

Report of the policy dialogue initiated by the Cameroon team

Introduction

The event held on 24 April 2013 in Douala was the culmination of a long process that began four months after the launch of RurbanAfrica Cameroon program.

Work Methodology

The methodology Cameroon Team adopted is based on a good knowledge of the terrain and difficulty one would face to have decision makers of the country or of the region around the same table or in the same room. To meet great politicians, CEOs and CEO of agricultural enterprises, directors such as governors, presidents and vice presidents from some communities, prefects, mayors etc. required a special approach strategy. This is what the Cameroon team did.

- 1) Recruitment and training of some Master II and PhD students on the nature and objectives the RurbanAfrica project;
- 2) Definition of targets in the western region as a pool supply of Douala town;
- 3) Definition of targets in Douala as an area of investigation of the project;
- 4) Deployment of two big teams on the above grounds.

The approach in West region

The approach consisted of:

- To meet the great politicians of the region in their home. Generally, this approach has been successful to the extent that, apart from the newly elected President of the Senate: **Senator Marcel niat Djifendji** absent from the region, the following (VIPs) persons have received our teams and exchanges were particularly friendly and frank. They are:

- a) Their Majesties (the chiefs of villages of investigation area). For instance, his majesty the chief of Baleveng (a village near Dschang).
- b) His Majesty **Mbouobouo Ibrahim Njoya**, sultan of Bamun and Senator at the newly elected Cameroon Senate;

c) Mr. **Nganou Djoumessi**, Cameroon Minister of Economy, Planning and Territorial Planning,

d) **Jean Nkuete**, General Secretary of the Cameroon People's Democratic Movement (CPDM) the ruling party and ex. Deputy Prime Minister in charge of Agriculture and Rural Development.

e) We approached the governor of the West Region during his visit of the swampy Baïgom rice plain near Foubot. The visit was organized by general manager of Mount Mbappit Project that is funded by the Islamic Bank. It was at the occasion of the end of the first phase of the project. The governor kindly said he will be very pleased to receive us to know more about RurbanAfrica project and what his territory can wait from such a international study.

f) The governor of the Littoral Region in Douala received us for an hour of time. On the occasion, Dr. Kamdem and I were accompanied by students of "International Migration, Globalization and Local Development" a professional Master. We toured the problems of Douala and the place of migration in this town that is the way in and out of Cameroon and Central African.

g) The Government Delegate of Douala said that he and all Douala subdivision mayors have already appropriated the project and will do their best to facilitate the work of the team in Douala.

Dialogue with agro-industrial enterprises managers

We have taken a special interest in two projects that organize space in West Region:

- 1) The re-launch of Arabica and Robusta coffee sector of western Cameroon. It is a state project headed by UCCAO,
- 2) Mont Mbappit Project which aimed to master water of swampy plains of the Noun department and to install rice farmers and producers of food crops on plots of 2000 sqm. The second phase of the project, on the financing of the Islamic Bank, will begin soon.

At the UCCAO it is the person in charge of engineering, Mr. Feugueng who received the team RurbanAfrica. After the presentation of the project, his main interest was to know the place of cash crops like coffee in the project. After having answered the question, a long and rich debate on the coffee cultivation

re-launch took place. He then said that the pertinence of the project was obvious and that his collaboration was no longer a matter of fact.

Mount Mbappit Project general manager, Mr. Amadou Potouogbounkouo received the team twice in his office in Fouban. His first and only question was: why are you interested by mount Mbappit project? Our answer was very simple and clear:

- 1) The project surely generates mobility of persons with all the consequences one can imagine,
- 2) The project will surely generate land problems, source of social conflicts,
- 3) The project is, in a word, a source of social changes (in gender, power redistribution, transfer of power on land, access to social services etc.)
- 4) The project will have environmental impacts (on water drainage, flora and fauna)

The general manager was then convinced of the pertinence of our study and engaged a long and useful explanation on the mount Mbappit project. He proposed us a close partnership and promised the doors of project office will always be opened to Rurbanafrica. The Fouban team was invited to participate alongside the governor of the west region to discover the state of implementation of the first phase of the Mbappit project. It was an opportunity for the team to get in touch with some regional delegates and make an appointment (delegate of the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development; MINADER, regional delegate of Fisheries and Animal Industries, trade delegate etc.). This project generates in the area, mobility that should be studied.

The teams also presented the project and had fruitful discussions with:

- a) The departmental delegates,
- b) The sub-prefect of the district,
- c) Delegates district,
- d) Heads of farm items
- e) The responsible institutions of microfinance
- f) The various types of OP (ICM)
- g) Great market food crop farmers from different villages (including nurseries of coffee, corn, Irish potato etc. approved by MINADER)
- h) Taking gender into account was the rule.

The approach adopted in Douala

In Douala specifically, the team that I drove for a week, met:

The Government Delegate to the Douala Urban Community has honored us not only to receive us and follow our presentation carefully but to also introduce a debate he concluded that our approach to study the urban poverty was original and he looked forward to our results. The interest he immediately brought to the project decided him to open personally the meeting on the "Policy dialogue".

The Prefect Wouri (former prefect of Dschang) was met by myself for more than an hour in his office,

b) **The mayors and their deputies** of Douala districts below:

- 1) Douala I Bonandjo
- 2) New Bell Douala II
- 3) Douala III
- 4) Douala IV Bonabéri
- 5) Douala Fifth Bonamoussadi

c) **The regional representatives** of the areas covered by Rurbanafrika project (mainly those in charge of basic services, agriculture, urban planning, statistics, trade, MINEPAT);

d) **The heads of villages** outlying areas approached as study sites);

e) Various **charitable associations** (Chaine des Foyers St-Nicodème);

f) **Youth associations** (Green and Clean Youth, Federation of Youth; Recuperation of Youth, Well Be (Mieux-Etre) etc.)

g) **Media** (Le Messenger, Afrique Evolution, Gauris FM, Journal Epervier) **and television** (STV).

At each stage this is what we have to do:

a) Presentation of Rurbanafrika project;

b) Welcoming of the points of view and visions of each other,

c) The appreciation of the level of involvement of each other in the implementation of the project in Douala,

d) Remembering of the invitation to the meeting of 24 April 2013 Hotel SOMATEL in Akwa Douala.

First results of this approach

From West to Littoral region our interlocutors have paid close attention to our presentation of the project and its objectives. Many if not all, are now aware of the project and have promised that we will find with them all the support, guidance and desired information as far as their ability.

Administrators and politicians have called attention to this study and its results may shed light on an innovative way, the decision maker to shift the fight against poverty, to better understand the meanings and economic and social importance of mobility.

Many persons were attracted by the reading we did to them related to agricultural policy in Cameroon since the German era. Policy that is conspicuous by its extraordinary continuity.

On the farmers' side, lots of problems have been shelled and we were requested to wear in high places (that means to the government of Yaoundé). It is clear from conversations invasive disappointment for non-compliance of the specifications by the State, especially with regard to the distribution of fertilizer subsidies and promised nurseries.

From the academic point of view, some doctoral students engaged in Rurbanafrika teams had either changed their research subject or, and it is the most common cases, have reoriented their problematic in the light of presentations, discussions proposals of some specialists.

Following the Douala campaign, we addressed 35 invitations for the seminar to be held on 24 of April 2013.

Seminar April 24, 2013

Program

LOCATION: SOMATEL Akwa-Douala (three stars)

Number of participants: 40 peoples representing all walks of life while we placed 35 invitations.

It must be noted that many private and state structures were represented by their technical managers, giving us reason about our approach that consist of meeting each boss in his office or at home for their personal opinions on Rurbanafrika.

Hours: 9.30 minutes opening of the meeting by the Government Delegate who surprised more than one person by his punctuality.

These are some highlights of the speech of the Government Delegate to the Douala Urban Community

Welcome Speech of the National Project Manager Pr. Martin KUETE

Mr. Government Delegate of the Urban Community of Douala, your presence here honors us, precisely when you challenge your many occupations; you have seen fit to begin your day with the opening of this workshop dealing with a problem rooted in the Strategic Vision of our country. Our institution, the team that I lead and I are very grateful.

Distinguished Mayors, spontaneity and warmth with which you welcomed us here in Douala and all-out mobilization of this morning are proof, if any were needed, of your interest in this project. The project team and the University of Dschang in my voice say thank you, a thousand times thank you.

Gentlemen, regional and departmental delegates of decentralized state services, I can say without risk of being wrong and without bragging that you are the "magic ingredient" in this project. Your concerns are ours and vice versa. You stood up as one man to our call to bring us your valuable knowledge and expertise or to shift the terms of reference of this project. We are confident that we will always find you with practical knowledge sharing,

documentation and information of any kind necessary for the success of this major undertaking that we will all be the beneficiaries. We hope that access to the information we will not be bargained.

Distinguished representatives of national and international organizations, NGOs and various associations, dear colleagues, the positive response to our invitation without any hesitation is the most obvious that we can rely on you, our nearby partners. This is the opportunity you give to academics to leave their baptismal, ivory towers, and finally work in synergy or hand in hand with you, in a general interest program, with skilled men and women in search of practical and sustainable solutions to social problems. Urban issues that challenge us, caused by the mass of unemployed, are a cause and perhaps a consequence of bloodless development of our cities. They are among the challenges facing humanity. We will in a short time attack them resolutely. Indispensable participative approach requires that we associate the mass to the finding of solutions to their own problems, to the renegotiate a true cultural heritage, why not to develop a new culture: foundation of a controlled development.

Mr. Government Delegate, mayors, regional and departmental delegates, ladies and gentlemen, this unison around a project tracing the paths to development not only inflates us to block, makes us proud to serve, but also carries a strong message: the team and its partners have no right to make mistakes in carrying out the important mission that you will soon invest them : id est to make available for politicians new, diverse, reliable, relevant and high-quality knowledge, respectful of our values, our culture and our environment (lato sensu).

This is in my opinion is the forced passage leading to the development of efficient and effective strategic plans and to the emergence in 2035.

Thank you.

Opening speech of the Government Delegate of the urban community of Douala

Distinguished Mayors

Ladies and gentlemen of the regional and departmental delegates
Distinguished representatives of international organizations, NGOs and various
associations,
Distinguished guests in your titles and ranks,
Ladies and gentlemen,

The Urban Community of Douala is happy to welcome you in its estuarian city
on the occasion of this information and discussion seminar on global
collaborative project entitled "**urban-rural connections in Africa south of the
Sahara**" whose relevance seemed compelling and justified my membership.

So, welcome and feel at home.

Let me express my gratitude supported the national coordination team that
worked, I think, for our country and especially our city is chosen as a privileged
site for the study. Prof. Martin KUETE and your team, the city of Douala is
grateful.

It is obvious that this goal was not achieved if you had not had the necessary
institutional support. You want to be the spokesman of our gratitude to the
University of Dschang and its Rector, Prof. Anaclet Fomethé.

This duty done, let me say that the theme you are addressing in the proposed
study is of interest, the approach that sees the rural and urban poverty as an
extension of the same reality, original. Douala, controls a vast rural hinterland
and is thus a field of rare fertility for the study of poverty in the broadest sense.
This has led, I do not doubt for a moment, his choice.

Douala and vast agricultural basin that control then wait to see the results of
your work that will allow us to better understand the urban-rural relations and
the connection with poverty, the mechanisms that generate it and reproduce,
the strategies that are developed in other target countries and Cameroon to
minimize its effects. The capitalization of experiences from other sub-Saharan
African countries and your own conclusions will be, I'm sure, of very high value.
We are already convinced, we policymakers that we are, you will put at our
disposal an arsenal of indispensable and original knowledge for better urban
planning especially in the development of efficient and effective policies to
reduce poverty in our city . A city of the future, well controlled and where he
will live to good advantage.

From the foregoing, the conduct of this study the first beneficiary is our urban area, will always find at the Urban Community of Douala and its branches, the desired partnership and institutional support: wages of success of this project Douala has already appropriated.

I declare open the first Douala conference of RurbanAfrica and wish it large success.

Long live International Cooperation (EU-Africa)

Long live the urban community of Douala,

Long live Cameroon.

Thank you

Douala, April 24, 2013

Government Delegate

Commissions' Work

The workshop discussions were organized around the themes of work packages 3 and 4.

The aim of the workshops was to deepen the discussion topics by sharing experience of the participants about the themes of the project. Thus, each participant was found in the theme that suited him best. The discussions were organized into three parts:

- the inventory,
- the impact of deficiencies and
- suggestions for research.

Theme 1: Access to basic social services

Whether access to water, primary health care to education or energy, the workshop has noted the acute shortage in poor neighborhoods. For example, with regard to access to water, the extension of the water system does not follow the growth of the population, the water quality is questionable and adaptations of populations are multiple issues: supply from river water, boreholes, rain and sources. Examples are taken at Mabanda Bonabéri and Nylon-Madagascar. As a consequence, they discussed the exposure to diseases

and various forms of pollution, decreased quality of life and increased social tensions.

Regarding health services, they discussed the inadequacy of public and private health facilities. This deficiency is operated by traditional practitioner and informal health centers that thrive in poor neighborhoods. The use of traditional practitioners and churches for illness is discussed and deserves to be deepened. Among other suggestions, they offer courses on supporting informal health centers, the regulation and control of drilling activity and education in the treatment of drinking water.

Regarding education, it was proposed to investigate the phenomenon of clandestine schools and part of school life in the slums.

In terms of access to energy, the issue of power cuts and low voltage in poor neighborhoods has castigated the underground networks, the issue of AES-Sonel monopoly and especially the risks associated with non adaptations regulated in both poor and rich neighborhoods: Fire and other related to the use of generators, lamps, candles and firewood risks.

Sanitation and hygiene issues were also discussed as well as the role of social services supervision of vulnerable populations such as street children, women and the elderly.

Two approaches were proposed:

- The study of new sites as Bell Bepanda, Ndopassi, Nylon, Nyala and Bonabéri,
- To take into account all aspects of Douala town, many participants opted for a central-peripheral movement. That means from the hold quarters to the new ones.

Theme 2: Mobility and subsistence activity in the slums of Douala

This working group has developed a range of urban mobility and subsistence activities developed in the slums of Douala: The mobility of vulnerable people to work in affluent neighborhoods or in commercial and administrative centers. It derives much of livelihood activities such as: call-box, washer / guardians of cars, women / boys households, pushers, maneuver site, waste sorters, gardeners, lifeguards, small traders, buyam-sellam etc. This labor mobility seems the most important intra-urban mobility involving vulnerable and also mobilizes the informal transport system that characterizes the city. The

discussants at the workshop emphasized the study of mobility. Agricultural movements were specifically mentioned for urban workers in agricultural plantations around Douala or working on their own account. Residential mobility mask disparities in land supply. In this vein, it has been referred to the mobility to the original inside the city and out of town communities. These socio-cultural mobility that intensified by requiring citizens need to travel almost every weekend, either in the city or in the villages of origin for family reunions and other socio-cultural necessity involving the community belonging to the city. This is the second line of mobility offered by the workshop.

Theme 3: Urban Growth and access to land

The heads of villages and neighborhoods located in the workshop declined informal mechanisms of access to land in the national domain suburban. Several experiments have been shared with leaders of NGOs fighting against evictions. The area East of Douala that includes Ndopassi, Nyala and from PK10 neighborhoods has been proposed for further study.

Some experiences of private actors were discussed and must be studied in the example of real estate and land cooperatives as ABRICAM or informal private developments. Since it is the financial means which seemed to explain the informal land, NGO group shared their experiences of the difficulty of financing of land and real estate transactions and want a study of this issue in the context of the project.

Theme 4: Urban Growth, connection between demand for services and urban governance

This group worked on the relationship between urban growth, access to services and urban governance. Representatives of district councils shared their actions in favor of vulnerable and the difficulties of ensuring the sustainability of infrastructure for the benefit of these people. It was suggested that studies of recurrent failure of actions to ensure the governance of projects by municipalities.

We can say that Douala meeting was a successful one. Participants appreciated the fact that they have been associated to such a project. They are looking for the step of the project to contribute to its success.

Made in Dschang by

- 1) Pr. KUETE
- 2) Pr. TSALEFAC
- 3) Dr. YEMMAFOUO
- 4) Mr. NGOUANET