

# **Project paper**

on

# **Governance on irrigation in Northern Cameroon**

ASA on Governance and Farmer-Led Irrigation in Northern Cameroon (ID: P173136)

Cameroon (AFRICA)

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## **ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS**

AUE	Association d'Usagers d'Eau
CFPA	Centre de Formation Professionnelle Agricole (Agricultural Professional training center)
CGER	Centre de Gestion et d'Économie Rurale (Organizational Management Support Centers)
CIT	Centre d'Innovation Technologique (Center for Technological Innovation)
GDP	Gross Domestic Product (PIB Produit intérieur brut)
IMF	Institution de Microfinance (Microfinance institution)
MEADEN	Mission d'Etude pour l'Aménagement et le Développement de la province du Nord (Mission for the Development of the North Province)
MINADER	Ministère de l'Agriculture et du Développement Rural (Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development)
ΟΡΑ	Organisation Professionnelle Agricole (Professional Agricultural Organization)
PAP	Project Affected Population (Population affectée par le projet)
R&D	Recherche et Development (Research and development)
SIG	Système d'Information Géographique (GIS Geographic Information System)
SEMRY	Société d'Expansion et de Modernisation de la Riziculture de Yagoua (Company
	for the Expansion & Modernization of Rice Cultivation at Yagoua)
VIVA Benue	Valorization of Investments in the Valley of the Benue project
VIVA Logone	Valorization of Investments in the Valley of the Logone project
WUA	Water User Association



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## **1. INTRODUCTION**

This paper was prepared based on the work done during a series of missions in Northern Cameroon, between 2019 and 2020 as part of the preparation work for the VIVA Logone and VIVA Benue Irrigation Projects. The preparation team included David Casanova, Norman Piccioni, Jorge Trevino, Caroline Plançon, Stephen Hodgson, Bernard Drum, Srinivasan Rajagopal, Ashraff Mohammad, Jean Marie Noiraud, and Greg Felter. The purpose of this paper is to illustrate the complexities of the governance problems irrigation is facing in the Northern part of Cameroon, and to demonstrate how the two forthcoming multi-faceted projects will address them.

## **2. SETTING THE SCENE**

In recent years, Cameroon has achieved lower middle-income status on the back of sustained economic growth, but this has hardly been reflected in a reduction in the national poverty rate. In 2014, an estimated 37 percent of its population was classified as poor. Both the poverty rate and absolute number of the poor have increased in rural areas and particularly in the northern parts of the country. In the Far North alone the poverty rate increased from 56 percent in 2001 to 76 percent in 2014.

The increasing poverty rate in rural areas reflects the poor performance of the agriculture sector. Agriculture remains the backbone of Cameroon's economy, employing 70 percent of its workforce, while providing 42 percent of its GDP and 30 percent of its export revenue. Yet, a series of constraints have limited the productivity of Cameroon's agricultural sector and confining it largely to low-production subsistence farming, especially in the North and Extreme North. Among all the limiting factors, water is the most critical. Moreover, declining soil fertility, limited use of fertilizer, lack of farm mechanization, poor water management, low adoption of high yielding varieties and practicing obsolete farming techniques have also constrained yields.

**Agriculture in Northern Cameroon is exposed to rising temperatures and drought.** Regional climate change projections suggest continuing reductions in available water resources with droughts forecast every five years. Drier and hotter conditions are causing desertification in parts of the region. Damaging effects of adverse weather are contributing to rising levels of poverty and food insecurity.

**Improving agricultural productivity presents the best opportunity for poverty reduction in Northern Cameroon**, particularly through developing agriculture that is resilient and adapted to the challenges of changing climate and declining water resources. Supporting farmers in Northern Cameroon in increasing their productivity and resilience is therefore key. Furthermore, increased productivity and resilience of farming households in Northern Cameroon will be a necessary condition to achieving Cameroon's national growth and poverty reduction objectives.

Northern Cameroon has three regions: Adamawa, North, and Far North. They form a triangle with a very narrow strip of land around Lake Chad. The Lake acts as the boundary between



Cameroon, Chad, Nigeria, and Niger which are all members of the Lake Chad Basin Commission. Northern Cameroon hosts a large and fast-growing agricultural population. Taken together, Adamawa, the North and the Extreme North accounted for nearly 40 percent of the 1.98 million agricultural households in Cameroon in 2009, These households rely almost entirely on farming, both crops and livestock.

**Several crops dominate the landscape.** During the rainy season, farmers grow mainly corn, sorghum, peanuts, cowpeas, cassava and rice (the latter in the flooded areas). Cotton is by far the dominant cash crop, grown mainly in the North and the Extreme North, while also exerting a pull effect on other crops like peanuts and corn. Rice is an important product in areas where there is access to water. Rice paddy is already grown in the wetlands of the Extreme North and North, including areas that have benefited from irrigation infrastructure.

**Developing irrigation and water management systems will be essential to enable farmers to adapt and will be an imperative for all of northern Cameroon<sup>1</sup>.** Improved irrigation and water management are needed to allow the growing of counter-season crops and to improve yields. In the North region, the Lagdo dam was initially supposed to serve 15,000 ha of irrigated land, but only 600 ha are currently developed, and there is therefore significant scope for expansion.

## **3. IRRIGATION GOVERNANCE DIAGNOSTIC**

**Governance problems are widespread at the central, regional, and local levels in Cameroon.** The country ranks in the bottom 25<sup>th</sup> percentile for all governance indicators tracked by Kaufman and Kray over the last ten years. The country ranks 144<sup>th</sup> out of 177 countries on the 2013 Transparency International Corruption Perception Index. To fight against corruption, the government has strengthened procedures, controls, and audits and has taken capacity building initiatives and increased sanctions against offenders. The government has also created an anticorruption agency (*Comité National Anti-Corruption, CONAC*), but its effectiveness is limited.

**Governance issues have a major negative impact on the water and agriculture sectors**<sup>2</sup>. Working directly with the line ministries is challenging since cumbersome and bureaucratic procedures create inefficiencies in service delivery. Even autonomous agencies providing services report to ministerial authorities and are staffed by former civil servants who have the same working habits as those in the central government. And in the northern regions, more than elsewhere, it is difficult to find skilled individuals who are not themselves from the government. Government agricultural institutions operating in the irrigation sector in Northern Cameroon include the Company for the Expansion & Modernization of Rice Cultivation at Yagoua (SEMRY) and the Northern Region Development Agency (MEADEN).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Overview of the Agri-Pastoral and Water Sectors in Northern Cameroon, World Bank, June 2018.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Governance in Irrigation and Drainage: Concepts, Cases, and Action-Oriented Approaches—A Practitioner's Resource. World Bank, March 2020.



**SEMRY is the parastatal** agricultural and irrigation and drainage agency **supporting 25,000 farmers in the Logone river area.** SEMRY was originally established as the Yagoua Experimental Rice Modernisation Sector in 1954. Its name and status were changed in 1971 with the construction of the SEMRY I scheme at Yagoua (5,300 ha: 1972-1977) and SEMRY II scheme at Maga (6,200 ha: 1978-1986). The 27 km long earthen Maga dam was constructed on the upper part of the Waza-Logone floodplain in 1979 to provide water for the SEMRY II scheme (also called Maga scheme) and for fish farming. The Maga dam remains the largest piece of infrastructure in the Logone-Chari River system, with a maximum capacity of 620 million m<sup>3</sup>.

When SEMRY was established, the operation and maintenance of the hydraulic infrastructure of the Logone dyke and the Maga dam was part of its core mandate. During the 1990s, the mandate to operate and maintain the large-infrastructure (flood dyke and dams) was transferred to the Government, under the Ministry of Economy, Planning, and Regional Development (MINEPAT), so this institution annually evaluates the extend of maintenance works. SEMRY has ever since executed the maintenance works with the allocations from MINEPAT and, with respect to rice production, it is mainly focused on the operation of the irrigation services, along with the agricultural support, land-preparation services, post-harvest processing and marketing.

SEMRY presently undertakes three main functions: (i) Irrigation, Operations, Management and Maintenance at all levels of the schemes; (ii) provision of land-preparation services; and (iii) postharvest processing and marketing of rice (milling, bagging, transport, and limited retailing). The budget for 2018 was approximately US\$ 6 million. SEMRY has a substantial staff contingent of 431 personnel, of whom more than 50 percent are support personnel, such as security guards and watchmen. It also has machinery workshops and stores, new and old heavy construction machinery, and a fleet of trucks, among other assets.

Many attempts have been made over the decades to strengthen and enable SEMRY to fulfill its role adequately, but with little ultimate success. Key issues remaining to be addressed include the continued bureaucratic character of the organization and a multitude of roles which have been accumulated over the years. There are shortages of key managerial staff, limited technical skills, inefficiencies, weaknesses in financial audits, administration systems, and accounting transparency, and a relatively high average age in the workforce. There also remains a severe lack of mechanization in the area served by SEMRY, and a near-complete absence of explicit rules for land-access and control and for irrigation water management. SEMRY's organization structure will need a major overhauling to reflect the new roles that SEMRY will be called on to play under Government's new irrigation strategy, to be supported by the Project.

As a development agency the basic objective of MEADEN is the 'harmonious development of the Northern Province'. Originally established in 1972 to promote development in the Benue river area, including supervising the construction of the Lagdo Dam and reservoir, it is currently diminished in terms of size and resources. At present MEADEN provides limited support to irrigation in the area below the Lagdo reservoir, along with agricultural support and land-



#### preparation services.



Figure 1: Llocation map of VIVA Benue and VIVA Logone projects

MEADEN has a modest staff contingent of 40 personnel, machinery workshops and stores, machinery, and a fleet of trucks. Its budget for 2018 was approximately US\$0.5 million. As for SEMRY, there is a severe lack of mechanization in the area, and a near-complete absence of explicit rules for land-access, control and irrigation water management are key issues to be addressed. Also, just like SEMRY, MEADEN has inherited a bureaucratic structure. Of the 15,000 ha of land originally planned be irrigated from the Lagdo system, only about 600 ha are at presently serviced by MEADEN.

Given the lack of an operational institution to develop and manage irrigation systems, the current situation is an absence of Irrigation Governance in the North. It is therefore imperative to transform MEADEN to such an operational institution in the first two - three years of VIVA Benue project. A skeleton directorate for this purpose has been added to the Organigram of MEADEN.

Sustainability of proper governance in the irrigation sector starts with the establishment of such an institution within an agreed time frame of two to three years.

The existing legal framework for the irrigation sector in general, and the activities of SEMRY and MEADEN in particular, do not provide an appropriate basis for effective irrigation governance. Cameroon has no specific irrigation legislation and the topic is not even mentioned in the 1998 Water Law which is in any event recognized to be outdated and incomplete. Although they have slightly different legal forms, SEMRY and MEADEN are both subject to the 1999 Law on Public Institutions and Public and Parastatal Companies which confers broad powers upon them subject only to their internal statutes. Consequently, the relationship between these two organisations and farmers (irrigators), in terms of their respective rights and duties, is not clearly spelled out. At the same time Cameroon lacks suitable legislation for the creation of sustainable farmer-managed water user associations (WUAs) with robust governance arrangements and based on the compulsory participation of land holders.

The land in SEMRY areas is collectively ploughed by SEMRY's fleet of heavy-duty bulldozers and large sized disc harrows. The ploughing operation is carried out in dry soil and water is then released. After the ploughing, the cultivators carry out all the subsequent farming operations manually on individual basis. But SEMRY'S ploughing capacity has been grossly eroded over the years with frequent machinery breakdowns due to their age and to lack of funding for operation and maintenance. As a result, cropping intensity in the area has, dropped below 100 percent compared with a potential of 200 percent. Though SEMRY has recently started hiring machinery



from the private sector to supplement its ploughing capacity the services provided are still not adequate due to various constraints e.g. the machines are not available when they are needed, contractors fail to follow the cropping calendar, and payments to service providers are delayed due to lack of funds.

Land governance issues are cross-cutting and difficult to resolve because of inter-agency coordination challenges. The Ministry of Land affairs was set up in 2005. Its mandate is focused on cadaster and title deed conservation. Several other agencies, including the Ministries of Agriculture, Environment, Territorial Administration, and Planning, are directly concerned with land access and management issues. Yet, each of these bodies has its own separate regulations, and this has created gaps and overlaps. While these line agencies have no legal role in land management, their effectiveness depends on good land use planning and land management. A major challenge is that the ministries and other entities responsible for urban development, forestry and mining, as well as local governments, are not effectively coordinating with the Ministry of Land Affairs. The lack of government coordination is made worse by inadequate coordination among project financing agencies.

Beyond the issue of poor institutional coordination in land allocation, there are also challenges stemming from poor enforcement of rules and corruption, leading to the risk of preferential allocation of parcels of land to "elites" or favored individuals. Notable examples of poor enforcement concern the rules covering the recognition of land rights, as laid out in articles 15 and 17 of the 1974-1 ordinance establishing rules on land tenure. Cameroonian Laws concerning expropriation and the right to compensation when occupied land is taken over for infrastructure projects, need be observed. People with land tenure rights who should be the primary beneficiaries, are often not properly consulted from the early stages of project development. This process and principles had properly been taken into account in the Lagdo area where the VIVA Benue project is being implemented.

A key legal aspect of governance concerns irrigation land developed by Public entities such as SEMRY and MEADEN. These lands form part of the private domain of the state, governed by Ordinance 74-2 of July 6, 1974 - to establish rules governing State lands. The state's land regime has specific rules on land governance to ensure optimum management of the irrigation schemes, and farmers' land access and use rights. The recipients of the plots received certificates of attribution for the irrigated plots. The award criteria were being a father, accepting the conditions of development and exploitation of the plot, and being resident in the area. The attributions were validated by the traditional authority in the area (Diaourou level). The plot was given for 2 years (concession); then, after 3 years of agricultural development in the plot, the concession becomes definitive. A water and service fee are due from the recipients.

In addition, in Northern Cameroon, chief authorities (Lamido) play a key role in land management. Centralized in Northern Cameroon, these authorities have been recognized



formally, and a chief's ROLE IS RECOGNIZED BY THE LEGAL FRAMEWORK.<sup>3</sup> THEY MANAGE BOTH TERRITORIAL ADMINISTRATION/LAND ALLOCATION AND CONFLICT RESOLUTION. THIS AUTHORITY GOES BEYOND LAND ISSUES AND REFLECTS EMBEDDED SOCIAL RELATIONS AS WELL.

## **4. RECOMMENDATIONS AND NEXT STEPS**

Irrigation is fundamental to ensuring regional food security in the North and Far North of Cameroon. The region is highly populated and the poorest in the country. Most households rely on rainfed farming for food production which is highly vulnerable to climate change. In this zone, improved irrigation is critical to increasing food availability, diversity, and affordability for poor households.

#### A. Governance and irrigation with the VIVA projects (transition period)

There is a need for new irrigated agriculture policies. These should follow four main principles: (i) irrigation development and rehabilitation with a progressive transfer of the operation and maintenance of irrigation schemes to the WUAs; (ii) transfer of the land preparation services to the private sector; (iii) promotion of the private sector for the promotion of agricultural value chains (rice and other crops); and (iv) review and transformation of the role of the Government, particularly parastatal agencies, such as SEMRY and MEADEN.

### Institutional Changes

Both SEMRY and MEADEN need to be restructured and refocused to reflect the changed roles they will play under Government's new irrigation strategy. During recent World Bank preparation and appraisal missions for the two forthcoming VIVA Benue and VIVA Logone projects, the basic changes envisaged for both MEADEN and SEMRY were agreed with government following a series of participatory meetings with the management of the two institutions and with stakeholders, including beneficiary farmers and private suppliers of inputs and services.

As the larger of the two institutions, SEMRY's organization structure will need a major streamlining. The plans are for SEMRY to be transformed from a production company into a development agency for the area it now serves. Finance to support this transformation will be provided by the Bank's proposed VIVA Logone Project. Detailed planning for the transformation process will be completed by consultants to be financed by a Project Preparation Advance (PPA) by no later than December 31, 2020. The transformation process thus developed must be implemented in a time frame of three years from the commencement of the project. There should be dated covenants to reflect this in the legal documents

**This transformation of SEMRY into a development agency implies a change in its focus to** (i) the maintenance of major infrastructure (Maga dam, Logone dyke and 4 pumping stations); (ii)

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> Decree 1977 July on chief organization, revised in 1982. Particularly, they have been given role to collect taxes at local level



oversight and technical support to WUAs in the irrigation schemes; (iii) monitoring of water resources in the Logone basin in coordination with national and international authorities; (iv) training and support to farmers, including the setting up of a Technical Innovation Center; in other words the main focus of SEMRY will be on the socio-economic development of its zone of influence. This implies a re-organization of SEMRY's present services which will include: (i) transferring land preparation services to the private sector; (ii) concession of the rice storage, transformation and commercialization facilities to the private sector, (iii) transferring irrigation management to the WUAs and (iv) enhancing land governance

Based on this transformation, a new organigram (see figure 2) for SEMRY has been developed and agreed by the Government of Cameroon and the World Bank as part of the preparation of the VIVA Logone project. Five new organizational units are planned: (i) a new Hydrology/Water Resources Unit; (ii) a Geographical Information Systems Unit; (iii) a WUA oversight Unit; (iv) a Maintenance Unit for the major infrastructure; and (v) a Training/Technical Innovation Center. The graphic below shows the vision four years from now of the anticipated roles and structure of SEMRY. It indicates those essential services will be carried out completely by SEMRY, those to be provided by SEMRY in partnership with other entities, and those which will be transferred completely to farmers' organizations and private entities.



Figure 2: Restructured SEMRY by 2024



#### Restructuring directorate of irrigation management

An organization chart for restructuring this directorate has been prepared in consultation with SEMRY and MINADER by the World Bank mission during their January 2020 mission for the preparation of the VIVA Logone Project. This organization chart is provided figure 3 below.



Figure 2: Proposed reformed structure of the irrigation directorate (on the left)

The consultancy mentioned would:

- (1) Study this structure carefully and propose any modifications required to achieve the revised mandate of this Directorate.
- (2) Prepare job qualification requirements for the head of the Directorate
- (3) Prepare the staffing requirements of the Research and development unit, staff skills required and job qualifications
- (4) Prepare the staffing requirements for the WUA oversight units at Yagoua and Maga, staff skills required, and job qualifications. The functions of this unit would include preparation of relevant legislation, operational guidelines and setting up WUAs at relevant rehabilitated and new irrigation systems.
- (5) Prepare the staffing requirement for the revised mandate of operations for the Yagoua and Maga sites. This would include potential remote operations of the pumping stations at Yagoua and sluices at Maga. Prepare the appropriate job qualifications.



- (6) Prepare staffing requirements for dyke maintenance and revamped responsibilities as an oversight and emergency response unit at both Yagoua and Maga including minimal equipment requirements taking into account advances in technology for canal and drain maintenance.
- (7) Identify staff to be retrenched and work out the separation package for each staff member to be retrenched in accordance with Cameroon labor laws. Prepare a timeline for the retrenchment taking into account social aspects.
- (8) Prepare costed proposals for the restructured Irrigation Development and Management Directorate including staff salaries commensurate with prevailing market conditions, any renovation of buildings, electronic equipment capable of remote operation of pumping stations and sluices, operation costs for emergency dike repair operations, computers and internet connectivity in Yagoua and Maga, vehicles for staff and renovation of housing for senior staff at both Yagoua and Maga, and costs for scheduled maintenance.
- (9) Prepare a detailed timeline for the restructured Directorate to be complete and running effectively within three years from the start of project execution.

#### Establishment of water resources management directorate.

An organization chart for this directorate has been prepared in consultation with SEMRY and MINADER by the World Bank mission during their January 2020 mission for the preparation of the VIVA Logone Project. This organization chart is provided on the right side of figure 4 below.



*Figure 3: Proposed structure of the water resources management directorate (on the right)* 



The consultancy mentioned earlier would:

- (1) study this structure carefully and propose any modifications required to achieve the mandate of this Directorate.
- (2) Prepare job qualification requirements for the Head of the Directorate
- (3) Prepare job qualifications for the Hydraulic/Hydrologic Specialist who would be responsible to design the Basin Hydromet network with the assistance of external instrumentation consultant and then monitor the network. Identify requirements for support staff.
- (4) Prepare job qualifications for Basin Modeler including River Administration systems. This office would be responsible for regular flood forecasting and issuing Flood Alerts to the Basin stakeholders.
- (5) Prepare job qualifications for staff responsible for dealing with other water resources management entities in Cameroon as well as dealing with transboundary issues with the Lake Chad Commission.
- (6) Prepare costed proposals for setting up this unit including staff salaries commensurate with prevailing market conditions, buildings, electronic equipment capable of remote monitoring of instruments, issuing flood alerts, computers and internet connectivity in Yagoua, vehicles for staff and housing for senior staff.
- (7) Prepare a detailed timeline to get this Directorate set up and running effectively within three years from the start of project execution.

**MEADEN is a relatively small institution compared with SEMRY.** Its proposed new roles, (shown in figure 5) are similar to those proposed for SEMRY. However, in MEADEN's case, the proposed changes consist mainly of building MEADEN into a new institution designed to fulfill its new mandates. As with SEMRY, MEADEN will focus its activities on its regional development role, on the management of the irrigation infrastructure, and provision of essential services such as integrated water management and research and development. Functions such as management of the irrigation water within the perimeters, land preparation, and technical assistance to farmers will be transferred from MEADEN to WUAs, to private service providers, and to independent user groups and cooperatives.

As the process of institutional changes is complex, needing to be conducted simultaneously with the implementation of the different components, in **Annex 1** is presented a more detailed view of the structural adjustments, as well as the sequence of the agreed activities.



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Figure 5: Restructured MEADEN by 2024



#### Land tenure

In compliance with the current legal framework, the land under the irrigation schemes will remain State land, but the quality of State land management needs to be improved and land tenure rights for users' needs to be enhanced. In both VIVA Benue and VIVA Logone projects, the legal situation regarding land tenure rights will need to be clarified with respect to the use of plots and water, and rights and duties and relationships between each stakeholder (farmers, WUA, MEADEN). This will be needed to secure and enhance land tenure rights, manage water fees, as well as setting up the land user register in the existing and new irrigation schemes. MEADEN's and SEMRY's institutional transformation will provide an opportunity to clarify land tenure rights in the irrigation schemes and to strengthen them. Given the current social context, updates and clarification of land rights will be needed, but these changes will have to be progressive.

A key aspect during project implementation will be to render all the land rights activities of the Projects as transparent as possible with clear communications among beneficiaries, PAPs, and all the stakeholders involved along with the publication of the names of individuals and the land allocated to them. The Projects will ensure that land tenure aspects, including technical specifications, are included in contracts between WUAs, MEADEN/SEMRY, and farmers. To achieve these purposes, land governance activities will be supported under a Technical Assistance for Irrigation Management component to ensure the quality and transparency allocation and use, as well as the WUA structuring process, with MEADEN/SEMRY retaining an oversight role.

The TA will deal with both a clear land allocation process, including which criteria are applied and how these criteria have been identified for farmers and private sector, and the land contract update including clarification of land tenure rights and enhancement of the irrigation scheme management. This will be updated in "renovated technical specifications" which will take into account new stakeholders such as WUAs and new land and technical management. Land rights security does not necessarily mean title deed and ownership; a balanced long-term lease with a clear set of rights and duties could also be an option. Long leases and land rights transfer conditions, including to heirs, will enhance land use rights for farmers and the private sector. An assessment of the legal framework, using a participatory process, to identify which legal provisions are acceptable and doable, will be undertaken to identify water and land services management.

The water fee will be managed by WUA while the land fee should be for the parastatal entity (MEADEN/SEMRY), given that lands are State lands. Regarding water and land fees, an assessment of the acceptable amount is necessary as well as on the payment terms. The contract update will include transfer conditions, rights, and obligations for all the stakeholders, land fees, if any, duration and termination conditions. The conditions of forfeiture of the exploitation rights should be specified and balanced to motivate the various actors in order to achieve optimum



functioning of the perimeters. For long-term sustainable land governance, an updated GIS database will register and monitor land rights transactions.

### Legal Framework

The VIVA projects will support the ongoing process of policy and legislative reform initiated by the Government, in relation to the irrigation sector. This will involve completing the preparation of the National Water Policy, the Hydro-Agricultural Policy, and the new Water Code relevant for implementing regulations as well as to creating an appropriate legal basis for the irrigation sector.

This new legal framework will create the legal basis for the establishment of WUAs within new and existing irrigation schemes. Membership of a WUA will be compulsory for each landholder so as to ensure the payment of irrigation fees (which will be set to cover the WUA's own operation and maintenance costs as well as any fees due to a third party) and compliance with irrigation rules. At the same time the legislation will also set out the rights of WUA members including the right to a fair share of irrigation water. It will also clearly specify the internal governance arrangements within WUAs so as to ensure transparent decision making and provisions for effective oversight.

The legislation will also provide that each WUA is to be responsible for the management, operation and maintenance of irrigation infrastructure within its area of responsibility on the basis of a long-term use agreement to be concluded with SEMRY/MEADEN other such public entities. The new legal framework will also spell out the functions of the latter, with regards to their role as bulk water suppliers, on the basis of long-term contracts until the WUAs are able to take responsibility for major irrigation infrastructure, either individually or on the basis of a WUA federation.

#### Land preparation Services

The land preparation operations within SEMRY serviced areas will be transferred to the private sector by outsourcing to service providers and farmers' cooperatives. Mechanization of other farming operations such as precision land levelling, harvesting, threshing etc. will also be promoted. Matching grants will be provided to the cooperatives and private entrepreneurs for the procurement of the requisite farm machinery, implements and other equipment. Subsidies will initially be provided to the growers to pay for these services in the form of e-Vouchers which will be gradually phased out so that the farmers will eventually be fully paying for the services. The operators and technicians will be trained in the operation, repair and maintenance of the equipment, machinery, and implements whose use will be promoted. Awareness will be created amongst the farming community on the need to adopt the improved agricultural practices by establishing demonstration sites for technology showcasing, as well as information dissemination through organizing field days, establishing individual contacts, and using ICT.



#### B. How to ensure long-term sustainability

The key to long-term sustainability is a successful transformation over the next few years as part of an effective implementation of the two key VIVA Benue and VIVA Logone projects. Key achievements must include:

- (a) Transformation and effectiveness of the reformed SEMRY and MEADEN by the end of the second third year of the respective VIVA projects;
- (b) Transfer of the operation and maintenance of irrigation schemes to WUAs and full functioning of WUAs;
- (c) All land preparation services undertaken by the private sector at the latest by year 3 of the VIVA projects; and
- (d) Private sector fulfilling its functions for effective functioning of the rice and other value chains (incl. storage, processing, marketing, etc.).

Once a successful transformation has occurred and if all key entities (SEMRY, MEADEN, farmers, WUAs, private sector) fulfill their respective roles, sustainability will be assured.

This transformation process will not take place without the commitment of the government, as well as the commitment of stakeholders. To ensure adherence to institutional transformation, to the participation of the private sector, to the new role of organized farmers, in short, adherence to the four principles which are the basis of the Projects in preparation, several actions have been carried out. **Annex 2** presents a description of the main actions.



## **ANNEX 1. INSTITUTIONAL CHANGES**

The purpose of this annex is to give a more detailed view of the practical reasons for the structural adjustments, as well as the sequence of the agreed activities. This will be part of the design of the VIVA Benue and VIVA Logone projects.

#### Institutional changes in MEADEN.

MEADEN is a parastatal organization responsible for the Benue river valley. When MEADEN was established in 1972 in Garoua, the operation and maintenance of the hydraulic infrastructure of the Lagdo reservoir was its core mandate. During the 1990s, the mandate to operate and maintain the large infrastructure of the Lagdo reservoir was transferred to the Government, under the Ministère de l'Economie, de la Planification et de l'Aménagement du Territoire (Ministry of Economy, Planning, and Regional Development, MINEPAT). MEADEN has since then focused only on the operation of the irrigation services, along with agricultural support and land-preparation services. MEADEN has a modest staff contingent of 40 personnel, machinery workshops and stores, machinery, and a fleet of trucks. Its budget for 2018 was approximately US\$0.5 million. A severe lack of mechanization in the area, and a near-complete absence of explicit rules for land-access and control and irrigation water management, are key issues to be addressed. The present multiple roles originate from historical evolutions that have entrenched a highly centralized bureaucratic character of the organization, which requires transformation.

In the North region, MEADEN is the primary institution responsible for the strategic vision for regional development, reporting to MINEPAT. As discussed with the specialists, the Institutional Strengthening subcomponent of the VIVA Benue Project will focus on the reorganization of MEADEN and the training of its staff. The reorganization will include the transfer of aspects of MEADEN's present operations such as irrigation management within the rice fields to the WUAs and land preparation to the private sector, while strengthening MEADEN's important residual roles of providing support to the WUAs, managing the main water infrastructure, and overseeing hydrology, research, water management within the catchment area and providing an early warning system and rapid response to flooding and other emergencies.

The challenge for MEADEN will be the preparation of a detailed restructuring plan with objectives, actions, responsibilities, timing, and costing for a 3-year implementation with clear milestones. During project implementation, the Bank will monitor the plan and review the milestones to provide support as needed. It is foreseen that during the Mid-term Review, the implementation of the restructuring plan will be assessed, and corrective measures will be taken, if necessary. The restructuring plan will gradually reinforce the MEADEN team, while the PIU will focus on project management from the beginning. Specialized intensive training will be provided to the staff of new specialized units like a Water Resource Unit (for supporting the Water Management Committee of Lagdo dam/Comité de Gestion de l'Eau du Barrage de Lagdo) and a WUAs Oversight Unit.



Once MEADEN has the capacity to take over the long-term activities of the Project, it will begin to assume them in close coordination with the PIU and the Steering committee, so that upon Project completion, MEADEN will have the capacity to continue the regional development process started with the project. See the sequencing in Table 1 below. According to this planned sequencing, since year 3 the Project will provide institutional support to MEADEN to ensure its empowerment ant its autonomy after closing VIVA-Benue Project.

#### Institutional changes in SEMRY

SEMRY is a production company created in 1971 and whose main mission was rice production. However, 40 years later, performance continues to be weak, the irrigated areas per year remains limited (11,000 ha instead of potential 24,000 ha) and rice production stagnated at 60,000 ton/year (instead of potentially over 150,000 ton/year). Thus, in order to modernize and provide solutions to the Far-North of Cameroon, it needs to evolve towards a development society playing the sovereign role of State. In this sense, its new role should be (i) maintenance of the main infrastructure; (ii) support and supervision of farmers; and (iii) general development of the area. This will involve the gradual transfer of some of its current responsibilities, namely: rice milling (to a private concession), plowing services (to private providers), and management of the irrigation network (to WUAs). A management consulting firm has been recruited during project preparation for elaboration on a comprehensive transformation plan of SEMRY.

The transformation plan of SEMRY will include a new organization chart with the removal of the above-mentioned aspects (land preparation services, rice commercialization, and irrigation management) and five new functions: (i) Water Resources Management Unit, (ii) Geographic Information System Unit, (iii) WUA Support Unit, (iv) Maintenance Department, and (v) Training Manager/Innovation Center. The transformation plan will have an implementation period of 3 years with specific restructuring milestones that can easily be monitored and also reviewed at mid-term, if necessary. It is expected that, due to the size of the SEMRY and the complexity of the transformation, the firm will prepare a costed Social Plan with all the necessary activities to be carried on, and a calendar with milestones.

It is planned that once SEMRY has the capacity to take over the long-term activities of the Project, at around the third year of implementation, it will begin to assume the long-term activities in close coordination with the PIU and the Steering committee, so that upon Project completion, SEMRY will have the capacity to continue the development process started with the project.



#### TABLE 1. Sequencing Table for VIVA Benue

Preparation	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6	Year 7
(2019- 2020)	(2021)	(2022)	(2023)	(2024)	(2025)	(2026)	(2027)
1 – Improvement	of Infrastructure and	d Water Management					
Ongoing studies: Right bank (RB) and left bank (LB) hydro-agricultural development, preliminary project documents, and	Finalization of development studies for RB perimeters 1,000 + 5,000 ha	Procurement process for phase 1 and phase 2 works and works oversight	Rehabilitation works for (phase 1) 1,000 ha open canal; Development (phase 2) 1,000 Ha new RB open canal	Development work (phase 2) 2,000 ha RB open canal	Development work (phase 2) 2,000 ha RB open canal	Finalization of development works phase 2	
tender documents			Construction work oversight	Construction work oversight	Construction work oversight	Construction work oversight	
	Finalization of development studies for perimeters on the LB 5,000 ha (pressure irrigation)	Procurement process for phase 3 and control works (same as phases 1 and 2) and for the construction of the RB	Development work on the LB area (phase 3): Installation of primary pipes	Installation work (phase 3) of secondary and tertiary pipes + water meters	Installation work (phase 3) of secondary and tertiary pipes + water meters		
	and RB and LB protective dikes	and LB protection dikes	Construction work oversight	Construction work oversight	Construction work oversight		
			Construction of protective dikes for RB & LB	Construction of protective dikes for RB & LB	Finalization / revegetation of protective dikes for RB & LB		



Preparation	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6	Year 7
(2019- 2020)	(2021)	(2022)	(2023)	(2024)	(2025)	(2026)	(2027)
Land management/ development of award criteria; Census of rice farmers; Establishment of the plot allocation committee (RB and LB)		Work on banks, canals and roads (revegetation, mowing, etc.)	Work on banks, canals and roads (revegetation, mowing, etc.)	Work on banks, canals and roads (revegetation, mowing, etc.)	Work on banks, canals and roads (revegetation, mowing, etc.)	Work on banks, canals and roads (revegetation, mowing, etc.)	Work on banks, canals and roads
	Implementation of the GIS geographic information	Updating the register of beneficiaries	Allocation of new plots in RB and LB	Allocation of new plots in RB and LB	Allocation of new plots in RB and LB	Operation of the rice and agricultural plot management	Operation of the rice and agricultural plot
	system; Updating of specifications; Registration of plot requests/updating of the register of beneficiaries	Allocation of new plots in RB	Raising awareness/training	Raising awareness/training	Raising awareness/ training rice farmers	system	management system
		Raising awareness/training rice farmers on land management	<ul> <li>rice farmers on land management</li> </ul>	management	management		
	Support for the structuring of associations of water users	Support for the structuring of water user associations (creation, training,	Operation of Water User Associations	Operation of Water User Associations			
	(creation, training, support, equipment, etc.)	support, equipment, etc.)	support, equipment, etc.)	support, equipment, etc.)	support, equipment, etc.)		
			Exchanges with SAED	Exchanges with SAED	Exchanges with SAED		
		Management of subsidy systems with CGER	Management of subsidy systems with CGER	Management of subsidy systems with CGER	Subsidy systems management/CGER		



Preparation	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6	Year 7		
(2019- 2020)	(2021)	(2022)	(2023)	(2024)	(2025)	(2026)	(2027)		
2 – Production and Support to Agriculture Services									
Studies in progress/CGER Identification of local actors	Identification of existing and potential private operators	Subsidy systems for plowing and micro- planning And input and service subsidy	Subsidy for plowing and micro-planning Input and service subsidy	Subsidy for plowing and micro-planning Input and service subsidy	Subsidy for plowing and micro-planning Input and service subsidy	Subsidy for plowing and micro-planning Input and service subsidy	Operation of rice enterprises		
	Support for the preparation of BPs for cooperatives and private entrepreneurs and Common Interest Group (CIG) Updating of operational procedures manuals	Support for the preparation/financing of BPs (agricultural/mechaniz ation/ product transformation, agri- services, marketing,	Support for the preparation/financi ng of BPs of cooperatives and private companies	Support for the preparation/financin g of BPs of cooperatives and private companies	Support for the preparation/financi ng of BPs of cooperatives and private companies	Support for the preparation/finanic ng of BPs of cooperatives and private companies	Operation of co- ops, GiEs, private agricultural production, processing and services		
		etc.)	Support for agricultural machinery maintenance workshops	Support for agricultural machinery maintenance workshops	Support for agricultural machinery maintenance workshops	Support for agricultural machinery maintenance workshops	and agricultural maintenance workshops		
	Operational planning		Warantage capacity building	Warantage capacity building	Warantage capacity building	Warantage capacity building	Operation of agricultural warantage systems		
	Professionalization of the seed sector/structuring of actors	Installation and start- up support for seed cooperatives, training + equipment/technical	Technical and organizational support for seed coops, training + equipment /	Technical and organizational support for seed co- ops, training + equipment/technical	Professionalization of seed coops, training, certification + equipment/technica	Empowerment of seed coops, quality certification	Seed quality monitoring and certification		



## The World Bank

Preparation	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6	Year 7
(2019- 2020)	(2021)	(2022)	(2023)	(2024)	(2025)	(2026)	(2027)
	Planning of support activities for the seed sector Installation of a technological	support/seed quality, etc. Installation of the innovation perimeter	technical support/seed quality, etc. Tests of innovations and adaptive	support/seed quality, etc. Tests of innovations and adaptive R&D of	l support/seed quality, etc. Tests of innovations and adaptive R&D	Tests of innovations and adaptive R&D	Tests of innovations and
	innovation centerininnovation centerarin LagdoinPlanning of R&DTeactivitieste	and training infrastructures;	Research and Development (R&D)	sustainable intensification;	of sustainable intensification;	of sustainable intensification;	adaptable R&D of sustainable
		Technical and technological innovation tests	intensification of irrigated rice	nable cation of Variety selection Variety selection rice	Variety selection	Variety selection	Variety
	Launch of priority tests of technical and technological innovations with partner farmers Preparation of training modules and curricula	Rice varietal selection; AC tests and diversification of agricultural production	cultivation; Variety selection Climate Smart Agriculture (rice, onion, corn, sorghum, fruit trees, fish farming, cultivation under cover, fertilization, small mechanization, cultural associations, etc.)	Climate Smart Agriculture (rice, onion, corn, sorghum, fruit trees, fish farming, cultivation under cover, fertilization, small mechanization, cultural associations, etc.)	Climate Smart Agriculture (rice, onion, corn, sorghum, fruit trees, fish farming, cultivation under cover, fertilization, small mechanization, cultural associations, etc.)	Climate Smart Agriculture (rice, onion, corn, sorghum, fruit trees, fish farming, cultivation under cover, fertilization, small mechanization, cultural associations, etc.)	
			Capitalization of results;	Capitalization of results;	Capitalization of results;	Capitalization of results;	Capitalization of results;



## The World Bank

Preparation	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6	Year 7
(2019- 2020)	(2021)	(2022)	(2023)	(2024)	(2025)	(2026)	(2027)
	Organization of the basic seed production process	Technical and professional training	Technical and professional training	Technical and professional training	Technical and professional training	Technical and professional training	Technical and professional training
		Production of pre-base seeds and rice bases/processing, etc.	Production of pre- base seeds and rice bases/processing, etc.	Production of pre- base seeds and rice bases/processing, etc	Production of pre- base seeds and rice bases/processing, etc.	Production of pre- base seeds and rice bases/processing, etc.	Production of pre-base seeds and rice bases
	Creation/structurin g of the Lagdo CGER	Development of services to agricultural businesses: accounting.	Creation of the Garoua CGER; Development/stren gthening of business	Strengthening of services to businesses in the agricultural sector:	Consolidation of business service capacities	Business services	Business services
 	Planning the development of CGER activities;	management, subsidy, organizational and strategic advisory	services: accounting, management,	accounting, management, subsidy,			
	Awareness and training of local actors	support; Awareness and training of local actors	subsidy, organizational and strategic advisory support	organizational and strategic advisory support			
3 – Capacity Build	ling and Implementa	tion					
Ongoing studies: MEADEN institutional audit;	Restructuring of MEADEN/creation and reorganization of services	Institutional support to MEADEN/strengthenin g of services	Institutional support	Institutional support	Institutional support	Support for the empowerment of MEADEN	MEADEN autonomy



## The World Bank

Preparation	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6	Year 7
(2019- 2020)	(2021)	(2022)	(2023)	(2024)	(2025)	(2026)	(2027)
Lagdo watershed management master plan; Pest management plan ; Social influx management plan ;	Operational planning of MEADEN activities in Lagdo and in the Benue valley	Support for the creation and development of CFFPA (agricultural vocational training center)	Support to CFFPA	Support to CFFPA	Support to CFFPA		
Stakeholder engagement plan; Baseline	Signing of grant agreements for	Subsidy from agricultural training institutions	Subsidy from agricultural training institutions	Subsidy from agricultural training institutions	Subsidy from agricultural training institutions		
situation; ESMF; RPF/Social	agricultural training institutions in	Training of internal and external actors	Training	Training	Training		
Assessment/RAP; Rules of	Laguo anu Garoua		Promotion of Lagdo rice at national level	Promotion of Lagdo rice at national level	Promotion of Lagdo rice at national level	Training	
MEADEN land tenure;			Knowledge exchanges	Knowledge exchanges	Knowledge exchanges		
Manuals of procedures (3);				Organization and implementation of a	Maintenance of hydraulic	Maintenance of hydraulic	
Markets Strategy; Communication Strategy;				hydraulic infrastructure maintenance fund	infrastructure with WUAs	infrastructure with WUAs	Land regulation
Law/water support			Funding of scholarships for	Funding of scholarships for agricultural students	Funding of scholarships for	Funding of scholarships for agricultural students	



The World Bank

Preparation	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6	Year 7
(2019- 2020)	(2021)	(2022)	(2023)	(2024)	(2025)	(2026)	(2027)
			agricultural students		agricultural students		
	Adoption/ implementation of new law on water and WUAs	Land regulation	Land regulation	Land regulation	Land regulation	Land regulation	
	Establishment of partnership agreements with IRAD, AFRICA RICE, SAED, NBA, and MINADER	Technical support for rice intensification and agricultural diversification	Technical support for rice intensification and agricultural diversification	Technical support for rice intensification and agricultural diversification	Technical support for rice intensification and agricultural diversification	Technical support for rice intensification and agricultural diversification	End of the VIVA BENUE project
	Implementation of the VIVA BENUE project	Implementation of the VIVA BENUE project	Implementation of the VIVA BENUE project	Implementation of the VIVA BENUE project	Implementation of the VIVA BENUE project	Implementation of the VIVA BENUE project	
	Implementation of project monitoring and evaluation	Implementation of project monitoring and evaluation	Implementation of project monitoring and evaluation	Implementation of project monitoring and evaluation	Implementation of project monitoring and evaluation	Implementation of project monitoring and evaluation	



# ANNEX 2. BUY-IN FROM THE GOVERNMENT OF CAMEROON TO ADOPT THE INSTITUTIONAL AND SOCIAL REFORMS

The awareness of changes, in fact, is beyond the institutional changes and includes not only SEMRY and MEADEN but MINEPAT and MINADER, private sector including the financing sector, the academia, among others.

During the preparation of VIVAs, four principles were agreed with the GoC: (i) irrigation development and rehabilitation with a progressive transfer to the irrigation water users associations (WUAs); (ii) transfer of the land preparation services to the private sector; (iii) promotion of the private sector in the commercialization of agricultural value chains (e.g. rice); and (iv) review the role of the Government, particularly parastatal agencies created, such as MEADEN and SEMRY.

These principles are the basis for the whole transformational process. This process includes the Institutional restructuring, the active participation of the private sector to provide services that currently are provided by MEADEN/SEMRY as land preparation, maintenance of irrigation and drainage infrastructure, transformation of paddy rice, and commercialization. The process includes the participation of private financing institutions as banks and microcredit institutions.

The Project and the Government have decided to follow some successful transformational experiences in the region, mainly the one of the Société d'Aménagement et d'Exploitation des terres du Delta et de la Vallée du fleuve Sénégal (SAED) in Senegal. The implementation of the model in Senegal took several years and, as any dynamic process, is not finished.

Changes could be challenging to be implemented and could need long term engagement from different stakeholders. To ensure the buy-in from the Government of Cameroon, several strategies were adopted as a permanent exchange of information with local Institutions and Government; periodical missions with activities in the field as with stakeholders in the ministries involved or related to the projects; technical visits to SAED, among others.

The projects supported technical visits to SAED where participated representatives from the MINEPAT, MINADER, SEMRY, MEADEN, representatives of farmers, of producer cooperatives, traditional authorities, local authorities, among others. This strategy promoting learning by touching, by talking with peers, by noting the real possibility of a favorable change for all, was a successful one, convincing the stakeholders on the necessity of changes.

The General Directors of SEMRY and MEADEN, as several managers and technical staff, participated in the technical visits and exchanged information on the institutional changes and



adaptation process. To facilitate the exchanges, a Convention was signed with SAED. Under this Convention technical staff from Cameroon goes to learn particular operative aspects of SAED, and staff from SAED come to Cameroon to support different technical aspects.



Technical visit to SAED. November 2019.



Exemple of local irrigation planning. Saint Louis, Senegal. SAED



At the national level, an important moment was the acceptance of the institutional transformation by the MINEPAT and MINADER. In February 2020, a meeting was held with the Minister of MINADER, and with the participation of representatives from MINEPAT and SEMRY, to discuss i) the process of institutional transformation; ii) the necessity of a firm to prepare the transformational plan including a Social Plan; iii) the inclusion of Farmer Led Irrigation as part of the projects; iv) the legal framework that needs to be improved to consider WUAs.

The main agreements of the meeting were:

# Prochaines étapes

- 1. Accord de principe du MINADER sur la feuille de route pour la réforme institutionnelle
- 2. Inclure dans les Documents des 2 projets VIVA les éléments nouveaux
- 3. Mission d'évaluation technique du VIVA BENOUE mi-février 2020 → puis négociations → Board BM Mai 2020
- 4. Lancer l'étude de planification détaillée de la réforme institutionnelle de la SEMRY
- 5. Inclure dans le PTAB MINADER et la loi de finance 2021 le coût de la réforme de la SEMRY pour l'Etat (Plan social, etc.)
- 6. Appuyer le processus de révision de la Loi sur l'Eau (inclure AUE)
- 7. Mission d'évaluation technique du VIVA LOGONE Septembre 2020

As part of the preparation of the VIVA Bénoué and VIVA Logone Projects, the Government has sent a *Note d'Engagement* (see below) about its engagement on the four principles agreed. This Note also mention the engagement on continuing the efforts to improve the legal framework to include the status of Water User Associations.





#### A Monsieur le Directeur des Opérations pour le Cameroun, Région Afrique de la Banque Mondiale - Yaoundé –

#### Objet : Coopération Cameroun/Banque Mondiale

Mise en œuvre des recommandations de la mission d'évaluation du Projet d'Aménagement et de Valorisation des Investissements de la Vallée de la Bénoué (VIVA-Bénoué) et d'appui à la préparation du Projet d'Aménagement et de Valorisation des Investissements de la Vallée du Logone (VIVA-Logone) du 17 au 28 février 2020

Monsieur le Directeur des Opérations,

En me référant aux conclusions de la mission visée en objet,

J'ai l'honneur de vous faire tenir ci-joint la note d'engagement du Gouvernement signée par mes soins au sujet de la mise en œuvre des deux projets susmentionnés (VIVA-Bénoué et VIVA-Logone).

En effet, comme convenu avec la Banque mondiale, le Gouvernement du Cameroun s'engage dans le cadre de ces deux projets à :

- transférer la gestion des périmètres réhabilités et/ou aménagés aux Associations des Usagers de l'Eau (AUE) suivant des modalités à définir en matière de gestion de l'eau et du réseau d'irrigation;
- impliquer progressivement le secteur privé dans le financement des plans d'affaires pour la mise en œuvre de certaines activités telles que le labour, le planage mécanisé, les intrants agricoles et, l'appui conseil ;
- 3. promouvoir la dynamisation de l'offre des services de transformation et de commercialisation par le secteur privé à travers notamment le financement des plans d'affaires;
- 4. assurer la régulation du secteur de l'hydraulique agricole.

Par ailleurs, le Gouvernement a déjà engagé et va poursuivre la finalisation de la Politique Nationale de l'Eau (PNE) qui intègre notamment le statut juridique des AUE.

Vous réitérant la gratitude du Gouvernement pour le soutien de votre institution aux efforts de développement du Cameroun, je vous prie d'agréer. Monsieur le Directeur des Opérations, l'assurance de ma considération distinguée./-

PJ:-Note d'engagement

COPIE: - SG/PM

- MINEE
- MINADER
- SEMRY - MEADEN

