

Presentation of COMAID

Community Assistance In Development (COMAID) was founded on January 2007 and registered on the 3rd of March 2009 by the Cameroon Government with registration N0.010/E.29/1111/VOL.8/APPB. COMAID has a multi-disciplinary team of experienced and qualified staff in the areas of Natural Resource Management, Microfinance and Agricultural Value Chain development, Geographic Information System, and Rural development who work together to foster development in communities:

Vision: COMAID envisions a future of hard working and responsible community members enjoying self-sufficiency and sustainable livelihoods in a challenging environment.

Motor: "Making Knowledge Work"

Mission: COMAID exist to enable communities achieve sustainable development, through research, capacity building, partnership, lobbying, and field interventions in a participatory approach to address key development needs of communities.

Specific objectives:

- ❖ To promote economic activities towards food security, income generation and employment especially of the poor, disadvantaged, marginalised and other socially excluded populations.
- ❖ To assist communities benefit from their natural resources while maintaining a unique ecology through conservation and biodiversity protection.
- ❖ To enhance sustainable decision making through the integration of geo-spatial tools like GIS/GPS in development
- ❖ To assist communities especially the poor and socially excluded (women, marginalized and disadvantaged groups) have secured and equitable access to land with focus on food security.
- ❖ To strengthen capacities of community based organizations, municipal councils and government departments through training, partnership, networking and lobby/advocacy.

The main domains of intervention of COMAID includes

- ❖ Natural Resource Management, Biodiversity Conservation and Environmental protection
- ❖ Social exclusion and Minority issues
- ❖ Geographic Information System for environment and development
- ❖ Sustainable agriculture and agribusiness
- ❖ Rural infrastructure development
- ❖ Gender / Development
- ❖ Micro Finance, entrepreneurship and agricultural value chain development

Description of the environment of the region where the internship takes place:

Politically: The North West Region (NWR) is one of the ten regions in Cameroon and Bamenda is the political head quarter of the region administered by the Governor. The NWR is part of the Anglo-Saxon part of Cameroon with English as the main official language. The North west region host many political parties and is the seat of the Social Democratic Front (SDF) being the main opposition party in Cameroon. The NWR is composed of seven Divisions and 31 Sub Divisions administered by Senior Divisional Officers and Divisional Officers respectively. The NWR shares international boundaries with Nigeria to the west and north west.

Socially: the NWR is rich in socio-cultural diversity. It is made up of over 30 ethnic groups with a population of 1.8 million according to the population and housing census of 2005. Occupying a surface area of 17,300 square kilometres, the NWR is densely populated in the urban areas like Bamenda and Kumbo. The NWR has numerous registered civil society groups who intervene to shape the social landscape of the region. Socially they are organised under Associations, Common initiative groups, Cooperatives and cultural meeting groups. The NWR is multi denominational even though Christianity dominates.

Economically: The economic activities of the region is characterised by agriculture, cattle rearing and petit businesses. The livelihood of most families depends on subsistent agriculture. The rate of unemployment is slightly higher than the rest of the

regions because of its limited economic activities. Most of the industries are located outside the region particularly in Douala and Yaoundé, the economic and political head quarter respectively.

Ecologically: Bamenda is found on the western highlands of Cameroon, which runs from the Bioko highlands from the Equatorial Guinea to the Mambilla highlands in Nigeria. The climate of the North West region which is greatly influenced by topography can be described as a tropical transitional climate in the central mountainous region of Cameroon. The high mountainous areas are cold (<15°C) whereas those around the low altitude zones are hot (average 27°C). The region has 2 seasons: Rainy season (mid March-mid October) and Dry season (mid October-mid March). Annual rainfall varies from 1300 mm in the plains to over 3000 mm on the mountains. Altitude ranges from 1000 m asl to 4,090 m asl (Mount Cameroon) The highest point in the NWR is Mount Oku with altitude of 3010 m asl. The vegetation of the region is mostly characterised by grassland savannah and patches of tropical montane forest.

Security Issues: the NWR is a quiet and peaceful region. Since independence, social unrest was witnessed once in 1990-1993 during the advent of political multipartism. Since then, there absolute freedom of movement, freedom of speech, religious tolerance etc. Because of the boundary that Cameroon share with Nigeria there has been incidences of kidnap in the northern part of Cameroon, but no eminent threat of Boko Haram has been reported in the North West Region.

Contribution of the organization towards to the development of the country/region:

- ❖ COMAID informs the government (policy and decision makers) through our reports about on the needs of rural communities, which is considered by government during planning, implementation and monitoring of public investment budget
- ❖ COMAID is currently enhancing civil society participation in the land reform process of Cameroon, through strengthening the capacity of civil society organisations and development of positive suggestions to be integrated in the land law.
- ❖ COMAID builds the capacity and provides technical assistance to sector ministries. Eg COMAID has just supported the ministry of Forestry and Wildlife to Map out the Klmbi-Fungom National Park in the North West Region.
- ❖ COMAID improves the living conditions of communities by increasing income levels through training in income generating activities, material support and creation of employment opportunities which goes a long way to support the GDP of Cameroon.
- ❖ COMAID technically supports municipal councils to develop Council development Plans, trainings, and accompaniment in the decentralisation process.

How many people work for the organisation (employees / volunteers)?

- ❖ 3 Permanent staff
- ❖ 1 Part Time

What working conditions offered the participants (working space, computer, etc)?

- ❖ Working space
- ❖ Internet facility
- ❖ Computers
- ❖ Coffee

Accommodation and costs:

The participants will be accommodated in Bamenda Town, the head quarter of the NWR

COMAID will provide participants following:

- ❖ accommodation of two rooms and 1 seating room for two persons, a common internal kitchen, common internal toilet, light and water facilities
- ❖ office space with internet connection.
- ❖ COMAID will also assist the VISA process by writing and certifying the invitation letter to Cameroon.
- ❖ COMAID will host a maximum of two volunteers at a time

Concerning Living Expenses for Volunteer:

- ❖ Food approximately 3000 frs CFA per day, 90,000 frs CFA per month equivalent to 180 US dollars per month
- ❖ Local transportation approximately 15,000 frs CFA per month equivalent to 34 US dollars per month
- ❖ Other running cost 50,000 frs CFA per month equivalent to 100 US dollars per Month

(Total monthly living expenses is 155,000 frs CFA equivalent to 314 US dollars per month)

Concrete tasks for interns:

Support execution of field activities

- ❖ Support in the organisation of workshops with target beneficiaries
- ❖ Training of beneficiary communities
- ❖ Participate in writing field activity reports

Project writing and fundraising for COMAID

- ❖ Identify potential funders in the objective areas of COMAID
- ❖ Support in project identification and elaboration following funder guidelines
- ❖ Act as liaison between the donor and COMAID

Capacity building for COMAID staff

- ❖ Build staff capacity in relevant areas (project writing, IT, GIS etc)
- ❖ Team building

Networking and long term relationship with COMAID

- ❖ Development and management of COMAID website
- ❖ Capacity on maintaining relationships with partners and donors
- ❖ Mentoring / coaching

Requirements:

- ❖ Mastery of English language (both written and spoken)
- ❖ Ability to work in a rural milieu
- ❖ Good development skills
- ❖ Good analytical and reporting skills
- ❖ Ability to work with diverse team

Learning opportunities for Interns:

- ❖ Interns will be able to learn the African perspective of development particularly the case of Cameroon.
- ❖ Participants will enhance their team spirit to work with people from different cultural backgrounds
- ❖ Interns will practically learn on the effectiveness and impact of funding in Africa
- ❖ They will learn innovative ways of fundraising and sustainability plans of NGOs.

Moreover:

- ❖ Interns will participate in workshops
- ❖ They will work, sleep and eat with local communities during field work
- ❖ They will have the opportunity to work and interact with the numerous NGOs and CSO in the North West Region
- ❖ They will also have the opportunity to interact with government departments that work with COMAID

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