

ISSUES AND CHALLENGES OF THE DEVELOPMENT OF AGRICULTURE AS A DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY IN WEST CAMEROON***Yousouf Monkouop, Theodore NGOUFO SOGANG and Noula GILBERT ARMAND**

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Abstract

Cameroon has both human and geographical potential to comfortably address the issue of development. However, these are not always fully exploited. This research sets out to question the policies, challenges, as well as agricultural and food strategies put in place since the colonial period, and their impact on the issues of economic development in the West region Cameroon. What are the strategies and objectives of agricultural and food development that were set up in this region between 1916 and 2016? Interdisciplinary, the methodological approach used is that of research in economic and social history. This led us to identify our field of study and to develop practical operating procedures for the processing of the data collected. Findings show that the West region of Cameroon has agricultural and food potential changing constantly. Underexploited, they can help the county to develop the agricultural sector in order to further boost the economy, and in turn limit imports of food that can be produced, processed and consumed at the national and international levels. The region has indeed experienced agricultural and food policies and changes since the colonial era. Cash crop such as coffee and others largely influenced the agricultural orientations and practices with a great impact on eating habits during the post-colonial period from 1980 to 1993.

Keywords: Agriculture, Development, Issues and Challenges, Strategy, Mutation.

INTRODUCTION

The West region of Cameroon has a rich agricultural tradition that has seen several developments. In the second aspect of our research, it's facing a number of challenges as an economic development strategy. Small-scale agriculture is the main source of income for over half a billion Africans, or 65 to 70 percent of the population (over 80 percent in some countries). The agricultural sector accounts for 20 to 40 percent of the continent's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and is expected to reach USD 1 trillion by 2030. Yet, less than 3% of bank loans are allocated to it. The agricultural production of the African continent is one of the lowest in the world. According to the World Bank, it would be necessary to invest 80 billion USD per year to meet Africa's food demand. As this study ends, how can we transform agriculture into a key element in the economic development strategies of the Westregion of Cameroon in particular, and Cameroon general? For agriculture to serve as an instrument of the economic development in the West region of Cameroon, this chapter aims to address the financial and structural issues and challenges, but also those of the human-resource training, essential for to achieve this.

The financial and structural challenges of reviving the agrarian sector in the West region of Cameroon

Access to appropriate financial services is a prerequisite for realizing the potential of African agriculture. Thus, financing is a challenge for the development strategies of agriculture as the basis of the economy. But once this problem has been raised, it must be linked to the need for a reorganization of farmers within cooperatives and also closely examine the problems of financial governance which is often at the origin of the distribution of funds dedicated to the agricultural development in Cameroon in general, and in the West region in particular.

Access to finance and the challenge of a strong economy for production

In developing countries, poverty is a phenomenon concentrated in rural areas where the great majority of farmers maintain rudimentary farming practices. Yet, in these countries, agriculture contributes significantly to the national economy, both in terms of employment and GDP. This makes agricultural development a priority strategy for the governments of several countries to tackle the issue of food insecurity and reduce poverty. Food insecurity and poverty are also a concern for the international community, and have contributed to make the access of small farmers to adequate financial services one of the most widely debated issues in recent decades in the world. Community finance sector. The findings on the state of the world at the beginning of the 3rd millennium force humanity to lead three colossal struggles relating to poverty, the environment and health. Agriculture is intimately linked to these three struggles, for it constitutes the main activity for the majority of active populations in developing countries, and has a major effect on the ecosystems and the climate (use of water, deforestation, pollution) and because it has a direct impact on the health of populations (nutrition and food safety).

Indeed, although agricultural production is an economic activity carried out by independent entrepreneurs, it constitutes a State responsibility, in the sense that it ensures the food security of both rural and urban populations, and contributes greatly to economic activity, including the country's exports. From an economic point of view, all the stakeholders (farmer, consumer, financial institution) seek to maximize their profit or their well-being under their own constraints. In terms of agricultural production, one constraint is common to them: the risks associated with the sector. This common constraint makes it very complex to achieve a stable balance between agricultural production and the needs of the population, since none of these economic agents is really capable of assuming all

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of the risks. The government must therefore help put in place measures to remove certain barriers, and thus promote the achievement of the balance required to ensure food security for the population. The financing of agriculture has always figured prominently among the strategies for implementing agricultural policy in Cameroon: from the first five-year economic, social and cultural development plan in 1960, then in the following ones, the government implemented set up credit incentive programs with the aim of ensuring food security, developing exports and improving living conditions in rural areas. However, the results were generally below expectations. We note, in fact, a weak exploitation of the production potential, with maintenance of the peasant production systems at a traditional level, which has had the effect of stagnating the production of the main export crops, the weak exploitation of the agricultural potential. In addition, an excessive weakening of food security faced with the economic crisis. The causes often highlighted stigmatize, on the one hand, the lack of positive reaction of peasants to economic incentives and, on the other hand, the inadequacy of financial institutions to peasant conditions in an unfavorable global economic environment.

In fact, while rural population put their social needs first in their financing choices, it was also noted that the financial structures put in place had little served their initial clientele. By way of illustration, the National Rural Development Fund (FONADER), which was set up to facilitate the distribution of funds in rural areas, has never achieved this objective. It was planned, for example, to channel 20 billion FCFA in 1985/86 and 32 billion in 1990/91; but during nearly 16 years of activity, it will have distributed to the rural world less than 15 billion. Another illustration is based on Crédit Agricole du Cameroun (CAC).¹ Established since 1990, the CAC started its activities in October of the same year. Fruit of the German-Cameroon cooperation, it is presented as being the true bank for the rural world. It was a public institution that was to administer credit funds from cooperation with international donors such as the World Bank, the ADB (African Development Bank). It was responsible for financing the rural world through the funds village and legally recognized local funds that it was to set up on the basis of existing associations. It has also served as a financing belt for many development projects such as projects supervised by MIDENO (North-West Development Mission). Over time, this bank has shown its limits in terms of financing the rural world. It is then that this structure, like the previous ones, will close without having served those for whom it was established. In 1993, the share of credit granted by the bank to agricultural companies represented barely 3% of its total loan portfolio. The CAC over time was proved ineffective in financing the rural world and has instead asserted its vocation as a commercial bank. The granting of loans on the basis of mountains of unreliable records (especially with regard to guarantees) made the bank in a few years largely in deficit to the point where it could not be saved by the restructuring of 96 / 97.² Thus, financing is a real problem for the development of agriculture in Cameroon in general, and therefore for farmers in the West region of Cameroon.

¹Développement international Desjardins (DID), «Financement agricole : un puissant outil de contribution à la sécurité alimentaire des populations », <https://www.findevgateway.org/sites/default/files/publications/files/mfg-fr-publications-diverses-financement-agricole-et-securite-alimentaire-des-populations-2010.pdf>, 2010.

² Innocent MANFOUO FOUNTONG NAMEKONG, « Les effets de la disparition des organismes publics...

The revival of agricultural cooperatives

Agriculture employs around 60 percent of the labor force and contributes between 19 percent and 21 percent to GDP. According to the National Institute of Statistics, most of the wealth is created through food crop agriculture, followed by forestry and logging, animal husbandry and hunting, industrial and export agriculture, fisheries and aquaculture.

Table 1. Average production by agricultural sub-sector in Cameroon between 2013 and 2017

Agricultural sub-sectors	Percentage
Agriculture of food products	63%
Forestry and logging	12%
Breeding and hunting	12%
Industrial and export agriculture	7%
Fishing and aquaculture	6%

Source: FAO, Evaluation of the FAO Cameroon Program 2013-2017, December 2017, P. 22.

The agricultural sector accounts for 55 percent of the country's export earnings, ahead of hydrocarbons (30 percent), with cocoa, cotton fiber, coffee, dessert bananas, rubber and palm oil. The sector consists mainly of subsistence agriculture characterized by small family farms. State expenditure devoted to the four main ministries of the rural sector (MINADER, Ministry of Livestock, Fisheries and Animal Industries - MINEPIA, Ministry of Forests and Wildlife - MINFOF, Ministry of the Environment, Nature Protection and Sustainable Development - MINEPDED) account for 4.5 percent of total spending, which is still well below the Maputo target of 10 percent.³ The new second generation agricultural policy (NPADG) marked the will of the Cameroonian government to break with the importation of agricultural products and its awareness for the revival of intensive production and, in turn, to save the escape of national currencies. According to the words of the Head of State, it is about launching an "agricultural revolution to make this sector one of the pillars of our development", to enhance the profession of farmer and restore confidence to producers; ensure the sovereignty and food and nutritional security of the country through a reasoned and balanced modernization of production systems. The Head of State reiterated this revival at the agro-pastoral fair and the Minister of Agriculture declined at the launch of the agricultural campaign in Lagdo in 2012 in these terms:

I ask the populations of Cameroon, from North to South, from East to West, to move agriculture from a subsistence activity to a business, that is to say one that allows the family to change their living conditions. You should now farm for a living ... It is possible today to double your income in a single farming season. This is what the minister called agribusiness which consisted in extending the agricultural production areas by 20% for 2015 by tripling the number of tractors in the country, by practicing mechanization which allows an increase in harvests and setting up agricultural SMEs. National demand could thus be satisfied and, at the same time, exports to neighboring countries supported. He specified it in these terms: I urge you to tie in with the new deal in terms of the agricultural development of our country and to give you the duty, not only to ensure our food self-sufficiency, but to make

³ Moulende Fouda, T., « Les mécanismes de financement en milieu rural camerounais : une analyse des déterminants de la demande de services financiers des ménages », thèse de doctorat en Sciences Économiques, 2003, p. 15.

agriculture a business, a business thus making it possible to glean currencies of neighboring countries and even those of West Africa. This is how the agricultural sector should participate in the success of the major development projects that the Head of State had defined in order to double agricultural production by 2015, to fight against poverty and promote the emergence of Cameroon in 2035. Agribusiness thus became the leitmotiv of the policy for the development of second-generation agriculture, the double objective being to triple production in ten years and to make this sector a source of growth, a springboard for the development of the whole world. National economy. Four pillars were then assigned namely: the increase of agricultural schools; research to isolate high yielding seeds; the opening up of production basins so that those who produce can evacuate their products to places of consumption; and for the mechanization which makes it possible to cultivate and to harvest, to preserve and to transform finally to sell. To this end, a special endowment was allocated to IRAD to produce hybrid seeds. With regard to production basins, the government carried out a soil map in partnership with IRAD and the University of Dschang with the aim of knowing the types of soil and their potential. It is in this sense that the agricultural sector to meet the challenge was inscribed not only in the direction of sufficient production to increase growth, but also in the creation of a high number of jobs to absorb unemployment. The government recognized the enormous nature of the task and demanded the participation of all actors in the process of developing the agricultural sector. He was particularly counting on the cooperatives which have always had the capacity to undertake differently and which will have to be the direct actors of the agribusiness project. Second-generation agriculture thought by the Cameroonian authorities should therefore be based both as a lever: on Family Farms (EAF) and on Medium and Large Size Farms (EMGI), which, regardless of their size or their statutes, should contribute to the good management of natural resources and the protection of the environment and thus be part of the logic of the green economy. This targeting was carried out by strengthening their complementarities and promoting their integration into value chains and connections to local and international markets.

The design and implementation of agricultural development projects

The governance of agricultural development projects is sometimes an obstacle to the achievement of these projects. In the 1960s, René Dumont observed that the development of the economy in general and of agriculture in particular in Africa was faced with the lack of adaptation and orientation of agricultural projects to the real needs of the populations. As an illustration, the move towards second generation agriculture also faces the problem of how machines can help cultivate apples, for example, as envisaged through the Mbouda acropolis project. Another ensuing problem at the centre of development policy failures relates to corruption and embezzlement of funds allocated to designed projects. This corruption extends into the award of project contracts and control missions. Indeed, a project is a coordinated set of activities and actions undertaken in order to meet a need within a specified time frame by mobilizing the resources allocated to it. It is a unique set of processes, made up of coordinated and controlled activities, with start and end dates, and undertaken to achieve project objectives. Achieving project objectives requires the provision of deliverables that meet specific

requirements. This definition advocates a process-based approach, which forms the common basis for a set of ISO4 standards.⁴ In another sense, a project is a “temporary business initiated with the aim of providing a unique product, service or result”. This definition thus emphasizes the objectives of the project, and the uniqueness of these. The uniqueness does not exclude a repetition of similar projects (for example in industries whose method of production corresponds to the project mode), but emphasizes that the approach of each project needs to be adapted according to the characteristics that make it unique. It is therefore a temporary organization, created to deliver one or more project products in accordance with an agreed business case. This definition highlights the organizational component of projects while emphasizing the need to respond in a viable manner to economic objectives. Projects are a collection of operations. Operations are carried out through sustainable, continuous and repetitive processes and with resources. Projects, in essence, are temporary, have characteristics that make them unique (innovation, change, characteristics of the product or service) and require a specific approach. During its implementation, a project mobilizes identified resources (human, material, equipment, raw materials, information and finance). The expected results of the project are called supplies, products or “deliverables”. Considering these parameters, we can see that the history of agricultural development projects in the West region of Cameroon is characterized by few, if not rarely, projects that have gone to the end. The disuse of the Santchou rice station and the abandoned Tonga rice project are examples of this.

The challenges of training engineers in the cultivation of new food fashions

Most of the criticism that agricultural development strategies in Cameroon in general and in the West region in particular face is that of their implementation. In view of the challenges demanded by second-generation agriculture to which Cameroon has turned, the training of a human resource capable of helping the real implementation of projects which corresponds to this ambition of transition to an economy. Agrarian support is important. An overview of the history of agricultural research in Cameroon allows us to see to what extent the training of engineers for agrifood production still poses a challenge in terms of training structure.⁵

Overview of the history of agricultural research in Cameroon

As in most other African countries, so-called “modern” science was introduced to Cameroon with Western colonization. We owe the beginning of scientific research activities in this country to explorers, Christian missionaries, colonial administrators, officers of the German and French armies, as well as to fields as diverse as botany, zoology, archeology, anthropology, history, sociology, physical and human geography, geology, among others. Initially individual, research will gradually evolve into more organized and institutionalized forms. At the institutional level, the major fact to be noted during the colonial period is the establishment in 1935 of the Société d' Etudes Camerounaises (SECAM), an

⁴FAO, Évaluation du Programme de la FAO au Cameroun, Décembre 2013-2017, PP.22-23

⁵Monkouop, Y., « Les mutations agricoles et l'évolution des habitudes alimentaires en pays Bamoun de 1908 à 2008 », Mémoire de Master II, Département d'Histoire, Université de Dschang, 2016.

organization whose objective is the study of all questions related to the human sciences, geology, oceanography, flora and fauna, both terrestrial and marine, and, in general, everything related to the particularities of the country. The work of SECAM gave rise to the publication of the first Cameroonian scientific journal. Long before the creation of SECAM, German colonization had also created from 1889 some trial gardens in Edéa, Akonolinga, Limbé (ex-Victoria). Research on the rural world was also carried out at this time by individuals attached to scientific institutions (universities or metropolitan research centers) or others (church, army ...). It was after the War of 14-18 that research began to take off with the creation by the Agricultural Services of the High Commission for the Republic of Cameroon. Subsequently, many experimental stations were created: in Dschang in 1925 (arabica and cinchona coffee), in Ngaoundéré in 1930 (animal production), in Bambui in 1933 (food crops), in Ebolowa in 1938 (robusta coffee and food crops), Nkongsamba (soils) and Djarengol-Maroua (groundnuts and animal traction). After the World War II, the first French institutes specializing in colonial agricultural research began to settle in Cameroon. The French Institute of Colonial Fruits and Citrus (IFAC, which would later become IRFA) was the first to set up in Njombé in 1944. Followed by the Research Institute for Oils and Oilseeds (IRHO) in Dibamba in 1948 and the Institute of Animal Husbandry and Veterinary Medicine of Tropical Countries (IEMVT) in Wakwa in 1955.⁶ These last three institutes are also present in most of the countries of Central and West Africa. In fields other than agriculture, notably that of the human sciences, we note the creation in Douala in May 1944 of the French Institute of Black Africa (IFAN). In 1949, the Office for Overseas Scientific Research (ORSTOM) created the Cameroon Research Institute (IRCAM), which covers disciplines as varied as pedology, veterinary and medical entomology, geography and anthropology. In the western part of the country, under British administration, we note the creation in 1951 of the Barombi-Kang station near Kumba and, in 1954, that of Ekona by the Cameroon Development Corporation (CDC).

The establishment of agricultural research institutes results from the evolution of practices and controversies which move from the initial stage of trial gardens, to the more elaborate one of experimental stations, to finally reach the final institutional stage of research institutes. This three-step periodization corresponds to three highlights in agricultural experimentation and in the training of cadres in the colonies; the shift from colonial agriculture to colonial agronomy in the 1920s; the emergence of tropical agronomy on the eve of World War II; its full development after 1954. During the "garden" and "station" phases, activities were limited to the collection of more or less elaborate information, which was then transferred to mainland France for processing for scientific purposes. Test gardens before the First World War, experimental stations during the interwar period, and finally agricultural research institutes after the Second World War. This was the genesis of the emergence of the first research institutions in Cameroon as in most of the countries of Francophone West Africa (ex-AOF). At independence, the Cameroonian State therefore had a significant research infrastructure, and showed a particular interest in scientific and technical research, which was directly attached to the federal authorities, a measure which, at the time, testified to its importance to the authorities. The running

costs of the institutes were covered by the Cameroonian authorities, but the salaries of the researchers, who were mostly French, were provided by the former colonial power. The fact that research is, in part, supported by France, will allow the nascent Cameroonian state to initially concentrate its resources on higher education and training. Followed by the Research Institute for Oils and Oilseeds (IRHO) in Dibamba in 1948 and the Institute of Livestock and Veterinary Medicine of Tropical Countries (IEMVT) in Wakwa in 1955. These last three institutes are Taking advantage of the infrastructure bequeathed by colonization, the young Cameroonian state shows a particular interest in scientific and technical research, which is directly attached to the federal authorities, a measure which, at the time, testified to its importance for the authorities. The running costs of the institutes were covered by the Cameroonian authorities, but the salaries of the researchers, who were mostly French, were provided by the former colonial power. The fact that research is, in part, supported by France, will allow the nascent Cameroonian state to initially concentrate its resources on higher education and training.

Structures for training engineers for agrifood production in West Cameroon since independence

West Cameroon has several structures that provide training for engineers who can help meet the challenges of relaunching the agrifood sector. To name only the most prominent, there is the Faculty of Agronomy of Agricultural Sciences (FASA), the Research Institute for Agriculture and Development (IRAD), the Technical School of Agriculture (ETA) of Bafang, and the National Center for Zootechnical and Veterinary Training (CNFZV) in Foumban. The history of FASA begins with the Cameroonian National School of Agriculture (ENCA) was created in 1960 in Dschang. It was then replaced in 1972 by the National School of Agriculture (ENSA), then in 1977 by the Dschang University Center. In 1988, the Center became the National Institute for Rural Development (INADER). Established in 1993, FASA is one of the institutions of the University of Dschang. It has campuses in the 5 agro-ecological zones of Cameroon. Its main mission is to implement a coherent training policy for middle and senior managers dedicated to agricultural production, food security and sustainable development. The admission of students is by competitive examination for Cameroonians holding a baccalaureate C, D or a GCE AL with at least two scientific subjects and a GCE OL, or an equivalent diploma recognized by the ministry in charge of Higher Education. Nationals of CEMAC member countries having ratified the texts relating to national treatment are also admitted under the same conditions as Cameroonian candidates. FASA, a faculty establishment of the University of Dschang - which has eight - has its main campus based in Dschang. It has an Application Farm on the main campus in Dschang, and a growing garden in Bansoa. It trains engineers in the following specialties: Plant production, Animal production, Rural engineering, Rural economics and sociology, Forestry. Since its inception, the school has trained several thousand engineers and senior technicians from more than 10 African and European countries in the field of agriculture and rural development. Several of its former students have held senior positions in national and international administration. FASA has two branches in Nkolbisson (Yaoundé) and in Ébolowa.⁷ As for it, created by presidential decree n ° 96/050 of March 12, 1996, IRAD is a

⁶<http://campack-cm.com/minresi/index.php/ministere/historique>

⁷<https://www.agropolis.fr/formation/pdf/Kaou-FAR-Yaounde-2007.pdf>

public scientific and technical establishment. It has legal personality and financial autonomy. It is a reference center for agricultural research. It promotes agricultural development, particularly in the fields of plant, animal, forestry, fisheries and environmental production, as well as food and agro-industrial technologies. As such, these activities cover two components, notably agricultural research and the promotion of agricultural development.

Regarding agricultural research, the objectives pursued by IRAD are numerous:

- Ensure the research, collection, processing, conservation and dissemination of scientific, technological and innovative knowledge, having an impact on the development of sectors in its fields of competence;
- Ensure the promotion and popularization of research results among development actors, in conjunction with the ministries in charge of the rural sector (agriculture, animal industries, livestock, forestry, wildlife, environment and sustainable development);
- Develop national research strategies, and contribute to the development of sub-regional, regional and international research strategies, as well as to dialogue between science, research and society in its fields of competence;
- Contribute to or participate, as necessary and in any form whatsoever, on their own initiative or on order, in carrying out studies or services in accordance with its purpose;
- Assist the State Council in the design, implementation and monitoring-evaluation of activities also present in most of the countries of Central and West Africa.
- Contribute to or participate, as necessary and in any form whatsoever, on their own initiative or on order, in carrying out studies or services in accordance with its purpose;
- Assist the State Council in the design, implementation and monitoring-evaluation of activities relating to its purpose;
- Assist the state authorities on matters relating to intellectual property, standards and quality of agricultural products, in conjunction with the body in charge of Standards and Quality.

Apart from these research objectives, IRAD also has a fundamental objective of promoting agricultural development to contribute to national strategies aimed at food self-sufficiency in Cameroon. Among these objectives, they are:

- Develop agro-food and agro-industrial technologies as well as scientific models for environmental conservation, economic and sustainable management of agricultural resources;
- Develop scientific and technical cooperation with specialized national, sub-regional, regional and international institutions in its fields of competence;
- Implement scientific programming around the priority axes for the development of the country, based on the real needs of users;
- Promote and make available to users of research results, reliable data meeting their needs;
- Ensure the capacity building of researchers, technicians and staff of sectoral administrations necessary for the accomplishment of its missions;
- Contribute to the development and updating of the agricultural map of Cameroon;

- Establish collections for agricultural, plant, animal, forestry, environmental and fisheries research.

IRAD's fields of action revolve around three axes namely: Plant Production, Animal and Fisheries Production, and Biodiversity, Forest and Environment. To do this, it has several operational structures throughout Cameroon as indicated in the table below:

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Table 2. Distribution of IRAD infrastructure in Cameroon

Types of infrastructure	Cities
Agricultural Research Centers	Maroua, Wakwa, Bambui, Ekona, Mbalmayo, Garoua, Bangangté, Dschang, Njombé, Bertoua, Minkomultipurpose stations (Dja Reserve).
Specialized stations	Specialized Agricultural Research Station on the Dibamba Oil Palm
Specialized Botanical Research Station (National Herbarium)	of Yaoundé
research stations.	Mankon, Foumbot, Kumba, Limbé-Batoké, Mboka-Nguti, Nkoemvone
Experimental Station	Kribi Marine Ecosystem Research Experimental Station (SERECOMA)
	Yagoua, Banyo, Foumban, Nko'olong, Abong-Mbang, Meyomessala, Ngomedzap, Yokadouma recovery stations
	Guetale, Tiko, Babungo, Tcholliré, Tombel, Mouloudou, Kousseri, Akonolinga, Batibo, Toubouro, Ebodjé, Nguemendouga, Soukoundou, Bokito, Befang, Bayangam, Edéa, Oyem-Bengbis, Garoua-Boulai, Esodiji, Esodiji, Bitsok-Adjap, Mbé, Nanga-Éboko, Nkambe, Santchou, Bakassi, Meyoumadjom, Meiganga, Ntui, Santa, Mancha, Mamfé, Zoétélé, Ndokayo, Obala, Bere, Mbouroukou, Akwaya, Ambam, Ngatti, Okola, Biemi, Andom, Bitiyili, Tibati, Ngoumou, Karewa, Bangem, Belabo, Tignère, Yoko, Fignole, Mundemba, Gribé. ²

Source: <https://www.irad.cm/index.php/fr/a-propos-de-l-irad/nos-structures-operationnelles>

Thus, IRAD has numerous infrastructures to provide supervision and training, but also to support agro-food development in Cameroon. In all, these are: five Agricultural Research Centers (ARCs) which are structures exercising responsibility for the extent of each of the five agro-ecological zones. They have a national and regional vocation to cover all the problems of agricultural development. There are then six multipurpose stations, two specialized stations, six research stations, one experimental station, eight upgrading stations across the country and 58 Antennas.

In this set, the part that falls to West Cameroon is composed in particular of:

- The multi-purpose stations of Banganté and Dschang;
- Foumbot research station;
- The Foumban recycling station;
- The Bayangam and Santchou branches.

In all, therefore, there are six IRAD structures located in West Cameroon. Judging by the agricultural potential of this part of Cameroon, this number appears relatively insufficient. The stake would thus be for the public authorities to increase the grip of IRAD in the region, by creating other branches or other

⁸Meba, A.G.D., « L'évolution des politiques agricoles et leur incidence sur l'économie et le développement rural au Cameroun (1960-2014) », DIPPES II, université de Yaoundé 1, ENS Yaoundé, 2014.

types of structures in the other Departments of the region. Indeed, IRAD is only established in four departments out of the eight that exist today in West Cameroon. An effort in this direction would undoubtedly allow IRAD to set up programs that make it possible to exploit the potential of the Western region, which appears not only as the breadbasket of Cameroon, but also to a certain extent, of development central Africa. In the system for training engineers for agricultural production in West Cameroon is also the Bafang Technical School of Agriculture (ETA). It is in the Haut-Nkam Department. In 2011, this establishment opened a higher technician cycle. It is part of the overall training system set up by the State of Cameroon to provide training in the field of agrifood and animal industries. This system includes establishments under the supervision of the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development (MINADER) on the one hand and by the Ministry of Livestock and Animal Industries (MINEPIA) on the other. MINADER has 35 agricultural training centers divided into 24 Rural Training Centers (CFR) and 11 Training Centers for Young Farmers (CFJA) which train around 3,500 producers in the agricultural sector each year. The training courses are non-degree, modular and on demand. They last from 01 to 02 days for CFRs and one year for CFJAs. The beneficiaries of these trainings are active producers or people looking for jobs (retired, deflated, young people in post-primary situations, among others). These centers receive from MINADER an annual allocation of approximately CFAF 1 million per center. Their staff usually comes down to a director, responsible for the center, who is the main trainer assisted by one to two support staff. The CFRs have on average an area of 04 hectares, an administrative block (an office, a store and a training room) and basic teaching material.

The CFJA, designed to accommodate couples (a farmer and his wife) in a residential fashion, have an average of 100 hectares and are equipped with a complex comprising an administrative block, meeting rooms, training, workshops, dormitories, stores, on-call accommodation, a production farm, recreation areas as well as teaching equipment and materials. MINEPIA has 16 centers specializing in small livestock (two), large livestock (two), artisanal maritime fishing (two), inland fishing (two) and aquaculture (eight). The training lasts from 1 to 3 months. The centers receive from MINEPIA an annual allocation of approximately CFAF 1.2 million per center. Their staff usually comes down to a director, responsible for the center, who is the main trainer assisted by one to two support staff. The Centers have an average area of 30 hectares, an administrative block (an office, a store and a training room) and application workshops (ponds, pigsties, henhouses, among others). MINADER and MINEPIA have an education and vocational training system which is based on the one hand on centers geared towards the training of producers, and on the other hand on initial training establishments preparing for diplomas. Techniques. Regarding initial training, the MINADER system consists of:

- Three Regional Colleges of Agriculture (CRA) and nine Technical Schools of Agriculture (ETA) - including that of Bafang cited above for West Cameroon -;
- Three Training Schools for Community Development Specialists (EFSDC) and two Training Schools for Specialists in Cooperation (EFSC);
- A Training School for Specialists in Rural Equipment and Facilities (EFSEAR).

The CRAs prepare for the diplomas of Higher Technician and Technician of Agriculture, the ETA for the diploma of Technical Agent of Agriculture, while the EFSDC and the EFSC train technical agents and technicians in the fields of community development and management of cooperatives. EFSEAR, for its part, trains technical agents in rural equipment and facilities. On the side of MINEPIA, the training system is made up of three National Zootechnical and Veterinary Training Centers (CNFZV), two of which are specialized in the fields of health and animal production in Jakiri and Maroua and one specialized in the fields of production animal, fishing and aquaculture in Foumban. These centers prepare for the Brevets of Superior Technicians and technicians (veterinary nurse, animal husbandry technician, fishing technician and aquaculture technician) and the Professional Studies Brevets (assistant veterinary nurse, assistant livestock technician and assistant farm technician). 'aquaculture). The above training institutions are already part of the response to the challenge of training a human resource essential for the economic take-off of Cameroon and the West through agriculture. They also help reduce unemployment in its own way. But that is enough, because the problems of financing projects designed by the young people trained, but also the lack of experience that often prevents the practice, in part pose problems that must be resolved.

Conclusion

Since the 1990s, agriculture has been a real challenge for development in the West region of Cameroon. The conversion towards a self-centered policy of agricultural activities to give the possibility of opening the way to second generation agriculture. The agricultural development projects that were launched in this context have been taking shape since the end of the 2000s and the beginning of the 2010s with projects implemented by agro poles in the region. However, some projects are currently dead, such as that of Santchou. Despite this, agriculture continues to represent a potential source for the economic development of the Western region itself and for Cameroon in general which is a leader in Central Africa. To do this, we just need, among other things, to guarantee the financing conditions for agriculture.⁹ The revival of agricultural cooperatives should also help reorganize peasants in order to produce better. Development projects, in terms of implementation and monitoring must be re-articulated. The training of a generation of agronomist engineers tied to modern farming techniques, but aware of the cultural and socioeconomic realities of the local context, but also of contemporary food issues also contributes as a way of relying on agriculture as a strategy. economic development in the West region, in Cameroon and even, with a certain optimism in the Central African sub-region where the country supplies its neighbors of Gabon and Equatorial Guinea with various foodstuffs, some of which come directly from West Cameroon like Foubot via Kyé-Ossi. Crossing the approaches of historians, ethnologists, anthropologists as well as sociologists on the agricultural and food question, this research makes a panoramic study on the practice of agricultural production by the populations of the West region of Cameroon from 1916 to 2016. In addition, it presents the culinary and food art of West

⁹NgoufoSogang, T., « Tensions sociopolitiques, continuité approximative et incertitude dans les anciennes plantations caféières coloniales en pays bamiléké (Ouest-Cameroun) : le cas de Darmagnac, Chanas et Privat 1930-2005 », in *Revue Nka'a*, No 4, 2005, PP. 241-285.

Cameroon by analyzing the strategies set up from the German and French era until the post-independence period. But while relying on agricultural development policies and strategies in the West region and the economic challenges of this sector which has a considerable share in Cameroon's GDP. It should also be noted that proper supervision of this sector contributes to maintaining the social stability of the country.

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