaller producer market, sends its potatoes directly to Douala.

Data on rice flows is of limited reliability because harvesting was done long before the research period and supplies were primarily of imported rice wholesaled in Bamenda and redistributed to rural consumption markets. Local rice still in stock also assumes a redistributive flow through Bamenda because of the location of several hulling mills available to Bamenda merchants.

Palm oil is widely produced in the southwest of the province and is sold by producers in the markets at Bafut, Meta, Widekum and Guzang, which also serves as a redistribution point for some Widekum oil. Supplies flow directly from

producer to consumer markets. Bamenda plays a very minor redistributive role, consuming over 95% of all the oil it receives. Additional supplies of oil are received from the large industrial plantations in the south of the Southwest Province and are consumed primarily in Bamenda. Ndop also consumes some plantation oil (not indicated in the table), which its own traders bring in directly from the Southwest. Aside from the normal marketing channels a number of women's cooperative societies purchase Southwest oil in bulk for distribution to their members, but these operations account for a very small proportion of flows. The largest society, the Mezem Women's Union, sold an average of 175 gallons per week in 1979, which accounts for less than 2% of all oil sold.

Beans are produced in a great number of varieties throughout the province and each market receives some supplies from its local hinterland. Highland areas seem especially productive. The area around Kumbo and Ndu is the main producing zone, but there is also an important area to the east of Guzang, extending through Santa and Awing. Surpluses from highland areas either flow directly to deficit rural areas or are redistributed through Bamenda in roughly equivalent proportions. A substantial proportion of supplies, 75% of all flows, is shipped outside the province, especially to Victoria, Tiko

and Kumbo in the Southwest. Bamenda plays a very limited role in bulking for external sales and most external flows move directly from producer to consumer markets.

Tomatoes and cabbages are the most important of the recently introduced garden vegetables. There are two main production zones: Santa and Bambili. In Santa local farmers started cultivation after learning of large-scale production among West Province farmers, some of whom are Europeans. Cultivation in Bambili was introduced by Dutch volunteers. Santa's produce is sold privately through the marketplace. Bambili's is primarily distributed through the Bamenda Cooperative Vegetable Society, a marketing organization established by the Dutch. It maintains a single retail outlet in Bamenda and has supply contracts with institutions in the provinces.

Cabbage is almost exclusively an urban consumer item. Bamenda is the primary consumer location within the province, but the bulk of supplies in the main producing area around Santa is shipped to Douala. It appears as a consumer good in rural markets only if they are within or adjoin producing areas.

Tomato as well is an urban consumer item and the bulk of the province's flows are directed towards Bamenda as a final consumption point, as are substantial flows from the West Province. Bamenda does redistribute a very small amount of produce to the larger rural markets.

A concise summary of commodity flows in the system as a whole is difficult because of the diversity of patterns identified. Nevertheless a rough picture can be drawn by grouping commodities in regard to four salient flow patterns: extraprovincial flows, intraprovincial rural to urban flows, intraprovincial rural to rural flows, and intraprovincial urban to rural flows.

1. Extraprovincial flows. This category includes the flows of potatoes, cabbages and beans. All crops are specialty products of the highland areas and have higher value to weight ratio and consequently involve lower transport costs than other agricultural goods. External movements proceed directly from producer markets to the main urban consumption centres of the country, although Bamenda does perform a wholesale bulking function for about 20% of potato exports. Bamenda acts as a secondary consumption centre for all goods, but there is no distribution to rural areas outside of the producing areas except in the case of beans.

2. Intraprovincial rural to urban flows. This is the largest category, including tomatoes and the basic staples: cocoyam, gari, maize and plantain. Flows are directed almost exclusively to Bamenda, the primary consumption centre. There is little direct or redistributed movement to rural markets, so that rural consumption is limited to areas favorable to production. There is as well little movement of produce to

other provinces. Limits to movement involve high transport costs because of the value to weight ratio of the staples and high damage losses for tomatoes. The demand level in Bamenda is evidently high enough to create economics-of-scale that allow these costs to be absorbed.

3. Intraprovincial rural to rural flows. This category includes palm oil and lake fish which are in high demand in rural areas and have quite a high value to weight ratio. Bamenda is an important consumption centre as well.

4. Intraprovincial urban to rural flows. This category includes seafish and rice. Seafish are carried over long distances in large quantity lots and must be bulk broken in Bamenda before rural distribution is possible. Imported rice follows the same pattern. Local rice is redistributed through Bamenda because of processing requirements. In all instances Bamenda provides the economics-of-scale that allow produce to be efficiently shipped and processed.

C. Quantity and Price Variation

One basic conclusion is evident in the material summarized above. Although the province's environmental variability has fostered the production of a wide range of crops there is relatively little exchange of subregional specialties between rural areas and relatively little exchange with other regions.

However, Bamenda's consumers receive the full benefit of the region's diversity, because of its situation as a large urban centre within the region. These observations will be discussed more fully in the concluding portion of this section, following an analysis of the effects of flow patterns on quantity and price variation.

Variation in commodity stocks in sample marketplaces (see Table VII) is difficult to analyze because of a number of factors. Markets are of different sizes and base hinterland population figures for each market are not available. Quantities sold to local consumers and to urban traders cannot be factored out of the total quantity available. Yet a rough index of differences in quantities available for local purchase can be obtained by comparing the coefficients of variation for amounts of each commodity across the different market places.

The coefficients of variation vary from 0.6 to 2.0 and can be divided into ranges of 0.6-1.0, 1.1-1.5, and 1.6-2.0 to yield three categories of variability. The category of lowest variability includes plantain, gari, rice, fish and palm oil, which are well distributed in the system. The distribution of rice, fish and palm oil is evened out by extensive redistributive and rural to rural flows, the distribution of plantain and gari, by widespread production

TABLE VII

STOCKS OF PRODUCE IN SAMPLE MARKETS

Market	Rank	Produce: Cocoym (kg)	Plantn (kg)	Gari (kg)	Corn (kg)	Rice (kg)	Potat (kg)	Total Starch	Fish (kg)	Beans (kg)	Cabbg (No.)	Tomat (kg)	Oil (gals)
Santa[a]	3	460	660	1440	170	120	1800	4650	150	ND	1800	240	280
Bali	3	4420	910	5440	1600	480	130	12980	1300	2100	260	45	820
Guzang[a]	2	4560	1130	3750	000	500	100	10040	470	1800	300	30	1040
Meta	3	7200	300	1750	000	700	100	10050	615	760	000	20	300
Bafut	3	1200	2200	5350	70	300	000	9120	390	120	000	30	300
Babanki	4	360	1560	400	290	100	000	2710	300	100	000	00	180
Bambui	4	160	1750	320	470	200	100	3000	270	200	50	120	110
Bambili	4	1410	1360	350	250	340	240	3950	315	200	100	120	90
Babanki -Tungo	4	000	000	820	100	000	2500	3420	150	000	50	00	80
V[b]		1.2	0.6	1.0	1.5	0.7	1.7	0.6	0.8	1.3	2.0	1.2	1.0

a. Quantities were lower than usual because of rain during the day of the main survey.

b. Coefficient of Variation = Standard Deviation ÷ Mean.

throughout the sample area. The intermediate category includes cocoyam, corn, tomatoes and beans. These goods tend to be consumed in greater proportions in the areas where they are more widely produced and in Bamenda. In the case of cocoyam and corn, poorer distribution is offset by the availability of substitutes so that the variability of starches in general (V = 0.6) is quite low. The category of highest variability includes potatoes and cabbages, which are produced for urban consumption and export rather than for a widespread rural demand.

The quantity variability patterns support the general interpretation of commodity flow data. Redistribution of subregional specialties to rural areas is poor, except for a few items that have fairly high value to weight ratios and a well-established rural demand. Accordingly the distribution system limits the range of food items available in rural markets to locally-produced crops, and may possibly lead to scarcities and higher prices when local production is insufficient. Thus aside from palm oil and fish, sauce ingredients are erratically distributed. Basic starches as a group are better distributed because of the range of substitutes produced, but seasonal fluctuations in local supply may very well create a problem. Further investigation of this problem depends on the collection of comparable quantity data over the course of the year.

1. Rural demand. The marketing system exhibits substantial weaknesses in the manner in which it stimulates and satisfies rural demand. A few products that have a high value to weight ratio are widely available to rural consumers, but for many starch and sauce items the low general level of demand and the scale of transport cost limits the range of foodstuffs to locally produced items. Although no time series data are available, it is probable that the highly bounded nature of the local food market causes seasonal scarcities of foodstuffs which are not mitigated by urban redistribution or direct inflows from other areas. Lawson (1971) commenting on a similar situation in Ghana has correlated poor rural distribution with increases in rural food prices in excess of those in urban areas.

2. Urban demand. In contrast to rural distribution patterns, urban demand within the province is relatively well supplied. Bamenda consumers can purchase a full range of food items that are produced in a wide variety of ecological areas, benefit from a wide variety of starch and condiment substitutes, and are consequently less subject to scarcities and price fluctuations than rural residents. Lawson has related this difference to the scarcity of retail services in the economy. In the Bamenda case differential variety between rural and urban areas is also related to the greater economics-of-scale that urban demand creates.

In spite of problems in rural distribution an investigation of price differences across the system (see Table VIII) indicates a low degree of variability for most items and thus a basic coordination of prices. Prices for commodities that are widely distributed throughout the rural market (palm oil, fish and rice) are subject to little variation. Prices of commodities channelled into rural-urban flows tend to vary more widely but nevertheless rural producer prices are set in a standard pattern related to Bamenda demand and transport costs to consumption points. Potato prices vary the most, although the statistic is of limited significance because of only four data points.[6] Cocoyam and gari prices show more variability. For cocoyam, a fairly low value to weight crop, prices are set by Bamenda demand and the cost of transport to Bamenda. For gari, price variation is explained by higher prices in Bambili and Bambui resulting from the cost of shipment from neighboring markets. Corn prices indicate low variability, although data from Ndop and Bui markets (see next section) indicate that producer prices decrease with distance from Bamenda in the same fashion as cocoyam prices.

D. Assessment

Basic information on commodity flow, distribution and pricing delineates a rough picture of the integration of supply and demand at various levels of the marketing system.

TABLE VIII
PRICES OF PRODUCE IN SAMPLE MARKETS
(In CFA Francs)

Market:	Product: Palm Oil (tin[a])	(botl[b])	Cocoyam (basket[c])	Corn (basket)	Potatoe (basket)	Ocean Fish (cup)	Gari (cup)	Rice (cup)
Santa	4100	150	450	650	750	30/50[d]	7.1	33
Bali	4000	150	350	600	e	30/50	8.3	29
Guzang	3600	140	300	e	e	30/50	6.7	29
Meta	3700	140	300	e	400	30/50	6.7	29
Bafut	3600	140	400	e	e	30/50	6.7	29
Babanki	4000	150	300	550	e	40/70	7.1	33
Bambui	4100	150	450	550	e	30/50	9.1	29
Bambili	4000	150	400	550	600	30/50	10.0	29
Babanki-Tungo	4100	150	400	500	600	30/50	6.7	e
Bamenda	3900	140	500	650	750	30/50	9.1	29
V	.05	.04	.17	.10	.23	.11	.16	.07

a. 4 gallons (18 litres)
b. 1 pint (.6 litres)
c. 4 gallons weight approx. 12.5kg.
d. Two types of fish are sold: dried crayfish and dried sardine.
e. No quantities available.

3. External demand. Another weakness of the system involves the limited nature of inter-regional exchange. Only a few regional specialties of highland producers are extensively exported to the nation's urban centres. This limitation is a combined result of the low level of market production of basic commodities, the distance of the area from large urban centres and the poor condition of internal transportation.

4. Rural production. The marketing system has had a mixed effect on the level of rural commercial production. On the one hand local urban demand has served as a stimulus to rural production and has effected a standardized and apparently competitive producer price structure. On the other hand rural agricultural demand has been fairly static and restricts economic growth because of limits to aggregate regional demand and to rural consumption possibilities. Additional limitations are caused by the small scale of interprovincial exchange and by the effects of transport costs on producer prices, which will be discussed in the following section.

NOTES

1 Because of the limited amount of data available all rank 2, 3 and 4 markets are classified as "rural" and the Bamenda market as urban. To some extent the rural patterns identified in the course of the section are not as extreme in the rank 2 and 3 markets.

2 Urban consumers include Bamenda shoppers who regularly visit rural markets, passing travellers and institutional buyers.

3 Cooperative rice marketing flows are not indicated in the tables.

4 Flows to Bamenda tend to be over-represented because of the absence of surveys of some important supply markets.

5 Unfortunately time permitted the collection of prices on only those items sold in standard measures.

6 Actually prices are fairly standardized. Prices at Bamenda and Santa are linked to Douala demand; produce prices at Bambili and Babanki-Tungo are determined by Bamenda prices less the costs of transport and handling. Variability results from the low price at Meta, which is explained by the fact that quantities are not large enough to attract urban traders and the price is influenced by local demand factors only.

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V The Organization of Distribution

This section will analyze the basic economics of commodity distribution in terms of the sequences of transactions through which agricultural goods pass from producer to ultimate consumer. It will consider:

1) forms of entry into trading as an occupation
2) mode of cooperation and competition among traders
3) the cost of transactions attributable to transport, handling, marketing fees and profits

Rural distribution, marketing in Bamenda, and external trade will be considered separately.

A. Rural Distribution

The supply of food items to rural markets is primarily in the hands of local entrepreneurs and has created an important income activity for rural households. Men and women engage in trade in different fashions. Traditionally domestic activities were strictly allocated on the basis of sex. Women were responsible for subsistence farming and for supplying their families with basic staples. Men were responsible for the family's cash income, which they obtained in a variety of ways: the cultivation of market crops, the manufacture of craft items and participation in trade. Traditional sex role patterns are still very much in evidence. Men produce

the major cash commodities of the region: coffee, palm oil, raffia wine, as well as newer cash crops: rice and garden vegetables. They also produce a variety of craft goods for sale within their localities and organize much of the local retailing of meat, fish, palm oil, and various imported manufactures. Individual household heads will engage in a variety of occupations, offsetting risks in one activity with profits from another. Women, however, are still primarily subsistence farmers. Even for such crops as potatoes, a major regional export, production is oriented towards home consumption; and only surpluses over subsistence needs are sold. Income gained from agricultural sales is often handed over to the husband, so that women have little disposable income and little capital to invest in production or trading. Nevertheless the growth of local markets has created a number of new economic niches, and women often supplement agricultural incomes through petty retailing and gari production.

Local participation in rural marketing varies in relation to the wholesaling and retailing of different commodities. Rice and ocean fish, because of the need for processing and the scale-economies of long distance shipment, are almost exclusively distributed by Bamenda-based merchants, either by large scale retailers, who sell in a circuit of rural markets, or wholesalers,[1] who supply locally resident retailers. Local

retailing of these items is a woman's occupation. (see Table IX A)

Other locally purchased foods--for which assembly costs are substantially lower--lake fish and palm oil--are distributed by rural merchants, who obtain supplies directly from producer markets. They engage in both wholesale and retail distribution and can maintain moderate sales volumes by working a circuit of nearby rural markets in much the same fashion as Bamenda merchants. These activities provide an important economic niche for rural men, although a small proportion of women have also entered this market. Women are much more likely to participate as stationary retailers, obtaining goods from male wholesale traders and selling them in the nearest market. (see Table IX B)

Modes of organization of rural distribution are quite simple. Most often itinerant traders acquire goods from producers and sell to consumers directly. Wholesaling, which introduces a second link in the trading chain,[2] accounts for a smaller but significant proportion. Competition is fairly widespread. Producer markets are visited by Bamenda and various rural market traders, who have no opportunity to collude; there are no exclusive producer-trader relationships that would discourage new entrants. Marketing costs have not been obtained but it is unlikely that transport and profits

TABLE IX

ROLE, SEX, AND RESIDENCE OF SELLERS IN RURAL MARKETS

A. REDISTRIBUTED GOODS

Residence	Role	Rice			Ocean Fish		
		Sex			Sex		
		Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
Bamenda	Wholesaler	2	0	2	2	0	2
	Retailer	1	0	1	1	2	3
Local	Wholesaler	1	0	1	0	0	0
	Retailer	2	9	11	1	12	13
Total		6	9	15	4	14	18

B. DIRECTLY DISTRIBUTED GOODS

		Palm Oil			Lake Fish		
Bamenda	Wholesaler	2	0	2	0	0	0
	Retailer	0	4	4	2	0	2
Local	Wholesaler	3	0	3	4	0	4
	Assembler-Retailer	7	4	11	12	4	16
	Stationary Retailer	0	12	12	4	4	8
Total		12	20	32	22	8	30

would add more than 15-20% to the base producer prices of oil and lake fish. Costs for ocean fish and rice marketing cannot be estimated, but Bamenda to rural market costs would be similar, if not lower.[3]

B. Bamenda marketing

Time constraints allowed me to investigate the organization of only a few commodities distributed in Bamenda: plantain, cocoyam, gari, corn, rice, beans and palm oil. Cost analysis was possible for even fewer: cocoyam, gari, corn and palm oil.

Wholesale trading in Bamenda is both a male and female activity. Men engage primarily in the moderate and long distance trades and women trade in crops distributed from markets nearer to Bamenda. Male traders come from a variety of ethnic backgrounds. Bamileke are notable as migrants who have come to Bamenda specifically as traders and who have had a long history of commercial activity.[4] Nevertheless, for the commodities sampled this group is not exclusively represented. Many rural migrants from within the province have established market businesses. Migrants from the south of Bamenda--Awing, Santa and Pinyin--seem especially active in trade. Typically the male trader has had a primary education and has adopted food wholesaling as a second or less preferred occupation after failing to establish a salaried job or a trade in manufactured goods. Capital requirements for male trading

occupations range between 20,000 and 40,000 CFA, $100-$200. Female traders in Bamenda were quite resistant to providing personal background data, so no discussion of modalities of entry is possible. Capital requirements for female trading occupations are approximately half those of male occupations.

Palm oil wholesaling for the Bamenda market is based primarily on supplies of oil from Widekum and from the Southwest plantations. Bamenda traders as a group are not organized into a cohesive unit, but do travel to producer markets together and tend to cooperate in the establishment of producer prices in Widekum. Their influence on the price, however, is moderated by the producers, who also act in concert. Price setting takes the form of both sides standing each other off for several hours, waiting for someone on the other side to break ranks and put forward an acceptable price, which then becomes the market price. Both producers and wholesalers seem to have a general knowledge of supply and demand conditions.

Oil is shipped to Bamenda in 45 gallon drums, where it is wholesaled by the 4 gallon tin to retailers in Bamenda and from nearby markets. Profit margins indicate the competitive nature of the market. Net profits on wholesale transactions are 10% on Widekum oil and 16% for Southwest oil. (see Tables X and XI) Retailing in pint bottles involves an additional markup of 10% - 15%.

TABLE X

MARKETING COSTS OF BASIC COMMODITIES SOLD IN BAMENDA

A. COCOYAM

Origin	Road Distance to Bmnda	Price (100kg)	Transport[a]	Handling[b]	Profit	Bamenda Price
Bambui	12km	3150CFA	150	100	100	3500
Bambili	16	2800	150	100	450	" "
Bali	24	2450	300	100	650	"
Bafut	24	2800	300	100	300	"
Babanki	32	2100	450	100	850	"
Meta	35	2100	450	100	850	"
Guzang	45	2450	500	100	450	"
Oshie	65	1400	1200	50	850	"
Average[c]	35	2290	510	90	610	3500

B. GARI

Bali	24	3859	300	100	300	4550
Bafut	24	3550	300	100	600	4550
Average	24	3670	300	100	480	4550

C. CORN

Bambui	12	3850	150	100	450	4550
Bali	24	4200	300	100	-50	"
Bali-Kumbat &Babessi	70	3500	400	100	550	"
Ndu	145	2500	800	200	1050	"
Average	86	3270	500	130	650	4550

D. PALM OIL

		(200kg)				
Meta	35	40700	750	100	1350	42900
Guzang	45	39600	900	100	2300	" " "
Widekum	67	37400	1500	150	3850	" " "
Lobe (Palmol)	400	31900	2000	150	5550	39600
Average	250	34600	1720	150	4600	41070

[a] Includes cost of personal transport.

[b] Includes payments to carriers, market fees and patente fees.

[c] Costs are weighted according to quantity shipped.

TABLE XI

COSTS AS PERCENT OF PRODUCER PRICE

A. COCOYAM

Origin	Distance	Transport	Handling	Gross Profit	Net Profit[a]	TOTAL
Bambui	12km	5	3	3	(3)	11
Bambili	16	5	4	16	(15)	25
Bali	24	12	4	27	(23)	43
Bafut	25	10	4	11	(9)	25
Babanki	32	21	5	40	(32)	66
Meta	35	21	5	40	(32)	66
Guzang	45	20	4	18	(14)	43
Oshie	65	85	4	61	(32)	150
Average	35	22	4	27	(21)	53

B. GARI

Bali	24	8	3	8	(7)	19
Bafut	24	8	3	17	(15)	28
Average	24	8	3	13	(12)	24

C. CORN

Bambui	12	4	3	11	(11)	18
Bali	24	7	2	-1	(-1)	8
Bali Kumbat & Babessi	70	11	3	16	(14)	30
Ndu	145	32	8	42	(30)	82
Average	86	15	4	20	(17)	39

D. PALM OIL

Meta	35	2	-	3	(3)	5
Guzang	45	2	-	6	(6)	8
Widekum	67	4	-	10	(10)	14
Lobe	400	6	-	17	(16)	23
Average	250	5	-	13	(13)	18

[a] Gross profit divided by the cost of product, transport and handling.

Corn, beans and rice form a commodity group that is distributed by a single group of wholesalers who utilize a variety of supply areas. Rice is purchased directly on the farms in Tingo, Num and Ndop. Bamenda wholesalers have special supply relations with producers dependent upon the payment of crop advances to farmers. Additional rice is obtained from stocks of imported rice in Bamenda warehouses. Local rice is purchased as paddy and stored throughout the offseason, being husked in privately owned mills as it is put on the market. Wholesalers sell in wholesale quantities, and at retail, in Bamenda and in circuits of rural market-places. Profit margins could not be estimated because the length of the buying and selling cycle exceeded the research period.

Corn and beans are usually purchased together. Because of the complexity of summarizing the extensive variety of beans marketed, only corn wholesaling will be discussed. There are two main supply areas, the Ndop Plain and the area around Ndu. Bamenda wholesalers also purchase in the Kumbo market, but were not doing so during the research period. Bamenda wholesalers have developed a variety of purchase arrangements. They travel directly to the larger supply centres and purchase supplies from producers as well as from local wholesale assemblers, who may have acquired goods from outlying markets or

forestalled producers on their way to the larger centres. Neither mode of purchase involves any exclusive buyer-seller relationships. However regular agreements have been developed for the supply of goods in more remote areas. Bamenda wholesalers contract local commission agents to accumulate stocks over one or two weeks, after which they will make a journey to pick up their goods. Commissions are set at 10%, which would seem to be the same margin at which independent local assemblers in the supply area operate. Both modes of sale lower producer prices accordingly since the Bamenda wholesaler sets his price according to the producer price in the main supply centres.

Bamenda wholesalers actually retail much of their stock either by the 4 gallon tin or by a bowl approximately one pint in volume. Wholesale purchases of corn and beans are made by Bamenda retailers, Fulani herders and traders from Wum, Douala, and the Southwest. Most wholesaling is done in November and December, when corn and bean crops have dried Corn and beans are not usually stored over longer periods because of the risk of insect damage.

Bamenda traders operate independently of one another and there is no evidence of cooperation or collusion in the setting of producer, wholesale or retail prices. Profit margins differ

according to the supply zone involved. Markups were 30% for Ndu corn and 14% for Ndop corn. This difference overlies a basic pattern for all trades, in which net profit margins increase according to the distance of the supply area from Bamenda, (see Table XI) a characteristic which will be discussed in the conclusion to this section. Other costs include those of transport and handling, both of which are passed on to the producer, effecting a producer price which varies according to the distance from Bamenda. Handling costs are increased for wholesalers travelling to Ndu because the scale of their operations requires them to rent permanent stalls in the Bamenda market, where their goods are stored, and to hold a patente. Both costs, 20,000 CFA and 6,000 CFA per year respectively, seem to be ultimately passed on to the producers.

Gari, cocoyam and plantain fall into a second group of starchy staples whose supply zone is nearer to Bamenda and which are marketed primarily by women. Their trading chains are fairly simple. Bamenda traders visit circuits of nearby markets, purchase goods from producers and then transport them to Bamenda for retailing. Each commodity introduces a minor complication to the general pattern. Cocoyam from Oshie, the most distant supply market, is transported to Bamenda by Oshie wholesalers, usually farmers who ship their own goods along with a supplemental amount purchased in the Oshie market.

Some plantain stocks are supplied by Bamileke traders from West Province markets. Some gari is wholesaled in Bamenda to Littoral and Southwest Province merchants.

There is little evidence of restrictive competition among staple traders. There are neither organizations of market women, exclusive buyer-seller arrangements, nor apparent practices of price fixing. Competition is enhanced by the participation of farmers living near Bamenda, who sell their produce to consumers in open sections of the Nkwen and Mankon markets. Net profit margins range from 10% to 30% and for cocoyam exhibit the tendency to increase relative to the distance of the supply market from Bamenda already noted for palm oil and corn.

C. External Trade

A longer research period is required to deal with this important aspect of regional trade. Surveys have identified potatoes and beans as the major export items. Cabbage is of minor significance for the province but it is quite important for the Santa locality. Gari and corn have a very small export market, although transport records from Ndop indicate larger flows during the dry season.

Much of the potato and bean crop are directly purchased by urban traders from outside the region in supply area markets, especially Kumbo. A smaller number of urban buyers acquired

goods from Bamenda wholesalers. Cabbages from Santa are purchased by Douala traders as well as by local wholesalers, who have organized their own transport and sales to Douala markets.

It is impossible to estimate marketing costs for external flows on the basis of the data collected. Obviously transport costs are substantial. Governmental licensing policy also adds to interprovincial marketing costs since traders are required to hold patentes from each province in which they do business.

D. Assessment

The data presented in this section allow for some broad generalizations about market entry conditions, marketing practices and marketing costs, the basic characteristics of structure and performance. Each characteristic will be discussed separately.

1. Entry

The basic limitation on establishing a marketing operation is capital. There are no evident institutionalized barriers to entry that allow an ethnic group or urban class to monopolize a particular trade. Rural people have local opportunities to engage in trade and often establish urban operations. Although some ethnic groups specialize in commerce, ethnic origin as such

does not constitute an entry criterion. Women do not have the same trading opportunities as men, essentially because of their limited abilities to acquire capital.

2. Organization

Two organizational forms have been identified as prevalent techniques of restricting competition in peasant marketing systems: exclusive buying-selling relations and trader associations. Exclusive relations assume the form of personalized friendships between buyers and sellers that require that the participants exchange exclusively with each other. Such relations discourage competition between existing traders and entry of new ones and may lead to distortions in price determination. Trader associations attempt to create oligopolistic conditions for wholesalers of the same commodity in a fairly direct fashion.

Bamenda market relationships show little evidence of either of these forms of restriction. Wholesale merchants in the middle of trading chains tend to buy from producers on an open, impersonalistic basis. With the exception of the use of advances in the rice trade and of commission agents in the corn trade, there is no indication of long-term fixed arrangements between buyer and seller. Similarly there are no trader associations which formally or informally control levels of

competition. As such there are no direct or indirect forms of collusion to limit competition or interfere with the integration of prices, supply, and demand.

3. Costs

The general absence of collusion from the marketing process is reflected in the level of traders' profits. Normal margins vary between 10% and 30% on total expenditure. These profits seem to be reasonable and competitive considering the time and capital invested in the business, the nature of risks and the possibility of profit fluctuations. However there is one important problem in the profit structure. Traders' profits increase in relation to the distance between supply and sale markets. This trend can be interpreted as an imperfection that results from the small number of traders with capital to finance long distance runs. However, higher profits on longer runs can be more simply explained as a return to the greater labor and increased risk that more travelling introduces. Accordingly the profit structure entails a hidden cost of distance, an additional transport cost.

Palpable transport costs comprise an important component of the total marketing cost, adding on the average between 5% and 22% over the producer's price. Handling costs are more modest, adding another 5% or less.

Whatever the justification for the various marketing costs, they have one pervasive effect in the system. Since both transport costs and profit margins vary with distance and are ultimately deducted from the producer price, producers living far away from Bamenda are disadvantaged, sometimes receiving as little as half the price for these goods that producers living near Bamenda do.

NOTES

1 These merchants will actually sell only a portion of their stock at wholesale and retail the rest.

2 A third link for ocean fish involves the coastal merchants who assemble and ship goods to Bamenda.

3 Retail prices in Bamenda and rural markets are usually equivalent, indicating that rural distributors absorb the cost of transport and work on the same retail-wholesale market as do Bamenda traders, approximately 10%.

4 Ibos occupy a similar position, but tend to be better represented in the retailing of industrial manufactures. Many of the ocean fish wholesalers are Ibo.

VI Conclusion

A final assessment of market structure and performance in the Northwest will review the conclusions of the previous sections in the context of the range and costs of market goods and services available to the rural agricultural population.

A. The Range of Goods and Services

The marketing system provides a rather narrow range of goods and services to the rural population. Standard markets function primarily to supply a few normally purchased, high value to weight food items and to bulk local crops commonly consumed in Bamenda. Major markets offer manufactured goods: clothing, domestic utensils and farm implements. Households depend on their own production and local village exchanges for the bulk of their consumption. As such the small size of the market imposes a wide set of constraints to economic well-being and growth. There is a narrow range of substitutes for basic starch and condiment items in each locality. The supply of goods which are locally produced in substantial quantities are subject to seasonal and year to year fluctuations, which are not mitigated by inflows from other localities. The ability of localities to fully specialize in intensive production is restricted. Thus the region's full potential to capitalize on diverse environmental conditions and provide a wide range of produce to its population has not been realized.

A number of conditions are responsible for the limits to market size and the range of goods and services available. A discussion of the effects of marketing costs will be deferred to the next section. In the context of the basic local economy, the main constraint to increasing the range of the market is that the rural cash economy does not provide the minimum economics of scale necessary to support trading operations that would provide additional marketing services. Further consideration of scale economics indicates substantial regional inequalities in marketing services related to differences in population concentration and cash income. The growth of Bamenda has generated a population base and income level that supports a large market and allows urban consummers to obtain the range of substitute items produced throughout the region. Rural population concentration in mid-altitude areas allows for a few basic commercial services. Sparse population and poor infrastructure in extensive peripheral areas indicate more localized economies with fewer commercial opportunities.

B. Marketing costs

The basic costs of marketing derive from trader profits, transport charges and market use and licensing fees. Although trader profits comprise the largest cost component, they appear to be determined by openly competitive processes and to be reasonable in relation to capital, time and risk involved in the

trading process. Transport costs comprise the second largest component but assume greater significance when the distance costs embedded in profit margins are considered. These costs are affected by the poor road conditions in the province which directly influence operating costs for transporters and traders and indirectly lead to higher rates because of the scarcity of vehicles. Marketing and licensing fees comprise the smallest cost component but are directly dependent upon government policy.

Marketing costs have a multiple effect on rural economic development. They directly affect producer prices and, perhaps more importantly, affect rural economics of scale by raising prices and lowering demand for goods and services. The current transport structure has the most pervasive effect on income and demand, since the compound correspondence between cost and distance to Bamenda reinforces the basic pattern of regional inequality.

C. Policy Recommendations

The findings of this report suggest that the current difficulties in the performance of commodity markets in the Northwest are symptomatic of underlying economic limitations and that the marketing process has not in itself discouraged economic development. In particular, patterns of competition indicate that trading practices are not restrictive and are relatively cost-effective, given the prevailing limitations of

transport costs and rural supply and demand levels.

These findings call a number of current regional policies into question. The cooperative movement in the Northwest has been increasingly involved in developing food marketing cooperatives to provide an alternative channel to private trading networks. As there are few inflated profits in the marketing system, expansion of cooperatives will not effect reductions in marketing costs. In fact preliminary analysis of information collected from the cooperatives indicates that they are more expensive to operate than private businesses and can compete only because a substantial proportion of their costs are covered by grants and loans. Cooperative and other development agents should therefore be investigating more direct modes of investment in regional growth, specifically those which lower ancillary marketing costs and those which directly increase rural economics of scale.

1. Costs

a. Transport costs. While transport costs are essential for the efficient allocation of regional resources, excessively high costs, such as those prevalent in the Northwest, have a multiplex effect on rural income, economies-of-scale, and regional inequalities that impose substantial barriers to specialization and trade. Major extension and improvement of the existing road network would lower the monetary and time costs

of transport and consequently make a wider range of goods and services accessible.

b. Market fees. Provincial and local administrations have instituted a number of marketing fees and licences. While these comprise a relatively small cost component and to some degree are used to cover cost of marketplace improvements and maintenance, they are ultimately transferred to the producer. The expansion of licensing to cover all traders will have further increased costs and will also serve to discourage market entry and decrease competition. Alternative local and provincial financing arrangements should definitely be considered.

2. Increasing rural economies of scale

While direct improvement in rural income is an obvious general goal, the findings of this report indicate some specific avenues for development.

a. Expanding inter-regional trade. One finding of this report indicates that demand from large national centres has exerted a rather small influence on provincial production and marketing. High transport costs and poor communication of supply and demand conditions are the dominant constraints. Both government and cooperative could make major contributions by identifying national and international markets and organizing or facilitating supply to their consumers. As yet food marketing cooperatives have been too heavily involved with intraprovincial

marketing and suffer from competition with private traders and from the losses and costs of keeping large quantities of unsold goods in storage.

b. Reviewing PMO Policy. While this report has been concerned with food marketing, ancillary research indicates that current coffee export marketing policies have a pervasive effect on rural incomes and economies of scale. Current government pricing policies should be reviewed to ensure that PMO reserves derived from coffee incomes are invested directly in activities that will increase rural income. Research has also indicated malpractices in village-level cooperative coffee markets that have a widespread effect on rural incomes and economies of scale. Further investigation of coffee pricing and marketing arrangements may indicate simple avenues for initiating rural growth.

Chapter III:

MARKET PARTICIPATION AND THE ORGANIZATION OF LAND AND LABOR IN THE NORTHWEST PROVINCE, CAMEROONS

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THE CHANGING LAND MARKET IN THE NORTHWEST PROVINCE

Is land becoming a scarce resource in the Northwest Province? Even with a relatively densely populated rural area, it still would appear that province wide land is an abundant resource in relationship to the number of people available to work the farms. Yet farmer-grazier disputes are frequent; land disputes between neighbors, kinsmen, villages and tribal groups are common. How do the peoples of the province view their relationship to control of and access to land? What are the underlying rules governing this relationship?

In Cameroon, as in most of West Africa, "agriculture is the matrix in which all other indigenous activity is set."* The question of rights of allocation and control over land becomes a central issue as the population--both human and animal--grows while the amount of arable land available remains static.

Throughout African history, control over labor rather than control over land has been the key to political power and economic success. African leaders have traditionally invested in social or symbolic capital rather than material wealth *per se*, for the former is ultimately transformable to the latter. Since land has always been abundant in proportion to the people available to work, wealth and power have been measured in labor rather than land. Those who could demand fealty--and labor--from others have been the powerful men in the social structure; this is one reason why kinship relations or

*Hill , Polly, "Some Characteristics of Indigenous West African Economic Enterprise," *Economics Bulletin of Ghana*, 1962, pp 3-14.

relationships expressed in kinship terms have been so important in Africa and remain so up to the present time.

A growing population coupled with the introduction of cash crops and the increasing involvement of the rural area in a cash economy have all forced people to rethink the value attached to land. Whereas in the pre-coffee period the greatest part of agricultural land was exploited primarily for subsistance, today it is increasingly seen and utilized as a source of cash income. The purpose of the following report is to look at the interrelationships between the traditional land tenure systems of the Northwest province and the land laws of Cameroon as they exist today in order to identify points of articulation and disjunction as the rural areas become increasingly developed and involved in a monetary economy.

When we talk about "ownership" of land in the traditional land tenure system, we must disregard ideas of absolute ownership of land as a commodity which can be bought or sold by individuals at will, and instead think of control over land as a bundle of rights vested in different individuals at various levels of society. Out of the many rights that may be identified, two stand out clearly. First, there is the right to own land. This right is not vested in individual persons but rather in the group to which they belong, symbolically represented by the chiefs or Fon's titular control over all land. Secondly, there is the right to use land--often in perpetuity--and this right is vested in the individuals

within the group. With few exceptions, the occupation and use of land was individual and the individual enjoyed a security of tenure as long as he was in occupation of the land and abided by customary law and by decisions of the customary authority. However, the individual's right was to the product of the land; to its use and inheritance of its use rather than to the land itself. Land was not viewed as a commodity which could be alienated by individual owners.

The underlying contradiction in this system of land tenure lies in the fact that the ideology stresses the supremacy of the group over its individual members, and yet these individuals possess pieces of land as long as they identify themselves with the group. At the level of facts, it would appear as if individuals own land, while at the level of ideas it is the group which owns the land. This contradiction becomes more apparent as land begins to take on a market value of its own and begins to be treated as a commodity. With a movement towards an increased separation of economic from non-economic activities, there is a relaxation of traditional tenure constraints while at the same time there is a contradictory ideological attempt to maintain the dominance of traditional values over these developing activities, to defend the integrity of the customary pattern.

The system of land tenure will closely follow the pattern of leadership within the society, reflecting the structure of social relationships within the community. Therefore, as these patterns and

relationships undergo significant changes due to increasing involvement of the rural areas in a monetary economy, the system of land tenure will begin a process of transformation. This process will in turn affect the pattern of social relationships, although the traditional and modern systems will remain interconnected and interdependent for some time.

In order to understand this process we must first understand the underlying principles of the traditional system of land tenure.

Brief Social History of the Northwest Province

It is difficult to talk about "the Northwest Province" as though it consists of a uniform population undergoing uniform changes through time. There are, however, throughout the province, basic similarities in customary social, economic, and political organization. The Northwest Province is encompassed by the area commonly referred to as the "Bamenda Grassfields." "Grassfields" is the name given to the highlands of Western Cameroon, which extend immediately north of the tropical forest between 5 and 7 degrees north of the Equator, between the Cross River to the south, the Katsena Ala River to the north and the Mbam River to the East.* As a result of the ecological diversity and high population densities in the area, commercial exchanges existed between complementary areas long before European colonial rule. There is a long-shared history of economic and political interaction within

*Warnier, J.P., "Precolonial Mankon: The Development of a Cameroon Chiefdom in its Regional Setting," unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, University of Pennsylvania, 1975.

the region, and, despite their interdiversity, the peoples of the Grassfields share similarities in technology, economy, social and political organization as well as material culture.

Ass the peoples of the Grassfields were organized in chiefdoms of various sizes; almost everywhere the chieftainship was hereditary, and the chief a sacred symbol of the unity of his people. Men's secret societies were numerous. The distribution of power between these societies, chiefs, lineage and quarterheads varied from chiefdom to chiefdom. With few exceptions the peoples of the region have practiced patrilineal descent, and any given chiefdom has combined principles of descent and residence into an intricate pattern of social organization. Production for consumption and exchange in all the chiefdoms was embedded within the compound economy each of which functioned as a self-sufficient unit. A compound was made up of a head, his wives, adult sons, children, and other dependents. The prestige and power of an individual was positively correlated with the number of people who lived in his compound. Subsistance was historically and is today provided almost entirely by women.

Within this organization, land is inherited both individually and communally; the chief or Fon holds property in common, while de facto control is exercised to varying degrees by lineage and family heads. Although we cannot talk about the traditional land tenure system of the province, we can point out a shared set of underlying principles. The extent to which these principles do or do not operate today will be

discussed in relationship to increased and moving populations, urbanization, and the degree to which customary values outweigh or are incorporated into ideas of modernity.

Research Methodology

The largest part of the research for this report was carried out in Bui Division where extensive interviews were conducted in ten villages with individual farmers, government officials, and local chiefs and notables. During the four months of research I lived in compounds in Kumbo and in Nseh, and spent a considerable amount of time travelling around outlying farms with the women in the compounds. The research effort was extended into Donga-Mantung and Mezam divisions. While these areas have been affected differentially by the process of urbanization and development, they share basic similarities in land tenure patterns and problems. Nso in Bui division was chosen for most intensive study for several reasons. First, it is the largest of the four major kingdoms of the Grassfields (the others being Bali, Bafut, and Kom). Second, the Nso people are of Tikar origin. The indigenous peoples of the province fall into five main groups--Tikar, Widekum, Mbembe, Bali and Aghem--of which the Tikar have been the most numerous and influential. Finally, the Nso people are at once traditional and modern, urban and rural in attitudes towards use and control of land. While there are surely variations on the Nso pattern, the principles governing land tenure in Nso remain fairly typical of the underlying structure of land ten

in much if not most of the province.

Principles of Customary Land Tenure

As noted earlier, throughout most of the Northwest Province, eminent domain or titular ownership in land is vested in the Chief or Fon or the village head as trustee of the community, and the settlement of outsiders requires his permission. De facto control is exercised by lineage or extended family heads; this control often extended to trees planted by male dependents. In Nso today, there are approximately forty landlords called [A]Taa-Ngwoen (literally "the man who owns the fields"). Most of these men are descendents of M'tar lineages: these are people who became voluntary allies of the Fon of Nso upon his first settlement in Kovifem some 12 miles to the northwest of the present capital, Kumbo (Banso). These men became founders of clans whose members regard themselves as "the true people of Nso" in contra-distinction to the people of conquered subtowns of foreigh origin, i.e., Nkar, Djottin, Nseh, Lassin, Din. These men are also called the "priests" of the land and are required to perform sacrifices and rituals to ensure the fertility of the land and well-being of all persons working on the land.

The Fon makes the annual sacrifices geared towards the productivity of the soil but has no particular piece of land to allot to an individual.* He must go through the traditional landlord. This is

*In many of the chiefdoms in the province, the Fon can allocate land directly to individuals, although it is controlled by lineage and extended family heads.

most usual when the person requesting land is a non-Nso person. The Fon sends such a guest to a landlord through a palace page. The landlord then understands he must keep the Fon's guest, and after a short time reports on the man's behavior to the Fon. If the man's conduct is considered proper, the landlord gives the man land for farming and building after the proper gifts have been made. If the man leaves to return to his former village, the property (i.e., buildings) reverts to the Fon and the land to the landlord.

In Nso, and in most of the Grassfields region, the overlordship of a chief or Fon over land represents the territorial aspect of his authority over persons. Fonship is seen as the external symbol of the unity and authority of the people, and titular control of land carries symbolic and political rather than economic connotations. The lineage or extended family head's de facto control is an aspect of the recognition of his general competence as the political and religious leader of a group of persons. Traditionally, the privileges of the lineage head included calling on his dependents to assist in the cultivation and clearing of his farm; in addition, he inherited permanent tree crops planted by his descendents as well as property such as livestock (goats, sheep, fowl), guns, ornaments, and money. However, this privilege included obligations to his dependents, the foremost of which was to keep the patrimony of the lineage intact for future generations. The succession of a lineage head has to be confirmed both by his family and by the Fon, and he can be deposed from office if he abuses his privilege. As local people put it today

"a fai* can gain alot of power but he cannot profit too much at the expense of his own people."

Throughout most of the province, women could not own or control rights over land but have in practice exercised considerable control over plots they actually cultivated and could loan them to other women or even transmit them to close female kin. Women have customarily farmed on the land of their husband's lineage and continue to do so today. However, they have had rights of usufruct in lands belonging to their mother's lineage or in certain cases, in land of their father's lineage.

Several points emerge from this brief description which are pertinent when looking at how this pattern of land tenure has or has not changed:

(1) The lineage head's role in allocation of land carried moral as well as legal connotations: he was expected to ensure all his dependents enough land for their individual needs. In addition, he was expected to safeguard the partimony of the lineage. Although it was left to him to decide whether non-members of the lineage should be granted plots, he had a moral obligation to do so only when it did not go against the best interests of his own dependents, nor prejudice their access to enough land to satisfy their needs. A corollary of this is that the status of a lineage head depends on the number of his dependents; if he alienates them he will lower his status in the community.

*Lineage heads are called by various terms throughout the province. In Nso they are called "fai"; in this report "fai" will be used to denote lineage head.

(2) Sylvan resources--permanent trees such as raffia and kola--were regarded as "things of the lineage"; if a man planted tree crops he could exploit them while he lived, but the lineage head, rather than his own heir, inherited these upon the man's death. Tree crops could not in any event be planted without the express permission of the landlord.

(3) Once a man was allocated plots by his lineage head, these were handed down from son to son so that certain areas of land became vested in smaller segments of the lineage. Land given out for foodcrops could be reclaimed by the landlord at any time as long as he gave proper notice, but it was frowned upon for him to take back land unnecessarily from his own dependents.

(4) Once land was loaned to non-kin, if not claimed for the use of the lineage within one generation, there was a tendency for the land to become permanently alienated.

(5) Land, while it could be loaned, could not be sold, pawned, or bartered.

Contemporary Forces for Change in Land Tenure

The introduction of cash crops--especially coffee--and the ever increasing involvement of the rural sector in a monetary economy has had significant effects on this system of land tenure, especially

in more densely settled areas, although the ideology that farmland, especially land for foodcrops, is free and cannot be bought or sold remains strong. The greatest impact has stemmed primarily from:

(1) The introduction and expansion of cash crops, in particular of coffee, as the primary source of income in the province.

(2) The monetary value now attached to land and the growing tendency to view land as a commodity and source of cash income rather than as a means to satisfy subsistance requirements.

(3) Population growth in general; in particular, the growth of an urban or town population leading to heavy demand and inflated values for land within the more densely populated areas.

With an ever increasing need for cash income along with the substantial investment of time and money involved in coffee production, men came to demand that their own heirs inherit coffee farms. Coffee, along with kola, raffia, and other tree crops, is viewed as a permanent crop which should not be planted without permission of the landlord. Today, permanent crops as well as buildings are considered individual property, and are inherited by individual heirs rather than reverting to the lineage head upon the death of the owner. (Some farmers, especially in the more rural villages, report that if they want to sell their coffee farm to another person, they first have to obtain the

consent of the landlord.) Landlords have become extremely reluctant to give out land for any use other than subsistance crops, and even here will often put a definite time limit on the amount of time the land can be used before it is reclaimed.

Political Responses to the Evolving Market for Land

Land has taken on a real monetary value, especially in and around towns. Gradually landlords have come to ask for cash, as well as gifts and labor in return for use of farmland. This practice has been denounced both by the Fon and by the people. As one Nso man said, "Now they [the landlords] ask for compensation. Compensation for what? Do you compensate a man for grass?"

As cash crops become more important land has tended to become vested in smaller segments of the lineage. Confusion as to the real or original landlord--over exactly who has the right to allocate what land--has become prevalent. When land has been lent relatively recently and witnesses are available, there is a good chance of tracing to the original landowner. But where land was lent many years ago and witnesses have died, litagation can drag on for years. All of this has had an effect on the customary practice of lending land to people outside the lineage. Land owners have become reluctant to lend land even for subsistance crops. Although there are alternate means available for acquiring land, a man's claims are strongest in regard to the land of his own lineage. Individuals who belong to lineages which do not have sufficient land to meet the demands of all

members may have difficulty obtaining enough land to meet their needs. Children of people who "begged" land or were tenants often have their land taken from them after the death of the original landlord.

In March of 1972, the Fon of Nso made a speech stressing the following points:

(1) No two persons can represent the Fon over any one piece of land;

(2) Some landlords are collecting rent for land ranging from 500-2000 frcs and this is wrong;

(3) There are too many land cases in recent times, which had never happened before;

(4) A landlord should not be represented by others in court because the young men they send to represent them are not priests of the land, don't know about land matters and can't perform the traditional sacrifices;

(5) Careless handling of land matters is the greatest reason for conflicts and lack of unity in Nso;

(6) Present ill luck stems from landlords accepting more than the traditional wine and fowl for land.

These points summarize the inherent conflicts between rights of individuals to permanancy of tenure and the rights of the community or group to hold and administer land in the traditional manner. They also

highlight the contradictions between the traditional land tenure system and the new land tenure and state lands ordinances issued in 1974 by the Cameroon government.

Land Tenure and State Lands Ordinances

In 1974, the Cameroon Government issued Land Tenure and State Lands, Ordinances No. 74-1, 74-2, and 74-3. This was viewed as a land reform law intended to protect the small farmer, assure him a permancy of tenure, and encourage development in the rural areas. It divides all land into National Land, State Public Land and State Private Property,* appoints the State as guardian of all lands, and guarantees rights of ownership (private property) to "all natural persons and corporate bodies having landed property." The following categories of land are included under "private property": (a) registered lands; (b) freehold lands; (c) lands acquired under the transcription system; (d) lands covered by a final concession, and (e) lands entered in the Grundbuch. All persons legally occupying or holding such land as of 6 July 1974 are entitled to file directly for a land title certificate. However, if you didn't occupy land before that date, you can't file directly for a land title certificate, but rather have to apply for formal allocation of land through the land commission or land consultative board.

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* State Public Land and Private Property of the State: State public property is comprised of all property set aside for the direct use of the public or for public services, i.e., coastlands, waterways, highways; State private property encompasses personal and real property acquired by the State; lands which support buildings, constructions, structures and installations established and maintained by the State as well as real property devolving on the State by virtue of war sequestations or expropriation for reasons of public interest. See pp 27-31, Land Tenure and State Lands, Ordinances 74-1, 74-2, 74-3, 6 July 1974.

National Land is comprised of all lands, "which, at the date on which the present Ordinance enters into effect are not classed into the public or private property of the State...or are not covered by private property rights." National lands are divided into two categories:

(1) Land occupied with houses, farms and plantations, and grazing lands, manifesting human presence and development, and

(2) Lands free of any effective occupation.

These lands are to be administered by the State "in such a way as to ensure rational use and development thereof."

All developed land within the former category of national lands has a set value attached to it and can be sold for building. The value attached to this land varies from division to division:

Land Costs per Square Meter

Division	Area	Per Square Meter Land Cost
Mezam	Bamenda	250 frcs CFA
	Bali	80
	Ndop	50
	Santa	60
Momo	Mbengwi	80
	Babito	20
Bui	Kumbo	100
	Jakiri	50
Mentchum	Wum	80
	Njinikom	50
	Fundong	50
Donga-Mantung	Nkambe	80
	Nwa	30
	Ndu	60

We should note that these are "correct" prices; the actual price charged is often higher, especially in preferred parts of towns like Bamenda and Kumbo. To file for title to building land, the plots have to be at least 100 x 60 ft; for farm land there has to be at least an acre of permanent crops already planted.

National lands which are non-allocated or exploited can be given out as grants for development purposes by the government. These are initially 3-5 year temporary grants for right of occupation. An application for these concessional grants must include a program for development and proof of financial ability to carry out this program. If approved, the land is granted for a period of five years during which time the land must be developed as per the program submitted. A man may ask for an investigation of his progress at any point; in any case at the end of the five years if development is substantial a land title certificate will be granted. Alternatively if development isn't complete, an extension may be given; however, if little or no progress has been made the land can be reclaimed by the government.

Fusion of Customary and State Land Authority

While declaring itself guardian of all lands, the government has nevertheless had to take into consideration the position of traditional rulers and traditional law whose authority and potency it both recognizes and respects:

"...independently of their sentimental value [the chiefs] still constitute today and surely will tomorrow, by reason of the leadership which they give to the people, an instrument of action which the State cannot afford to do without.."

A. Ahidjo

[1964: Paris. Contribution to National Constitution. Presence Africaine]

In order to fuse the new land laws with the traditional rules governing land tenure, the Fon and two of his councillors or notables must constitute part of the Consultative Land Board set up within each sub-division in the province. Other members are the District Officer as Chairman, Land Department Representative as secretary, and members from the Surveys Department, Town Planning and Housing, Department of Agriculture, Veterinary Department or Department of Construction (members other than the traditional rulers, the District Officer and the Land Department Representative can vary according to the nature of the proposal). Although the government technically has declared itself the owner of all lands, these lands are held in trust by the traditional rulers and landlords.

Effects of Interaction Between Customary and State Land Laws

The land tenure and state lands ordinances emerge as fairly ambiguous, both in terms of exactly which kinds of occupancy and/or "ownership" are to be included within categories designated as private property, and in terms of rights of allocation of land to individual farmers. Essentially two forces have now become opposed as aspects of

the development process, creating an ambiguous system of land tenure which is at one and the same time consolidated as some people claim authority over the allocation and disposal of land, and fragmentary as other people repudiate those claims of authority. This has created essentially a dual system of tenure: for the small, uneducated village farmer without the knowledge or means to institute a development plan, the only access to land is within the customary land tenure system. Some people have access to only a small amount of land, especially within a reasonable distance from their compounds; land near towns is seldom left to fallow and people are now farming up to the tops of hills.

Those persons who are aware of the law, know the procedure and have the capital to develop land can acquire rights of occupancy and land title through government channels as well as by traditional means. It can be quite expensive to go through the land commission for land concessions; not only do you have to draw up plans and have a survey made but, as one Nso man put it, "you have to entertain the commission. It cost me over 50,000 frcs CFA to obtain a certificate of occupancy for my land." This is of course in addition to the actual capital required to institute the development plan. The typical pattern of investment has somewhat limited the amount of land brought under cultivation to date. Most men will invest in urban land, building houses for rental, establishing stores or otherwise making investments which assure a steady income. The primary reason given for filing for title to land is to acquire access to credit in order to invest further in the

urban areas; investment in rental property in Bamenda or Kumbo assures faster returns than investment in agriculture. Many of the rental houses in town are owned by absentee landlords, often local people who have left for jobs in the cities--Douala, Yaounde, Victoria, Buea. Although some men have started to invest in large farms as well as urban property, most of them do so only after establishing a secure income from other investments. Most of the larger farms are owned by administrators, traders or schoolteachers who can afford both transport and labor costs in outlying areas.

Land Conflicts

Disputes over land are usually settled through the traditional land authorities. If a dispute goes beyond this, the case goes to the Administration: first to the District Officer of the sub-division and the lands officer. If they can't settle the dispute it goes to the Land Consultative Board. In every dispute rights to the land must be traced to a former landlord or to a relative, but this is often a long and difficult process, and there are frequent claims of bias and unfair practice.

The most prevalent land conflicts today are between farmers and graziers. Local government officials estimate that at least 90% of all land cases are of this kind. The District Officer in Kumbo receives at least two such complaints a week, and most conflicts are handled in the traditional courts and do not even reach his office.

These conflicts are far from new, but they have been exacerbated by the growth in both human and animal populations, and by consequent arguments over the use of former grazing land for cultivation (land which has been designated as grazing land by the local government can actually be allocated by the land board or by the traditional rulers for either grazing or farming). The growth of rice cultivation on the Mbaw and Ndop Plains (as well as the lake in the latter) have usurped key dry season grazing space of the Fulani transhumance. Chiefs are extremely reluctant to grant land title to graziers--especially Fulani, but even to native graziers and mixed farmers. Title is not given for grazing land, rather, herders are issued a grazing permit authorizing them to graze their livestock within certain circumscribed areas. Since graziers cannot obtain title to land they have little vested interest in substantially improving range management. [cf. John Holtzman, pp 56-57] Much of the damage to farms can be traced to Fulani herders; however, many farmers complain that local cattle and goat owners are worse culprits, often refusing to pay fines when levied.

Conflicts caused by encroachment are common. Boundaries have often not been clearly defined and a farmer may slowly edge onto his/her neighbor's land until a boundary suit arises. These cases are usually handled by the landlord(s) involved or, if they

become serious, by the traditional court.

Conflicts over inheritance--between brothers and between the deceased man's younger brother and his son--also occur. These are less common and are often handled within the lineage; if they go beyond this they are referred to the traditional court and only in extremely rare cases are they brought to the administration.

Land disputes often arise between the original landlord and families who have held the land for a long period of time, especially if the latter try to sell the land. Since there is often no guaranteed way of knowing just what land was occupied and by whom prior to the 1974 land ordinance, some people are claiming portions of land which were not theirs.

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* Each landlord has what is called a shoo: a sacrificial vessel especially for use in land cases. The Fon invites the landlords to the palace, pours palace wine into these vessels from which landlords drink as a pledge of just land administration. On their return home, the landlords pour some of this wine around the land shrine--Kiroe Kenyuy--as a sign that the Fon is concerned about the welfare of those who use the land. By this act it is assured that no landlord should encroach upon the domain of another. Should there be a dispute, confusion, or misunderstanding, the only satisfactory method of settling it customarily is by an act known as Lau-Ngom: that is, two shoo containing palace wine are brought forth and each of the landlords drink from these and each condemns the alleged trespass. The effect and result of this act has always been reconciliation because no Nso landlord will drink such wine unless he is convinced he is in the right. This practice is still highly respected in some quarters and is still used today since it is felt that no traditional landlord will accept to drink the wine if he is doubtful about his claim since if he does so he will become ill or even die.

As both the population and the economic potential of land grow, there are strained relationships between villages and conflicts arise between the paramount Fon of Nso and the village sub-Fons over rights of territorial jurisdiction. As Nso people settle and farm further and further out in the countryside there is some friction. The sub-chiefs in villages have acquired some measure of independence and assertion of territorial rights, while the Fon of Nso maintains that he is the supreme Fon in the division. Arguments arise over who should pay taxes to whom and whose native holidays--"Country Sundays"--should be observed. All over the province as various tribal groups expand or move into new areas conflicts arise. These conflicts are usually couched in political terms; however, control over men is essentially control over land, and as the amount of desirable land decreases these conflicts become more prevalent.

Other Problems

Due partly to historical circumstances and partly to methods of cultivation, in most cases the lands of a lineage head or a landlord do not form one continuous tract. People also may have land from several landlords. Farmers usually have several plots, often several miles apart and sometimes separated by a distance of 15-20 miles. Consolidation of holdings is apt to arise as a problem in the future. One government lands person expressed the opinion that consolidation will either "evolve voluntarily or by decree." Some farmers are aware of this and a few have started farming cooperativ

to consolidate their holdings.

As noted earlier, individuals who belong to a lineage which doesn't have enough land to satisfy the needs of all its members may have problems of access to more than enough land to satisfy subsistance needs, and near the towns may not even have this. Landlords are reluctant to give land for permanent crops since they know they may eventually lose control of this land. Even with land given for subsistance crops, length of tenure is not always assured; the landlord can reclaim the land at any time upon proper notice. Length of fallow has decreased considerably, especially on land near to towns. Even in some outlying areas, women report that they are often reluctant to let land lie fallow since the landlord may allot it to someone else in return for a cash payment.

A landlord increases both his symbolic and material capital when he gives out land. People who "beg" land from him not only are obliged to give him gifts and labor*, but also owe him allegiance. The more people who are obliged to him, the greater his prestige. However, the real source of prestige for a landlord comes from the number of people within his own lineage who are veiwed as his "depedents"; he is in effect the manager or "father" of lineage land, not the owner.

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*Landlords of high status have special farms called shuu-sum and the women who farm on his land as well as his own wives work it for him. The existance of such farms has symbolic connotations: they are proof that the landlord is the true owner of the land. If a woman doesn't work for the landlord, she can be displaced from her farm plots.

He must weigh the advantages of giving out land to non-kin against the disadvantages of taking too much from his own family. Some landlords, especially around Bamenda, are capitalizing on their position, selling not only urban land under their jurisdiction but also charging large amounts of money for "compensation" for permanent rights to farmland. In the rural areas while some landlords abuse their privilege, they are bound by tradition and family in a way which prohibits them from gaining too much individually at the expense of their lineage. Wealth in farmland may become somewhat concentrated within a number of the larger families but it is not apt to become a privilege of individual men within the traditional system. While many people claim these landlords abuse their priviledge concerning land for building, they also agree that it is not so often abused concerning land for food crops (although many landlords are charging rent for agricultural land).

The Growing Market for Land in the Province

The question remains, "Is land becoming scarce or is it still plentiful?" Although there is a good deal of unoccupied and unfarmed land available in outlying areas, land is becoming scarce in economic terms. Land around towns is both scarce and expensive. In Nkwen (Bamenda) women are paying rent of 1000-2000 frcs CFA/year for approximately 1/4 hectare of farmland. It is beginning to be difficult to get land to farm "because the rich people are buying up all the land." Land costs are 70,000 frcs CFA for 1/4 hectare of fertile land. After the land is purchased, the

buyer still has to "dash" the Fon for permission to work it. Many people around Bamenda can't afford to hire land for extra production. Most women in Bamenda farm in Nkwen, Bambui and Bambali. These women, if they are not locals, will try to maintain access to land in their own or more commonly their husband's natal village, travelling periodically back to the village to farm. Even so, most women around the Bamenda area who try to farm as much land as possible still have to buy at least 25% of foodstuffs required to maintain their households, and have to purchase even more from March to June.

Around Kumbo, although plots in town usually require a cash payment, it is still possible to get land through the customary land tenure system if you want a very small plot; otherwise you have to go far out into the countryside. Traditional values have so far persisted so that families with little land have been absorbed and accomodated into traditional society, though sometimes unequally. These latent inequalities are beginning to come to the surface; although enough land is available to everyone to satisfy subsistance requirements, without the money for transport costs and hired labor it is difficult to farm large plots out in the countryside.

Relatively few people have filed to date for land title certificates. Those who have filed have done so primarily

for building land and/or a few coffee farms, although some government officials and civil servants have filed for land allocation certificates for farms of 30-40 hectares (the State law limits the amount of land held by an individual to 50 hectares; for more than 50 hectares a presidential decree must be secured). Most people take farmland for granted; many people in villages say they cannot file for land allocation certificates or for land title to their buildings or they might lose the land to the landlord. Filing is costly in any case: good arable land isn't concentrated in one place so a farmer's plots are scattered all over and surveys would be expensive. Capital sources are necessary to ensure development of the claim. Traditional councillors on the Land Board are often reluctant to grant title. The dominant ideology in rural areas remains: land should not be bought or sold. It is only recently that people have started coming to the land co-mission; most people still have access through traditional landlords. It was envisioned that the filing process would take only 6 months, in fact it takes much longer. Although the number of applications has increased, it will be a long time before many people gain title to land.

The Government is trying by the land act to keep down land profiteering, but actually has done just the opposite. In the words of one senior government official, "the intention

of the Government was to protect the small farmer but the new professional class is taking advantage of their superior knowledge and acquiring more than their share of land. Those who have the money are investing in sub-urban areas and speculation is becoming scandalous." The major source of social differentiation in the rural area is not apt to come from the traditional system alone, nor from the differences between small farmers and big farmers *per se*, but lies rather in the relation of rich farmers to the bureaucracy through which they can gain differential access to resources: land, capital (loans), and thus increased ability to hire wage labor.

Land Tenure and Market Access--Political Constraints

Although it is difficult to sort people out into groups, broadly speaking we can identify five categories of people regarding access to land and ability to respond to market opportunities.

(1) There is a relatively small non-resident group of men who have either left the province for professional jobs in the larger cities--ie. Yaounde, Douala, Victoria--or who hold such jobs in the provincial capital. These men invest primarily in urban properties; they are the absentee landlords in towns like Kumbo and Bamenda and are beginning to invest in smaller urban areas, i.e., Ndu, Kom, Nkambe, Wum. While most of these men have claims on and retain interest in family

farms in their natal villages, their primary investment is not in agriculture at this time.

(2) There is a larger group--probably 10% of the rural population--of local entrepreneurs, men who are bureaucrats, politicians, big coffee farmers (and thus "big men" in the cooperatives) or men who engage in large-scale trading operations. This group also includes some of the bigger landlords--traditional notables--especially those who control land around the more urbanized areas. For these men, investment in agriculture is oriented towards cash crops--coffee and more recently rice and oil palm. Cattle are also becoming more prevalent as a prestige investment. These men can afford both transport and labor costs to enable them to successfully exploit large farms outside the heavily populated areas; they can also obtain FONADER and bank loans and afford to pay "compensation" to landlords to enable them to file land allocation certificates for large plots of farmland.

While wives of local entrepreneurs have food crop farms, they tend to hire other women to work these farms which may be but often are not oriented towards production for the market. Instead, most of these women will use available capital to open up provision stores, off-liscences (beer parlors) or make other entrepreneurial investments in the towns. If foodstuffs production becomes a more profitable enterprise,

these households will have the capital to respond to the market. At the present time, however, they are primarily oriented towards and have the means to invest in urban properties and cash crops both of which assure faster returns than foodstuff production.

(3) There is a fairly large group--approximately 20% of the population--of men and women who are "progressive farmers" but not large-scale entrepreneurs. Many of these men have occupations outside of farming; i.e., they are schoolteachers, traders, city workers--which enable them to hire labor during seasonal labor bottlenecks. These men and women are interested in increasing agricultural production and utilizing novel farming techniques. Many of them have obtained fairly large tracts of land from traditional landlord and are farming extensively in outlying areas. Most labor is performed by individual households; the men in this category tend to help their wives more with foodstuffs production than the men in other categories as we are defining them here. At the present time transport to these outlying areas is both difficult and costly. These men and women are anxious to increase production for the market, but will not be encouraged to do so on a large scale until roads are improved and transport costs lowered.

(4) With some exceptions the largest group--the small village farmer--is at a disadvantage both locationally and

politically. There are few wage labor or salaried jobs or even trading opportunities available in rural villages. The financial burden of the household is often assumed primarily by women. Land is available for foodstuffs production; however, many farms are located a substantial distance from compounds requiring women to spend a substantial amount of time daily just trekking to work on the farms. Plots are not contiguous and are often located several miles apart. Transport of foodstuffs from the farms is usually by leadload. Even where there are roads, transport is expensive, and many farms are located in areas impossible to reach with vehicles. Consequently, many women will work for wages on other peoples' farms rather than increase their own production for the market. This assures them a more rapid and a guaranteed return on the investment of time and labor.

Village women are bound into social obligations most frequently cast in the idiom of kinship which are necessary to their mobilization of factors of production. Men who have outside employment can fulfill obligations to the landlord with money purchases, or obligations to kin through financial aid, i.e., payment of school fees. Where no cash income outside of farming is available, these obligations must be met with donated labor and gifts of produce. Many women in the villages send foodstuffs to relatives--

usually children--who have moved into the towns to seek employment. These mutual interdependencies are essential to productive capabilities both in terms of access to land and access to labor. Survival of the group has depended on mutual obligations between individuals, and cooperation is further reinforced by jealousy and even social ostracism of those who are perceived as gaining too much as individuals. These women are caught in a double bind: unless technological improvements are made they will have a hard time increasing the amount of foodstuffs they can seel in the market. They are, however, constrained by the mutual interdependence essential to access to factors of production from accumulating the necessary investment for improving technology--fertilizer, pesticides and storage facilities. Therefore, unless there are substantial price incentives given, these women will have a hard time increasing production for the market.

(5) There is an increasing number of men whose family lands have diminished. These are primarily young men, many of whom have at least a primary school education and most of whom have rising expectations. They do not want to farm at a subsistance level. These young men migrate to the towns and cities seeking employment which is usually difficult to find. The majority of these men express the desire to return to their natal village to farm. Young men see farms

in their villages as security. They will not, however, be encouraged to return until they can establish farms which guarantee a standard of living above that of the "average" small village farmer. With land becoming scarce and expensive it takes an increasing amount of capital to establish a paying farm. If foodstuffs production becomes profitable the younger men are likely to produce for the market. They will, however, need the capital to enable them to do so. A substantial number of these men are likely to remain in the cities. However, If resettlement programs can be implemented and funds made available to encourage farming, many of these men will be encouraged to return to the rural areas.

Land Tenure and Market Access--Spatial Constraints

Despite the scarcity of land around more heavily populated areas, there is still plenty of land available for farming. The real problem lies not in the availability of land *per se*, but rather in the availability of land with good market access. Farm to market roads throughout the province are either poor or non-existant. Many women trek 4-6 hours to take produce to market, and sometimes may trek even further. Transport costs are high in relation to prices paid in the market for foodstuffs. Much of the available farmland lies far down in valleys and/or in areas which have no or very limited intrastructure. Areas like Mbaw Plain, Nkuv, Wasi and Lip

in Bui Division, and Mbaw Plain and Mbembe in Donga-Mantung Division all badly need farm to market roads if increased production for the market and resettlement are to be encouraged. Many progressive farmers have obtained land in these areas and are farming there. Transport costs, however, are prohibitive as far as encouraging substantial production for the market. For example, Nkuv, southeast of Kumbo, is an arduous four or five hour trek from town, half of which is straight downhill--which means an even longer and harder trek back. Transport out during rainy season other than by leadload is impossible. During dry season transport costs for foodstuffs runs at least 1200/bag. As noted in the previous section, farmers in areas like Nkuv are anxious to increase production but will not be encouraged to do so until transport facilities to market are available and less costly.

While farmland is available, given the pressure on land in the more populated areas, new areas will have to be opened up and resettlement encouraged. People who have lived on the high plateau often are reluctant to move into the valleys which are hot and often malaria-ridden. Drainage of swampy areas will be necessary. Good roads will become an absolute necessity if people are to be encouraged to move to outlying areas to produce for the market. Amenities such as water systems will eventually have to be installed in

outlying areas. If young people in particular are to be encouraged to stay in rural areas and farm, they will need access not only to land, but also to credit or capital. The Government has started resettlement programs on a piecemeal basis in some of these areas. The Catholic Mission in Bui Division has successfully settled 42 young farmers in Mbo-Nso, alloting each man three hectares of farmland and three hectares of oil palm. FONADER has aid available for resettlement of young farmers (18-35), giving them 360,000 (primarily in kind.rather than cash) and requiring a payment of 200,000 after the farm is producing. According to young men in villages these loans are often difficult to obtain and in any event are not well advertised as to time of application. These resettlement programs are for "school leavers", young men who have finished class seven and have just come onto the labor market. These are the people "most likely to go to the cities and cause trouble."

The rural exodus of young people has been a real problem in the province. According to a Catholic Mission survey conducted two years ago, 60% of the young men in rural villages leave and don't return; young women are now starting to leave in larger numbers. A few people, however, claim that as land takes on a definite value, young people are beginning to return to their villages to ensure access to family land. In int[illegible]ew

in Bamenda with ten young men from five villages around the province, all but one claimed to be working to get together enough capital to get married and start a large farm in his own village. Due to diminishing family lands, it would cost 100,000 frcs CFA for several of these men to obtain land just for subsistance farming. Most of them left home because their families didn't have enough money to maintain them above a bare subsistance level. They claim wages for farmwork are very low, that the actual wage paid is often only 250 frcs CFA which is 200 frcs below the "correct" wage and sometimes a farmer will not pay at all or will withhold payment until the crops are sold. The rural economy will have to offer more than a subsistance living if young people are to be discouraged from leaving for urban areas.

Conclusions

Land in the Northwest Province is becoming both scarce and costly. Despite the ideology to the contrary, it is difficult to obtain and exploit substantial amounts of farmland without considerable capital investment. People have become aware of the increasing scarcity and rising value of land and are attempting in various ways to hold onto and/or obtain as much land as possible. Lineage heads in rural areas have tried to resist encroachment of the monetary economy on their

land holdings by lending less land to people outside the lineage, and by refusing to give permission for planting of permanent tree crops. At the same time there is a contradictory movement on the part of the new professional class to invest as individuals in large tracts of farmland as well as urban property.

Given the already heavy demands on land in settled areas, increasing production will require resettlement programs. There is a need for a land use inventory to determine who is consolidating modern title to land in order to assess potential for increased production, development, and resettlement programs.

Resettlement programs on an individual household level often fail because the people involved have difficulty organizing effectively for production when they are removed from their political and social networks. The resistance by the lineages to alienation of family land has potential for the organization of resettlement and development programs. There is a considerable amount of economic cooperation for production within the lineages. Under present technological conditions agriculture is not possible without cooperative labor for bottleneck periods, and no alternative appropriate technical packages have been worked out for hillside farming the the Northwest. Lineages could become units of semi-spontaneous resettlement, with a number of members moving simultaneously to outlying areas to farm, thus ensuring

continuity of social networks.

Resettlement programs and increased production on farms in outlying areas will require considerable improvement in infrastructure, particularly building and improving feeder roads. People who are already farming in outlying valleys have put a sizeable amount of time and effort into building and maintaining feeder roads. They have, however, lacked the time, capital and equipment necessary to construct anything but temporary roads which can only be utilized in dry season. These must be substantially rebuilt after each rainy season. Once more permanent roads are construc-ed, road maintenance should be controlled by and funds channelled through local councils which clearly has a vested interest in keeping the roads in the best possible condition.

Finally, any program for development and resettlement should take into account the role of women in agriculture in the Northwest Province. Women perform almost all labor required for foodstuffs production at the present time and will most likely continue to do so for some time to come. Not only does agricultural production give women status in the community, it also assures their economic independence should they become widows or leave their husbands. Women have not been allowed to own farmland under the customary land tenure system. They have, however, always had a right to usufruct to lineage lands. Unless women can be

guaranteed permanent tenure, they will be reluctant to invest in land improvement. The information and access pattern to farmland must not overlook women's needs. Where only men hold land use rights and land title, women will have problems obtaining credit or other services (i.e., resettlement programs) for which legal and permanent possession of land is an eligibility requirement.

SEXUAL DIVISION OF LABOR IN THE NORTHWEST PROVINCE

Research for the following report was conducted during a four month stay in Bui Division with trips to villages in Donga Mantung and Mezam Divisions. Sixty formal questionnaires were filled out. In addition, during my stay in the Northwest, I lived in compounds in Kumbo and Nseh and spent considerable time on the farms and in various households talking with the women. I would like to thank all of the women in villages around these divisions for their warm response and generous amount of time spent answering what must have seemed like an endless barrage of questions. For the formal interviews, households rather than individual people were interviewed whenever possible.

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Sexual Division of Labor in the Subsistance Economy

At the end of the nineteenth century, the Northwest Province was occupied by a number of chiefdoms of differing origin, size and complexity. The chiefdoms of the "Bamenda Grassfields" ranged in size and complexity from the small village chiefdoms of Widekum to the expanding conquest-states of Nso and Bafut, with populations estimated at 20-25000 by their German conquerors.* These chiefdoms were linked to each other in a complex relay trade of subsistance products, cross-cut by a long distance trade network in which slaves were exchanged

*Chilver, E., "19th Century Trade in the Bamenda Grassfields, Southern Cameroons," Afrika und Ubersee, v. 45, #4, June 1962.

for European goods via the Bamileke chiefdoms to the south and various populations on the Cross-River to the Southwest.* The Grassfields chiefdoms were bound together in complex systems of political and marriage alliances, trade partnerships and exchange of various status objects and royal gifts. Within this area there existed a high degree of local economic specialization, and therefore regional trade. It was wealth gained in this local trade that formed the basis for household expansion as the pre-requisite to gain priviledged access to the trade in slaves and European goods.

Ivory too was an important royal prestige and trade item, and annual hunts were conducted on the behalf of the chiefs or Fons. Kola was produced and exported in large quantities and unlike ivory and slaves whose trade was restricted to chiefs and notables, was traded by a large majority of the male population, serving to enrich all kin- or lineage-heads who controlled tree crops.

Production for consumption and exchange in all the chiefdoms was embedded within the compound economy. A rigid sexual division of labor acted to distribute male labor to craft

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*Rowlands, M.J., Local and Long Distance Trade and the Incipient State Formation on the Bamenda Plateau in the late 19th Century, p. 5.

production, hunting and military activities, rearing of livestock and trade; and female labor to agriculture and domestic activities and a limited range of low value crafts products for primarily compound consumption.

The nature of regional trade often necessitated extended male absence from the compound. The widespread slave trade required the involvement of men in military activities, both for offensive and defensive purposes. In the absence of a standing army, all males were at times required to become warriors, thus facilitating against their involvement in sustained agricultural activities.

With the demise of the slave trade and the end of internal military conflicts in the 20th century the cultural categories of the sexual division of labor remained fixed, with male labor allocated to trade, handicrafts, livestock rearing and the exploitation of tree crops and female labor allocated almost exclusively to agriculture and domestic activities.

Most of sub-Saharan Africa has been historically--and remains for the large part today--a female farming area. The Bamenda Grassfields stands out as an example par excellence of a female farming production system wherein women perform almost all agricultural labor. Within the customary sexual division of labor the primary--and often only--involvement of men in growing food crops has been the performance of heavy

tasks such as clearing fields which usually involves fewer than two weeks per year. Women perform virtually all remaining tasks--tilling, planting, weeding and harvesting--which, in combination require year-round, almost daily attention. These tasks are tedious at best, and much of the work is arduous, especially given the level of technology available. Native hoes, while efficient in breaking up and tilling the hard soil, are heavy and cumbersome to use. In addition to agricultural work, women have been responsible for virtually all domestic chores.

In 1948, Phyllis Kaberry*estimated that most women spent 60% of their time in the field. 12-hour days were not uncommon, especially after completion of domestic tasks. Men's productive activities varied according to age and social status. Men seldom involved themselves in any one task for more than a few hours, so their actual labor time is elusive and hard to record. Kaberry (p. 87) characterized men's labor in Nso, "...the average Nsaw man (and indeed the average Bamenda man) rather resembled Chaucer's Man of Lawe,

> "No-wher so bisy a man as he ther was,
> And yet he seemed biser than he was".

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*Kaberry, Phyllis, Women of the Grassfields, Her Majesty's Royal Stationery Shop, 1952.

Major male occupations included trade, tailoring, bricklaying, carpentry and smithing; in addition most men supplemented their income with a variety of tasks. They tapped and sold raffia wine and looked after and traded various tree crops--kola, plantain and banana. They gathered firewood and thatching grass and cooperated at times in constructing houses. Men's secret societies and njangis took up a considerable amount of male time. Rather than view this time as simply time wasted in drinking, we have to admit that these societies and clubs had economic and political as well as social connotations: a man's status in the community and this his ability to recruit labor was often linked to his status in men's societies as well as to his age and lineage position. Njangis, or rotating credit associations, provided financial aid, and were often the only available source of credit.

Within this subsistance economy, the principle responsibility of women was farming. There was a prejudice against women selling in the market or handling relatively large sums of money. In so far as they traded at all, they dealt with small quantities of foodstuffs, beer or articles such as pots and baskets which they manufactured. Their object was not to acquire capital to support a family but rather to obtain small sums of money to purchase household items.

The primary duty and responsibility of a woman as "mother of the house" was to supply foodv The focal point of a woman's interest was her family and it was in relation to this group that her chief responsibility was defined--as a daughter in her youth and as a wife and mother after marriage. Although her workload was arduous, farming gave women considerable status in the community, and was bound up with respect and dignity. Farming was viewed as a women's activity, and one in which men did not feel competent to intervene. In the pre-monetary economy women in the Grassfields emjoyed considerable status and economic independence. A woman played out several roles during her life-cycle. In some of these roles she was subservient ot other women; in others she was reqarded as not only equal to but superior to men. Kaberry (op. cit, p. 150) quotes women regarding their position vis-a-vis men: "Important things are women. Men are little. The things of women are important. What are the things of men? Men are indeed worthless. Women are indeed God. Men are nothing. Have you not seen?"

Sexual Division of Labor in the Monetary Economy

The integration of Cameroon into the world market system created wage labor. cash cropping, increased involvement in a monetary economy and a growing government bureaucracy--all "public" areas overshelmingly staffed by men. Older forms of societal relationships which retained at least some forms

of traditional production were slowly distorted, transformed and disrupted, losing much of their historic status as integral to the social labor of the community. In the subsistance economy, the family was the basic unit of all economic production--not the "wage-earning" male but the household as a whole. While there was an intense division of labor within the family based on age and sex, there was no division between the family and the workd of commodity production. Women's sense of self as "outside" the larger society was limited by the fact that society was composed entirely of family units.

With the necessity for wage labor and a cash income to meet increased demands for taxes and school fees, men became involved more and more in non-traditional forms of work, often migrating out of the rural areas. Public and private labor became distinct with the former becoming more prestigous and socially valued. With the increased involvement of men in wage labor and cash crops, women have had to perform their own work as well as assist their husbands. Men concentrate their labor in cash-earning activities. They perform domestic labor only in a family emergency, i.e., illness or absence of the wife for a period of time on her farm outside the village. Men will not use a woman's hoe. They are therefore not "able" to till the ground or plant or weed the major food fields. Women on the other hand have

been "allowed" to join in men's work. Women now use machetes for clearing food fields along with their husbands, and also work on the coffee farms. No significant improvement has been made in the technology available to women. As education becomes increasingly important, children, historically an important source of labor to the household, disappear into the schools for the greater part of the year.

Although women's workload has increased, their labor has become socially devalued. In the context of a market economy the economic meaning of the subsistance work women perform becomes analogous to housework women do in industrialized countries.

According to a 1976 study*, an average woman in the Northwest Province spends about 50 days a year on housework, and 170 days on farming, about 160 to cultivate her own fields and about 10 days to help her husband. The time spend by men was more difficult to estimate since it varies substantially from one man to another. Estimates ranged from fewer than 100 to more than 200 days per year. It is difficult to tell from this study exactly what a "day" consists of in terms of hours spent. According to our study, women work 4-6 days per week, depending which "Country Sundays" they observe and

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*Simon, H.,"WADA Extension Farmers, A Socio-Economic Survey about the Living Conditions and Annual Budgets, Wum", 1976. Quoted in H. Simon, "Farming in the Tropical Highland of Northwest Cameroon, 1978, p. 7.

whether or not they consider Sunday a day of rest. Most women left for the fields by 8:00 a.m., after feeding the family and often did not return until after 6:00 p.m. Preparation of the evening meal added another two hours to the day. Most women worked an average of five 10 to 12 hour days per week, totalling 60 hours of labor time, one-third allocated to household tasks and two-thirds to farming. (Women's domestic chores of course must be performed seven rather than five days per week)

A man's work in the field varied according to whether or not he was engaged in outside occupations, and according to the size of his coffee farm. But seldom did a man put in an eight hour day. In some rural villages, women not only worked their own fields, but worked substantially more than 10 days per year on their husband's coffee farms.

Virtually all the women interviewed worked in cooperative or communal aid work groups. Only one-third of the men worked in these work groups. Over half of the men reported that they hired labor for their coffee farms. Women, on the other hand, work for wages on other people's farms during part of the year in addition to working their own farms. Between 20 and 30 percent of the women interviewed worked for wages at one time or another during the year on farms which were not their own.

While women have historically and continue today to work longer hours on the farm than men, men exercise more control over the production process. Women's labor is subordinate to men, but the reverse is seldom true. Men can mobilize women's labor to help on their coffee farms, but women seldom have the capital to recruit male labor in their own fields except through their husbands. Of the men in our sample who hired labor, 27 hired labor for coffee farming and 12 hired for clearing fields. Labor was usually hired for "women's work" only if the women was ill or otherwise incapacitated. Women are instead dependent for help in their fields on their children and on mutual aid or cooperative work groups which do not add any labor to the total work force.

While women often have secure rights of usufruct, according to customary land tenure only men can own and control land. This becomes clear when we look at the difference today between permanent rights over land planted with coffee and other tree crops which are men's property, and the absence of such rights over land utilized for food crops which are within the women's domain. Even the fertility of the fields depends customarily on rituals performed primarily by men; these rituals are viewed as important even today and often women have to wait until the landlord gives his permission before she can harvest her crops.

Women in the Production-Marketing Chain

All of the women in our survey grow the major part of the food consumed in the household. The only agricultural products purchased consistently are tomatoes and onions; occasionally rice is purchased but does not form a major part of the diet of local people. Between ten and twenty percent of the households purchase some staple foods--mostly corn--from March to June. Women by and large sell only their surplus produce--most often irish potatoes, beans and corn. Tree crops--raffia, kola, plantain, banana, avacado pears, oranges, pineapple and sugar cane as well as coffee are viewed as men's crops even when they are worked and harvested by the women. In addition to irish potatoes, corn and beans, most women grow a large variety of other foodstuffs, primarily for household consumption. These inc7ude cocoyams, yams, casava, sweet potatoes, egusii (melon), cow peas and local greens (jama-jama).

Most women have from two to five farm plots. Usually a small plot is located near the compound and utilized primarily as a ketchen garden. Other plots are located from two to twenty miles apart. When farms are located at a distance of ten miles or more, women will most often stay on the farm for several weeks or longer during peak labor times. Average farm size ranges from .5 to 3 hectares with an average of 1.8 hectares devoted to foodstuffs production.

Food production is still first and foremost a subsistance activity, and the rise in food prices is not changing this orientation. On the contrary, as food prices go up while coffee prices do not, thus falling in relative value, it becomes increasingly essential that the rural family retain its capacity to produce its own food. On the average, women have substantially lower incomes than men and this limits the cash investment they can put into their farms. Unless her husband provides her with the cash to do so, a woman usually does not use fertilizer or insecticides, nor does she have the capital to employ wage labor.

Most women who sell in the market are also producers. Out of 60 women interviewed only four claimed to sell more than one-fourth of her total production in the market, while ten sold less. All of the women who sold more received financial assistance from their husbands which enabled them to hire extra labor.

Market access is substantially limited by location: both location in relation to distance from home to market and location of farms in relation to the market. Transport costs are high relative to prices paid for foodstuffs in the market Most women headload product to market, often trekking six or more miles. The further a woman has to trek to market the more likely she is to sell at a low price so she can make

the return trip home before nightfall. The economic possibility to produce food for sale is constrained primarily by access to a reliable market.

Women have become increasingly involved in petty trade. For most women, however, the trading profits are small, at best providing for sheer maintenance rather than growth. Women sell a variety of cooked food, groundnuts and fruits both in the market and along the roadside. They also run small provision stalls in the daily markets in Kumbo and Bamenda where they sell a variety of processed foods and household commodities--salt, sugar, soap, tinned tomatoes, speces, as well as gari, beans, groundnuts, fresh tomatoes and onions. In order to set up a small provision stall, a woman must make an initial capital investment of approximately 30,000 frcs CFA. Women usually must obtain their initial capital either from their husband or alternatively, from an njangi. Profit margins are low. Women in Kumbo market estimate profits of 500 FCFA for rice on a 11,000 FCFA investment; 200 FCFA for beans on an average 800 FCFA investment; 3000 FCFA for crayfish on a 18,000 FCFA investment. These women pay stall fees of 200-300 FCFA/month. Supplies are mostly furnished by local male traders who obtain these in Bamenda and Douala. Some foodstuffs--gari, beans, groundnuts--are purchased directly from the producer in the market. Not only are profit margins low, but they are in some cases unstable due to fluctuation

in local staple food prices.

Most of these women also feed their families from their stocks so it is difficult to calculate total profits; sometimes too they are forced out of business before they can realize any profit or even recoup their initial investment.

The majority of the provision stalls in the more remote rural markets are run by men--either locral men who travel to Kumbo or Bamenda monthly for supplies or traders--usually from Kumbo or around Bamenda--who travel around the rural market circuit.

Outside of the Bamenda area, very few women act as middlemen in trade. In Kumbo market there are approximately five women traders who buy 100-150 bags per week, primarily potatoes and beans. Four of these women are from Santa (Momo), while one is from Buea in the Southwest Province. Approximately 25 to 30 women--all from the Bamenda area--buy from ten to forty bags of foodstuffs (potatoes and bean) weekly in Kumbo market. Women who buy large amounts (100-150 bags) will go--or send young men as agents--to Kuflov, Mbiami, Dzeng, Memfu, Ngondzen and Djottin to buy produce as well as purchasing in Kumbo market itself. All produce from these outlying areas must pass through Kumbo on the way south. These women transport produce to Buea, Victoria, Kumba and Douala where they sell to hotels, colleges and larger traders. Women who buy under twenty bags will almost invariably sell in Bamenda market.

Women who buy from twenty to forty bags will sometimes pool their resources and arrange transport to the Southwest and Douala. For the most part, middlemen, especially large-scale traders, are men.

A woman's subsistance and domestic labor obligations which stem from her duty to grow and prepare the family food actually leave her little time to expand her cash-earning activities. The demands on her time and income have increased substantially as cash becomes an integral factor in the reproduction of rural living standards. The customary cultural categories with the sexual division of labor remain strong. Even with rising returns to commodity food production, many men have been reluctant to work with their wives in the fields. However, there is an increasing tendency, especially in areas with high demand and good market access for foodstuffs, towards male involvement in food production. If production of foodstuffs becomes more profitable it is likely men will become more involved for several reasons, the most obvious being that women, due to their role in domestic work and the requirements of household subsistance production, simply don't have time available to expand production using traditional farming technology. The corollary to this is that women have neither the access nor the expertise to utilize new and improved technology. Most agricultural extension programs to date have been oriented towards cash crops--coffee and rice--and the

education and training of men in utilization of modern equipment, fertilizers, insecticides and new farming techniques.

According to a 1978 study*, the average man in the Northwest Province has an annual income of 79,880 FCFA, 67% of which is monetary and 33% the value of his subsistance contribution to the household. The average woman has an annual income of 56,040 FCFA, 32% of which is monetary and 68% the value of subsistance contribution. While women work more consistently and longer hours than men, returns to their labor are lower. We might note here that changes in the sexual division of labor within the monetary economy are not only shaped by customary cultural categories but also by the interests of the dominant political economy. The introduction of coffee as a cash crop has created basic changes in the subsistance economy. Coffee has brought the agricultural economy under the influence of world market conditions. Monetary value attached to all agricultural produce now gives a means by which men's and women's products can be compared. When evaluating the economic contribution to the household by sex, we should note that women's subsistance production while accounting for less than men's contribution in monetary terms, not only requires more labor time, but also

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*Simon, Helmut, Farming in the Tropical Highland of Northw Cameroon, Oct. 1978, p. 31.

subsidizes the modern economy by making it possible to employ men at wages below the cost of supporting a family. While it is fair to say women's labor is exploited by men, often men are in a structural position within the monetary economy which gives them little choice, especially if they are to marry and raise a family.

Organization and Constraints in the Wage Labor Market

Many women in rural areas are now working on other people's farms for cash income. This practice has its origin in several factors:

(1) With more men involved in wage and salaried jobs outside the agricultural sector, there is a growing sector which requires and can afford to pay for hired agricultural labor.

(2) Due to the distance many women must trek to their own farms, it becomes more cost effective to work for wages rather than increase production and pay high transport costs in either time or money.

(3) In rural areas, market access and storage problems often make it more cost effective to work for an assured wage rather than take a gamble on raising unmarketable produce which stands a good chance of spoiling.

(4) Labor has always been in short supply in African farming systems. The rural exodus by young men--and more and more, young women--leaves a gap in the wage labor force which is increasingly filled by women.

A steadily growing number of young people are leaving the rural area to seek employment in the cities. Although formerly this rural exodus was largely male, an increasing number of young women are now leaving the villages for the "free life" in town. Young men complain that women no longer want to marry--or at least want to marry and remain in the rural area. While fewer women than men are given access to education, a growing number of girls are attending school through class seven. This is not entirely altruistic on the part of many parents who see education of women as an investment to be recouped by higher bridewealth payment. Many young men leave for jobs in the cities in order to earn enough money to enable them to marry. They claim that jobs in the countryside (in agriculture) offer a low wage in the best of circumstances and they may not even be paid for their labor at all.

Unless and until the burden of agricultural labor placed on women is relieved by improved technology, by the participation of men in foodstuffs production, and by the ability of both sexes to realize the value of their labor in agricultural

endeavors, this rural exodus will not cease, but will most likely continue to grow.

Although we have already mentioned cooperative or communal work groups we should in this section note the importance of these groups in breaking seasonal labor bottlenects. Virtually all women interviewed in the Northwest Province belong to a communal work group; composition of these groups ranges from three to twenty members. We might also note that women are quite dependent on each other for labor contributions, yet the introduction of Western commodities into the rural economy has in some cases distorted social relationships between women in rural villages. Women who aspire to a higher standard of living are often the target of jealousy by other women in the village. The need for organizing communally to break labor constraints often puts a constraint on the ability of village women to break out of customary patterns or cultural categories within the sexual division of labor.

Conclusion

Women's access to income and jobs has increased within the monetary economy as they have gained entry into petty trade. Although the percentage of females enrolled in school remains far below that of males, a growing number of girls are being educated, and thus have access to employment formerly denied to them. Women's access to increased income and job

opportunities have raised their standard of living and given them greater freedom from the domestic context. At the same time the labor they perform has become to some extent socially devalued, and the value of their labor vis-a-vis men's labor has declined. It is a case of the old problematic which goes back at least to Hegel: the distinction between "freedom from" and "freedom to." Women are free from many of the constraints of precolonial social structures, and free to work in the market economy at a low wage.*

Women as a group will only become equal to men when there is a change in rural production as a whole with both sexes realizing the value of their labor. Increased production for the market must necessitate the entry of men into what has traditionally been viewed as "women's work." At the same time development and resettlement programs must give women equal access to productive factors--including land, technology and education in modern agricultural practices.

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*see Jane Guyer, "Women's Work in the Food Economy of the C Belt: A Comparison," Working Papers #7, African Studies Ce Boston University, Cambridge, MA, 1978.

WOMEN AND COOPERATIVES

The following report is an attempt to examine the status of and potential for the effective participation of women in cooperatives in the Northwest Province of Cameroon. It is not intended to provide detailed case studies of existing women's cooperative societies.* The purpose is rather to look at historical precedents and present social factors which may enhance or inhibit the operation of women's cooperative societies today.

I would like to thank the Peace Corps Volunteers in the Northwest Province for their patience and advice during the time I spent in the Northwest researching this project. In particular, I am grateful to Lisa Matt, Anne Mulvaney, Jim Geren and Dave Delponte for their direction, friendship and time as well as their patience with my endless questions. I would also like to thank Mr. T. Tafon, manager of Nso Union, for his kindness and support during the time spent in Kumbo.

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* For detailed case studies of the women's cooperatives in the Northwest Province see L.M. Matt, "Report on Women's Cooperatives in the Northwest and Southwest Provinces," July 1, 1979. For a less detailed case study of the Nso Women's Cooperative Society see D. Jackson, "Narrative Case Study for the Nso Women's Cooperative, Cameroon," prepared for Development Alternatives, Inc.

Women and Cooperatives

Collective organization for mutual benefit is hardly a new concept among women in the Northwest Province. Communal work groups, mutual aid associations and various societies run by and for women have been integral parts of the economic and social organization of indigenous social formations for many years. The present attempts to organize women's cooperative societies in modern economic terms with a minimum of new input and no qualitative transformation of existing structures have had both positive and negative effects in setting a precedent for the organization and viability of women's cooperative societies today. An understanding of indigenous modes of cooperation among women and the historical position of women's groups within the larger social structure are essential to an assessment of the potential for rural women to organize, manage and participate in a cooperative society within the modern economy.

Women's associations and communal efforts in the production process have traditionally been utilized as vehicles through which women organized for mutual economic and social benefit. Historically and to some extent today, women's societies have provided access to positions of authority and responsibility outside the compound or kinship group. In addition to serving as a forum for mediation of quarrels and disputes between members of their own sex, these societies have performed important ritual functions and often acted as the voice of women as a whole within the community. Economic cooperation among

women has been an essential part of their organization of production. The sexual division of labor in the Northwest Province allots the primary burden of and responsibility for agricultural production to women. Both historically and today, women have organized to work cooperatively in the fields. The organization of communal work groups varies from cooperation between a few close kin or neighbors to groups of 15-20 women who form teams which work on the farms of members in turn. Even in areas where these groups are fairly limited in size, women organize on a larger scale in times of emergency or to break heavy seasonal labor constraints.

Women also form mutual aid societies to gain access to credit. The primary source of credit today among rural women in the Northwest Province is the njangi, a rotating credit or savings and loan association. Virtually all women interviewed belong to at least one njangi. Most women emphasized that they preferred to belong to an njangi whose membership was exclusively female, since they felt that men could neither be trusted to contribute fairly nor be kept from dominating the organization of the group.

It is clear that there is an historical and social structural precedent set for the organization of women's cooperative societies today. However, all these modes of cooperation share one aspect in common: they give women the power to exercise authority and responsibility within certain defined spheres such as the farm,

the home and women's associations. Although a few women within royal families have exercised a degree of influence in the public or political sphere, as a category, women have been allowed little input into the political decision-making process. They have had limited access to the responsibilities of political office within the larger society. Phyllis Kaberry in her 1952 study of women in the Northwest Province* quotes a fai or lineage head in Nso, "Ruling is for the man. If you catch trouble will you send for a man or a woman? A woman has farm work. You call her the mother of the farm." This opinion is scarcely outdated today. Women are given recognition of their management expertise within a circumscribed sphere. But it is accepted as truth within the larger society that women do not have the ability to manage affairs which fall outside the customary "female sphere of influence."

The separation of male and female spheres of influence coupled with the dominant position of men in general has had real consequences for the effectivness and ability of women to organize and manage women's cooperative societies within the modern economy. Men have been given differential access to education and job-specific training. It is difficult to find educated women at the village group level who are willing and capable of keeping books and organizing meetings effectively. There is also a lack of educated and trained women to assume positions of responsibility and management at the upper levels

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* Kaberry, Phyllis, Women of the Grassfields, London: Her Majesty's Stationery Office, 1952. p. 152.

of women's cooperative societies.

Marketing efforts of the Cooperative Unions today have until very recently concentrated exclusively on cash crops--coffee in particular--which are managed and sold by men. This "coffee mentality" in the Northwest Cooperative Unions has delegated women's cooperative societies to a position of a low status and a low priority group within the coffee unions.

By and large, women have been given neither the training nor the initial capital to enable them to effectively set up a solid cooperative structure. Policy and management decisions are often dictated to the Board of the women's societies. They are often left with little room or few options for discussion; instead they have been put in the position of an organ agreeing with decisions made by men at the Union level. An example of this in Donga-Mantung revolved around the decision of whether or not capital available to the women's society should be used to purchase a vehicle for transport of member produce from the villages to the cooperative warehouse. The women were against acquiring a vehicle, feeling instead that hiring transport would prove more efficient and that the money should be invested in working capital to help them attain financial independence. The decision of the Board of the women's society was overruled by the Union and the vehicle was purchased. The Union has also not allowed its selected Provisionary Board for the women's society to be replaced by one elected by the members.

Financial aid to the women's societies has generally been in the form of one-shot grants or gifts. While the government has helped institute and sanction long-range plans and subsidies for the cash crop cooperatives, no such commitment has been made to the women's societies. The dictation of policy from above, lack of any coherent structure and plan outlined for the future, and the dependence for financial support on fairly sporatic gifts and grants has created a "dependency mentality" among the members of the women's cooperatives who now often look to outsiders to solve their problems. There is, in addition to formation of this "dependency mentality" among the women, an increasing suspicion of misuse of funds created by one-shot funding policy. Many women don't understand the financial operations involved and feel the society must be more profitable than it is when they see a new store being built or a vehicle purchased with outside funds. They feel these purchases are made at the expense of their surpluses and this leads them to believe that the cooperative should pay more for producer goods than it can in fact afford to do. This leads to a general mistrust of the cooperative as a whole. It also makes it difficult for the cooperative to compete effectively with traders. It is generally felt among most village women that the cooperative should pay more than the traders and if it doesn't, many women will sell to traders in preference to the cooperative.

Finally, due to insufficient funding, many employees--especially secretaries at the village level--are either given minimum compensation or work completely on a voluntary basis. This creates a problem with

the amount of time the group secretaries are able or willing to invest in cooperative activities. If operating costs could cover the expense, it would be desirable to hire trained people who are accountable to a Board.

The increasing involvement of the rural area in a monetary economy has increased the demands on women's labor by raising the basic cash needs of the family. Women now assist their husbands with cash crops in addition to assuming the largest burden of foodstuffs production. Approximately one-third of the women interviewed contributed to payment of school fees. With an increasing number of children attending school, a customary source of labor has been greatly diminished. Increased demands on women's labor time have not been accompanied by any significant introduction of new technology. Monetary demands are further increased by the rising price of commodities--soap, kerosine, sugar, tea, cloth--which are now considered essential to the rural standard of living. The purchase of many of these household items is the women's responsibility: many women report that they receive little financial assistance from their husbands in supplying the household with these commodities.

The limited amount of free time and extra cash available for outside activities has several consequences for women's participation in the cooperative society. Attendance at group meetings is often low and sporadic. Low attendance is further exacerbated by mistrust of cooperative leadership. The women's cooperative has often been used by some women as a field to play out personal politics. Other women

are discouraged by the level of discussion and do not perceive their attendance as giving them any substantial input into the real business of the society. While mistrust of leadership is usually directed at officers or board members at the society level, it can extend to and limit the effectiveness of a secretary at the village or group level.

Given that their working capital is so limited, many women are unwilling or unable to tie up even a small amount of money in the cooperative society unless they can see immediate cash benefits. Hence the bonus system, similar to that used by the men's coffee cooperative, has often been viewed with mistrust and dislike by the poorer women. Many women don't or are unable to see a future bonus as having the same value as cash in hand. This is due in no small part to the long delay in distribution of bonuses which relies on an audit approved at the provincial level. In the best of circumstances this process can take four months, and in some cases has been delayed up to three years.

In order to gain a better understanding of the operation of and problems involved in organizing effective women's cooperative societies, it is first necessary to look briefly at the history of these societies and to survey the different activities within women's cooperatives as they exist at the present time.

Brief History of Northwest Women's Cooperative Societies

The real impetus for the organization of women's cooperative societies in the Northwest Province can be traced to the basis provided by corn mill societies established in the early 1950's in Bui Division. These corn mill societies were started by a British Adult Education Officer, Elizabeth O'Kelly. Up to that time, one of the most onerous tasks women were required to perform was the daily grinding of cereals. After several years of experience running literacy classes in the area, Ms. O'Kelly became aware of the lack of free time available for women to attend classes or undertake new activities, due partially to the heavy demands of this labor intensive activity on their time.

Hand operated corn mills were introduced and societies organized through which the women could jointly purchase and operate these machines as a group. The machines were purchased by the members: each society had to collect sufficient funds [£15-20] to pay for the mill within one year of receiving it. Beginning with fifteen corn mills, the project gradually expanded until there were 232 societies with a total membership of approximately 15000 women.* Soon other activities were organized around the corn mill societies, including classes in soap making, poultry schemes using bran from the milling process, planting fuel plantations of eucalyptus trees, and the establishment of society farms. A cooperative shop was set up to supply needed commodities to the women at a low rate on a regular basis.

*Byson, Judy, Women and Development in Cameroon, prepared for USAID, Cameroon, p. 93.

The shop was set up by a confederation of these societies in the Kumbo (Banso) area with capital gained from shares purchased at two shillings each by 4000 members.

Although these societies operated successfully for a number of years, they disintegrated rapidly after the departure of Ms. O'Kelly in 1961. The demise of these organizations can be attributed primarily to two factors: (1) the lack of education given the women in the planning and organization of the groups, and (2) lack of preparation for effective participation in organization and management. With the departure of Ms. O'Kelly, there was no one with the management expertise to continue the operation of these societies.

The experience of women in these early groups disillusioned them for some time and facilitated against group efforts in this direction until the 1970's. At this time the WCNU, the women's wing of the national party, initiated a platform calling for a concerted effort to involve women in development schemes. Due primarily to the impetus of the WCNU, old women's cooperatives were revitalized and new societies were formed. In the Northwest Province today there are a number of women's cooperative societies and cooperative shops organized to provide a range of services and projects including:

- operation of corn mills
- supply, sale and distribution of palm oil
- supply and sale of commodities such as soap, sugar, salt, hoes
- cooperative or group farming endeavors
- marketing of member's produce.

The officially recognized women's cooperative societies in the Northwest Province today are Mbengwe, Nso and Donga Mantung, all of which are affiliated with the coffee unions in their divisions; Mezam which is directly responsible to the Department of Cooperation and Mutuality; and Kom which is presently in the process of becoming officially registered. The Mendankwe Women's Society in Mezam Division is the only women's cooperative involved in marketing coffee; as such, the problems they have are not those shared by the rest of the women's cooperative societies with which we are concerned in this report.

Palm Oil

The supply, sale and distribution of palm oil was the first activity undertaken by the women's cooperatives. It is also the most successful and financially viable venture to date. Palm oil is an essential ingredient in the diet of the area. Prior to the entry of the cooperatives into distribution and sale of palm oil, supplies--especially to more remote areas--were often sporadic and the monopoly held by traders kept the market price at a high level. The cooperative has been able to guarantee a fairly regular supply, and appears to have substantially increased consumption in the areas served. With the entry of the women's cooperatives into palm oil sale and distribution, prices have been stabilized in the market.

The cooperative can compete with traders for several reasons:

(1) the cooperative is willing to take a lower profit; (2) they are guaranteed oil supplies by CDC-Victoria and Palmoil-Lobe, therefore, in times of oil shortages cooperative quotas are often filled before oil is sold to the traders. Consequently traders often lose a substantial amount of time waiting for supplies.; (3) women's cooperatives provide a regular delivery and distribution service. This program is particularly effective in areas like Nso where oil is not locally produced. It is worth noting that in areas like Momo where large quantities of oil are produced locally the women's cooperative has had serious difficulties competing with local traders. This seems to indicate that it is more difficult to compete in areas which are well served by private commercial networks.

The Mezam, Nso and Nkambe (Donga Mantung) societies have all been involved successfully in supplying palm oil within their respective areas. All three societies purchase oil in the Southwest Province. Although palm oil is produced in limited quantities in Donga Mantung (Berebe) the cooperative has been unable to obtain oil locally due to trader competition, the small quantities available and inefficient organization of local purchase and transport. This causes some problems for the cooperatives oil program. Although not produced in sufficient amounts to supply the division, Berebe oil is often cheap in the market. When the market price is low women will buy from the

market in preference to the cooperative. This may make it difficult at times for the cooperative to estimate needed supplies and can also cause storage problems. It also increases the difficulty of stabilizing prices and profits.

Although the palm oil program can be considered successful it is not without substantial problems. At times oil drums are difficult to obtain and deterioration is rapid. Storage facilities need to be improved. The organization of transport is often difficult. Transport costs are high, often accounting for two-thirds of overhead (administrative and operating) costs. High transport costs have been attributed to mismanagement and the high costs of running a vehicle.* An important factor in high transport costs is the under-utilization of vehicles picking up oil in the Southwest Province. At the present time, a 12-ton truck will leave the Northwest Province to pick up oil in the Victoria-Kumba region of the Southwest Province loaded with 60 empty drums which is far below carrying capacity in tonnage. Women's cooperatives have been exploring the idea of opening up foodstuffs markets in the Victoria-Kumba region of the Southwest Province, where foodstuffs are often imported and tend to be expensive. Due to the bulk of the drums, it would be difficult to transport large amounts of foodstuffs in this way, but probably 40 bags could be transported for essentially no additional overhead cost.

At the present time, prices compete with those in the market, but due to market fluctuation cannot remain consistently at or below market

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*L. M. Matt, op. cit, p. 3.

price. he cooperative buys oil, subtracts its costs for transportation, handling, and storage, and returns the remainder to the women in the form of higher profits or bonuses. Bonuses are distributed to the village groups through the group secretary. Bonuses on oil are supposed to be reinvested in the society as working capital; i.e., as initial investment for purchase of consumer goods, or for overhead costs such as transportation, office supplies, or food for group meetings. Or alternatively, bonuses can be distributed among the individual members. This is decided by each group individually and records are kept on a group level. Bonuses, however, are sporadic and payment is often delayed. The Mezam Cooperative has not paid bonuses: although it operated at a profit in 1975 and 1977, it lost money in 1976 and 1978 due to high fixed costs and low volume in these years. The Donga Mantung Society started buying and sale of palm oil in 1977. Although it appears as though a bonus will be paid, due to a time lag in the auditing procedure no bonuses have been paid to date. Nso Cooperative paid bonuses of 500 frcs/drum in 1977 and 200 frcs/drum in 1978. Many members feel that the importance of giving a sometimes doubtful bonus at the end of the year is not as important as having a lower initial cost to the consumer.

Finally, there is a problem with a number of women utilizing the cooperative essentially as a wholesale supplier, buying cheaply from the cooperative and selling on the local market at a profit. This practice often creates tensions among the women, creating an atmosphere of

competition between individuals and between groups. This leads to political infighting and exacerbates the feeling that some members are using the cooperative for personal gain. Capital expansion has also been limited due to political jealousies and attempted manipulation by individual members. When the women's cooperative was first formed, members bought shares according to their financial ability. This practice while sensible in financial terms led to inequities among the women: women who had a larger number of shares felt that they had a right to purchase large amounts of oil. To combat this problem the cooperative passed a regulation limiting the number of shares each member could hold. This helped but did not solve the problem of inequity. Personal power struggles among the members and between groups create a substantial problem in some of the Northwest Women's Cooperatives--particularly in Mezam where they have "created inactivity and segmentation leaving a dissatisfied membership."*

Consumer Shops

More recently some women's societies have expanded consumer services to include commodities such as sugar, salt, soap and farming hoes. While it is too early to fully evaluate the potential for these services, the cooperative has made substantial progress in providing these goods at costs below those charged in the market.

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* L. M. Matt, op. cit., p. 20)

Foodstuffs Marketing

The buying and marketing of foodstuffs is a fairly recent program and has operated on a much smaller scale than the supply and sale of palm oil. The problems are much more complicated and if the program is to work will require substantial investment both in management expertise and other financial support. So far only the Nso and Donga Mantung societies have made a serious attempt at foodstuffs marketing, although the Mbengwi society has recently been involved in marketing cocoyams.

The stated rationale for foodstuffs markeing by the cooperative societies include:

(1) diversification as a strategy for continued survival and expansion of the cooperative;

(2) better distribution of foodstuffs throughout the country as a whole;

(3) stabilization of market prices;

(4) a guaranteed market for members' produce. Since most foodstuffs production is done by women, the program is viewed as a means of ensuring a second family income.

None of the above criteria appear to have been met nor is it guaranteed they can become economically feasible given the problems of foodstuffs marketing in general. Clearly the marketing of foodstuffs is a much more complicated endeavor than the marketing of coffee, (1) over which the cooperative has a monopoly and (2) which the internatio market readily absorbs.

The primary problem is securing guaranteed markets. This will involve seeking markets outside the division, province and perhaps the country. At times stocks have accumulated with no market available to absorb them, i.e., this past year Donga Mantung bought 30 tons of beans and was only able to sell 10 tons, leaving them with an unmarketable surplus of 20 tons. Sufficient resources have not been devoted to finding markets. At the present time lack of trained personnel to secure markets has created substantial problems. Cooperative officials assigned to this task have either not taken their job seriously or lack the time and expertise to expend the necessary effort. To date the bulk of the responsibility in securing markets has been assumed by the Peace Corps Volunteers assigned to the women's cooperatives. This absorbs time and expertise which is needed in other management areas. More importantly it does not create a self-sufficient internal marketing structure. At this time women's cooperatives are struggling individually to market foodstuffs, resulting in competition between societies, low turnover, and at times losses.

Cooperatives have had substantial problems competing with traders who have an already established marketing infrastructure, communication network, and lower overhead costs. Problems with transport reliability and the instability of market prices are reasons often given by women for selling to traders in preference to the cooperative. The original plan for transport was to pick up produce at the same

time oil was delivered to a village. Lack of communication, poor roads and poor organization of transport have made this program less than efficient. This inefficiency has led to disillusionment on the part of village women who are left "holding the bag" if the cooperative doesn't show up as promised. The cooperative does not buy as regularly as the traders. Many women need the immediate cash and cannot afford to wait for the cooperative to come to buy their produce. In some villages there are local traders who go from door to door and who will buy in small quantities weekly. Although it is generally agreed that traders often use unfair measures, many women can't or won't wait to sell to the cooperatives.

Often women are unwilling to sell to the cooperative at a stable price because of the instability of the market price. Women also feel the cooperative owes them a higher price and will often sell to traders when their demands are not met. The cooperative buys at the seasonally lowest price and tries to sell when prices go up, giving a low stable price for produce and relying on the bonus system to attract sellers. This puts the burden of risk on the producer in addition to limiting her immediate cash in hand. If the cooperatives are to succeed in marketing foodstuffs, finances must be organized to pay women reasonable prices and not rely on the bonus system to attract sellers.

Both long and short term storage facilities are inadequate. At the present time erratic market prices tend to make storage a risky undertaking in any event. If the foodstuffs program is to be successf

secure markets and adequate storage facilities must be provided.

There is a feeling among many people that women would rather sell in the market due to social factors. The marketplace is the primary point of social interaction in rural areas, and taking produce to market to sell is viewed as a social as well as an economic activity. Most women, however, headload heavy loads long distances or pay high transport costs to take produce to market. Once there, they are sometimes unable to sell or are forced to sell at low prices. If the cooperative can offer reasonable prices, arrange transport and guarantee a market, it is likely that women will be willing to sell at least a substantial part of their surplus to the cooperative.

The financial viability of the foodstuffs program is unclear from the present accounts. However, L. Matt (op. cit, p. 5) states, "the [apparent] profitability of [the foodstuffs program] is masked in the accounts of the cooperative. Profit statistics for foodstuffs reflect a very small percentage of actual transportation and handling charges. If, in fact, these costs were correctly taken into consideration it is doubtful that a profit would be reflected for foodstuffs."

In principle the foodstuffs marketing program has the potential to provide women with a guaranteed market and thus assure a second family income. In fact it will take a substantial effort and commitment to do so, and may not prove to be an economically feasible venture, or

a preferred alternative to selling to traders or in the market. The women's cooperative societies are going to have to make a decision as to priorities: whether they should be primarily oriented towards supplying consumer services, marketing produce and/or assuming the role of integrating women into rural development. If they are to fulfill these functions, direct intervention by the government will be required. The women's cooperatives must be given the same access as the cash crop cooperatives to government financial support. Plans for expansion and financial support should be made so as to encourage self-reliance, efficiency and competent management.

The women's cooperative societies provide an important service to rural women, providing them with essential consumer items at fair prices and with an alternative market for selling produce. Given the length of time these societies have been operating and the problems they have encountered, progress has been made. However, substantial problems remain which must be solved if the cooperative societies are to continue to expand consumer services and institute a large-scale foodstuffs program.

Relationship between the Coffee Unions and the Women's Cooperative Societies

The serious attempt to expand into foodstuffs procurement and marketing brings the contradictions of continued affiliation with the coffee cooperatives into sharp perspective. Members of women's societies directly affiliated with the area unions resent having poli

and management decisions dictated to them. Nevertheless, they are dependent on the Unions for management expertise, storage facilities and other financial assistance. According to L. Matt (op. cit., p. 20), those cooperatives which are affiliated to the Unions to some degree appear to function better in terms of leadership and membership satisfaction. Expansion of the foodstuffs program will require an increased number of trained personnel. It will require a substantially increased amount of working capital. And, importantly, it will require a platform for extensive programs on the village level to give women in rural villages access to agricultural extension program; to provide them with information and technology (fertilizers, seeds, insecticides) to improve production. Programs educating women not only in improved production techniques and practices but also supplying them with other tools they need to operate successfully will be necessary. These might include discussion groups, agricultural extension demonstrations, and lessons in simple accounting and bookkeeping and perhaps household and farm budgeting. The cooperative could utilize community development programs and include health and child care as part of their teaching program. The women's cooperative could be utilized as a vehicle to incorporate women into the national development program. Women have expressed to desire to organize a cooperative many times both in the past and at the present time. But first they must be given the necessary tools with which to operate a successful cooperative within the modern economy.

Given the male-dominated decision-making structure and the lack of training and education given women to date, if the women's cooperative societies remain directly affiliated with the Unions it is highly probable they will cease to operate effectively as women's cooperatives. The women feel--perhaps rightly so--if the foodstuffs program becomes a profitable enterprise it will be dominated and co-opted by the men. It is highly doubtful that extensive programs designed to incorporate women more fully into development programs will be organized within the existing cooperative structure. Even in Nso Union, where the management clearly is eager to establish a successful foodstuffs program, the women's cooperative society has remained a low priority group within the Union, with most resources going to improvement, expansion and processing of coffee and other cash crops.

Reorganization of Women's Cooperative Societies

Women's cooperative societies could be organized with a centralized union on the provincial level directly responsible to NWCA. The women's society union could then enjoy all the rights, privileges and restrictions of the coffee cooperatives within NWCA. This would give them centralized facilities for securing markets, for storage of palm oil and produce, and for organization of transportation to outside markets. A women's cooperative union could set up centrally organized inventory and budgetary controls and a central auditing staff. They could act as a central funding point, and perhaps purchase expensive

equipment each individual society cannot afford at the present time. For example, they could purchase an oil tanker to bring oil from the Southwest Province to a central distribution point. This would save each individual society the time and expense of making long trips.

The lack of an adequate communications network with potential markets has plagued the women's societies' efforts to market foodstuffs. If adequate storage could be provided on a centralized level, orders could be filled directly from a central point. This would allow orders to be filled rapidly, and increase the efficiency of transport organization.

There are obvious problems with centralized facilities, services, and management. For a cooperative to work a certain amount of local control must be ensured. Provisions must be made to ensure autonomy in decision-making at the local level. The Union would have to be organized to ensure equitable treatment of and equal input from each individual society. A women's union might also suffer from the same problems as the women's societies today vis a vis the coffee unions; it might become a low status and low priority union within the NWCA structure. However, the women's cooperatives are either going to have to be substantially reorganized or subsumed by the coffee unions.

One of the major problems within the women's cooperative societies has been lack of job incentive. There is often little motivation on the part of employees to do any more than required to maintain their position and keep their job. Often the women's society is not the primary concern

of many of its key employees who, although legally responsible to the women's society, view themselves as responsible to and employees of the coffee unions. If the women's societies were to be organized into a women's cooperative union, the lines of command and management would become clear, and loyalty of employees would not be divided in this way.

At the present time, women are going to find it difficult to operate and manage an organization like this without male management expertise. Given the position of men in the economy of the country, men would be in a better position to effectively seek out and secure markets. It would be, however, essential that women be given the education and expertise to assure access to management positions as well as inclusion and involvement at all levels of the organization.

Conclusions

Women are the primary producers of foodstuffs in the Northwest Province today, and are likely to remain so for some time. Although their labor is essential to the maintenance of the economic structure of the country, women's productive activities have become marginalized within the modern economy. It is important that women become integrated more fully if they are to utilize their productive capacities and potential, improve their standard of living and raise their income. Women must be given expertise in and access to positions of responsibility and decision-making outside of what has traditionally been considered the "female

A Women's Cooperative Union could function as a multi-purpose organization to fulfill a variety of the needs of rural women.

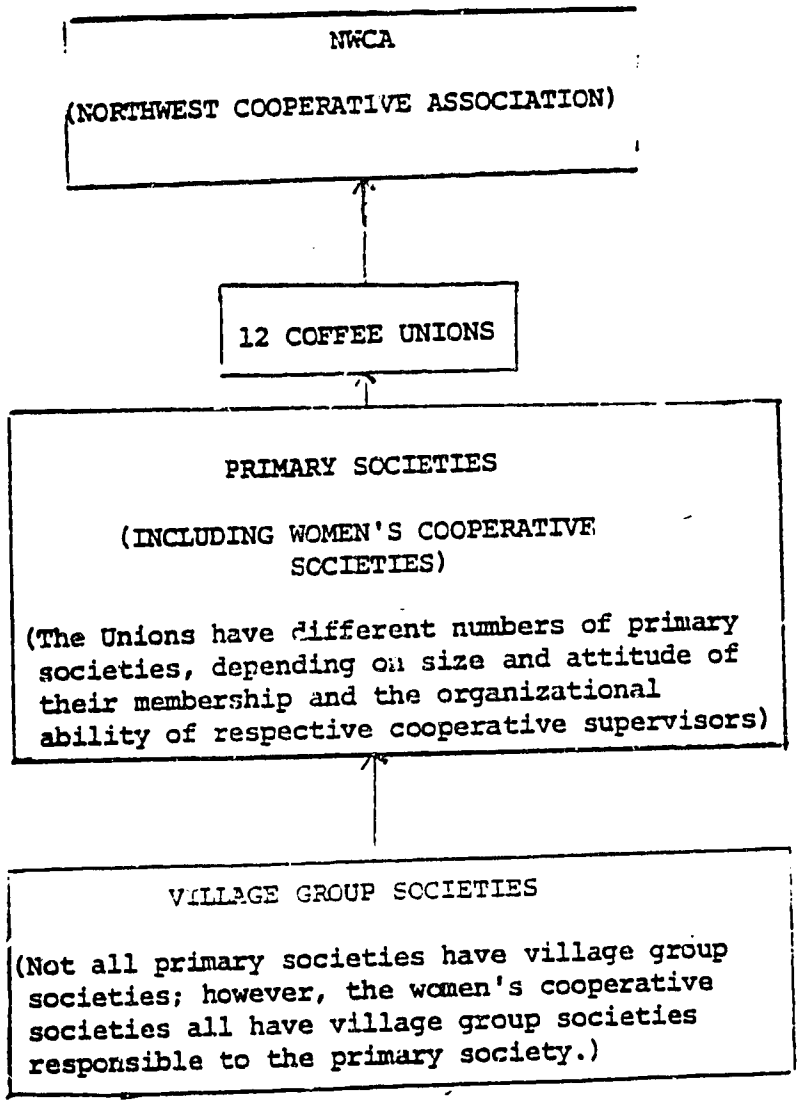
Given the constraints on women's time and income, two things are essential to ensure participation:

(1) The production and marketing of foodstuffs is the only income available to most rural women. Unless the cooperative can guarantee reasonable prices, reliable transport, and an assured market, women will not be willing--or able--to sell to the cooperative in preference to traders or the marketplace.

(2) Programs in the villages are essential if women are to be given access to the information necessary to encourage their involvement in a cooperative effort specifically, or to assure their participation generally in rural development programs.

To reorganize and diversify a women's cooperative union in these ways, a substantial commitment must be made to make it work. Positive results will take time. The cooperatives are now at a point where they have to decide just what the objective of women's cooperative societies should be. If the women's cooperatives are going to continue to provide services and organize a foodstuffs program, they must be given adequate resources to do so. A women's cooperative union has the potential to organize women in ways which would involve them more fully in rural development. The history and traditions of women in the Northwest Province,

as well as their expressed desire for a women's cooperative today, demonstrate that they are willing and capable of participation in an organization which will assure mutual benefits. But first a commitment must be made and programs implemented to ensure them the benefits of their participation.



STRUCTURAL POSITION OF WOMEN'S COOPERATIVE SOCIETIES WITHIN THE NORTHWEST COOPERATIVE ASSOCIATION

Chapter IV:

LIVESTOCK MARKETING IN THE NORTHWEST PROVINCE, CAMEROONS

John Holtzman
John Staatz
Michael Weber
Michigan State University

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RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This contribution to the final report represents the joint efforts of three Michigan State University marketing researchers. It is based on two months of research in Northwest Province (June 25th through August 30th, 1979), which were preceded by several weeks of reviewing available literature and discussions of research methodolgy and goals in East Lansing, Michigan and Washington, D.C. From the outset, it was intended that this case study go beyond consideration of livestock subsector efficiency and competitiveness to deal with, at least tentatively, some of the broader equity, employment and developmental policy issues raised by the research. Estimates of traders' and butchers' costs and returns were deemed necessary to provide a basis upon which judgments about equity considerations and alternative policies, as well as subsector competitiveness, were to be made.

Research time in Cameroon was about evenly split between field research, which included visits to livestock markets, production areas and slaughter and retail facilities in all the Divisions of Northwest Province, and discussions with government officials in Bamenda, Yaounde, and Divisional headquarters. On arriving in Northwest Province, Holtzman spent about two weeks based in Wum, where he gathered preliminary data and began informal interviewing and the formulation of tentative interviewing strategies. He returned to Bamenda the second week in July to join Staatz, who reviewed his

early findings and assisted him in doing research at the Mendankwe cattle market, the Bamenda slaughters slab and retail market, and in various government offices. Weber arrived a week later to provide further critical input, and the three researchers spent the next week discussing early findings and methodology, carrying out further research in Bamenda, and planning additional research. Staatz left for Kumba (Southwest Province) at the beginning of the following week to interview traders, butchers and livestock officials at the very important consumption/redistribution cattle market there. He then proceeded on to Buea, the provincial capital, and Douala, a major consumption center, where he concluded his interviewing and drafted a document which served as a basis for the final report. Meanwhile, Holtzman and Weber continued interviewing important officials in and around Bamenda, as well as making several short field trips, before heading off to Yaounde for several days of discussions of existing and planned livestock development programs and policies with USAID and Cameroonian officials. They then proceeded to Douala to join Staatz, where they reviewed Staatz's preliminary report and decided how Holtzman's remaining time in Cameroon ought to be allocated. On July 26th, Staatz and Weber returned to the U.S., while Holtzman returned to Northwest Province to complete the research. He spent about two weeks doing research in Donga-Mantung and Bui Divisions before returning to Bamenda to conclude with final discussions with Cameroonian officials and visits to major small stock markets in the towns around Bamenda. Holtzman

then used Staatz's draft and his own interview file to piece together the final report over the final 15-20 days. The last three days were spent in Yaounde, where Holtzman gave a seminar on his research results.

Aside from purusing government documents and previous studies of livestock production and marketing and carrying on discussions with local officials, much of the information in the report was obtained through informal interviewing. A survey using highly structured questionnaires was not undertaken due to time constraints, as well as a conviction that an understanding of the problems of livestock producers, traders and butchers could be obtained better in such a short period through in-depth informal interviews. We were interested primarily in learning what subsector participants perceived to be the constraints to increasing livestock production and improving livestock trade, slaughter and retailing.

Through conducting informal interviews, estimates of likely ranges of costs for performance of different marketing functions were developed. Representative cost ranges and returns to labor, capital and managment for cattle traders and butchers appear in the study. Calculating costs and returns gave a rough idea of how efficiently and competitively livestock is marketed and provided indications of areas in which improvements could be made. Furthermore, cost and return data generally disprove the often prevailing notion that marketing intermediaries capture monopoly profits to the detriment of both producers and consumers. Gross margins do tend to be high in developing countries but usually for good reason, as

transport costs are high, exchange involves time consuming personal inspection and bargaining, and traders assume the risks of product loss and spoilation.

Reliable estimates of producer returns were not obtained, since their sales of animals are relatively infrequent and irregular, and it was thought that such information could best be obtained through formal surveys carried out over a longer period, preferably at least one year. Nor were returns to small stock traders obtained, since a ban on interdivisional and interprovincial movements of sheep and goats was in effect until the middle of August. This ban was imposed late in 1978 in response to an outbreak of caprine pleuropneumonia in Donga-Mantung.

There are limitations to the informal interviewing technique used in their study. First, the results obtained depend in large part upon the skill of the interviewer. He has to pose questions in a logical sequence, sift through the often vague responses to extract useful information, and decide how to follow up certain questions. In addition, he must try to put the person being interviewed at ease and avoid, at least initially, sensitive and threatening issues. Many of the people involved in livestock production and trade are wary of researchers asking them detailed questions about their businesses. Government policies such as the cattle head tax (Djangali), restrictions on cattle sales outside of organized cattle markets and on shipment of cattle to Nigeria, and retail price controls on meat have not made research on livestock marketing any easier. Despite these difficulties,

we did persist in informal interviewing with the assistance of very able interpretors and livestock service officials.

A second limitation to using informal interviewing as a research technique is that one cannot be entirely sure that the information obtained is representative. The people interviewed were not selected randomly: rather, the selection process was purposive. They were interviewed because, first of all, they were well placed to answer certain questions due to long years of experience in their occupations or familiarity with particular problems. More importantly, the selection of interviewees was designed to elicit multiple views of marketing performance, government policies and subsector problems. The purposive selection of informants with different perceptions and beliefs was intended to minimize the risk of obtaining inaccurate information or deliberate misinformation.

Finally, we would like to acknowledge comments on an earlier draft of this report by John Lewis and Tjaart Schillhorn Van Veen.

I. LIVESTOCK PRODUCTION IN NORTHWEST PROVINCE

Compared with other regions of West Africa, Northwest Province has a high potential for livestock development. The high elevation (1,000 - 2,300 meters) and resulting cool climate prevent tsetse infestation, which greatly reduces the incidence of trypanosomiasis. Ticks are less of a problem than in other areas of West Africa. The area is well watered, as average rainfall is high (2,700 mm per year in Bamenda). There is a six to seven month rainy season from April to October. The hot dry season is relatively short (January-March), and it is preceded by a cool dry season (October-December). Grassland has a growing capacity of eight to nine months a year, which permits a relatively high stocking rate. Depending on the estimate of cattle population used, there are between 2.07 and 2.84 hectares per head of cattle grazing the available pasture in the Northwest.[1]

It has been argued that most areas of Northwest Province, which feature "rugged topography, leached soils, and poor approach roads and tracks, are better suited for livestock rearing than for cropping."[2] The area also has a comparative advantage in coffee production. A high and increasing human population density may represent, however, a major constraint to further livestock development. In 1976 Northwest Province had a population density of 914,912 residing in an area of 17,910 square kilometers. Therefore, the average population density was 52.9 inhabitants per square kilometer, compared to 15.3 for Cameroon as a whole.[3] As the population approaches one million, demand for foodstuffs increases.

[1] See Page 272

[2] Appraisal of the Livestock Development Project, Cameroon, World Bank, March 1974, Annex 2, P. 8.

[3] Recensement General de la Population et de l'Habitat'd'Avril 1976, Volume I - Resultats, Tome I - Republique Unie du Cameroun, Bureau Central du Recensement.

With more land being put under cultivation, conflicts between livestock producers and farmers are becoming increasingly important. Although the Ministry of Animal Breeding and Industries (MINEL: Ministere d'Elevage et des Industries Animales) issues grazing permits and arbitrates between herders and farmers in cases of crop damage it is thought that sedentarization of graziers and more rational land use offer the best long-range solutions to current problems.

A. Livestock Population of Northwest Province

If the Adamaoua Plateau is considered a seperate geographical entity (Central) then Northwest Province ranks third among Cameroonian regions in cattle and pork population and fifth in small ruminant population. (See Table I).

TABLE I

ESTIMATED LIVESTOCK POPULATION OF CAMEROON, 1976

Province	Cattle	Sheep	Sheep	Swine
Northwest	327,000	40,000	135,500	44,000
North	1,215,900	825,800	932,500	4,400
Central (Adamaoua)	1,279,300	700,000	350,000	200
East	163,900	73,500	64,500	37,000
West	126,200	366,200	446,600	355,700
Southwest	5,000	5,400	11,000	6,000
Littoral	1,300	1,100	2,800	17,400
Center-South	87,000	133,000	267,000	444,000
TOTALS	3,205,600	2,145,000	2,209,900	908,700

SOURCE: Ministry of Animal Breeding and Industries Annual Report for 1976/77, P. 44.

From a livestock census taken in the first half of 1976 in Northwest Province, the following estimates of livestock population for each Division are available, (See Table II). These estimates are based upon animal vaccination statistics and educated guesses on the part of MINEL field staff.

TABLE II

ESTIMATED LIVESTOCK POPULATION OF NORTHWEST PROVINCE, 1975/76

	Mezam	Momo	Donga/ Mantung	Menchum	Bui	TOTAL
Cattle	48,200	35,050	90,250	101,250	44,150	319,100
Sheep	20,200	8,300	10,000	7,500	3,950	49,950
Goats	31,300	15,500	72,900	7,400	8,500	135,600
Pigs	16,330	25,000	700	1,250	100	43,380
Horses	1,140	860	1,430	620	1,360	5,410
Poultry	151,300	50,900	338,180	17,320	62,060	619,760

SOURCE: MINEL, Provincial Delegation, Livestock Census of 1976.

Using the 1975/76 livestock census data as a base and growth rates of 4 percent for cattle, sheet, goats and horses, 5 percent for pigs, and varying rates for poultry for different divisions projections for livestock population in 1979/80 are obtained, (See Table III). The growth rates for different stock were the same as those used by the MINEL Provincial Delegation in its projections for 1976/77 and 1977/78.

TABLE III

PROJECTED LIVESTOCK POPULATION FOR NORTHWEST PROVINCE, 1979/80

	Mezam	Momo	Donga/ Mantung	Menchum	Bui	Total
Cattle	56,395	41,175	105,360	118,460	51,655	373,345
Sheep	23,635	9,710	11,700	8,775	4,620	58,440
Goats	36,620	18,135	85,290	8,660	9,945	158,640
Pigs	19,850	30,390	850	1,520	120	52,730
Horses	1,335	1,005	1,675	725	1,590	6,330
Poultry	177,000	74,500	374,700	35,900	83,800	745,900

In a recent report entitled "An Evaluation of Livestock Production in the Northwest Province from 1959/60-1979/80," MINEL estimated that the livestock population would attain the following levels by 1979/80, (See Table IV).

TABLE IV

MINEL ESTIMATES OF LIVESTOCK POPULATION IN NORTHWEST PROVINCE, 1979/80

Livestock	Population	Rate of Growth per year
Cattle	510,513	5 percent
Sheep/Goats	280,510	7 percent
Pigs	66,119	8 percent
Poultry	911,660	7 percent

The exact livestock population probably lies somewhere between the sets of numbers presented in Tables III and IV. Growth rates of seven percent for small ruminants and poultry may be somewhat high. Although small ruminants, pigs and fowls have shorter reproductive cycles than cattle, goat and poultry production has been hampered by epidemics of caprine pleuropneumonia and fowl cholera, newcastle disease and pullorum. As a result the poultry and goat populations are probably growing at slower rates. Pigs have been relatively untouched by epidemic outbreaks, although they suffer from internal and external parasites. Consequently, an annual population growth rate of eight percent for pigs is plausible.

B. Cattle Grazing in Northwest Province

Northwest Province has an area of 17,910 kilometers, of which 59.1 percent or 10,589 square kilometers is cattle grazing land. From Table V we observe that 39.2 percent of all the grazing area in Northwest Province is in Menchum alone, which is greater than its proportion of total land area in Northwest Province (35.0 percent). Similarly, Donga-Mantung contains 28.9 percent of the grazing area in the province, while the Division makes up 24.7 percent of the total area in the Province. Together the two Divisions comprise 68.1 percent of the grazing area in Northwest Province, which is significantly greater than their combined proportion of total land area in the province (59.9 percent of the cattle population in the Northwest Province is found in these two Divisions). From Table V we also note that a significantly greater percentage of the land area in each Division is grazing area in Menchum (66.6 percent) and Donga-Mantung (71.8 percent) than in the other Divisions.

TABLE V

CATTLE GRAZING AREA BY DIVISION IN NORTHWEST PROVINCE

Division	Grazing Area (HA)	% Of Total Grazing Area In N.W.P.	Grazing Area As % Of Land Area In Division	Grazing Area As % Of Total Land Area In N.W.P.	Projected Cattle Population, 1979/80	% Total Cattle Population In N.W.P.	Grazing Area Per Head (HA)
Momo	124,200	11.7	60	6.9	41,475	11.1	1.99
Mezam	105,667	10.0	33.3	5.9	56,395	15.1	1.87
Bui	108,000	10.2	50	6.0	51,665	13.8	2.09
Menchum	415,333	39.2	66.6	23.2	118,460	31.7	3.51
Donga/ Mantung	305,714	28.9	71.8	17.1	105,360	28.2	2.90
Total	1,058,914	100.0	--	59.1	373,345	100.0	2.84

Using 373,345 as the cattle population in Northwest Province in 1979/80 grazing area per head can be seen to vary between 1.87 hectares in Mezam and 3.51 hectares in Menchum. For the province as a whole, there are 2.84 hectares per head (or perhaps as little as 2.07 hectares if 510,513 is accepted as the cattle population in 1979/80. Grazing figures in Table V are for cattle and not other livestock. Small ruminants are not included in calculations

of grazing area per head due to noncomparability of different livestock types. Conversion ratios indicating how many cattle equivalents small ruminants would facilitate comparison and lower grazing area per head ratios. From Table V we can hypothesize that there is overgrazing in Mezam and Bui, where the grazing area, per head is low (1.87 and 2.09 respectively). This is indeed the case, as most of Mezam and certain parts of Bui (around Mbiami and in the hills near Jakiri that overlook Babessi) are overgrazed, according to knowledgeable officials. From the figures in Table V it appears that this is less of a problem in Momo, Donga-Mantung and Menchum. To a certain extent this is true, but again according to well placed informants, there are serious problems of overgrazing around Binka, Mbot and Misaje in Donga-Mantung and near Mungong along the western edge of the Dumbo ranch in Menchum. In addition, bracken fern infestation has greatly reduced available pasture in Donga-Mantung, although this is not reflected in the official statistics. Hence, the above comparisons between Divisions are somewhat misleading, since the analysis is carried out at a high level of aggregation. The figures in Table V do correctly illustrate, however, the distribution of potentially usable grazing area in Northwest Province.

As noted above, the average grazing area per head of cattle in Northwest Province may vary from 2.07 to 2.84 hectares. Although this land to cattle ratio is low by Sahelian standards, it could be lowered further if more intensive range management practices were adopted. Local informants speculate that the lush grasslands of Northwest Province may be able to support a cattle population of over one million, such that the land/animal ratio approaches 1:1 on the available grazing land.

C. Geographic Distribution of Livestock Population

The cattle population is concentrated in the north and west of the province in Donga-Mantung and Menchum Divisions. Comparing the percentage distribution of cattle in Northwest Province among Divisions with the percentage distribution of land area by Division, as in Table VI, we note that cattle population distribution corresponds very closely to land area distribution. Only in Donga-Mantung do we observe significantly greater cattle concentration (28.2 percent) than that which the pattern of land distribution (24.7 percent) would suggest. Hence, it appears that cattle are distributed fairly evenly throughout Northwest Province, although there are pockets of concentration within each Division, as shown by the map of cattle population and transhumance routes on the following page.

From Table VI we can also observe that sheep (40.4 percent) are most heavily concentrated in Mezam, and to a lesser extent in Donga-Mantung (20.0 percent) and Momo (16.6 percent). Goats (53.8 percent) and poultry (54.6 percent) are very heavily concentrated in Donga-Mantung and to a lesser degree in Mezam (23.1 percent and 24.4 percent respectively). The goat population is highest around Ndu, although the recent outbreak of caprine pleuropneumonia (November-December 1978) has greatly reduced this concentration. An overwhelming concentration of pigs is found in Momo (57.6 percent) and Mezam (37.6 percent). Pigs are hardly found at all in the other Divisions. It is also noteworthy that Menchum has such low concentration of goats, sheep and poultry relative to its land area.

TABLE VI

PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF LAND AREA AND LIVESTOCK POPULATION AMONG DIVISIONS IN NORTHWEST PROVINCE

Division	% Human Population	% Total Surface Area In North-west Province	% Cattle Population	% Sheep Population	% Goat Population	% Pig Population	% Poultry Population
Bui	15.5	13.3	13.8	9.9	6.3	0.2	10.0
Donga/ Mantung	18.9	24.7	28.2	20.0	53.8	1.6	54.6
Menchum	20.0	35.0	31.7	15.0	5.5	2.9	2.8
Mezam	32.7	16.6	15.1	40.4	23.1	37.6	24.4
Momo	12.9	10.3	11.1	16.6	11.4	57.6	8.2

These percentages are based on 1976 Census data (Recensement General de la Population et de l'Habitat d'Avril 1976) and 1976 Livestock census data for Northwest Province.

D. Distribution of Ownership

Cattle are owned primarily by Fulani Graziers, although in recent years other groups, including agriculturalists and civil servants have begun to invest in cattle, hiring Fulani and some non-Fulani herders to take care of the cattle. There are two groups of Fulani in the province: the Mbororos, who settled in the eastern part of the province in the early 1900's and the Aku, who settled in the west in the 1950's. The Mbororo cattle are large, well fleshed, red animals, while the white Aku cattle are smaller, but more disease resistant. The Mbororo and the Aku people do not get along well, because the Mbororo charge that the Aku usurped their traditional dry season grazing areas and that the disease tolerant Aku cattle carried diseases that infected the Mbororo stock. Furthermore, the two groups differ markedly in social structure and political organization.

Sheep are owned primarily by the Fulani, who herd them in flocks, while goats are held by sendentary agriculturalists. Goats are not herded; they are staked individually during the growing season and left to roam about the villages once the crops are in. Poultry and swine are held mainly by agriculturalists, although some Fulani graziers also keep a few fowls. The population of families in Northwest Province holding different types of livestock and the average number of animals per farm family are as follows:

	Cattle	Sheep	Goats	Pigs	Poultry
Percentage of farm families raising livestock.	3.3	8.3	22.1	21.7	77.5
Average number of animals per farm family.	34.0	5.3	4.2	2.0	9.2

SOURCE: Cameroon Agricultural Census 1972/73

Ownership of small stock, particularly of goats and poultry, is much less concentrated than that of cattle. Therefore, development of small stock might have a greater direct impact on the rural poor than cattle development.

E. Production System for Cattle

Neither Fulani nor the farmer-graziers own the land on which they graze their animals. They obtain permission to graze from the Farmer-Grazier Service, which is a subdivision of MINEL responsible for issuing grazing permits and handling farmer-grazier problems. The Farmer-Grazier Service demarcates the boundaries between farming and grazing land and divides grazing areas into blocks under the authority of individual ardo. It then issues grazing permits to individual graziers, who are authorized to graze their cattle within specific rainy season and dry season grazing blocks, which can be different areas.

The Fulani graziers within a particular block tend to be members of the same extended family or clan, and the ardo is their most senior and/or respected member. Each grazier is granted a specific grazing area surrounding his ruga, (compound) but the rest of the grazing block is reserved for open grazing for graziers within the block. As long as graziers within the block do not trespass upon the grazing area around the other graziers' rugas, they are free to graze their cattle anywhere on the common pasture.

The Mbororo graziers stay in one grazing area in the hills during the rainy season, and then transhume with most of their herd to lowland grazing areas during the hot dry season. The rainy season grasses are burned off beginning in December-January to kill ticks and other parasites and encourage regrowth of fresh pasture in anticipation of the return of the herd to the hills in April. Lactating female cows are left to graze on the remaining grasses at the rainy season grazing area, which serves as a permanent base for the graziers. Older males, children and women remain with these cows, which provide milk for the household. Younger males in the household and/or hired herdsmen take the remaining cattle on transhumance to low-lying valleys. These dry season grazing areas are generally 15-30 km. from the permanent rugas. Occasionally, they may be as far as 40-50 km. away. The principal dry season grazing areas for the Mbororo are the Mdop and Baligham plains in Mezam Division, the Ndi plain in Bui Division and the Mbo plain in Donga-Mantung. The senior male in the household usually stays at the rainy season grazing site with most of the extended family, but he descends to the valleys periodically to inspect his animals.

The Aku graziers, who migrated from the hot, dry savannah of northern Nigeria in the 1950's perfer to graze their highly disease resistant cattle in lower-lying areas year round, unlike the Mbororo. Transhumance consists of moving from one lowland grazing area to another, so that the Aku grazing patterns are more circumscribed than those of the Mbororo. The Aku graziers are found in the western part of Northwest Province, and their main dry season grazing areas are the Misaje and Dumbo plains in Donga-Mantung and in the valleys around Wum, Su-bum, Mungong and Marshi in Menchum.

The "native" graziers, who are cultivators seeking to diversify or others from ethnic groups that have traditionally farmed and who are looking for alternative investments, are entering livestock production in increasing numbers. Larger, more prosperous native graziers usually hire Fulani and non-Fulani herders to care for their animals. The herders are entrusted with taking the cattle on transhumance from the hills to the valleys during the dry season and with hillside grazing during the rainy season. Smaller, less prosperous native graziers, particularly farmer-graziers, tend their own animals and are less likely to take them on transhumance. A good number of the native graziers are receptive to improved range management practices, in large due to more certain land tenure than Fulani graziers. They are more apt to cultivate fodder crops primarily for dry season feeding and to practice rotational grazing, both of which reduce the need to send cattle on transhumance.

F. Production System for Small Ruminants, Pigs and Poultry

Goats are raised almost exclusively by farmers who sell them when they need cash. Most producers raise small numbers of goats (2-10), although there are larger producers around Kumbo, Ndu and Ndop. Even these larger producers do not depend upon goat sales for the major part of their income. Instead, that comes from sales of coffee, rice and other crops. Most goat producers do not fence in their goats but instead stake them during the rainy season and allow them to browse freely during the dry season. Presently, MINEL is not

actively promoting goat production, since goats are difficult to control and may destroy pasture and crops. As noted earlier, the goat population fell precipitously in areas of high concentration (Ndu and other parts of Donga-Mantung and northern Bui), where the epidemic of caprine pleuropneumonia was severe.

Sheep are raised primarily by Fulani graziers, who herd them in groups of five to fifty. The graziers tend to separate their sheep and cattle for grazing. Some native graziers and farmers keep a few sheep as a source of additional income during the Moslem holidays and at Christmas, when demand is highest.

Pig production tends to be carried out on a small scale in Northwest Province, as producers raise only two on average.[1] Pig production and demand are highest in Momo and Mezam and some pigs are produced in Momo for sale in Southwest Province. Producers usually fence their pigs, since they will destroy crops if left free. Pigs consume maize, boiled cocoyams, plantains, bananas and just about anything else which producers grow on their farms. Internal and external parasites are a problem, but little is done to eliminate them, due primarily to a lack of veterinary care and inputs.

Poultry is raised by 77.5 percent of farm families, who keep 9.2 fowls on average.[1] The fowls provide eggs and occasionally meat for household consumption. Eggs and chickens are sold to consumers who are willing to pay very high prices relative to what they pay for beef and pork. Disease problems and the lack of a ready source of feed mix are major constraints to increasing production. Most fowls presently forage for food or receive scraps of maize and leftovers from the farm family.

[1]See P.276

II. CATTLE MARKETING IN NORTHWEST PROVINCE

A. Cattle Markets in the Northwest

In an attempt to control cattle marketing in Northwest Province the government has established 16 cattle markets. These markets meet weekly, (i.e., in accordance with the seven day Islamic week) and they are not usually held the same day as foodstuff markets, which fall once every eight days, the length of the traditional week of the indigenous population. In a few isolated areas the foodstuff market falls on the same day (once a week) as the cattle market, primarily for the convenience of Fulani graziers and their households. On this one day both sales of cattle (and butter) and purchases of maize, salt, cloth and other household items are made.

1. Classification of Cattle Markets

The cattle markets in Northwest Province can be classified broadly into two types. The first group are assembly markets, where producers buy breeding stock and sell excess males, unproductive females, and diseased and weakened stock to traders who trek the cattle to larger markets. The second group of markets are redistribution-consumption markets, where cattle are sold for local slaughter or assembled into larger herds for shipment south. Redistribution-consumption markets also serve as assembly markets for graziers living nearby.

The cattle markets in Northwest Province are classified below according to division. The day of the week on which the market falls

and a brief characterization of the markets are also noted. The map on the following page shows the location of each of the cattle markets. Circled markets represent assembly markets, while squares designate redistribution-consumption markets.

Mezam/Momo Divisions

Mendankwe: Daily except Saturday; redistribution-consumption market, largest market in the province.

Acha-Tugi: Guzang market day; redistribution-consumption market.

Bamessing: Not presently functioning.

Bui Division:

Mbiame: Friday; a major assembly market for cattle heading to Bamenda, Southwest Province and Nigeria.

Takija: Friday; not presently functioning.

Wainama: (Jakiri ranch), occasional sales.

Menchum Division

Wum: Saturday; both an assembly and redistribution-consumption market; the largest market in the Division.

Fundong: Friday; an assembly market and consumption market for Kom.

Konene: Friday; an assembly market.

Essu: Friday; an assembly market.

Bafumeng: Thursday; an assembly market.

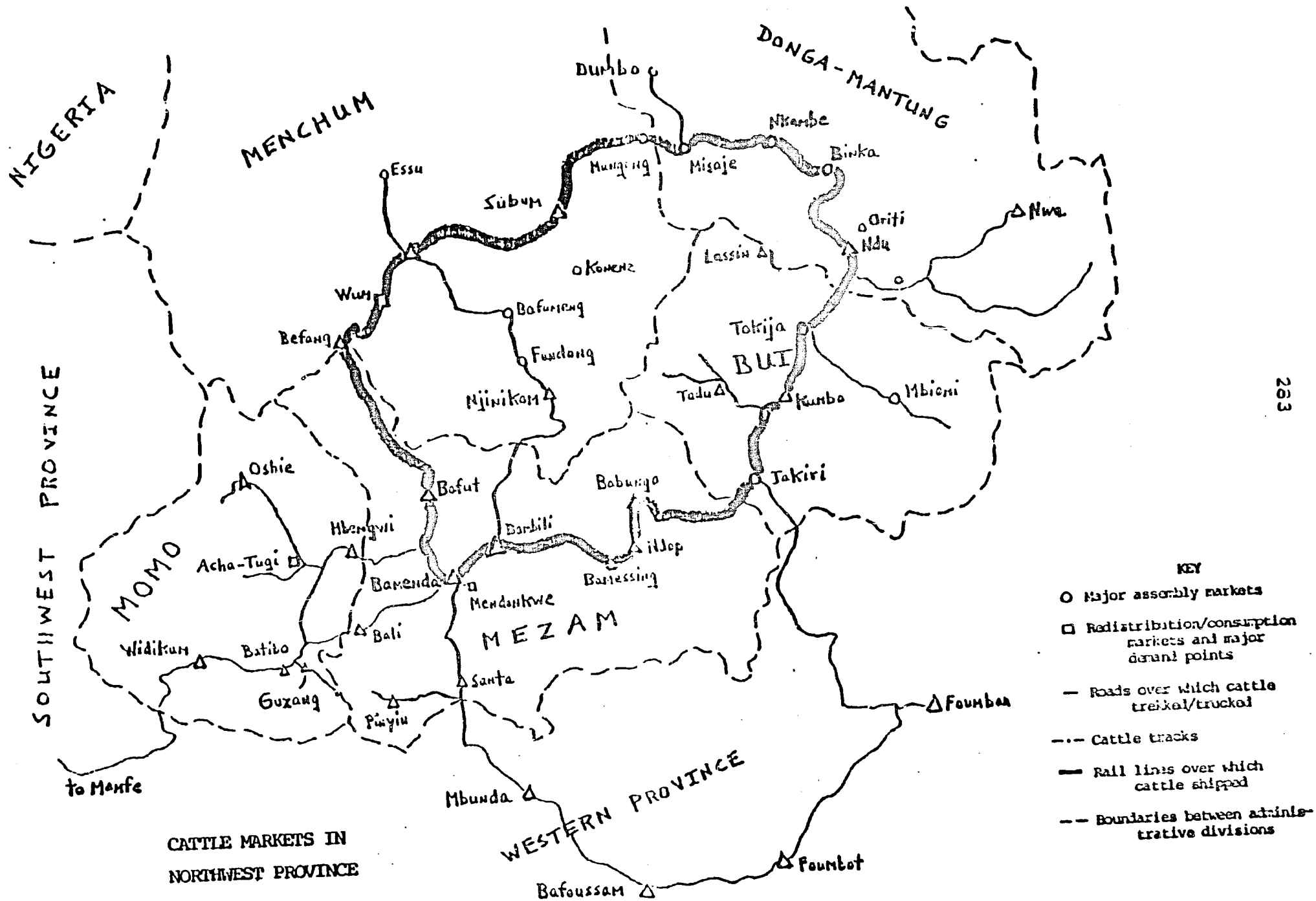
Mungong: Sunday; a major assembly market for cattle heading to Nigeria.

Donga-Mantung Division:

Nkambe: Tuesday; assembly and consumption market.

Misaje: Thursday; a major assembly market for cattle heading to Nigeria.

Binka: Monday (large market); Thursday; a major assembly market for cattle heading to Nigeria.



CATTLE MARKETS IN NORTHWEST PROVINCE

Ntumbaw: Tuesday and Kumbo market day; assembly market.

Oriti: Tuesday and Kumbo market day; assembly market, consumption market for Ndu.

Dumbo Ranch: Sales at end of rainy season; October-January.

Mendankwe, which is by far the largest cattle market in Northwest province, is a redistribution-consumption market which meets Bamenda's consumption needs and redistributes cattle for shipment to southern consumption points like Kumba, Bafoussam and Nkongsamba.

2. Producer Bargaining Power

The cattle markets have served to better organize livestock marketing in the province. Every grazier interviewed expressed a preference for selling cattle in regulated assembly markets rather than in the bush. They cited increased competition among buyers (and hence higher sale prices) and better market price information as reasons. Graziers sell in the bush only when one of their animals is injured or too sick to trek to market and also when their cattle have gone on transhumance to dry season grazing areas. In the former instance cattle are sold to local butchers, who slaughter them on the farm. In the dry season cattle merchants are forced to assemble by going directly to graziers' herds in the bush. At this time supplies in the markets are low, since the herds are grazing far from the markets in remote areas. When the traders assemble from door-to-door, they face higher cattle prices, since the producers know that they are short of animals at this time. Recognition of this bargaining power undermines the stereotype of monopsonistic cattle merchants who use superior knowledge of

market conditions to exploit producers by buying in the bush. Rather, the producers have been able to obtain rapidly rising prices for their animals through selling in competitive markets for most of the year and directly to traders during the dry season.

3. Operation of the Cattle Markets

Representatives of the Local Area Council and MINEL veterinary centers of post are present at each of the cattle markets to collect revenue and observe cattle sales and movements. The usual market toll is 200 FCFA per animal sold, half of which is paid by the buyer and half by the seller. The money collected is supposed to pay for market improvements, such as fences surrounding markets, cattle enclosures, vaccination crushes, and structures to house market representatives and protect buyers and sellers from rain. The Area Councils have made many of these improvements at several of the most important markets (Mendankwe, Misaje, Mbiame, Binka), but many of the markets lack enclosures and protective structures. Both graziers and cattle traders complained about the lack of market improvements at such major markets as Wum and Mungong.

In principle, Veterinary Service assistants record numbers of cattle presented and the numbers, sex and prices of animals sold. They also issue cattle movement permits (50 FCFA per head) and treat cattle moving through tsetse infested zones prophylactically against trypanosomiasis (100 FCFA per head). The accuracy of cattle marketing and movement statistics collected by the veterinary assistants varies greatly. Often they only record numbers of animals present in the

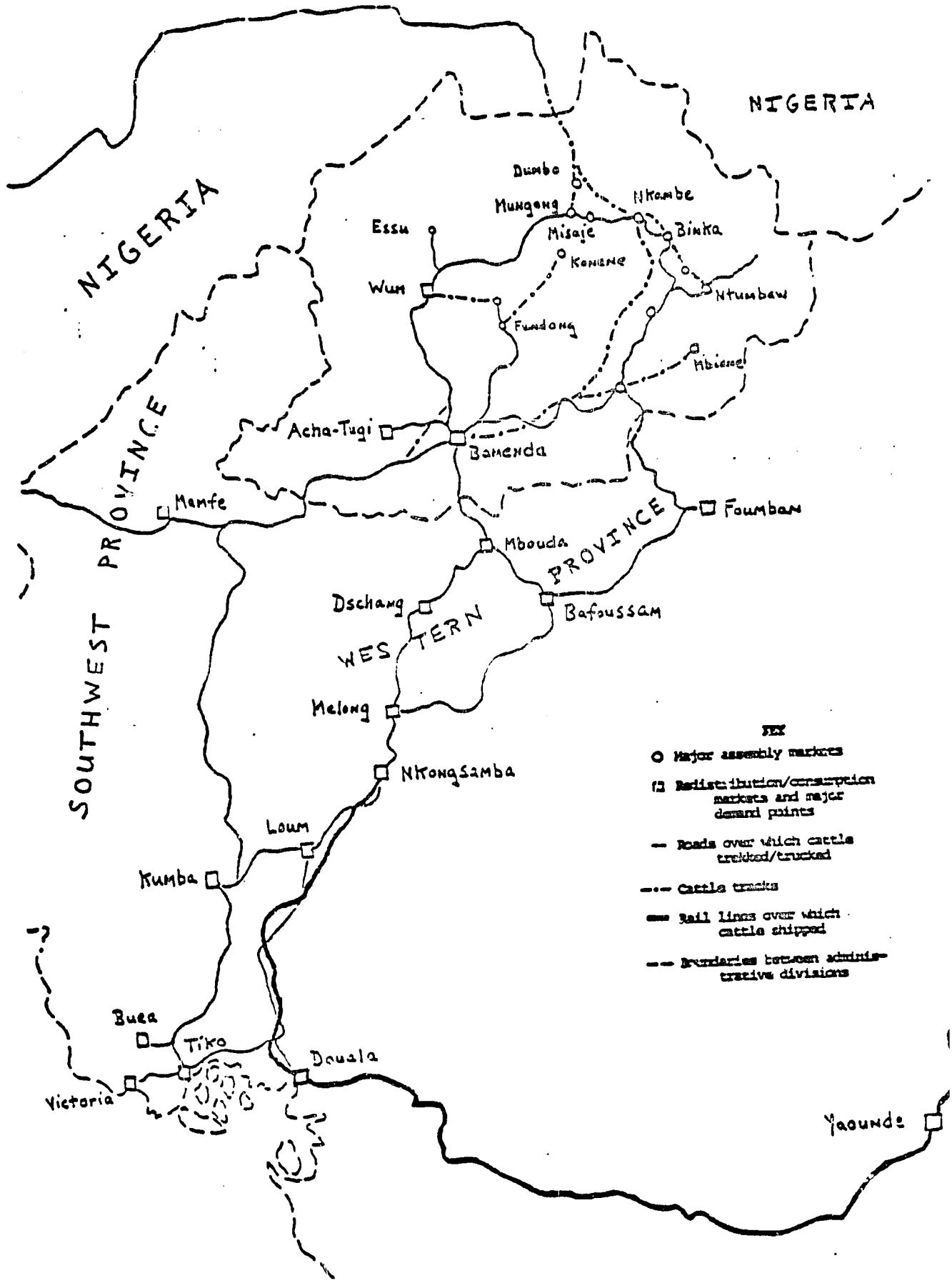
market place. These figures are misleading, since they include cattle not intended for sale, which are required for herding those animals designated for sale to the market place. Hence, the number of cattle presented at the market place greatly overstates the number intended for sale. Moreover, no veterinary assistants record the ages of cattle sold, and few actually record the sex and prices of the animals sold. Price data that are collected are not very useful, as cattle weights are not obtained. As a result, it is impossible to observe price variation across time and space (i.e., between seasons and markets for cattle of different ages and sex).

B. Flows of Trade Cattle

1. Flows Southward

A large number of cattle for slaughter are exported from Northwest Province, while some are imported for breeding purposes, mainly from the Adamaoua Plateau. The major recorded flows of cattle within the province are from the producing areas of Menchum, Donga-Mantung, and Bui Divisions to Bamenda. Cattle from the Wum area (Menchum) follow the ring road to Bamenda, while cattle from the Banso area (Bui Division) Konene, Fundong (Menchum Division) and Nkambe (Donga-Mantung) follow cattle trails away from the ring road, as illustrated by the map on page 287.Some of the cattle are sold for slaughter in Bamenda, while others continue to markets in the south. By far the most important Comeroonian market for cattle leaving Northwest Province is Kumba, which is the only cattle market in Southwest Province. It thus serves

CATTLE FLOWS FROM NORTHWEST PROVINCE



as the supply point for butchers from Kumba, Victoria, Buea, Tiko and other nearby towns. Cattle travel from Bamenda to Kumba by two routes:

1. To the West, through Mamfe, then directly South to Kumba (a trek of about 14 days.
2. To the East, usually through Bafoussam, Nkongsamba, and Loum or less often through Mbouda, Dschang, Melong, Nkongsamba and Loum, (both treks of 10-12 days).

Some cattle are sent from Wum directly to Kumba via Mamfe, and a few animals travel from Banso to Foumban and Bafoussam (via Jakiri), but it appears that the bulk of the animals shipped south pass through Bamenda.

The origin of trade cattle arriving in Bamenda from August, 1978 through June, 1979 is shown in Table VII. The table shows that approximately 42 percent of the animals came from Menchum Division (the most important markets were Wum, Koneno and Fundong), followed by Donga-Mantung Division, which accounted for 23 percent, and Bui Division (21 percent). Males accounted for 60 percent of the animals marketed in Bamenda, while females make up 40 percent. The relatively high proportion of females reflects both sales of breeding stock among local graziers and sales of cull cows (i.e., either diseased or unproductive females).

TABLE VII

ORIGIN OF CATTLE ARRIVING AT THE MENDANKWE (BAMENDA) CATTLE MARKET
AUGUST 1978 - JUNE 1979

Area of Origin	Number of Cattle	% of Total
MENCHUM DIVISION	5,878	42
Wum	(3,067)	(22)
Kom (Fundong)	(1,133)	(8)
Bum (Konene)	(1,314)	(9)
Essu	(92)	(1)
Unspecified	(288)	(2)
DONGA/MANTUNG DIVISION	3,246	23
Nkambe	(1,501)	(11)
Ndu	(698)	(5)
Dumbo-Misaje	(256)	(2)
Nwa	(708)	(5)
Unspecified	(83)	(1)
BUI DIVISION	2,972	21
MEZAM DIVISION	1,274	9
MOMO DIVISION	523	4
SUBTOTAL	13,893	
UNSPECIFIED	254	2
TOTAL	14,147	100
NUMBER SLAUGHTERED IN BAMENDA (% of Total)	5,428	38

SOURCE: Records of Area Council representative at the Mendankwe market.

Cattle movement statistics collected by MINEL, are difficult to interpret, since there appears to be a lot of double counting of cattle leaving Northwest Province through Bamenda. This is because cattle movement permits are issued by veterinary officials to traders at the point of first sale for the trek to Bamenda, and then again at Bamenda if the cattle leave for markets outside the province. In spite of this, the MINEL statistics do give us a rough idea of flows of trade cattle leaving Northwest Province for other parts of Cameroon (See Table VIII).

TABLE VIII

CATTLE MOVEMENT FROM NORTHWEST PROVINCE TO SOUTHWEST, LITTORAL, WESTERN AND CENTRAL SOUTH PROVINCES, 1974/75 - 1978/79

		DESTINATION		
	Total	Southwest	Western & Littoral	Central South
Total 1974/75	33,343	23,651	9,692	--
Total 1975/76	33,170	26,700	6,470	--
Total 1976/77	9,112	7,371	1,425	316
Total 1977/78	9,128	7,714	922	492
Total 1978/79	15,144	9,577	4,531	1,036

SOURCE: Ministry of Animal Breeding and Industries, Provincial Delegation, Northwest Province, Annual Reports; also Divisional Quarterly Reports.

The volume of cattle exported to other provinces has declined markedly since 1975/76 from about 33,000 head to roughly 9,000 in 1976/77 and 1977/78 and 15,000 in 1978/79. Much of this decline is due to increased flows of cattle to Nigeria, the exact magnitude of which is unknown. The rest of the decline may be the result of several factors including changes in the method of recording flows or in the thoroughness with which flows are recorded, or a result of increased beef consumption in Northwest Province. The latter hypothesis is not substantiated, however, by recorded slaughter figures, (See Table IX, XI, and XII). Whatever the reasons for the decline in flows, it is clear that most of the cattle (63.2 - 80.5 percent) leaving Northwest for other provinces in Cameroon head to Southwest Province. A lower volume of cattle (10.1 - 29.9 percent) head directly for Western and Littoral Provinces. The above statistics do not account for those cattle which are sent initially to Southwest Province but which end up being sold at Kumba for slaughter in Douala. Furthermore, when animals destined originally for Kumba (and noted as such in cattle movement statistics) are sold at points in Western (Mbunda, Bafoussam) or Littoral (Loum, Nkongsamba) Provinces, these sales are not recorded. As a result, the official statistics overstate movement (and implicitly final sale) of cattle to Southwest Province. A lot of these animals end up being sold for slaughter in Western and Littoral Provinces. Finally, a significantly lower percentage (3.4 - 6.8 percent) of cattle sent from the Northwest to other provinces is recorded as being destined for the Central South. This may also understate

actual movements, but not by much, since Northwest traders face competition in Central South markets from cattle of the Adamaoua Plateau.

2. Flows to Nigeria

An unknown number of animals leave Northwest Province for Nigeria. The Cameroonian government licenses a few traders to export to Nigeria, but they are limited to exporting ten head per month. The government tries to discourage exports in order to hold down domestic meat prices. Official exports pass through Mamfe in Southwest Province and cross the border at Ekok, or they pass out of Northwest Province to the North through Dumbo.

Exported cattle are subject to a 3,000 FCFA per head tax. In addition to licensed exports, a large number of cattle are apparently smuggled into Nigeria, attracted by cattle prices which are reported to be roughly twice as high. Records indicate that these exports began around 1976, and originally many of them passed through Ekok. The government strengthened export controls along this route, however, it now appears that most animals exit either North through Dumbo or Northeast through Wum, where the border is harder to control. The major Nigeria markets in which the exporters sell are Abakaliki, Onitsha, Enugu, and Umuahia.

3. Seasonality of Flows and Prices

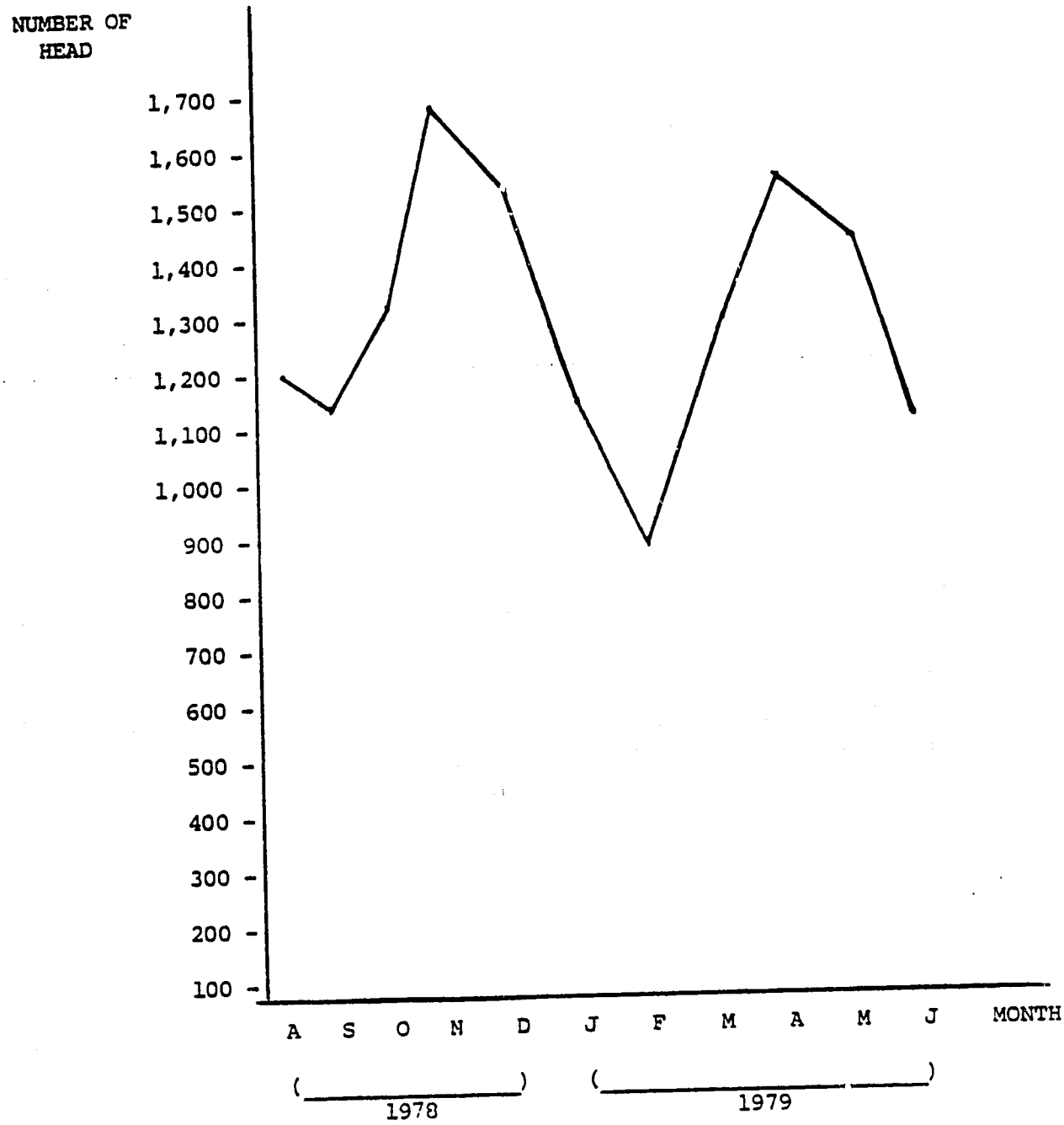
Sales of cattle are generally higher during the early and late rainy season than during the dry season in most areas of Northwest Province. During the height of the rainy season (July-September),

meat purchases fall off, however, for several reasons. First, as maize and other foodcrops are harvested, they substitute for meat. These foodstuffs are cheaper than meat, and since the income from the coffee and cocoa harvests is not available until later in the year (October-December), consumers are constrained to purchase less costly items. Second, in some areas flooding streams and muddy treking routes prevent graziers from herding their cattle to market, since they risk losing or injuring the animals.

Peak cattle sales occur in November-December, in response to high demand for meat over the Christmas and New Year's holidays, (See Figure I). Demand is high in rural areas for this is the period of the cocoa and coffee harvests, when rural incomes are highest. Flows of cattle fall off sharply from December through February and March, when cattle migrate to dry season grazing areas. Graziers are reluctant to sell at this time for two reasons. They are far from the markets, and their animals are at their lowest weights of the year. Although buyers bid up cattle prices on a per kilogram basis due to shortages in local markets, the low liveweights may fetch lower prices than if the cattle are held until they regain weight on the new grasses accompanying the beginning of the rainy season. Sales pick up after the rains start and herds return to normal grazing areas. Butchers also report an increase in demand for meat at this time as people celebrate Easter. Traders and veterinary officials in Southwest Province, the major export market for cattle from the Northwest, report the same seasonal pattern of supply and demand as that for Northwest Province.

FIGURE I

RECORDED ARRIVALS OF CATTLE AT THE MENDANKWE (BAMENDA) MARKET
AUGUST 1978 - JUNE 1979



SOURCE: Records of Area Council representative at the Mendankwe Market

The seasonal fluctuation of cattle prices could be dampened by promoting on the farm fattening that makes cattle (and other livestock) available for market when supplies are short. Loans are presently being extended to farmer-graziers by FONADER (Fonds pour le Development Rural), but this is a pilot program that is limited in scope. Greater allocation of funds to small-scale fattening projects should be considered carefully.

Table IX shows monthly slaughter statistics for Bamenda over the last five years, while Figure II depicts the movement in monthly slaughter graphically. These statistics were collected by the Veterinary Service, and they do not account for all slaughter in Bamenda. Probably only a fraction of all slaughter is not recorded, however. From the available data it is clear that demand is strongest from November through the first half of January. Slaughter appears to be lowest during February and March, but it did not increase significantly at the beginning of the rainy season for four of the six years for which data are available. Nor is the alleged decline in beef consumption at the height of the rainy season verified by this set of statistics. Perhaps Bamenda is not a particularly good city for demonstrating cyclical swings in supply and demand, since its inhabitants have incomes high above the average for Northwest Province. As a result, demand in Bamenda remains at a high level throughout the year.

TABLE IX

MONTHLY CATTLE SLAUGHTER STATISTICS FOR BAMENDA, 1974-79

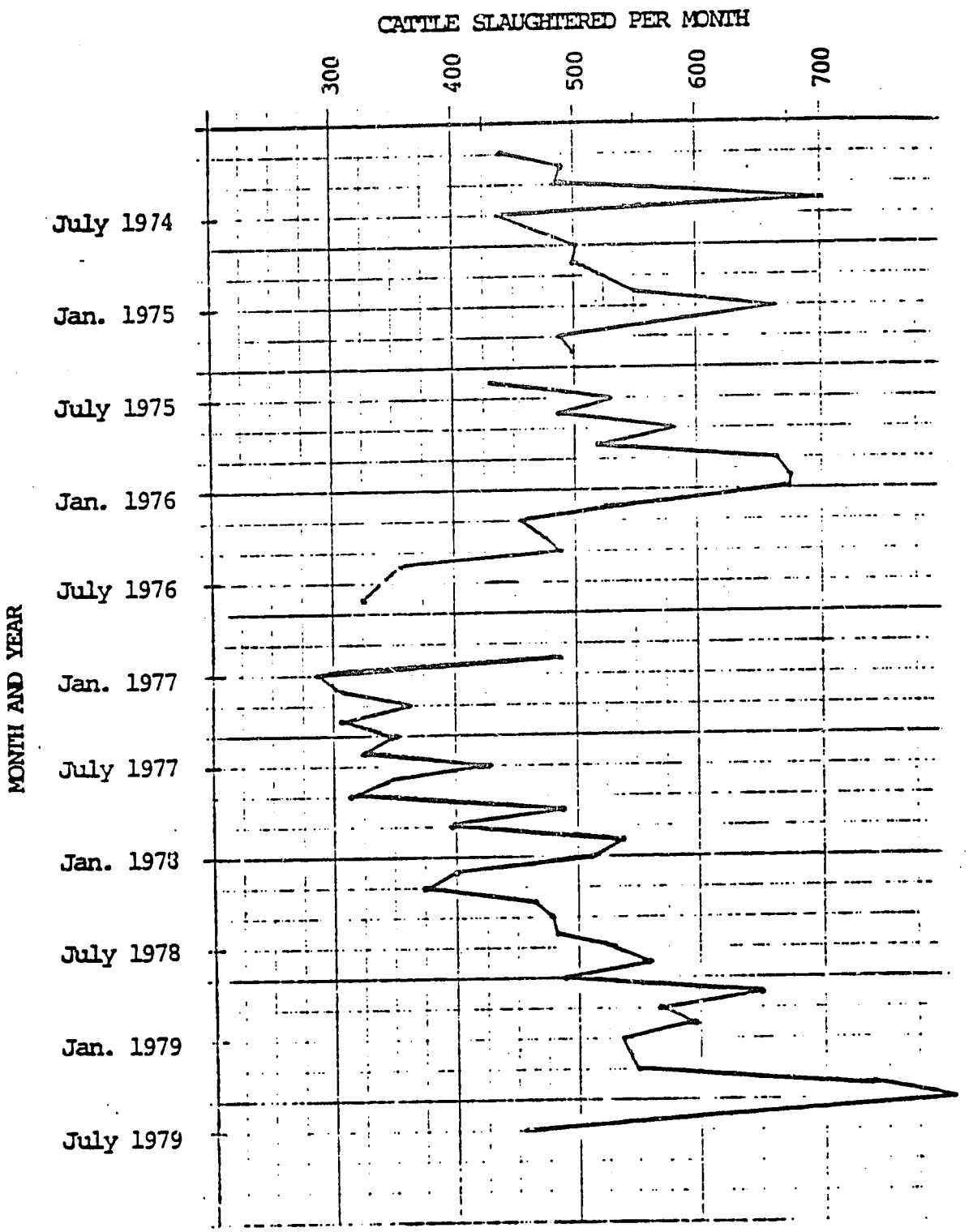
Month[1]	1974	1975	1976	1977	1978	1979
January	---	592	598	290	469	491
February	---	514	481	305	300	494
March	413	449	424	353	360	501
April	454	458	438	304	432	648
May	446	---	450	342	443	704
June	620	405	345	319	445	558
July	411	484	---	402	485	427
August	435	448	321	336	507	---
September	462	525	---	312	452	---
October	458	475	---	450	580	---
November	479	590	---	377	514	---
December	499	599	450	480	537	---

[1]Through August 1976 each month runs from the middle of the previous month (the 16th) to the middle of the month indicated (the 15th). This is probably the reason why slaughter is so high in January 1975 and 1976. Each January includes the last half of December of the preceding year.

SOURCE: Monthly Reports, Veterinary Center, Mankon (Bamenda).

FIGURE II

CATTLE SLAUGHTER STATISTICS FOR BAMENDA (1974 - 1979)



Slaughter figures for other towns in Northwest Province also provide some indications of a cycle of supply and demand as described by butchers and traders. Table I in Annex I contains two years of monthly slaughter figures for different sized towns in the province. Each month runs from the second half of the previous month through the first half of the month listed. Slaughter rises significantly at the beginning of the dry season (November-January) in most of the towns. However, it tends to fall off during the hot part of the dry season (February-April). This is due to the decrease in the numbers of cattle available for market, as well as to the tendency for meat to spoil more rapidly in the heat. There are some indications that slaughter declines somewhat at the height of the rainy season, but it does not appear to be very significant. More years of data and a larger sample of towns of different sizes are needed to verify the seasonality of slaughter.

Meat prices are lower in the rainy season than in the dry season, with the exception of the Christmas holidays when demand increases. Butchers report that consumers substitute fresh vegetables and maize for meat in their diet during the rainy season but that vegetables are not widely available during the dry season when the demand for meat rises. There does not appear to be widespread substitution of fish or game in the diet in Northwest Province.

The retail price series available for beef is incomplete in that certain monthly observations and blocks of several months are missing. As Table II in Annex I shows, no prices were collected from June 1975 to the end of 1976, nor from September 1978 through

February 1979. Simple inspection of the data that are available neither confirms nor disconfirms the seasonal price pattern described by butchers. The pattern seems to hold for certain years (1973, 1974, 1977), but not for others when prices remain relatively constant (1972) or fall (1971) or rise (1978) steadily throughout the year. Without a more complete time series verification of the seasonal pattern is not possible.

4. Cattle Transport

a). Trekking

Trekking is by far the most common means of moving cattle within and out of Northwest Province. All cattle move into the Bamenda market on hoof. Trucking of cattle within the province is not done because of its high cost and the poor condition of the roads. The trek to Bamenda takes three days from Wum, four-five days from Konene, six days from Banso, and six-eight days from Nkambe and Misaje. Traders can rotate their capital rapidly (because of the relatively short trek), assuming that they sell their cattle in Bamenda. Some of the larger traders from these markets reported making one to two trips per month to Bamenda.

Traders who trek cattle to market do not always know exactly what prices will be in final markets, but they usually have a good idea of the range of prices being offered. There are many traders who move cattle from the major cattle markets (Wum, Konene, Misaje, Binka, Mbiame) to Mendankwe and points south. Moreover, the traders turn over their capital at different rates. At any time there are

usually one or more traders who have returned recently from Bamenda or one of the southern markets. These traders pass on market price information to their colleagues, who are able to buy cattle in the assembly markets with some idea of what the return will approximate.

Supply fluctuations may cause prices to change suddenly, however so in reality, traders are forced to evaluate prices in each market they come to along the trek southward. They sell those animals for which the prices offered yield on acceptable return and continue southward to other markets with the remaining cattle. This process continues, as animals are sold in Mbouda, Bafoussam, Nkongsamba and Loum, until the final market (Kumba) is reached. Upon arriving in Kumba, the traders have to sell the remaining animals, for there is nowhere else to trek them. Further trekking to Douala is not feasible, since the cattle would lose too much weight to compete effectively against animals trucked or sent by rail from the Adamaoua Plateau. In addition, the risk of losing cattle from trypanosomiasis increases the longer the animals remain in the infested zone. Finally, Kumba is the only cattle market in Southwest Province, from which butchers in Victoria, Tiko and Buea buy cattle for slaughter. Consequently, trekking to other points in Southwest would serve no purpose. Some of the cattle are sent by rail from Nkongsamba to Douala, but the majority of these animals come from the Adamaoua Plateau. In the event of a poor market in Kumba, the only alternative to selling upon arrival is to graze the cattle in the area round Kumba. Several traders spoke of grazing their animals on rubber plantations run by the CDC in the hope of obtaining higher prices at the market the following week.

In the final analysis, trekking involves an element of price risk for there is no daily reporting of market conditions in Bamenda Kumba and other southern markets to traders based in Northwest Province. An informal network of traders is able to report prices and general market conditions to assemblers in the north, however. Groups of traders cooperate in not only communicating price information from Kumba, but by passing along market news concerning other markets in route (Bafoussam, Nkongsamba). Traders choose trekking routes and markets at which they will meet their cattle between Bamenda and Kumba on the basis of what other traders returning north have said about the number of cattle on the road between various points and in different markets. Despite the price risk involved, trekking remains popular with the vast majority of traders because of the low cash outlay required. Traders seldom pointed out, however, that the capital invested in cattle on hoof has a high opportunity cost. Trekking a herd from Misaje or Nkambe to Kumba (with a stopover of at least one day in Bamenda) ties up capital for anywhere from 19 to 30 days, or longer when delays in payment are considered. In making their calculations of profit, traders probably do not take this cost of capital into account.

Few graziers trek cattle to Bamenda, although some graziers in Mezam Division do trek their animals to the Mendankwe market. It does not pay for graziers at a distance of more than 30 km. to trek their cattle to market because of the time and expenses required to come to the market. Thirty kilometers is the maximum distance that cattle are able to trek in one day, so coming to Mendankwe from any greater distance involves at least three days of trekking

and selling. Some of the graziers interviewed at the Bamenda market had brought cattle from as far away as 15-20 km. (Sabga), but no one came from any greater distance. Hence, graziers must place an implicit value on their time so that long treks with small numbers of animals do not appear to be an attractive alternative to selling in nearby assembly markets.

b). Trucking

Trucking is an alternative means of moving cattle from Bamenda to southern consumption points. Twelve ton Mercedes trucks are used to transport ten head and rent for 40,000 to 50,000 FCFA for the trip from Bamenda to Douala or Kumba. Only the wealthier traders truck due to the higher capital outlay required. The numbers of cattle trucked from Bamenda during July and August appeared low, on the order of 40-80 per month (1-2 trucks per week), compared with roughly 600 per month trekked south.

Two merchants, one based in Bamenda and the other in Santa, truck cattle regularly from Bamenda to Douala and, during the dry season, to Kumba. There are also a few other traders who truck infrequently. These merchants truck when they receive information from buyers in Douala or Kumba or from other traders that supplies are very short in the southern markets and hence intermarket price differentials are high. This may occur for instance, when rail shipments of cattle to Douala have been disrupted. By trucking, the traders are able to react quickly to these temporary shortages.

Trucking requires, however, both good market information and enough liquid capital to buy up animals quickly and hire a truck to ship them south.

Some traders claimed that mortalities occur more frequently in trucking than in trekking. This seems unlikely, but further research needs to be done in order to determine whether or not this is so. If it is true, then trucking requires enough capital to bear the higher risks involved.

c). Rail transport

There is no rail line to Bamenda, but there are railways from Douala to Nkongsamba and Kumba. When supplies are short in Douala, traders from Douala buy cattle from the Northwest in Nkongsamba and ship them by rail to Douala. During these shortages, Douala merchants also buy cattle in Kumba to truck to Douala. The railway between Kumba and Douala is not equipped to handle shipments of cattle, since adequate loading facilities and cattle wagons are lacking. Occassionally, cattle are trekked from Kumba and Douala via Tiko.

5. Recent Trends in Prices and Flows of Cattle

Cattle and meat prices have risen markedly in Northwest Province since 1971, when meat without bones was retailing for 190 FCFA per kilogram. By July 1979 the same kilogram of meat was selling for over 500 FCFA. This represents an increase of 264 percent over the course of the last eight years, while the rise in the consumer price

index for a Yaounde family consuming a representative basket of goods was less marked than the increase in meat prices, at least through 1977. Table X shows the annual increase in retail prices for meat and pork since 1971, as well as the change in the general price index. Meat and pork prices remained constant during the period 1971-1973 but increased sharply thereafter, with especially strong increases occuring in the last few months of 1974.[1] Since 1974 retail prices have advanced steadily to the present level of over 500 FCFA per kilogram.

Unfortunately, we cannot compare retail price increases for meat and pork over the period 1971-79 with price increases at the wholesale level, since cattle and pig prices were not recorded during the entire period. The Provincial Delegation of MINEL collected minimum and maximum cattle price data in 1974/75 and 1975/76 for animals of different ages and sex,[2] but it has not recorded any observations since then.

[1]See Table II, Annex I.

[2]See Tables III and IV, Annex I.

TABLE X

RETAIL MEAT AND PORK PRICES IN BAMENDA, 1971-79 (FCFA per kg.)

Year	With Bones		Without Bones		Intestines		Pork		
	Retail Price	Index[1]	Retail Price	Index[1]	Retail Price	Index[2]	Retail Price	Index[1]	Consumer Price Index[3]
1971	162	100	191	100	---	---	192	100	100
1972	156	96	193	101	---	---	199	104	107
1973	151	93	201	105	138	100	201	105	115
1974	181	112	208	109	169	122	213	111	132
1975[4]	249	154	282	148	---	---	---	---	155
1976[5]	300	185	350	183	---	---	---	---	170
1977	357	220	438	229	284	206	475	247	190
1978	388	240	451	236	361	262	510	266	---
1979[6]	431	266	504	264	376	272	507	264	---

SOURCE: Ministry of Economics and Planning, Provincial Office of Statistics, Northwest Province, Bamenda, Retail prices are simple (unweighted) averages of bimonthly observations. See Annex I, Table I.

[1]The 1971 retail price equals 100. Retail prices for all other years expressed as a percentage of the retail price in the base year.

[2]The 1973 retail price equals 100.

[3]Index of consumer prices in Yaounde (Moderate-Income Cameroonian Families), 1971-72 - 1976/77.

[4]Based on prices collected during the first five months of 1975.

[5]No prices were collected by the Provincial Office of Statistics in Bamenda during 1976, as all available staff were collecting and analysing census data. The meat prices were drawn from the Annual Report for Northwest Province, Ministry of Animal Breeding and Industries, (p. 30).

[6]Based on prices collected from March through June 1979.

Table XI shows the minimum and maximum prices for bulls of different ages in Mezam and Momo for 1974/75 and 1975/76. The amount of increase in these prices is roughly the same as the percentage increase in retail meat prices in Bamenda between 1975 and 1976 (19.5 percent and 23.7 percent for meat with and without bones).

TABLE XI

PRICES OF BULLS (in FCFA) IN MEZAM AND MOMO, 1974/75 AND 75/76

Age of Bulls	Minimum Prices 1974/75	Minimum Prices 1975/76	Percentage Increase	Minimum Prices 1974/75	Minimum Prices 1975/76	Percentage Increase
1 - 2	16,000	19,000	18.8	17,000	21,000	23.5
2 - 5	25,000	30,000	20.0	40,000	40,000	20.0
5 - 7	45,000	45,000	0.0	50,000	60,000	20.0
7 - 10	50,000	50,000	0.0	60,000	70,000	16.7
10	42,000	50,000	19.0	45,000	70,000	55.6

SOURCE: Annual Reports for Northwest Province, MINEL, 1974/75 (p. 26), and 1975/76 (p. 23).

This type of comparison is not very reliable, however, since the MINEL prices were not determined on a liveweight basis. Without knowing the increase in liveweight prices per kilogram, it is impossible to know whether the increase in retail meat prices has paralleled and therefore, been caused by cattle price increases. We suspect that it has, since butchers argue that they have raised retail prices only in

response to supply price increases. This is by no means conclusive, however, Lutterloh and Batimba argue that meat price increases were not proportional to the increase in cattle prices from 1974/75 to 1975/76. From this they concluded that the financial situation of butchers was deteriorating.[1]

The dramatic increase in meat and cattle prices since the last quarter of 1974 is the result of several factors. First, the drought of the early 1970's reduced Sahelian cattle supplies, although production in Northwest Province was not adversely affected. The demand for cattle exports from the Northwest increased, as did cattle and meat prices within the province. This came about as a result of the reduction in supply of Sahelian animals available for slaughter in Nigeria and Southern Cameroon. Second, incomes have risen rapidly in Nigeria since 1974, which has also increased the demand for meat. As a result, animals have been drawn away from production areas like Northwest Province to the far more lucrative Nigerian market, where cattle prices are about twice those in the Northwest. Urban population and income increases in Southwest, Littoral and Western Provinces have probably had a similar demand pull effect.

As higher cattle prices have been offered over the last decade, the livelihood of Fulani graziers in Northwest Province has improved considerably. The value of their cattle has appreciated to such an extent that prices the Fulani are able to obtain from cattle sales have increased at a faster rate than the prices of goods (i.e., other foodstuffs, cloth, household items) they normally purchase.

[1]Lutterloh and Batimba Simplice, Le Systeme de Commercialisation et de Reglementation des Prix de la Viande au Cameroun, 1976.

6. Recent Trends in Cattle Slaughter

According to MINEL statistics, recorded slaughter and beef consumption in both Northwest and Southwest Provinces have fallen since 1974/75. Officials attribute this to the rapid rise in meat prices and increased flows of animals to Nigeria. As shown in Table XII, recorded slaughter in Northwest Province fell from 16,710 head in 1975/76 to 11,911 head in 1976/77, but then rose to a level of about 14,000 during the last two years. Considering the rapid rate of population increase, the decline from earlier levels is significant. In Southwest Province recorded slaughter fell from 1974/75 through 1976/77, then began to increase again, (See Table XII). The lowest annual recorded slaughter was in 1976/77 in both provinces. This was the period of most intense smuggling, and the provincial governments took measures to curtail it, such as closing certain cattle markets (Mungong, Konene) and strengthening border control. Note that recorded slaughter does not include slaughters away from MINEL supervised slabs. It is possible that some of the variation in recorded slaughter reflects changes in the volume of slaughter in the bush, but unlikely that this explains the major part of this variation. Clearly, the burgeoning Nigerian market has drawn away large numbers of cattle from Northwest Province. Nigerian consumers have higher incomes than their Cameroonian counterparts, and they are willing to pay higher prices for meat. Cameroonian traders are responding to this demand to the detriment of Cameroonian consumers who are unwilling or unable to pay the higher prices.

Virtually all of the cattle slaughtered in Northwest Province are produced within the province, while the bulk of slaughter cattle

TABLE XII

RECORDED CATTLE SLAUGHTER IN NORTHWEST AND SOUTHWEST PROVINCES 1969/70 - 1978/79[1] (HEAD)

Year	Northwest	Southwest
1969/70		9,750
1970/71		8,462
1971/72		8,978
1972/73		8,500
1973/74		9.005
1974/75	16,520	11,574
1975/76	16,710	10,767
1976/77	11,911	8,521
1977/78	14,089	9,374
1978/79	13,973	11,880[2]

SOURCE: Ministry of Animal Breeding and Industries, Provincial Delegations, Northwest and Southwest Provinces, Annual Reports.

[1]Each of these years is a fiscal year, which runs from July 1 - June 30.

[2]Projection based on slaughter of 8,908 head during the first nine months of the fiscal year.

in Southwest Province come from the Northwest. From July 1978 through May 1979, the only period for which precise figures are available, 7,472 head of the 10,481 cattle recorded as entering Southwest Province came from Northwest Province.[1] The increase in slaughter in the Southwest from 1976/77 through 1978/79 may reflect better government control

[1]Ministry of Animal Breeding and Industries, Delegation for Southwest Province.

of smuggling to Nigeria in recent years. It may also mean that more animals are coming from the Adamaoua Plateau, substituting for Northwest Province exports drawn away from Southwest Province to Nigeria. There are merchants who truck Goudali cattle from the western Adamaoua region (Banyo, Tibati) to Kumba, especially during the dry season. Several traders interviewed said that these Goudali, who are generally heavier and better fleshed than the Red Fulani and white Aku cattle of the Northwest, arrive in better condition than animals trekked from Northwest. When there are a lot of Goudali from the Adamaoua in the Kumba market, cattle from Northwest have trouble competing.

Another possible reason for the decline in slaughters in Northwest and Southwest Provinces since 1975/76 may be decreased sales by Fulani graziers in the Northwest in response to higher cattle prices. Since cattle prices have been rising rapidly, the Fulani may have been able to meet their basic cash needs through the sale of fewer animals, while the value of their remaining stock has appreciated. At the same time, the Fulanis' cash needs have risen, as they are sending more children to school and making more discretionary purchases. This assumes, of course, that the prices of the goods they buy have risen less rapidly than cattle prices in recent years. If the Fulani consider cattle a store of wealth, and there are many indications that they do, they might respond to higher prices by selling fewer animals and letting their assets appreciate. This strategy is made more likely by the existing land tenure system, in which the marginal private cost of holding an additional animal on the range is negligible.

The implications of this trend for livestock development projects are worth reflecting upon. As long as inflation of cattle prices outstrips the rise in the consumer price index, efforts to increase cattle production will not lead to the intended consequence of greater marketed output. If anything, offtake will fall, provided the marginal private cost of keeping an animal off the market is near zero. Graziers will have every incentive to hold as many animals on the range as possible. If this is indeed the case, then donor agencies and the Cameroonian government will need to raise the marginal cost of holding additional animals. This might be accomplished by closing the open range and demorcating restricted grazing areas for individual herders. By granting herders land tenure, they will be forced to pay for each additional animal held off the market. Additional fodder will have to be provided or additional land or rights to more grazing land will need to be acquired. Marginal cost will be positive and a rising function of herd size. As a result, herders will be rationally compelled to increase offtake.

Increasing taxes that herders pay is another way to increase offtake. Taxation systems are usually costly to administer, and taxes can often be easily evaded. One such tax is an income tax, whose cost of collection would probably exceed the revenue it generated. Increasing cattle head taxes is another way to increase marketed output, but this means is less than fully effective since payment is easily evaded. Higher head taxes would also create further ill-will between herders and the government. Taxes on clothing and food sales at

TABLE XIII

CATTLE SLAUGHTER

	Cattle Slaughter[1]	Total Quantity of Beef Consumed (KG)[2]	Population[3]	Beef Consumption Per Capita (KG)	Index of Consumption per Capital (1974/75) = 100
TOTAL 1974/75	16,520	2,973,600	888,264	3.35	100.0
Momo/Mezam	11,186	2,013,480	404,981	4.97	100.0
Donga-Mantung	2,180	392,400	167,682	2,34	100.0
Bui	1,899	331,020	137,879	2.40	100.0
Menchum	1,306	235,080	177,723	1.32	100.0
TOTAL 1975/76	16,710	3,007,800	914,912	3.29	90.2
Momo/Mezam	11,450	2,061,000	417.130	4.94	99.4
Donga-Mantung	2,134	334,120	172,712	2.22	94.9
Bui	2,053	369,540	142,015	2.60	108.3
Menchum	1,813	193,140	183,055	1.06	80.3
TOTAL 1976/77	11,911	2,143,980	942,359	2.28	68.1
Momo/Mezam	7,779	1,400,220	429,644	3.26	65.6
Donga-Mantung	1,992	358,560	177,893	2.02	86.3
Bui	1,051	189,180	146,275	1.29	53.8
Menchum	1,089	196,020	188,547	1.04	78.8
TOTAL 1977/78	14,081	2,535,660	970,630	2.61	77.9
Momo/Mezam	10,166	1,329,880	442,533	4.14	83.3
Donga-Mantung	1,020	201,600	183,230	1.10	47.0
Bui	1,431	258,660	150,663	1.72	71.7
Menchum	1,364	245,520	194,203	1.20	95.5
TOTAL 1978/79	3,793	2,482,740	999,749	2.48	74.0
Momo/Mezam	9,528	1,715,040	455,809	3.76	75.7
Donga-Mantung	1,202	216,360	188,727	1.15	49.1
Bui	1,543	277,740	155,183	1.79	74.6
Menchum	1,520	273,600	200,030	1.38	104.5

[1] Slaughter returns from Annual Reports for Northwest Province, Ministry of Animal Breeding and Industries.

[2] Carcass weight, including offals, is assumed to average 180 kilograms per head.

[3] Population figures for 1975/76 are from the Recensement General de la Population et de l'Habitat d'Avril 1976. The population figures for other years were calculated by assuming a 3 percent annual population growth rage.

foodstuff markets would generate some revenue, but such taxes are usually regressive and difficult to administer in developing countries. A more effective means of increasing offtake would be levying taxes on use of the rangeland through, say, making grazing permits more expensive. Finally, charging herders for veterinary services would compel them to sell diseased or aging animals in cases where the marginal cost of maintaining the cattle would exceed the marginal revenue from keeping them on the range.

C. Beef Consumption in Northwest Province

Beef consumption fell markedly (26 percent) from 1974/75 to 1978/79 in Northwest Province as shown in Table XIII. Per capita consumption was 3.35 kilograms in 1974/75, but it fell off 32 percent to 2.28 kilograms in 1976/77. By 1978/79 it had risen slightly to 2.48 kilograms. Consumption declined the most (over 50 percent) in Donga Mantung over the last five years, which is probably due to increasing exports of cattle to Nigeria. Consumption declined the least in Menchum. Consumption has been highest in Mezam/Momo, since the urban population (22.5 percent) is greatest and incomes are highest in Mezam, while it has been substantially lower in Bui and Donga-Mantung, where a larger percentage of the population lives in rural areas (90.2 percent and 95.1 percent). The low level of consumption in Menchum is surprising, since it is the second most urbanized Division (19.5 percent) in the province. Low incomes and hence low demand for meat may provide a strong incentive to export cattle to Bamenda, Kumba and Nigeria.

Slaughter statistics for cattle are based upon records kept by veterinary officials of slaughter at government slabs. According to local estimates, unsupervised slaughter probably does not amount to more than 25 percent of all cattle slaughter. Local officials concede that there is some slaughter away from government slabs to avoid payment of the slaughter tax or possible condemnation, as well as some forced slaughter of injured or unhealthy animals in the bush. Yet it is quite possible that supervised slaughter has fallen off in the last few years on account of higher rural demand for beef and hence more unregulated slaughter. Slaughter statistics for sheep, goats, pigs and fowls are far less accurate, however. The Veterinary Service is unable to inspect all slaughter of small stock, since consumers can easily slaughter then in their backyard. Hence, the official statistics capture only a fraction of actual slaughter. In light of this, an attempt to quantify annual per captia consumption of small ruminants, pigs and fowls, has not been made. By relying on MINEL slaughter figures to calculate annual per capita consumption of small stock, estimates ranging from .13 to .21 kilograms were obtained. Since actual consumption is probably several times this level, and since the exact level cannot be determined with any precision, the focus here has been exclusively on beef consumption.

D. Market Organization in Rural Assembly Area, Mendankwe (Bamenda), and Kumba:

This section breifly describes the organization of assembly markets and the two largest markets for cattle from Northwest Province, Mendankwe (Bamenda) and Kumba.

1. Assembly Markets

In the smaller assembly markets traders and butchers buy directly from graziers who trek their cattle to market. Producers generally refuse to sell on credit, so most all purchases are in cash. This suggests that links between producers and traders are weak, as producers lack confidence to invest in trading operations. In the larger assembly markets (Mungong, Misaje, Binka, Wum) there are brokers who negotiate between buyers and sellers. These men usually lack alternative employment, and they earn a commission of 100-1,000 FCFA for each transaction they arrange. Veterinary and revenue collecting officials and subsector participants estimate that the commission averages 250 FCFA, as both buyer and seller generally pay a small amount according to how satisfied they are with the transaction. It is not uncommon for brokers to earn substantially more for each transaction, however, as they often pocket the difference between the price the buyer pays and the price the seller receives. It is impossible to know these intermediaries' earnings from such practices, since they are the only witnesses to transactions. It may be as large as 2000 FCFA for each animal sold, however. Brokers tend to be reluctant and evasive interviewees and for good reason; government officials regard them as parasites who perform no useful function. As a result, they fear government reprisal and are unwilling to offer reliable information. It appears that they do perform some functions, however. They facilitate exchange among buyers and sellers who do not know and trust one another as well as guarantee credit in larger transactions that usually take place in the larger assembly markets.

Traders who assemble usually buy in several rural markets, taking from five days to two weeks to assemble a herd for the trek to re-distribution-consumption markets. Cattle may be enclosed temporarily in fences adjacent to the markets, but at some point they are brought together in a central location. They may also be kept with the trader's personal herd, since many of the rural assemblers are also graziers. For example, there are traders based in Wum who buy cattle at the Essu, Bafumeng and Wum assembly markets. While they are forming the herd for the trek to the south, the cattle are kept at night at the cattle enclosure at Wum and grazed on the common pasture nearby or kept with the trader's herd or that of a trusted friend. Traders based in Donga-Mantung purchase cattle in Mugong, Misaje, Nkambe and Binka and assemble them in their home towns or in the bush for shipment to Bamenda or to Nigeria.

Most of the graziers, butchers and traders interviewed stated that the cattle markets were highly competitive. Although many of the buyers and sellers know each other, transactions are impersonal and cattle are sold to the highest bidder. Cattle are not weighed. Rather traders and butchers estimate liveweights by sight and gauge their profits accordingly. Graziers learn about current prices from discussions with other producers at the cattle markets, foodstuff markets, or when they visit each others' rugas. Most of them refuse to sell outside the market place, since this increases the risk that they may be cheated by traders.

Another common buying arrangement is where several traders with more or less equal capital at their disposal buy as a team under the

name of only one licensed trader in order to avoid paying for three separate licenses. Finally, it is common for smaller traders to assemble cattle which they have each bought separately for the trek south. They share in paying the drovers' salaries, and the traders who do not want to go to Bamenda to sell their cattle may trust an associate with the task.

Wholesale butchers in the towns and villages near assembly markets have to compete with traders in order to obtain cattle for slaughter. There are usually one or two licensed butchers in the smaller towns and as many as six in larger towns. Each of these has two to three apprentices who retail under him. The licensed butcher wholesales most of the slaughtered cow out to the retail butchers on one day credit, but he usually keeps some of the meat to retail himself. He may give his apprentices preferential access to the meat, or he may sell only to the highest bidder, whether that is another licensed butcher or other apprentices. The apprentices also perform other tasks for the licensed butcher, such as leading slaughter cows from point of sale (the cattle market or a ruga in the bush) to the slab, dressing out the slaughtered animal, and transporting meat from the slab to the market. They are often paid in kind.

A wholesale butcher buys animals from both cattle markets and directly from producers in the bush. In the latter case the grazier sends word to the butcher that he has a sick injured or weak animal for sale. Or he may cull an animal for sale, implying immediate cash need. Whatever the circumstances, the butcher is able to buy the

animal at a lower price than in the market, since the producer is pressed to sell. When the butcher buys at the local cattle market, he will usually buy for the week, which usually involves buying at least one animal. This depends on cattle prices on a particular market day, however, and upon the capital he has available. Some of the wealthier butchers have their own herds, from which they cull animals for slaughter from time to time. The butcher typically slaughters at least one animal on foodstuff market day and grazes any other(s) before slaughter later in the week. In smaller towns and villages only one animal may be slaughtered every few weeks. Since there is no refrigeration, meat not sold after several days is smoked for preservation.

Butchers in towns outside Bamenda cooperate in order to prevent excess slaughter and keep meat prices from falling. They have informal arrangements whereby a predetermined number of animals are slaughtered on foodstuff market day and individual animals are slaughtered between market days to meet demand. When a wholesale butcher slaughters an animal he may sell part of it to another wholesale butcher who has slaughtered a few days earlier or who is short of capital. The latter butcher may then wholesale in turn or retail, depending upon how cheaply he bought the meat. Joint purchases of cattle for slaughter are uncommon. The butchers do not usually loan each other money, but they do coordinate slaughter to keep competition from driving prices below operating costs. In this way the risks of default are kept at manageable levels.

Sales to traders are usually for cash, while sales to local butchers are often on two-three day credit. The availability of credit often substitutes in part for short term price fluctuations. When there are a lot of cattle on the market, sellers are more willing to supply credit in order to dampen price decreases. When few cattle are on the market, credit is difficult to obtain. Default on credit does not seem to be a serious problem, but some traders complained of late repayment, which slows down their rotation of capital. Butchers do not seem to be tied to any particular trader or broker, but are free to buy from whoever they choose.

Most butchers in Bamenda are aided by one or more apprentices ("boys") who transport cattle from the cattle market to the slaughter slab and dress out the animals. Most apprentices also work as retailers, buying entrails and a quarter or more of beef from their employers on one day credit. The employer retails the rest of the meat. Apprentices are generally paid in kind. It appears that most butchers in Bamenda spent several years as apprentices before beginning to slaughter on their own. During their apprenticeship they accumulated capital and learned the necessary skills of the trade, such as being able to estimate carcass weights and hence the profits obtainable from paying different prices. The most successful butchers are those who are able to procure animals at the lowest price per kilogram acceptable to the trader. Apprentices usually begin by working for a relative or a friend.

Most butchers in Bamenda slaughter only beef. Small ruminants and poultry are usually purchased live for slaughter in the compound.

Some pork is slaughtered at the Nkwen slaughter slab (the smaller of two slaughter slabs in the city) and is sold by specialized retailers. Beef is retailed in the market six days per week. The government control price for beef is 400 FCFA per kg. boneless and 350 FCFA per kg. with bones. Although butchers sell above the control price, they do so at the risk of fines from the price control authorities. In response to the price controls, butchers prefer to sell meat by the piece rather than by weight, since it is harder to verify the price per kilogram when meat is sold by the piece. It is shown below that a butcher would lose money if forced to sell all his meat at the control price.

3. Kumba

Kumba is the major Cameroonian market for cattle exported from the Northwest Province. The Kumba market meets once a week (on Wednesday) and serves butchers from towns throughout Southwest Province. Cattle purchased in Kumba are trekked to other cities throughout the Southwest (Victoria, Buea, Tiko) etc. The day of our visit to the market, about 180 head were presented for sale and there were perhaps 30-40 buyers and sellers present. Those interviewed said this was a typical market volume during the middle of the rainy season.

Butchers buy several animals at a time to slaughter throughout the following week. On account of the larger purchases involved, credit is often granted for as long as two weeks to a month. Usually a trader will return to Bamenda or to assembly markets in Northwest Province to organize another shipment south while awaiting repayment

of the credit. He then picks up his money when he returns to Kumba with the second herd. To do this, a trader must have enough capital to finance two shipments of cattle at a time, which may give larger traders an advantage over smaller ones. Some traders rely upon trusted trading associates to collect the money and bring it north. As in Bamenda, when the market is poor, the extention of credit dampens price fluctuations. Credit serves as an inducement for buyers to purchase cattle at higher prices than they would be willing to offer if they had to pay cash. When a trader fails to sell all his cattle at the Kumba market, he must wait for the market the following week. It is possible to graze cattle on nearby rubber plantations for a week.

About three-fourths of the animals sold in Kumba come from Northwest Province. Other animals arrive from the Foumban area (Western Province) and the Banyo and Tibati areas (Adamaoua Plateau). One trader in Kumba buys cattle along the border of the Central African Empire (east of Meiganga) and treks them through Tibati, Banyo, and Foumban to Kumba, (the trip takes two months). In the rainy season, cattle only trek to Kumba, but a few are trucked in the dry season when supplies are short and the Loum-Kumba road is in good shape.

III. Representative Costs and Returns in the Cattle and Meat Trade

This section presents costs of shipping cattle from assembly markets in Northwest Province to Bamenda and from Bamenda to Kumba/Douala. By collecting cattle purchase prices in the assembly markets and comparing them to sale prices in Bamenda, traders' profit margins are estimated. Butchers' costs and returns in Bamenda are also calculated.

A. Nkambe-Bamenda

Table XIV presents the costs and returns of trekking cattle from Nkambe to Bamenda. This data was obtained by interviewing a trader based in Nkambe who regularly sends cattle to Bamenda. He was queried before and after the trek south about purchase and sale prices, as well as cost data. It took two weeks to assemble the herd of 39 animals and then eight days to trek them to Bamenda. The cattle passed through some hilly and muddy terrain which was, however, well watered and pastured. As a result, the cattle lost little if any weight, and no attempt has been made to quantify losses. The trader did not have to pay any compensation for crop damage, but one diseased cow died in route. His head herdsman sold the animal for a 27,000 FCFA loss. Thirty-eight cattle arrived at Mendankwe for the Friday market. He sold only eight animals and decided to trek the rest to Kumba, citing low offer prices as the reason. For those animals sold, his gross margin averaged 5,000 FCFA per head. Although the trader did not sell all the cattle, he said that his gross margin per head generally ranges from 500 to 10,000 FCFA and averages 5,000 FCFA per head for sales in Bamenda. Therefore, it will be assumed, for the purpose of calculating a net return, that he grossed 5,000 FCFA for each of the 38 animals that arrived at Mendankwe.

TABLE XIV

COSTS AND RETURNS OF TREKKING 39 HEAD OF CATTLE FROM NKAMBE TO BAMENDA, AUGUST 1979, (ALL FIGURES IN FCFA)

Cost Item	Total Cost	Cost per Animal
1. Cost of buying 39 head in Donga-Mantung assembly markets.	2,238,600	57,400
2. Market toll at assembly markets.	3,900	100
3. Cattle movement permit.	1,950	50
4. Commission for brokers in assembly markets.	9,750	250
5. Three drovers at 8,000-10,000 each for 8-10 days.	27,000	692
6. Food for drovers 3 x 2,000.	6,000	154
7. Forced sale of cow (mortality).[2]	(27,000)	(692)
8. Weight loss.	Negligible	Negligible
9. Crop damage.	--	--
10. Market toll at Mendankwe.	3,800	97
11. Payment of Mendankwe herder/night watchman.	3,800	97
12. Commission for brokers in Mendankwe.	19,000	500
13. Amortization of trader's license (21,840 per year for 360 animals or 30 head per month).[3]	2,366	61
14. Round trip transport for trader.	2,800	72
15. Taxis from Bamenda to Mendankwe market and back (3 round trips).	600	15
16. Cost of capital (2,238,600 invested for 21 days at 12 percent interest).[4]	15,446	396
Total Cost	2,335,012	59,872
Return from sales of 38 head at Mendankwe (38 x 62,400) and one cow en route (30,400) at a 27,000 loss.	2,401,600	61,579
Net return to Trader's Labor, Management and Capital.	66,588	1,707

[1]The cost per animal of 57,400 is obtained by subtracting a gross margin of 5,000 per head from the average price (62,400) paid by butchers for slaughter cattle of Mendankwe in July 1979.

[2]The loss from the forced sale is listed for illustrative purposes but it is not considered a cost item, since including it would overstate costs. The cow that was sold in route was already paid for in Nkambe. Adding 27,000 to costs would constitute double counting. The correct way to account for the 27,000 loss is to note the low return (30,400 FCFA) on the animal in the return category.

[3]See Table I, Annex II.

[4]See Table II, Annex II.

Figure III illustrates the breakdown of the trader's costs into cost categories. Cattle purchase costs, which make up 95.9 percent of the trader's total costs, are excluded. Cattle purchase is considered an investment, while the remaining cost items are regarded as operating costs.

FIGURE III

PERCENTAGE BREAKDOWN OF TRADER'S COSTS (EXCLUDING CATTLE PURCHASE)

Labor Costs 1. Drovers' Salaries and Food Money. 2. Payment of Herder at Mendankwe	Brokers' Commissions	Cost of Capital	Tolls, License, Permit	Trader Transport
38.2%	29.8%	16.0%	12.5%	3.5%

As seen from the figure, the largest cost component was labor costs (38.2 percent), which included the drovers' salaries and food allowances and payment of the herder at Mendankwe. Along with brokers' commissions (29.8 percent) labor costs comprise 68.0 percent of the trader's costs. The cost of investing capital in the herd (16.0 percent), payment of market tolls, cattle movement permits and the business license (12.5 percent), and the cost of transport to and from Bamenda (3.5 percent) are less significant.

As Table XIV shows, the trader's net margin would have been only 66,588 FCFA or 2.8 percent of his sale receipts, had he sold all his cattle in Bamenda at a 5,000 FCFA gross margin per head. The

meagerness of this return only confirms his good judgment in deciding to send most of his animals to Kumba. The Mendankwe market is usually poorest from the trader's standpoint at the height of the rainy season. Had the trader not lost the sick cow, but instead sold it for the same gross margin as the others, his net margin would have increased to 93,588 FCFA, which is still only 3.9 percent of his receipts from cattle sales.

By allowing the gross return per head to vary, a broader range of outcomes is generated. If the gross return were 4,000 FCFA per animal, then the trader's net margin would be 28,588 FCFA or 1.2 percent of sales receipts. If the gross return dropped to 3,000 FCFA per head, the trader's net margin would fall to -9,412 FCFA. Both of the above cases assume that there is one forced sale in route which results in a 27,000 FCFA loss. If this assumption is dropped, then the net returns in each case would be 31,000 FCFA and 30,000 FCFA higher respectively. Finally, the trader's net return for trekking 39 head from Nkambe to Bamenda would be 256,588 FCFA if the gross return per animal increased to 10,000 FCFA. According to the traders, this outcome is highly unlikely. If the market in Bamenda is good, a 5,000 FCFA gross return per head is about the best traders expect to average. Lower returns per animal are common, while higher returns are less likely. The above sensitivity analysis underscores the tenuousness of our calculations of traders' returns. The figures presented in Table XIV are intended only to give the reader a rough idea of traders' costs and returns.

Table XV presents a range of costs and returns involved in trekking 30 head of cattle from Nkambe to Bamenda. Herds trekked to Bamenda average 30 animals; a herd of 39 is rather large. Commissions paid to brokers, the number of forced sales and mortalities, the cost of tying up capital, and the gross return from sales of cattle at Mendankwe are subject to large variation. The cost items vary depending upon the bargaining skill of the trader, the number of days during which capital is invested in livestock, the opportunity cost of capital, the health of the cattle trekked, and the seriousness of hazards encountered along the trek. Changes in the gross margin per animal and forced sales have a large impact on the trader's net return.

Depending upon the assumptions made, the net return to the trader's labor, management and capital will vary between -249,505 to 234,601 FCFA per trip from Donga-Mantung to Bamenda. Hence, the trader's net return will be -14.1 percent to 12.5 percent of his total receipts. This is quite a wide range of outcomes, highlighting the risk and uncertainty involved in the cattle trade. If the mean net return is taken, -7,452 FCFA results, which implies that traders just about break even on the average. Such a low mean return is not plausible, as the traders would be forced out of business. Perhaps a herd of 30 cattle is too small a herd on which to make a profit. Or perhaps the upper ranges of some of the cost items are overstated in Table XV. It is more likely that a negative mean return results from a failure to weight various outcomes by the probability of their occurence. The data to do this kind of analysis are lacking.

The strongest conclusion one can draw is that traders must, on balance, enjoy positive net returns. Their returns are subject, however

to great variation, due to the risks and uncertainties they are forced to face. If traders lose animals entirely without getting any return or are forced to sell at a loss en route, or if their gross margin per animal is cut by brokers' commissions or a poor market at Mendankwe, then they suffer heavy losses. Given such risks, the handsome returns from highly successful treks to market do not appear unjustifiable.

TABLE XV

TYPICAL RANGE OF COSTS AND RETURNS OF TREKKING 30 HEAD OF CATTLE FROM NKAMBE TO BAMENDA (ALL FIGURES IN FCFA)

Cost Item	Total Cost	Cost per Animal
1. Cost of buying 30 head in Donga-Mantung assembly markets.[1]	1,572,000 to 1,812,000	52,400 to 60,400
2. Market toll at assembly markets.	3,000	100
3. Cattle movement permits.	1,500	50
4. Commission for brokers.	6,000 to 15,000	200 to 500
5. Three drovers at 8,000-10,000 each (for 8-10 days).	24,000 to 30,000	800 to 1,000
6. Food for drovers 3 x 2,000.	6,000	200
7. Forced sales and mortalities (0-2).[2]	(0-64,400)	(0-2,813)
8. Weight loss.	Negligible	Negligible
9. Crop damage.	--	--
10. Market toll at Mendankwe.	2,800 to 3,000	100
11. Payment of Mendankwe herder/ night watchman.	2.800 to 3.000	100
12. Commission for brokers at Mendankwe	5.600 to 30.000	200 to 1,000

Cost Item	Total Cost	Cost per Animal
13. Amortization of trader's license (21,840 for 360 animals per year or 30 head per month).[3]	1,820	61
14. Round trip transport for trader	2,800	93
15. Taxis from Bamenda to Mendankwe and back (2-5 round trips).	400 to 1,000	13 to 33
16. Cost of capital (1,722,000[4] invested for 15-30 days).	8,679 to 28,585	289 to 953
Total Cost	1,637,399 to 2,022,105	54,580 to 67,404
Return from sales of 30 head[5]	1,772,600 to 1,872,000	59,087 to 62,400
Net Return to Trader's Labor, Management and Capital	-249,505 to 234,601	-8,317 to 7,820

[1]The cost per animal is obtained by subtracting the gross margin per head from the average price (62,400) paid by butchers for slaughter cattle at Mendankwe in July 1979.

[2]It is assumed that the worst case would be for two animals to be lost en route before reaching Bamenda. A mortality with no possibility of sale would result in a 57,400 loss, assuming that the animal could not be sold, and a forced sale is assumed to result in roughly a 27,000 loss. More than one mortality with no possibility of sale is unlikely. Hence, the worst case would be one such mortality and one forced sale.

As in Table XIV, these losses are not included in total costs. Rather, they lower traders' receipts from sales of particular animals. Therefore, losses are accounted for in the return from sales category.

[3]See Table I, Annex II.

[4]See Table II, Annex II.

[5]The highest return results from the sale of all 30 animals at 62,400. The lowest return occurs when 28 head are sold at Mendankwe for 62,400 each, one animal dies en route and is not sold, and another is sold at at 27,000 loss (when the initial purchase price was 52,400, which corresponds to the lowest acquisition cost).

B. Bamenda - Kumba/Douala

Table XVI presents the costs of trekking and trucking cattle from Bamenda to Kumba or Douala. Depending upon losses due to forced sales and mortalities during the trek, trucking costs up to three times what trekking the same number of cattle south costs. If the most costly case of trekking (145,948 FCFA) is compared to the least costly outlay for trucking (159,126 FCFA), then trucking is only 9.0 percent more costly. This is an extreme case, however, where there is one forced sale and one mortality along the trek. Usually there are neither, according to the traders interviewed, so trucking is generally about three times the cost of trekking. Trucking may be even more costly if mortality is a serious problem (as some traders allege). On the other hand, trekking may become more costly relative to trucking if weight loss and crop damage increase costs significantly.

Given the present structure of costs, then we can assume that trucking cattle is two to three times as costly as trekking them. Trucking has the advantage, however, of allowing merchants to react quickly to changing market conditions and to have a rapid rotation of capital. From talking with merchants, though, it appears that trucking is profitable mainly when there are spot shortages of cattle in the southern markets and intermarket price differentials are temporarily high. Trucking does not appear more profitable than trekking on an everyday basis. This would explain why the merchant who trucks most frequently from Bamenda still sends most of his cattle south on hoof.

TABLE XVI

COMPARISON OF THE COSTS OF TREKKING AND TRUCKING 30 HEAD OF CATTLE FROM BAMENDA TO KUMBA/DOUALA, JULY 1979 (FCFA)

ITEM	TREK Total Cost	TREK Cost per Animal	TRUCK (3 TRUCKS) Total Cost	TRUCK (3 TRUCKS) Cost per Animal
1. Drovers' salaries.[1]	3 x 10,000 = 30,000	1,000	3 x 8,000 = 24,000	800
2. Food for Drovers.	3 x 3,000 = 9,000	300	3 x 500 = 1,500	50
3. Vaccinations & Cattle Movement Permit	4,500	150	4,500	150
4. Round trip to market	4,000	133	4,000	133
5. Truck Rental	---	---	3 x 40,000=120,000-50,000 150,000	4,000-5,000
6. Food for truck driver and his apprentice.	---	---	3 x 1,500 4,500	150
7. Amortization of Traders License.[2]	598 - 838	20-28	60	2
8. Indemnities for crop damage.[3]	?	?	0	0
9. Forced Sales, Mortalities.[4]	0 - 84,400	0 - 2,813	?	?
10. Weight loss.[5]	?	?	---	---
11. Cost of Capital.[6]	5,661 - 13,210	189-440	566 - 944	19-31
TOTAL COSTS	53,759-145,948	1,792-4,864	159,126 - 189,504	5,304-6,317
TIME IN ROUTE	10 - 14 DAYS		1 DAY	

[1] One Drover accompanies each truck to watch over the cattle.

[2] The annual charge for a business license is 21,840 FCFA for traders who sell 301-400 head per year. Multiplying 21,840 by the fraction of a year needed to transport the animals yields the amount of license amortized over that period of time.

[3] We were unable to obtain this data.

[4] The assumption here is the same as that used in Table XV. To facilitate comparison of the costs of trekking and trucking, when returns are not being compared, losses due to forced sale and mortality are considered explicit costs. Hence, they are added to the total cost of trekking.

[5] Animals trekked to Kumba lose weight in the dry season, but they lose little if any weight during the rainy season. The amount of weight lost and the cost of losses were not determined.

[6] Capital Cost = Capital Outlay for Cattle x Opportunity Cost of Capital x Fraction of Year during which Capital is in Cattle.
Capital Cost = 1,722,000 x 12-20 percent x Fraction of Year for Trekking/Trucking

C. Costs and Returns of Butchering/Retailing in Bamenda

Table XVII presents typical costs and returns for the slaughtering and retailing of cattle in Bamenda in July, 1979, based on prices and costs obtained during the study. The net return shown in Table XVII is split between the butcher and the apprentices who retail part of the butcher's meat. The table shows that if butchers sold all their meat at the official control prices, they would lose between 2,985 and 6,487 FCFA per head. By selling above the control price the slaughtering/retailing operation yields a net return to the labor of the butcher and his apprentices and to the butcher's management and capital of from 7,613 to 11,115 FCFA per head, which represents 10.2 - 14.6 percent of the total receipts from retailing meat. The actual return is probably lower than this, due to occasional fines imposed for selling above ceiling prices. Furthermore, the butcher's share of the profit may be reduced due to meat pilferage by apprentices. The margin is also subject to variation, because cattle are purchased on sight rather than by weight. As a result, the butcher may misjudge the weight of the animal he buys. For example, the price per kilogram carcass weight of five animals weighed during the study varied from 430 to 479 FCFA, which would yield a return ranging from 4,953 to 15,315 FCFA per head.

Bidding cattle prices based upon visual estimation involves important risks for butchers. For if a butcher misjudges an animal's weight and pays a high price per kilogram liveweight, he may lose money and face cash flow problems. He may be forced to buy on credit. Without cash to purchase animals, the butcher may find it more difficult to obtain

TABLE XVII

TYPICAL COSTS AND RETURNS FOR THE BUTCHERING/RETAILING OPERATION IN BAMENDA, JULY 1979

Item	Amount FCFA	Percentage of Total Costs
COSTS:		
1. Purchase of animal with 140 kg carcass at 460 FCFA/kg.	62,400	93.0 - 95.7
2. Payment to brokers	200 - 1,000	0.3 - 1.5
3. Transport of butcher to and from cattle market.	200	0.3
4. Transport of animal from cattle market to slaughter slab (paid in kind).	1,200- 1,500	1.8 - 2.2
5. Slaughter tax.	500	0.7 - 0.8
6. Payment to Mallam to cut throat.	100	0.1 - 0.2
7. Amortization of butcher's license (21,840 FCFA per year - 350 animals per year).[1]	62	0.1
8. Stall rental (4,500 FCFA for 3 months - 72 market days).	58	0.1
9. Transport of meat from slaughter slab to market.	200	0.3
10. Payment to apprentices for dressing animal (paid in kind).	200 - 1,000	0.3 - 1.5
11. Loss through condemnation: 0.1% of above costs.	65 - 67	0.1
TOTAL COSTS	65,185-67,087	100%

[1]See Table I, Annex II for details.

RECEIPTS:

Case 1: Meat sold retail at prevailing market prices

1. Bone wastage: 3 kgs.	0
2. 80 kg. (60% of carcass) sold bone-in at 450 FCFA/kg	36,000
3. 52 kg. sold boneless at 500 FCFA/kg.	26,000

4. 4 kg. of filet sold at 600 FCFA/kg.	2,400
5. 5 kg. of liver sold at 500 FCFA/kg.	2,500
6. Head	1,500 - 2,000
7. Hide	1,500
8. Tail	900 - 1,200
9. Heart, spleen, lungs	800 - 1,000
10. Intestines	600 - 1,000
11. Feet: 4 at 225 FCFA	900
12. Stomach	800 - 1,000
13. Kidneys: 2 at 200 FCFA	400
14. 1 kg of meat left over sold next day at 400 FCFA	400
TOTAL RECEIPTS	74,700 - 76,300
Net Return to the Butcher's Labor, Management and Capital and to the Labor of the Apprentices	7,613 - 11,115 (10.2 to 14.6 percent of retail price).

RECEIPTS:

Case 2: All meat sold at official control prices

1. Bone wastage: 3 kg.	0
2. 80 kg. sold bone-in at 350 FCFA/kg.	28,000
3. 57 kg. sold boneless at 400 FCFA/kg.	22,800
4. 5 kg. of liver sold at 400 FCFA/kg.	2,000
5. Rest of fifth quarter same as case 1.	7,800 - 9,400
TOTAL RECEIPTS	60,600 - 62,200
Net Return to Butchering and Retailing	-2,985 to -6,487

cattle for slaughter. Sellers prefer cash payment, and they may ask higher prices to cover the risk of selling on credit. This is more likely to be the case during the dry season, when demand for beef exceeds the supply of slaughter cattle and hence the advantage in bargaining tends to lie with the seller.

IV. MARKETING OF SMALL STOCK IN NORTHWEST PROVINCE

A. Location and Organization of Markets

Small ruminants, pigs and poultry are sold in and alongside foodstuff markets on the days that these markets meet. Only in Kumba were small ruminants sold inside a fenced enclosure. Pork is regularly retailed in the market place, while small ruminants and fowls are usually slaughtered in consumers' compounds. In theory, the Veterinary Service supervises all slaughter and regulates the movement of all small stock. In reality, it is extremely difficult, particularly in the absence of adequate staff, to control small stock marketing and slaughter.

The largest small stock markets are located in major production areas. Ndu, Kumbo and Ndop are the most important small ruminant markets. Traders come primarily from Western and Central South Provinces to assemble goats and sheep for shipment via small pickup trucks to Mbouda, Bafoussam, Nkongsamba, Douala and Yaounde. Pigs are produced and marketed in large quantities in Momo Division, particularly at Guzang, Tad and Widikum markets, and at Bali, Ndop, Santa and Bambili markets in Mezam Division. Fowls are marketed throughout Northwest Province, with large numbers found in the markets around Bamenda (Bali, Guzang, Big Babanki, Bambili and Tad). The demand for poultry and eggs is strongest within Northwest Province in Bamenda.

Most of the people selling goats, sheep, pigs, and fowls in the markets are producers, who sell directly to traders or local consumers.

In the larger assembly markets traders do a lot of the selling. They acquire their animals by buying from producers on their farms or in smaller markets and from producers who come to the assembly market early in the day to sell quickly and spend the rest of the day buying and selling other items. Some traders selling small ruminants at Tad market had purchased their stock directly from producers at Oshie and trekked the animals to Tad (a distance of about 30 km.). More commonly, sellers buy directly from producers in the areas around the assembly markets in order to sell to large-scale traders from Western and Southwest Provinces, Pinyin and Bamenda.

Not all of the traders who move small stock from assembly markets to larger towns come from the demand centers. There are also enterprising local traders who buy and then trek small ruminants and piglets to nearby markets for resale or ship them by public transport to points farther away. For example, a number of small-scale pig traders buy piglets in Guzang and trek them to Widikum or other nearby markets. When these traders want to sell piglets or fattened pigs outside the province or fattened pigs in other markets of Northwest (Widikum, Bamenda), they go via public transport. Fowls that leave assembly markets for Bamenda and other consumption points are also transported publicly. Most of the people buying fowls in Bali, Guzang and other markets around Bamenda are small-scale operators, who buy 3-10 for resale. There are, however larger traders based in Northwest or in Western, Southwest and Central South Provinces who assemble fowls for shipment south in small pickup trucks.

TABLE XVIII

FLOWS OF GOATS, SHEEP, PIGS, AND POULTRY FROM PRODUCTION AREAS IN NORTHWEST PROVINCE TO CONSUMPTION POINTS IN AND OUTSIDE OF THE PROVINCE

			DESTINATION (BY PROVINCE			
Year	Type of Livestock	Total Leaving	Southwest	Littoral & Western	Central South	North-west
1974/75	Goats	8,844	1,435	7,364	40	-
	Sheep	3,875	379	3,496	-	-
	Pigs	567	322	245	-	-
	Poultry	20,107	12,877	6,898	322	-
1975/76	Goats	6,662	2,012	7,247	403	-
	Sheep	5,157	953	3,669	535	-
	Pigs	1,857	1,292	549	16	-
	Poultry	22,254	7,719	11,013	3,522	-
1976/77	Sheep/Goats	15,155	754	11,094	209	323
	Pigs	1,045	175	185	49	636
	Poultry	20,868	4,886	9,532	2,114	1,423
1977/78	Sheep/Goats	8,036	1,382	5,326	363	965
	Pigs	465	162	5	208	90
	Poultry	19,797	5,443	6,770	2,593	3 251

SOURCE: Annual Reports: Ministry of Animal Breeding and Industries, Provincial Delegation for Northwest Province.

B. Flows of Small Stock

From the livestock movement statistics kept by the Veterinary Service it is possible to get an idea where small stock is flowing. Veterinary officials are supposed to inspect all small stock moving from

each Division to other provinces, as well as to other points within Northwest Province. Traders are supposed to pay a small fee per animal (ranging from 20 to 50 FCFA), but they often try to avoid paying it. Hence, MINEL statistics understate small stock movement, but they give us a rough idea of the proportion of livestock flowing out of the Northwest to different demand centers.

Table XVIII shows that most of the goats and sheep that leave Northwest Province go to Littoral and Western Provinces. Pigs are sent to Southwest more frequently than elsewhere, although the overall volume of pig exports from Northwest appears lower than for small ruminants. Poultry flows appear to be more evenly divided between Littoral and Western Provinces (34-49 percent), Southwest Province (23-64 percent), Central South Province (10-16 percent) and Northwest Province (7-16 percent).

Although monthly statistics on flows of small stock are lacking, buyers and sellers reported that flows vary greatly by season. Demand for small stock is highest during the Moslem holidays, around Christmas, and generally throughout the dry season (November-March). As with beef, the demand for pork, poultry, goat meat and sheep is strongest when other foodstuffs (grain, vegetables, fruit) are in short supply. Pigs and fowls in particular compete with humans for stored maize and other foodcrops during this period. Some producers and traders also claimed that sales of pigs and poultry continue at a high level through the beginning of the rainy season, as producers sell animals to minimize damage to newly planted crops. The demand for small stock falls off during the rest of the rainy season, as vegetables and other foodcrops substitute for meat, pork and poultry.

V. MAJOR ISSUES IN THE EXPANSION OF CATTLE PRODUCTION AND TRADE IN NORTHWEST PROVINCE:

This section outlines basic issues involved in improving:

1. Cattle production.
2. Cattle marketing.
3. Retail beef marketing in Northwest Province.

A. Policy Issues in Developing Cattle Production:

1. Development of Cattle Production for Whom

Northwest Province has a high potential as a cattle producing region for several reasons. First, cattle flourish in the mild climate of the Northwest where there is plenty of rainfall and good pasture, a short dry season, and relatively little disease. The potential demand for increased output is large and expanding, both in Nigeria and in domestic urban areas (Bamenda, Douala, and the cities of Southwest and Western Provinces). Finally, most cattle are owned by the Fulani, a specialized herding group that is responsive to new production techniques if they are available and profitable at the farm level, and provided the Fulani have secured title to their grazing areas.

Before encouraging cattle development in the Northwest, however, several questions should be asked. First, who will benefit from increased cattle production? Cattle are held by only about 3.3 percent of the households in Northwest Province. These include the Fulani and some Hausa, the Pinyin and other indigenous peoples, and some civil servants who have recently begun investing in cattle.

Therefore, cattle development projects aimed at current owners of cattle will most directly benefit a small proportion of the rural population. At the same time, cattle development projects have the potential of generating broader based indirect benefits. Expanded production will keep meat prices from rising rapidly and induce greater meat consumption, as long as some of the additional animals produced are slaughtered in Northwest Province. As producer incomes increase, graziers will probably spend more on food raising, the demand for foodstuffs, which will help drive the local food crop economy forward. Hence, the dynamic impact of expanded cattle production and consumption upon agricultural and rural development must be considered.

A second and related issue concerns whether producers will be allowed to take advantage of the high prices offered for cattle in the Nigerian market. This is a political question of how the benefits from increased production will be distributed between domestic producers and consumers of beef. If traders are legally authorized to send more cattle to Nigeria, their income and the earnings of domestic producers will rise. The government's foreign exchange earnings will also increase. Domestic consumers will probably have to pay higher prices for beef, although it is possible that expansion of the trade with Nigeria will serve as a catalyst for increasing marketed output to such an extent that local consumption does not fall. On the other hand, if there is little incentive to increase production and illegal exports continue to mount, then domestic beef prices will increase even more rapidly than they would if exports to Nigeria were authorized. The Nigerian issue will have to be addressed through the political process.

2. Alternative Uses of the Scarce Factor, Land:

The most fundamental issue underlying expansion of cattle production concerns how best use of the increasingly scarce factor, land, is to be made. Agriculture is a more intensive and calorie-productive use of land than is grazing. As population increases in Northwest Province, cattle production and agriculture have competed for land which is generally well-suited to both activities. The result of this has been increasing conflict between farmers and graziers. The conflict has intensified to such an extent that low-land areas formerly reserved for dry season grazing, such as the Ndop and Mbo plains, are being used increasingly for irrigated rice production.

Expansion of rice production might put a limit on cattle population in the province. By denying cattle access to dry season grazing areas, graziers may be prevented from using much larger areas during the rainy season that are only marginally suited to agriculture. Furthermore, restricting transhumance will force herders to graze their stock on upland range during at least part of the dry season and the early part of the rainy season. Overgrazing of early rainy season pasture would have serious consequences for pasture availability later in the rainy season. Finally, expansion of farming on to steep hillsides during the wet season may accelerate erosion. Grazing may be a better way to maintain soil structure and fertility in such areas.

The fact that there are alternative uses of the highly productive land of Northwest Province raises the issue of consistency in funding

rural development projects. If USAID or any other donor agency chooses to promote cattle production in the Northwest, it should not be funding projects that develop cropping in traditional lowland grazing areas, unless it helps cattle producers to ease their dry season feed constraint. This could be done by encouraging land tenure reform or funding research on pasture development. Since the critical feed constraint period in the Northwest is only about three months long, compared with six months in the Sahel, the problem can probably be overcome. It will require changes in land tenure, however, which inevitably involve political divisions as well as effective research and extension to promote pasture improvement and fodder crop production.

3. Land Tenure: A Major Constraint to Increasing Cattle Production:

Although the fertile grasslands of Northwest Province are as potentially productive in livestock products as any other region in West Africa, much of this potential has not yet been realized on account of uncertainty of land tenure facing Fulani graziers. Traditional native authorities do not recognize graziers' rights to land. They may grant permission to indigenous farmers to cultivate land that has been grazed for decades. With this encroachment taking place and no effective means of counteracting it, graziers have no incentive to upgrade pasture and make investments in fencing, cattle treatment crushes, night paddocks and the like. Consequently, MINEL's efforts to promote fencing, improved range management, and cultivation of fodder crops tend to be ignored. The Fulani graziers

are not irrational or resistant to change. Rather, it is not in their interest to invest heavily in any particular grazing sight when that land may be brought under cultivation before an adequate return has been realized.

In order to encourage more rational use and development of the land, graziers need to obtain land title, or at least some form of security regarding land use. The present grazing permit issued to herders authorizes them to graze their livestock within certain geographically circumscribed areas. Permits need to be replaced, however, by certificates of occupancy before larger numbers of graziers will respond to MINEL's attempts to improve range management. Since the traditional chiefs obstruct herders from obtaining certificates of occupancy, their authority regarding land distribution needs to be tempered, if not removed altogether.

FONADER has circumverted the native rulers by not requiring graziers who apply for loans to obtain the certificate of occupancy. An absence of complaints on the part of neighboring graziers and farmers and continuous use of the land for at least five years have served as adequate proxies for land title. This sort of flexibility will have to be continued in order to increase the number of loans in the future. Granting land title might induce some graziers to make the types of improvements voluntarily that are presently funded almost exclusively by FONADER.

4. Farmer-Grazier Problems: an Elaboration:

a). Intensification of the problem in recent years:

Farmer-grazier conflicts have intensified severely over the last decade as increased human and livestock populations have led to more demands on farming and grazing land. Farmers are encroaching upon grazing lands in order to plant coffee, rice, cocoyams, maize and other food crops. These areas had been grazed by Fulani herdsman for several decades with little protest from the indigenous farmers. As the need for more farmland increases, however, the farming population has brought more land under cultivation.

The graziers, who rarely enclose their pastures, can do little to prevent this encroachment, since they lack title to their grazing land. Farming people have inhabited the Northwest for centuries, while the Fulani are relative newcomers. The former regard the land in the province as theirs, and the Fulani have been allowed to graze their cattle as long as this does not conflict with farming. Traditional chiefs of agriculturalist groups have been extremely reluctant, however, to grant land title to the Fulani. The Fulani have always been regarded as intruders, despite the dairy and meat products and the ready market for food crops that they provide. The herders are assessed heavier and heavier fines for crop damage, which often stems from farmer encroachment. Yet, as several informants pointed out, the deterioration in farmer-grazier relations is the product of ill will and misunderstanding on both sides.

b. The administrative mechanism for handling farmer-grazier problems:

Individual cases where crop damage has occured are first handled by MINEL officers of the Farmer-Grazier service who specialize in farmer-grazier problems. These officers must determine whether herder negligence or farmer encroachment is responsible for the damage. In the former instance the grazier is assessed a fine in accordance with the extent of the damage. In the latter case no compensation is provided. In actual practice, it is difficult to decide who is to blame for crop damage. Graziers do not have title to land, so the exact boundary between farming and grazing areas cannot be identified.

When the MINEL officers are not able to resolve a farmer-grazier problem satisfactorily, the case is tried before a commission chaired by the Assistant Divisional Officer or the District Head and composed of representatives of the Ministry of Agriculture, the Ministry of Animal Breeding, and the Domain Services and Cadastre as well as the local Chief and two important persons of the village concerned and an ardo. This commission serves as the court of final appeal. It is also responsible for organizing the rural area into agricultural and grazing zones and determining how mixed zones are to be used. Although not many cases reach the commission, scarce MINEL staff resources could be better allocated if farmer-grazier conflict were minimized. Clearly demarcated garzing areas and fencing of the rangeland and farms would go a long way toward solving these problems.

c. Rice production schemes and farmer-grazier problems:

The government, working through the cooperatives and agencies such as the Upper Noun Valley Development Authority (UNVDA), the Wum Area Development Authority (WADA) and the Societe de Developpement de la Riziculture dans les Plaines des Mbo (SODERIM), has promoted rice production in low lying valleys in Northwest Province during the 1970's. Both upland and irrigated rice production is expanding especially rapidly in the Ndop and Mbo plains, where two crops per year are possible. Both of these areas have served for decades as dry season grazing lands for Fulani livestock on transhumance. Consequently, promotion of rice production has exacerbated farmer-grazier conflicts in these fertile lowlands. The conflict is especially severe in the Ndop plain, where 1,000 hectares of irrigated rice are presently cultivated. The UNVDA intends to expand this to 3,000 hectares over the next four years. The creation of a lake in the Ndop plain by construction of a dam for hydroelectric purposes along the Noun River has further eliminated many hectares of farmer dry season pasture.[1]

Several years ago the UNVDA implemented a rule which compels farmers to harvest rice by the end of December (or some other predetermined date near the end of the year). This limits farmers to one rice crop per year and enables herders to move their cattle into the Ndop plain for dry season grazing from January through March. If cattle cause crop damage before this date, then the responsible graziers

[1]Boutrais, Deux Etudes sur l'Elevage en Zone Tropicale on Cameroun Orstom, Travaux et Documents #88, 1970.

have to pay compensation. If cattle damage unharvested rice after this date, then the farmers are not compensated. It has proved difficult to enforce this rule, however, since farmers do not always plant their rice early enough to allow them to harvest by the end of December. In addition, the hillside grasslands begin drying up as early as late November, so it becomes increasingly difficult to keep cattle from straying into the maturing rice crops before the harvest.

Even after the rice harvest is in, farmers are reluctant to allow cattle to graze on the stubble of their fields, despite the obvious benefits that the animals' droppings would have upon rice production. This is so because animals damage the dikes of the surface irrigation system and repairs are costly in terms of farmer labor and/or payment of occasional laborers. The UNVDA has proposed fencing as a solution. Enclosures would prevent trampling of dikes, and rice stubble would be gathered and piled outside the fences for cattle to graze upon. The problem with this scheme, however, is that it fails to designate who should provide or pay for the fencing and labor. Farmers might be willing to put up fences, but it is unlikely they will gather and pile fodder for cattle without charge. The herders are equally unwilling to perform this task. It would represent a significant increase in dry season labor for them. Instead, they prefer to graze in the plain as they always have done. Presently, there is some incidence of surrepitious night time grazing by herders. By doing this the graziers are able to feed their animals at no additional cost, although damage to crops and dikes may prove costly to farmers.

UNVDA officials, livestock and agricultural service representatives, and traditional authorities including chiefs of the farming peoples and Fulani ardoz have discussed the issues of crop damage during the rice growing season and dry season grazing ever since the founding of UNVDA in 1970. No solution to the problem of damage to the irrigation channels has yet been reached. The conflict between herders and rice farmers in the Mbo plain are evidently not so severe as in the Ndop plain, largely because the surface irrigation system is less elaborate. As in Ndop, the farmers must harvest by the end of December to allow cattle to enter the Mbo plain for dry season grazing.

An important question underlying the issue of farmer-grazier conflict in lowland areas devoted to rice production is whether it makes sense from the economic standpoint to promote rice production in place of dry season grazing. An analysis of the returns from these alternative enterprises in the valleys is needed before any judgment can be made. It appears that returns from grazing may be higher than those from rice production, particularly when one recognizes the difficulty Cameroonian rice has in competing against imported rice from Asia. It should be emphasized, however, that upland pasture improvement and cultivation of fodder crops could relieve the dry season grazing constraint in lowland areas. Successful promotion of this strategy would eliminate the tradeoff between dry season grazing and rice production in the lowlands.

d. Possible solutions to farmer-grazier problems:

There are several possible solutions to the farmer-grazier problem. The first would be to restrict further agricultural development in dry season grazing areas. As population density increases, however, this may not be either desirable or politically feasible. The second would be to allow further agricultural development of these areas and encourage a shift in livestock production away from cattle into small ruminants, poultry and pork, which may be less subject to dry season feed constraints. The disadvantage of this strategy, however, is that the capacity to use rainy season pasture, which is only marginally suited to agriculture, would be reduced. This would involve a major political decision to favor agricultural development at the expense of graziers.

A third possibility, one currently being promoted by the Ministry of Animal Breeding and Industries, is to encourage graziers to cultivate drought-resistant forage crops (i.e., Guatemala grass) that allow the cattle to forego the dry season transhumance. A major constraint to graziers establishing drought-resistant improved pastures, however, is a lack of secure land tenure. Since graziers do not have title to the land upon which their animals graze, they are unwilling to invest a lot of money in improving pastures for fear of being evicted before they have recouped their investment. The government has established a procedure by which graziers can obtain title to their land, but the procedure is lengthy and tends to favor the better educated and politically connected graziers.

Graziers who share the ethnic background of the local farming people tend to have fewer problems in obtaining land title.

Even if graziers were able to secure rights to grazing land, they might not willingly cultivate fodder crops which would substitute for dry season transhumance. The planting and cutting of Guatemala grass to feed livestock is a labor intensive process which might not be accepted readily by the Fulani. To date their involvement and interest in crop cultivation has been limited, and they tend to regard agriculture as an inferior means of earning a livelihood. Fodder production would probably be associated strongly with food crop cultivation. If the graziers accepted the innovation of producing fodder, but were unwilling to perform the necessary labor, they would have to pay farmers to do it. In the final analysis, it will be important to search for alternatives to solve the dilemma of increasing farmer-grazier competition for land. Rather than casting the problem in an either farming or grazing framework, alternatives such as promotion of fodder production and marketing should be considered.

5. Access of Graziers to Veterinary Medicines and Services:

The second most commonly cited problem by graziers was tick-borne diseases and worms. Although disease is less of a problem in the Northwest than in most other parts of West Africa, graziers often reported difficulty in obtaining the veterinary medicines and services they needed. In theory, veterinary care and medicines are provided free by the Veterinary Service in Cameroon, and they are

financed by the 200 FCFA head tax (the Djangali). In reality, the Veterinary Service vaccinates cattle biannually against black quarter and hemorragic septicemia, but deworming medicine, tick spray and castrating rings are often out of stock. As a result, graziers are forced to go without these inputs, or they buy them from private sources when available or from Livestock Service representatives who accumulate private stocks. Furthermore, a lack of adequate transport limits the mobility of the veterinary field staff, and hence its ability to respond to graziers' request for help.

The provision of free (but inadequate) veterinary care does not seem to be justified by a lack of willingness to pay on the part of cattle graziers. Most of the graziers interviewed said they would pay for reliable veterinary care if they could get it, and some have gone as far as Nigeria to buy medicines for their animals. Small stock producers are also willing to pay for services, but they are seldom available. Provision of free veterinary care to small stock producers might conceivably be justified on a public health externality basis. That is, if some people are unwilling to pay for veterinary care, all producers may lose because of an epidemic.

Several steps could be taken to improve the situation. The first would be reform of procedures for procuring veterinary inputs. At present no domestic production of vaccines or drugs takes place. Instead, a parastatal company, the Office Pharmaceutique Veterinaire (OPV), imports most of the drugs, although it can also license others to import. Imported vaccines were coming from Ndjamena,

Chad, where production laboratories are located. The recent civil war has completely disrupted this flow, however, so imported drugs are currently passing through France. As a result, veterinary inputs have become more costly and they are taking a longer time to arrive. Yet even without this recent change, procurement of drugs would remain a lengthy process. Veterinarians report frequent delays in obtaining certain inputs, since they must make requests through official channels. Livestock Service Chiefs of Post must request inputs from Chiefs of Center, who in turn appeal to Subsector Chiefs (at the Divisional level). The Subsector Chiefs write to the Provincial Delegate, who must then make a written request to one of the OPV centers in Yaounde or Douala.

Within a couple of years there will be on OPV center in Bamenda. In the more distant future there may be OPV centers in each Divisional administrative center (Wum, Kumbo and Nkambe) as well. It will be interesting to see how well the OPV distribution system functions once it is set up. In order to supplement OPV efforts, other organizations (such as cooperatives or private firms) could be allowed to import in competition with OPV. This competition could serve to discipline the parastatal, which might otherwise operate inefficiently. Domestic production would be a longer range, though admittedly costly alternative to depending on imported inputs.

There is also room for improving provision of veterinary services once the medicines are available. One way to do this would be to eliminate the Djangali and charge graziers directly for

services. Currently graziers do not see the connection between the Djangali and the veterinary services they receive. If other organizations in addition to the Veterinary Service (i.e., cooperatives) were allowed to sell production inputs (vaccines, tick spray, castrating rings, etc.), wider distribution of these inputs could probably be achieved. Since early 1979, veterinarians in Cameroon have had the right to operate private practices. Therefore, veterinarians or veterinary assistants could be associated with the different input retailers and could administer the drugs purchased from them.

Another way to achieve wider distribution of inputs, as well as promote better flows of information about market conditions and production techniques, would be to use cattle markets as centers for extension meetings and input sales. Since practically all cattle graziers sell at least some animals, wide coverage of graziers could be achieved in this way. This model might be less applicable for input sales and extension for small stock producers, however, as most small stock is consumed in rural areas without entering market channels. Working through the small stock markets would therefore only reach the more commercialized producers. Providing vaccines and other inputs and veterinary care for small stock would require far more resources and staff than the veterinary service is currently able to provide. The Provincial Delegate of MINEL estimated that five to six times the present annual allocation of funds (10,000,000 FCFA) would be needed to provide all the cattle, small ruminants, pigs and fowl with adequate veterinary care.

6. Dairy Versus Meat Production:

Currently much of the extension work and market infrastructure is aimed at increasing meat offtake from the herders. Yet many of the production decisions by the Fulani (i.e., the choice of animals to castrate) are made on the basis of mild production. Sales of dairy products are a source of income for smaller graziers and women in the Fulani households. Milk is also an important source of protein in the Fulani diet and may be important in the diet of farmers with whom the Fulani trade. More research needs to be done on dairy production and exchange between herders and farmers before interventions are contemplated. There have been attempts to introduce exotic breeds of dairy cows (U.S. Jersey and Guernsey cows) and cross breeds between exotic and local varieties by the Heifer Project International at Bambui, but so far these efforts have had limited success. HPI and USAID are presently planning to undertake a larger scale dairy production project that will affect Northwest Province.

7. Genetic Improvement:

The cattle in Northwest Province are zebus from the savanna. They are long-legged, rangy animals, well adapted to sparse grazing and long transhumances. In Northwest Province, however, both the dry season and the transhumance are short. Thus, there seems to be room for improving local stock by developing a more fleshy animal that is a more efficient converter of feed into meat and/or milk. Local Fulani have begun to do this, crossing their animals with

improved breeds from the Adamaoua Plateau, and some FONADER recipients are procuring Goudali for breeding purposes from Dumbo ranch. Most graziers do not have access, however, to improved breeding stock. There may be a high pay off to examining ways to increase this access. In the final analysis, further crossbreeding should be encouraged, provided more improved breeds can be made available.

B. Policy Issues in Developing Cattle Marketing:

Among the issues involved in developing cattle marketing in Northwest Province are the relative bargaining power of producers and cattle traders, graziers' motivations for selling, problems of livestock transport, the seasonality of supplies and prices, and the role of the government in promoting long run improvements.

1. Price Information and Formation of Price Expectations:

As mentioned above, there is little evidence of traders buying from isolated producers in the bush except during the dry season, when the relative bargaining power of the graziers is probably highest. Graziers contacted during the study indicated they were aware of prices in local markets, either through attending the markets or talking with friends who had recently sold animals. Furthermore, since assembly markets are near producing areas, it is not uncommon for a grazier to speculate, bringing animals to market and returning home with them if he does not receive the price he wants. Thus, there seems to be little exploitation of producers by traders, and

actions to restrict traders' activities on these grounds do not seem warranted.

One area in which more research should be done is that of price variation over space. Since no detailed records of sale prices for cattle of different sex and ages are kept in Northwest Province, it is impossible to know the extent of price variation over space. It is clear how producers learn about prices offered at assembly markets, but it is not at all clear how producer price expectations are influenced by prices offered in markets further along the chain. As noted before, there are some graziers who trade cattle and, therefore frequently sell in Bamenda. In most assembly areas there are a number of grazier-traders who may pass up-to-date price information back to other graziers. It is not always in their interest, however, to communicate price changes in Bamenda or Kumba to other producers from whom they often buy. One indication that producers are aware of price variation over space is that cattle prices have risen substantially over the last seven years, both as demand for beef has increased and as graziers' cost of living has forced them to ask for higher prices. In a few assembly areas traders complained about how producers had raised prices in a seemingly unilateral fashion, presumably in response to higher costs of living.

A very important equity issue is that of alternative access to information. Traders tend to be better informed than producers. In the course of their operations, traders will necessarily be well apprised of price variation over space and time. On the other hand,

producers face high transactions costs in obtaining accurate information. In addition, larger traders tend to be better informed than their smaller counterparts. This has especially important implications for trucking of cattle, since at present it is the largest traders who have access to information of temporary intermarket price differentials, as well as the capital, which enables them to truck. Finally, there is probably unequal access to information among producers of different sizes.

On account of the types of unequal access discussed above, there may be justification for intervening to improve market price information. Prices could be provided to traders and producers at regulated markets. This would require setting up an agency which would collect prices at different markets and disseminate this information via public broadcast or weekly (monthly) price sheets to be posted at all markets. Marketing agents would be needed to help market participants interpret price differentials over space and time. Familiarity with prices in southern markets would improve the bargaining power of producers, while traders in northern assembly markets would have some rough measure by which to gauge their return from sending cattle south. In sum, a price information service would increase competition in assembly markets as well as producer and trader knowledge of market opportunities. Before establishing such a service, however, start-up and operating costs would have to be estimated and the issue of who should pay would need to be addressed.

2. Grazier Motivation for Selling Cattle:

Increased cattle production and/or higher prices will lead to increased supplies of cattle in the market only if producers decide to sell more animals. Therefore, the question of what motivates producers to sell is crucial.

Producers contacted indicated that in the short run, at least, they tend to sell animals when they have a pressing need for cash rather than at times when the sales would maximize their cash incomes. Such behavior may be economically rational in that:

a). The value of cattle has been increasing rapidly in recent years; therefore, cattle, unlike cash, provide an inflation-proof means of savings.

b). Given existing land tenure arrangements (communal grazing), the private cost of holding an additional animal is low, equal to the risk that the animal will die during the year.

c). Cattle, unlike cash, come in large indivisible units; therefore, it is harder for relatives to make demands on cattle than it is for them to make demands on cash.

The policy implications of such behavior, if true, are that if one wants to increase herd offtake, it will be necessary to increase graziers' cash needs, provide them with alternative inflation-proof investments, or increase the private cost of holding additional cattle on the range. One way of achieving this goal would be through making consumer goods and production inputs more widely available. Another way would be through increasing the availability of education for the children of graziers. Both grazier purchases of consumer goods and investment in their children's formal education are increasing spontaneously. Finally, reforms of land tenure, so as to

increase the private cost of holding mature animals and to encourage investment in land improvement (i.e., improved pasture), would also increase herd offtake. By doing this, Fulani producers would be encouraged to keep younger animals that gain weight at a more rapid rate than older ones, since they would be trying to obtain the largest possible unit weight gain from the (limited) pasture utilized. This would increase cattle production for the market.

3. Problems of Livestock Transport:

All cattle traders contacted during the study said that livestock transport was their major problem. If the cattle trade is to be promoted in Northwest Province, serious attention must be paid to the question of transport. Within Northwest Province, the major problems include:

a). Very narrow roads and trek routes through heavily farmed areas, particularly in the western part of the province. Since the routes are narrow, crop damage by the animals is frequent, as are the subsequent disputes with farmers about compensation.

b). The poor condition of trek routes, roads, and bridges, especially during the rainy season. The animals become exhausted trekking through heavy mud, and they sometimes slip on the slick roads or fall through planks on bridges, leading to injuries that force traders to sell the animals at a loss.

c). The lack of night paddocks along the route. Previously, such paddocks existed, but they have been usurped by local farmers who were attracted by the soil fertility of these heavily-manured areas.

In trekking cattle out of Northwest Province to Kumba and Douala, the major problem is that there are no separate trek routes for cattle. The animals therefore, have to walk along the main highway. Farmers cultivate right up to the edge of the roads, and the

animals often wander onto surrounding fields, causing crop damage. Accidents between cattle and vehicles are not infrequent; traders report that this is the major cause of mortality in trekking cattle south. In the event of an accident, the trader not only loses his animal, but he is also liable for damages to the vehicle. Traders also report that animals trekked south through the forest zone lose considerable weight during the dry season, although weight loss does not seem to be much of a problem during the rainy season.

Over the long run trucking will probably become the principal mode of transporting cattle to southern markets. Trucking permits traders to respond quickly to shortages of cattle in Kumba and Douala that lead to high prices in those markets. In addition, trucking enables traders to turn over their capital at a much more rapid rate, thereby increasing their incomes (although their costs increase also). Although more research needs to be done in this area, it may well be that trucking will reduce mortality and forced sales of cattle, which presently cause traders to lose money. It certainly will eliminate financial costs and ill will created by trekking, which leads inevitably to crop damage. Finally, trucking will reduce weight losses caused by trekking to Kumba and other sourthern markets during the dry season. It is possible that some sort of association of small traders, which would pool the traders' capital and spread the risk of trucking, would allow merchants other than the larger and wealthier ones who presently truck to benefit from trucking their cattle to market. The government will play an important role in ensuring competitive access to trucking services.

Perhaps the government or donor agencies can provide some of the funds to help the traders' associations get started.

4. Seasonality of Prices:

Cattle prices, especially for well-fed animals, are reportedly highest during the dry season when most cattle are in their dry-season grazing areas far from the markets. There seem to be opportunities for some temporal arbitrage of cattle. This would involve buying animals in the rainy season and holding them near the markets on a maintenance ration (i.e., Guatemala grass and mineral supplement) for resale during the dry season when prices are high. One wealthy grazier is presently doing this near Bamenda. The major constraint to other people doing it seems to be the necessity of tying up a large amount of capital in the animals over several months. Perhaps producer or trader associations could pool capital contributions from many members to allow smaller traders and producers to benefit from seasonal price changes. Alternatively, a program of short-term loans to individual producers or traders would allow them to conduct this sort of temporal arbitrage.

5. The Role of Government in Promoting Long-Run Marketing Improvements:

In many instances developing country governments become adversaries of traders. They maintain that intermediaries capture monopoly profits, procuring primary produce at low prices and charging consumers high prices. As a result of these beliefs, governments impose price

and margin controls or attempt to take over functions performed by private traders by establishing marketing agencies or boards. These interventions usually have adverse unintended consequences. Controls provide disincentives to producers and traders which ultimately reduce product flow. Government take-over of marketing is costly and inefficient, as marketing agencies usually have higher administrative and operating costs than intermediaries in the private sector.

Rather than creating suspicion and hostility through punitive regulatory measures, developing country governments would be better advised to intervene in ways that facilitate marketing system coordination and change instead of impeding it. In the case of livestock marketing in Cameroon, government planners and livestock officials should consider alternative means to increase product flow and to improve livestock sector coordination and performance. Over the long run, marketing margins will be held down by moving from a livestock marketing system based upon personal inspection of produce at each stage along the chain to one where produce can be categorized according to standardized grades and measures. As this begins to occur, transactions costs will be reduced and overall marketing costs will fall.

One possible long-term intervention would be the introduction of scales at cattle markets. One argument for using scales is that traders are generally better able to estimate cattle weights (or more precisely, returns that particular animals will yield) than are graziers.[1] In addition, buyers have better information about prices

[1]It is important to note that traders' bids for cattle are based not only on their estimate of the return cattle will yield but also on their appraisal of how well particular animals will be able to endure the trek to market.

at other markets than do sellers. As a result, they are often able to obtain cattle at lower prices than what they would be willing to pay. This is, of course, less than ideal from an equity standpoint, as producers returns are lower than they might be if animals were weighed and better price information were available. A second argument for introducing scales is that the high transactions costs involved in personal inspection of cattle by traders would be reduced. As livestock marketing became more highly standardized a few fairly easily identifiable cattle grades would be established, and prices per kilogram would be fixed within a certain range. The type of system envisioned for Cameroon would fall somewhere between this ideal and the present system.

Traders and producers interviewed had mixed reactions about the proposed introduction of scales. Some producers fear that traders would bribe Area Council or Livestock Service representatives to readjust scales or misreport cattle weights. Others said they preferred to bargain, anticipating that they could obtain higher prices for their cattle than those based on fixed rates per kilogram. Many traders also prefer to bargain, claiming that they are often able to buy cattle at low prices, particularly when graziers are anxious to sell in order to meet some immediate cash need. Some traders feared that intermarket price differentials in a system where prices per kilogram would be higher at markets farther along the chain would not be high enough to cover trekking costs and losses incurred due to forced sales, mortality and cattle weight loss en route. Other traders and producers opposed the introduction of scales for no apparent reason other than a general suspicion

about governmental motives for becoming increasingly involved in livestock marketing.

C. Issues in Retail Beef Marketing:

There are two major issues involved in improving retail meat marketing: retail price controls and butchers' payments for services.

1. Price Controls:

All the butchers contacted cited retail price controls as their number one problem. Butchers point out that they have been required by law to sell at a constant retail price, while the cost of cattle has risen in recent years. Butchers in several cities in Northwest Province went on strike in early 1979 to protest this situation.

As shown above, butchers in Bamenda currently would lose money if they sold their meat at the control price. Butchers, therefore, are forced to evade the law. This not only engenders disrespect for the law in general. It also creates the possibility of corruption (i.e., through bribing price control authorities to turn a blind eye to sales above the control price). Furthermore, if price controls are strictly enforced in certain cities and more laxly enforced in others, cattle merchants will ship their animals to the areas where prices are not regulated, denying cities with strict price controls their meat supply. In general, encouraging competition in the cattle and butchering trades and improving livestock transport are probably more effective ways of holding down retail meat prices than are price controls.

A fundamental issue underlying price controls is their disincentive effect upon livestock production. Controls are inconsistent with the objective of increasing production for the Cameroonian market, and they encourage traders to export cattle to Nigeria. By imposing price ceilings, the government shows a lack of understanding of the signals that prices provide to producers and traders as well as ignorance of butchers' operating costs and minimum profit requirements.

It should also be noted that the way the Cameroonian government handles the export question will have a major impact on retail beef prices. If the government effectively restricts exports, incentives to market cattle may be undermined, producers would lower offtake, and resources would then shift out of livestock marketing into other enterprises. Cameroonian consumers might end up consuming less beef. On the other hand, relaxing export restrictions would provide incentives for producers to increase production, and offtake for the domestic market might rise along with exports to Nigeria.

2. Butchers' Payments for Services:

Butchers in all towns in Northwest Province, including Bamenda, complain about the quality of slaughter and meat facilities available to them. Slaughter slabs lack carcass hoists and running water, and sanitary conditions, even in Bamenda, are deplorable. Similarly, market stalls are run-down and dirty. The butchers complain that although they pay fees for the use of the slabs and the markets, the local Area Councils that administer the facilities use the receipts for general revenue purposes rather than for maintenance of the facilities.

It might, therefore, be advisable to transfer administration of the slaughter slabs and meat market facilities to a butchers' association or to the Livestock Service, either of which would be charged with investing user fees in improvement and maintenance of the facilities.

VI. ISSUES IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF OTHER TYPES OF LIVESTOCK IN NORTHWEST PROVINCE:

This section presents some ideas on issues related to increasing production and marketing of small ruminants, pork, and poultry in Northwest Province.

A. Small Ruminants:

The first question to ask about small ruminant projects is whether they will focus mainly on sheep or goats. This is an important distributional question, as the Fulani own most of the sheep, while agriculturalists own most of the goats. A second question is whether the dry season feed constraint is as serious for small ruminants as it is for cattle. If it is, expansion of small ruminant, particularly sheep, production may run into the same type of farmer-grazier problems described above for cattle. Even expansion of goat production, which takes place on farms, may require changes in cropping patterns, (i.e., the introduction of forage cultivation) to overcome the dry season feed constraint. There are presently some large-scale goat farmers who have begun to cultivate Guatemala grass.

Another point to consider is that if the government decided to encourage the production and substitution of small ruminant meat for beef in the diet, some changes in the retail meat marketing system will

be necessary. Currently, very little small ruminant meat is retailed in the market. Consumers buy live sheep and goats for slaughter in their compounds, usually for ceremonial occasions. If small ruminant meat is to become an item in the everyday diet, however, butchers will have to begin slaughtering and retailing these animals. In principle, there is no reason why they could not do this, but there may be some problems of transition, as butchers would have to develop contacts with sheep and goat traders, learn how to estimate the weight of the animals, etc.

Finally, if small ruminant production is to be encouraged, veterinary care will have to improve. Treatment of small stock has been practically nonexistent. Although some veterinarians used antibiotics to fight the recent epidemic of caprine pleuropneumonia in Northwest Province (November 1978 through the first half of 1979), no vaccines were available. As a result, goat losses were catastrophic, particularly in Donga-Mantung and northern Bui. Before small ruminant production is promoted, adequate means of combatting major outbreaks of disease will have to be devised. A well-trained and adequately equipped network of extension agents will probably be required. Producers will have to be confident that they can obtain adequate veterinary care when necessary.

B. <u>Pork and Poultry</u>:

Although technically it may be possible to increase pork production rapidly in Northwest Province, marketing seems to be a major constraint. Pigs cannot be trekked long distances, and assembly and transport of pigs

to market seem to be a major problem for small producers. It usually is not profitable for a producer to hire a vehicle to transport only one or two animals to market, and there may, therefore, be substantial room for involvement of producer associations in the collection and transport of pigs to market. In order for this to be feasible, the associations would probably have to synchronize production schedules so that enough animals would be ready for market at specific times to justify renting a vehicle. These associations would also be able to provide marketing information about sales opportunities.

Retail marketing may also represent a serious constraint to increased pork production. Many of the butchers in the province are Moslem and, therefore, refuse to handle pork. Even non-Moslem butchers are reluctant to sell pork for fear of losing their Moslem customers. There are a few specialized pork vendors in the markets, but the retail network will have to be greatly expanded if pork production is to develop. A third possible constraint is insufficient effective demand for pork. Pork currently plays a minor role in the diet, except in Momo, and it is not clear how much people in the Northwest are willing to expand their consumption of pork. These marketing constraints suggest that pork production should be increased only gradually until the marketing problems can be overcome.

Marketing seems to be less of a constraint to poultry production. On account of their smaller size, poultry can be taken to market in bush taxis or by head load. There may be a problem of a lack of effective demand, however, particularly if a broiler industry is being contemplated. Given current production costs, poultry is 100 to 200

FCFA per kg. more expensive (on a dressed weight basis) than beef. As long as this price differential persists, it may be difficult to expand per capita poultry consumption. Demand for eggs is also constrained by the high costs of production. Eggs cost 25-35 FCFA apiece, which is over twice the cost of eggs in the United States.

A major constraint to pork and poultry production has been an absence of veterinary inputs. Without adequate deworming medicine, antibiotics, vaccines against fowl cholera and newcastle disease, and other medicines, production of pork will be constrained and fowl mortality will remain high. Coupled with this lack of veterinary inputs is insufficient veterinary expertise concerning pigs and poultry. Most of the Veterinary Service's efforts have been directed toward improving cattle production. There are few officials who are specialists in pig and poultry production and hence familiar with the diseases affecting these animals.

Perhaps the largest constraint to intensified poultry and pork production, however, is that it involves direct competition with man for food, particularly maize. Livestock officials have tried to reduce this competition through use of agricultural by-products for feed (cottonseed, groundnut, palm kernel cake, rice bran, molasses and brewing by-products). Adequate supplies of these by-products have not yet become available. As a result, increased feed production is a prerequisite to improving and expanding poultry and pork production. The Poultry Centre at Bali will soon begin feed production, but more grinding and mixing facilities need to be established in other areas

of potentially high production in order to promote larger scale poultry and pork production. Perhaps the rice bran from processing by the cooperatives, WADA and other agencies could serve as the raw material for feed production, as could occasional stocks of stored maize which are not presently being utilized.

Without adequate feed supplies, part of the feed requirement for poultry and pigs has to be met (and is being met) by maize. Using maize for livestock feed is costly, but returns may be high enough to justify this practice, yet it raises the question of whether feeding grain to livestock should be enouraged in an area of high population density (where malnutrition may be a problem).

An often ignored issue is the macroeconomic consequences of increasing production. The capital needed to begin a medium size poultry or pig operation is not beyond the reach of small farmers, especially if they could obtain loans from cooperatives to meet these initial capital costs (of probably less than 50,000 FCFA). As more small farmers begin to produce poultry and pork, the demand for agricultural by-products and processed feed will expand, which would push up the price of this major input. As a result, producers' operating costs will increase significantly, which will tend to increase the cost of the final product. Depending upon demand elasticities for pork and poultry, returns to production might change significantly, making these enterprises less profitable for producers. In recognition of these possible macroeconomic consequences, it may make sense to promote poultry production more vigorously than pig production. Chickens are more efficient

converters of feed into protein, and the demand for poultry and eggs appears to be potentially greater than that for pigs in Northwest Province.

VII. NATIONAL LIVESTOCK POLICY AND ITS RELATIONSHIP TO LIVESTOCK DEVELOPMENT IN NORTHWEST PROVINCE:

A. The First National Livestock Development Project[1]

In 1974 the World Bank began to finance a National Livestock Development project which had the objective of meeting beef requirements in Cameroon through increased production by government managed ranches and traditional graziers. In addition, the project aimed to improve slaughter and retail facilities in Yaounde and Douala in order to upgrade hygiene and minimize waste. The project was also designed to eliminate tsetse fly infestation on the Adamaoua Plateau, and to help graziers in Northwest Province and on the Adamaoua Plateau increase production through more intensive range management.

1. SODEPA Ranches:

Under the National Livestock Development project, SODEPA (Societe de Developpement et d'Exploitation des Productions Animales) established and operated three 20,000 hectare ranches. Each was to be stocked with 8,000 head, which would include feeder steers and breeding stock. One of the ranches is located in Northwest Province at Dumbo. The ranches are equipped with tracks, fences, firebreaks, stock-handling and watering facilities, dips, ranch buildings, vehicles, and other first-rate facilities. In reality, the Dumbo

ranch covers about 30,000 ha of prime grazing land and there are nearly 7,000 head (6,861 as of August 4, 1979) on the ranch. SODEPA obtained a 99 year lease for the Dumbo site, and the former inhabitants of the area, mainly Aku graziers but also farmers who had established a village within the persent confines of the ranch, were asked to relocate. The value of the abandoned property was assessed with the intention of compensating those who migrated. To the best of our knowledge, no compensation has yet been provided. The Aku graziers have moved to the Menchum side of Dumbo ranch and to the western edge of the Adamaoua Plateau.

The SODEPA ranches were intended to provide well-fleshed steers for slaughter in Yaounde and Douala, breeding stock for local graziers who received FONADER (Fonds National de Developpement Rural) loans, and extension services to traditional graziers. In actuality, none of the ranches are producing animals for slaughter at anticipated levels, but the Dumbo Ranch is approaching the anticipated stocking rate and may be able to meet production targets. The ranch has a mixed record in providing breeding stock to loan recipients, many of whom are forced to procure heifers, which are scarce and costly, at local cattle markets. Finally, extension work has been limited at Dumbo Ranch. One 5,000 hectare section of the ranch was originally intended to be used for extension purposes. FONADER loan recipients would receive the land, and their ranches would be closely supervised. Evidently this was never done.

There are two other SODEPA ranches, one in Jakiri and the other in Tadu (both in Bui Division). The ranch at Jakiri has 1,000 total hectares of grazing land. It is stocked with 600-750 head (depending on the time of year), 150 of which are culled out each year for sale to traders or as breeding stock for herders. Formal extension is limited, but there is a good deal of informal instruction of traditional graziers. The graziers are especially interested in obtaining veterinary inputs such as deworming medicine, vaccines, tick spray and castrating rings. The ranch sprays some of the local graziers' cattle against ticks, a service for which the graziers pay 10 FCFA per head. The ranch manager claimed that there is no lack of willingness among traditional graziers to pay for improved veterinary inputs. The ranch distributes these inputs to graziers when they have obtained written permission from the Veterinary Service. The range improvements that have been made at the ranch include fencing, paddocking, rotational grazing, cultivation of silage for dry season feeding, and planting of Kikuyu and Guatemala grasses. In addition, there is some cross-breeding of Goudali breeding stock from the Adamaoua Plateau with local Red Fulani cattle. Finally, there is a veterinary school at Jakiri at which many of the Livestock Service officials in English-speaking Cameroon have been trained.

The Tadu Ranch is a much smaller operation which primarily provides extension services for local graziers. There are presently only 50 head of cattle grazing an area of 100 ha, much of which is infested with bracken fern and undesirable grasses. Guatemala grass

is cultivated in two large stands and distributed to local graziers and FONADER recipients. The ranch manager administers drugs to some 25-30 graziers around Tadu and also advises them on how to improve their pasture. When the ranch is better stocked and the pasture has improved, breeding stock will be distributed to FONADER loan recipients.

2. The FONADER Loan Program:

FONADER was set up to provide medium-term loans for breeding stock and investments on mixed farms and ranches, as well as short-term loans for feeder stock. There is a FONADER office in Bamenda, which identifies potential borrowers, evaluates loan applications, supervises repayment, and gives technical advice to borrowers. Technical evaluation is carried out by livestock extension specialists.

FONADER loan recipients are expected to obtain certificates of occupancy, which gives them a 20 year leasehold for land on which improvements, such as fencing, night paddocking, rotational grazing and cultivation of fodder crops (Guatemala grass), are to be made. In reality, the certificate of occupancy is very difficult to obtain, as the approval of local chiefs of traditionally farming peoples is required. The chiefs are very reluctant to grant land title to Fulani graziers and even to native graziers and mixed farmers. As a result of this difficulty, FONADER will approve loan applications if the farmer or grazier has spent at least five years working or grazing the land, if neighbors have no quarrel with him over the extent of his holdings, and if the other necessary signatures have

been obtained. Before submitting an application, the farmer or grazier must obtain the approval of the local administrative officer (the District Officer), a representative of the Ministry of Agriculture (the Divisional Delegate) in the case of loans for mixed farming, and local traditional rulers (an ardo and a local chief, if possible). The grazing/farming area also has to be surveyed and a map must be drawn up, with precise details as to where fences, night paddocks, cattle vaccination crushes, and the like will be located. The representatives of the Ministries of Agriculture and Animal Breeding and Industries do a lot of the technical work in conjunction with FONADER field extension workers.

There are three types of FONADER loans. Type I loans are granted to mixed farmers who purchase feeder steers and fatten them for at least one year before selling them at a local cattle market. These farmers are supposed to provide 20 percent or more of the capital required to buy the steers and make the necessary farm improvements. Type II and III loans are granted to graziers who plan to fence grazing areas of 250 and 750 ha., respectively and invest in breeding stock, vaccination crushes and night paddocks. After increasing herd size to the point where there are 2.5 ha. per head, graziers are encouraged to sell off bulls and cull cows in order to repay the loans. Loans to Type II and III recipients are usually repaid over nine years, with a two-year grace period, as are loans to Type I recipients for on-farm investments. Short-term loans for feeder cattle to be fattened by Type I borrowers are repaid within one year. All loans bear interest at 10 percent.

Table XIX shows the status of FONADER Loan applications made through June 31, 1979. Of the 91 loans actually disbursed (see line 10), 62 or 60 percent were Type I loans, while 30 and 6 percent were Type II and III loans. The average amount disbursed to Type I recipients was 283,726 FCFA, while Type II and III recipients received 2,117,542 FCFA and 2,664,000 FCFA on average respectively. Note that 30 of the 32 approved loans that are holding in Bamenda (see line 11) are Type I loans, which have not yet been disbursed because the applicants have failed to meet the 20 percent minimum capital requirement.

To pursue the analysis further, each category of loan recipient is broken down according to administrative Division, occupation, and ethnic group (Fulani vs. native or agriculturalist) in Table XX. At the beginning of the First National Livestock Development Project, the World Bank intended to provide loans only to farmers and graziers along the Ring Road from Mbengwi through Bamenda and Kumbo to Nkambe. Hence, most of the loan recipients are from Mezam (47 percent) and Bui (23 percent), while fewer come from Momo (11 percent), Donga-Mantung (9 percent) and Menchum (10 percent). Twenty-one of the loan recipients (20 percent) have primary occupations other than farming (trading, civil service, teaching, etc.). Only 15 of the 103 loan recipients are Fulani (or Hausa). The remainder are from indigenous agricultural groups that have been occupying the Northwest for hundreds of years. This distribution is due in part to the fact that Fulani graziers do not farm, so by default all 62 of the loans to mixed

TABLE XIX

STATUS OF FONADER PROJECT LOAN APPLICATIONS
(AMOUNT IN LOCAL CURRENCY F CFA.)

	Statistics to the end of last Quarter	Statistics during the current Quarter	Total at the end of current Quarter	TYPES I	TYPES II	TYPES III	AMOUNT I	AMOUNT II	AMOUNT III
1. TOTAL SUBMITTED	314	8	322						
2. RETURNED (INCOMPLETE)	150	-	150						
3. TO BE STUDIED IN BAMENDA	164	8	172						
4. COMPLETED FROM 2	22	-	22						
5. STUDIED IN BAMENDA	186	8	194						
6. REJECTED	33	-	33						
7. APPROVED IN BAMENDA	153	8	161	105	48	8	31.641.000	104.277.980	21.924.000
8. SUBM. & APPROV. BY FONADER	110	25	135	92	37	6	27.141.000	78.303.980	15.984.000
9. DIFFERENCE	43	-	26	13	11	2	4.500.000	25.974.000	5.940.000
10. DISBURSED	91	12	103	62	35	6	17.591.000	74.113.980	15.984.000
11. HOLDING IN BAMENDA	19	13	32	30	2	-	9.550.000	4.190.000	-

Source: FONADER/SODEPA Regional Office, Bamenda, Quarterly Report for April-June 1979.

TABLE XX

FONADER LOAN RECIPIENTS ACCORDING TO TYPE, ADMINISTRATIVE DIVISION, PRIMARY OCCUPATION, AND ETHNIC GROUP[1]

Division	Type I		Type II		Type III
Mezam	34	1 civil servant 1 teacher 32 native farmers	12	1 Hausa cattle trader 2 native traders 4 Fulani graziers 5 native graziers	1 Fulani grazier
Momo	8	All native farmers	2	Both native graziers	1 Fulani grazier
Bui	18	2 teachers 16 native farmers	6	1 Fulani trader 2 cattle traders 2 teachers 1 native grazier	
Donga-Mantung	1	civil servant	7	1 Fulani grazier 4 native graziers 1 pastor 1 businessman	1 native grazier 1 promising farmer
Menchum	1	civil servant	8	2 traders 1 mechanic 5 native farmers	1 cattle trader
TOTAL	62		35		6

SOURCE: FONADER/SODEPA Regional Office, Bamenda.

[1]The above loan recipients are only those to whom funds have actually been disbursed.

Type I loan recipients are all members of ethnic groups that have farmed traditionally.

Type II and III: Both Fulani and natives are involved in this loan scheme. There are teachers, civil servants and traders as well as graziers.

farmers (Type I) have gone to natives. Since fifteen of the remaining 41 loans (37 percent) have been disbursed to Fulani graziers and traders, it appears that Type II and III loans are better balanced from an ethnic standpoint. However, this is not really the case, since the Fulani make up a greater proportion of the grazing population in Northwest Province. It is only in recent years that agriculturalists have become cattle graziers. Yet 63 percent of the loans going to ranch managers have been received by people from ethnic groups that have not traditionally raised cattle.

Members of the indigenous groups are better able to obtain loans than the Fulani for several reasons. First, they tend to be literate, while the Fulani are usually illiterate. The loan application process is complicated and lengthy, and it involves a lot of visits to offices to obtain signatures, guidance and approval. Literacy and hence familiarity with filling out forms make the process easier. In addition, most of the civil servants from whom information and approval must be obtained are natives and not Fulani. Thus, indigenous applicants more commonly share the ethnic background of the people who guide the application process. In addition, natives who apply for Type II and III loans invest in cattle although their primary occupation (teaching, trading, farming) is not grazing. They tend to be better informed than the Fulani, whose access to information is limited and whose association with government agencies (with the exception of the Livestock Service) has been largely negative. Finally, indigenous applicants are better placed to obtain loans than the Fulani,

because they usually live nearer administrative centers, which lowers their costs of getting information and guidance. Their farming/grazing areas tend to be closer to roads and therefore more accessible to visiting FONADER and Livestock officials. This is a very important consideration, since the farming/grazing area has to be surveyed and inspected by extension workers and local officials, and the improvements made after disbursement have to be supervised. Hence, Fulani graziers with remote rugas are at a great disadvantage from the logistical standpoint.

In conclusion, the majority of the loans have been distributed to indigenous applicants, many of whom were not originally graziers or farmer-graziers by profession. Part of this was intentional, since the World Bank urged that initial FONADER loans go to progressive farmers and graziers. From developmental and equity points of view, however, donor agencies and the Cameroonian officials, should ask whether more loans should be received by traditional Fulani graziers in the future. One of the most serious problems with the present loan program is that capital provided by FONADER to progressive graziers and farmer-graziers is fungible. Traders, merchants, civil servants and wealthy producers are able to invest the capital made available by the loans in other enterprises (i.e., real estate, general stores, trading operations) and meet repayment deadlines by drawing funds out of any of a number of enterprises. Reliable sources complained about how funds are not always used for acquiring breeding stock, which suggests that fungibility of capital may be defeating the purpose of the program. Thus, the program may not be the most effective means of

promoting increased livestock production. Channeling resources to less progressive and less wealthy graziers may do more to expand production, since these recipients are less apt to shift funds elsewhere.

In the final analysis, it is important to raise the questions of whether the present distribution of loans is optiomal from the standpoint of 1) increasing cattle production and offtake and, 2) generating the dynamic inpact that expanded livestock production will have upon food-stuff production and levels of specialization, exchange and monetization in the economy. These issues demand careful consideration.

3. Slaughterhouses in Yaounde and Douala:

The First National Livestock Development Project aimed primarily to increase beef consumption in Cameroon and particularly in Douala and Yaounde. the SODEPA ranches were to supply modern slaughter facilities in these cities with well-fleshed cattle, which would meet, in part, the increasing demand for higher quality beef. The strength of this demand may have been overestimated. The slaughter facilities are nearly completed and should be operating by early 1980. They will replace present abattoirs which have hoists and running water, but which are unhygienic and of inadequate size to meet present demand.

It appears that the government of Cameroon did not consult butchers and their apprentices in Yaounde and Douala before deciding to construct the new slaughterhouses. It was assumed that butchers would be willing to pay significantly higher fees to have their cattle

slaughtered under more hygienic conditions and to eliminate losses due to pilferage of meat by apprentices and employees of the present slaughter facilities. In reality, the butchers will have little choice, since the existing abattoirs will be closed down once the SODEPA slaughterhouses begin operating. It will be interesting to see whether the butchers will actually prefer the new facilities. The supply of well-fleshed animals will probably not reach anticipated levels, since the SODEPA ranches, particularly the one at Faro (in the Adamaoua Plateau), are not well enough stocked. In addition, it may prove that the new slaughterhouses employ a technology that is too advanced and too costly. The facilities are partly automated, and all of the parts of the animals are processed into useable by-products. Opening the new slaughterhouses will put a large number of employees of the present abattoirs and butchers' apprentices out of work, since neither facility will employ nearly as many workers as the number presently employed. It is impossible to draw final conclusions about the desirability of investing in modern slaughterhouses, since they are not yet operating. It appears at this point, however, that such a facility need not be constructed in Bamenda or any other towns in Northwest Province. Simple innovations, such as putting in hoists and running water and improving drainage, would greatly improve hygiene and working conditions, as well as satisfy butchers who have reason to complain that the high slaughter fees they pay are never used to improve existing facilities.

B. Assessment of the First National Livestock Project and Proposed Changes:

In 1978 and early 1979 the World Bank undertook an evaluation of the First National Livestock Project and an appraisal of a Second National Livestock Development Project. A consulting firm, C.M. Chisholm and Associates Ltd., prepared the project document and another team of experts toured the SODEPA ranches in May 1979 to assess their performance to date.

The Chisholm report proposed continuation of the SODEPA commercial ranches, setting up of a Development Division of SODEPA, and an expansion of the loan program to traditional graziers and mixed farmers.[1] Mixed farmers would receive 2,940 loans, graziers 670 loans, and small farmers 800 loans to resettle a previously tse-tse infested zone (valley of the Upper Faro). In addition, loans would be granted to 1,470 small producers of pigs, poultry and milk. The SODEPA ranches would be stocked with 25,500 head of cattle in order to provide breeding stock to loan recipients and well-fleshed animals for slaughter. The Development Division of SODEPA would be charged with selecting loan recipients, providing them with extension services, including instruction in rangeland management, and redeveloping areas of the Adamaoua Plateau where tse-tse flies have been eradicated. Three Development Centers and eight Technical Service Centers would be constructed to carry out the work of the Development Division.

[1]Information about the proposed project is taken from Republique du Cameroun: Second Project National de Developpment de l'Elevage, Rapport Final, Juin 1978, C.M. Chisholm and Associates (C.I.) Ltd.

The World Bank is presently negotiating the details of a Second National Livestock Development Project with the Government of Cameroon. These deliberations are at a sensitive stage and the exact shape of the second project is not yet clear. The Bank sent a second team of experts into the field in May 1979 to further investigate the economic viability of the SODEPA ranches. Evidently, this team recommended that the ranches be broken into smaller holdings settled by traditional graziers. The ranches would put more emphasis on providing extension services and breeding stock to graziers (primarily to FONADER loan recipients but also to other graziers) and less emphasis on commercial beef production. The team also recommended that cross-breeding and dairy production be promoted by the ranches. In the final analysis, it appears as if a major shift of emphasis concerning livestock production may be imminent. The details of any change are yet to emerge, however.

Although a second National Livestock Development Project has not yet been approved, FONADER was decentralized in May 1979. The Bamenda Office is now authorized to approve and disburse loans of up to 2.5 million FCFA without having to send applications to Yaounde for analysis. This should speed up the application and approval process considerably and make it more attractive for mixed farmers and graziers to apply for loans. In addition, the Bamenda Office is now able to grant loans to producers of pigs, poultry, sheep and dairy products. This should have favorable equity implications, since

FONADER funds can be spread more widely when more applications are for short-term loans and smaller amounts of capital.

VIII. COOPERATIVE INVOLVEMENT IN LIVESTOCK PRODUCTION AND MARKETING

As noted throughout the report, there are several possibilities for involvement of producer, trader, and butcher associations in livestock production and marketing. Cooperative associations could distribute veterinary and other production inputs, such as agricultural by-products and processed feed for poultry and pig production. Associations could also provide credit to cattle traders who wanted to buy a truck to transport their animals to market, or traders themselves could form associations and pool capital in order to make major investments. In addition to buying or renting trucks, traders could pool funds to improve cattle trekking routes, construct night paddocks for animals being trekked, and upgrade facilities at cattle markets. Associations could enable smaller scale graziers and traders to engage in temporal arbitrage, whereby cattle are bought when prices are low and fattened until prices are high (during the dry season). Associations could also help producers transport their pigs to market by synchronizing production schedules and arranging for groups of small producers to hire a vehicle. Furthermore, cooperative associations could provide market information to producers, so as to inform them of interspatial and intertemporal price differentials and hence marketing opportunities. Marketing extension agents could line up prospective buyers with the producers in Northwest that they

represent. They could facilitate negotiation of production/marketing contracts. These measures would probably be advantageous to small stock producers, who are not fully aware of price differentials between production areas like Northwest Province and areas of high demand, such as Western, Central South, Littoral and Southwest Provinces. Another area in which associations might become involved is in the operation of slaughter and retail market facilities. Rather than paying slaughter and retail market tolls and rarely getting improvements in return, butchers could petition to form an association which would collect revenue to maintain and improve their places of work.

Although opportunities for cooperative associations to become involved exist, a word of caution is needed. If the initiative for formation of these associations comes from producers, traders and butchers, and if management remains responsive to their wishes, then these associations should function well. However, what often begin as cooperatives in developing countries turn into marketing boards, which become largely mechanisms for agricultural taxation. Cooperatives often tend to build up excessive overhead (offices, vehicles, etc.) that make it difficult for them to compete with private traders. In order to overcome their competitive disadvantage, the government often grants them exclusive buying or selling rights in certain areas. Producers are then faced with lower prices for their output and higher prices for their inputs than previously were available.

If cooperatives are to facilitate livestock production and marketing, such a situation should be avoided. Graziers, traders,

and butchers have shown they are capable of running businesses on very low overhead. They could probably run associations in a similar manner if given the chance. Some overhead, especially for input distribution, would be necessary, but it should be kept to a minimum. Furthermore, the activities of associations should be clearly delimited, so that they do not become mechanisms by which market agents collude to set prices. To help prevent this, private individuals should be allowed to compete freely with the cooperatives in the provision of inputs and marketing services.

ANNEX I

TABLE I

CATTLE SLAUGHTER FIGURES FOR REPRESENTATIVE SIZE TOWNS

	Bamenda	Kumbo	Nkambe	Ndu	Misaje	Ntumbaw
August 1977	336	--	45	26	9	13
September	312	--	--	36	11	16
October	450	80	--	41	18	15
November	377	64	36	32	18	17
December	490	73	39	34	20	20
January 1978	469	79	29	23	20	27
February	380	69	31	42	17	14
March	360	61	35	25	15	21
April	432	62	28	22	15	6
May	443	71	26	38	14	10
June	445	69	33	31	19	5
July	485	70	26	38	21	8
August	507	--	25	29	21	9
September	452	75	29	25	26	15
October	580	81	36	34	20	10
November	514	67	39	31	19	6
December	537	81	51	30	22	7
January 1979	491	64	40	31	21	5
February	494	60	26	31	15	14
March	501	62	28	35	18	10
April	648	--	29	29	12	9
May	704	82	36	30	18	9
June	558	77	39	32	23	12
July	427	80	38	30	16	11

ANNEX I

TABLE II

RETAIL MEAT PRICES AT MANKON (BAMENDA) MARKET

	Beef with Bones	Beef without Bones	Intestines	Pork
1971 January	188	186		198
F	182	211		163
M	172	229		163
A	154	196		195
M	147	198		---
J	193	192		186
J	143	183		186
A	155	185		212
S	155	181		184
O	146	183		207
N	143	179		188
D	160	168		173
Average	162	191		192
1972 January	152	201		191
F	157	184		198
M	155	199		200
A	164	187		199
M	146	198		195
J	145	188		202
J	144	185		199
A	165	209		201
S	157	191		210
O	166	184		205
N	162	189		191
D	156	203		196
Average	156	193		199
1973 January	151	203		177
F	162	202		198
M	179	201		184
A	158	215	127	184
M	161	198	137	200
J	124	188	144	188
J	148	185	130	246
A	139	197	139	217
S	151	211	124	186
O	140	180	171	197
N	130	202	138	212
D	141	202	130	217
Average	151	201	138	201
1974 January	183	203	157	215
F	177	211	165	192
M	191	211	179	218
A	181	215	161	220
M	173	200	182	218
Average	181	208	169	213
1975 January	236	259	---	---
F	241	300	---	---
M	240	269	---	---
A	275	289	---	---
M	252	292	---	---
Average	249	282	---	---

Table II - Retail Meat Prices at Mankon (Bamenda) Market - continued

		BEEF WITH BONES	BEEF WITH-OUT BONES	INTESTINES	PORK
1977	Jan	430	445	---	450
	F	417	412	339	---
	M	449	480	---	
	A	353	538	---	
	M	364	480	---	
	J	349	415	256	450
	J	350	414	---	
	A	350	414	---	
	S	250	309	---	
	O	295	444	290	556
	N	357	442	247	464
	D	319	465	290	455
Average		357	438	284	475
1978	Jan	311	341	241	588
	F	248	375	357	513
	M	300	521	313	476
	A	452	429	---	---
	M	400	441	440	496
	J	495	500	455	495
	J	450	500	---	500
	A	450	500	---	500
	S	---	---	---	---
	O	---	---	---	---
	N	---	---	---	---
	D	---	---	---	---
Average		388	451	361	510
1979	Jan	---	---	---	---
	F	---	---	---	---
	M	429	514	411	524
	A	427	501	432	500
	M	434	498	320	---
	J	435	503	330	498
	J	---	---	---	---
Average		431	504	376	507

Source: Ministry of Economics and Planning, Provincial Office of Statistics.

ANNEX I TABLE III

PRICES OF CATTLE (in francs CFA), 1974/75 : NORTHWEST PROVINCE

Age Group	Subsector	Bulls		Bullocks		Cows		Heifers	
		Minimum	Maximum	Minimum	Maximum	Minimum	Maximum	Minimum	Maximum
1 to 2 years	Nezam/Momo	16,000	17,000	-	-	-	-	30,000	35,000
	Bui	14,500	16,000	-	-	-	-	28,000	30,000
	Menchum	14,000	15,000	-	-	-	-	25,000	28,000
	Donga-Mantung	14,000	15,000	-	-	-	-	25,000	28,000
	Average	14,625	15,750	-	-	-	-	27,000	30,000
2 to 5 years	Nezam/Momo	25,000	40,000	30,000	45,000	35,000	35,000	32,000	37,000
	Bui	22,000	30,000	23,000	32,000	28,000	32,000	25,000	36,000
	Menchum	20,000	28,000	21,000	27,000	25,000	35,000	30,000	35,000
	Donga/Mant.	19,000	25,000	20,000	28,000	25,000	30,000	30,000	35,000
	Average	21,500	30,750	23,500	33,000	27,000	31,750	32,000	35,750
5 to 7 years	Nezam/Momo	45,000	50,000	50,000	55,000	35,000	38,000	-	-
	Bui	43,000	48,000	45,000	52,000	33,000	35,000	-	-
	Menchum	40,000	47,000	40,000	50,000	30,000	33,000	-	-
	Donga/Mant.	35,000	45,000	45,000	50,000	30,000	35,000	-	-
	Average	40,750	47,500	46,000	51,500	32,000	35,500	-	-
7 to 10 years	Nezam/Momo	50,000	60,000	60,000	65,000	33,000	35,000	-	-
	Bui	45,000	58,000	45,000	62,000	30,000	33,000	-	-
	Donga/Mant.	40,000	55,000	42,000	60,000	28,000	31,000	-	-
	Menchum	40,000	55,000	40,000	57,000	30,000	33,000	-	-
	Average	45,000	57,000	46,000	61,000	31,500	33,000	-	-
Above 10 years	Nezam/Momo	42,000	45,000	48,000	53,000	25,000	30,000	-	-
	Bui	40,000	42,000	40,000	43,000	25,000	28,000	-	-
	Menchum	38,000	40,000	38,000	42,000	24,000	25,000	-	-
	Donga/Mant.	38,000	40,000	38,000	40,000	24,000	25,000	-	-
		39,500	41,750	40,000	46,500	27,000	27,500	-	-

Source: Annual Report, 1974/75, MINEL, Northwest Province

ANNEX I TABLE IV

PRICES OF CATTLE (in francs CFA) 1975/76 : NORTHWEST PROVINCE

Age Group	Sub-sector	BULLS		BULLOCKS		COWS		HEIFERS	
		Minimum	Minimum	Minimum	Maximum	Minimum	Maximum	Minimum	Maximum
1 year to 2 years	Mezam/Momo	19,000	21,000	-	-	-	-	36,000	42,000
	Bui	17,000	20,000	-	-	-	-	30,000	35,000
	Menchum	16,000	18,000	-	-	-	-	30,000	35,000
	Donga-Mantung	16,000	18,000	-	-	-	-	30,000	35,000
Average		17,000	19,250	-	-	-	-	31,500	36,750
2 to 5 years	Mezam/Momo	30,000	48,000	36,000	54,000	35,000	40,000	35,000	42,000
	Bui	25,000	36,000	28,000	38,000	28,000	35,000	30,000	35,000
	Menchum	24,000	33,000	25,000	33,000	25,000	35,000	30,000	35,000
	Donga-Mantung	23,000	30,000	24,000	33,000	25,000	35,000	30,000	35,000
Average		25,500	36,750	28,500	39,500	28,500	36,500	31,250	36,750
5 to 7 year	Mezam/Momo	45,000	60,000	50,000	70,000	35,000	40,000	-	-
	Bui	43,000	50,000	45,000	55,000	33,000	35,000	-	-
	Menchum	40,000	48,000	40,000	55,000	30,000	35,000	-	-
	Donga-Mantung	40,000	50,000	40,000	60,000	30,000	35,000		
Average		42,000	52,000	46,250	60,000	32,000	36,250	-	-
7 to 10 years	Mezam/Momo	50,000	70,000	60,000	75,000	35,000	40,000	-	-
	Bui	45,000	56,000	45,000	60,000	33,000	35,000	-	-
	Menchum	40,000	52,000	42,000	60,000	30,000	35,000	-	-
	Donga-Mantung	40,000	60,000	42,000	65,000	30,000	35,000	-	-
Average		46,250	59,500	48,250	65,000	32,000	36,250	-	-
Above 10 years	Mezam/Momo	50,000	70,000	60,000	80,000	35,000	40,000	-	-
	Bui	45,000	56,000	45,000	65,000	33,000	35,000	-	-
	Menchum	40,000	55,000	42,000	65,000	30,000	35,000	-	-
	Donga-Mantung	40,000	65,000	42,000	70,000	30,000	35,000	-	-
Average		43,750	61,500	47,250	70,000	32,000	36,250	-	-

Source: Annual Report, 1975/76, Northwest Province, MINEL

ANNEX II

TABLE I

Payment Schedule for Butchers and Traders, According to Annual Volume of Slaughter and Sales.

Annual Volume of Slaughter/Sales	Zone 2[1]	ZONE 3[2]
< 100	9,240	7,560
101-200	11,760	10,080
201-300	15,120	11,760
301-400	21,840	19,480
400	33,600	30,240

[1] Zone 2 includes all Divisional headquarters (Bamenda, Kumbo, Wum, Mkambe, Mbengwi) and the towns of Ndop and Batibo.

[2] Zone 3 includes all areas in Northwest Province outside of Zone 2.

Source: Ministry of Finance, Directorate of Taxes, Divisional Inspectorate of Taxes, Bamenda.

ANNEX II

TABLE II

COST OF INVESTING CAPITAL IN CATTLE CALCULATIONS

Period of time for Capital Turnover	Number of Days	Typical Number of Days
Function:		
Assembly	5 - 13	8
Trek	7 - 8	7
Sales	2 - 5	3
Repayment (when credit extended)	0 - 3	2
Return to Nkambe	1	1
	15 - 30 Days	21
Precentage of One Year	.042 - .073	.0575

Capital Outlay for Cattle x Opportunity Cost of Capital x Fraction of Year During Which Capital Invested in Cattle

= Capital Cost of Investing in Cattle.

Example: 2,238,600 FCFA x 12%/yr. x .0575 = 15,446 FCFA

1,722,000 x 12% x .042 = 8,679 FCFA

1,722,000 x 20% x .083 = 28,585 FCFA

These calculations are for the trek from Nakmbe to Bamenda.

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A SHORT HISTORY OF COOPERATIVES IN THE NORTHWEST

By

Dean Mahon

Arabica coffée production was the original impetus for the formation of cooperative societies in the North West Province. Prior to the introduction of coffee in 1932, agricultural activity of the area was restricted to the growth of foodstuffs for local consumption. Production was the responsibility of women, while the men engaged in the village-to-village trade of such articles as palm oil, groundnuts and clay pots. At times, items such as palm kernels were head-carried to areas as far away as Nkongsamba to be exchanged for other commodities, such as salt. As a result of the sowing of the first arabica coffee seeds in Santa in 1932 by a Mr. Chuachang, this life-style was due to eventually change.

By the year 1950 enough farmers in the Bamenda area were producing arabica coffee that the first cooperative society for the handling of its members produce in the (then) Bamenda Provi was formed at Bafreng (Nkwen). The formation of this society was probably most influenced by three factors: (1) Arabica coffee cooperatives had already been in existence in Dschang and Bafoussam since the early 1930's and the male population had been exposed to them while on trading trips through the West Province to Nkongsamba; (2) between 1935 and 1940 cooperative unions were formed in Mamfe and Kumba (of the present South West Province) for the marketing of members' cocoa and robusta coffee; and, (3) due to the increase in the number of farmers producing arabica coffee, a need was perceived for the orderly marketing of their produce.

It was soon evident that this single society would not be able to effectively handle all of the province's produce and entailed transport difficulties for members. Thus, it was shortly thereafter decided that more societies be formed in order to alleviate the logistical problems of individual members. These societies were:
--the Bamenda Cooperative Produce Marketing Society
--the Banso Cooperative Produce Marketing Society
--the Santa Cooperative Produce Marketing Society
--the Bali Cooperative Produce Marketing Society
--the Bafut Cooperative Produce Marketing Society

Further, these societies met on August 21, 1953, and decided unanimously to form the Bamenda Provincial Cooperative Produce Marketing Union. Each of the societies had two representatives at the Union meeting, and they elected their first officers. The first President of the Union was Mr. John Ako of the Bamenda society.

Up until this time, West Cameroon cooperative societies were supervised from Enugu in the Eastern Region of Nigeria. Originally, this had been the responsibility of an European Agricultural Officer working within the Agricultural Department in Lagos. Due to the marketing nature of the societies in what is now the South West Province, a problem of legal status initially existed. This was remedied by the passing, in 1935, of the Nigerian Cooperative Societies Ordinance, which granted access to this recognition. However, the problem still remained that, since there was no field staff and the distance from the Cameroonian provinces to the Cooperative Registrar in Enugu precluded routine supervision, the cooperative movement made very little progress.

In 1954 the Southern Cameroons (what is now the North West and South West Provinces) was granted territorial autonomy within the Federation of Nigeria. As a result, a full Department of Cooperative Societies was established and staffed with a Registrar, three Assistant Registrars, and ten Cooperative Inspectors. One year later, the West Cameroon Parliament enacted into Law a Bill--No. SC.13 of 1955--which created the legal status of cooperative societies. The role of the Government was defined in Sessional Paper No. 3 of the same year. Specific facilities and services to be provided were spelled out in paragraph (iv) of the opening chapter:

" (a) Legislation to provide wasy registration and to safeguard members.
(b) Trained supervisory staff in the Cooperative Department.
(c) Support in obtaining financial grants and loans for societies to carry out approved objects.
(d) Exemption from taxation in any surpluses accruing to societies by Cooperative operations.
(e) Assistance in any way which might facilitate the operations of Cooperative Societies. "

Between the years 1953 and 1959, farmers in different areas of the North West Province saw the need of grouping themselves together into arabica coffee marketing societies in order to facilitate their cash flow and market access. It thus became necessary that more Unions be formed in consideration of the interests of the farmers to be served over these distances.

With this in mind, a meeting of the Bamenda Provincial Cooperative Marketing Union was held on October 16, 1959. At this meeting

it was resolved that,

(1) The following Unions be formed:
  (a) the Nso Area Cooperative Produce Marketing Union, Ltd.
  (b) the Kom Area Cooperative Produce Marketing Union, Ltd.
  (c) the Central Area Cooperative Produce Marketing Union, Ltd.
  (d) the Santa Area Cooperative Produce Marketing Union, Ltd.
  (e) the Bali Area Cooperative Produce Marketing Union, Ltd.
  (f) the Ndop Area Cooperative Produce Marketing Union, Ltd.

(2) The Bamenda Provincial Cooperative Marketing Union should become the Bamenda Cooperative Marketing Association, Ltd. (BCMA, Ltd.)

In the following years, societies continued to be formed throughout the province, resulting in the registration of more Unions. Between 1961 and 1969, the following three were registered: Pinyin Area Cooperative Produce Marketing Union, Ltd., on November 18, 1961; Moghamo Area Cooperative Produce Marketing Union, Ltd., in 1964; and Nkambe Area Cooperative Produce Marketing Union, Ltd., February 17, 1969.

Beginning in the 1968-69 arabica coffee season, the different unions were granted licenses to be separate Licensed Buying Agents (L.B.A.'s) This then altered the function of the B.C.M.A., Ltd., since it had previously marketed its member unions' produce. It still continued, though, to hull and process its coffee in the following areas:

Union	Where Coffee Hulled
Nso	Nso
Nkambe	Nso
Kom	Kom
Santa	Santa
Pinyin	Santa
Central	Mankon
Ndop	Mankon
Bali	Mankon
Moghamo	Mankon

Due to this change in the role of the BCMA, a need was seen to change the defined role of the apex organization, in order to place it more in tune with the new realities. For a period of time, there was actually a split in the North West movement as to the apex's role, and the BCMA's very existence was seen to be at stake. A temporary organization, the Arabica Coffee Cooperative Organization (ACCO) was formed to look into the by-laws and to amend them accordingly. Several meetings were held, the final ones being in Nso for the Nso and Nkambe Unions on June 30, 1970, and in Mankon for the seven other Unions on July 9, 1970. At these sessions, the amended by-laws were presented, and it was unanimously resolved that the BCMA, Ltd., become the Bamenda Cooperative Association, Ltd. (Bca, Ltd.). The first elected President of the BCA was Mr. M.E.

Achonduh, and, provided that no one union had more than four members on the Board of Management, representation was accepted to be on a tonnage basis as follows:

Up to 500 tons	= 1 member
501 - 1000 tons	= 2 members
1001 - 1500 tons	= 3 members
1501 - 2000 tons	= 4 members

Thus, the Bamenda Cooperative Association, Ltd., came into existence on July 1, 1970, with the following functions:

(1) To formulate cooperative policy in the area of operation.
(2) To undertake cooperative education, information, and publicity.
(3) To improve the production and processing of members' coffee and other produce.
(4) To arrange the purchase of equipment and other requirements to member societies or their members.
(5) To provide technical and maintenance services.
(6) To further the extension of cooperative marketing and other forms of cooperative activities in the area of operation.
(7) To raise capital and do such other things as are necessary to carry out these functions.
(8) To administer the property taken over from the former Bamenda Cooperative Marketing Association.
(9) To act as the mouthpiece for the cooperative movement in its area of operation.
(10) To do such other things as decided upon from time to time by the General Meeting in order to carry out above objectives or functions.

Now that the restructuration of cooperative structures in the North West had been solidified, the government decided to award these structures monopoly rights for the marketing of arabica coffee. According to a paper written by Mr. S.S. Shang in 1971, the following were given as reasons for this policy action:

" (a) The Cooperatives handled over 75 per cent of the crop; the continued presence of traders in the field only helped to disrupt orderly marketing, and to obstruct improvement schemes.

(b) Because of the stiff competition in the world market which has become very selective, our crop must be of the desired quality; it has therefore become imperative that coffee be bought from farmers based on the quality of the parcels; such a scheme insures that the hard-working and honest farmer receives fair value for his product, and at the same time, the poor farmer can immediately learn from his defects. It is impossible to achieve good results in such a scheme unless all coffee passes through one marketing agency; the cooperatives have proved the one such institution. Indeed,

this practice has been in force in East Cameroon for over 20 years!

(c) The target for a high quality product cannot be attained without a properly schemed pragmatic Extension Service Service Scheme which will ensure the prompt and orderly distribution and proper use of farms inputs and tools; and because the producer's net income is so low that he cannot conveniently finance these operations all in a season, there is need to give him "supervised" credit; it is only the angel of a trader who will risk his capital, the producer, in such a scheme, and without enslaving the farmer in debt for life, and without impoverishing the peasant with prohibitive interest rates! A well managed Cooperative can, and has operated such schemes successfully.

(d) The three-stage system of payment which was designed in all honesty to assist the coffee farmers to spread their income so as to keep out of debt during the 'waiting period', created opportunity for unscrupulous L.B.A.'s to cheat; there is abundant evidence to show proof that many farmers who fell victim to these produce sharks never received the second and third payments; the middlemen pocketed these sums of money. But the Cooperatives passed on the whole payment to the farmers.

(e) By their nature of business, Cooperatives, if properly managed, increase the farmer's net income; the net profits are either ploughed back into the working capital, or paid out to those who contributed to earn it; the example is this year when Societies paid another 5 francs package in addition to 15 francs from the Marketing Board.

(f) The developmental effects of the Cooperative institutions can be seen and felt within the community; the clear example is seen in the establishments of the nine B.C.A. Unions spread around the coffee producing centers in the arabica coffee region; while the L.B.A.'s concentrated their operations and factory installations in Mankon, the Cooperative Unions directly develop the regions which produce the crop; this pattern of development rhymes with the State policy. The location of these structures in the rural area has brought along general improvement directly and indirectly to the communities.

(g) By this arrangement it is now possible to determine what in fact is the coffee potential of each region or district, knowledge which is beneficial for purposes of planning and the allocation of resources. "

Following the formation of the United Republic of Cameroon, the Department of Cooperation and Mutuality within the Ministry of Agriculture was created for the overall supervision of all coopera-

tive societies in Cameroon. The texts which now related to the rules and regulations governing cooperative societies were the Law No. 73-15 of December 7, 1973, and its Decree of Application No. 74-874 of October 29, 1974.

Probably the first major policy action to be enacted by the new government as pertains to cooperatives was that of the amalgamation of cooperative societies, where necessary, in order to improve their viability. Although by the end of the year 1979, this policy had become a reality throughout a great majority of the country, it was in the North West Province that it began.

The bulk of the re-organization was performed in the 1973-74 period. Below is a breakdown of the changes incurred:

Division	Union	No. of Societies, 1973	No. of Societies, 1974	Membership
Mezam	Ndop	16	5	1,173
	Central	48	14	3,689
	Bali	8	3	880
	Santa	15	8	1,730
	Pinyin	8	3	826
Momo	Moghamo	10	6	1,457
Menchum	Kom	50	15	3,118
Bui	Nso	66	33	6,572
Donga Mantung	Nkambe	30	13	2,663
	TOTALS	251	100	22,108

In 1975 two more marketing unions were formed: the Oku-Noni Area Co-Cooperative Union, Ltd., in Bui Division, and the Mbengwi Area Co-operative Union in Momo Division. This brought the total number of Unions to eleven for the five North West divisions.

Up to 1976 marketing of export crops (e.g., coffee and cocoa) by L.B.A.'s in the North West and South West Provinces was done through the Produce Marketing Organization. In the year 1976 the P.M.O. became part of a national organization which was to serve all seven of Cameroon's provinces. (Previously, different "caisses" existed through which each of the francophone export crops were marketed.) This organization, the National Produce Marketing Board (N.P.M.B.), intends to eventually utilize cooperative and parastatal services to facilitate marketing procedures throughout the country. Where these structures already exist, it has recently been the policy to encourage procedures to be carried out as expeditiously as possible. Thus, in 1978, the B.C.A. became the North West Cooperative Association, Ltd., (N.W.C.A., Ltd.), and, in contrast to 1968, took on most of the marketing responsibilities for cash crops in the North West Province. The first elected President of the N.W.C.A. was Mr.

S.K. Nyoh, who was re-elected (89 - 11) in November, 1979.

Probably the most important change to be effected by this latest re-organization involved cooperative inspectors. Previously, their jobs (generally that of supervising bookkeeping at the primary society level) were directly controlled by the Unions. This situation obviously allowed for too much local influence. In contrast, now these inspectors work for the N.W.C.A. and can be transferred from one Union to another at the apex's behest. Towards the end of the first year of this new system (1979) all parties involved seemed more comfortable with the role of these inspectors than in prior years.

The year 1980 portends to be one of important decisions for the N.W.C.A.. Specifically, this is because (1) the three year "trial period" of the N.P.M.B. will have drawn to an end; and (2) an internationally sponsored (European Development Fund, German Federal Republic, International Funds for Agricultural Development) Integrated Rural Development Project with a price tag of ten billion FCFA (forty five million dollars) is scheduled to begin and will work through the existing cooperative structure in the North West. If this project is to be truly aimed towards self-sufficiency in the Privince, it would follow that the N.W.C.A. should take on the marketing role which has been proven operational over the years by U.C.C.A.O. (the Central Union of Agricultural Cooperatives of the West Province); that is, that it export cash crops directly on the international market. This new project will definitely make this possibility more feasible since it envisions increased agricultural inputs. Increased inputs (fertilizers, insecticides, nurseries, etc.) in 1979 have already turned production figures drastically around, as seen below:

Year	Arabica Coffee Marketed Through North West Cooperatives
1975	10,221 tons
1976	8,321 tons
1977	6,707 tons
1978	6,207 tons
1979	10,000 plus tons (incomplete)

In addition to the marketing of arabica coffee, cooperatives in the North West Province have performed other functions both within and outside of the apex structure. Principally, these have been: The sale and distribution of building materials; the marketing of foodstuffs, robusta coffee, palm kernels and palm oil; and the encouragement of savings and loans.

The first of these diversified actions began with the formation of what was to be the Bamenda Vegatable and Foodstuff Cooperative Society. It was in the year 1963 that farmers in Bambili (about 15 kilometers outside of Bamenda) discovered that they were producing more vegetables than they and their families could consume. Since they saw the growing urban center of Bamenda as the most reasonable market, it was decided that they should group together when transporting their produce, in order to reduce charges. By the following year, it was deemed even more economical to open a small store in Mankon. On June 15, 1965, it was registered with 53 persons as members. Initially for its first few years of operations, the society was assisted by grants and volunteer support from the Organization of Netherlands Volunteers. It now covers an area within a fifty kilometer radius from the Bamenda store, and further, has financially expanded to the point that its 1978 turnover was 42,047,763 FCFA. However, its net profit of 2,567,082 FCFA for the same year must be considered in light of the fact that the manager of the Society is a civil servant whose salary is not yet charged to the organization.

In 1964 a U.S. Peace Corps Volunteer organized the first handicraft cooperative society. This society, which was registered on May 14, 1965, now has members from each division of the province, and, although no longer the beneficiary of American aid, it is now assisted by the Dutch (Hivos).

The first credit union in Cameroon was formed in 1963 in Njinikom, located in Menchum Division of the North West Province. Credit union growth since that time has set an example for African savings and loan associations. (Indeed, since its formation in 1968, the President of the African Cooperative Savings and Credit Association--ACOSCA--based in Nairobi, Kenya, has been a Cameroonian.) Very briefly, on November 13, 1963, there were fifteen members of the Njinikom Union with a total share savings of 2,100 FCFA. At the end of 1978 there were 18,132 members in the North West Province with savings of 346,500,000 FCFA, and 45,000 credit union members in the United Republic with savings of 1.5billion FCFA.

The original women's cooperatives in Cameroon were begun by a Catholic Relief Services worker in the early 1950's as corn mill societies. These groups began in Nso and later expanded to the other Divisions of the North West Province. Within a short time, the society in Bui Division began to deal in such consumer items as household goods, and it was officially registered as a cooperative society in 1960. However, in a short time, competition from local traders coupled with poor management caused the society to disintegrate. In 1971 a re-vitalization process was begun by a Government Cooperative Inspector, and, by 1973, the Nso Women's Cooperative Shop took over the registration certificate of the former corn mill

society. The mail activity of this society is the sale of members' foodstuffs, although some consumer items are also retailed.

In addition to the Nso Society, there are four other women's societies in the North West Province which are functional. All but one of these (the Mezam Women's Palm Oil Society) are affiliated to Unions within the N.W.C.A. structure. Of those affiliated, only one, located in Donga-Mantung Division, has proved to be a profitable enterprise.

There are also several other primary societies affiliated to Unions whose primary purpose is not the marketing of arabica coffee. Examples of these are the Mbo-Nso Rice Cooperative Society and the Shisong Cattlemen's Society--both affiliated to the Nso Area Cooperative Union.

Within the operations of the Unions themselves, activities have also become diversified. Beginning in 1969, with the assistance of the UNDP/ILO sponsored Federal Center for the Development of Cooperative Enterprises (CEFDEC, now CENADEC), building materials were bought in bult by the provincial apex organization and distributed to the Unions for sale to the members of the primary societies. This service has expanded, and its results can be seen by the changes in village dwellings over the last ten years. These supplies may be bought by farmers on credit, with upcoming cash crops as collateral.

Credit itself to members of the marketing societies has been an ongoing service over the past few years, sometimes through the collaboration of the Cameroon Cooperative Credit Union League (CamCCUL) The possibilities of expanding this service are extremely optimistic, considering the combined efforts of FONADER (the National Rural Development Fund) and the previously mentioned North West Province Integrated Rural Development Project.

Other services provided by the cooperative marketing structure include the distribution of agricultural inputs. In this area, the cooperation of the Agricultural Delegations has been a key to meeting farmers' needs, as well as an example of the cooperatives' responsiveness to members.

Early on it was noted that due to the sowing of the first arabica coffee seeds in the North West Province, life-style in the area was to change. Prior to discussing detailed changes, the present situation should be presented. Membership is a reliable sign of cooperative impact. Because farmers may belong to more than one cooperative (e.g., a primary society and a credit union), a conservative estimation of cooperative membership in the North West Province will be made here using only the figures for membership

in societies affiliated to the marketing Unions. At the end of 1978, 29,500 farmers were registered as members of these (117) societies. According to the 1976 Cameroonian census, the rural population of the North West Province is 832,806, and there is an average of seven persons per family. If it is assumed that one shareholder is deemed sufficient per family, then 24.8 per cent of the heads of rural households in the North West are cooperative members. Profit distribution by cooperatives to 28,017 of these members (no figures were available for the Santa Union) for the 1976-1978 period was valued at 1,026,806,000 FCFA (5,010,000 dollars), or 37,000 FCFA per farmer.

Evidently the biggest impact in the area has been that caused by the introduction of arabica coffee as a cash crop. In order to show how this has affected the farmer's actual cash flow and its implications for future cooperative development in the area, the following tables are presented:

I. Arabica Coffee Price Paid to Farmer Per Kilo

Season	First Price	Second Price	Bonus	Total Paid	Per Cent Change
1963/64	125	10	2	137	--
1964/65	135	--	20	155	+ 13%
1965/66	135	--	10	145	- 6%
1966/67	135	--	10	145	--
1967/68	125	25	2	152	+ 5%
1968/69	125	--	25	150	- 1%
1969/70	125	25	15	165	+ 10%
1970/71	130	25	10	165	--
1971/72	130	25	15	170	+ 3%
1973	130	25	20	175	+ 3%
1974	140	30	30	200	+ 14%
1975	140	30	20	190	- 5%
1976	150	35	60	245	+ 29%
1977	180	45	85	310	+ 27%
1978	275	--	50	325	+ 5%
1979	300	--	(Bonus not yet determined)		

II. Arabica Coffee Price Paid to Farmer Per Kilo In Constant 1975 Terms

Season	Total Paid	Cost of Living Index 1975 = 100	Price Paid to Farmer In Constant 1975 Terms
1963/64	137	53.9	254
1964/65	155	55.1	281 (+ 11%)
1965/66	145	56.3	258 (- 8%)
1966/67	145	58.2	249 (- 3%)

Season	Total Paid	Cost of Living Index 1975 = 100	Price Paid to Farmer In Constant 1975 Terms	
1967/68	152	59.3	256	(+ 3%)
1968/69	150	60.0	250	(- 2%)
1969/70	165	63.4	260	(+ 4%)
1970/71	165	65.8	251	(- 3%)
1971/72	170	69.8	244	(- 3%)
1973	175	74.4	235	(- 4%)
1974	200	86.9	230	(- 2%)
1975	190	100.0	190	(- 17%)
1976	245	109.4	224	(+ 18%)
1977	310	112.6	275	(+ 23%)

III. World Market Price for Arabica Coffee (Yearly Average)

Season	Price per Kilo*	Per Cent Change
1963/64	224.5	
1964/65	240.5	+ 7%
1965/66	229	- 5%
1966/67	214	- 7%
1967/68	210	- 2%
1968/69	218	+ 4%
1969/70	276	+ 27%
1970/71	263.5	- 5%
1971/72	260	- 1%
1972/73	295	+ 13%
1973/74	336	+ 14%
1974/75	317	- 6%
1975/76	576	+ 82%
1976/77	1,030	+ 79%

*Adjusted per dollar exchange rate

At once several items seem worth noting. First, as understood, the sharp rises in the world price of coffee was due to the Brazilian frost which affected the global supply, and therefore, similar increases should not be extrapolated for planning purposes. However, in terms of real income, it was only in these years of increased demand that the farmer's cash flow accelerated.

Perhaps most obvious is the fact that this world market fluctuation is not immediately reflected in the farmer's income. True, inputs have become cheaper and more available in recent years, and the N.P.M.B. has given grants to several of the Unions and Societies; but in many cases the specific designations of how the grants should

be used were not what the cooperatives themselves would have decided upon. Itemized lists of N.P.M.B. grants to cooperatives for 1977/78 and 1978/79 are as follows:

IV. 1977/78 N.P.M.B. Grants to North West Province Cooperatives

Cooperative	Items Financed	Grant Amount (FCFA)
Ndop Area Cooperative Union	Store Extension Land Rover	9,000,000
Bamenda Central Area Cooperative Union	Coffee Store Office	7,000,000
Nkambe Area Cooperative Union	Store Extension & Slab Large Rice Huller	8,000,000 15,000,000
Kom Area Cooperative Union	Store Extension in Wum Subdivision 3 Med. Size Rice Hullers	10,000,000 12,000,000
Santa Area Cooperative Union	Store Extension	5,000,000
Pinyin Area Cooperative Union	Store Extension	3,000,000
Mbengwi Area Cooperative Union	Robusta Coffee Store	8,000,000
Oku-Noni Area Cooperative Union	Coffee Machinery	25,000,000
Bali Area Cooperative Union	Coffee Slab/Shed	3,000,000
Nso Area Cooperative Union	Large Rice Huller	15,000,000
Ndop Area Cooperative Union	Engine Canoe	2,500,000
Moghamo Area Cooperative Union	Tipper Lorry Miscellaneous	8,000,000 1,500,000
Widikum Cooperative Produce Marketing Society	Produce Store	2,000,000
Mezam Women Palm Oil Society	Land Rover	3,500,000
Mendankwe Women Cooperative Produce Marketing Society	Store	4,000,000
Nso Women Coop. Shop	Store	3,000,000
Nkambe Women Cooperative	Store	2,000,000
Momo Women Cooperative	Store	1,500,000
TOTAL N.P.M.B. GRANTS TO N.W. COOPERATIVES, '77/78:		148,000,000 ($722,000)

V. 1978/79 N.P.M.B. Grants to North West Province Cooperatives

Cooperative	Item Financed	Grant Amount (FCFA)
Santa Area Coop. Union	Coffee Machinery	64,000,000
Oku-Noni Area Cooperative Union	Repair & Extension of Store	10,000,000
Nkambe Area Cooperative Union	Construction of Sub-Store at Nwa	10,000,000
Bamenda Central Area Cooperative Union	Construction of Coffee Factory	10,000,000
Nso Area Coop. Union	Truck	15,000,000
Mbengwi Area Cooperative Union	Coffee Machinery	35,000,000
	Enlargement of Coffee Factory	7,000,000
Ndop Area Coop. Union	Coffee Machinery	35,000,000
North West Coop. Assoc.	5 Trucks	75,000,000
	Construction of Building	300,000,000
TOTAL N.P.M.B. GRANTS TO N.W. COOPERATIVES, 78/79:		561,000,000 ($2,737,000)

In addition to the above, 9.5 million FCFA in 1977 was granted to the Provincial and Divisional Services of the Department of Cooperation and Mutuality (Coop/Mut), and 22,500,000 in 1978 was granted to the same service for vehicles. Therefore, the total granted to cooperatives and their supervisory service for both years was 741,000,000 FCFA (3.6 million dollars).

However, since the grant totals to these organizations for the three previous years only amounted to 71,786,508 FCFA, the five year average comes to just over 150 million FCFA (or a return of 3.6 francs per kilo of coffee delivered to the N.P.M.B.). Although these grants have definately assisted cooperative growth in the privince, it is re-iterated here that the designation of grant allocations were not totally at the volition of the cooperatives involved.

For its direct dealings with the N.P.M.B. the cooperatives receive a price equal to the purchase price to the farmer plus a buying allowance. This buying allowance was calculated at 53.0 FCFA/kg., which was, in fact, an average of the buying allowances for the various sizes of coffee:

A - 59.0 FCFA
B - 56.0 FCFA
C - 54.0 FCFA
D - 51.0 FCFA
E - 54.0 FCFA
F - 48.0 FCFA

The breakdown of this commission is as follows:

Activity	FCFA/kg.
1. Estimated cost of collection	33.00
2. Re-use of service bags	1.51
3. New bags	4.51
4. Contribution to NWCA costs	4.00
5. Insurance (0.25% of producers' price plus buying allowance)	0.857
6. Commission (0.1% of producers' price plus buying allowance)	0.353
7. Bank interest (9.25% of 12 weeks of producers' price + items 1 to 5)	7.340
8. Stamp duty (0.4% of producers' price plus buying allowance)	1.430
TOTAL:	53.00

In contrast to the above, U.C.C.A.O.'s recent gross margins per kilo of the same type of coffee have been:

A - 274.39 FCFA
B - 265.89 FCFA
C - 265.89 FCFA
D - 236.89 FCFA
E - 211.89 FCFA
Average: 247.265 FCFA/kg.

It should be noted, though, that these margins are only due to the recent boom in prices, and should not be used as the basis for long term planning. However, such margins, even reduced by market elasticity, if also enjoyed by the N.W.C.A. affiliated cooperatives, would be the beginnings of self-determined development efforts in the area.

Although it is obvious that cooperatives have grown in the North West Province, and that their continuing potential is still unlimited, it is pertinent to inquire about their effect on the actual producer in the province. At this point, the writer feels it most pertinent to quote one of the most reliable comparative analysis sources available.

At the Fourth Inter-Provincial Seminar on the Integration of Women in Development held in Bamenda from February 19 to the 24th, 1979, Mr. S.P.D. Tita presented the following historical impact background:

"With the introduction of cooperatives...agricultural production was almost entirely in the hands of small-scale family farming units, which produced a combination of subsistent food crops and coffee. They were using mostly unpaid family labor. The plots cultivated were small, implements used were largely limited to the hoe and the machete. Average yields were poor, and farm incomes were correspondingly low. There were not many feeder roads in the area, and transportation was fairly difficult. There were a number of coffee traders buying coffee from farmers to sell to John Holt and Co. or U.A.C. (United African Company). Ltd. The production was low, and farmers were not being paid a maximum price for their crop. Cash payments were not readily available locally, and there were no processing facilities. Farmers pounded their cherry coffee in wooden mortars and also pounded the dry parchment in wooden mortars.

The cooperatives undertook to carry out the same reforms in the North West for coffee that they had in the South West in the field of cocoa. The cooperatives provided an an honest buying system and ensured that a maximum price was paid for coffee. The cooperatives made cash payments readily available locally at cooperative stores and built central storage and grading facilities. Transportation was made available by the cooperatives, and short and medium term agricultural credits were made available to members. Pulping machines were introduced and farmers taught how to use them. Coffee buying in dry parchment was introduced, and hulling and grading done at the central processing stores. Most of the coffee trees were grown on mixed plots, among food crops that, in many cases, received most of the farm family's attention. The cooperatives went out on an education campaign to educate the farmers on better care of existing plantings by introducing better pruning, thinning of plants, elimination of mixed cropping, fertilization, use of pesticides, and protection of plants. Healthy seedlings were produced for farmers needing to increase their holdings. Coffee demonstrators were employed to go out to the farmers to demonstrate proper coffee planting, care, harvesting, and processing. Coffee buying by quality was introduced, and farmers were taught through their cooperatives how to detect defective coffee beans, the causes, and how these defects can be prevented....

The cooperatives further subsidized the transportation and handling. Chemicals, farm tools, cement, building material, and various sorts of farmer requirements were

supplied to members at good prices. Farmers increased coffee production and quality. Many farmers now live in good and comfortable permanent buildings, having luxury goods. They eat good food, live in comfort, and drive personal cars. Some individual farmers now own their own private fleet of vehicles.

Whereas there was only one bank in Bamenda in 1954 (Barclay's Bank, now BICIC), and it served the entire North West Province from Bamenda town, there are now four different banks in Bamenda town with branches in various Divisions like Bui, Donga-Mantung, etc..

Many feeder roads have been constructed to remove produce from the various village cooperatives to the central processing plants which now exist in all Divisions. The cooperatives now provide work for many people who would otherwise be unemployed, and have drastically changed the living standards of the people for the better.

The government, having seen that the cooperatives are capable and can best serve the needs of the farmers in the field of production and productivity, granted a monopoly to the cooperatives for the marketing of arabica coffee. After a number of years, government was satisfied with the operations of the cooperative monopoly in arabica coffee marketing, and has recently granted the cooperatives of the North West Province monopoly in the marketing of Robusta Coffee and Palm Kernels.

The cooperative movement has therefore been and still is the major influence in the economic advancement of the country, and thus has fulfilled a most important function as a producer organization in the field of production and productivity."

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FOOD PRODUCTION AND MARKETING PARTICIPATION IN KOM

By Paul NCHOJI NKWI

I - PRODUCTION AND TYPES OF PRODUCERS

a)- Major Crops : Kom lies in the mountainous district of the Western Grassfields of the North-West Province. It is a fertile area with beautiful landscapes. It is a region of intense agricultural activities, and the crops grown include maize (corn), beans, coffee, plantains, guinea corn, cocoyams, kola nuts, bananas, rice, pumpkins, groundnuts and yams. Most of these crops are cultivated by women. Men grow coffee, plantains, kola nuts and bananas. There are certain areas where some crops do not do well. Corn does not grow well in the Abasakom area (Fundong and Abu), but guinea corn does well there. Coffee grows well all over, but does well in Abasakom area. Rice is cultivated in Mejang, where the climate is warmer.

Most of the crops are cultivated during the two planting seasons : From August to September and from February to March. Corn is a major food crop which is grown twice a year. Most tribes in the North West plant corn once only that is, February/March. We shall see later on why Kom seems to produce more corn but imports some during some seasons. Peanuts are grown only around February/March. The farms which are cultivated in the February/March period are left fallow for at least a year. There is some form of shifting cultivation.

Producers are usually small domestic units varying in size and structure. The independant elementary families constitute the producers of most cash and food crops. The members of these units cooperate in production. The independent polygynous families represent larger units of production. Like the elementary families, they engaged in food production in order to satisfy both ritual and ceremonial needs, rather than a marketing need. There are no large scale producers of food crops for any commercial satisfaction. Coffee which represents a major cash crops still remains an affair of the domestic units under the control of the household head. The land tenure system does not seem to promote the emergence of any large scale producer. The agricultural expansion largely depends on this.

The Bulk of the data was collected on a brief visit to Kom (8th to 10th eptember 1979. The scanty nature of the paper is due to lack of sufficient time to explore in depth the various aspects involved. The attempts to show in broad terms the food crop production and market participation in Kom. It would have been a terrible oversight if the North-West Marketing Survey project was concluded without a statement on the situation in the central part of the Western Grassfields.

b)- Access to land : The foyn (chief) is the titular owner of all land within the tribe. All lands within the palace vicinity belong de facto to the foyn. He may have some de facto control of certain portions of land in some villages, but these usually are administered by his direct representatives, usually royals. All other portions of land throughout the Kom kingdom come under the control of village or lineage heads whose illustrous ancestors were the 'primi occupants'. The lineage or village heads distribute the land to heads of domestic units who derive the usufruct of such lands. The head of the domestic units has portions or parcels of land exploited by his wife or wives. These parcels of land are usually redistributed to married sons. A married woman is given at marriage some acres of land by her husband for exploitation. Her married son usually acquires some of these for building and cultivation. That is why the saying goes 'A man always builds on his mother's farm'. Land really belongs theoretically to the lineage, and when it is given to a woman for cultivation,. is only entrusted to her for that purpose and can only be transferred to her lineage, if her husband makes a gift of it to her son. Here we witness the land changing hands from one lineage through the son and through marriage to another lineage.

Kom has a matrilineal descent, and all land theoretically belong to members of the matrilineage, but in effect it is controlled by one member of the lineage, who makes occasionally distributions to the children of the lineage (woindo, sing. wain-ndo). A son who does not belong to his father's matrilineage, has a right to claim land from his father's lineage, and once that transfer is made, it becomes the property of his lineage. When a man dies without distributing land to his sons, the lands are turned over to the lineage and can be distributed on request by the successor who is usually a sister's son or a brother.

Within the domestic unit the woman and her children receive land for exploitation. The usufruct rights belong to the man. The man makes available the land to the wife because he needs enough food both for ritual and ceremonial activities, and food crops are produced by women who handle most of the agricultural production. Theoretically no married man can demand food from his wife unless he has given her fields on which to work and produce the crops for the household. He must provide her with several fields so as to permit shifting cultivation. If he cannot afford more she or he may hire some fields for food production.

Domestic units usually have land surrounding the homestead. This land is usually used for the cultivation of coffee, kola, plantains, bananas, etc.,but far away from the homes there are fields in which corn, beans, groundnuts, yams, pumpkins are grown. The fields vary in sizes. Some are as small as one acre and some are as big as five to ten acres. Each field is cultivated twice before it is left fallow for a year or two.

Since the foyn is the titular owner, he controls it through his territorial agents who are village heads and lineage heads. No strangers can settle or acquire land without his explicit permission. Usually these strangers go through the territorial agents and are formally presented to the foyn for approval or disapproval. Land is acquired by other Koms through lineage or affinal relatives, and it is a problem acquiring it, that few today can afford. The monetary value of land is quite known, and land tends to be sold out to non-lineage men. There are more land cases today than there were 20 to 30 years ago. Court records show that in the 1920s there were few court cases on land. Land has so much marketable importance, that lineage heads who administer land in the name of the matrilineage tend to part from the principle.

Access to Labour

To exploit the fields left fallow,producers need labour beyond that which the domestic unit can provide. The elementary family provides the labour for ordinary small farms. Some larger domestic groups such as the polygynous households use the women and some grown-up children for farm work.

Each woman has her own fields, the yield of which goes to maintain her children and husband. But the polygynous man would have certain specific farms which are his and whose products are turned into his granary and not to the granaries of his wives.

A man can hire festive labour to plough either his farms or the farms of his wives. They do so in return of food and drinks, meat and salt.

A woman who receives portions of land from her husband may lend this out to her kin. A young married woman may plough her fields with the help of her mother and sisters, and sometimes the harvest can be turned over to all of them. A landowner may distribute land both to his kin and affinal relatives. These usually constitute a major labour force. Matrikin tend not to constitute a major labour force to the domestic unit. Although land belongs theoretically to the lineage, few lineage men or women are used in land exploitation. Affinal relatives remain for the domestic group a source of labour recruitment. The moment a girls is engaged, the relatives of her future husband will from hence be responsible for the supply of labour in the performance of all types of duties to which they may be called. It is usually the duty of the son-in-law (lum-wie) and his relatives to clear the farms of his mother-in-law (na-wie). He assists in the harvest of corn, especially guinea corn. Affinal relatives usually supply the labour before the actual marriage and few years after it. But this does not mean that throughout life the son-in-law will not perform duties if called upon, but the obligation is usually not so great as it is before and immediately after marriage.

If young married man has to clear or prepare the farms of his mother-in-law, he invites his age mates. They do the work in return for food, drinks and a hot bath. No young man ever refuses to join his age mate in performing such duties for his mother-in-law if invited, because whoever intends to marry must be prepared to supply labour to the mother-in-law and to her own relatives. Usually the fields may by so large that an individual will need months to prepare or clear them for cultivation. It is but natural for him to call on his age mate to help him do the work.

Co-operative labour was a common feature in Kom, and still is, though the means of ~~remuneration~~ have changed. People prefer cash for labour rendered than food and drink. In some cases food and cash are still supplied. Young men team up, and clear the farms of their mothers or provide grass for the thatching of the roofs of their father's houses. These work groups move from one farm to another over a certain period, at least before the ploughing period begins. In each case they are fed. Women also used constitute work groups to plough each other's farms. If they worked on A's farm today, in two days time, they will move to B's farm, and then to C's farm, and so on and so forth.

A prestigious landowner could invite the women to plough his fields cleared and prepared by his sons, or sons-in-law. This will take a festive tone because the work is accompanied by singing and dancing. The work group which may number as many as fifty persons are usually fed; they drink, and receive gifts of salt and palm oil. Only notables can afford to invite such a festive labour force (ayo'mbang). The labour force here goes beyond kinship ties, since the invitation is usually made indiscriminately.

Collective labour is also provided for the ploughing of the royal farms by all the foyn's subjects. The men clear the farms, and the women hoe the farms. The foyn usually needs the yield from such farms to replenish his granaries, but much of the food used for royal entertainment comes from individuals throughout the kingdom. One must not look at the palace only as a centre of accumulation but it should without a gift, and no one ever goes away with a royal gift. Even the collective labour supplied on the foyn's farm is usually renumerated.

Over past 20 years labour recruitment policy has changed. Group labour still exist. Work groups have become more structured or organized. The groups are more restrained with mechanisms developed to check laziness, latecoming, disputes or conflicts. Such organic perform duties for cash only. The members work on each other's farms ; they work on the farms of non-members in return for money. Some groups demand for cash and food. These group help in clearing farms, ploughing, hervesting, plugging coffee, etc. The groups were either constituted on the basis of age, sex or even religion (eg.,Young Christian workers). Money realized from such labour supply is shared among the members. Some groups have developed into thrift and loan societies. They have made some impact in food and cash crop production, and their role in the market participation appears evident.

II - PRODUCE OF DISTRIBUTION

Each household consumes that which it produces : corn or maize, beans, cocoyam, peanuts, etc. Top on the list of food crops consumed by the household is corn. Corn constitute the stable food, and it is eaten at least ten times a week At least 80 % of the corn produced is consumed within the household. Corn production goes into ritual or ceremonial events - marriage, births and deaths. During such events kin and their allies contribute enough corn to make the occasion dignified and solemn. It is usually the amount of corn consumed on such occasions that determines the prestige and importance of the occasion.

This heavy consumption at certain periods of the year poses certain peculiar problems.

There are seasons when there is acute shortage especially around May/June. Most families run short of corn supplies during this period. In order to promote food conservation, kwifoyn, the traditioal arm of government usually banns death, marriage and even birth celebrations during period of scarcity of corn. The bann is lifted normally after the harvest. During the period of shortage, corn is either imported from Bamenda or Babungo, or the people turn to other food crops ; cocoyams, plantains, beans. Corn become very expensive, that is about 1000 francs per tin.

One would tend to suggest that production should be promoted not only to meet local demands, but also to meet commercial needs. The problem does not lie in increased production, for apparently Kom produces enough even for herself, but it is the rational use of corn that does not exist because the social structure does not permit. Increased production could mean the exploitation of unexplored lands. The hilly nature of the area and the land tenure systems poses a number of problems. High possibilities of soil erosion have discouraged the exploitation of some hilly areas. Some areas have very poor soil texture, and corn hardly does well. Farms of any importance are usually very far from the homes, since coffee cultivation has taken up most farms arounds the homesteads. The distances women have to walk to those farms bring extra burden, and lowers their production capacity. Encouraging increase of corn production will also pose a serious problem of storage. The traditional storage system can only handle corn for domestic or local consumption. The problems of handling weevils with insecticides may not be at the reach of all. If production has to be increased or the present production level maintained, there must be a decrease in wastage. How can wastage be discouraged ?

No person considers the death, a marriage or birth well celebrated if there is no abundance of corn consumption to the point of wastage. Kwifoyn accepts this principle, but maintains its vetoe in times of scarcity. Unnecessary wastage is considered proper in the celebration of such events because misfortune is expected is this consumption is not pushed to a wastage point. A solution to the problem may be the education of the people.

People should be taught to distribute their meals ; there should be a decrease of corn meals ; other food crops should become part of the menu of the household No Kom man believes he has been fed, if corn is not involved in it.

Corn as a stable food crop occupied a unique position in the gift-system. It constitute an essential means of exchange - prestation, especially in marital transactions. Engagement (sü yen ndo) rites usually implies the exchange of gifts. When a yound man brings to his engagement night, palm oil, cooked meat, firewood, clothes, he receives in return from his parents-in-law a certain quantity of corn flour, usually several bags of corn. This corn is usually provided not only by the household of girls but also by her kin group. On the actual marriage day (nchawie) the girls' skin prepare a gift of more than five bags of corn in exchange of the palm oil and other gifts made by the son-in-law. The corn receided is redistributed among the kin of the young man. During death celebrations corn flour is used to entertaining the various mask societies which come to dance at the occasion. Again on such occasions; kin always contribute enough corn. Corn production as one may see serves mainly for exchange among affinal relatives or kin, as well as on death ceremonies, and rarely beyond such dimensions.

Some crops are treated with less importance because they do not constitute means of exchange. Beans, cocoyams, plantains are consumed during periods of shortage of corn. Most of these are sold in the markets mostly to strangers and to those who do not grow them. Some of the major crops such as rice deserve some treatment here.

Rice : Rice is produced by one of the sub-chiefdoms of Kom, Mejang. The climate is relatively warm, and the rice grown here goes to local consumption and for exportation. The Kom Area Co-operative Union (KACU Ltd) has seen the preponderance of its commercial value and is actively promoting its cultivation. The KACU lid is telling the farmers that there is a market for rice, since the rice produce at Mujang is not sufficient because rice is till imported into Kom. It seems that the KACU ltd received a gift of three rice haulers from the Marketing board, and ever since then, the rice programme has not been launched because of a number of problems. There is no personnel to run the programme ; there seems to be few markets as well as the problem of storage facilities ; the farmers in Kom have to compete with other producers in the North-West (Tingo; Ndop, Wada, Nkambe). These producers have still piles of rice for marketing.

To encourage the Kom farmers to produce beyond the local needs, is to open them up to stiff competition. Some farmers have tried to sell their rice outside Kom but have failed either because of the poor qualities or because there is a lot of competition. From my assessment it is apparent that the KACU Ltd has abandoned for the time being the promotion of rice cultivation because of problems of marketing faced by other producers in the N.W. The haulers donated by the marketing board to the KACU Ltd have not yet being put into operation.

Coffee : It is produced by men or heads of household, and most of them belong to the KACU Ltd. The crop has taken up most of the farmland around the homes. It is the major crops marketed outside Kom. This shall all be exported. One per cent of coffee production may be too high to represent local consumption. The farmers sell their coffee through the co-operatives which are members of the KACU Ltd. It is the KACU Ltd that prepares the coffee for the world market.

The households are engaged in its production. It is usually the man, his wife or wives and children who are involved in its preparation for purchase by the co-operative societies.Most of the work begins around December when there is plugging and husting of the grains. It goes through a period of drying in the sun, and is sold when the sales seasons opens. During the year the house-hold is involved in clearing and weeding of the estates. Most of this is done by children or by hire labour.

Palm-Oil : The climatic conditions of the area does not permit the cultivation of palms. Mejang to the south offers relatives good conditions for experimentation. A palm plantation is being experimented in order to cut down the permanent importation of the palm oil. Today, palm oil is imported from Wum, Isu, Bamenda. It is an important commodity which plays a vital role in the payment of brideprice. For a person to complete his marriage payments he needs at least 30 to 50 tins of palm oil. One can image the number of marital transactions that go on in Kom every year, and then multiply it by 50 or so, then one can know the amount of palm oil imported into the area every year. A kilo of palm oil cost 185F, and a tin cost at least 34 000 Francs CFA a tin. The consumption is so high that measures have been taken by the KACU Ltd to step up and facilitate the supply. The KACU Ltd has been able through the assistance of an American Peace Corps to organise Women's co-ops to handle the importation and sales of palm oil.

There are 11 groups of woman's co-ops (Wombong, Njinikom, Alim, Fundong, Abu, Bobong, Kikfuni, Ashing, Belo, Anyajua, and Anjin). These groups buy and distribute palm oil to its members.

Some of these women's co-ops (Ashing and Belo) handle not only palm oil sales but they stock surplus beans, plantains, and corn of its members. Here again the problem of storage facilities is posed. Only beans and corn can be preserved for a reasonable period while plantains and bananas must be liquidated within days. The market for this is not always there and Kom has a closed market system. It is not very much open to traders from other areas because its road infrastructure is rather poor, and roads became impassable in the rainy season.

The women's co-ops need to be promoted, so that they can diversify their activities. The development of the co-operative spirit, and its advantages needs to be part of the co-operative education. The education should embrace basic instructions in agricultural principles, the improvement of their food production, the diversification of meals. Corn should become only one food crop among others, but not <u>the</u> crop.

Circulation of Produce

The distribution of produce may take place within the kin groups or between affinal relatives. Marketing constitutes also another form through which produce is circulated. At the level of known relationship, circulation is called for by specific events--births, marriages, and deaths, as well as the scaling of elderhood ranks. We have seen already how produce is circulated among kin and affinal relatives. We shall concentrate now on circulation called for by elderhood attainment and by marketing. One must note here that circulation does not concern the surplus only, for exchange is an essential part of the social life, and should go on even if there is no surplus.

Muyo is the elderhood status among the Kom involving the circulation of the distribution of goods or produce. A person can only become a member of the respected elderhood if he has paid a certain amount of goods to elders who have already attained the rank. The things given usually include livestock, corn, salt, oil, etc.. Every man who has a compound must have paid goats, sheep, fowls, corns in bags, salt, and oil to the elders of the village in order to sit in their midst and claim the title of a bobe, the lord of the compound. Wealth in Kom has meaning when it is given out, or left to the disposal of others. When distribution is made to the right persons, one usually expects a handsome return; that is, he will share from henceforth goods paid by others willing to become elders. To become an elder today, one will needs goods and produce to the value of about 200.000F CFA. It is not only Muyo, but there are other regulatory societies, such as Mukum and Chong, which demand a circulation of goods.

The cultivation of food crops such as beans, corn, groundnuts,

banana, plantains, are not only sold, but exchanged at a very limited level between kin groups. Besides these local products, other foreign goods such as kerosine, soap, cloths, milk, and palm oil are sold in the markets. And corn, which is largely produced in Kom for local consumption, meets an acute shortage around May/June. When corn becomes scarce around this time, importation of corn becomes imperative, and the price of corn rises. This seasonal importation is due to the fact that it is during May and June that corn is getting ready for harvest, and most households have already exhausted their previous year's reserves. People are usually out of stock because much is used for the celebration of deaths, marriages, and births. Corn is the staple food of the people, and they are not happy if corn does not constitute part of their daily meals. Therefore, importation is the logical answer.

Marketing System

Kom has a very closed marketing system. There are six markets: Njinikom, Fundong, Kikfuni, Belo, Mbingo, and Anyajua (Anjin). Most of the traders in these markets are Kom themselves who trade in both local food production and in European goods. From time to time traders come from Bamenda or from chiefdoms around. The European goods are either purchased at Bamenda or in Douala. There is the importation of such goods as well as the importation of palm oil, but there is little exportation. Coffee, which is exported totally, is the major cash crop. Livestock exportation to Ndop chiefdoms and to Bamenda goes on too.

Within Kom traders move from one market to another from their permanent village stores. Njinikom markets hold on Saturdays. The other markets hold on days within the traditional Kom eight day week. Fundong market draws traders from Bafmeng (outside Kom), and from villages around. Belo and Mbingo markets draw

traders from Bamenda, Babanki, and Babungo. These traders come to sell clothes, soap, knives, and other iron tools. Njinikom market, which is in the heart of Kom, is an important market because it draws traders from all over, and offers a variety of goods.

The movement of traders is usually a major problem in the rainy season. The roads are usually almost impassable. Market attendance falls, and trading activities are reduced to the minimum. The marketing remains an affair of the villages around. The bad road conditions affect the prices as the transportation fares change. Few public vehicles are available during this season and those who can risk their cars charge prices which are usually three times the normal fare in the dry season. The traders will increase their prices also in order to make up for the loss in transportation.

The introduction of the Credit Union in the 1960's helped in the promotion of trading activities. Most traders have access to credit facilities offered by the Union. The interest rate is rather low. There are no banking facilities in Kom, and the Credit Union remains a vital means. There are also thrift and loan societies (njangi) from which traders can obtain credits also, but here the interest rate is rather high, all to the benefit of the members of such societies.

One aspect of the marketing system is its social dimension. It is on market days that kin in distant villages turn up to exchange messages, drink, chat. It is a day of rest for most people who are not Christians. A person does not come to the market just to buy, but also to meet friends, kin, and affinal relatives.

Constraints on Further Market Participation

It can be said that modern demands are promoting more and more market participation. In the 1930's and 1940's, the demands could only be made through work in the coastal plantations. People used to migrate to the coastal plantations in order to earn money to come home, pay the tax, buy clothes, and pay bride-wealth. The kola-trade, which was the privilege of a few, could only meet the demands of the wealthy. Very few could recruit paid labour to bring their kola to Takum or Yola in Nigeria. When missionary activities began in Kom in the 1920's there was a necessity to promote the circulation produce, especially among the strangers who came to Kom either as missionaries, or as pupils or teachers. In those early days the sale of food crops was a taboo, and gradually the missionaries encouraged the people to sell food and to pay their church dues and taxes.

The gradual realization of the monetary value of food crops also has promoted market participation. People today can sell corn, beans, cocoyams, and plantain in order to pay their taxes, school fees for their children, or to acquire some of the luxury goods of modern economy. Market participation has improved over the last twenty years, and people can sell anything, provided they can get money.

The agricultural extension programmes are making their own impact on market participation. Since people are realizing the monetary value of land, they are more sensitive and ready to assimilate the educational principles on soil conservation, the improvement of agricultural output, the introduction of fertilizer, and the rational exploitation of land. What still has to be done is the campaign against wastage or "spoilage" of corn. The Government and agricultural extension officers are finding

it difficult because the wastage is part of the social structure. It may be that the co-ops can succeed here because they are run by people of the place. Although the co-ops are trying to promote the production of certain crops to a surplus level, they must be ready to find a good market; otherwise, it makes no sense giving farmers a false hope.

BALI-KUMBAT: A CASE STUDY OF A PRODUCER COMMUNITY

INTRODUCTION

Bali Kumbat is one of several villages in Ndop Sub-Division of the North West Province. It is situated on the Ndop-West Plain, surrounded by a number of smaller villages: Bamessing to the north, Babanki Tungo to the north west, Bamunkumbit and Bafanji to the south, Babalang to the south east, and Bamali to the north east. (See map below) It lies between 1150 m and 1200 m above sea level. It is relatively flat land surrounded by the Bambotus and the Oku high-lands. The area is lower than much of the North West Province.

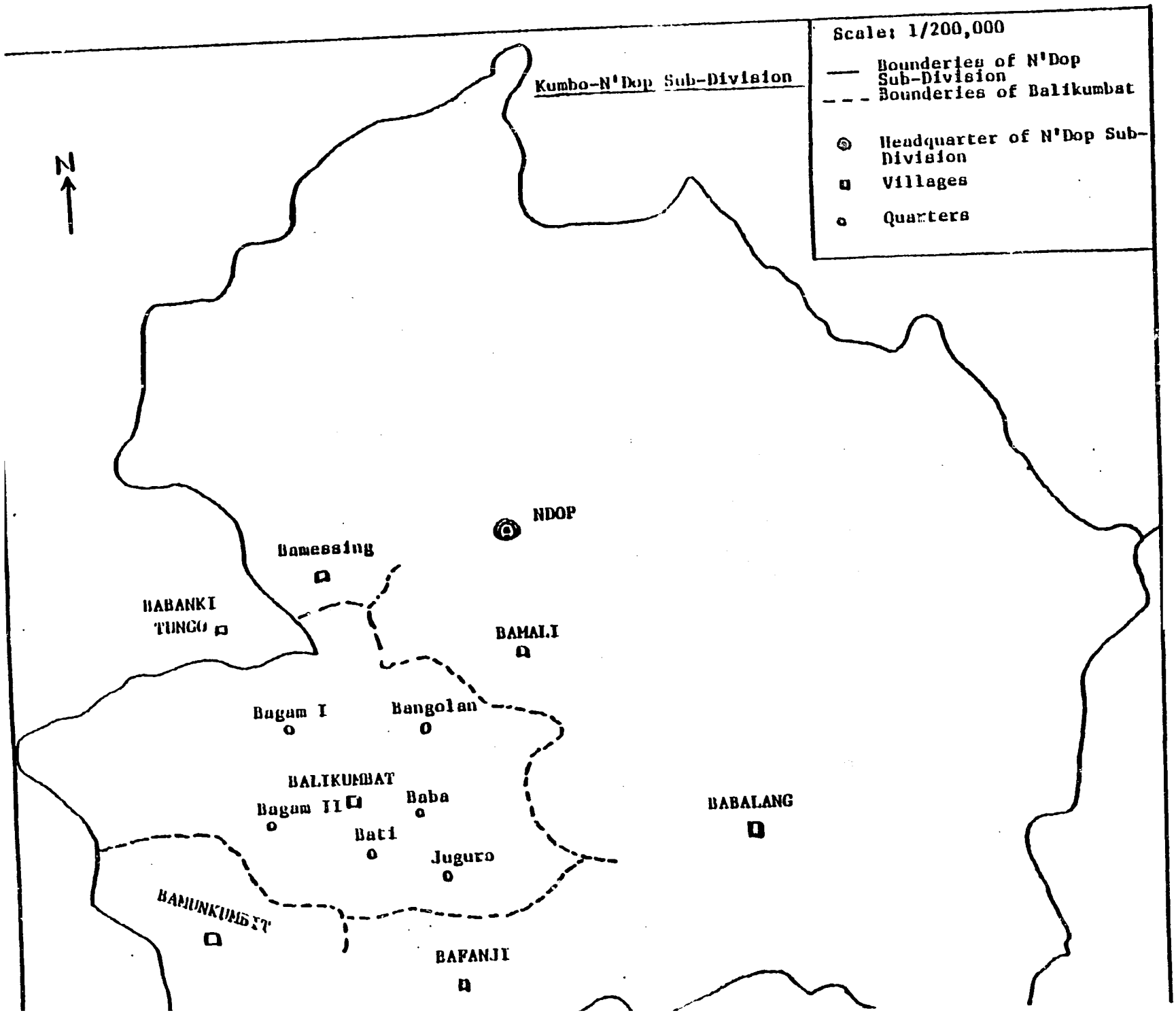
This study focuses on the local staple food crop cultivation of the area and the various constraints affecting production and access to markets.

METHODOLOGY

Much of the information upon which this chapter is based was gathered through filling out questionnaires during personal interviews. (See questionnaire at the end of this chapter). Forty five questionnaires were completed at the end of the study. 22% of the sample population was women, producing groundnuts and corn; 4%, women producing rice, as well as groundnuts and corn; 2%, women traders, and 2%, women operating local stores. 27% of the sample population was male farmers growing corn and groundnuts, as well as coffee; 20%, male farmers who care only for their coffee and other tree crops; 9%, male farmers engaged in rice cultivation; 7%, male traders and 7% local buying agents. 33% of the sample population was female and 67%, male.

History of Production

When the Bali people arrived on the Ndop plain 3 centuries ago, their main crops were millet and groundnuts. Because of unfavourable climatic conditions, the cultivation of millet was abandoned. Corn, groundnuts, and a variety of other crops became the basic staple foodcrops produced in the area. Presently, corn is the main staple foodcrop. Groundnuts are a cash crop, used for exchange and entertainment. Okra, previously produced only around Mbouda in the Western Province, has become one of the important cash crops cultivated in this area. Rice, another cash crop, has just been recently introduced.[1] The cultivation of coffee was introduced to the area sometime after the Second World War and has remained the major cash crop.


Kumbo-N'Dop Sub-Division
Scale: 1/200,000
Bounderies of N'Dop Sub-Division
Bounderies of Balikumbat
Headquarter of N'Dop Sub-Division
Villages
Quarters
N
NDOP
Bamessing
BABANKI TUNGO
BAMALI
Bagam I
Bangolan
BALIKUMBAT
Bagam II
Baba
Bati
Juguro
BAMUNKUMBIT
BAFANJI
BABALANG

Factors of Production: Land, Labour and Capital

It was noted above that Balikumbat sits on a low plain. Consequently, it is possible to cultivate different low altitude crops, such as rice. The plain is covered by very lush grass vegetation, interspersed with raffia palm and swamps.

The soil of this area is quite fertile. It consists of dark volcanic soil which favours farming. Wind and water erosion of neighbouring hills has left alluvial soils in many areas. The valleys are well watered by small tributaries of the Nun river, which rises near Kumbo in Bui Division. These fertile areas are concentrated in four places: Jugoru, Bangolan, the valley separating Balikumbat and Bafanji, and along the courses of streams. (See map P. 1).

Land around most homes has been planted with coffee, intercropped with plantains and other tree crops such as mangoes, plums, kolanuts and oranges. The farming of food crops is done on lands further away from homes.[2]

Although swamplands constitute some of the most fertile land in the area, until the introduction of rice farming and water control techniques by the Upper Nun Valley Development Authority (UNVDA), farmers were not able to fully utilize them due to heavy annual flooding.

Acquisition of Farmland:

The extended family is the basic economic unit in the area. Each household is largely self-sufficient, producing most of their basic subsistence items. Farm land is acquired by individuals as members of this unit.

The Chief or Fon[3] exercises a traditional claim within the village boundaries and has powers of allocating land to individuals. New and undeveloped lands, not under the control of any lineage, are allocated to farmers by the Fon. The individual locates a piece of uninhabited land within the village territory before making his request to the Fon. The request is then made by presenting the Chief with a basket of groundnuts, a jug of raffia palm wine, firewood, and corn flour.

Farmers can also inherit land. This is land acquired by members of a lineage through succession. Within the lineage group, the "Doh"[4] has control over land. He allocates portions to his young male dependents. His land can only be inherited when he dies by the eldest of his male offsping.

Control of the distribution of rice farms is administered by the U.N.V.D.A. Farmers' committees are set up in the villages. The committee is then vested with the distribution of rice farms under U.N.V.D.A. guidance. The right to cultivate land requires an annual fee of five hundred francs C.F.A. plus a membership fee of two hundred francs C.F.A. These fees are used to pay for communal work on the rice field, such as the building of banks and digging of trenches to control water.

All land acquired must be developed or farmed to maintain control over it. Inherited land or land allocated by the Fon to farmers is controlled permanently by possessors. Although the greater population of those who work on the farms are women, they have little control over land Most of them work on their husbands' farms.

Size of farms:

Family farms usually consist of a number of plots located in different areas. These plots are made up of long dome-shaped ridges. According to our study, a family has between five to ten of such plots. The average farm size is approximately 1 hectare per family, with 0.5-0.8 hectares planted in foodstuffs. Coffee hectarage is estimated to be on average of 0.25 hectares. Rice farms are delimited into diked rectangles of 1 "room" (10m x 20m à $200m^2$). Each farmer controls between 2-10 rooms. (0.04 ha - 0.2 ha).

Large families tend to have large farms. This is because, as families expand in size, there is need for more land to cultivate foodcrops. Also they begin to become prominent in the village.

Labour:

Farm work is mostly done by the family, hence the amount of labour available to a farmer depends largely on the size of his family.[5] A large number of family members are children who cannot effectively work on the farms throughout the year. They are either in school or too young to work. However, labour available to farmers can increase during holiday periods.[6]

To compensate for the shortage of family labour, farmers often organise themselves into cooperative work groups. These are simple organised groupings of 5-20 persons who associate themselves according to criteria such as friendship, age groups, kin or sex. The groups come together to perform various agricultural tasks such as clearing, tilling, or harvesting, with work performed in rotation on members' farms. Food and sometimes raffia palm wine are provided by members as their turn is reached.

There is also a labour market. This is made up of Bamoun farm labourers[7] and a few local villagers. They are hired at a piece rate of one hundred francs C.F.A. for every three to six ridges[8] depending on the nature of land and length of ridges. Labour is usually hired for the more difficult and time consuming farm tasks: clearing, tilling, and mulching.

Division of Labour:

The bulk of farm tasks required for foodcrop cultivation are done by the women. The men are to a greater extent involved with cash crop cultivation. Men may help the women in difficult tasks like clearing vegetation in preparation for tilling. Presently, however, because of increasing labour shortages, men have begun to till plots for foodcrops. Young children assist in all forms of farming activities, helping the women on corn and groundnut farms and the men on coffee and rice farms. As the rate of rural exodus rises, labour shortages have become more acute. One of the ways to compensate for this diminution of family labour

is by marrying more women who will work on the farms. The resulting number of children from marriage helps to ease the labour shortage. Labour available to a farmer may also increase through marriage since part of the bride wealth or dowry is paid by the husband and his kinsmen in terms of labour hours.

Types of Labour Tasks:

In January and February, coffee, rice, and foodcrop plots are cleared. Tilling for food crops starts in Mid-March and continues through May. Also during this period, farmers plant coffee seedlings and rice farmers till plots and install rice nurseries. Rice seedlings are transplanted from nurseries in June. Foodcrop plots are mulched in May and June and harvested during July, August, and September. Weeding of rice farms is done twice a season; a few weeks after transplanting of rice seedlings and immediately before rice ears are about to be harvested. Coffee and rice are harvested during November and December.

Labour days on Farms:

According to our Survey, foodcrop production requires 200 man/days per hectare; coffee production, 270 man/days per hectare; and rice production, 410 days per hectare. U.N.V.D.A. reports estimate that rice production requires 350 man/days per hectare.[9] Peak labour periods fall between May and June

Table 1 - Labour days/Ha

Crop	Preparation days/Ha		Maintainance days/Ha		Harvesting days/Ha	Days Total
	Clearing	Tilling/Planting	Mulching	Weeding*		
Foodcrop	42	50 50 33	33	15	60	200
Coffee	84	-	84	-	102	270
Rice	50	110	130*	70	50	410

* First weeding
Controlling water
Scaring birds

Capital:

Farmers invest in farm equipment such as hoes, matchets, shovels, pickaxes, small knives, basins, jute bages, and bamboo graineries. Women who make gari buy or make local graters. Some men have bicycles and a few rich farmers have motorcycles a cornmill, or a coffee pulper. In general, farmers cannot afford to own or hire tractors or other mechanized equipment.

Only some coffee and rice farmers use fertilizers. Most are financially unable to buy these chemicals and moreover, they lack knowledge of their correct application. Rice farmers spend relatively little on fertilizer, (845 Frs. CFA).[10] Because of heavy floods which can easily wash away chemicals on rice fields, farmers have been advised to use chemicals only on their nurseries. The UNVDA is the sole supplier of fertilizers to rice farmers. Coffee farmers buy fertilizers at the rate of 1,800 F CFA per bag from the Co-operative. This is highly subsidized by government.

Credit:

Small farmers often have difficulty in obtaining capital. Only a small number of farmers have obtained credit from FONADER over the last five years.[11] Results from our questionnaire showed that 7% of the farmers had obtained credit from FONADER once. These 7% were mostly coffee farmers and members of the co-operative society. There are no credit unions in the area. Farmers, generally uneducated, are often unable to complete the difficult application procedure required for obtaining credit.

Interest rates for FONADER loans are 7% per annum. Farmers complain that this is high compared to their annual earnings. Although the loan is to be repaid in kind over a period of 3 years, farmers note that they never receive the full amount of the loan at one time. Usually the credit comes in small amounts, and farmers pay interest even on the amount they have not yet received.

Local Credit Institution: Njangi

Njangi houses are the most common traditional saving organisations. These are local gatherings organised according to criteria such as friendship, age groups, members of secret societies, or sex. One of the functions of this organization is to raise money for individual members. Each member contributes, weekly, a sum agreed upon by the group and one member "eats".[12] This is done in rotation till every member has had his share.

Local banks are not common. They are usually organised by youths who contribute a few hundred francs weekly and at the end of the year the total amount of money is shared according to the individual's contribution. They also give out short-term loans to members at an interest rate of 10% per month.

There are a few individual money lenders. Their high interest rates - between 15 and 20 percent a month - keep most farmers away and only individuals in serious need of money go to them.

Farm Profile: Categories of Agricultural Products:

(a) Staple Food crops: corn, groundnuts, plantains, yams, cassava, and sweet potato.

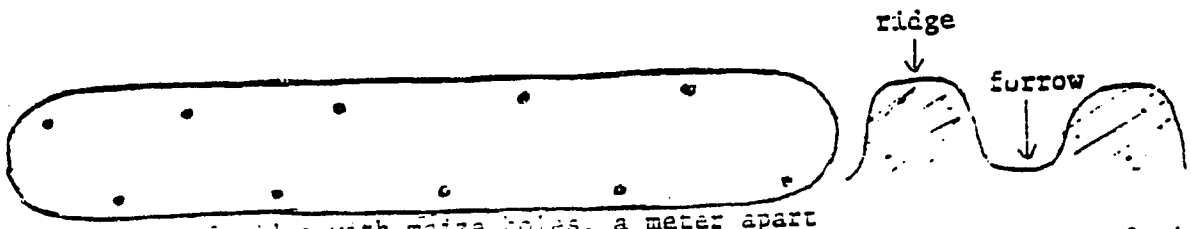
(b) Cash crops: Coffee, rice, raffia-bush, oranges, plums, avocado.

(c) Vegetables: Okro, tomato, cow peas, and pepper.

Foodcrops:

Cereals: Major cereals produced in the area include maize and rice. Maize is intercropped with groundnuts and grown once a year. This is in contrast to other areas such as Bali, where there are two corn crops annually. (In Bali the wet season corn is intercropped with groundnuts. The dry season corn, which produces the higher yield, is grown alone).[13]

Corn is farmed by women. Ridges are firmed with traditional hoes, and maize is planted on them. On every ridge, there are two rows of corn planted one meter apart. (See diagram below).



Top view of ridge with maize holes, a meter apart (Two seeds in a hole)

Side view of ridge

Corn is harvested and consumed fresh or dried and ground into flour. Corn is also processed into local corn beer. Consumption of corn varies between 500 gms - 1 kg per day per adult.

Groundnuts: Groundnuts are one of the major crops produced by the Balikumbat people. They are intercropped with maize, and like maize, farmed only once a year, during the rainy season. There are two varieties the red, which has a cycle of 85-110 days and the white, which has a much longer cycle, 110-160 days.[14] The estimated output for .12 ha varied from field to field, 6-8 basins. (500 kg - 664 kg/hectare).

Very little of the crop is consumed by the farmers. Well over 3/4 of the groundnut harvest is marketed. Part of the crop is reserved for planting.

Starchy food: Starchy foodcrops cultivated in the area include cocoyams (colocasia), cassava, yams (yellow yams or Dioscoria Cayennesis), and sweet potatoes. These crops are produced in small quantities and are usually consumed locally. Average yields for these crops are estimated at some 3,000 kg/hectare.

Vegetables: Vegetables play an increasingly important part in the local diet. They are cultivated widely and consumed locally as part of a vegetable sauce eaten with corn "foufou" They include cassava leaves, cocoyam leaves, and a wide variety of African spinach. European vegetable varieties are produced in smaller quantities.

The most important of the vegetable crops produced here is okra (hibiscus esculentus). Okro is planted in March and harvesting begins in August. It is produced in large quantities in Bamunka and Balikumbat, where output ranges from 10-20 local basin per .12 ha of land. (664kg-1,328kg/hectare).

Coffee:

Coffee is the most important cash crop in the area. Production is carried out mostly by men. There are no large plantations, although some farmers are beginning to expand production.

Farmers buy coffee seedlings from Cooperative nurseries at 20 F CFA each. However, some farmers start small local nurseries at home. Coffee is planted between March and May.

To maintain steady growth and good yields, farmers mulch and clear coffee yearly. Pruning, which maintains a succession of young growths (primaries) springing from the base of the plant and retaining the bearing surfaces within easy reach of the ground, is done once annually. Coffee berries are picked and passed through a pulper which removes the outer soft flesh leaving the beans. Fermentation for some 24 hours follows and the beans are washed. Coffee beans are then dried under the sun to get "parchment".[15] Coffee yields range from 160kg-200kg/hectare.

Rice:

Rice farming was introduced in the area as early as 1969 by the "Bureau Pour le Développement de la Production Agricole." (BDPA). However, wide-scale participation began in 1972, reaching its peak in 1974/75, when total farm area covered by rice farms was 4.4 ha[16] The table below shows the evolution of rice farm area and number of rice farmers between 1974/79:

TABLE

VILLAGE	No. of Rice Farmers			Average area under cultivation		
	1974	1979	1979	1974	1975	1979
Bamunkumbit						
Baligashu	74	120	-	11.1	18.4	x
Bafanji	86	130	76	11.0	34.5	x
Balikumbat	49	32	15	4.4	2.1	.87

Source: Statiscics from U.N.V.D.A. Report, Vol. III 1976 p. 145. Figures for 1979 were obtained from U.N.V.D.A. rice demonstrators.

According to available statistics, the number of farmers involved in rice cultivation is declining. Farmers complained of the difficulty involved in rice production, the lack of technology and capital, and the low returns.

After manual clearing of rice farms, remaining vegetation is dried and burned. Stumps and other remains are used for the making of banks. Soil is ploughed manually with traditional hoes. Nurseries are installed in separate plots for 25 days. Transplanting of rice is done in June and weeding and scaring of birds are part of the preharvest work.

There are two varieties of rice produced on the plain: Mangakely (long grain), which has a cycle of 170-180 days in a year and Tainan V (short grain) which has a slightly shorter cycle. The long grain variety was preferred by farmers when they marketed the rice themselves. (The long grain rice has a greater volume than the short grain when sold by volume in cups on the local market). Much more Tainan V is produced now because it is resistant to disease and weighs more per kilo. (Farmers sell paddy rice to UNVDA today at 42.5 F CFA/Kilo). Rice yields range from 0.8 to 1.5 tons per hectare.

Rice farming, since its introduction, has not upset the traditional farming system because of the small number of farmers involved and because it fits in well with the prevailing agricultural calendar. Local residents consume very little rice and urban consumers prefer the long grain because it is easily prepared. This has led to marketing problems for the UNVDA.

Tree Crops:

Care given to tree crops is very limited. Raffia palm, oranges, and avocado trees are generally found near the houses. It is rare to find cultivated plots. As a result of little care, fruits from these trees are often infected with disease.

Raffia palm bush is the second most important men's crop. Raffia palm wine is tapped from them and sold locally. It is a very popular drink among farmers and is sold in the evenings by women in small "mimbo" houses and at the market.

Marketing Arrangements

Storing Crops:

Only maize and groundnuts can be conveniently stored over long periods. Traditionally, corn or groundnuts can be stored for 10-12 months. They are dried (smoked or sundried) and stored in bamboo graineries below the roofs of farmers' houses.

Unlike maize and groundnuts, coffee and rice are not stored by the farmers. They are packed into bags and carried either to the Cooperative Society or to the UNVDA collecting station for sale. Coffee farmers who are not members of cooperative societies are responsible for the storage of their coffee until it is marketed. All rice farmers are members of the UNVDA farming groups and UNVDA is responsible for storing the paddy after buying it from farmers.

For traders who come to buy groundnuts or corn, there are no special storage facilities at the local markets. They, however, may store what they have bought overnight with friends and consequently pay no storage fee. Local agents for these crops do not store them either. They buy and sell the crops immediately to traders.

Transporting Crops to Markets:

Most women farmers transport food crops to local market by carrying them on their heads. 80% of the sample population had this as the only available means to transport their crops to the market. Most male farmers use bicycles to transport their crops to the marketing point. Motorcycles and handcarts have been recently introduced but are not yet completely integrated into the transportation system. Harvested rice paddy is carried in basins or in bags on the head or on bicycles to farmers' homes, and from there taken to the UNVDA stores. The UNVDA is then responsible for its transportation in trucks to the warehouses in Bamunka. Traders from Bamenda or Mbouda use hired trucks or public transport to carry the purchased produce to Urban Centres.

Marketplace:

In every village on the plain, there are one or more markets, owned by the local council. The number of markets varies from 1 to 4 in the different villages. In Bali Kumbat there are 4 market places. Markets meet once every 8 days.[17] All these markets do not have equal importance. Ngoti and Sapo are the most important ones and attract people from long distances. The other two are small evening markets, attended mostly by people around the quarter.

The marketplace consists of an area where rows of bamboo and stick shades have been built. It is usually divided up into sections: food crops, palm wine, meat, vegetables, and imported goods sections. This division is, however, not rigid for one can still find goods and produce scattered all over the market.

Sellers and Buyers:

Most of the sellers in the markets are women. They sell groundnuts, corn, okro, and gari. Men and children also sell, but they are generally in the minority.

The demand for foodcrops by local consumers is very low because most families produce nearly all the food they need on their farms. Their market needs are oriented to things not produced locally, including palm oil, salt, fish, and manufactured articles such as household utensils.

The most important source of demand for local produce comes from traders from urban areas such as Mbouda and Bamenda. These are mostly men who come in trucks, buying for resale in urban centers.

Also present in markets are local buying agents. These are mostly young men who are unable to get jobs in towns. They make arrangements to buy crops from farmers in small quantities to resell to incoming traders in bulk.

Marketing of Food Crops:

Groundnuts:

Fresh groundnuts are sold only during the harvesting season between June and September. They are sold in small local basins.[18] A woman can sell on the average, four basins a week. By November, farmers begin to supply the market with dried, shelled groundnuts. Shelled groundnuts are measured out in cigarette cups at 3-4 cups (1 kg) for a hundred francs CFA on the markets at harvest time.

Corn:

Corn is produced mainly for household consumption. Only the surplus, estimated at about 20% of the total crop is sold on the market. However, when the farmers need money, they sell small quantities of corn which had been previously reserved as part of the year's food stock. At the market, corn is measured out in small localbasins at 300-500 francs CFA. Prices rise to about a thousand francs CFA a basin during the tilling season (May and June).

Okra:

Okra has been increasingly cultivated and sold over the past years as a cash crop. It is measured out in local basins at 250-300 frs CFA a basin. Other vegetables are consumed locally and very small quantities are sold on the market.

Rice:

When rice was first introduced on the Ndop plain, rice farmers hulled and sold their rice on the local markets or to UNVDA. In 1978 UNVDA decided to control the marketing of rice and began to buy paddy rice from all farmers. The organization also took responsibility for transporting paddy from farm collection points to UNVDA warehouses and for the marketing of hulled rice. The UNVDA has found it difficult to market its rice. This is partially because the population of the North West Province consumes little rice and partially because of competition from imported rice coming onto the local market. As a result, the UNVDA now finds in its possession large stocks of paddy. Continued effort must be made to find markets for this rice.

Coffee:

The North West Co-operative Association is the sole buyer of the coffee produced in the North West Province. Sales of coffee are controlled through co-operative societies. Farmers who bring their products to sell are then given produce receipts. If cash is available, farmers get paid immediately, but this has not always been the case. Indeed many farmers complained of having to wait for long periods before receiving their money.

Not all the farmers are co-operative members. Only about 20% of the sample population had joined co-operative societies. The remaining 80% consisted either of those who had never joined or those who had withdrawn from co-operative societies. Untrustworthiness of co-operative workers and long delays for payment were cited as reason for not joining the co-operative. Farmers who are not cooperative members usually sell their products to members for cash, although it is possible to sell directly to the co-operative, but with the usual wait for cash, and some of the bonuses members get from time to time.

Other Tree Crops:

The production of tree crops is small and irregular. Consequently, they are marketed sporadicly and do not consitute a minor part of the goods marketed. Only the rafia palm wine which is consumed in large amounts by the local population has a strong market.

PRODUCTION CONSTRAINTS

Land:

Farm land is not particularly limited, given the large land area still lying fallow or undeveloped. However, this unutilized land is under the control of either the local Fon or a lineage head. Trespassing on that land is usually considered either as a violation of the traditional land rules or a power challenge to the original holders. Both individual farmers and village groups are traditionally limited within defined areas of land outside of which they cannot farm without being considered as intruders. However, the traditional system of land distribution allows that the individual can obtain more farm land if it becomes necessary, in their father's or mother's lineages' holding or by asking the Fon for it. But this should not lead us to the conclusion that very large portions of farm land can be given out to individuals. In fact, in the distribution of farm lands, other members of the group are taken into consideration since land is collectively owned.

Although land itself is generally not a constraint to production, the distance from the home to the farm plot may effectively limit the expansion of agricultural production by an individual farmer. The marginal cost in terms of time and effort required to reach distant farmplots may be greater than the marginal returns for such work. It may be desirable to undertake land reforms to encourage "modern" agriculture

However, any institutional attempt at consolidation of individual farm lands may be difficult to undertake, since it would mean a complete reorganisation of land holdings.

Labour:

There have been increasing labour shortages as children, an important part of family labour force, go to school. On the other hand, the young people of the village do not see farm work as a sufficiently remunerative source of employment. It is viewed rather as a tedious sacrifice, a non-profit undertaking. Their aspirations are orientated towards the towns, where it is believed that "whiteman" jobs are available. Exciting stories about city life told by friends visiting the village help to kindle their desire to go to the city. Presently, only older people form the majority of the local agricultural work force.

Given the present agricultural practices which use little or no labor-saving technology, a farmer's attempt to expand production may be limited by serious seasonal labor constraints, unless labor can be hired. However, many farmers cannot afford to hire labor. This, combined with the rural exodus of youth, creates a serous labor constraint for small farmers.

Capital:

Access to credit is often limited, since most of the farmers are not members of the co-operative (through which much of the agricultural credit is given) or they are not educated enough to follow the complicated procedures required for obtaining a loan. At the same time, a farmer's annual income is generally small and quickly eaten up by the needs of the family - fees, purchased household goods and taxes. Consequently, it is difficult for most farmers to invest in the labor necessary for the expansion or maintenance of farms or in the fertilizer needed for higher yields.

Farming Practices:

The farmers practice dense inter-cropping. This farming method, which is aimed at a maximum use of cultivated land, has a number of short comings in terms of output, namely, low yields and poor quality of crops, with damage from insects and diseases occuring easily. Secondly, without fertilizer, the fertility land is quickly exhausted. This leads to letting land lie fallow after a couple of years of work on it. Also the traditional method of making ridges wastes land since large spaces (furrows) are left in-between ridges. The farmers are not unaware of the production constraints engendered by these practices, but they regard them as the most optional given extant land, labor, and fertilizer constraints. Even if these constraints could be technologically and economically overcome, marketing uncertainties for any single crop could still frustrate the introduction of any mono-cropping efficiencies.

Other Constraints:

Another problem is the health of farmers. Farmers generally lack medical facilities. Because of the poor sanitary environment, farmers often suffer from illness, especially malaria, during the rainy season, when much of the farm work is done. Often farmers, plagued by these medical probelms, are unable to finish farm work within required periods.

Customs, such as the observation of sacred days, and death celebrations for extended periods of time, can interrupt farm work. Also sacred societies like the "Voma"[19] prohibit beginning of farm work until the the fertility rituals have been conducted.

The bargaining power of farmers is also a problem. Farmers can sell crops only to local buying agents, who after taking account of high transport fares, bad roads, the risk of transporting crops to urban centers and the possibility that crops may spoil before their entering the market, pay very little to farmers. Village storage facilities are still very traditional. A portion of the crops are sundried or smoked to preserve them. Otherwise, they are brought directly from the farm on to the local market. Unprotected local graineries allow weevils and rats to invade the stored crops, increasing spoilage losses.

Government participation in processing and controlling of the marketing of crops began only two decades ago through the Marketing Boards. This was and still is limited to major export crops like coffee.[20] Today, however, other parastatal organizations are trying to extend these activities to other crops, like rice, produced in the area.

In conclusion, we can say that the most important economic question remains: how to reform of agricultural production and distribution, given the traditional structure of farming and the constraints to expanded production as discussed above. Efforts towards the improvement of agricultural production can be oriented towards the opening up of better roads, which constitutes one of the farmers' greatest complaints, the encouragement of the consolidation of farm land, the control of the rural exodus by adapting primary education to rural and farming needs, and making the village environment a more conducive place to live, and perhaps to the development of a more diversified farmers' cooperative organization in which honesty and trust relationships between its workers and the farmers are strongly emphasized.

Social Hierachy and Economic Position

Long before the introduction of monetary economy in the traditional society, a system of social stratification existed which ranked individuals in a hierarchy of wealth, prestige, and power. Two classes were present: the noble and the peasant. The nobles had control of land, and were the political, religious, and ritual leaders. They were able to acquire wealth from their subjects in the form of gifts, tributes, and fines. They often demanded and obtained labour from the subjects for free.

The presence of a move to an elaborate money economy, coming as a result of changes during and after colonization, has produced an intermediate class which includes retired wage earners, wage earners, businessmen, and people with educated and prosperous children. It is this class of people, coming principally from the lower class, who have been able to buy land and to expand or establish coffee or food crop farms. It is they who owned anything that can be considered as heavy agricultural equipment; e.g., a coffee pulper or a corn mill.

The lower class remains under the old system, controlling very small patches of land and leading a subsistence life. The diagram below attempts a classification of the social hierarchy, and tries to show to what economic stratum they correspond:

Social Hierarchy

Nobles
- Chiefs and their families
- Religious and ritual personalities
- Sub chiefs, war leaders, and titled men

Intermediate Class (New)
- Retired workers
- Businessmen
- Employed people with monthly earnings

Peasants
- Dependents
- Subjects
- Strangers, etc.

Economic Strata

Nobles

Control large portions of land; demand and get free labour from subordinates; cultivate relatively large coffee/food crop farms. Some are cooperative members.

Intermediate Class

Control some land; have coffee, food crop, and rice farms. Most are cooperative members; most hire labour

Peasants

Have small patches of land for food crops or coffee; use self-labour; are not usually cooperative members. Some are rice farmers.

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VILLAGE PRODUCTION AND MARKET ACCESS STUDY :

1. Market Access: What problems do you have marketing the crops that you produce?

a)

a) Roads and Transport costs:

b) Market fees and Government Regulations:

c) Storage, processing, packing:

d) Spoilage:

e) Competition. Are there many other sellers (Traders or Producers)? Do big sellers make it hare dor smaller sellers?

f) Who is allowed to market in the family? Are there other family problems?

2. Food Purchase: Are there times when you have trouble getting food?

a) When?

b) For what reason?

3. Marketing of Food:

a) Which crops are produced primarily for sale and which for household use? By men? By women?

b) Where do you usually sell?: Farm_____

Market place(which one(s)?)_____

Cooperative(which one)_____

c) To whom do you sell?: Consumers_____

Traders_____

Cooperative officials_____

d) Why do you sell?: For food_____

manufactured goods_____

Taxes_____

other_____

4. Production Problems:

a) How do you get your farm land? Are there problems?

1. Inherit land (from whom)?

2. Buy land (from whom)?

3. Rent or have Access through traditional landlord? (What type of payment is required for land use?)

b) How do you get credit? Are there problems?

COSTS OF PRODUCTION

1. What crops do you grow? (see production matrix)

2. How many plots do you have?_____
   What size? _____

3. Labour Requirements:

Man days/ Plot unless noted

CROP / Operation					
Clearing					
Tilling					
Planting					
Weeding					
Harvesting					
Processing					
Storage					
Other					
Size of Plot					
Yield					
Number of Plots					
Who cultivates?					
Who harvests?					
Who markets?					
Distance to Plot					
Tools used					
Fetilizers quantity					
Pesticides					
Other Imputs					
Length of day					

4. 4) Do you store crops? Which ones? For how long? For home consumption or for the market?

What crops spoil and how much of stored crop spoils?

5) Marketing:

a) How do you deliver produce: headload_____

animal_____

bicycle_____

lorry_____

other_____

b) What distance do you travel?

How long does it take?

c) What are the costs of transport? Self_____

Produce_____

d) Commercial Relationship:

(Credit, special arrangements, etc.)

3/.-

1. What other activities do you engage in for income?
2. Where do you usually buy food and manufactured goods?
3. Was previous year's cropping pattern different? How?
4. What prices do you get for your crops? Does the price change much during the year? How does the price now compare to the price 5 years ago?
5. Do you see and get help from extension workers or other government agencies?
6. Do you participate in a cooperative or credit union?
7. If you have a dispute in the market, how is the problem settled? Who settles it?
8. What would you like changed in the market?
9. Would you produce more if prices were better or if there were fewer marketing problems or if there were more markets available?

REMARKS:

FOOTNOTES

[1]The Bureau pour le Développement de la Production Agricole" introduced rice farming in 1969.

[2]Farm lands are on the outskirt of the village.

[3]The Fon is assisted in his administration and control of the village chieftaincy by 'Fontehs' - village elders. They form part of the village council, a traditional body responsible for settlein minor conflicts.

[4]The "Doh" represents the founder of the lineage.

[5]Size of families varies between 4 - 20 members including dependents.

[6]There are 9 months in a school year.

[7]Men who come from Bamoun, a Western Province tribe of Cameroon.

[8]Ridges are raise dome-shaped areas between furrows. Length of ridges varies between 9-20 meters.

[9]Upper Nun Valley Development Authority (U.N.V.D.A.) Feasibility Study for the Development of 3000 ha of rice fields in the Upper Nun Valley. Vol. 3: Human Environment, agriculture, Animal, Industry; Yaounde 1976 p. 36.1 man-day 8-9 hours.

[10]Figure from U.N.V.D.A. rice demonstrators.

[11]FONADER is a parastatal bank for agricultural development. We obtained figures from the Agricultural Post in Balikumbat.

[12]Njangi houses are traditional saving banks.. To 'eat' is the term used by members of these groups to say that someone has collected the contributions for that week.

[13]First Crop, January to August,
Second Crop, June to December.

[14]U.N.V.D.A., op. cit., p. 151.

[15]Patchments = dried coffee beans. Prices are fixed by the Government 300CFAF/kg in 1979.

[16]U.N.V.D.A., op. cit., p. 45.

[17]Local week is 8 days.

Footnotes (cont'd)

[18]Small local basin is equivalent to approximately 6 liters.

[19]"Voma" a secret society made up of nobes. They go out once every year at the beginning of the cultivation period to conduct a ritual for the revitalisation of land and its people.

[20]The marketing of coffee is vested in the National Produce Marketing Board.

HOUSEHOLD GENEALOGIES AND THEIR RELATIONSHIP TO PRODUCTION, CONSUMPTION, AND DISTRIBUTION OF CROPS: A CASE STUDY OF A META VILLAGE -- GUNEKU

- By Margaret Agbaw

Brief History

The Meta are a group of people living on the South Western edge of the Bamenda Plateau in the United Republic of Cameroon. The Meta Country lies between 5.55 degrees and 6.10 degrees North Latitude and 9.50 degrees and 10.2 degrees East Longitude-- an area of about 160 square miles.[1]

Oral tradition holds that the ancestors of the Meta clans originated from Widekum. The Widekum people are said to have migrated from Tadkom for economic reasons. After the emigrants had settled in Widekum, it is said that some native leaders, notably TOGUNCHA and his brothers, left Widekum and founded the Meta clans. Toguncha and his people first settled at Tonokun from where they moved on to Zangnbeng, led by his son Tabi. While at Zangnbeng, Tabi's descendants began expanding the Meta territory by settling in different areas. Ticharebunaw, one of the sons of Tabi, settled at Acha. The other sons, Fongho, Ticharebi, and Tegenbi, were led by Tichanung to Tudik. While at Tudik, Fongho left and settled at Bomi, Ticharebi left for Mbemi as a warrior, and Tegenbi left for Njinibi. Tichanung later left Tudik, resettled at Nyen, and founded the Menyen village area. He was very prosperous, and had several descendants. His sons included Awazi, who settled at Tudik, former place of his father, and became chief; Mbacham, who became chief of Wumnemberg; Muki Keng, who was in line to succeed his father, but instead left Nyen and resided at GUNEKU, where he became a great leader; and Forminyen, who succeeded Tichanung and became village head of Menyen.

Gregg, in his assessment, classifies the Meta clans under four village areas: MEZANG, MENYEN, MUKU, and BONJO. He holds that the followers of the ancestors of the four village area heads make up the Meta clans.[2] GUNEKU falls under the Menyen village area with Nji Formiki as village head. Muki Keng was the first chief of Guneku, and, in the line of descent, Formiki is found in the seventh generation. Muki came to

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[1] An Assessment on Meta Clan of Bamenda; C.J.A. Gregg, 1924; page 6.

[2] Op.cit., page 19.

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Guneku as a farmer. He was very prosperous, and, being motivated by his economic desires, he acquired a lot of farmlands. He was very ambitious, and even though he would have inherited his father's wealth and lands, he preferred to be independent and to have an original area of his own. Moreover, Muki wanted to avoid any struggles or quarrels that may have arisen over landed property with his brothers and the other descendants of his father. At Guneku he had a large family and several wives. His younger, adopted brother Formyam left Nyen and joined him to enjoy his wealth. Being wealthy, generous, and powerful, he attracted a large following of people who sought his protection. Some groups of families left their former settlements to join Muki. These included Isaiebi from Ngie, Chuo from Nyen, Chum and his family from Batyen. Presently, apart from the people of the cheif's palace, most of the quaterheads of Guneku are Muki Keng's descendants. Hence, there is such a wide range of relationships linking several households or people to the chief's lineage. With a lot of followers and children, Muki became very influential. He was very kind, and each time strangers came to the village he was always referred to as the head. Before Muki Keng came to Guneku there were people already living in this village, but they lived in isolation. Muki's influence was able to bring the people together to form a group; thus, he is today accepted by all the inhabitants as the founder of Guneku.

Settlement Patterns in Guneku

There are many quarters making up this village, and the settlement pattern is one of dispersed households. Residence is strictly patrilocal; hence, a couple usually resides near the parental home of the groom, except in those cases where they are living outside the village. There is a lot of land within the village, mainly because the quarters are greatly separated from one another. Nevertheless, considering the nature of these people, as almost everyone is a farmer, one would not doubt the fact that there is hardly any waste land. A piece of land is either farmed, left to fallow, or built upon. The households are also scattered except in the chief's quarter, called "Ntaw", where settlement is a bit concentrated. In the rest of the village, one has to go quite some distance to find a household. With these type of scattered settlements, one would hardly know that there are inhabitants living on the hilltops and in the valleys forming part of the mountain scenery of the Meta country, except on market days when almost everybody comes to buy or to sell at the only market in the village,

called "Ngong This scattered settlement pattern might have been motivated by economic reasons. Every individual wants to acquire enough land for cultivation and to hand down to his sons. Moreover, a compound farm is so vital among this people that there is no household without one. Thus, instead of building near a household which has already been established in a particular area, a man would prefer to go elsewhere, where he can have enough land for himself and his sons.

Domestic Economy

Guneku is generally a rural farming society, and the main activity of the natives is agriculture. The economy is a bit diversified, including subsistence farming, trading, and some livestock keeping. There are a few cattle owners. There are people who rear goats, pigs, and fowls; but the goats and fowls are kept for sacrifices.

Both men and women cultivate the land. Every household in Guneku owns a compound farm; the surrounding gardens are always cultivated, including some more distant plots of farmland. Usually different types of crops are grown in suitable areas, but in the compound farms, there is always grown a bit of everything, especially vegetables. The main crops grown by women include cocoyams, maize, cassava, yams, groundnuts, vegetables, okra, tomatoes, pepper, and other spices. The men grow tree crops, which include oil palm, coffee, and plantains. They also tap raffia wine, which is greatly consumed in this area. Some men supplement their incomes through petty trades and government employment such as working as nightwatchmen in some government institution or office at Mbengwi. There are also a few primary school teachers. Others sell coffee, which is an important cash crop, and kernels at the co-operative in Nyen. Most of those who grow oil palm produce oil, but as most of my informants told me, they always preserve their oil for domestic consumption. Very little oil is sold; some men send oil to daughters married elsewhere, or to family members living around. Women are able to earn extra money by selling subsistence products in local markets. There are eight main local markets within the Meta country, and every day there is a market in one village or another.[3] These eight local markets fall on the eight days of the week recognized by the Meta people. The largest and most renowned is Tad market at Nyen, where people from all over Meta, Mankon, and the other surrounding areas come to buy foodstuffs. All types of subsistence crops are found in this market, including some livestock.

[3] The eight markets are Keh, Tang, Tad, Koh, Mbone, Ejei, Kwe, and Ngong.

The people come from different villages some several miles away to sell their products. On Tad market days the Meta people do not work on their farms because almost everybody in a household goes to the market. Also, on market days in in the various villages, as in Guneku, nobody goes to the farms. Apart from these two days in the week, there is also a "country sunday", a particular day usually observed by the natives as the village sabbath. Considering all of these days in the week, most of my female informants told me that they do effective work on their farms three or four times a week. Some women spend their time going from one market to the other, and this greatly reduces farming labor. This may also influence the rate of food production, and eventually food consumption. Nevertheless, this market attendance to some extent gives rise to social interaction. People meet their friends and relatives living in other villages. There are some families who even plan to have their discussions (notably at Tad market) where they are sure to meet their relatives. This is especially true of women who have married outside their groups and are living in their husbands' villages within the Meta country.

Social Organization

Guneku, like other villages within the Meta clans, is an association of several lineages. A lineage is a unilineal descent group whereby all its members trace descent genealogically to a known ancestor. In traditional African societies descent can be reckoned patrilineally through males to an original male ancestor; matrilineally, through females to an originale female ancestor; or bileterally, either through male or female cognates.

The social organization of Guneku is based on patrilineal descent, and localized patrilineages regulate the activities of its members. This may involve the inheritance of land, the distribution of bridewealth, and also the performance of rituals meant to do away with illnesses and misfortunes that may befall their members. The patrilineal descent group among the Meta is termed neubeu , and the Meta concept of descent, according to Dillon, can largely be subsumed under this single term.

The concept of neubeu was an idea fundamental to Meta political order. It was a general category of social grouping which had many specific manifestations. It provided a basis for dividing the social world into those who shared a common and irrevocable commitment by virtue of birth, and those who did not. Neubeu had extremely important functions, including organizing rights over property and women, and support and assistance to members as was necessary in times of unusual or extreme need.

Finally, belonging to a neubeu placed a person in a common supernatural predicament with his fellow members![4]

Most of my informants whose genealogies I have collected and analyzed told me a neubeu was a group of people descended from the same ancestor who founded the group. This ancestor was usually very many generations back, and a few of my informants could trace descent right to the founding ancestor. Whether the members of the neubeu knew their founding ancestor or not, they always claim patrilineal descent from a common "father". Hence, a neubeu was more of a social group with its members having a general belief they they had a common ancestor in some past generation. Like among the Banyang, the names of neubeu groups often highlighted this belief. For example, all the members of the patrilineage called "Bawn Tanwi" (children of Tanwi) regard Tanwi as the founding ancestor of the neubeu Tanwi to which they belong.

In this patrilineal group there are four generations of related members. The members are related to one another by kinship or marriage. Through ties of kinship, the members of a neubeu, especially the males, are able to have claims over land and other kinds of property. It would be noted that the ancestors represent their life-time try to make provisions for those in the descending generation; hence, the acquisition of land is very important in most traditional societies in Africa. In the line of descent it is usually the males who inherit in such patrilineal groups as found in the Meta country; therefore, there is the need to bring forth males. The women are given out in marriage to other lineage groups, since marriage is exogamous. Nevertheless, they always remain members of their lineage groups. Most of the adult men in neubeu Tanwi are living on the lands of their ancestors, and this also gives them claim to land for cultivation. Most of the adult women of the group are married outside, and are related to the rest of the group through a common ancestor, while their husbands are related to the group through affinity. Thus, while sons and daughters of a patrilineal group are kins, their wives and husbands are affines to the group.

In the above group, Manfred Tanwi in the household is the head of the lineage, and he is charged with the well being of the group. He therefore carries out all of the necessary activities on such occasions where the recognition of kinship

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[4] Dillon, 1973; pp. 72-73

requires it. This may include the performance of rituals and sacrifices to the ancestors. In cases of disputes among the members, especially land disputes, he is responsible for settling it. If a girl of the lineage group is to be given out in marriage, he plays a major role. In such cases the father of the girl, her uncles, and the head of the lineage decide on the bridewealth to be paid. But it is usually the head of the lineage who has a final say and who receives the bridewealth. A certain amount of the bridewealth goes to the head of the group; part of it to the father of the girl; and the rest is distributed among the uncles (father's brothers). Through the payment of bridewealth an alliance of two bodies of kin is created. This alliance gives rise to reciprocity in the exchange of valuables. This reciprocity can either be one of services or of goods; but among the Meta it is mostly goods. There is a saying among the Meta that "bridewealth never ends"; hence, a man always thinks of giving something to his parent-in-law (in cash or kind). Through kinship and marriage a man is placed at a wide range of relationships, and thus recognizes several hundreds of persons who he must treat as relatives. This range of relationships plays an important role in the economy of the people of Guneku, mostly in the field of consumption and distribution of crops.

Certain kinship terms can be distinguished among the Meta. Some of these terms include the following:

Patrilineal descent - Neubeu mba
matrilineal descent - mbawih
affinity - Meche/eche

There are specific terms used for linear relations:

father - mba (memba, plural)
mother - ngob (mengob, plural)
child - wan (bon, plural)

Other terms of everyday usage are as follows:

girl - wanavie (bonmevie, plural)
boy - wanbang (bonmbang, plural)
father's child - wan mba
mother's child - njibe

There are also specific terms like:

first child - wanchu
last child - nwi jwe
follower - benejum
twins - mumwi

Among the Meta we may talk of classificatory terminology even though there are few descriptive terms. Ego uses the same terms for lineal relatives and calls his father mba and his mother noob. The same terms are applied to collateral relatives; hence, he calls his father's brother mba and his mother's sister ngob, but he uses separate terms for his mother's brother and his father's sister.

Households

Within a lineage group several households can be distinguished. For example, we can distinguish thirty-four households within Tanwi's lineage. From the genealogical studies, twelve have been chosen. All the households chosen are related to the rest of their lineage groups through kinship ties.

Two main types of households can be found in Guneku. First, there is the independent nuclear household, which includes the father, mother, and children. Secondly, there is the independent polygynous household consisting of a man, his wives, and his children. In both types of households there are two generations of related members. In some of the households analyzed there is segmentation where the older children are married and are no longer members of their parental households. A household may be a political unit, a ritual or social unit, or an economic unit. In my study, more emphasis will be on the household as an economic unit, considering the level of production consumption and redistribution.

1. Nji Formiki's Household

This is the chiefly household. It is an independent polygynous household. Nji is married to four wives plus eight inherited ones; thus a total of twelve wives. In this household there are twenty-five children. They are Nji's children with his wives and those inherited from his father. Thus, there are thirty-eight members making up the chiefly household. Considering Nji's status as chief of the village, it is normal that he should have many wives and children under his protection. In the grassfield region it is a general tradition for a chief to have a large palace, many wives, and to bring forth several offspring. As my informant told me, it is a symbol of power, wealth, and prestige. Nji is also head of his lineage group; hence, all the descendants of Muki Keng, the first chief of Guneku, right to the present generation look up to him for guidance and protection.

Looking at the general structure of this household, Nji

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plays the role of headship. All the women in the palace play their roles as wives and mothers to their children, but the third wife of the chief, Fri, could be regarded as the most beloved wife of the chief. She is the queen-mother, and is treated more specially. She lives permanently with the chief in his hut. It should be noted that within the palace every woman lives with his children in her hut. Hence, there are about thirteen huts or smaller units within the main household. While we can term Nji's household as a social unit, these smaller units are more precisely economic units. Every woman sees about her supply of foodstuffs and consumption within her hut.

All of the women in the palace carry out subsistence farming except for Fri, who teaches in a government primary school in the village. They grow such crops as groundnuts, cocoyams, yams, cassava, maize, sweet potatoes, vegetables, and spices. These crops are all kept for local consumption. There is hardly any redistribution since the woman does all the farm wrok by herself with the help of her grown-up children, if she has any. Thus, in most cases, she is capable only of producing enough to feed herself and her children. Fri provides food for Nji every day, while the other women only give him food on very special occasions, such as Christmas or some traditional festival.

Nji carries out cattle trade, and this is his main source of income. He goes to Wum or to Acha once a month to buy cows. At one time he can have about thirty to fifty head. As the head of the household, Nji makes provisions once in a while for the everyday needs of the wives; like buying soap and kerosene for them on some market days. At Christmas he buys clothes for all of the children of the palace, and also distributes meat to the women.

Nji's brother, his wives and five children maintain a household of the independent polygynous type. The household of Nji's sister is the independent nuclear type, consisting of the sister, her husband, and five children. Nji gives farmlands to his brother's wives for cultivation, but his sister has to get farmlands in her husband's lineage group. There is a continuous exchange of goods among the households, especially at Christmas. Sometimes Nji's sister's husband may offer Nji a fowl. Nji usually kills a cow and distributes meat to his relatives.

2. Mbah's Household

Unlike that of Nji's, Mbah's household is an independent nuclear type. There are eight members living in this household; that is, Mbab, his wife, his mother, and five children. It is basically an economic unit, and Mbah is the head. He is a bricklayer. He also participates in cultivating the land, and while his wife works on the more distant farms, he cultivates the compound farm and grows plantains and a little bit of coffee. His wife grows cassava, yams, maize, cocoyams, and groundnuts. She also sells crayfish and salt in the market. She goes to Bamenda once a month to buy crayfish and salt, which she sells at Tad Market and Ngong. The crops she grows are mainly for domestic consumption.

Mbah's relationship to the rest of his lineage group ha been strained, due to the frequent disputes over land b tween him and his half-brother, Teghen. These two are completely separated from one another. It is believed that Mbah monopolized the lands inherited from their father, and would not let Teghen have his rightful share. There is no co-operation among the members of this group, and each individual manages his household without interfering in the affairs of the other. There is no exchange among kins. Since kinship relationship is not very strong in this group, there is strong attachment to affinal relationship. Mbah's wife is from Mbengwi, and a good relationship exists between him and his parents-in-law. Redistribution is mostly between his household and that of his parents-in-law. Very often the first harvest of crops, particularly yams, are taken to Mbengwi cooked or raw, and this is usually accompanied by a jug of raffia wine or a chicken brought by Mbah.

3. Nonje's Household

Like the former, this is an independent nuclear household consisting of eight members. Nonje is from Kai at Meta village, and is residing in Guneku as a pastor. There has been sigmentation in this household since one of Nonje's daughters is married and is living in Kai with her husband.

The livlihood of this household depends on the income that Nonje earns as a pastor and from the little bit of cultivation done by his wife. In the Meta country kinship ties give people claims to land for cultivation. Since Nonje is not a man from Guneku, he has neither kinship nor affinal relationships in this village. Thus, he does not own any piece of land in Guneku. His wife usually begs farm plots from friends. She and the three eldest children

participate in production, while Nonje also assists in working on the compound farm. This aspect of begging farmlands for cultivation is very common in Guneku, and it is one of those elements which stimulates exchange of goods. Whenever someone bega a piece of land to work on, there is always the tendency to send back gifts in the form of food crops after harvest to the owner of the land. Nonje's brother lives in Kai. Due to the distance and to the fact that they rarely visit each other, there is very little exchange between the two. Nonje goes home only when there is a a death celebration or a marriage in his lineage group.

4. Abanda's Household

Abanda is more than 100 years old and is descended from Nji's lineage group. The oldest man in the group, he was married to four wives and had five children (an independent polygynous household). Presently, as three of his wives are dead and his daughters have been married outside, he lives with his last wife and son.

Because he is very old Abanda can no longer work. His wife cultivates the land with the help of her son, and they grow cocoyams, cassava, maize, groundnuts, and vegetables. These crops are mainly produced for local consumption. Abanda owns palm trees and usually hires someone to cut down the palm nuts when they are ripe. Even though he is old, he makes oil once in a while, but he does not sell it. Since he cannot do any intensive work to earn a living, he lives at the mercy of his married daughters and his sons-in-law who supply him with his everyday needs. As he told me, his sons-in-law usually bring him tobacco, wine, fowls, and different types of food crops. He also sends oil to his daughters who are living in Kop with their husbands. These girls do not have farm lands in Guneku, and Abanda's lands will be inherited by his two sons. In the Meta tribe, where descent is on the male line, it is usually the boys who inherit from their fathers. The fathers always distribute land, which is the most vital element a child can inherit, before he dies.

5. Wong's Household

This is an independent polygynous household made up of seven members. Wong is living on land inherited from his father. He has two half-brothers who are also living in Guneku on land given to them by their father.

Wong earns his living by carving traditional stools which are usually decorated for sale. He supplements this activity with some farming, and grows plantains in the compound farm. His wives are mainly cultivators, and they grow especially cassava, which they make into gari. This gari is sold in the market at Tad and Ngong. The other food crops and items, such as vegetables, oil, meat, and fish necessary for local consumption are usually bought from the market.

Wong has very few relationships to which he is bound by kinship or affinity, and, as he told me, there is very little exchange that goes on in his household. He sends foodstuffs like plantains when any of his haf-brothers wives bring forth, and they do the same for him.

6. Nanji Dasi's Household

The households of Nanji's family are independent nuclear types, but the situation is somewhat different. One of Nanji's brothers is deceased, and he is married to his brother's widow, thus giving rise to a levirate situation which is quite common among the people of the Meta tribe. Nanji's brother's widow, her two unmarried children, Nanji's wife and her seven children, along with Nanji make up the 12 member household.

Nanji has a coffee farm around his compound, but the trees do not produce weill; hence, he earns his income by buying coffee from other people and kernels, which he sells to the co-operative at Nyen. His wives, with the help of their children, engage in production. In this household each woman is responsible for the well being of her children. Nanji buys meat on market days and distributes it to the wives. He also pays fees and buys books for the children. The women are responsible for every other thing. These women are involved in trading. Some of the foodstuffs they cultivate, such as cocoyams, are usually sold in the market. They also make and sell gari. The small income they receive from these sales are sometimes supplemented by gifts from their grown children. Nanji's brother's widow in particular gets most of her income from her son and daughter in other households. She in turn usually sends oil and foodstuffs to them. Nangi's real wife visits another household very often and takes along oil, cocoyams, and even vegetables.

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7. Mbah Makam's Household

Mbah Makam is an ex-warder now in retirement. His household is the independent polygynous type. At the time I did my interview there were only three members in the household: Mbah, his third wife, and the last son of the second wife. Mbah could not tell me why his first and second wives are living apart, but he claims they are still his wives. Four of Mbah's children are married and are living outside with their spouses in separate households.

Mbah Makam is on a pension and earns some money from the government. He has oil palms, and usually hires someone to cut down the palm nuts which he uses in producing oil. This oil is kept for domestic consumption, although very rarely some of it is sold in the market at Tad. He has recently planted young palm trees, and in the near future he intends to be producing oil in large quantities for commercial purposes. His third wife buys rice in large quantities from Mankon, and sells at the local markets in Ngong and Tad. Mbah and his wife are not involved in agricultural production; hence they buy almost everything from the markets. This third wife comes from Wum, and she usually goes to Wum once a month to collect maize from her parents. The maize is used for cornfoofoo, which is greatly consumed in this household. Mbah has three sons-in-law, and through this affinal relationship he is always receiving gifts from them. He also sends oil to his children once in a while.

8. Ndah Tebi's Household

Of the independent nuclear type, Ndah's household is made up of Ndah, his mother, his wife, and seven children. Ndah's father is married to four wives, and is living with three of them in Kumba. Hdah's mother is quite aged and is living in Guneku with his son. Altogether there are ten members of this household related to each other through marriage or blood ties.

Ndah is a butcher, and sells meat in the market. He also sells raffia wine. His wife has farm lands in Guneku and in Mbemi, her village. Her father gave her plots in Mbemi, where she grows maize and groundnuts. In Guniku she cultivates cassava, cocoyams, yams, spices, and vegatables in the compound farm. There is a lot of gift exchange between Ndah's household and his parents-in-law living in Mbemi, He pays frequent visits to Mbemi,

and always goes along with a calabash of raffia wine and kola nuts. Occasionally his wife takes food to her parents, especially during the harvest season. She usually prepares the first harvest of yams for her parents. Ndah's wife and her mother usually share their harvests, and very often they work on their respective farms together. Ndah's sister is married and lives in Kop; hence he always sends meat to her monthly on market days.

9. Akoh's Household

This household consists of Akoh, who is the head, his wives, and two sons. It is an independent polygynous household. With the marriage of his three daughters, there has been segmentation.

Akoh is a farmer, and grows coffee and plantains around the compound. This coffee is sold to the co-operative of Nyen. His plantains are also sold at Tad. Akoh has very limited land for cultivation. He is living with his family in his father's compound. His brother Fursong is supposed to be living in this compound as he is the successor. However, since his wife is deceased and he has no children, he prefers to live instead in a farmhouse at Ngamunang. Due to lack of sufficient land for cultivation, Akoh's wives beg farm lands from friends to work on. One of his wives told me she often gives a basket of cocoyams to the owner of her farm plot after harvest.

Fursong's household can be termed "at risk". This is because Fursong is already quite old and living alone with no helper. He tries to do some farming, and he grows a few crops to live on. But in most of the households without women that I came across, the rate of consumption is very low and poor. Akoh pays frequent visits to his brother at Ngamunang, and helps to provide him with his daily needs. Once in a while, his wives may take cooked food to him.

10. Forminap's Household

Forminap's household is of the independent nuclear type. Except in one family where there is an adopted child, all members of the household groups of which Forminap is the head are related on one another by blood or marriage. There are seven members in Forminap's household. He is the head of his lineage group, which is believed to have some kinship relationship Nji's group, but my in-

formant was unable to explain how the two lineage groups were related. Forminap is a farmer, and carries out subsistence farming at a commercial level. Most of his farm lands are in Fun, where he has a large plot of plantains and another for oil palm. He also taps raffia wine at Fun. He goes to Fun twoice a week, notably on the market days of Tad and Ngong to collect plantains and wine. There are people at Fun who he hires to help him in cultivation. At one market he can sell about ten to twenty bunches of plantains. He makes oil once in two months. Part of it is sold, and the rest is reserved for local consumption. Forminap's wife has farm land in Guneku and around the compound, where she grows vegetables, groundnuts, maize, and spices. Her farm lands in Guneku are given to her by Nji, who also distributes farm plots to the wives of Forminap's brothers. There is a lot of redistributions within households in Forminap's lineage group. At Christmas in particular he distributes plantains to his parent-in-law living at Tudik. He receives gifts very often from his daughter and son-in-law living at Fun.

11. Moses Fongho's Household

Fongho is a member of Tanwi's lineage group mentioned earlier. Manfred Tanwi, who is head of this group, is an uncle to Fongho. This lineage group is so large that the members are scattered all over in Guneku village. Moses is living on land handed over to him by his father, Samuel Fongho. He was the only son of Samuel, and thus inherited all his father's lands. His household is an independent nuclear type, consisting of twelve members. Apart from himself, his wife, and his children, his sister and her son are living temporarily in his household.

Fongho's sister has been living in Fongho's household for over a year. She has been sick, but her husband, who lives in Buea, did not make any efforts to get her treated, so Moses went to Buea and brought her home for treatment. According to Meta culture, it is believed that Fongho's brother-in-law neglected this woman, and that is why her brother had to intervene. This situation has thus caused a strain between the two bodies of kins. It is expected that before this woman goes to her husband's group, her husband has to come and apologize and beg his wife's group for forgiveness. According to tradition, he has to bring along a goat, fowl, and some jugs of raffia wine.

Fongho is a tailor, and his wife is a seamstress, but she also does farming, and grows subsistence crops only for domestic consumption. On every Tad market day both husband and wife go to sell already sewn cloths in the market, and they have separate stalls. The members of Fongho's group co-operate with one another, especially when there is a death celebration or marriage. At Christmas they exchange gifts and send food to relatives, both affinal and kins.

12. James Tanwi's Household

Like Moses Fongho, James is also descended from Tanwi's lineage group. He is married to four wives, and presently there are nine children in this household. It is an independent polygynous household, made up of fourteen members. Apart from the first wife, who is sick, every other person participates in production. Most of the products grown are kept for local consumption. Once in a while the third wife makes and sells gari.

James does sewing and embroidery. He embroiders traditional gowns and sells them. He earns a lot of money from this, especially at Christmas, when many people buy new gowns. In this household every woman cares for the nourishment of her children. James supplies soap, kerosene, and clothes to his wives and children. He also buys meat, about four kilograms, at Tad market every week, and distributes it to his wives.

Conclusion

From my household study of the Meta village of Guneku, the following conclusions can be drawn. Every household pertains to a lineage group, and there is always the need to be associated to a group. This is because being a member of a group gives an individual rights over property and claims to land. Moreover, in cases of misfortune and illness there is the tendence to turn back to one's group for assistance. As it is believed, some misfortunes might have arisen due to the fact that the ancestors are angry with an individual. In such a case, the individual comes back to his group and sacrifices are offered to ward off the misfortune. Usually it is only the adult males who participate in eating the goat or fowl killed for such purposes, even if it is offered on behalf of a female member.

Like the Banyang, a lineage group in the Meta would be recognized as a corporately organized group of kinsfolk who recog-

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nize a senior man as their common head, share a common locality to each other and to the group as a whole, and participate (directly) in collective activities undertaken by the group on behalf of its members. Both men and women are members of a lineage. The women are daughters of the group, despite their marriages, remain members of their natal groups. Although women are never assimilated into their husbands' groups, their sons have access to lineage groups other than that of their fathers, even though inheritance is limited to the groups of their fathers. Women are never assimilated into their husbands' groups because they are related to the group only through marriage, and in most traditional African societies kinship ties are usually more binding than marriage ties. As the Meta people say, marriage ties may break up, but kinship ties never break up. Even though problems, disputes, and strains may arise among kins, with time they are usually resolved. A wide range of relationships runs through the Meta country, and this is often motivated by marriage and blood ties. Households are formed when the descendants of a group begin to get married and to leave their parental households, thus creating more relatives.

There is great dispersity in settlement patterns in Guneku, mainly because of economic reasons as each group or household wants to own lands both for cultivation and to hand down to their sons. The economy is basically agricultural, and this is practiced at a subsistence level. Very few households grow crops for commercial purposes, and one could describe this type of production in Guneku as a hand-to-mouth type; or it may be considered as a simple and common form of primitive communism. The force of production can distinguish it from other forms of production. The population of the twelve households analyzed frange from three to thirty-eight, but the latter could be considered an exception because it is the chiefly household. The force of production varies in different households. It includes the labor, either the men and women in some households, or only the women with the help of their children. There are circumstances when the men do not participate in food crop production; such as when they have a particular trade. For example, there is Nji Formiko, who carries out cattle trade, and James Tanwi, who sews and designs traditional gowns for sale. What distinguishes the force applied in this mode of production is that the demand for technological shill and knowledge is within the capacity of each single individual male or female. Within a household there is naturally a division of labor which arises due to the differences of sex and age. The men usually clear the farms

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for their wives, and the women do the tilling, planting, weeding, and harvesting. Children participate monthly in weeding and harvesting. The men who participate in production grow mostly plantains, oil palm, and coffee. It is not necessarily everybody who lives in a household that participates in food crop production, but everybody takes part in consumption. What is consumed in most households depends on what is produced, and to some extent, this varies in different households. There is a great deal of carbohydrate foodstuffs consumed in this village; notable cocoyams, cassava, plantains. But there are some fairly well-to-do households who vary their carbohydrate levels with a considerable amount of protein meals. In such households, meat and fish may be eaten three to four times a week. In those households which we can term less well-to-do, meat, for example, is eaten only on market days, and sometimes not even once a week. Thus the nutritive value of foods consumed in some households is very low due to unbalanced diets, and this gives rise to malnutrition, especially in growing children.

It should be noted that in most households what is produced is reserved for domestic consumption, and in this village there is little trade. There is very little specialization; hence, everybody has to struggle to produce everything. Rather than selling his oil, a man would keep it for local consumption, and send some to his daughters married outside.

There is quite a considerable amount of exchange and redistribution going on in this village. This helps to strengthen solidarity and social interaction among members of a group and to revive relationships.