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**DEPARTMENT OF DEVELOPMENT STUDIES**

**AGRICULTURAL CONTRIBUTIONS OF RURAL WOMEN TO  
LIVELIHOOD AND FOOD SECURITY: CASE STUDY:  
NGENDZEN MBAM, NKUM SUB DIVISION, CAMEROON**

A Project Report submitted to the Department of Development Studies, in Partial  
Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Award of a Higher Technical Diploma in  
Development Studies with specialization in Environment and Geo-Information Science

By

**NGAH DICKSON YUFONYUY**  
PAIDWA00283

*Supervisor*  
Mr. Che Samuel

**BUEA, SEPTEMBER 2015**

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**Name of Student Submitting R. Project:**

Ngah Dickson Yufonyuy

**Matriculation Number of Student:**

PAIDWA00283

**Title of the Research Project:**

Agricultural contributions of rural women to livelihood and food security: case study Ngendzen Mbam

**Date of Submission:**

30 september 2015

**Signature of Student Submitting Research Project:** .....



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MR Che Samuel

(Supervisor)



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Registration number: PIADWA00283

Date: 11 September 2015

Signature:

A handwritten signature in dark ink, consisting of several loops and a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

## **DEDICATION**

This book is dedicated especially to my parents Mr Ngah zachious(of late) and Mrs. Ngah Emilia, and to the following: Mr Chilla Gerald, Chief Makia Thomas Eni, Mrs. Chilla Alison, Mrs. Makia prudence, Ngah families.

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## ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

- PAID WA-Pan African Institute Development West Africa
- CIGs – common initiative groups
- FOA-Food and Agricultural organization
- *USAID- United States Agency for International Development*
- MDG –Millennium Development Goals
- WFS- world Food Summit
- GDP- Gross domestic product
- PIR Poverty and Inequality Report
- HIV/ AIDS. –Human immune deficiency virus

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## ABSTRAIT

Les femmes rurales ont traditionnellement joué un rôle essentiel dans la promotion du développement agricole, la sécurité alimentaire et des moyens de subsistance. Leurs contributions sont probablement contrainte en inégalités dans l'accès et le contrôle des ressources vitales et des intrants tels que la terre, de la finance, et les intrants agricoles, les techniques agricoles modernes, le marketing ainsi que des services de formation et de vulgarisation qui caractérisent la plupart des zones rurales dans les pays en développement. Ce travail a été fait dans le village de Mbam dans Nkum-département de la région du Nord-Ouest. Ngendzen Mbam est situé dans le département Nkum et se situe entre 10.400 et 10.500 longitude E du méridien de Greenwich et la latitude 6.100 6.200 N et au nord de l'équateur. Ngendzen Mbam est délimitée au nord par le village Tatum, à l'Est par Ndu Tea Estate, à l'Ouest par le village Kitiwum et au village du Sud par Mbiame avec une population estimée à environ 2500 personnes. Sources de données primaires et secondaires ont été utilisées dans la collecte de données. Les données primaires ont été obtenu grâce à des entretiens avec des agriculteurs en milieu rural, et avec les présidents des groupes d'initiative commune enregistrés (GIC) dans Ngendzen Mbam. Les données secondaires était de révision des manuels, des revues, des rapports antérieurs sur les articles publiés se rapportant à ce sujet. Sources Internet ont été utilisées. Les résultats ont révélé que 75% des femmes étaient dans l'agriculture que tandis que 25% d'entre eux étaient à la fois dans l'agriculture et les petites entreprises. En outre, 72,3% étaient à la fois animale et végétale la culture comme moyen de subsistance et source de revenu. Alors que 26,7% parmi les agriculteurs comptés uniquement sur la production agricole comme moyen de subsistance et source de revenus. La plupart des répondants face des problèmes et défis dans leurs diverses activités. 86,5% des répondants confrontés à des difficultés dans l'agriculture, ont eu des problèmes de la ferme de la route du marché et le manque d'engrais, tandis que 20% des agriculteurs ont eu des difficultés dans l'agriculture. Cinq pour cent des famers agriculteurs avait problème avec suffisamment de terres. En conclusion, les différents moyens par lesquels les femmes dans Ngenzden Mbam contribué à la subsistance et la sécurité alimentaire comprend les cultures, le bétail et les entreprises à petite échelle. Les revenus provenant de produits agricoles tels que le maïs, les haricots, les pommes de terre et a eu un impact positif dans leur vie comme il les a aidés à acheter d'autres produits alimentaires tels que le riz et les besoins fondamentaux. Il est recommandé que le Conseil devrait encourager les jeunes à participer à l'agriculture.



## **CHAPTER ONE**

### **INTRODUCTION**

#### **1.1 Background of the study**

Rural women traditionally have played a vital role in promoting agricultural development, food security, and livelihood. This is reflected in the wide range of income-generating activities and food production (post-harvesting, cow fattening and milking, goat farming, backyard poultry rearing, agriculture, horticulture, food processing, cane and bamboo works, silk reeling, handloom weaving, garment making, fishnet making, coir production, and handicrafts amongst others) that they carry out. A significant number of rural women, particularly from extremely poor landless households, also engage in paid labour in construction, earthwork, and field-based agricultural work, activities that traditionally have fallen within the male domain

According to the 2007 United States Census of Agriculture, women have a growing presence in the United States (U.S.) agricultural sector, as women are running more farms and ranches, operating more land, and producing a greater value of agricultural products than they were in the previous years (U.S. Department of Agriculture, 2007). Rural women throughout Asia and the Pacific region make critical contributions to household production and consequently to household and national food security. Although the specific nature of their contribution varies among the various Asian and Pacific countries, clearly, the majority of rural women take on an increasing share of household labour and their lives are characterized by mounting drudgery Food an Agricultural Organization (FOA, 2005).

In Pakistan, women are key players in the agriculture sector, which employs almost 12 million women in the production of crops, vegetables, and livestock. The cotton crop, accounting for half of national export earnings, depends heavily on female labour. Women have the exclusive responsibility for cotton picking, exposing themselves in the process to health hazards emanating from the intensive use of pesticides (Bari, 2000)

Access to food is a basic need for human beings; however, many poor people do not have physical and economic access to sufficient, safe, and nutritious food (McMichael, 2009). There are several factors related with the condition of food insecurity such as loss of job, lower level of education and employment, lack of access to land, single-parent families, unstable income level, and having a poor family head. All these factors lead to the condition of poverty and the fundamental outcome is inadequate access to food (FAO, 2008)

About 79% of women in developing countries depend on natural resources and agriculture for their livelihoods, and, on average, comprise 43% of the agricultural labour force in developing countries. In Africa 80% of the agricultural production comes from small farmers, who are mostly rural women (Saquina, 2015) Yet, because of cultural attitudes, discrimination and a lack of recognition for their role in food production, women have a reduced access to productive resources. In sub-Saharan Africa, only 15% of landholders are women and they receive less than 10% of credit and 7% of extension services. As a result, their productivity lags behind, negatively affecting their livelihoods and that of their families. (Robynne 2012).

In general, rural women's work patterns are marked by change and continuity as well as flexibility and rigidity (Gurun, 1999). Women taking on new roles in farm production, off-farm production and community production to ensure the family's access to food and household resources characterize change and flexibility. Detailed time allocation studies in Burkina Faso, Ivory Coast, and Central African Republic indicate that activities such as routine food processing, collection of water and fuel, and domestic activities take up about half of the 8 to 10 hours of their average daily workload (Kumar, 1928).

The World Bank (2000) reported that about 290 million Africans survive on less than US\$1 per day with Sub- Sahara Africa being the most affected region. Most countries in this region are on the drive of finding ways to improve food production. According to Obasanjo (2002), food security is the first step in poverty eradication. Tansa (1996) argues that in Africa, low-income households spend up to 90% of their income on food

In Cameroon like the world at large, the contributions of rural women to livelihood and food security is unquestionable. It is estimated that rural women supply about 90% of the food needed for the subsistence of the population. Women also participate to a lesser extent in the cash crop sector. Fact sheet: Cameroon - Women, agriculture and rural development (1992). Rural women contribute to the livelihood and food security, they bear a greater tasks, including food processing and the collection of fuel wood and water

Mbam is a small village in kum subdivision of the North West region. Ngendzen Mbam is located in the Nkum Sub-Division, Bui Division of the North West Region. Nkum Subdivision lies between longitude 10.40<sup>0</sup> and 10.50<sup>0</sup> E of the Greenwich meridian and latitude 6.10<sup>0</sup> N and 6.20<sup>0</sup> North of the Equator. Ngendzen Mbam is bounded to the North by Tatum village, to the East by Ndu Tea Estate, to the West by the Kitiwum village and to the South by Mbiame village with

an estimated population of about 2500 people. (Nkum council). The main economic activity of the locality is agriculture and small business such as selling of corn beer, food processing etc. About 80% of the women in this locality are involved in agriculture.

## **1.2 Statement of the Problem**

In Ngendzen Mbam village, rural women represent approximately 43 per cent of the agricultural labour force. The income they generate from natural resources and agricultural activities goes a long way to improve on their livelihoods and that of their families. However, women have a greater potential to contribute to food security and livelihoods than they do presently. Their contributions are probably constraint by inequalities in access to and control over crucial resources and inputs such as land, finance, agricultural inputs, modern agricultural techniques of cultivation and technology marketing as well as training and extension services which characterized most rural areas in developing countries .Furthermore, the participation of women in decision making which has a bearing on improving their contribution to food security and livelihoods is often absent. Unequal access to inputs reduces yields and hinders agricultural productivity, which negatively affects the economy & food security at the local and national level. Ensuring rural women's access to productive agricultural resources empowers women and contributes to decreasing world hunger and poverty. In a similar manner, in most areas just as in Ndendzen Mbam the absence of industries negates optimal contributions of women Thus, it is important that their contributions be realized and up scaled.

## **1.3 Objective of the study**

### **1.3.1 Main objective**

To examine the agricultural contribution of the rural women to livelihood and food security through agriculture in Ngendzen Mbam village of Nkum Sub-Division of Cameroon

### **1.3.2 Specific objective**

- To examine the various ways through which rural woman contribute to livelihood and food security through agriculture.
- To assess the socioeconomic implication of the contribution of women to food security and livelihood in the Ngendzen Mbam village of Nkum Sub-Division of Cameroon

- To examine the barriers to the effective contribution of women to food security and livelihood in Ngendzen Mbam village of Nkum Sub-Division of Cameroon

#### **1.4 Research questions**

In view of the aim of this paper, the following research questions have been coined.

1. What are the various ways through which women contribute to livelihoods and food security in Ngendzen Mbam village?
2. Are there any socioeconomic implications of the contribution of women to livelihood and food security through agriculture in the Ngendzen Mbam village?
3. Do rural women in Ngendzen Mbam face any challenges in the domain of agriculture that affect their contributions to livelihood and food security?

#### **1.5 Significance of the study**

This research will help the women of this locality to take measures to address the challenges they face in the agricultural sector and will help them to diversify their income generating activities to ensure a sustainable livelihood. This study will help the local council (Nkum rural council) to support the women of this locality with agricultural inputs such as fertilizer, improved seedlings.

This awareness will enable the women of Ngendzen Mbam to be integrated into the 2<sup>nd</sup> generation agriculture agenda of the Cameroon government. This study will equally help the women to form a producer cooperative so that they can bring their farm products together to sell to consumers at good prices.

#### **1.6 Organization of the study**

This study is organized in five chapters. Chapter 1 comprises of the background of the study, the statement of the problem, objectives of the study, research questions, significance of the study organization of the study and definition of key terms. Chapter two of the study is centered on literature review, theoretical framework, identification of gaps in literature. In chapter three research methods, study design, analytical approach, and validation of the results are the focus of this chapter. Furthermore, data analysis and presentation, implication of results and limitation of



the study make up chapter five, while summary of the findings, conclusion, recommendation, and suggested areas for further research make up chapter six.

## **1.7 Definition of key Terms**

Key terms here include,

### **Livelihood:**

According to Lasse (2001), a livelihood comprises the capabilities, assets (stores, resources, claims, and access) and activities required for a means of living.

A Livelihood comprises the capabilities, assets (stores, resources, claims, and access) and activities required for a means of living (Chambers and Conway, 1991,)

### **Food security:**

In the World Food Summit of 1996 the state in which all people at all times have access to sufficient, safe, nutritious food to maintain a healthy and active life was considered as food security.

According to the United States Agency for International Development(USAID, 1992) “When all people, at all times, have physical and economic access to sufficient, safe, and nutritious food to meet their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life.”

### **Rural Area:**

A rural area is an open swath of land that has few homes or other buildings, and not very many people. A rural areas population density is very low. Many people live in a city, or urban area. Their homes and businesses are located very close to one another.

### **Agriculture:**

The science or practice of farming, including cultivation of the soil for the growing of crops and the rearing of animals to provide food, wool, and other products

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **2.0 LITREATURE REVIEW AND CONCEPTUAL FRAME WORK**

Chapter one was centered on the introduction, which has examined the contributions of rural women from a global perspective to the national and study area level .we also have the statement of the problem and research questions which the thesis shall answer, including definition of key terms. Literature will be reviewed under this themes food security, threat about food security, livelihood, linkages between livelihood and food security. Lastly, conceptual framework on livelihood and food security will be examined

#### **2.1 Food Security**

According to (FAO, 2005) About 850 million people in the world are undernourished - a number that has hardly changed since the 1990-92 base period for the World Food Summit and Millennium Development Goal commitments on reducing hunger by half in 2015. Particular concern is hunger hotspots, marked by the widespread persistence and prevalence of food insecurity, especially in protracted crises. As of May 2006, 39 countries in the world were experiencing serious food emergencies and required external assistance for dealing with critical food insecurity: 25 in Africa, 11 in Asia and Near East, 2 in Latin America and 1 in Europe

At the World Food Summit (1996), food security was recognized as a circumstance where “all people at all times have physical and economic access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food to meet their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life”.

The State of Food Insecurity in the World 2014 presents updated estimates of undernourishment and progress towards the Millennium Development Goal (MDG) and World Food Summit (WFS) hunger targets. A stock-taking of where we stand on reducing hunger and malnutrition shows that progress in hunger reduction at the global level and in many countries has continued but that substantial additional effort is needed in others.

However, improvements in agricultural productivity are necessary to increase food security; this however, is insufficient to ensure food security. The main problem is perhaps associated with lack of economic, social, and physical access to food, and insufficient nutrition at national and household levels (Brown *et al.*, 2006). Notwithstanding, Patel’s position is reminiscent of Brown *et al.*’s arguments that, food crisis is not any kind of partial crisis, but rather a crisis of the entire economic and social model.

However, Patel (2009) argued that the processes in each continent, in each country, are very different. In developing countries in South-east Asia, rural women and men play different roles in ensuring food security for their households and communities. But customary rules and practices often have restrictive effects for women, which limit their access to important resources such as land and credit, and affect household food security and nutrition (World Bank 2012). Similarly, Abu-Ghaida and Klasen (2004) argued that the limitation of women access to education and employment opportunities restricts their economic autonomy and weakens bargaining position within the family. This vulnerable situation of women, thus, translates into little or no voice in household decisions and the outcome is food and nutrition insecurity.

According to Brown *et al.* (2006), food security is mainly built on three pillars: food availability, food access, and food utilization. Across the world, rural women playing very important roles in attaining each of these pillars of food security; however, their roles are generally unrecognized and controlled by restricting their access to resources, services, and employment opportunities (FAO, 2014).

In the case of Bangladesh, in spite of having a steady progress in the expansion of food production, food insecurity is still a major problem mainly because of the limited purchasing power and of access to food. In Bangladesh, women are socially and economically less privileged than men did, thus, the condition of food security is worse for them (Kashem and Faroque, 2011).

In sub-Saharan Africa, agriculture remains the backbone of most economies. The management of agriculture is therefore critical in determining the attainment of sustainable futures for a number of sectors in the region. These include the attainment of food security, the exploitation, and use of natural resources, environmental pollution, adaptation to climate change, biodiversity management and other aspects of sustainable development

In Cameroon in general and Ngendzen Mbam in particular women constitute about 52% of the population and their Contribution to the country's agricultural and economic development is unavoidable. Because farming was initially presented as a male occupation for some speculations such as cash crops, many societies could not easily understand and accept that women could own and manage large parcels of cash crop lands or create their own plantations.

Most societies attributed only the food crop management roles to women while devoting the speculation in cash crop production to men. This could be because, before 1990s cash crops were sold at high prices yielding high incomes to men who controlled them. However, with the

recent decline in the price trends of cash crops, the fight for food security and the evolution of the international food policies, women now do a large proportion of the agricultural work on food crop farms.

The undisputable place of women in the agricultural production system and food security is further reinforced by the rapid social and economic changes which have affected the traditional pattern of gender roles. For instance, there is increasing awareness of women's role in increasing and sustaining food production, and in spite of their increased role in food production, little has been done to eliminate the constraints they experience as food producers and providers. These constraints include the access and control of arable land and are due to traditions, customs, and the inexistence of appropriate legislations to protect women.

Policy makers have paid little attention to women and the roles they play in rural society, despite their predominance in agricultural production. By discounting their contributions, many agricultural development policies and programs designed to alleviate impoverishment actually are making the problem even worse.

Although most women are willing to create their own plantations, they are frustrated because they do not have equal rights as men to land access and control. Agriculture in 2008, contributed more than 41% of the GDP and presently employs more than 70% of the country's population (Genesis *et. al.*, 2010).

In Cameroon Food security is presently being undermined by a number of challenges such as rapidly growing demand and changes in consumption patterns, competition for agricultural lands for other uses, the effects of global environmental change, serious degradation of agricultural soil, and erosion of the genetic base of agricultural biodiversity, water scarcity, poor land reform policies, poor governance, and others.

The 2007–2008 world food crises tested the resilience of the global food system and revealed deficiencies in its capacity to efficiently adjust to and absorb shocks that show many signs of growing in the future (Genesis *et. al.*, 2010). The Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO) suggest that processing food may improve its digestibility and extend its availability, thus stabilizing supplies and increasing food security at the household and national level

In the case of Ngendzen Mbam the socio-economic impact of the contribution of women to food security and livelihood is unquestionable, in spite of having a steady progress in the expansion of

food production, food insecurity is still a major problem mainly because of the limited purchasing power caused by low income and access to food, inequalities in access to and control over crucial resources and inputs such as land, labor, fertilizer and formal finance, agricultural inputs and technology such as improved seedlings, training and extension, and marketing services. In Ngendzen Mbam, women are socially and economically less privileged than men, thus the condition of food security is worse for them

### **2.1.2 Threat about food security**

FAO (2006) identified poverty as the major driver of food insecurity- not food availability and food security at household level is connected with poverty. Kashem and Faroque (2011) claimed that poverty and food insecurity problems in Bangladesh are massive. About half of the population live below the poverty line, thus, lacks the resources to get adequate food.

Similarly, Uraguchi (2010) brings up the role of poverty within the food security debate. Uraguchi argued that women in Bangladesh are vulnerable to poverty and food insecurity. Though the women of Bangladesh represent a large income group in rural households, it is however also women who fall below the poverty line and primarily bear the burden of household food provision (Uraguchi, 2010).

Fuster *et al.* (2008) have a clear focus on the relation between gender and food security. As women in Cameroon at large and Ngendzen Mbam in particular always are less privileged than men, they face significant difficulties in occupying economic assets, generating income and household decision-making. These conditions eventually restrict their access to food. Challenging the limitations that women are confronted with and enlarging their access to opportunities, are two essential components in the fight against hunger and food insecurity.

However, removal of these limitations needs more than good will to improve the condition of women. Empowerment can play a crucial role for women in decision making, at every sphere of social life, including the household, local communities and national level, and can serve as the basis for a sustainable strategy for reducing food insecurity (FAO, 2014).

It is observed in the case of Cameroon in general and NgendzenMbam in particular, that rural credit projects, such as microcredit, good land policies and improved market services can be considered as an important tool to raise the income of the rural women, which leads to advanced food security and an improved household livelihood.

### 2.1.3 Livelihood

A livelihood comprises the capabilities, assets (stores, resources, claims and access) and activities required for a means of living (Lasse,2001).The term “livelihood” is used rather than “job” or even “source of income”.

Firstly, most rural people work in agriculture as farmers or farm workers or get non-farm or off-farm job opportunities only seasonally and often part time. Second, individuals and households create a living from various sources such as production farming, local craftwork, small-scale industries, own labour, trading, transfers grants and remittances. This last form of entitlement often forms the backbone of rural people’s livelihood.

Secondly, individuals and households create a living from various sources: production (farming, local craftwork, small-scale industries), own labour, trading, transfers (grants and remittances); this last form of entitlement often forms the backbone of rural people’s livelihood in South Africa, especially through old-age pensions (Anseeuwet *al.*, 2001; Perret, 2003). In 1998, the government produced the Poverty and Inequality Report (PIR). This questioned whether the macro -economic framework would actually deliver poverty eradication, and suggested a variety of ways to improve well-being through agriculture, employment creation and land reform. Such report illustrates the two strands of thinking that have dominated the debate about land reform and the restructuring of post-apartheid South Africa’s rural economy, at least until 2000: (1) land restitution and redistribution will be conducive to poverty alleviation, and (2) support to smallholder agriculture is an effective mechanism for creating and enhancing rural livelihoods.

McIntosh & Vaughan (1996) warned, “Neither of these populist paradigms is likely to generate practical and sustainable approaches to the problem of creating and enhancing livelihoods on a significant scale”. Almost ten years have passed, yet the question remains sharply topical in rural South Africa.

In Sub Saharan Africa, rural people tend to move away from natural resource-based occupations (Ellis, 1998; Bryceson, 2000). Cameroon makes no exception and such trend leads to the diversification of rural livelihood systems. Although 70% of rural households carry out some form of farming activity, only 2.7% of rural households in South Africa are relying primarily on this source of income (Forgeyet *al.*, 2000).

Actually, livelihood diversification appears to be a strategy (made by necessity or choice; (Ellis, 2000) out of poverty, and towards more resilience and sustainability. According to (Ellis, 2000), livelihood diversification is more than activity and income diversification. It includes property right, social and kinship networks, and access to institutional support.

Livelihood diversification is the process by which rural families construct a diverse portfolio of activities and social support capabilities in order to survive and to improve standards of living. “Livelihood diversification is a pervasive and enduring characteristic of rural survival, reflecting the continuing vulnerability of rural livelihoods. The task of policy is to facilitate rather than inhibit diversity. Diverse livelihood systems are less vulnerable than undiversified ones.” The present report will define, describe, and analyze the diverse livelihood systems that have developed in the study areas. According to (Ellis, 1998) Livelihood systems may include

- farming activities and income;
- Non-farming activities and sources of income (e.g. gathering from the wild and local trade, food processing, local services –traditional healing, repairs.-, handcrafting)
- Off-farm activities (e.g. permanent, seasonal or casual external jobs and wages, self-employment in trade, small scale industry and businesses);
- Non-income related activities (i.e. housekeeping, child / relative caring, fetching firewood and water for domestic use);
- Non-activity related sources of income (i.e. remittances, welfare).

In recent years, a broad and comprehensive definition of the concept of livelihood has been developed, in connection to sustainability. Chambers and Conway (1992) stated that a livelihood comprises the capabilities, assets (including tangible and intangible resources) and activities required for a means of living. “A livelihood is sustainable when it can cope with and recover from stresses and shocks, and maintain or enhance its capabilities and assets both now and in the future, while not undermining the natural resource base” Chambers and Conway, (1992).

Cameroon is a highly urbanized country by sub-Saharan standards (World Bank, 2002); these policies had negative effects on the huge urban population. It is worth noting that the country has seen its urbanization level increase from 35.7per cent in 1985 to 56.1 per cent in 2010 (UN-HABITAT, 2011).

The urban population had to develop livelihood strategies to enable them deal with changing times and economic pressure. The notion of ‘Livelihood strategies’ refers to “the mix of individual and household strategies, developed over a given period of time that seeks to mobilize available resources and opportunities” (Grown et al 1989). The informal economy has been a platform where several of these strategies are displayed.

In fact, it is a vital source of income generation. The “informal economy is one way of pointing to how people devised their own means of survival and sometimes of prosperity in the urban markets that spring up spontaneously to meet their needs” (Hart k,2010). As with other developing countries, the informal economy in Cameroon is very vibrant. According to Cameroon’s (National Institute of Statistics, 2011). The informal economy is now the greatest provider of jobs, since about 90.4 per cent of workers operate there.

#### **2.1.4 Linkages between food security and livelihood**

The 1996 World Food Summit reached near-consensus on the main features of the global problem of food security. Food security is not just an adequate supply of food, but also means of food availability, stability of supplies and access and consumption by all. ‘Food security is achieved when all people, at all times, have physical and economic access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food to meet their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life’.

The right to food is a basic human right, mandated in international law and recognized by all countries. Food availability is necessary for food security, but it is not sufficient. Food-insecure households may live where there is enough food, but lack income or ‘entitlements’ (production, trade, labor or transfer-based) to get it. Improving entitlements means expanding economic opportunity and making markets work better for the poor. Food-insecure people may live in food-secure households. Ensuring all family members have an adequate diet means overcoming gender or age discrimination.

The livelihoods approach, which considers people’s assets and constraints, is a valuable tool for finding ways to improve food access of poor people. It also helps an understanding of transitory food insecurity and vulnerability e.g. how changes in vulnerability (HIV infection, drought), institutions (market reforms) or endowments (soil degradation) affect livelihood outcomes (food security).



The view of assets and livelihood strategies (including non-farm strategies) is a valuable way of moving thinking about food security away from an agriculture-only focus. In fact, the close relationship between food security and livelihood is a consistent theme (explicit or implied) in definitions of food security, as noted by Maxwell (1991), “food security will be achieved when equitable growth ensures that the poor and vulnerable have sustainable livelihoods.”

In practice, livelihood security and food security are linked in a bi-direction relationship. Food production constitutes one of the most basic livelihood activities, and can be a critical source of food access, particularly for rural households. The household’s ability to purchase food in the marketplace is another critical determinant of food access, which in turn depends on the household’s ability to generate income.

Research indicates, moreover, that many of the food insecure in developing countries, even among the so-called subsistence farming groups, are not purchasers of food, reinforcing the critical role of income generation in determining food access, livelihood, and food security conceptual framework (2013)

It is thus not surprising that research further indicates that the quantity and quality of food consumed is positively associated with household income and food production. As USAID (1995) has noted, “the primary cause of food insecurity is the continued lack of economic opportunity to produce adequate amounts of food or to obtain sufficient income to purchase adequate amounts of food.” As incomes rise, poor households spend more on food (although proportionately less than the increase in income), purchase a more diverse variety of foods, and shift to higher quality foods with greater nutritional value (Behrman, 1995; Diskin, 1995; Kennedy, 1989).

A household’s livelihood activities, moreover, enable it to manage risks, cope with stresses and shocks, and build or replenish assets, all-important determinants of household food security. The household’s livelihood security in turn is affected by its food security. Households with poor food access and/or poor food utilization tend to suffer more from illness or other physical debilitations thereby impairing their labor productivity and/or their ability to engage in livelihood activities.

Many donors have adopted poverty eradication as their overarching theme. The World Development Report 2000/2001 presents a poverty-reduction strategy focusing on three areas (promoting opportunity, facilitating empowerment and enhancing security). Each of these can be seen as supporting improved livelihoods and food security.

## **2.2 Conceptual Frame Work**

This section presents a conceptual framework for integrating sustainable, market-driven livelihood strengthening into food security interventions. The purpose of the conceptual framework is to provide a common frame of reference for clarifying and communicating important concepts related to livelihoods and food security, and their relationship with each other

### **2.2.1 Important concepts in food security**

#### **2.2.2 Food Availability**

Availability refers to the physical existence of food, whether from the household's own farm or garden production or from domestic or international markets. It is defined by According to the United States Agency for International Development USAID (1992) as when: "Sufficient quantities of appropriate, necessary types of food from domestic production, commercial imports, commercial aid programs, or food stocks are consistently available to individuals or within their reach."

Food availability is a function of domestic food stocks, commercial food imports, and food aid, in addition to the underlying determinants of these factors, including macro-economic trends and events, government policies, the functioning of international and domestic markets, and the state of the physical economic infrastructure

#### **2.2.3 Food Access**

Access refers to the resources individuals have at hand to obtain appropriate foods for a nutritious diet. It is defined by USAID (1992) as when: "Individuals have adequate assets or incomes to produce, purchase, or barter to obtain levels of appropriate foods needed to maintain consumption of an adequate diet/nutrition level."

Individuals obtain food through (1) own food production and consumption (including wild food gathering), (2) purchases in the market place, or (3) in-kind transfers or loans from relatives, members of the community, the government, or foreign donors private citizens. An individual's ability to access food from these sources is in turn determined by their asset endowment and by the social, economic, policy, physical, and natural environments, which define the set of productive activities they can pursue in meeting their income and food security objectives. Food

access is also influenced by the aggregate availability of food through the latter's impact on supply and, therefore, prices in the market (Langworthy, *et al.* 2003).

#### **2.2.4 Food Utilization**

Utilization refers broadly to the actual food that is consumed by individuals; how it is stored, prepared, and consumed; and what nutritional benefits the individual derives from consumption. It is defined by USAID (1992) as when: "Food is properly used; proper food processing and storage techniques are used; adequate knowledge of nutrition and child care techniques exist and are applied; and adequate health and sanitation services exist."

Food utilization has both a socio-economic and biological dimension. The socio-economic dimension refers to decisions related to what food is consumed and how the food is allocated within the household. Both decisions in turn are influenced by intra-household dynamics and social customs/taboos. Depending on these factors, individuals within households may have access to food but still suffer from food insecurity. Women and children are particularly more likely to suffer from food insecurity because of their relatively limited control over assets and relatively weak intra-household bargaining power. (This is addressed in further depth below.) The biological dimension of food utilization refers to the ability of the human body to take food and transform it into energy for daily activities or to store it for future energy needs. Food utilization interacts in complex ways with diet, nutritional status, the functioning of the immune system, and health and hygiene practices. In this context, food utilization requires a healthy diet, a healthy body, and a healthy physical environment, including safe drinking water and hygienic sanitary conditions. It also requires a practical understanding of proper health care, food storage, food preparation, and feeding practices, along with the associated behaviors

While important for its own sake as a determinant of human well-being, food utilization also has feedback effects through its impact on the health and nutrition on individuals and thus on their labor productivity and income-earning potential.

#### **2.2.5 Food Stability**

Food stability is the fourth component of food security that cuts across the other three. Stability refers to the temporal dimension, or period, of food security as implied by the wording

“at all times” in the USAID definition of food security. Stability is defined as, “The ability to access and utilize appropriate levels of nutritious food over time.”

An important distinction is made between chronic food insecurity and transitory food insecurity (World Bank, 1986). Chronic food insecurity is the long-term or persistent inability to meet food needs, whereas transitory food insecurity is a short-term food deficit. Transitory food security is sometimes divided into two sub-categories: cyclical food security and temporary food insecurity. Cyclical (or seasonal) food insecurity occurs on a routine or predictable basis, for example, the ‘lean season’ that occurs in the period just before the harvest. Temporary food insecurity occurs for a limited time due to unforeseen and unpredictable circumstances.

In practice, transitory food insecurity and chronic food insecurity are closely linked. Successive bouts of transitory food insecurity may increase individuals’ vulnerability to chronic food insecurity if it leads them to liquidate their productive assets to stabilize food consumption.

#### **2.2.6 Intra-Household Issues with Food Security**

The definition of food security adopted here applies to the individual. This is true as well of most other definitions of food security. Only rarely do definitions of food security refer to the household, whether as an aggregation of individuals whose food needs must be met or as a unit. In contrast, livelihoods, and their vulnerability contexts, are typically defined at the household level. To facilitate integration of the concepts, this framework adopts a household-level perspective. While this approach is taken to facilitate greater conceptual simplicity and clarity, it does present some conceptual challenges.

In particular, moving from the individual level to the household level requires making a set of simplifying assumptions about the intra-household structure and dynamics (e.g. preferences, incentives, or power) to identify the types of activities, relationships, and processes that contribute to the household’s improved food security. Under these assumptions, households are portrayed as homogenous and independent units that act cooperatively to maximize a shared utility function (Behrman and Anil, 1990).

In practice, however, households are heterogeneous units nested solidly within dense social networks and whose members often possess different preferences, incentives, and power. Or, as Maxwell et al (1992) describe them; households are, “internally diverse organizations, embedded

within and shaped by wider structures.” This has a couple important implications for our conceptual framework.

First, different household members have different access to and control over assets whether due to specific intra-household power dynamics, more general social norms, or other factors. This in turn affects their ability to allocate labour and non-labour resources to generate income or produce food and thereby secure their access to food. Given that diversifying income is one of the main strategies to reduce the risk of food insecurity, operationalizing a household conception of food security requires an understanding of intra-household dynamics related to assets ownership/control and income-generation and how they affect different household members (Gary, 2011).

Second, there often exist intra-household disparities related to the allocation and control of income and food. The effect of income on the food security of household members depends on who controls the income. Maternal income effects on food security and family health (particularly for the women and children in the household) can be significantly larger than paternal income effects. Similarly, the effects of stresses or shocks on the intra-household allocation of food can be different for different household members. In particular, the nutritional burden of increased food insecurity often falls disproportionately on women and girls, although they also appear to benefit disproportionately from improvements in food security (Behrman and Anil, 1990).

Third, intra-household dynamics cannot be divorced from the social context in which the household exists. Social norms create a set of behavioral expectations that powerfully affect intra-household dynamics related to things such as income-generation, food access, and food utilization. Some of these effects are described above, although they are not limited to these. The nature and strength of social norms vary from context to context, although important regional regularities do exist (Kabeer, 1991). Models of individual or household behavior that fail to give due weight to the effect of social norms are undoubtedly miss-specified.

## **2.2.7 Important concepts in livelihood**

### **2.2.7.1 The Household Livelihood Approach**

This section describes an approach for understanding the context in which a household pursues its livelihood. The term livelihood is often used interchangeably with economic strengthening and refers generally to economic production, employment, and household income. A more holistic understanding of livelihood, however, incorporates this general definition within

a broader context of economic development, reduced vulnerability, and environmental sustainability. The conceptual framework adopts this expanded definition, often referred to as the sustainable livelihood approach, which is defined as follows:

A Livelihood comprises the capabilities, assets (stores, resources, claims, and access) and activities required for a means of living: a livelihood is sustainable which can cope with and recover from stress and shocks, maintain or enhance its capabilities and assets, and provide sustainable livelihood opportunities for the next generation; and which contributes net benefits to other livelihoods at the local and global levels in the short and long term” (Chambers and Conway, 1991).

The primary focus of the sustainable livelihood approach is on the household, specifically the ways in which the household uses its assets to undertake a range of livelihood activities and to ensure its livelihood security, defined as, “adequate and sustainable access to income and other resources to enable households to meet basic needs,” (Frankenberger, 1996). Household basic needs cover a spectrum of food, education, health, and personal needs. It is important to note that in this framework, food security is but one of many household needs and is thus but one of a range of factors households consider in determining how they balance competing interests to subsist in both the short and longer terms.

Notwithstanding, food still constitutes a critical basic need and looms large in any conceptualization of household livelihood. In fact, the close relationship between food security and livelihood is a consistent theme (explicit or implied) in definitions of food security, as noted by Maxwell (1991), “food security will be achieved when equitable growth ensures that the poor and vulnerable have sustainable livelihoods.”

In practice, livelihood security and food security are linked in a bi-direction relationship. Food production constitutes one of the most basic livelihood activities, and can be a critical source of food access, particularly for rural households. The household’s ability to purchase food in the marketplace is another critical determinant of food access, which in turn depends on the household’s ability to generate income. Research indicates, moreover, that many of the food insecure in developing countries, even among so-called subsistence farming groups, are net purchasers of food, reinforcing the critical role of income generation in determining food access (Frankenberger, 1996).

It is thus not surprising that research further indicates that the quantity and quality of food consumed is positively associated with household income and food production. As USAID (1995) has noted, “the primary cause of food insecurity is the continued lack of economic opportunity to produce adequate amounts of food or to obtain sufficient income to purchase adequate amounts of food.” As incomes rise, poor households spend more on food (although proportionately less than the increase in income), purchase a more diverse variety of foods, and shift to higher quality foods with greater nutritional value (Behrman, 1995; Diskin, 1995; Kennedy, 1989). A household’s livelihood activities, moreover, enable it to manage risks, cope with stresses and shocks, and build or replenish assets, all-important determinants of household food security.

The household’s livelihood security in turn is affected by its food security. Households with poor food access and/or poor food utilization tend to suffer more from illness or other physical debilitations thereby impairing their labor productivity and/or their ability to engage in livelihood activities.

With the above in mind, the household livelihood approach has two primary components:

1. A livelihood comprises the assets and activities required for a means of living.
2. A livelihood is sustainable when it can cope with and recover from shocks and stresses, and maintain or enhance its assets now and in the future.

#### **2.2.7.2 Livelihood Assets**

Assets represent the stock of resources on which households can draw to generate income, meet their basic needs, manage risk, and cope with stresses and shocks. A larger asset base generally translates into greater livelihood opportunities and greater livelihood security. Six types of assets are generally recognized: human, physical, social, financial, natural, and political (Department for International Development, 1999).

##### **1. Human assets**

Refers to the livelihood knowledge and capabilities possessed by individuals, in addition to the intangible character traits (ambition, drive, persistence, etc.) and health status that determine how effectively individuals apply their knowledge and capabilities to livelihood activities. Critical determinants of human assets include

individuals' access to education and training, health services, sanitation, clean water, and adequate amounts of nutritious food.

## **2. Physical assets**

Include the physical economic infrastructure along with the household's productive and other assets that enable the household to pursue its livelihood. The physical economic infrastructure includes, among other things, roads, rail networks, communication facilities, ports, etc. The household's productive assets include land, machinery, tools, and draft animals. Other household physical assets include moveable assets that can be converted into cash or exchanged for goods or services, such as jewelry, furniture, electronics, appliances, or animals.

## **3. Social assets**

Are commonly referred to Social capital is generated by the household's connections in a social network, and the trust, reciprocity, and resource- referred to as social capital. Sharing qualities of those connections. It can be activated by households to gain social support or social advantage, or by communities to facilitate organization and collective action. Social capital is a resource in which households can invest with the expectation of a future flow of benefits. Social capital is commonly viewed as a positive resource, but can become negative when used to exclude outsiders, impose social sanctions, or advance special interests that are detrimental to the greater good.

## **4. Financial assets**

Are financial resources that are available to the household and include savings, credit, insurance, remittances, pensions, cash transfers from social welfare programs, and assets held as a store of value, such as livestock or jewelry? To act as a store of value, assets must be able to be saved and retrieved later and have a predictable value when liquidated or exchanged.

## **5. Natural assets**

Include the physical environment and the natural resource stocks that can be controlled by the household and used to expand or enhance livelihoods. Natural assets include land, water, wildlife, biodiversity, and forests.

## **6. Political assets**



Are defined as the ability to use political power or economic positions, which in turn affects livelihood options and outcomes (Baumann and Sinha, 2001). They refer to the legitimate distribution of rights and power, and how illicit operations of power can frustrate efforts of households to access and defend entitlements. Illicit use of political power by state officials and community elites can divert significant resources away from vulnerable households (Gary, 2011).

### **2.3.7.3 Livelihood Activities**

Household livelihood activities fall generally under one of three categories: income generating activities, risk reduction strategies, and loss management strategies. Income generating activities include wage labor and self-employment. Wage labor includes local or migratory labor, formal employment or casual (day) labor, and payment in cash or in kind. Income generating activities are also distinguished by whether they are formal or informal and legal or illegal. Self-employment activities in turn can be grouped into five categories: (1) agricultural production, including crops, aquaculture, and livestock; (2) agro or other processing; (3) small-scale manufacturing; (4) service provision; and (5) trading.

A household's choice of livelihood activities reflect factors such as the diversity of its asset base; geographic location; the economic, political, and natural environment; and social/cultural traditions. For household members, livelihood activities also depend on their gender, age, and health status.

It should be emphasized that household income generating activities are dynamic. Vulnerable households often engage in a continuously changing portfolio of income generating activities to spread risk or take advantage of earning opportunities. Income generating activities in a single rural household might, for example, include food crop production, cash crop cultivation, day labor provided periodically by a household member, retail marketing of fruits and vegetables at the local market and remittances from an adult member of the household working in the city (Department for International Development, 1999).

### **The Vulnerability Context**

How well a household can draw on its assets to pursue its diverse livelihood activities depends on its vulnerability context. Vulnerability refers to a household's susceptibility to a future

acute loss and its capacity to maintain its livelihood and food security over time. Vulnerability is defined as “the household’s susceptibility to shocks and stresses that affect the household’s ability to generate sufficient income to earn a livelihood and achieve a threshold level of nutritional requirements for a healthy life both now and in the future.” Vulnerability is a day-to-day reality for many households (Behrman and Anil, 1990).

The household’s vulnerability context is influenced by factors both outside of and within its control. Those outside its control include stresses and shocks as well as external structures and processes. Structures and processes include factors like the public and private sectors, civil society, laws, policies, culture, and social institutions that affect how households accumulate and utilize assets.

Stresses are long-term trends or recurring events that put ongoing pressure on the household’s livelihood and food security. In contrast, shocks are unanticipated (and often dramatic) adverse events that undermine the household’s livelihood and food security. Stresses and shocks emanate from a variety of sources in the economic, natural, health, political, and social environments. HIV/AIDS is a distressingly common and particularly severe source of stress and/or shocks. Because of its importance to food security and livelihood (Donahue, 2000).

Three household characteristics determine its vulnerability to shocks and stresses: ‘risk exposure,’ ‘resilience,’ and ‘sensitivity.’ Risk exposure refers to the likelihood of a stress or shock and the magnitude of its consequences. Shocks and stresses often cannot be prevented, and if they occur, can generate adverse impacts on households in both predictable and unpredictable ways. Given the persistence and potential seriousness of such risks, much of a household’s economic activities are aimed at managing them (Chenet *al.*, 1996).

Resilience refers to the household’s capacity to recover from stresses and shocks. Resilient households tend to absorb stresses and shocks without serious modifications reverting relatively quickly to their previous state after the effects have passed. Sensitivity refers to the magnitude of change set in motion by the stress or shock. The more sensitive the household, the greater the adverse impact of stress or shock on its livelihood and food security.

#### **2.2.7.4 Food First vs Sustainable Livelihood Approach**

One of the central implications of the discussion in this section is that food security cannot be viewed as a unique and objectively defined need at any point in time independent of the

household is other priorities as informed by its risk perceptions and inter-temporal decision framework.

Rather, vulnerable households allocate their assets over time to balance their current food needs with their ability to secure their ongoing livelihood viability and future food needs through a variety of livelihood strategies. This means in turn that successful food security interventions need to address not only issues related to food security but also wider issues related to households' livelihoods and their vulnerability context. Conversely, successful livelihood interventions need to address how food security concerns influence household livelihood strategies.

To demonstrate the practical importance of this point, Davies (1993) contrasts what she calls the 'food first' approach to food security to the sustainable livelihood approach described in this document. Taking one or the other approach has significant implications for how we think about food security and food security interventions.

### **Intra-Household Issues with Livelihoods**

It is important to note that, in practice, stresses and shocks may affect different household members differently. Livelihood decisions within the household reflect a process of conflict and bargaining between household members often across generations and gender with different perspectives, interests, and power. The incentives for household members to engage in income generating activities that maximize household income are weakened when the benefits of higher income are not shared.

The advent of stresses and shocks may also serve to create inequities within the household or to worsen existing ones in terms of intra-household resource allocation. Socially marginalized groups including women, children, disabled, and the elderly tend to be most sensitive to stresses and shocks owing to their relatively limited control over assets. For this reason, they also tend to be in the greatest danger of falling into chronic food insecurity (Behrman and Anil, 1990).

### **2.3 Gaps Identified in the Literature and How the Work Shall Attempt to fill them**

From the literature reviewed above this study has notice that lack of economic ,social, and physical access to food and insufficient nutrition at household and national levels is linked to poverty and livelihood insecurity .this stud will attempt to fill the gap by looking t ways of diversifying livelihood strategies by encouraging women and men like to enter into other income generating

activities such as trade and food processing, local services etc so as to generate income to purchase food products and ensure food security and improved livelihood their various households and this will intern led to a national livelihood and food security improvement

Customary rules and practices often have restrictive effects for women and limit their access to important resources such as land, fertilizer, and formal finance, agricultural inputs, which affect their production capacity, and as such, having a negative impact on food security and livelihood .this study will try to fill the gap by providing recommendations to address the present situation Limited access to women's education and employment opportunities restrict their economic autonomy and weaken their bargaining position within the family as such translate to little or no voice on household decision and outcome is food insecurity this study will try to address this problem by coming up with various ways by which women can be empowered to address this problem

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **MATERIALS AND METHODS**

#### **3.1 Description of research site**

Mbam is a small village in kum subdivision of the North West region. Ngendzen Mbam is located in the Nkum Sub-Division, Bui Division of the North West Region. Nkum Sub division. Ngendzen Mbam village is made up of five quarters with five-quarter heads and chiefs. The main economic activity of the locality is agriculture and women concentrate on food crop production and support their husbands with household responsibilities while men in this locality are directly involved in cash crop production. Other income generating activates are selling of palm wine and liquor, corn beer, etc. About 80% of the women in this locality are involved in agriculture. Elderly people considering the fact that most young people in this area have left the villages for greener

pastures dominate the population of this area. The literacy level of the population in this locality is too low. Deplorable conditions of women make them come together as a group (kisso and salama) in order to improve their socio-economic status.

This area has two main seasons, which are the dry and rainy seasons. This community is known for community-based get together in occasions like child naming wedding, condolence visits.

Map of Bui division with the Nkum in yellow and the study area is mbam ngenzen which is located in nkum sub division .



### 3.2 Data collection

Primary and secondary data sources were used in this research. Primary data was obtained through observations and interviews carried out with rural farmers, and with presidents of registered common initiative groups (CIGs) in Ngendzen Mbam. Information collected from the farmers included: demographic data, types and volumes of crops produced, livelihoods of the rural people and the gender aspect of rural farming. Key informants also provided information on agriculture to the environment and marketing of crops by the farmers. Secondary data was obtained from review of textbooks, journals, past reports on contributions of women to livelihood and food security, and published articles relating to this topic. Internet sources were used to obtain data on contributions of rural women to livelihood and food security in other countries, southern African region and around the world.

### **3.3 Study design**

Simple random sampling was used to select farmers and women who were into agriculture and other livelihood activities such as small businesses in Ngendzen Mbam for interviews. Thus, a sample of 45 rural farmers was selected from the target population for study and 45 questionnaires were administered to respondents considering the timeframe and availability of means. Data was collected through questionnaires, interviews, and observations. These data were then analyzed and tabulated.

### **3.4 Analytical approach**

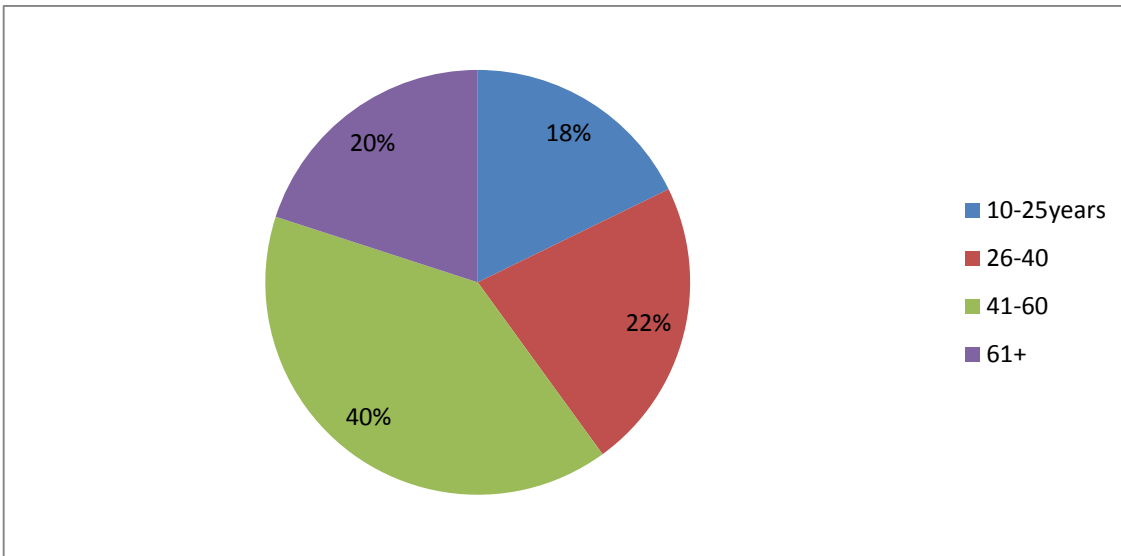
Both descriptive and inferential statistics was performed on the data

### **3.5 Data verification**

The data collected was verified through triangulation and the inclusion, plot testing of questioners of cross reference questions amongst the questions

## **CHAPTER FOUR PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF DATA**

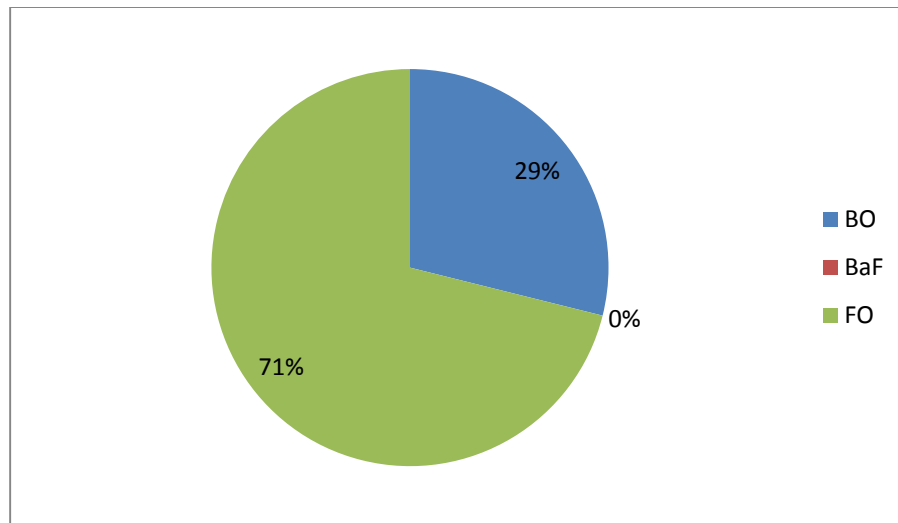
### **4.1 Age distribution of participants in Ngendzen Mbam**



**Fig. 1 Age distribution of participants in Ngendzen Mbam**

Figure 1 revealed that, 18% participants were within the age range of 10-25 years a while 22%, of the participants were within the age range of 26-40 years and 40% of the participants were within the age range of 41-60 making. Whereas 20% of the participants were above 60 years of age

#### 4.2.1 Distribution of farmers as per means of survival in Ngendzen Mbam



**Fig. 2 Distribution of farmers as per means of survival in Ngendzen Mbam**

Figure 2 revealed that, 71% of the farmers depend only on agriculture as a means of survival while 29% are into both agriculture and small scale businesses.

From the answers obtained 71% of the women were only involved in agriculture without doing others small scale businesses because, they felt it could not generate income like agriculture while some of the women considered small scale businesses as time consuming since they spend most of their time in the farm from morning till evening. They believed that doing business would not be possible because they would return from the farm late and considering their household duties of catering and food provision to their families, could not let them get into small scale businesses. To them they can only sell their agricultural products to get other basic family needs such as foodstuff they do not produce like rice and other basic needs for their families.

Twenty nine percent of the farmers (women) were involved in both agriculture and small-scale business. Pointing out the need for livelihood diversification aiming at improving standards of living and escaping from poverty (Ellis, 2000). Most of these women do not own enough land, which could keep them only into agriculture the main problem is perhaps associated with insufficient economic resources to either rent or purchase of land for agriculture, (Brown *et al.*, 2006).

It is worth noting that most of the women, who are into agriculture and small scale businesses, are mostly within the age range of 10-25 years. This age group according to them has enough time

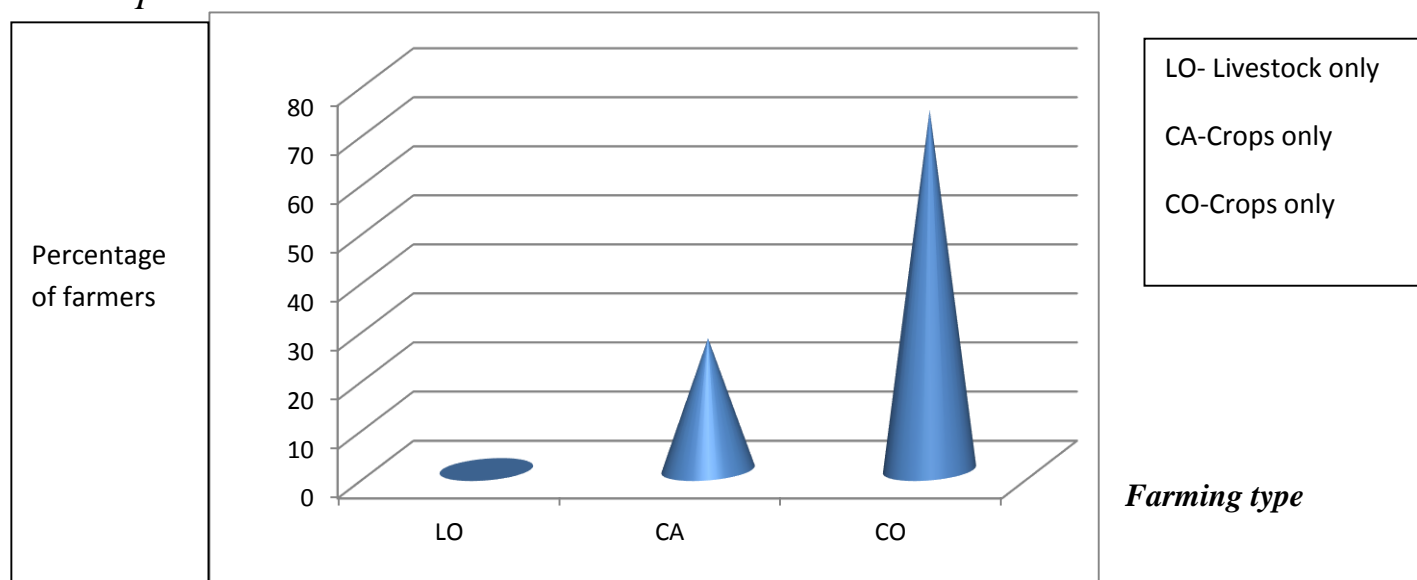


after farm work to do small-scale businesses to support their insufficient food production. Although most women are willing to create their own plantations, they are frustrated because they do not have equal rights as men to land access and control. Agriculture in 2008, contributed more than 41% of the GDP and presently employs more than 70% of the country's population (Genesis *et. al.*, 2010). Which is accounted for by the lack of sufficient land for agriculture considering that most of them are not married and are single mothers. The (World Bank 2012) indicate that, customary rules and practices often have restrictive effects for women, which limit their access to important resources such as land and credit, and affect household food security and nutrition these women are affected by the fact that they cannot own lands because it is forbidden by their customs and traditions

#### 4.3 Distribution of number of farmers against type of agricultural practice in Ngendzen

Mbam

Y



**Fig.3 distribution of number of farmers against type of agricultural practice in Ngendzen**

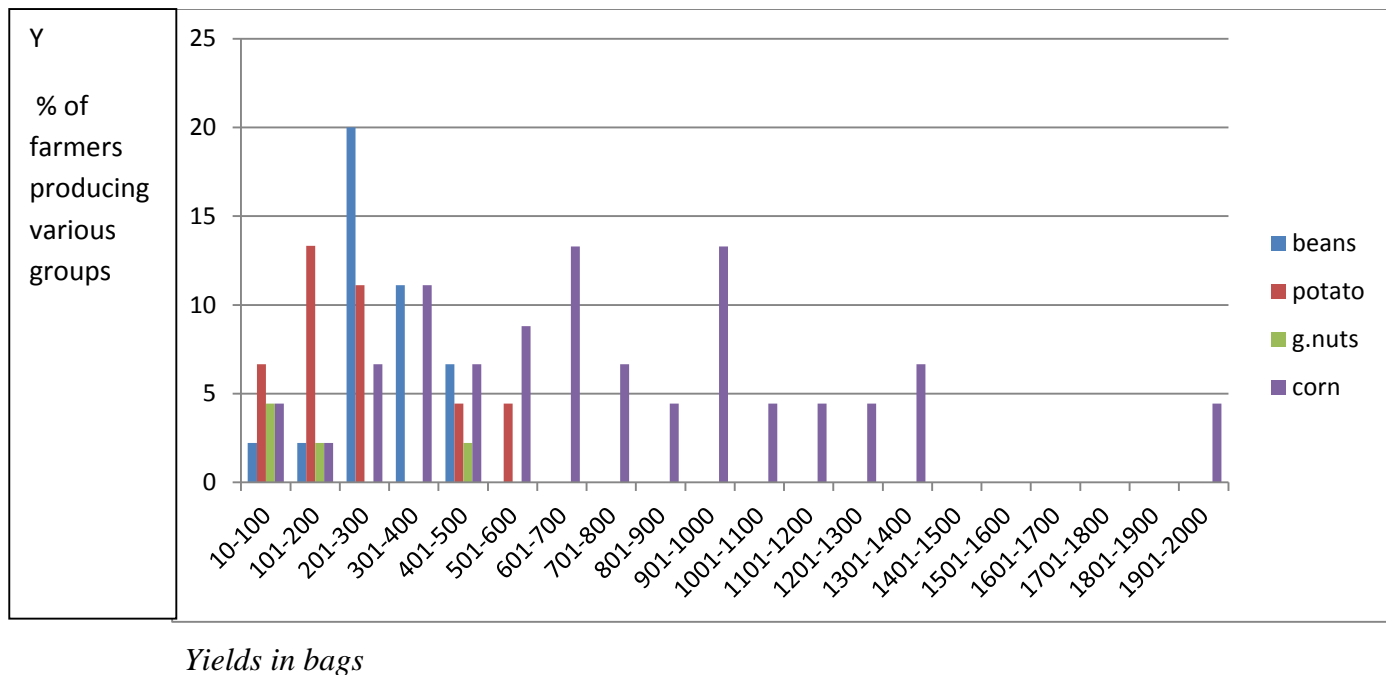
Mbam

Figure 3 revealed that, 73.3%, women who participated in the survey were involved in both livestock and crop cultivation as means of livelihood and source of income. While 26.7% of the farmers rely only on crop production as a means of livelihood and source of income.

From the results, farmers in Ngendzen Mbam participate or do not only take part in crop cultivation only. They also kept animals as a source of livelihood and income as such they had to put some strategies in place to better their standards of living (livelihood diversification) (Ellis, 2000). Seventy three percent of the farmers are of the opinion that keeping of livestock such as goats, sheep, cows etc contributes in one way or the other to their livelihood and food security. Most of these women sell the goats and cows to even renovate their houses, pay for medical bills, pay for education, buy clothing for their children and husbands at times and other farming inputs such as fertilizers, pesticides, and food products they do not produce like rice. FAO (2006) identified poverty as the major driver of food insecurity- not food availability and food security at household level is connected with poverty. According to this women, mixed farming has to an extent solve the problem of shortages of fertilizers since they now used organic manure from these animals to put in their crops though many of them still prefer fertilizers. Furthermore, the keeping of livestock has also provided a source of meat to them and they can use the money for meat purposes to purchase some other family need.

According to 26.6% of the farmers, crop cultivation was the only way they can meet their livelihood needs and food security challenges. Twenty-six percent of these women solely depend on crop production for their livelihood. They sell their products though at cheaper prices to purchase other necessities and to sustain or meet the food needs of their households and relatives living in cities. Some of the women cannot afford the finances needed to undertake mixed farming so they prefer to concentrate on crop production as a means of livelihood and food security to them and their household.

#### 4.4 Distribution of food crops grown by the farmers in Ngendzen Mbam



**Fig. 4 Distribution of food crops grown in Ngendzen Mbam**

Figure 4 revealed that 100% of the farmers cultivated corn and beans. Moreover, 24.4% respondents cultivated potato in addition to corn and beans. From the findings 6.6% farmers cultivated groundnuts in addition to the cultivation of corn, beans and potato.

From findings, all rural women in this area were into corn cultivation giving 100%. According to farmers, corn production had its roots from the first settlers of that area and as such, they had some ancestral attachments to corn production. Findings revealed that, 27.5%. Of farmers, cultivated Potatoes cultivated potatoes in addition to corn and beans. According to the farmers, potatoes were not important to them considering the fact that the harvesting process was very strenuous and old aged. Farmers were not able to do the harvesting, accounting to the low number of farmers involved in potatoes production, this was the same with groundnuts with which only 6.6% of the farmers were into it cultivations. All the farmers affirmed that the above crops had helped them in providing food for their families and provided them with income from the sale of these crops to buy other basic needs and to support their husbands in basic household provisions.

#### 4.1 Percentage of farmers in common initiative groups in Ngendzen Mbam

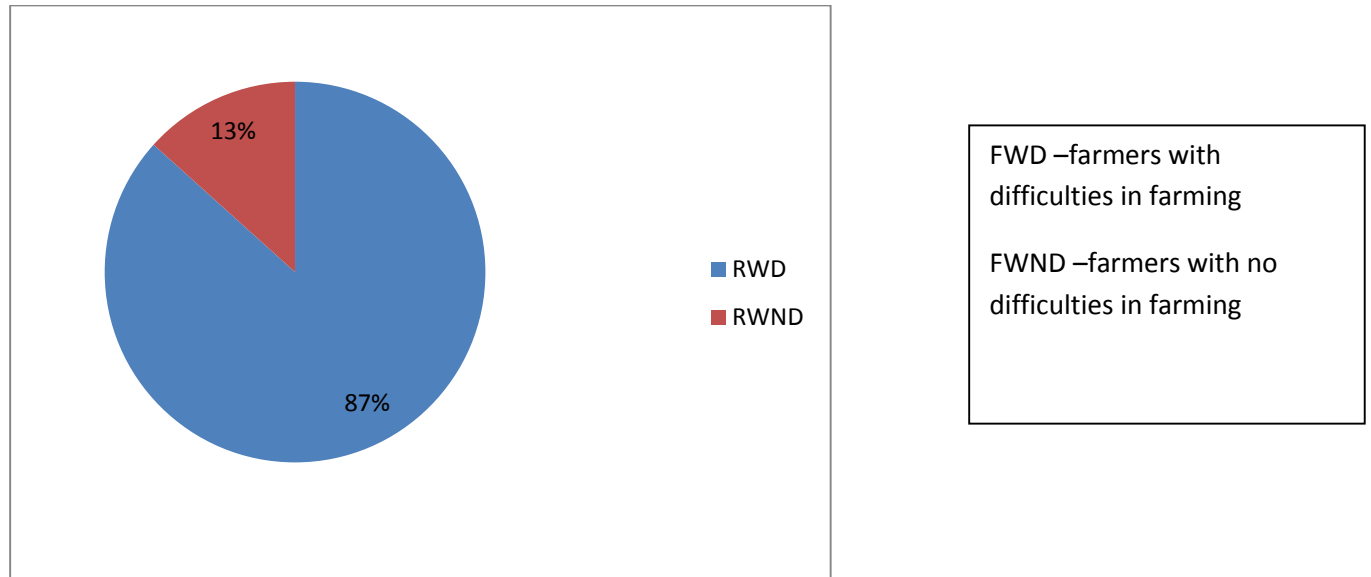
Description	Percentage
Number of respondent belonging to CIG and who benefitted from CIG.	40%
Number of respondents who belonged to CIG but do not benefit from it.	17.5%
Number of respondent who are not in any CIG.	42.5%

Figure 4.1 revealed that, 45% of the farmers belong to CIG and did benefitted from these groups, 17.5% of them did belong to CIG but did not benefit from these groups while 42.5% of the farmers did not belong to any CIG.

There were two registered CIGs, which were Salama and Kisso groups. From results, 40% of farmers belonged to CIGs and benefitted from them. Benefits include subsidies of fertilizers, loans and access to improved maize seedlings. Findings revealed that, 12.5%. Of the farmers did not benefit from the CIGs and did not belong to any of them. Reason being that, to these farmers, they could not pay interest rates on loans offered by these CIGs. Some complained that the presidents of these groups and the executive members personalized things meant for the group as a whole. 47.5%. Of the farmers did not belong to any CIGs and the reason was that they did not have enough finances for weekly contributions. (FAO, 2014) suggest that women Empowerment can play a crucial role for women in decision making, at every sphere of social life, including the household, local communities and national level, and can serve as the basis for a sustainable strategy for reducing food insecurity. Some even said they were not aware of the existence of CIGs to some, CIGs where meant only for the educated women.

Nevertheless, women who belonged and were benefiting from these CIGs were impressed and said it had greatly changed their lives and their social statues, since they could now do petit trading and it made them socialize with their fellow women from other villages as they attended community based get-together in occasions like child naming, weddings and condolence visit.

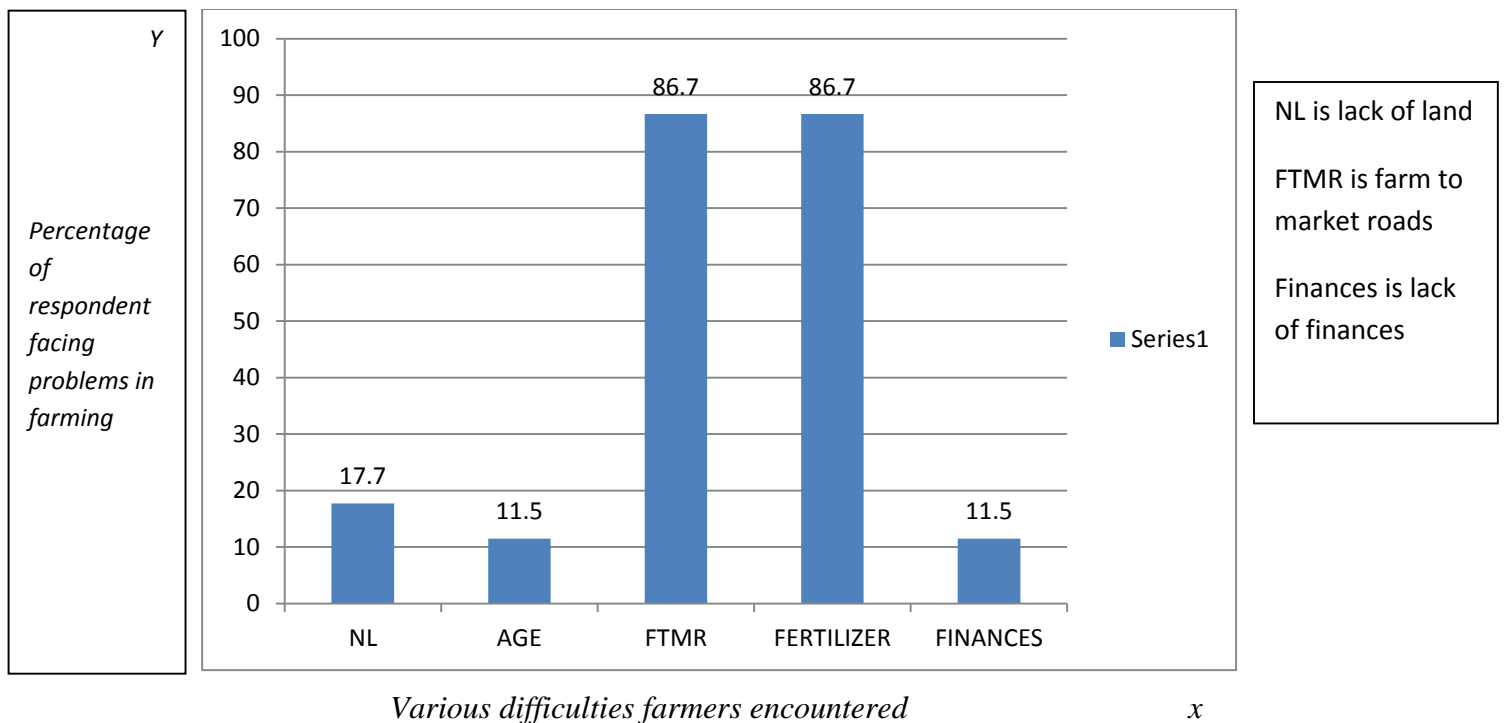
#### 4.5 percentages of farmers with difficulties and those with no difficulties in farming in Ngendzen Mbam



**Fig. 5 percentages farmers with difficulties with those with no difficulties in farming in Ngendzen Mbam**

Figure 5 revealed that , 87% of the total respondents, did faced difficulties in farming, and 13 % of the total respondents did not have any difficulties in farming.

#### 4.6 Various difficulties faced by farmers in Ngendzen Mbam



**Fig. 6 various difficulties faced by farmers in Ngendzen Mbam**

Figure 6 revealed that, 86.7 % farmers facing difficulties in farming did had problems of farm to market road and lack of fertilizer, while 17.7 % of the farmers facing difficulties in farming did had additional of lack of land, 4.4 % of the farmers facing difficulties in farming complained of age while 11.5 % had problems with finances.

Like women in other local areas, women in Ngendzen Mbam also faced many challenges in agriculture 86.7% of farmers, did faced difficulties in farming. They said they faced challenges in the area of fertilizer supplies. All the respondents with problems said despite the fact that some of them belonged to these CIGs and some did not. They had a big problem which was to get fertilizer and on time. They said fertilizers always came late and may be when the period for application had already passed, accounting to low output. Some also said the prices were too high for them to afford.

Some of the respondents also said they faced challenges in the area of farm to market roads. According to them, the road network linking the village to the economic and political capital of the sub division had hindered their production and progress, ranging from fertilizer delivery and marketing of crops. This had accounted for the presence of many intermediaries who bought their

products at a cheaper price from them and sold at a higher price in cities like Douala, Yaoundé, Bamenda, etc making huge profits while the poor farmers remained poor as such affecting their livelihood negatively.

Another problem was the acquisition of land. Twenty percent of farmers did not have enough land for production of food crops so most of them had to rent excess land to use and these had affected them negatively leading to low agricultural output. According (Kashem and Faroque, 2011), women are socially and economically less privileged than men did, thus, the condition of food security is worse for them.

Some of them were not married and so did not have any land. They relied on renting. Some were married and worked in their husband's plots of lands but they were still not enough so they did also rent. According to (World Bank 2012) traditional practices and customs have affected agricultural production negatively in developing countries.

According to some respondents, age was a serious problem to them. Five percent of the farmers facing difficulties in farming complained of age. Women above 60 years of age complained that they could no longer participate actively like before, consequently affecting them negatively and their households. Thirty seven percent of the farmers were facing problems with finances. They complained about loans from their CIGs with high interest rates and about lack for financial assistance from government and financial institutions in the area such as credit unions and banks. , Abu-Ghaida and Klasen (2004) argued that the limitation of women access to education and employment opportunities restricts their economic autonomy and weakens bargaining position within the family. This vulnerable situation of women, thus, translates into little or no voice in household decisions and the outcome is food and nutrition insecurity

#### **4.7 Socio-economic Implication of the Result**

From the findings of this study, women in the area of Ngendzen Mbam in general did not own or control crucial resources such as land and agricultural inputs. Women did not own land in this locality but most of them were involved in agriculture considering the fact that agriculture was their main economic activity. This problem had a very negative impact on the general output of agricultural products and as such affecting livelihood and food security in the locality. From the result gotten from this study, the study took noticed that many women in Ngendzen Mbam had limited access to financial assistance either from the government or financial institutions. The

results proved that not all of them were aware that heavy investments led to heavy profit. We also saw the problem of lack of collateral security (land) that could enable them access loans considering the fact that all financial institution depend on that for loans to be granted.

The system of agriculture practiced in Ngendzen Mbam according to these results was mixed faming and lack modern agricultural techniques of cultivation and technology marketing as well as training and extension services had a negative effect on output in the area of marketing. We had problems of low prices for farm products due to lack of farm to markets roads. In the area of inputs we had seen problems with fertilizer supplies; high prices on these inputs hinder agricultural productivity which negatively affected the economy and food security at the local and national level.

From the results obtained by this study we also identified that there was, little trading in Ngendzen Mbam considering the number of women involved in petit trading. Many respondents said it was because of lack of capital, low population, and lack of access to city markets that accounted for this. That is, the rural economy depends primarily on natural resources to generate income. Thus, it is important that their contributions be realized and upscale.

#### **4.8 Limitations to the study**

This study had it limitations such as time. The time frame that was available for data collection was very limited and as such made the work more strenuous for the researcher. Secondly, another challenge was literacy level of the rural women in Ngendzen Mbam. It was so difficult since the researcher had to fill the questioners at the same time asking questions. The topography of the area made movement very difficult and lack of electricity was a major problem.



## **CHAPTER FIVE**

### **5.1 Summary of findings**

From the findings, demographically the study revealed that 40% of farmers were within the age range of 41 to 60 years of age, justifying the less involvement of youths in agricultural activities in this area.

As to means of livelihood and food security 75% of the women were only involved in agriculture without doing other small-scale businesses because, women who were into both agriculture and small scale businesses made up 25% of the respondents.

From the findings, 72.3% were involved in both livestock and crop cultivation as means of livelihood and source of income .while 26.7%. Of the farmers relied only on crop production as a means of livelihood and source of income

From the results 100% of the famers cultivated corn and beans. While 24.4% of the respondents cultivated potatoes in addition to corn and beans. Whereas 6.6% of the respondent cultivated groundnuts in addition to the cultivation of corn, beans and potatoes. as such accounting to the total number of farmers into the cultivation of the four main cash crops in Ngendzen Mbam village.

Most of the respondents faced problems and challenges in their various activities. 86.5 % of the respondents facing difficulties in farming did have problems of farm to market road and lack of fertilizer, while 20 % of the farmers had difficulties in farming. Five% of the respondents had an additional problem, which is lack of land.

### **5.2 Conclusion**

To conclude, the various ways through which women in Ngenden Mbam contributed to livelihood and food security includes crop cultivation, livestock, and small-scale business. The income from agricultural products such as corn, beans, and potatoes had a positive impact in their lives as it helped them to buy other foodstuff such as rice and basic needs, which they did not produce. Income from sale of agricultural products had helped them to start small-scale business, which had improved their standards of living. According to the respondents, they could now pay for school fees and health bills and support their husbands in household upkeeps.

Agriculture had also helped them to join CIGs that had changed their socio-economic statues and they could now come together to address their common problems by

themselves. They could now take part in many social activities as a group and that had changed the social statuses. This community get together had also helped them to form small Njangi groups and the weekly contributions in these groups had helped them economically because at the end they used the contributions to invest in their business to purchase other needs as such helping them elevating their socio-economic statues in the society. For example, one of the respondents said because she was in the Kisso group, she was being looked at like a model by other women who were not yet in any CIG and to her she felt like she was a big person because her social statues had changed in her quarter.

From the study, it was revealed that despite the successes recorded by these women like attaining food security and livelihood being improved, they did faced serious challenges, which included lack of access to credit, financial assistance, poor road networks linking the village and the nearby cities. These had seriously affected prices of their farm products with the coming in of intermediaries or “buyamsellam” that bought cheaper from them and sold at higher prices in the cities, causing the women to remain poor. Insufficient land for production was another problem. Most of them did not own land and those working on lands owned by their husbands were still insufficient thus, they were forced to rent and considering their financial difficulties, they could not meet up. They also faced problems with agricultural inputs, modern agricultural techniques of cultivation and technology.

### **5.3 Recommendations**

From the study the following recommendations were arrived at that can or would help the rural women of Ngedzen Mbam to better contribute to livelihood and food security in the community. They are listed below.

- ❖ In Oder to encourage young people to get involved in agriculture the council of Nkum and the government should organize seminars to sensitize the youths on the importance of agriculture in this community and the nation as a whole.
- ❖ To encourage women in this area to diversify livelihoods, the governments should construct a local market and provide financial support to those who are into small business and to those who wish to start up business in this area.
- ❖ To address the issue of farm to markets roads the council and the government should construct an accessible road to link the village and the nearby cities. This will go a long

way to boast food security not only in this locality but to other cities and the nation as a whole.

- ❖ The council should create a market outlet that will enable the women sell their crops at good prices that can help them improve on their livelihood and that of their families and give them a better socio-economic empowerment.
- ❖ Women in this area should be encourage creating more CIGs and for those who have not yet joined should do so. This can be done through workshops or seminars organized by the council and the government. Through these CIGs the government can then assist the women with finical support and loans at low interest rates that will help them invest in agriculture and other small business and as such their standards of living will improve and a greater output will be attained.
- ❖ Access to and control over crucial resources and inputs such as land has a negative effect on the contributions of women to food security and livelihood. The council has to educate and sensitize the chiefs to give women access to land for farming. This will have a positive influence. The government should subsidize faming inputs such as fertilizers so that these women can have fertilizers at a cheaper rate that will enable them to have it on time and consequently will led to an increase in food production both at national and local levels.

#### **5.4 Suggested Areas for Further Research**

Further research should be conducted on women and land ownership. In addition, research should be carried out to know the reasons for low female education in this locality. A research can be conducted on the impact on CIGs to the lives of women in Ngeden Mbam.

## 5.1 Sommaire des résultats

D'après les résultats, démographiquement l'étude a révélé que 40% des agriculteurs se trouvaient dans la tranche d'âge des 41 à 60 ans, justifiant le moins de participation des jeunes dans les activités agricoles dans cette zone.

Quant aux moyens de subsistance et la sécurité alimentaire de 75% des femmes étaient seulement impliqués dans l'agriculture sans faire d'autres petites entreprises parce que, les femmes qui étaient dans les deux entreprises agricoles et à petite échelle représentaient 25% des répondants. D'après les résultats, 72,3% ont participé à la fois animale et végétale la culture comme moyen de subsistance et source de revenu. Alors que 26,7% parmi les agriculteurs ne comptaient que sur la production agricole comme moyen de subsistance et source de revenu.

A partir des résultats de 100% des agriculteurs cultivent le maïs et les haricots. Alors que 24,4% des répondants ont cultivé des pommes de terre, en plus de maïs et de haricots. Alors que 6,6% des répondants cultivée arachides en plus à la culture du maïs, des haricots et des pommes de terre. en tant que telle qui représente le nombre total des agriculteurs dans la culture des quatre principales cultures de rente dans le village de Mbam Ngendzen.

La plupart des répondants face des problèmes et défis dans leurs diverses activités. 86,5% des répondants confrontés à des difficultés dans l'agriculture a ont des problèmes de la ferme de la route du marché et le manque d'engrais, tandis que 20% des agriculteurs ont eu des difficultés dans l'agriculture. Cinq% des répondants avaient un problème supplémentaire, qui est le manque de terres

## 5.2 Conclusion

Pour conclure, les différents moyens par lesquels les femmes dans Ngendzen Mbam contribuent à la subsistance et la sécurité alimentaire comprennent les cultures, le bétail et les entreprises à petite échelle. Les revenus provenant de produits agricoles tels que le maïs, les haricots, les pommes de terre ont eu un impact positif dans en les aidant à acheter d'autres produits alimentaires tels que le riz et les produits de base, dont ils ne produisent pas. Revenu de la vente des produits agricoles les avaient aidés à commencer leurs activités à petite échelle, qui avaient amélioré leur niveau de vie. Selon les répondants, ils pourraient maintenant payer les frais de scolarité et les factures de santé et soutenir leurs maris dans l'entretien du ménage. Agriculture avait également aidés à rejoindre GIC qui avaient changé leurs statues socio-

économiques et ils pourraient maintenant se réunir pour résoudre leurs problèmes communs par eux-mêmes. Ils peuvent désormais prendre part à de nombreuses activités sociales en tant que groupe et que les statuts avaient changé sociaux. Cette communauté se réunissent leur avait aussi contribué à former des petits groupes tontines et les contributions hebdomadaires de ces groupes avait aidés économiquement parce qu'à la fin, ils ont utilisé les contributions à investir dans leur entreprise pour acheter d'autres besoins en tant que tels les aider à élever leur statut socio-économique statuts dans la société. Par exemple, l'un des répondants ont dit parce qu'elle était dans le groupe Kisso, elle était regarder comme un modèle par d'autres femmes qui ne sont pas encore dans quelle CIG et elle, elle sentait comme si elle était une grande personne parce que ses statuts sociaux avaient changé dans son trimestre.

De l'étude, il a été révélé que, malgré les succès enregistrés par ces femmes comme la réalisation de la sécurité alimentaire et des moyens de subsistance en cours d'amélioration, ils ne rencontraient des difficultés graves, notamment un manque d'accès au crédit, l'aide financière, les réseaux routiers pauvres reliant le village et la proximité villes. Ceux-ci avaient sérieusement affecté les prix de leurs produits agricoles avec l'entrée dans des intermédiaires ou "buyamsellam" qui a acheté moins cher d'eux et vendus à des prix plus élevés dans les villes, provoquant les femmes restent pauvres. Pas suffisamment de terres pour la production était un autre problème. La plupart d'entre eux ne possèdent pas de terres et ceux qui travaillent sur des terres appartenant à leurs maris étaient encore insuffisantes par conséquent, ils ont été obligés de louer et compte tenu de leurs difficultés financières, ils ne pouvaient pas se rencontrer. Ils ont également rencontré des problèmes avec les intrants agricoles, les techniques agricoles modernes de culture et de technologie.

### **5.3 Recommandations**

De l'étude, les recommandations suivantes ont été prises à ce que peut ou aideraient les femmes rurales de Ngedzen Mbam de mieux contribuer à la subsistance et la sécurité alimentaire dans la communauté. Ils sont énumérés ci-dessous.

Afin d'encourager les jeunes à participer à l'agriculture du Conseil de Nkum et le gouvernement devrait organiser des séminaires pour sensibiliser les jeunes sur l'importance de l'agriculture dans cette communauté et de la nation dans son ensemble.

Pour encourager les femmes dans ce domaine afin de diversifier les moyens de subsistance, le gouvernement doit construire un marché local et de fournir un soutien financier à ceux qui sont dans les petites entreprises et à ceux qui souhaitent démarrage d'entreprise dans ce domaine.

⌘ Pour résoudre le problème de la ferme aux marchés routes le conseil et le gouvernement devrait construire une route d'accès pour relier le village et les villes voisines. Cela ira un long chemin à vanter la sécurité alimentaire non seulement dans cette localité, mais à d'autres villes et de la nation dans son ensemble.

Le Conseil devrait créer un débouché sur le marché qui permettra aux femmes de vendre leurs récoltes à de bons prix qui peuvent les aider à améliorer leurs moyens de subsistance et celle de leurs familles et de leur donner une meilleure autonomisation socio-économique.

⌘ femmes dans ce domaine devrait être d'encourager la création de plus de GIC et pour ceux qui ne l'ont pas encore adhéré devraient le faire. Cela peut être fait par le biais d'ateliers ou de séminaires organisés par le Conseil et le gouvernement. Grâce à ces GIC le gouvernement peut alors aider les femmes avec le soutien mièvre et des prêts à faibles taux d'intérêt qui leur permettront d'investir dans l'agriculture et d'autres petites entreprises et en tant que tel leur niveau de vie permettra d'améliorer et d'une plus grande production sera atteint.

⌘ L'accès et le contrôle des ressources cruciales et des intrants tels que la terre a un effet négatif sur la contribution des femmes à la sécurité alimentaire et des moyens de subsistance. Le Conseil a pour éduquer et sensibiliser les chefs de donner aux femmes l'accès à la terre pour l'agriculture. Cela aura une influence positive. Le gouvernement devrait subventionner les intrants agricoles tels que les engrais pour que ces femmes peuvent avoir des engrais à un taux moins cher qui leur permettra d'avoir à temps et par conséquent seront conduit à une augmentation de la production alimentaire à la fois aux niveaux national et local.

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