

# **Original Research Article**

## **Stakeholder Contribution to Rural Development in Mezam Division, Cameroon**

### **1 ABSTRACT**

Rural development is a continuous process facilitated by stakeholders. These stakeholders play complementary roles in the process through rural empowerment, project execution and provision of material needs to the population. In rural Mezam Division notwithstanding, there exists a dearth of information on the stakeholder categories, their spatial distribution and intervention domains in the rural development process. This paper examines the stakeholder categories, their spatial distribution within the various sub-divisions and specific domains of intervention in the rural development process in Mezam Division. Field surveys, focused group discussions, structured interviews with 31 institutional heads and the administration of 260 questionnaires to various actors constituted the main primary data sources while a review of institutional, library and internet sources served as secondary sources materials of data gathering for this research. The collected data was analysed descriptively using tables, percentages, graphs, bar charts and histograms. The results revealed that the stakeholders involved in rural development in Mezam Division are wide-ranging but were categorised into four, namely, state institutions (16%), CBOs (49%), NGOs (27%) and cooperative development agencies (8%). These stakeholders are unevenly concentrated within the four sub-divisions in Mezam Division as follows; Santa (33%), Bafut (28%), Tubah (23%) and Bali (16%). The areas of intervention of the stakeholders in rural development in Mezam Division are water supply schemes (39%), school construction (20%), agricultural development and modernisation (17%), road maintenance (8%), health centres (7%), erection of community halls and palaces (5%) and electricity supply schemes (4%). The paper recommends that the rural populations should be empowered and their local institutions like the rural councils be made totally autonomous. It concludes that in this way, the rural councils could easily rally the rural people, raise funds, execute projects, coordinate the activities of other stakeholders and serve as the custodian of rural development.

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*Keywords: Stakeholders, contribution, rural development, Mezam Division, Cameroon*

### **1. INTRODUCTION**

Over 1 billion people the world over live in poverty and 70% of these live in the rural areas. In the developed world (European Union (EU) for example), rural areas dominate the region making up 91% of the territory in the 27 member states and are homes to 113 million people who are over 56% of the population of EU [1]. In the less developed world, over 76% of the poor people reside in rural areas and make their living from agriculture. In India for example, the national economy is predominantly rural with 72.22% of its impoverished population still living in rural areas while 60.41% of total work force in rural areas draw their livelihood from agriculture and allied sectors. In Africa, the problem of rural underdevelopment is very severe as over 74% of African poor live in rural areas. The situation is however slightly better

15 in North Africa as not up to half of the rural poor in Africa are found in this region. More than  
16 65% of the rural poor in Africa is found in Sub-Saharan Africa. The economy of Ghana in  
17 West Africa for example, just like other Sub-Saharan African countries like Tanzania, Niger,  
18 Togo, Chad, Central African Republic and Cameroon all depend heavily on agriculture in  
19 terms of employment, food security and income [2]. Here, the problem and extent of rural  
20 underdevelopment has been growing and manifest itself in the form of poor infrastructure,  
21 lack of access to basic education, lack of drinking water, lack of basic health facilities,  
22 hunger and lack of adequate shelter. The core problem of widespread poverty, growing  
23 inequality, rapid growth of population, and rising unemployment all find their origins in the  
24 stagnation and other retrogression of economic life in rural areas. Rural development is  
25 therefore a very important and urgent need for rural areas.

26 [3] considered rural development in terms of improvement in the economic and social life of  
27 the rural poor. Thus, the basic objectives of rural development include organising,  
28 developing and utilizing the available natural and human resources to facilitate equitable  
29 opportunity to the entire population dependent on them. Beneficiaries contribute to rural  
30 development planning and implementation to the extent that their involvement is planned in  
31 the development process and facilitated by effective communication and participatory  
32 methods. This makes rural development a complex process involving an interaction of  
33 economic, social, political and cultural factors. It is a multidisciplinary process of  
34 development which seeks transformation of the society from traditional to modern nature.  
35 The concept of rural development is a process of development and change to improve rural  
36 social life. The goal of rural development cannot be achieved without available infrastructural  
37 development, commercialization of agriculture, proper utilization and mobilization of  
38 resources and inclusive social development. The term rural development connotes overall  
39 development of rural areas with a view to improve the quality of life of rural people.

40 Against this backdrop, world leaders have agreed on an ambitious development agenda that  
41 seek to end poverty and hunger by 2030 while recognising the central role that rural  
42 development plays [4]. The solutions to these problems require new forms of governance  
43 and partnerships between stakeholders [5]. Recently, partnering in rural development is the  
44 most popular concept in this regard. Consensus is its key and the primary factor for  
45 promoting such partnership between stakeholders. These stakeholders in rural development  
46 include farmers, agriculture and non-agriculture labourers, artisans, traders, money lenders  
47 and those engaged in providing such services as transport, communications, processing,  
48 banking and education and extension [6].

49 The government of Cameroon is conscious of the important socio-economic role of the rural  
50 areas and the need to improve on the conditions of the rural dwellers. Since independence,  
51 it has pursued a rural development policy through heavily subsidized agricultural projects in  
52 production and marketing, supporting and advising other agricultural institutions and farmers  
53 in their areas of operation [7]. In this light, the government of Cameroon has created  
54 institutions like municipal council and North West Development Authority (MEDINO) through  
55 which rural development challenges can be resolved and their needs provided in a bottom  
56 up approach with the contributions of private, public and international organisations.

57 In Mezam Division, several rural development stakeholders are present. However, these  
58 stakeholders face problems of uncoordinated activities, insufficient funding, poor  
59 infrastructures such as bad roads and state dominance in decision making in the rural  
60 development process. The respective areas of intervention of the various stakeholders in  
61 rural development are not well carved out leading to conflicts at times between stakeholders.  
62 The local population has not also been highly empowered to assist in the rural development  
63 process. Until today, the local population still lack the knowledge required to make correct  
64 decisions concerning the rural development of their area such as on which basic needs  
65 projects to execute, materials to use, where the project should be sited amongst others.

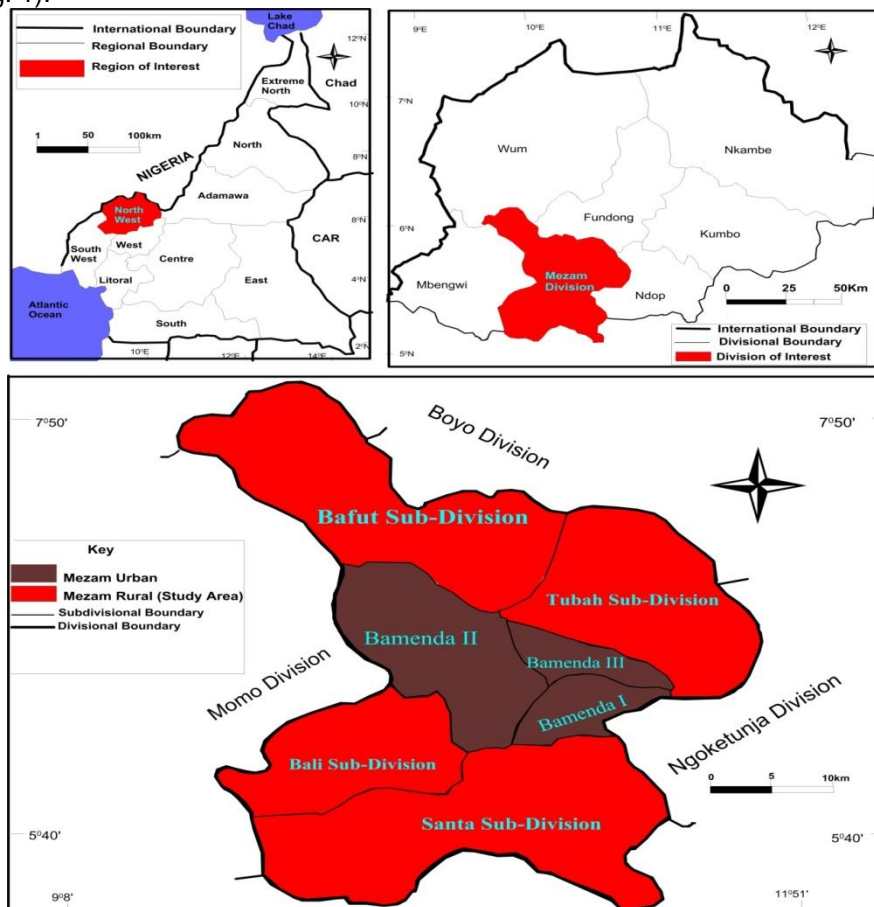
66 From all the above, it is clear that rural development projects and actions in rural Mezan  
67 Division are currently unsustainable. This paper examines stakeholders contributions to rural

68 development in Mezam Division. Specifically, it categorises the rural development  
 69 stakeholders, determine their spatial distribution within the various sub-divisions and  
 70 investigate their specific domains of intervention in rural Mezam Division.  
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72 **2. MATERIAL AND METHODS**

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 74 **2.1 Study Area**

75 Mezam Division is one of the seven Divisions in the North West Region of Cameroon. It is  
 76 located between Latitudes 5°40'N and 7°50'N of the equator and Longitudes 09°8'E and  
 77 11°51'E of Greenwich Meridians [8]. It covers a surface area of some 1,841.45km<sup>2</sup>. Mezam  
 78 Division is boarded to the North by Boyo Division, to the South by the West Region, to the  
 79 East by Ngoketunjia Division and to the West by Momo Division. Mezam Division is made up  
 80 of both urban and rural territories. Rural Mezam occupies the North and the Southern parts  
 81 of the Division and constitutes four sub-divisions, namely, Bafut, Bali, Santa and Tubah sub-  
 82 divisions (Fig. 1).



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 84 Fig.1: Location of the study area

85 Sources: Adapted and modified from Ndenecho and AKum (2009) [8]

86  
 87 The region is situated within the highland area of the North West Region of Cameroon. The  
 88 four sub-divisions which constitute the study area have a combined population of over  
 89 498,000 inhabitants. Of this number, Santa sub-division has the largest population which  
 90 stands at over 223,000 inhabitants, followed by Bafut and Bali sub-divisions with some  
 91 129,000 and 89,000 inhabitants respectively while Tubah is the least with some 68,000  
 92 inhabitants as of the 2015 projections [9-14]. Rural Mezam has an agrarian economy with

93 over 80% of the population involved in either the cultivation of crops or the rearing of  
 94 animals. The population of this area constitutes veritable potentials for rural development.

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## 96 **2.2 Data collection**

97 Pertinent data for this study was gotten from both primary and secondary sources. Primary  
 98 sources of data included field observations, questionnaire administration, structured  
 99 interviews and focused group discussions. These primary data sources targeted individuals,  
 100 institutions and groups who are directly involved and contribute to rural development in  
 101 Mezam Division.

102 Field observations were ensured on the state of rural development infrastructures present in  
 103 the sub-divisions. It also helped to identify the rural development stakeholders and their  
 104 respectively domains of intervention in rural Mezam. This was done between the months of  
 105 February 2018 and December 2019.

106 During the period of field observation, questionnaires were equally administered to varied  
 107 rural development actors in varying numbers based on population size within the four rural  
 108 sub-divisions of Santa, Bafut, Bali and Tubah. A total of two hundred and sixty  
 109 questionnaires (260) were successfully administered and retrieved within the four sub-  
 110 divisions that constitute the study area (Tables 1 and 2).

111 Table 1: Questionnaire administration within the four sub-divisions

S/N	Sub-divisions	2015 population	No of questionnaire administered	% of total
1	Santa	223,000	100	38.46
2	Bafut	129,000	70	26.92
2	Bali	89,000	50	19.23
4	Tubah	68,000	40	15.39
<b>Total</b>		<b>498,000</b>	<b>260</b>	<b>100</b>

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113 From Table 1, we realise that Santa which is the most populous sub-division in rural Mezam  
 114 received the largest proportion of questionnaires (38.46%) while Tubah which is the least  
 115 populated received the least proportion (15.39%). Table 2 further shows the administration of  
 116 the 260 questionnaires to various actors (the rural population and some rural development  
 117 sector staff) in the four sub-divisions combined.

118 Table 2: Questionnaires administration to various actors in rural Mezam

Actors	Men	Women	Youth s	Educationist	Health workers	Counsellors	Administrators	Total
No. administered	74	66	60	20	17	13	10	260
% of total	28.5	25.4	23.1	8	6	5	4	100

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120 These rural populations were targeted because firstly they are the beneficiary groups and  
 121 secondly constitute the main stakeholders who have a pivotal role to play in their rural  
 122 development process. To complement questionnaire administration, structured interviews  
 123 also targeted 50 rural development institutional stakeholders from schools, hospitals,  
 124 churches, sub-divisional delegations of government ministries in Mezam, municipal council  
 125 authorities, VDAs, CIGs and NGOs all involved in the rural development of the sub-divisions  
 126 (Table 3). Of the targeted 50 structural interviews, 31 were successfully conducted while 19  
 127 failed as the interviewees did not respect the programmed schedule with the interviewers  
 128 because they were absent at the time of the interview.

129 Table: 3: Institutional actors interviewed for the study

Actors	VDAs	NGOs	Administrative authorities	School heads	Health center heads	Church heads	Others	Total
Targeted	11	8	8	7	6	5	5	50
Interviewed	8	5	4	3	4	4	3	31
Absent	3	3	4	4	2	1	2	19

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131 These categories of actors in Table 3 were targeted because they are institutions involved  
 132 with rural development activities in their various sectors (schools, health centres, churches,  
 133 road maintenance and electricity and pipe borne water supply). To complement the  
 134 structured interviews, three focused group discussions were held constituting 8 members in  
 135 each group with livestock breeders association in Bafut, food crop producers association in  
 136 Santa and one female 'njanji' group in Tubah. The essence was to obtain information on the  
 137 rural development projects that they have participated in as CBOs and/or are ongoing in  
 138 their area.

139 Secondary data was obtained from published and institutional sources such as libraries of  
 140 the University of Buea and the Limbe municipal library. These included text books,  
 141 institutional archives and research papers or publications. Unpublished sources of data were  
 142 also reviewed in the study including theses, past dissertation, end of year institutional reports  
 143 and council reports.

### 144 2.3 Data analysis and presentation

145 Data gathered from both primary and secondary sources were analysed using qualitative  
 146 techniques and presented by help of photos, tables, bar charts and histograms.

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## 148 3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

149 Findings for this paper are presented on stakeholder typology in rural development and the  
 150 contributions of specific stakeholders in the rural development process in Mezam Division.

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### 152 3.1 Stakeholders of rural development in Mezam Division

153 In Mezam Division, partnership in rural development is a widely used development approach  
 154 facilitated by a multitude of stakeholders involved in the rural development process. These  
 155 stakeholders have been categorised into four groups for simplicity and easy understanding.  
 156 These categorised include Community Based Organisations (CBOs), Non-governmental  
 157 Organisations (NGOs), state institutions and Development Cooperation Agencies (DCAs)  
 158 like the United Nations Organisation (UNO), European Union (EU) and the African Union  
 159 (AU). The CBOs include Village Development Associations (VDA), cooperatives, CIGs and  
 160 PTAs. NGOs on the other hand constitute civil society organisations and non-governmental  
 161 organisations both national and international. The state institutions include rural councils and  
 162 the sub-divisional delegations of government ministries in rural Mezam while the  
 163 development cooperation agencies include international organisations (Fig. 2).

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Fig. 2: Stakeholders' categories in rural Mezam  
Source: Field Work (2019)

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191 Figure 2 presents the stakeholder categories involved in the rural development process in  
192 Mezam Division. Four categories of stakeholders are evident as found in the figure, namely,  
193 CBOs, NGOs, state institutions and DCAs.

194 The spatial distribution of stakeholders in rural Mezam is unequal. Findings revealed that the  
195 Santa municipality has the highest number of stakeholders given that the municipality has  
196 ten villages with different VDAs, traditional councils, CIGs and PTAs. This is followed by  
197 Bafut, Tubah and Bali respectively due to their comparatively small number of villages and  
198 small surface area that they occupy (Fig. 3).

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Fig. 3: Spatial distribution of rural development stakeholders  
in Mezam Division  
Source: Field Work (2019)

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217 Results equally show spatial variation in the degree of involvement or contribution by the  
218 various stakeholders in the rural development process in Mezam Division (Fig. 4).  
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Fig. 4: Spatial variation in the degree of contribution by stakeholders in the rural development process in Mezam Division

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Source: Field Work (2019)

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Figure 4 reveals that the CBOs make the greatest contribution to the rural development process in Mezam of up to 49%. This is closely followed by the NGOs, state institutions and CDAs with 27%, 16% and 8% respectively. Of the 49% of CBOs, Santa and Bafut sub-divisions host the greatest numbers. This follows that they receive more contributions in terms of rural development projects than Bali and Tubah sub-divisions.

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Regarding their domains of intervention, the stakeholders intervene in diverse domains in rural areas in Mezam Division where there is little funding available for development. Together, they have been involved in the construction of schools, health facilities, water supply schemes, road maintenance, agricultural development, community halls and palace headed by administrative authorities and development of electricity supply projects (Fig. 5). The rural population on their part has created community based organisations and elects their representatives to channel their development needs and challenges to relevant higher authorities and partners in rural development for solutions to be provided.

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Fig. 5: Domain of intervention by stakeholders in RD in Mezam Division

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Source: Field Work (2019)

240 Figure 5 reveals that of the stakeholder domain of interventions sectors, water supply is the  
241 priority sector of intervention represented by over 39.1% of all the contributions. This is  
242 closely followed by schools construction (19.1%), agricultural development in terms of  
243 intensification and modernization (16%) and road maintenance (10%). Potable water is  
244 being provided through pipes and boreholes. Small water tanks of between 10-30m<sup>3</sup> are  
245 constructed to provide water to some rural households by the stakeholders. Most of these  
246 water schemes however have suffered from breakdown without repairs. With rapid  
247 population growth in the area, more than 40% of the rural masses still lack access to potable  
248 water. The least intervention sector by stakeholders is in the domain of electricity supply  
249 represented by only 3.8% of the total. This explains why the rural masses still suffer from  
250 epileptic nature of electricity supply characterised by frequent power cuts from the energy  
251 utilization company Energy of Cameroon (ENEO).

252 Though the CBOs remain the most active RD stakeholder in rural Mezam, state institutions  
253 are the most influential since they have the authority over other stakeholders and determine  
254 the nature of rural development to be pursued in Mezam Division. The specific contribution  
255 to RD of the different stakeholder categories in Mezam Division is presented in the following  
256 section.

### 257 **3.2 Stakeholders contributions to rural development in Mezam Division**

258 The respective contributions of CBOs, NGOs, state institutions and DCAs to RD in Mezam  
259 Division are presented below.

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#### 261 **3.2.1 Contributions of CBOs to rural development in Mezam**

262 The populations of the different villages have organised themselves into CBOs to facilitate  
263 the collections of fund and rallying their rural populations to be actively involved in their rural

264 development processes. The CBOs constitute major stakeholders in the development of  
265 their villages. The CBOs initiate development projects in the different villages. In rural  
266 Mezam, CBOs (traditional councils, VDAs, PTAs, CIG, njangi groups and co-operative  
267 societies) contribute to rural development by providing free labour, building materials,  
268 financial contributions, entertainment and attending training seminars to acquire more  
269 knowledge on how to rally more people as well as manage rural development projects (Fig.  
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Fig. 6: CBOs contribution to RD in Mezam Division  
Source: Field Work (2019)

Figure 6 shows the various areas of CBOs contribute in rural development in Mezam Division. From the figure, CBOs highly contribute in the domain of free labour contribution for development purposes (44%). This is closely followed by financial contribution from youths (1,000-2,000FCFA), men (1,500-5,000FCFA), women (1,000-3,000FCFA) and volunteers (10,000FCFA+) annually (27%).

The traditional councils of villages for example are more involved in rural administration while the churches are involved in the religious, health and educational domains. The PTAs are more involved in the development of the educational, water and energy supply sectors targeting schools in most cases. The cooperatives and CIGs are more involved in agricultural development activities (Table 4).

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Table 4: Some CBOs and their contributions to rural development in Mezam Division

CBOs	Municipalities				Projects in rural Mezam				
	Santa	Bafut	Tubah	Bali	Classrooms	Health centres	Water supply	Farm tools	Electricity Supply projects
Traditional councils	10	1	4	2	—	—	—	—	—
Churches (Denomination)	9	8	7	6	272	14	30taps	14	9
PTAs	139	127	52	63	682	--	124taps	—	10
Cooperatives	14	9	5	4	8	--	18taps	269	6
CIGs	25	21	14	15	---	---	---	831	---
VDAs	10	1	4	2	141	18	674taps	456	26

Compiled from PTAs, CIGs, VDAs and other CBO reports (2019)

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Table 4 reveals that CBOs have contributed enormously to rural development in the different villages in Mezam Division. This can be seen in the domains of health, education, farm tools provision and water and electricity supply. Figure 7 shows a CBO leading in provision of labour in the laying of water pipeline in Manka'a village, Bafut sub-division.

Fig. 7: Photo showing CBO led community labour in the laying of water pipeline in Manka'a, Bafut municipality in 2012

Source: Bafut VDA report (2019)

Findings further revealed that water supply is purely a community based initiative given the fact that the national water corporation 'CAMWATER' does not serve rural municipalities in Mezam. The VDAs are making efforts to provide potable water to the population but the constructed reservoirs are very small in sizes between 10-30m<sup>3</sup> and found only in a few fortunate villages in the municipality. In high altitude areas like Manka'a, streams and springs

334 have been harnessed to run through pipes without reservoirs or treatment plants. These  
335 indigenous efforts have improved water supply in villages in rural Mezam. In the educational  
336 sector, the churches and PTAs provide the highest number of classrooms and other didactic  
337 materials. In the health sector, the churches dominate in the construction of health centres  
338 and hospitals. The PTAs dominate other CBOs in the execution of water and energy supply  
339 projects while the cooperatives dominate in the provision of farm tools and other inputs to  
340 boost agricultural development.

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### 342 **3.2.2 Contribution of state institutions in the rural development process in Mezam** 343 **Division**

344 The government of Cameroon has pursued rural development by creating development  
345 institutions at regional and sub-regional level such as MEDINO and rural councils. The state  
346 institutions have been set up to also coordinate the expertise knowledge and the activities of  
347 multi-disciplinary teams of technicians, engineers, agronomists, economists, rural  
348 sociologists, geographers, soil scientists and doctors to boost regional and rural  
349 development. Results show that the contribution by state institutions to RD in Mezam  
350 Division is not the same as some are more active than others in the process (Fig. 8).

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365 Fig. 8: Extend of contribution of state institutions in RD in Mezam Division  
366 Source: Field Work (2019)

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368 From Figure 8, we observe that the rural councils in Mezam are the most active government  
369 institutions in the rural development process in rural Mezam. However, their activities limited  
370 solely to their various municipalities as one council cannot encroach into another council  
371 area. MEDINO which is a regional development institution as well as sub-divisional  
372 delegations of ministries such as Agriculture and Rural Development also carry out  
373 development activities in the whole of rural Mezam. Again, state institutions equally  
374 contribute to the different development sectors (Table 5 and Figure 9).

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380 Table 5: Development sectors of state institutions in rural Mezam Division

State institutions	Contributions to rural development in Mezam Division					
	Agriculture	Transport	Seminar organisation	Classrooms construction	Health centres	Water supply
Municipal councils	356 tools provided	12bridges 26culverts 14km roads	7	18	24beds	267taps
MEDINO	223	14bridges 13culverts 46km roads	9	13	2 centres 12beds	4water scheme
Delegation of health	–	–	10	–	8centres	12taps
Delegation of education	–	–	8	382	–	18taps
Delegation of water and energy	–	–	2	–	–	2 feasibility studies
Delegation of transport	–	–	3	14km road rehabilitated	–	–
Delegation of agriculture	867 tools	9km road	9	–	–	Two water schemes, 14 taps, 3boreholes

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Source: Compiled from various regional sub-delegations of ministries and council reports (2019)

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Fig. 9: Photo showing a stretch of road graded by MEDINO in Pinyin, Santa municipality.

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Source: MEDINO reports (2019)

405 From Figure 9, we realise that rural Mezam benefits from RD projects coming from state  
 406 institutions. Besides roads, the area benefits from other rural development projects such as  
 407 creation of permanent and temporary jobs, increased the empowerment of farmers and  
 408 development of human resources of beneficiaries, promotion of small operators like day  
 409 workers, artisans, farm workers, support to micro-enterprises and technical support to  
 410 farmers by state institutions. The beneficiaries benefit from state assistance through the  
 411 participation of associations and individuals in the implementation of community  
 412 development.

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### 3.3.3 NGO's contributions to rural development in Mezam Division

415 Some of the NGOs operating in Rural Mezam Division include Society for Initiatives in Rural  
 416 Development and Environmental Protection (SIRDEP), Community Initiative for Sustainable  
 417 Development (COMINSUD), Grounded and Holistic Approach for People's Empowerment  
 418 (GHAPE), North West Craft Association (NOWECA), SNV, SAILD, Inades Formation, Plan  
 419 International, Heifer International and the Strategic Humanitarian Services (SHUMAS).  
 420 These NGOs provide funding to CBOs and empower rural people as well as execute  
 421 projects in the rural communities in Mezam with the participation of the populations. The  
 422 NGOs involved in RD in Mezam Division and their domains of contribution is presented in  
 423 Table 6 and Figure 10.

424 Table 6: NGO's contributions to rural development in Mezam Division

NGOs	Contributions to RD in Mezam Division					
	Agricultural development	Transport	Seminarorganisation	Classroom construction	Health centreserection	Water supply provision
SHUMAS	476 tools	4bridges 12culverts	6	18	26beds	27taps 5boreholes
SIRDEP	613tools	10culverts	7	5	28drinking g pales	Protected 8water catchments
Plan International	–	–	9	–	2centres	2 water schemes
NAF	–	–	4	8	14beds	3boreholes
SAILD	12processing machines	–	10	–	–	4 feasibility studies
HURCLEP	–	–	8	–	–	–
Hiefer project	421piglets	–	7	–	–	3 water schemes 2boreholes

425 Source: Compiled from NGOs' annual reports (2019)

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439 Fig. 10: Classrooms donated by SHUMAS to SAPACCO college, Babanki Tugoh, Tubah  
440 municipality in 2012

441 Source: SHUMAS Annual Report (2019)

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443 Table 6 and Figure 10 shows that NGOs have been very active in the rural development  
444 process in Mezam Division in the domains of education, agricultural development, health  
445 care, transportation and water supply projects. However, the 'Anglophone crisis' currently on-  
446 going in the Northwest and Southwest regions of Cameroon which turned violent in 2017 has  
447 hindered NGO development activities in rural Mezam. This was particularly felt in the domain  
448 of rural empowerment through training seminars and other field-based activities as a result  
449 of insecurity experienced in the region via frequent gun shots, kidnapping of workers for  
450 ransom, ghost towns and lockdowns. This is further worsened by the Covid-19 global  
451 pandemic today.

### 452 **3.3.4 Contributions of DCAs to rural development in Mezam Division**

453 A number of projects have been financed by development cooperation agencies in rural  
454 Mezam. Development co-operation agencies active in the decentralisation and rural  
455 development domain in Cameroon are the United Nations and its related structures, the  
456 World Bank, International Labour Organisation (ILO), EU, Arab League (AL), African  
457 Development Bank (ADB), Bank of Central African States (BEAC), as well as friendly  
458 countries like Germany, France, Canada and the Dutch and Swiss governments. The  
459 Grassfield I and II projects were some of the major projects sponsored by the ADB through  
460 ADF implemented by MEDINO and conducted in close collaboration with other on-going  
461 projects in rural Mezam Division. The development cooperation agencies sponsor state  
462 institutions, NGOs and CBOs involved in the rural development of Mezam. The state  
463 institutions, NGOs and CBOs then execute development projects. The contribution of  
464 development co-operations to RD in Mezam Division is presented in Table 7.

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467 Table 7: Contributions of DCAs to rural development in Mezam Division

DCAs	Contributions to rural development in Mezam Division					
	Agriculture	Transport	Seminar organisation	Classroom construction	Health centres	Water supply
UNESCO	—	—	6	8	—	4boreholes
EU	63tools	15km graded road	2	6	18 tables and chairs	5boreholes
AU	—	—	2	—	—	—
WHO	—	—	6	-	16beds 20drinking pales	6 boreholes
World Bank	10processing machines 546 farming tools	20km graded road	9	14	3centres 8beds, 6thermo meters, 4 weighing scales	3 water schemes 18taps
ADB	592 farming tools	46km graded road	82	11	2centres	4 water schemes 28taps
BEAC	-	-	6	-	-	-

468 Source: Compiled from state delegations, NGOs and beneficiary groups reports (2019)

469 Result in Table 7 reveals that CDAs have tremendously contributed to RD in Mezam Division  
 470 via the provision of farm tools and processing machines, road grading, organisation of  
 471 seminars, classroom and health centre construction as well as water supply provision to the  
 472 rural population.

473

474 **4. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION**

475

476 The contributions of four categories of stakeholders to rural development in Mezam Division  
 477 have been very visible in the various development sectors like agriculture, water and energy,  
 478 education, health and transport. These stakeholders play complementary roles in rural  
 479 development in Mezam. The state in an effort to facilitate stakeholder contributions created  
 480 Santa, Bafut, Bali and Tubah rural councils. However, these councils which are supposed to  
 481 be at the pivot and serve as custodians of rural development are weakened and reduced to  
 482 mere project recipients by state administrators. Rural development in Mezam is thus over-  
 483 lapping, uncoordinated and fragmented in a 'top-bottom' rather than 'bottom-top' approach  
 484 as prescribed by the decentralisation law which permits local participation in their  
 485 development. The end result has been continues rural underdevelopment in Mezam Division  
 486 with abandoned projects and regional inequalities observed. The rural populationas such  
 487 continues to suffer from seasonal roads, insufficient supply of potable water and electricity,  
 488 insufficient staff and classrooms and poorly staffed and equipped health centres.

489 The study recommends that besides providing some physical infrastructure to the rural  
 490 population, they should also be empowered by the state and NGOs through their CBOs. This  
 491 can be done through education, training and massive sensitisation to be able to improve on  
 492 their lives and their communities as they get more actively involve their community  
 493 development. These will enhance good governance, gender equality, lobbying and advocacy

494 for policy change. This should be backed by an independent legal system which can freely  
495 handle corrupt cases and regulate the contributions of stakeholder without state influence.

496  
497

**COMPETING INTERESTS DISCLAIMER:**

498

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500 are commonly and predominantly use products in our area of research and country. There is  
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547 **ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS**

548 CBO: Community Based Organisations  
549 NGO: Non-Governmental Organisations  
550 CDA: Co-operative Development Associations  
551 EU: European Union  
552 MEDINO: North West Development authority  
553 VDA: Village Development Association  
554 CIG: Common Initiative Group  
555 UNO: United Nations Organisation  
556 AU: African Union  
557 ILO: International Labour Organisation  
558 PTA: Parents Teachers Association  
559 ADB: African Development Bank  
560 UNESCO: United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization  
561 WHO: World Health Organisation  
562 BEAC: Bank of Central African States  
563 USA: United States of America  
564 SHUMAS: Strategic Humanitarian Services  
565 HPI: Heipher Project International  
566 NAF: Neba Albert Foundation  
567 SDC: Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation  
568 BHELP: Bamenda Highland Project  
569 SAILD: Support Service to Grassroots Initiatives of Development  
570 AWICO: Association of Women International Information and Coordination Office  
571 SIRDEP: Rural Development and Environmental Protection  
572 IDF: Integrated Development Fund  
573 ACDEP: Association of Church-based Development  
574 HURCLED: Hunam Rights Counseling and Education Centre  
575 ADF: African Development Foundation  
576 NOWECA: North West Craft Association  
577 GHAPE: Grounded and Holistic Approach for People's Empowerment  
578 COMINSUD: Community Initiative for Sustainable Development  
579 RD: Rural Development  
580 SNV: Netherlands Development Organisation  
581 AL: Arab League  
582 ENEO: Energy of Cameroon