

Native Authority Administration in the Kumba Division, 1916-1968: An Assessment of the Socio-Economic Contributions to Development

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Abstract: The departure of the Germans from Cameroon in 1916 following their defeat by the allied powers (Britain and France) led to the partition of the territory between the English and French. Hence they initiated policies in order to ensure efficient administration of their territories. It was within this context that the British introduced the policy of indirect rule in British Cameroons. The policy made use of indigenous chiefs (Native Authorities) in administration. The native authorities were empowered by the British to initiate socio-economic development initiatives. This paper attempts an evaluation into the activities of Native Authority administration in the Kumba Division, attributing the activities of Natives Administration as the basis of socio-economic development of the Kumba Division. The paper shows how Native administration was able to carry out collective socio-economic activities such as education, Health, sanitation, cooperatives societies, establishment of markets and transport network. These activities transformed the social structure of the indigenes of the Kumba Division. Based largely on archival and oral sources, the paper explains the genesis of native authority administration, how it was implanted in the Kumba Division and the socio-economic activities that they were involved in. The paper submits that despite the meager financial situation faced by the N.As, the bulk of socio-economic developments that occurred in the Kumba division during the colonial era could be ascribed to these N.As. They laid the ground work for self reliant development of the locale which has persisted till date.

Keywords: Native Authority, Native Authority Ordinance, Decentralized Villages

1. INTRODUCTION

Historical analyses reveal that the colonial powers introduced various forms of administration to govern their colonies for a plethora of reasons. The British used the administrative system of Indirect Rule based on the use of Native Authorities (chiefs) as agents of administration. James Coleman defined Indirect Rule as a system of local administration in which the essential features were the preservation of traditional political institutions and their adaptation under the tutelage and direction of the British administration to the requirement of modern units of local government. In simple terms, indirect rule may be defined as a system of administration under which traditional rulers were allowed to rule their people under the supervision of British officials¹.

According to Lord Harlech in his address to the South African Institute of International Affairs², Native Administration originated under Lord Lugard in Northern Nigeria in 1901 not from any consideration of deliberate policy coined by the British government but out of sheer local necessities. The conception of Indirect Rule was of course based on the idea of using the existing structures of the indigenous African social order as an instrument of progressive local government in ethnic areas. Indirect rule policy was regarded as a benign policy that preserved the African culture and tradition

¹J.S.Coleman, *Nigeria: Background to Nationalism*(California:University of California press,Bekeley and Los Angeles, 1958),427.

²Lord Harlech, *British Native policy and Administration in tropical Africa*(South Africa: South African Institute of international Affairs, university of Witwatersrand, Milner park,Johanesburg,1941),16.

British influence in the African continent in general and Nigeria in particular, began from 1849 when the British established a Consular Authority for the Bight of Benin and Bonny (Biafra)³. The British further annexation of Lagos in 1861, according to J.F.A Ajayi, marked the first major step taken by the British Government in the 19th century to acquire political and economic domination over the people of Nigeria.⁴ The second step was the British occupation of Yorubaland in 1888 following the treaty signed between the British government and the Alafins of Oyo which placed all Yorubaland under British protectorate. The third step was the establishment of the protectorates of Northern Nigeria with Lord Lugard as its first High Commissioner. On January 1, 1900, there was a superficial amalgamation of the three geo – political administrative units of Nigeria. This was finalised in 1914 and Lord Lugard became the first Governor – General of Nigeria⁵.

Lord Lugard was faced with numerous challenges to administer this large political unit. He was confronted by an acute shortage of trained European staff to help him run the administration of the vast territory which had been created. This shortage of staff was made worse by the high mortality rate caused by the tropical climate diseases among Europeans. Secondly, even if the Europeans staff were available, the funds at his disposal were too meagre to finance large-scale direct administration. Thirdly, the difficulties created by the existence of a multiplicity of languages and differences in cultures and customs. In the circumstance, a uniform administrative system over the whole area was unworkable⁶.

Another major problem was also the existence of indigenous political institution, the Alafins of Yoruba, the Ife of Benin and the Fulani Emirates of Northern Nigeria had powerful political institutions, a hierarchy of officials, system of justice and taxation. Although the effects of slave trade and the partition had seriously undermined the effectiveness of some of these institutions, they were still more preferable to the indigenous people than any foreign system of government⁷. What were the colonial powers to do with these indigenous political institutions? Were they to do away with them or integrate them into the new system of colonial administration?

To tackle the above problems, the Governor General of Nigeria, Lord Lugard, was able to come up with a system of administration popularly called Indirect Rule or Native Administration. Lugard recalled how his ideas of collaboration with the Fulani Emirates of North Nigeria as instruments of administration made nearly eight million Africans fall suddenly into the power of a small handful of European conquerors. There was the need to establish a cheap and manageable means of government by utilizing indigenous socio – political structures and systems as basis of local governments⁸.

According to Lord Lugard, in his administrative trilogy, *The Dual Mandate in Tropical Africa*, the maintenance of indigenous institution was necessary for the maintenance of native law and order. It was on this basis that, indirect rule had an intertwining relationship with the indigenous institutions. Lugard emphasised that, indirect rule provided a bridge by which the indigenous people may pass safely from the old culture to the western culture⁹. To him, the belief which underlay this policy was that every system of government if it is to be permanent and progressive, it must have its roots in the framework of indigenous society. Lugard went further to analyses that if European government

³K.B.C Onwubiko, *History of west Africa 1800-present day* (Nigeria: Africana-Fep Publisher Limited), 254.

⁴Ibid., 256.

⁵Onwubiko, *History of west Africa*, 254

⁶ibid.

⁷J.C. Anene, *Southern Nigeria in transition 1885-1906* (Cambridge: Cambridge university press, 1977), 58.

⁸F. D Lugard, *The Dual Mandate in British Tropical Africa* (London: William Black- wood and Sons, 1922), 15.

⁹NAB, AB 78. Report by his Majesty's government in the united kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland to the Trusteeship council of the United Nations on the Cameroons.

destroyed directly the power of traditional rulers they will wipe out the only basis upon which the indigenes could be administered politically and economically¹⁰.

Apart from Lord Lugard's justification on the application of indirect rule and Native Administration, the British government favoured the policy as the British administrators believed that African traditional methods of government were good, provided they were shorn of certain practices that did not entirely correspond to western norms. The British administrators, coming from a country which still maintained a monarchy had a basic respect for the institution of kingship and the panoply of ritual that surrounded it. Thus native authorities were very important for the smooth running of colonial policies and achievements¹¹.

Kamerun emerged from the First World War as a partitioned mandated territory of the League of Nations, administered by British and France. The partition which was meant to be provisional, gave France four fifth of the German *Kamerun* while Britain took one fifth. In 1922, the League of Nations through Article 22 and 23 confirmed the Anglo-French provisional partition of the Cameroons. The British and French Cameroons were later classified as class B mandates of the league of Nation¹².

By Article 9 of the mandate agreement of the League of Nations, Britain was given the right to administer its sphere of Cameroon as an integral part of Nigeria and to constitute the territory into various kinds of union with Nigeria. For administrative convenience, Britain divided its sphere of Cameroon (the Cameroons province) into British Northern Cameroons which was administered as part of the Northern Provinces of Nigeria and British Southern Cameroon that was administered as part of the Southern Province of Nigeria (Later as part of the Eastern Region of Nigeria).

British Southern Cameroon which was now administered as part of the Eastern Region of Nigeria witnessed the introduction of the British colonial policy of Indirect Rule and Native Administration. It is in this part of the Cameroons that is situated the Kumba Division.

2. IMPLANTATION OF NATIVE AUTHORITY ADMINISTRATION IN THE KUMBA DIVISION

In order to implant Native Administration successfully in the Kumba Division, the constitutional framework of the system rested upon a number of ordinances namely, The Native Authority Ordinance, Native Courts Ordinances and the Native Treasuries based on the Native Revenue Ordinance.

The creation of Native Authorities in the Kumba Division began with the enactment of the 1916 Native Administration Ordinance. According to this ordinance, a Native Authority was defined as "any chief or any native council or group recognized by the British government to work as an integral part of the machinery of administration"¹³. Therefore, Native Authorities were founded on traditional institutions and the limit of their jurisdiction usually coincided with tribal or clan boundaries. Although the system of native administration was best suited for highly centralize large scale society like the emirate of Northern Nigeria, it was introduced in the Kumba Division where a great majority of the communities were non- centralized. A logical question that follows is how then was Native administration implanted in the Kumba Division?

The whole idea to establish Native administration therefore was a major challenge .According to H.C.A Bryan, no indigenous foundation with dominant and influential prowess was discovered in the Kumba division on which a satisfactory system of native administration could be based. He further analyzed that the development of settlements in the Kumba Division bear some slight resemblance to the growth of the city state in Ancient Greece, where new community formed were essentially independent¹⁴. In order therefore to carve out native authority areas in such a decentralized society, a

¹⁰ibid.

¹¹ Ibid.

¹²Ngoh, Julius Victor.*History of the Cameroon since 1800*.limbe:limbe presbook,1996.168.

¹³ NAB, IC1917/2, Chiefs Affair-Kumba Division 1917.

¹⁴ NAB,File No Ae 38,Intelligent reports on the MbongeClan,KumbaDivision,Cameroonprovince,H.C.ABryant,AssistantDivisioner Officer Kumba,1931.

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selected district officer Cadman was posted to the Southern Cameroon from Northern Nigeria to instruct the British administrators in the Cameroons about the creation of native authorities¹⁵. Guided by him, they began to enquire into the history, custom and belief of the indigenous population in what was known as intelligence and assessment reports. Cadman and his team hoped that by winning the confidence of the indigenes, they could persuade the traditional leaders of the various communities to emerge from the obscurity into which the German master's race theory had driven them and help them to revive the old village council and establish clan councils.

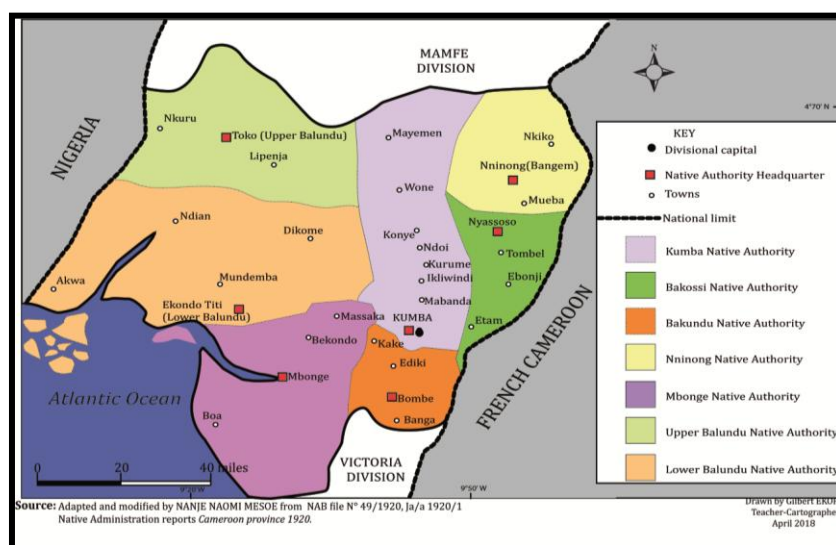
Cadman started with enquires based on ancient tribal organization prior to the German Annexation. In order to resuscitate ancient indigenous machinery to be used for Native Administration, elaborate and numerous studies were carried out tracing the genealogical trees of the villages in the Kumba Division. He concluded that villages with common ancestors and migratory trends should be grouped as Native Administrative units with the most accessible village as headquarter¹⁶. This was the beginning of clan organization. Endeavours were also made to unearth some leading families who held authority prior to European occupation. This move won the hearts of the people of the Kumba Division especially the older generation who had nostalgic feelings about the glories of their traditional council and lineage heads.

With such criteria therefore, according to the 1923 Native Authority Ordinance, seven native authorities units were established. Their spatial spread and boundaries are shown on Map 1. The following chiefs in Table 1 were issued a warrant to act as native authority administrators in their various clans that constituted these Native Authorities.

Table1. Native Authority Units (Native Court Areas) and their Heads (1923)

Native authorities Areas	Chiefs
Kumba(bafaw)	Rudolf Melango/Abel Mukete
Bakossi(nyassoso)	Ajebepie / NtokoEpie
Mbonge	Sakwe
Nninong	Makoge
Bakundu(bombe)	Etie
Upper Balundu	Esaw
Lower Balundu	Namuango

Source: NAB file no 49/1920, Ja/a1920/1 Native Administration reports Cameroon Province 1920.



Map1. Native Authority Units in the Kumba Division in 1923

¹⁵ J.L.Nfi, *Nigerians on Missions in the British Southern Cameroon* (Bamenda: Bamenda, Baron printing House, 2014), 29.

¹⁶ NAB, File No 793/22, Report on Ancient tribal machinery in the Cameroons province, H. CADMAN, 24/9/1922.

By 1932 Native Authorities gazette in Kumba Division had increased from seven native authorities to 19 native authority units with an increase size in population.

2.1. Native Revenue Ordinance

The British Administrative economic policy in the Kumba Division ruled out major government action and only attempted to influence native authority action. This meant that Britain did not involve itself in the fund raising process of the Kumba Division; rather the division was to auto-finance itself for local development. For native administration to function as an instrument of development, the administration required funds which accrued from a variety of sources. These sources included native courts fines, various taxes and royalties. Native Authority treasury was created to secure the various revenues.

3. SOCIO-ECONOMIC ACTIVITIES OF NATIVE AUTHORITY ADMINISTRATION IN THE KUMBA DIVISION

According to Robert Chambers¹⁷, the concept of development is generally associated with a positive connotation – progress, directed at efforts aimed at improving conditions of life. Development can either be immanent development which is a gradual historical process of change or a planned rapid change, ‘intentional development’ which forms the deliberate policies and actions of the state or development agencies¹⁸. For the purpose of the study the activities of native authority administration in the Kumba Division was a trajectory to immanent development. Despite their lean budgets, the native authority administration in the Kumba Division was able to carry out various developmental activities that included education, health, construction and maintenance of road, establishment of cooperatives, sanitary and hygiene. These socio-economic activities are examined in an evolutionary manner so as to establish clearly how the N.A gradually improved on the socio- economic life of the people of the Kumba Division.

3.1. Education

The British colonial government envisaged, as one of the duties of the N.As the provision of educational facilities to the people within their areas of jurisdiction. In Kumba Division the N.A educational development activities included the opening of schools (infant and primary schools), attempts to improve on the quality of pupils who attended the schools by the type of curriculum adopted and the training to N.A teachers¹⁹. The N.A also helped in raising the number of pupils and by offering scholarships to brilliant pupils to study in Nigeria.

In 1922, a memorandum was issued by the resident for the Cameroons that gave the go ahead for the opening of native authority schools²⁰. The first three native authority schools in the Kumba Division were established that same year. These included Nkiko opened in August 1922, Massaka September 1922 and Boa Bakunda November 1922. The Nkiko school had an enrolment of 120 boys, that of Massaka 110 boys and that of Boa Bakunda 26 boys²¹.

In order to improve on the quality of education offered by the NA, in 1923 a conference was held in London at the Colonial Office to examine the memorandum of the education committee. Following the recommendation of this conference, an advisory committee on native education in Africa was set up. After a detailed and careful study on the state of education in Africa, the committee issued a memorandum in 1925 embodying its recommendations. The memorandum was entitled “Education Policy in British Tropical Africa”. This document represented the foundation stone of western education in British tropical African dependencies.²²

¹⁷Robert Chambers, *Rural Development putting the last first.*(Routledge 2014).

¹⁸ ibid

¹⁹ J.A. Ihims, *A century of Western Education in Cameroon. A study of its History and Administration 1844-196*(Bamenda: Bamenda unique printers, 2003), 40.

²⁰Ihims, Jacob..*A century of Western Education in Cameroon.A study of its History and Administration 1844-1961.* 29.

²¹Nkwelle, “The politics of Economic of change in the British Cameroons”, 114.

²²Ja/a1934/2 Native Administration Education programme 1934.

Three other memoranda emphasizing different aspects of education in British tropical African territories were issued by the committee in 1935, 1944 and 1948. These memoranda were applied to the Cameroons as educational reforms. Article 7 of the British educational policy in tropical Africa stated that

Native teaching staff was of prime importance because the key to a sound system of education lies in the training of teachers of indigenous origin and of different grades and specialization.²³

Thus, from the above article, the training of indigenous teacher was the responsibility of the various NA administrations. After the 1925 memorandum, the N.A's were given the liberty of creating as many schools as possible depending on their financial status. In 1928, another N.A school was opened at Kurume raising the number in the division to four. In 1929, the former Nyassoso government school was fully placed under the responsibility of the N.A of that area.²⁴ The Nkiko School was closed down in 1935 because of poor accessibility. In the same year another school was opened in lipenda. In 1939, the Lobe and Kombone N.A Schools were opened with an enrolment of 76 and 80 pupils respectively.

There was a steady growth of N.A schools in British Southern Cameroon in General and Kumba Division in Particular. By 1940, the distribution of N.A schools stood as demonstrated on table 2.

Table2. *Native Administration Schools in British Southern Cameroon 1940*

Division	Number of Schools	Number Of Teachers
Victoria	04	11
Mamfe	05	08
Bamenda	07	15
Kumba	06	15

Source: NAB, Ja/a 1940/2, *Native Administration Education Program by the resident, Cameroon province.*

The above table reveals that the Kumba division had the second highest number of N.A schools in British Southern Cameroon. As the years passed, the enrollment into N.A schools increased. Furthermore girls started going into schools. This changing character of enrollment into the N.A schools is shown on table 3.

Table3. *Native Administration School's Enrolment in the Kumba Division 1943*

Schools	Boys	Girls	Total
Nyassoso	192	30	272
Massaka	174	11	185
Kurume	147	30	177
Lipenja	137	15	152
Kombone	121	38	159
Lobe	87	38	96

Source: NAB, Ba(1943)1, *Annual Report for the Kumba Division, 1943 Educational program.*

The tables above revealed that, in spite of the difficulties faced by the NA, they were able to accommodate a significant number of pupils in schools. It was from such early schools that early learned people of the division in the likes of Lawrence Elango and Otto Elango of Bafaw, Zachariah Agume of Nyassoso, Nasako of Mbonge, N.N Mbile of lipenja and R.N Charley of Bakossi were trained²⁵. Despite the limited elementary education offered by the N.A schools, these individuals formed the bastion of an early elite class in the Kumba Division. Compared to government and mission schools, N.A schools were closer to the indigenous population of the Kumba Division.

²³ Ihims, *A century of Western Education in Cameroon*, 31.

²⁴ J.Ebune. 'The Application of British Indirect Rule in the Kumba Division: A De-colonial Assessment 1916 -1961'. *European journal of Research and Reflections in arts and Humanities* ,vol 4 No 2, 2016.37.

²⁵ Interview with Aaron Ngoe

In 1948, after WWII, the educational cycle was reduced to eight years. Junior schools had an educational cycle which ran from infants one to standard two, intermediate school ran from standard two to standard four and senior school from standard four to standard six. Thus, they were some N.A school which ran either junior school, intermediate school or senior school. It was common for pupils to complete junior schools in their locality or Native Authority area and move to another native authority in order to pursue further education. In the Kumba Division, the Nyassoso and Massaka N.A Schools were able to offer senior school programs²⁶.

Worthy of note is the fact that the British established only two government schools in the Kumba Division. These were the Government School Kumba Town and the Government School Nyassoso. Although these were government schools, they were placed under the financial auspices of the native authorities of the division. Despite the number of challenges faced by N.A schools as limited funds and dilapidated buildings, the N.A did everything possible to sustain their schools and increase the number of pupils through door to door sensitization and mobilization.²⁷

The curriculum in N.A schools was another aspect in the educational process which the N.A attempted to improve upon. The subjects taught in N.A Schools included reading, writing, arithmetic, drawing, word building and moral instruction. In the Massaka N.A school in particular efforts were geared towards improving the reading and speaking capabilities of the pupils. The introduction of English in the N.A school was a major challenge as the infant in the junior school were unable to understand. To solve this problem and to encourage school attendance, a special memorandum was issued in 1927²⁸. This was "The Memorandum on the Place of the Vernacular in Native Education". This memorandum allowed the use of vernacular as a medium of instruction in the first stage of elementary education. English language was to be used in intermediate and senior schools.

The N.A's also contributed to the quality of education in the Kumba Division by sponsoring teachers to training school in order to maintain high educational standards. The N.As faced the problem of shortages of qualified teaching staff in their schools. This was compensated for by recruiting uncertified assistant, probationary and vernacular teachers. Indigenous teachers who were very efficient were sent to the Normal school for teachers in Victoria which was opened in 1925. With the creation of the Kake elementary teachers training center in 1940, each N.A in Kumba Division was forced to send teachers for training. The Native Authority Administration's expenditure in the Kumba Division on education was placed at 10% of the total revenue.²⁹

By 1943 each clan of the Kumba Division could boast of an N.A school that served the population. Prominent politicians in the Kumba Division could trace their educational background to N.A schools. For instance N.N Mbile, chief Mukete, chief Bokwe, R.N Charley, Elango and AjebeSone were all products of N.A school.

The effort of the N.A to develop the division educationally and to increase the number of schools goes was equally manifested in the award of N.A scholarship to school children. N.A granted scholarships to pupils to study in the Ombe technical trade center created in 1952. In 1957, the Kumba native authority voted two hundred and fifty pounds for the provision of scholarship to deserving students from Kumba Division who was already installed in secondary school anywhere in the federation³⁰. The various N.A's also encouraged students to apply for the Southern Cameroons scholarship board for assistance. The various pupils and students that were trained became the manpower of the N.A. They served as technical assistants, agricultural staff, cooperative staff, nurses and vaccinators³¹.

²⁶NAB,Ja/a 1940/2,Native Administration Education Program by the resident, Cameroon province.

²⁷1167 Vol.1/Ja/A1934/2 Native Administration Education ProgrammeKumba Division 1934.

²⁸.Ngoh,*History of the Cameroon* ,174.

²⁹1167 vol.1/Ja/a1934/2 Native Administration Education ProgrammeKumba Division 1934.

³⁰NAB,Ja/a1953/1 Education rating rules and orders made by Native Authorities, Cameroon province 1953.

³¹NAB,Ja/a1953/1 Education rating rules and orders made by Native Authorities, Cameroon province 1953.

By 1958, following the reorganization of native administration and the confederation of native authorities to form four council areas, deserving candidates for scholarship were presented in the council meeting. Each council was entitled to present two brilliant pupils to be awarded scholarships. Worthy of note was that if a student on NA scholarship failed to complete his /her studies and failed to render the deserved services for which the scholarship was awarded the said students parent were to return the money spent by the N.A. This situation made students to be very serious and determined to complete their studies in the various schools that they were sent to.

In 1961, Mr Pius Sone of the Kumba Eastern Council was granted scholarship to study in St Joseph College sasse. Miss Agnes DioneEjobe who had secured a place at Okoyong Girls Secondary School but had no money was also awarded an N.A scholarship. Efforts were made to encourage local chiefs to take interest in the N.A school by frequent visit and in particular to accompany the D.O and the superintendent of education on their visits to the various schools. N.A schools in the Kumba division were very instrumental as they formed the bases of literacy in the Kumba Division.

3.2. Sanitation and Hygiene

The Native Authority administrations were involved in the maintenance of hygiene and sanitation in their areas of jurisdiction. According to the British Government the African communities had to improve on their sanitation in order to reduce the spread of malaria and mortality. The British Public Health Act of 1872-1875 emphasized on the communities to have a well trained body of sanitary inspectors set to improve the hygienic conditions of dwellers and charged with creating a healthier urban environment on a day to day basis³². Since the N.As were in charge of the socio-economic development of their localities, the provision of sanitation and hygiene services was one of their activities that contributed to the development of the Kumba division.

The Kumba Native authority took upon itself the responsibility of training sanitary inspectors. The only school that trained sanitary inspectors was the Training Center for Native Administration Sanitary Apprentices in Umudike, Owerri Province of Nigeria. The inclusive annual cost in this respect for one apprentice in training was fifteen pounds.

By 1932, the Kumba division had just one sanitary inspector, a Nigerian by name, Mr. Ukong Esien. His attainments and recommendations were not so high thus there was the need to train another sanitary inspector from the division. A contract therefore was signed between Chief Abel Mukete and Joseph KottoEpie, a young man who was willing to do the work of a sanitary inspector. Kotto had shown some skills in Kumba Town pertaining to this profession. In 1934, the Kumba Native administration granted kotto a scholarship of fifteen pounds to study in the sanitary school in Umudike. It was agreed and signed by Kotto's father, Mr Johannes Epie, a cocoa farmer in Kumba, to refund the N.A scholarship if his son does not satisfactorily complete the course. Such a clause motivated Joseph Kotto to study hard.

The sanitary training was a twelve months course of which on his returned he would gain employment directly under the Kumba Native Administration with a salary of twenty four pounds per annum. Joseph KottoEpie became the first indigenous sanitary inspector in the Kumba Division.³³ He was able to rally a number of boys whom he later trained and formed a team to ensure the effective implementation of sanitary rules in the Kumba Division.

He was charged with the responsibility of ensuring environmental sanitation, improvement and protection of water supplies, giving advice on house construction and layout of villages, demonstration of suitable simple method of refuse disposal, control of insect breeding, investigation, notification and control of epidemic diseases, the drainage of standing water, inspection of latrines, markets and the general compound cleanliness.³⁴

³² NAB,148Ja/a1934/1 Native Administration sanitary inspectors scheme for training of Cameroon province 1934.

³³ NAB,148Ja/a1934/1 Native Administration Sanitary Inspectors Scheme For Training Of Cameroon.

³⁴ibid.

Between 1947 and 1948 N.A sanitary inspector visited 8355 houses in the division. In cases where the houses did not follow the advice of the inspectors, their owners were served with notice to appear in court and were fined³⁵. In order to speed up the knowledge of hygiene and sanitation, sanitation was introduced as a subject in N.A schools. With the help of the teaching staff, some good work was done on the pupils immediate vicinities.

With the activities of the sanitary inspectors, hygiene was of great importance and the people of the Kumba Division became very conscious of their environment. Thanks to the N.A sanitary inspectors market stalls were aligned, each home had a latrine and domestic animals were all placed in fences.

According to Mathew Eyambe, N.A sanitary inspectors were very strict and job conscious. They inspected drinking water supplies and advised the indigenes to rather drink spring water than water from larger rivers. They further advised the indigene to build houses with proper ventilation³⁶.

The work of the sanitary inspectors also included the inspection of food items. All baked and fried food had to be put in a glass box called "showcasing". Meaning you could see through the glass box to identify the contents. Those who could not afford a showcasing were forced to put their food items in buckets with lid. In 1956 for example, a huge quantity of tin food that had expired were seized and destroyed in Mbonge Marumba by N.A sanitary inspectors. Eyambe further emphasized that stray domestic animals were confiscated and owners had to pay a fine before the animal could be released. Dogs in particular had to carry a medallion on their neck so that their owner could be identified. The N.A sanitary inspector equally undertook the construction of incinerators for refuse dumps. Fines were levied on individuals caught disposing dump out of the incinerator³⁷.

According to chief V.E Mukete, N.A sanitary inspectors were a force to reckoned with as they were very meticulous in their quest to keep the surroundings clean and to give the town of Kumba and its environ a befitting look. He added that during the native administration era no refuse dump was found along the streets. Each quarter had a refuse dump and all refuse was dump in a constructed incinerator. He further emphasized that he wished present day sanitary inspectors could learn from the golden days of Native Administration when every employee was job conscious³⁸. By 1960 each council area could boast of a senior sanitary inspector. The activities of the N.A sanitary inspectors were greatly felt in the Kumba division as it transformed some settlement like Kumba, Mbonge ,Nyassoso,Tombel Bombe into semi urban status.

3.3. Kumba Native Authority Co-Cooperative Marketing Union

Cocoa, the main cash crop of the people of the Kumba Division was introduced in 1892 by the Germans. The effective cultivation of the crop by the indigenes, however, commenced only in the 1920s. The high humidity and heavy rainfall in the Kumba Division was very unfavorable for the harvested cocoa beans as it easily got moulded. This situation demanded proper fermentation and drying. The absence of this before the mid-1920s perhaps was responsible for the territory's poor quality of cocoa. This with other considerations motivated the Native Authorities in the Kumba Division to establish fermentaries and ovens. The first move was done by the Kumba Native Authority headed by Abel Mukete³⁹. He created the Kumba Cocoa Farmers Society that aimed at building ovens. In 1926, Mr Findlay, a superintendent of Agriculture, addressed farmers in the Kumba Division and applauded the Native Administration for designing such scheme and promised to send them technicians to erect the numerous ovens. According to him the cost of the fermentaries shall be borne by the Kumba Native administration⁴⁰.

³⁵NAB, file No.(Cd/1938/1), Annual Report for Kumba Division.

³⁶ Interview with Mathew Eyambe, Aged 83retired N.A clerk Kumba, Kumba, 18th December 2017.

³⁷ NAB,148Ja/a1934/1 Native Administration Sanitary Inspectors Scheme For Training Of Cameroon Province 1934.

³⁸ Interview with Nfon V.E. Mukete Aged 99,2nd son to Chief Abel Mukete, paramount chief of Kumbaa Former Minister of Information and Research Southern Cameroon, Lagos ,1951. 25th January 2018.

³⁹S.Fonge, "The Development of co-operatives societies in Southern Cameroon 1916-961", (Post Graduate Diploma in History University of Yaounde, 1988),48.

⁴⁰Ibid.,54.

In October 1927, Roebuk began the scheme with the sum of two hundred pounds given by the Kumba and Nyassoso Native administration. Using this amount and with the support of the farmers, fermenting houses and ovens were constructed in Kumba, Mambanda, Mokonje, Ikiliwindi, Nyassoso And Baduma. By the 1930s, the scheme was extended to the Mbonge Native Authority and ovens were constructed in Mbonge Marumba, Bekondo and Massaka⁴¹.

With the improvement of the quality of cocoa beans, the Kumba Native Authority started the Kumba Cocoa Marketing Society which was responsible for the buying of cocoa from farmers. It was sponsored by the various Native Authorities in the Kumba division. It is worth mentioning that Abel Mukete, the district head of the Kumba Division, was the highest producer of cocoa in the 1930s. He had bought a huge quantity of cocoa seedlings from his good friend Mandessi Bell of Douala, a wealthy business man who competed even with European expatriates⁴². Thus, Abel Mukete was doing everything possible to improve on the cultivation and marketing of cocoa produce. The Kumba Cocoa Marketing Society was a huge success as the farmers now had a ready buyer for their produce. The success achieved by the Native administration through their schemes to improve on the cultivation and drying of cocoa led to the emergence of the Kumba Native Authority Co-operative Marketing Union in 1934. It was a fusion between the Kumba Cocoa farmer's society (responsible for the construction of ovens and fermentaries) and the Kumba Cocoa Marketing Society (responsible for the marketing of cocoa).

By 1934 the KNACMU was made up of eighty one villages in the Kumba Division. It became the first indigenous cooperative in the entire British Cameroon and a powerful and influential body in the Kumba Division. It encouraged the cultivation of cocoa in areas like Kumba, Bombe, Tombel, Ebonji, EKumbae, Bangem, Bekondo, Ntehoii, Ngwandi, Lobe, Ebonji, Konye, MbongeMarumba and Lobe. Many individuals owned large cocoa and coffee farms and peoples like Bokwe, Mbile, Chief Mukete, Elango, Ntoko, Andrew Epie of ikiliwindi, Chief Isaac epie, Bernard Sona of Mambanda, became very wealthy and were regarded as the *bourgeoisies* of Kumba⁴³ and constituted an emerging middle class.

The KNACMU stationed buyers in all the villages that had registered. Farmers brought in their cocoa which was weighed and entered against each farmer's name. The dry cocoa was transported and sold at the best price obtainable from the European trading firms. The individual farmers were paid in proportion to the amount they supplied, with expenses for transport, clerk's wages deducted. The efficiency and popularity of the KNACMU greatly encouraged the cultivation of cocoa in the entire Kumba division as they provided a ready market for the small farmers⁴⁴. Table 4 indicates the quantity of cocoa from the Mbonge Native authority unit sold to the Kumba Co-operative marketing union in the 1935 cocoa season.

Table4. Mbonge Native Authority unit cocoa supply to the KNAMU 1935

Villages that supplied more than 5000lbs of cocoa to the KNAMU	Quantity
Bekondo	24080lbs
Massaka	9153lbs
Bolo	8360lbs
Ifanga	7980lbs
Bombele	6175lbs
Bombanda	5740lbs

Source: No. (Ae 37), Assessment Report on the tribal areas of Mbonge and Bakundu.

⁴¹ NAB Ae38(a) Intelligence report on the Mbongeclan, Kumba Division, Cameroons province by Mr H.C.A Bryant, A.D.O

⁴² Mukete, *My Odyssey*, 10.

⁴³ Nkwelle, "The politics of Economic of change", 123.

⁴⁴ No. (Ae 37), Assessment Report on the tribal areas of Mbonge and Bakundu.

The table above indicates villages that supplied above 5000lbs of cocoa to the KNACMU. From the table the marketing union was very helpful to the indigenous population as it provided ready market for their produce.

Apart from the marketing functions of KNACMU, it also provided spraying pumps and perenox⁴⁵ to its members to combat cocoa pod diseases. By 1958, KNACMU had sold close to one thousand six hundred pumps to its members in the Kumba Division. With such preventive measures the people of the Kumba Division did not cut down their cocoa trees as little or no black pod disease was registered in the Kumba Division.

The spirit of entrepreneurship dominated the Kumba Division. Proceeds from cocoa helped changed the status of many in the Kumba Division. The availability of resources helped increased the number of school goers and improved on the living standard of the indigenes of the Kumba Division. Money was made available through thrifts and loans schemes that started in the 1950s after the confederation of councils. There was also an increase in the demand for service such as shops, tailoring, food and furniture supplies.

Prominent cocoa farmers and chiefs were forced by the cooperative union to construct permanent buildings. Instead of living in dilapidated old bamboo/mud/thatch houses, majority of the population now lived in beautiful bungalows build of blocks, wood and stones with corrugated iron sheets. This building scheme initiated by the Kumba Native Authority Cooperative Union greatly changed the settings of some villages like Bekondo, Mbonge Marumba, Ikiliwindi, Bombe. Good examples were Sango Moses Ituka of three corners Bekondo, Sam Ndiba of Ikiliwindi, Sango Nambangi Mosongo of Bekondo, Sango Nanje Henry of Big Nganjo, and Chief Abel Mukete of Kumba, who constructed outstanding building in the 1940s thanks to the building schemes initiated by the Kumba Native Authority Cooperative Union. The aforementioned persons were very wealthy through their establishments of large cocoa plantations. Sango Moses Ituka of three corners Bekondo recruited a large number of young men to work in his plantation. This situation is said to have reduced the number of young men emigrating from the Bekondo area in search for jobs. Rather this wealthy people and their plantations acted as a pull factor for immigrants in the 1950s⁴⁶. The following pictures shows the houses that were constructed in the Kumba Division thanks to the cooperative union..

It is important to highlight that the Kumba Native Authority Marketing Union concentrated much on the cultivation of cocoa rather than coffee that was cultivated in the Bakossi country. Thus, a cooperative union was established in the bakossi land known as the Nyassoso Native Authority Cooperative Union. This union established seven coffee hulling units all in the bakossi area which was the main centre of robusta coffee production. A cleaning and grading plant was later established in Kumba where the products were assembled. The Nyassoso Cooperative was not productive compared to the Kumba Cooperative as farmers in the bakossi area preferred to smuggle their coffee to French Cameroon or sold it to French buyers than allow the cooperative to transport it to Kumba while awaiting payment⁴⁷.

The new found wealth brought by cocoa attracted immigrants from the western grass field and the Bamelike regions. Kumba gradually emerge as the economic capital of British Southern Cameroon thanks to the effort of the Native Authority administration in the improvement of cocoa cultivation and their initiatives of establishing cooperatives.

4. CONCLUSION

The findings in this paper have revealed that the N.As administration contributed immensely to the socio-economic development of the Kumba Division. They were the pivot of economic and social progress in their areas of jurisdiction. Despite their miniscule budgets, few grants or subsidies, fifty

⁴⁵Perenox is a copper fungicide spray against black pod disease and potatoes blight. It also has a large number of commercial designations such as Copper Nordox, Copper Sandoz, Fungimal, Nordox.

⁴⁶ Interview with Justice Bea Abednego aged 65, president Mbonge cultural and development organization, 17 th February 2018.

⁴⁷J.L.Nfi, *Nigerians on mission in the British Southern Cameroon*, 51.

percent reduction of the total budget collected from tax, the N.A administration proved frugal in their expenditure and registered huge developmental projects. Thanks to the N.A educational activities, the rate of literacy was seriously improved upon.

The study has established the fact that N.A administration instilled the spirit of self-reliant development in the indigenes of the Kumba Division. This spirit stemming from the N.A has been transferred progressively till today and is seen in the proliferation of community development schemes. Community labour has helped in maintaining roads in the entire Meme, Ndian and Kupe Manenguba. The foundation of present day political and socio-economic life of areas under the past Kumba division was laid by the N.A administration. One is tempted to opine that if there were no N.A administration in the then Kumba Division, there would have been no sound basis for the political, social and economic development of present day Meme, Ndian and Kupe-Muaneguba divisions

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