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Shea tree (*Vitellaria paradoxa* C. F. Gaertn) and household food security in Northern Cameroon

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Background

- Most rural households in Northern Cameroon, depend on agriculture for their livelihood but are still vulnerable to food insecurity **[1]**;
- Shea trees are documented as an important gap-filling crops during lean season **[2]**;
- However, the contribution of shea consumption and income is not well known in Cameroon.

Aim of the study

- Examine the relationship between shea butter consumption and income from the commercialization and household food security in Northern Cameroon.

Methodology

1-Study area

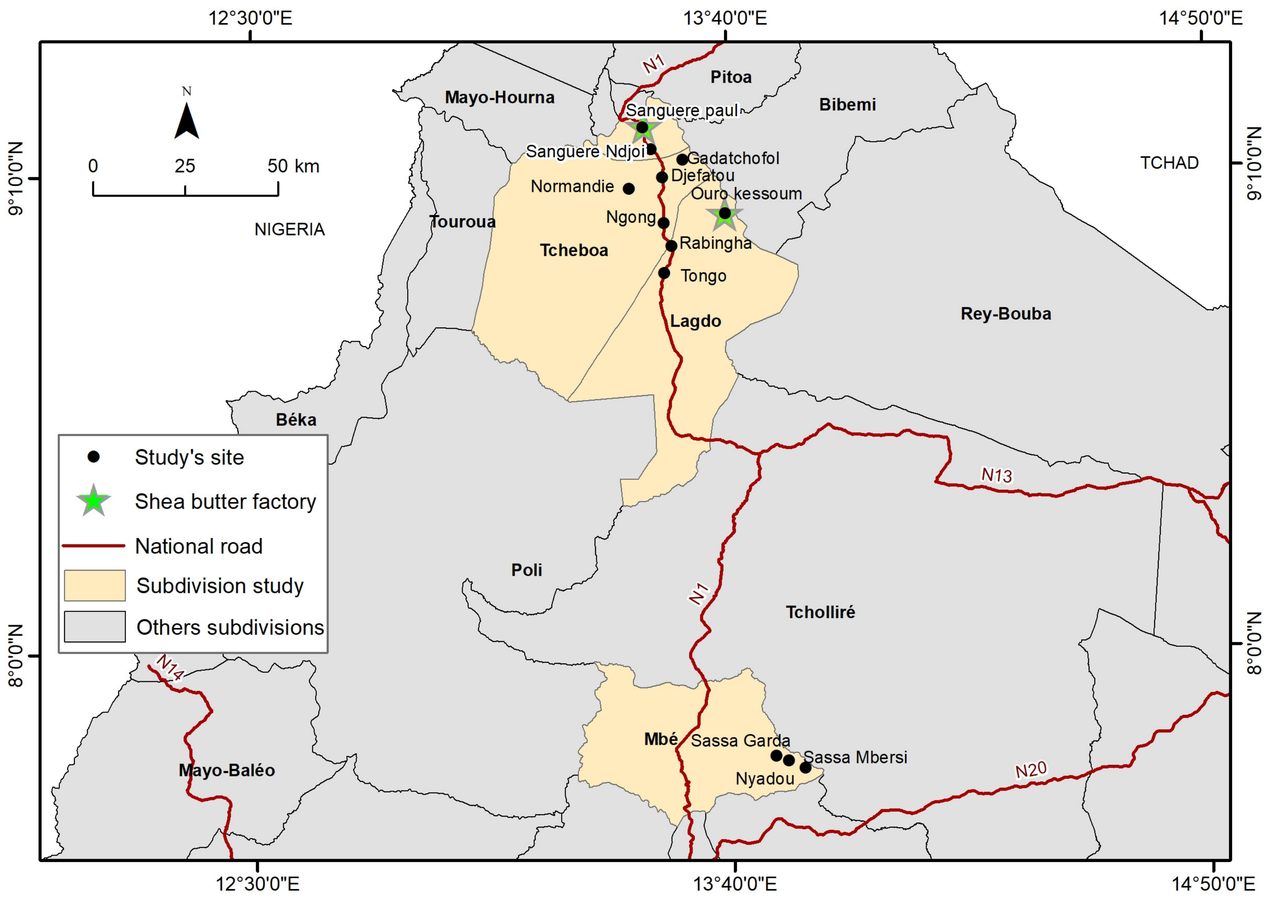

Fig 1: Map of the study area

2-Data collection

- Field research: April to May 2021 in four subdivisions in the Northern part of Cameroon;
- Sample: 381 respondents (including shea producers and non-shea producers);
- Semi-structure questionnaire;

3-Data analysis

- Tobit regression model;
- Variables included in the model are based on theory and previous studies on food insecurity **[3]**;

Dependent variable: Food security score (HFIAS);
Explanatory variables: Socio-economic factors such as gender of HH head, education, farm size, HH size, livestock unit, market access and household income.

Two proxy variables included:

- Shea income
- Frequency of shea consumption (fruits and butter).

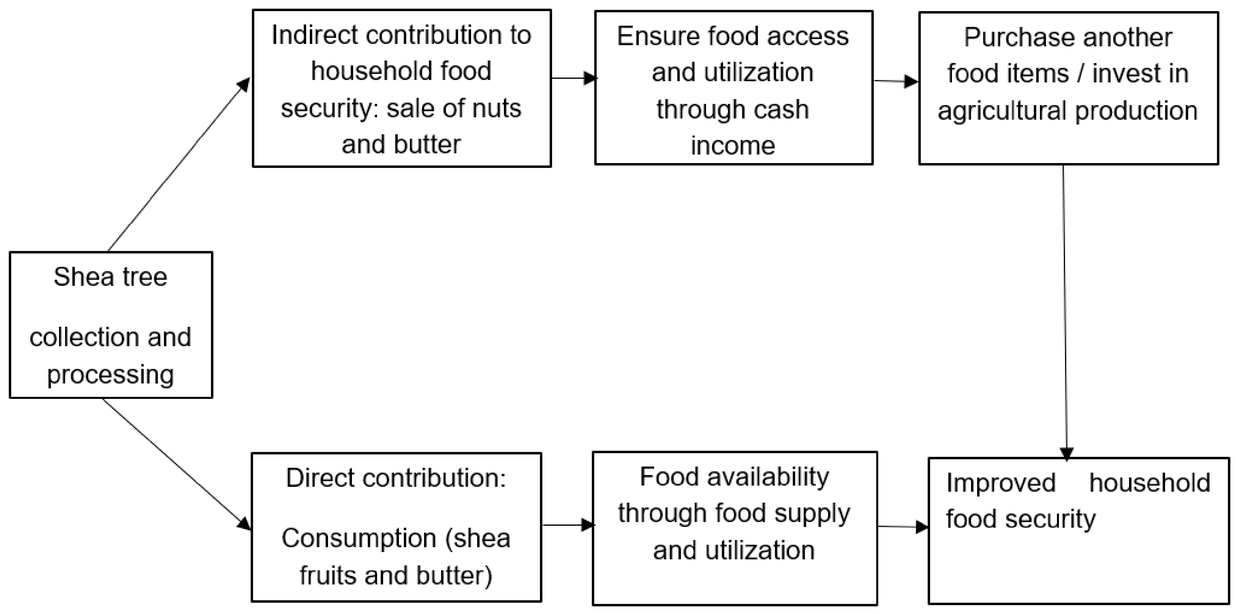

Fig 2: Link between the consumption and sale of shea and food security in the study area (Adapted from **[4]**)

Expected Outputs

- Determinants of household food insecurity in the study area will be identified;
- The frequency of shea consumption (fruits and butter) and income generated from the commercialization that contribute to the food security of rural household in the study area will be analyzed.

Conclusion

This research will help stakeholders involved in shea value chain to develop policies that:

- Promote the cultivation of shea trees in agroforestry parklands;
- Improve livelihood strategies of households with a view to enhance their living standard.

References

[1] Njouenwet et al. 2021. *Natural Hazards* 106:561–577.
[2] Pouliot (2012). *Economic Botany* 66 (3): 237-248.
[3] De Cock et al. 2013. *Food Security*, 5, 269-282.
[4] Baiyegunhi et al. 2016. *Food Security*, 8:153-165.

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