

MIA-VITA Project

The MIA-VITA project for socio-economic analysis in Cameroon is aimed at finding out the correct way to provide the best information to local people about the natural risks, organized preventions planning and tools to help the local ethnic groups to better perceive the risk, in collaboration with the local chiefdoms and the central government.



Mt. CAMEROON Volcano

The Africa's Mount Cameroon (4095 m) is an active stratovolcano of dominantly basaltic composition. Half million people live nearby, in an area comprising one of Cameroon's main economic resources, and including the cities of Buea and Limbe. Additional risk arises from landslides at many places around the volcano.



FIELDWORK Campaign Description

Based on a four months field data collection carried out in Fako Division, South West Region of Cameroon, from 4 November 2009 to 15 March 2010 to investigate the socio-economic vulnerability and resilience in risk zones inside MIAVITA project (WP5), the first fieldwork mission has been surveyed the urban areas of Idenau to Buea free way which involved Idenau, Bakingili, Batoke, Mokundange, Ngeme, Mokindi (Isokolo), Limbe (Bota, Mile 1, Mile 2, Mabeta New Lay Out and Bonadikombo), Moliwe, Ombe New Lay Out, Mutengene, Dibanda Mile 14, Bolifamba Mile 16 and Buea (Bokwango, Molyko, Poto-poto Quarter, Buea Town, Bonduma, Bokoko, Great Soppo), Muea, Ekona, and from Buea to Limbe via Tole which covers Small Soppo, Bwassa, Likmobe, Saxenhof, Tole, Sasse, Bonjongo and Wututu.

> SOUTH WESTERN REGION **Fako** Koupé-Manengouba Lebialem Manvu Meme Detps. Ndian 24 571 km² Surface 1 242 700 hab 50,6 h/km²



MT. CAMEROON SOCIO-ECONOMIC VULNERABILITY AND RESILIENCE ASSESSMENT THROUGH TRADITIONAL SURVEY METHODS

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Gathering data methods

Collection of statistical data has been recorded. Interview, keyinformant interviews, participant observations, life stories and focused group discussions were the main methods used to collect the data. In the course of gathering data, interviews were transcribed and recorded and implemented by two sets of questionnaires; one set for individuals and the other for administrators.



The gathered data, (geological, hydrological, social and ethnographic) have been integrated into an interactive GIS environment produced by MINIMIDT (Ministere de l'Industrie, des Mines et du Developpement Technologique), MIA-VITA partner of Cameroon.



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"Social vulnerability of a community facing the risk is generated by the complex and multifaceted historically variablile sum of internal or external factors to the social system" [Bell, 2005, p. 5].

"The factors that usually affect the damage is the distribution of population, social infrastructure and socio-cultural and socio-political diversity. The effects of a disaster can be mitigated by reducing the vulnerability" [Ligi, 2009, p.99]

In order to assess the level of vulnerability on Fako Division, even risks arising from human behavior were taken into account, such as:

ARCHITECTURAL INFRASTRUCTURES: Houses are built mainly with wood and concrete blocks. In several cases, villages are built on old landslides, and cultivation of plantains is practised after a disasters, despite government warnings against the danger of landslides.



mile 2, sample of houses built on landslide body. and a information risk billboard

SOCIAL ORGANIZATION:

- 1. Villages built around an economic activity, as in the case of plantain cultivations and mainly composed by unrelated family units proceeding from different regions of Cameroon and without a common ethnicity, could generate a PARTIAL COLLABORATION of the components.
- 2. Chiefdoms with a strong tribal background generate a community feeling and TOTAL COLLABORATION of the group.

SOCIAL COMMUNICATION: Languages used: Pidgin (the LINGUA FRANCA Cameroonian Pidgin, or "Kamtok", is a variety of West African Pidgin) and English.





RESILIENCE

The results of 108 interviews show that local knowledge of risks is high. The ability of small communities to adapt and protect themselves from the effects of volcanic activity of Mount Cameroon is almost nonexistent, showing an overall lack of planned strategies to face major natural events.

Despite the efforts of the Cameroon Civil Protection (MINATD) to raise awareness in the face of natural hazards, local risk perception comes from a strong historical memory that remains alive in tales and legends, were the resilient strategy is represented by divine intervention.

One example is that 30% of the informants, young and old, practicing animist religion, hope for divine protection through animal sacrifice.

Chief of Batoke, interview of 28/01/2010:

How do you think the force can be of help to this hazard? At the mountain we have EPASA MOTO, in the sea NIANGONAMUNA, we believe they protect us in times of hazard.

Is there a way to get in contact with this god or force? Who can do it? When? Why him/her/them? To get in contact with the god, sacrifices are being made to the god, it's a tradition that has been left to us and we sacrifice fowls and goats and other things that i can't name them.

CONCLUSIONS

The partial analysis produced for this first fieldwork mission show homogeneous social contexts, highlighting that people of Fako Division live a constant psychological pressure derived from the knowledge of Mount Cameroon volcanic activity.

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