

**REPUBLIQUE DU CAMEROUN
PAIX-TRAVAIL-PATRIE**

**REPUBLIC OF CAMEROON
PEACE-WORK-FATHERLAND**



**REPORT OF THE MINISTRY OF
JUSTICE ON HUMAN RIGHTS
IN CAMEROON IN 2019**

Yaounde, June 2021



REPORT OF THE MINISTRY OF JUSTICE ON HUMAN RIGHTS IN CAMEROON IN 2019

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Report of the Ministry of Justice on
Human Rights in Cameroon in 2019

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FOREWORD

“In this seven-year term of Great Opportunities for Cameroon, the Major National Dialogue has paved the way for our country to resolutely embark on the path to peace, national unity and progress, which are values that have always made our country great”.

Excerpt from the end of year 2019 and New Year
2020 Speech delivered by the President of the
Republic to the Nation, 31 December 2019.

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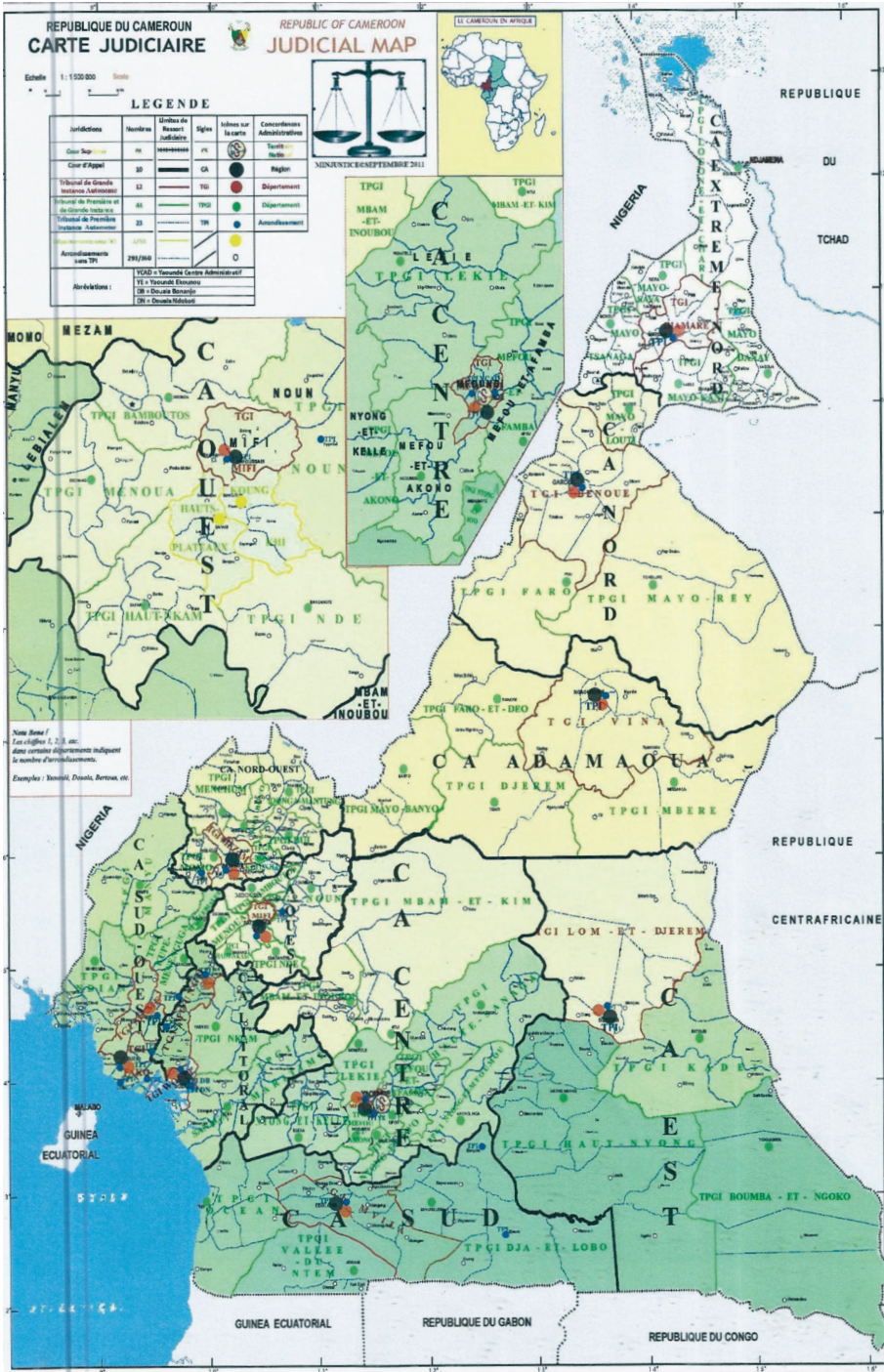
ADMINISTRATIVE MAP OF CAMEROON



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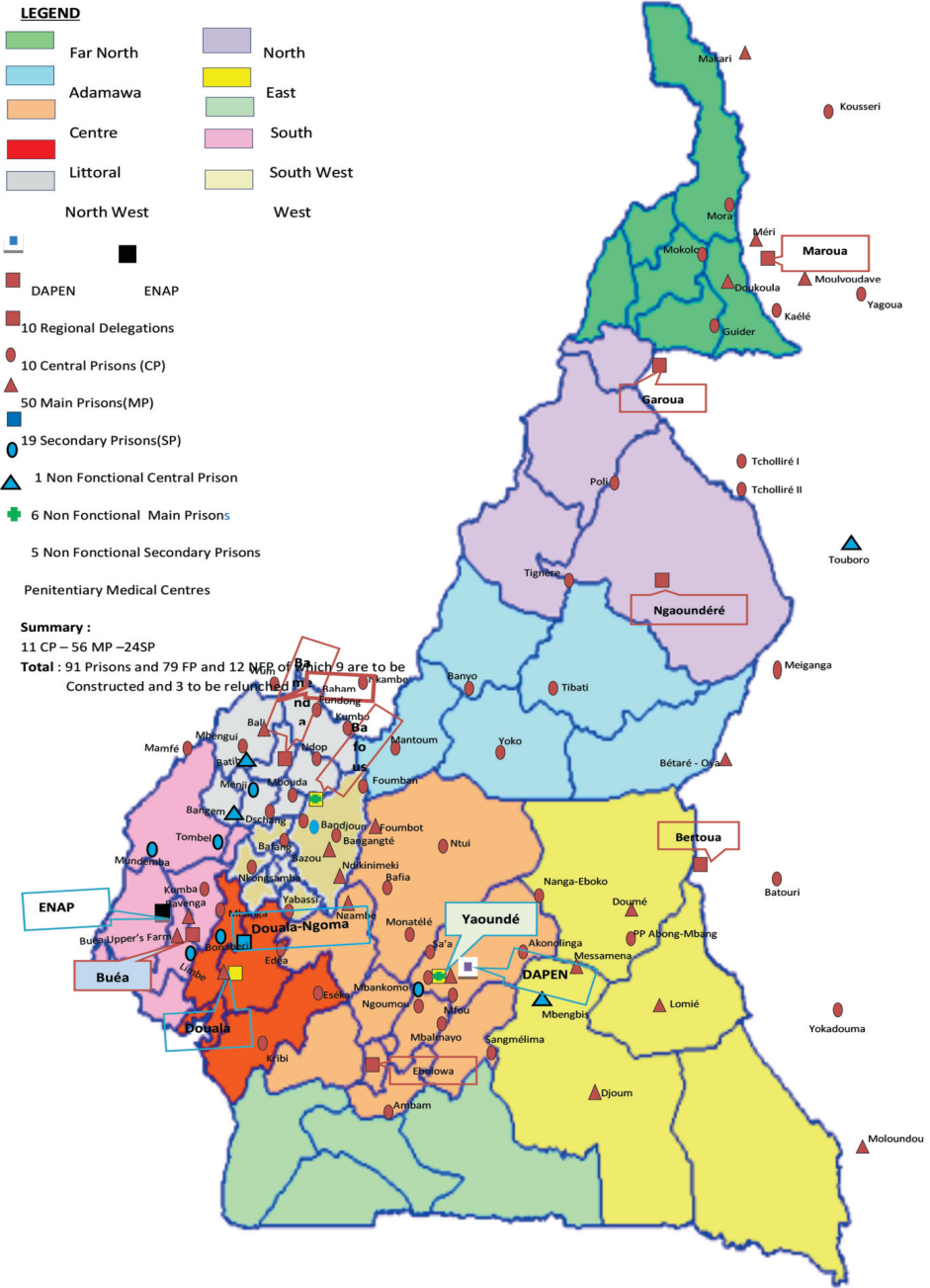
JUDICIAL MAP OF CAMEROON



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PENITENTIARY ADMINISTRATION MAP OF CAMEROON



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LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

ACN	: Africa Cup of Nations
ANTIC	: National Agency for Information and Communication Technologies
IPA	: Investment Promotion Agency
ASSEJA	: <i>Association Enfants Jeunes et Avenir</i>
BFDC	: Budget and Financial Disciplinary Council
CBCHS	: Cameroon Baptist Convention Health Services
CCCMBs	: Commission for the Control of Collective Management Bodies
CDDO	: Cameroon Deaf Development Organization
CFC	: Cameroon Housing Loan Fund
CIDIMUC	: Cameroon Council of Imams and Muslim Dignitaries
CMBs	: Management Collective Bodies
CNPBMC	: National Commission for the Promotion of Bilingualism and Multiculturalism
CPFF	: Centres for the Empowerment of Women and the Family
CSO	: Civil Society Organization
DSF	: Defence and Security Forces
EHAP	: Emergency Humanitarian Assistance Plan
EmONC	: Emergency Obstetric and Neonatal Care
ENEO	: Energy of Cameroon
ESCR	: Economic, Social and Cultural Rights
HND	: Higher National Diploma
HPD	: Higher Professional Diploma
HRC	: Human Rights Council
ICESCR	: International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights
ICT	: Information and Communication Technologies

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IDPs	: Internally Displaced Persons
IGAs	: Income-Generating Activities
IHC	: Integrated Health Centres
KPCS	: Kimberley Process Certification Scheme
MAETUR	: Urban and Rural Land Development Equipment Authority
MBOSCUA	: Mbororo Social and Cultural Development Association
MFI	: Micro-Finance Institutions
MINAC	: Ministry of Arts and Culture
MINADER	: Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development
MINAS	: Ministry of Social Affairs
MINCOM	: Ministry of Communication
MINCOMMERCE	: Ministry of Trade
MINDDEVEL	: Ministry of Decentralisation and Local Development
MINDUH	: Ministry of Housing and Urban Development
MINEFOP	: Ministry of Employment and Vocational Training
MINEPAT	: Ministry of Economy, Planning and Regional Development
MINEPDED	: Ministry of Environment, Nature Protection and Sustainable
MINESEC	: Ministry of Secondary Education
MINESUP	: Ministry of Higher Education
MINFOPRA	: Ministry of Public Service and Administrative Reform
MINJEC	: Ministry of Youth Affairs and Civic Education
MINMAP	: Ministry of Public Contracts
MINMIDT	: Ministry of Mines, Industries and Technological Development
MINPMEESA	: Ministry of Small and Medium-sized Enterprises, Social Economy and Handicrafts

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MINSANTE	: Ministry of Public Health
MINTOUL	: Ministry of Tourism and Leisure
MIRAP	: Consumer Products Supply Regulatory Authority
MND	: Major National Dialogue
MOU	: Memorandum of Understanding
MYPC	: Multifunctional Youth Promotion Centre
NACC	: National Anti-Corruption Commission
NAFI	: National Financial Investigation Agency
NCC	: National Communication Council
NCD	: Non-Communicable Diseases
NCHRF	: National Commission on Human Rights and Freedoms
NCRPD	: National Centre for Rehabilitation of Persons with Disabilities
NDDRC	: National Disarmament, Demobilisation and Reintegration Committee
NEF	: National Employment Fund
NHRI	: National Human Rights Institution
NPM	: National Preventive Mechanism
NSIF	: Nation Social Insurance Fund
NTD	: Neglected Tropical Diseases
OBC	: Cameroon <i>Baccalaureate</i> Board
ODS	: Ozone Depleting Substances
OIC	: Organization of Islamic Cooperation
ONACC	: National Observatory on Climate Change
ONEFOP	: National Observatory of Employment and Vocational Training
ONEFOP	: Employment and Vocational Training
ONJ	: National Youth Observatory
OPCAT	: Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading

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PASZEP	: Support Project in Priority Education Areas
PC	: Penal Code
RECAN	: National Cultural and Artistic Season
RLA	: Regional and Local Authorities
SAPAR	: Heritage Arts and Archaeology Fair
SCC	: Special Criminal Court
SME	: Small and Medium-sized Enterprises
SMI	: Small and Medium-sized Industries
SNPPK	: Permanent National Secretariat of the Kimberley Process
SONATREL	: National Electricity Transport Company Treatment and Punishment
WGAD	: Working Group on Arbitrary Detention
WWF	: World Wide Fund for Nature

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PREFACE

Once again, in order to disseminate information concerning progress achieved in Human Rights in the Country during the year 2019, the Ministry of Justice hereby publishes the Report on Human Rights in Cameroon in 2019.

In 2019, despite security, economic or social constraints from previous years and the surge of new forms of tensions, which escalated due to the use of social media, the Country managed to stay on course. This was possible through multiple initiatives undertaken by various stakeholders of the social fabric, and more especially thanks to the steadfast leadership of the Head of State, which is inclined to appeasement solutions while maintaining the major balances and fundamental pillars of the Republic.

The organisation of the Major National Dialogue is undoubtedly the most significant illustration of this commitment. This Report discusses this initiative and focuses on both Government and other stakeholders' initiatives that are consistent with consolidating the Rule of Law and guaranteeing the improved well-being of the population.

From a retrospective point of view, the Report gives account of achievements and with a look to the future, it highlights challenges to be addressed. Human Rights are and remain a collective task. In this regard, the Report should be viewed through the lens of contribution. The reader is thus encouraged to acknowledge progress made and identify challenges ahead. To tackle such challenges, further individual and collective work will be necessary.

Enjoy your reading.

Laurent ESSO

Minister of State, Minister of Justice,
Keeper of the Seals



GENERAL

INTRODUCTION



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1- After 2018, an election year during which Cameroon encountered security concerns and economic constraints, the country also had to address the challenge of strengthening living together in 2019.

2- In fact, while the country strove to explore various avenues towards resolving the security crisis in the Far North, North West and South West Regions, the social climate was further disrupted from the beginning of the year by consecutive claims relating to the October 2018 presidential election. These claims at times crossed Cameroon's borders, with actions against the interests of the State. Against this backdrop, there was an intolerable upsurge of hate speech, leading to measures such as the criminalisation of such speech, specifically by the promulgation of Law No. 2019/20 of 24 December 2019 to amend and supplement some provisions of Law No. 2016/7 of 12 July 2016 relating to the Penal Code. Apart from the above-cited crisis situations, natural catastrophes of significant magnitude equally occurred in October 2019, including the Gouache landslide in the West Region and the floods in the Far North Region.

3- In spite of all these, social forces and the country's partners worked relentlessly towards finding suitable solutions to the situation. In this regard, measures were taken to strengthen the security mechanism and visits of delegations from certain countries and international organisations were also inconsistent with this objective. Various audiences granted by the President of the Republic in 2019 illustrate such constructive interaction with foreign partners. The joint visit of the Chairperson of the African Union Commission, the Secretary General of the Commonwealth and the Secretary General of the Francophonie are equally in line with finding solutions to the crisis. The year ended on a note of easing tensions with the holding of the Major National Dialogue (MND) from 30 September to 4 October 2019.

4- Presided over by the newly appointed Prime Minister, Head of Government¹ following a Government reshuffle², the MND offered a platform to seek, as a matter of priority, pathways to a lasting solution to the crisis in the North West and South West Regions, which, alongside the Far North

¹ See Decree No. 2019/1 of 4 January 2019 to appoint a Prime Minister, Head of Government.

² See Decree No. 2019/2 of 4 January 2019 to reshuffle the Government.

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Region, were declared economically distressed areas³, with a specific investment incentive scheme⁴. At the end of the year, legislative adjustments which took into account some recommendations of the MND were made. Laws promulgated include in particular, the following: Law No. 2019/19 of 24 December 2019 on the promotion of official languages in Cameroon and Law No. 2019/24 of 24 December 2019 to institute the General Code of Regional and Local Authorities which internalises the African Charter on the Values and Principles of Decentralisation, Local Governance and Local Development, ratified following Decree No. 2019/583 of 31 October 2019.

5- Other strategic, legislative and institutional developments geared towards guaranteeing various rights are worth mentioning. The National Human Rights Institution was significantly reformed by Law No. 2019/14 of 19 July 2019 relating to the establishment, organisation and functioning of the Cameroon Human Rights Commission.

6- Regarding political rights, besides the MND, the year ended with the initiation of the process for municipal and legislative elections which held on 9 February 2020.

7- Concerning economic and social rights, a new expenditure programming and public investment budget preparation approach was instituted by Decree No. 2019/281 of 31 May 2019 setting the State budget schedule. Public establishments and corporations continued to be reformed, particularly 23 entities, which put their institutions in conformity with legal requirements, some with the purpose of enhancing their performance, and others, their competitiveness and profitability. Furthermore, several regulatory instruments to complete this reform were signed. They include:

- Decree No. 2019/320 of 19 June 2019 to lay down conditions for implementing some provisions of Law No. 2017/10 and Law No. 2017/11 of 12 July 2017 to lay down the General Rules and Regulations governing public establishments and public corporations.

³ See Decree No. 2019/3179/PM of 2 September 2019 to grant the status of economic disaster areas to the Far North, North West and South West Regions.

⁴ See Decree No. 2019/3178/PM of 2 September 2019 to specify the procedures for implementing the status of economic disaster areas and conditions for related tax benefits as provided for by Section 121 and 121 bis of the General Tax Code.

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- Decree No. 2019/321 of 19 June 2019 to lay down categories of public corporations and the remuneration, allowances and benefits of their managers.
- Decree No. 2019/322 of 19 June 2019 to lay down the category of public establishments and the remuneration, allowances and benefits of their managers.

8- Supervision of economic activities was also reflected by several instruments, including:

- Law No. 2019/4 of 25 April 2019: Framework Bill governing social economy in Cameroon;
- Law No. 2019/21 of 24 December 2019 to lay down some rules governing credit activities in the banking and micro-finance sectors in Cameroon;
- Decree No. 2019/195 of 17 April 2019 to lay down the modalities for the establishment and management of economic zones in Cameroon;
- Decree No. 2019/262 of 28 May 2019 to amend and supplement some provisions of Decree No. 2004/73 of 5 April 2004 relating to the application of the OHADA Accounting System and the Statistics and Tax Return.

9- To consolidate Cameroon's economic integration at the continental level, the Agreement establishing the African Continental Free Trade Area, adopted in Kigali in March 2018 was ratified following Decree No. 2019/586 of 31 October 2019⁵. At the Sub regional level, Cameroon hosted the Summit of the Economic and Monetary Community of Central African States from 21 to 22 November 2019.

10- Within the context of protection of the environment and exploitation of natural resources, a Forum on green economy was organised and legislative adjustments were made. Several laws ratifying international instruments were signed. These include in particular: Decree No. 2019/587 of 31 October 2019 to ratify the Agreement on the conservation of African-

⁵ In this respect can be mentioned the advocacy of Ms **Vera SONGWE** of the Economic Commission for Africa during her visit in April 2019.

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Eurasian Migratory Waterbirds (AEWA), signed on 15 August 1996 at The Hague, and Decree No. 2019/582 of 31 October 2019 to ratify the Amendment to the Montreal Protocol on substances that deplete the ozone layer, adopted in Kigali on 16 October 2016.

11- Law No. 2019/8 of 25 April 2019 to institute the Petroleum Code was adopted, including Law No. 2019/12 of 19 July 2019 to lay down the general framework for radiological and nuclear safety, nuclear security, civil liability and safeguards enforcement to regulate activities and practices connected with the use of sources of ionising radiation.

12- This Report renders account of such developments, as well as various legislative, institutional, strategic and operational measures taken to guarantee the rights of persons under the jurisdiction of the State, with sustained attention for those in vulnerable situations.

13- The approach used for drafting the Report and organising its structure is based on consistency. The participatory approach was maintained with the involvement of public administrations and institutions, independent administrative authorities and various components of the civil society.

14- Apart from the preliminary chapter which focuses on cooperation between Cameroon and International and Regional Mechanisms for the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights, the Report comprises 3 parts. It begins with a general introduction and ends with a general conclusion.

15- The three parts of the Report dwell on the following:

- Civil and Political Rights (Part I);
- Economic, Social and Cultural Rights and the Right to a Healthy Environment (Part II);
- Cross-cutting Issues on Human Rights and Rights of Specific Groups (Part III).

**PRELIMINARY
CHAPTER**

**COOPERATION BETWEEN
CAMEROON AND
INTERNATIONAL AND
REGIONAL MECHANISMS
FOR THE PROMOTION
AND PROTECTION OF
HUMAN RIGHTS**



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16- In 2019, Cameroon actively participated in the activities of most technical and political Human Rights Bodies, both at the international and regional levels. Its assiduity in terms of participation in Human Rights Council Sessions (HRC)⁶ and in those of treaty bodies such as the African Commission on Human and People's Rights (ACHPR) is quite remarkable. Participation in the deliberations of other Bodies was also done in the context of traditional dialogue through reporting or litigation. Apart from the above-mentioned discussion platforms, the visit to Cameroon of Ms **Michelle BACHELET**, United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights from 2 to 4 May 2019, offered the opportunity to discuss with public authorities, notably the President of the Republic, political parties, Civil Society Organisations (CSOs), including religious organisations, the National Commission on Human Rights and Freedoms (NCHRF) and development partners. In this regard, a technical mission of the Office of United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights visited Cameroon from 5 to 26 September 2019 to explore avenues for technical collaboration with the State. This interaction with Human Rights institutions made it possible to ascertain progress made, highlight the country's challenges on the subject, and most especially explore possible solutions.

17- The Concluding Observations of the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (CESCR or the Committee) made after the review on 20 and 21 February 2019, of Cameroon's 5th Periodic Report as part of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR or the Covenant) are consistent with this rationale, just like recommendations of the African Commission on Human and People's Rights (ACHPR) and those of the Human Rights Council's Working Group on Arbitrary Detention (WGAD or the Group) on specific cases.

SECTION 1: ASSESSMENT OF CAMEROON BY THE COMMITTEE ON ECONOMIC, SOCIAL AND CULTURAL RIGHTS

18- The Concluding Observations made by the CESCR on 8 March 2019 show some positive aspects as well as areas of concern and recommendations. Positive aspects concern the ratification of the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the involvement of children

⁶ Cameroon participated in the Council's Sessions of 23 February to 22 March 2019, then that of 24 June to 12 July 2019.

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in armed conflicts, as well as the adoption of various measures on the strategic ⁷ and operational levels for the implementation of rights contained in the Covenant.

19- Issues of major concern include the **security crises** in the Far North, North West and South West Regions as well as their consequences. The CESCR recommends that urgent action should be taken to ensure enjoyment of the rights set forth in the Covenant by the population living in the said Regions; thorough and independent investigation into allegations of acts of violence and destruction of hospitals, schools and entire villages; effective implementation of adopted strategic documents and a peaceful solution to the crisis in the North West and South West Regions.

20- Regarding **forced displacement**, which is sometimes caused by crisis situations, the CESCR calls on the State to prevent forced displacement and ensure effective protection of persons displaced within the country, refugees and asylum-seekers.

21- The Committee subsequently focused on the general framework and principles for the implementation of economic, social and cultural rights (ESCR), on various rights before making other recommendations likely to strengthen the effective guarantee of rights enshrined in the ICESCR.

22- The Committee therefore urges the State to continue to promote the invocability of provisions of the Covenant before the courts, through training of law enforcement personnel and provision of effective redress for victims. Furthermore, considering the importance of the work carried out by Human Rights defenders, including ESCR defenders, the CESCR posits that the State should guarantee a climate of tolerance, starting with information and awareness-raising, then ensuring effective protection from harassment, intimidation and reprisals, and making sure perpetrators of such acts are prosecuted.

⁷ It includes the Decent Work Country Programme for 2014-2017, the Health Sector Strategy (2016-2027) and its first plan of action, National Plan of Action for Resolution 1325 and related resolutions of the UN Security Council on Women, Peace and Security (2018-2020), the establishment of a 2017-2020 Humanitarian Response Plan for the Far North, North, Adamawa and East Regions, as well as the Emergency Humanitarian Assistance Plan for the North West and South West Regions.

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23- Regarding **resources needed for the implementation of ESCR**, the Committee deems that the policy put in place is not optimal, especially as it significantly relies on international assistance and cooperation regarding certain sectors, and does not mobilise adequate resources from foreign investors who exploit forests or extractive resources. The Committee therefore recommends a more efficient, progressive and socially fair tax policy and an increase of charges levied on foreigners for the exploitation of forests or extractive resources. Furthermore, it recommends that the process to strengthen the tax policy and draft any budget proposal should be transparent and participatory.

24- As regards the **protection of public resources**, the Committee urges the State to address, as a matter of priority, the root causes of corruption, and implement all legislative and administrative measures needed to guarantee transparency in public administration, both in law and in practice. It also recommends that the State should ensure the effective implementation of measures to combat corruption, and take steps to efficiently protect victims of corruption, their Lawyers, anti-corruption advocates, whistle blowers and witnesses.

25- Concerning the **implementation of economic development projects or exploitation of natural resources**, the Committee lays emphasis on the preparation of clear-cut guidelines and rules that allow the assessment of these projects on ESCR and on the environment, including those implemented by private stakeholders, on any part of the national territory, particularly on the lands and natural resources of indigenous people. It propounds that these people and the communities concerned should be consulted, compensated for damages or loss suffered and enjoy sustainable benefits from the projects⁸.

26- Equality and non-discrimination being a fundamental principle, the Committee urges the State to adopt a general law against discrimination⁹ in conformity with Paragraph 2 of Article 2 of the Covenant in order to prohibit direct and indirect discrimination for any reason, in all domains covered by the Covenant and ensure remedies for victims of discrimination.

⁸ See General Comment No. 24 (2017) on State obligations under the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights in the context of business activities.

⁹ See General Comment No. 20 (2009) on non-discrimination in the exercise of economic, social and cultural rights.

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27- It also examines **specific aspects** and recommends that the State should decriminalise consensual homosexual relations and repeal Section 347 (1) of the Penal Code (PC), and also ensure that no one is subject to discrimination in the enjoyment of ESCR, especially access to health services, because of their sexual orientation or their gender identity.

28- The Committee urges the State to intensify efforts towards effectively preventing and combating **de facto discrimination and marginalisation against ethnic, linguistic and religious minorities**, including the Anglophone minority, particularly through special temporary measures and awareness-raising campaigns.

29- Temporary measures are also recommended regarding equality between men and women, particularly in every aspect of political and public life. The Committee encourages the State to take steps towards combating gender stereotypes and bringing a change in cultural practices that deprive women from enjoyment their ESCR¹⁰, especially access to land. It also exhorts the State to repeal all legislative provisions that are discriminatory against women and uphold equality between men and women in the implementation of Customary Law as well as written Law. To protect women against violence, the Committee suggests that the legislative framework should be strengthened with a specific law on the elimination of all forms of violence against women and the explicit incrimination of rape in marriage and domestic violence. It urges the State to take effective measures towards preventing and eliminating harmful practices against women, including polygamy, early marriage, forced marriage and female genital mutilation. It encourages the State to organise large-scale information, education and awareness-raising campaigns on the gravity and adverse effects of violence and harmful practices against women and girls.

30- Concerning **indigenous peoples**, the Committee recommends that the State should uphold the rights of indigenous peoples living in the national territory and take concrete steps, in consultation with them, to fight discrimination against them and their exclusion. It urges the State to protect and guarantee, in law and in practice, respect for their right to freely dispose of their lands, territories and natural resources, and ensure that

¹⁰ See General Comment No. 16 (2005) on the equal rights of men and women to the enjoyment of economic, social and cultural rights.

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they are consulted in view of obtaining their prior informed consent, regarding any action likely to affect them, especially before the implementation of projects on their lands and territories.

31- As concerns **various ESCR**, the Committee first dwells on the right to work, then focuses on the right to an adequate standard of living before assessing the right to health, the right to education, the right to culture and the right to benefit from scientific and cultural developments.

32- Regarding the right to work, the Committee urges the State to step up efforts towards reducing unemployment and underemployment rates, particularly by ensuring the effective implementation of a national employment strategy. The Committee equally suggests an enhancement of the quality of school, technical and professional training programmes, adapting them to the needs of the job market, and to the needs of the most underprivileged and marginalised people¹¹.

33- Noting, with concern, that the **majority of the population remains employed in the informal sector of the economy**, the CESCR calls upon the State to ensure that workers, especially women, who are employed in the private sector are protected by the legislation on labour and social security, and in particular that labour inspection services equally cover this sector¹². Due to over-representation of women in the informal economy which results in discrepancies between their income and those of men, the Committee deems that the State should combat employment segregation which causes women to obtain poorly paid jobs and prevents them from having the same career opportunities as men.

34- Beyond that, **improving women's working conditions** requires measures to eliminate all discriminatory practices against women and to ensure that victims of discrimination, harassment, abuse or violence have access to protection mechanisms, as well as effective remedies and compensation measures.

¹¹ See General Comment No. 18 (2005) on the right to work.

¹² See General Comments No. 18 (2005) on the right to work, No. 19 (2007) on the right to social security and No. 23 (2016) on the right to just and favourable conditions of work. Also see the Statement titled *Social protection floors: an essential element of the right to social security and of the sustainable development goals* adopted in 2015 (E/C.12/2015/1).

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35- With regard to **indigenous peoples**, the Committee urges the State to combat forced labour, to guarantee fair and favourable conditions of work for all workers, including members of indigenous communities, to ensure that independent investigations are carried out into such cases, that perpetrators of such practices are brought before courts and sentenced to penalties commensurate with the gravity of their acts, and to provide effective protection and rehabilitation to the victims.

36- For better protection of **trade union rights**, the Committee recommends that the State should revise Section 2 of the Law on the Suppression of Acts of Terrorism in order to conform it with Human Rights requirements. It also urges the State to establish mechanisms for the effective protection of trade union rights, in particular by diligently investigating all complaints brought to its attention and deciding on adequate compensation for the workers concerned.

37- In order to strengthen the **right to social security**, the Committee recommends acceleration of the establishment of a social protection floor that includes basic universal social guarantees¹³.

38- With a view to **protecting children from economic exploitation**, the Committee recommends that the State should adopt and implement a national plan of action for the eradication of child labour, strengthen labour inspection mechanisms to support poor families so that children can stay in school. The Committee recommends that the State should ensure that all cases of economic exploitation of children or adolescents and all forms of abuse or violence against them are thoroughly investigated and that offenders are duly punished.

39- Proactively, the Committee suggests **an improvement in the system of birth registration** and access to identity cards, particularly by making birth registration free of charge, making the National Civil Status Registration Office (*BUNEC*) accessible throughout the country and through circuit courts and awareness-raising campaigns in rural areas.

¹³ See General Comment No. 19 (2007) on the right to social security and the Statement titled *Social protection floors: an essential element of the right to social security and of the sustainable development goals*.

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40- As concerns the **right to an adequate standard of living**, noting in general that poverty rates remain very high and disproportionately affect persons living in rural and remote areas, the Committee recommends that the State should conduct a comprehensive assessment of the programmes and strategies put in place, in order to identify obstacles and adopt the necessary amendments to implement a comprehensive strategy to combat poverty¹⁴.

41- With regards to specific aspects under the **right to an adequate standard of living** particularly the **right to food**, the State is called upon to adopt a legislative and institutional framework and a comprehensive strategy to guarantee the right to adequate food. It is also called upon to combat hunger and chronic malnutrition, to increase its efforts to improve the productivity of small agricultural producers by promoting their access to appropriate technologies and facilitating their access to local markets. By so doing, incomes in rural areas will improve. The State was also encouraged to consider conducting awareness-raising campaigns to prevent the use in agriculture of pesticides and chemicals harmful to health and to disseminate environmentally friendly agro-practices¹⁵.

42- With regard to the **right to housing**, the Committee focuses on **forced evictions** and recommends decriminalisation of non-payment of rent by revising Section 322-1 of the PC, ensuring protection against forced evictions, with an appropriate regulatory framework guaranteeing compensation or the availability of adequate alternative housing¹⁶.

43- The **right to health** on its part equally received attention, particularly with regard to remote rural areas and areas affected by security crises in the Far North, North West and South West Regions. The Committee calls upon the State to allocate sufficient resources to the health sector to en-

¹⁴ Such a strategy should go with specific and measurable objectives, provided with the necessary resources, effective mechanisms for coordination between various stakeholders and implemented in accordance with Human Rights standards and principles. It should also take due account of existing regional disparities and the real needs of the population, especially the most disadvantaged and marginalised groups. See the *Statement on Poverty and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights*, adopted in 2001 (E/C.12/2001/10).

¹⁵ See General Comment No. 12 (1999) on the right to adequate food, Voluntary Guidelines to Support the Progressive Realisation of the Right to Adequate Food in the Context of National Food Security (2004) of the Council of the Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations.

¹⁶ See General Comment No. 7 (1997) on forced evictions.

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sure the effective implementation of the Health Sector Strategy (2016-2027); to ensure accessibility, availability and quality of health care in all regions, particularly by improving the infrastructure of the primary health care system, and to ensure that hospitals have adequate and sufficient medical staff, infrastructure and medical equipment, as well as a regular supply of medicines; adopt legislation and a comprehensive mental health policy to ensure the provision of mental health services, including community-based services, and to increase the number of professionals working in this field¹⁷.

44- On sexual and reproductive health, it is recommended that the State should expand circumstances permitting legal abortion and eliminate restrictive requirements that would limit access to it, exempt women who resort to the practice from criminal liability, ensure dissemination of information and the provision of appropriate quality sexual and reproductive health services, guarantee access to such information and services, notably family planning services, for all women and adolescent girls, especially in rural and remote areas¹⁸.

45- Measures recommended to address the multiple challenges identified in **guaranteeing the right to education** include increasing primary and secondary school enrolment, removing obstacles to girls' access to education on equal terms with boys, and improving education infrastructure, with access to drinking water and adequate sanitation; effective implementation of free primary education and strengthening of the rules and mechanisms for monitoring and supervising private education institutions; access to quality and culturally appropriate education for indigenous peoples, particularly by improving education in their languages; emergency measures to ensure access to education for children in the Far North, North West and South West Regions. The State is also called upon to conduct thorough investigations into acts of violence against Teachers, students and parents, as well as damage to educational infrastructure, in order to bring authors of such acts before the court.

46- As concerns Access to the internet which contributes to the enjoyment of the right to benefit from scientific progress, the State is called upon to

¹⁷ See General Comment No. 14 (2000) on the right to the highest attainable standard of health.

¹⁸ See General Comment No. 22 (2016) on the right to sexual and reproductive health.

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develop the necessary infrastructure and make the costs of internet services affordable for all, especially in rural areas. It should also ensure that any measure to limit access to internet is necessary and proportionate to the circumstances, temporary and non-discriminatory, and that any limitation to internet access is compatible with Article 4 of the Covenant and provided for by law.

47- The Committee makes other recommendations related to the ratification of instruments and, above all, the adoption of a Human Rights approach in the implementation of development policies, considering beneficiaries as rights holders, respecting the principles of participation, accountability and non-discrimination, and establishing independent mechanisms for monitoring progress on the basis of the indicators that the State is invited to adopt¹⁹.

48- Finally, it calls for a wide dissemination of its recommendations and a participatory approach in monitoring implementation, involving the NCHRF, non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and other members of civil society.

SECTION 2 : RECOMMENDATIONS REGARDING PARTICULAR SITUATIONS

49- Many situations were brought by individuals before Human Rights mechanisms through complaints procedures. In 2019, the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights (ACHPR) and the WGAD completed the examination of certain cases.

§1: Recommendations of the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights

50- The ACHPR received 4 new communications against Cameroon and at the end of the year, 14 communications were pending, the institution having heard 2 cases. Communication 631/16, **PEREM AOUDOU** (represented by **George AYUK QUELENNEC**) was declared inadmissible²⁰.

¹⁹ See Conceptual and Methodological Framework on Human Rights Indicators developed by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights.

²⁰ During the 27th extraordinary session held from 16 to 30 July 2019.

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The complainant prosecuted in 2 cases, one before the Yaounde Court of First Instance for deception of shareholder and misuse of corporate property, the other before the Special Criminal Court (SCC) for misappropriation of public property, the concerned alleged his right to fair trial was violated due to the manipulation of the Judiciary by persons supposedly close to political power.

51- On the other hand, Communication No. 290/4, *Open Society Initiative* (on behalf of **Pius N. NJAWE**) was examined on the merits. The Communication concerned the closure of *Radio Freedom FM* on 23 May 2003. While contesting a decision, which the author of the Communication considered prejudicial to *Le Messenger Group*, he alleged lack of transparency and discrimination in the licensing process of social communication enterprises.

52- Upon completion of examination of the case, the ACHPR found that the State of Cameroon had violated Articles 1 (obligation to adopt legislative, administrative and other measures), 2 (non-discrimination), 9 (freedom of expression) and 14 (right of ownership) of the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights (ACHPR)²¹.

53- To conclude on the violation of Article 2, the ACHPR noted that *Radio Freedom FM*, as well as other radio stations that function with an editorial line which opposes the Government have sometimes been closed down. The finding of a violation of Article 9 is based on the lack of independence of the body responsible for granting licences, the lack of definition by law, of the conditions for granting licences and the lack of transparency in the examination of applications, as well as the arbitrary nature of the rejection of the application of a licence.

54- With regard to Article 14, the ACHPR considers the affixing of seals on radio premises without a court decision ordering such a measure, as an infringement of the right to ownership. The violation of Article 1 stems from the non-compliance of the normative framework governing freedom of expression with Article 9 of the ACHPR.

55- The ACHPR recommended remedies with a general scope and remedies specific to the complainant. Remedies with a general scope concerned

²¹ Decision taken during the 26th Extraordinary Session held in Banjul from 19 February to 5 March 2019.

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bringing national legislation in conformity with Article 9 of the Charter and the Declaration on the Principles of Freedom of Expression in Africa. It involves Law No. 90/52 of 19 December 1990 on freedom of social communication and Decree No. 2000/158 of 3 April 2000 to lay down the procedures for the establishment and operation of audio-visual communication enterprises.

56- Damages were awarded to the beneficiaries of **Mr Pius N. NJAWE** by way of compensation for material and non-material damages suffered. Thus the State is requested to pay them:

- a sum of US\$ 111,000 at the 2003 exchange rate for the material and radio equipment that was damaged;
- labour costs for the installation of the said equipment;
- the rent for the premises housing the radio for the period 2003 to 2005;
- Lawyers' fees and other legal costs incurred in connection with the various proceedings to recover the equipment and apply for the award of the licence.

§2: Opinion of the Working Group on Arbitrary Detention

57- The WGAD examined the case of Mr **MANCHO BIBIXY TSE**, regarding his detention since January 2017 in connection with the crisis in the North West and South West Regions. The author of the Communication alleged that Mr **MANCHO BIBIXY TSE**'s deprivation of liberty stemmed from the exercise of freedom of expression and right to protest. The trial and conviction of the accused by the Yaounde Military Tribunal was equally castigated.

58- The WGAD found that the State failed to provide the warrant of arrest that justified the arrest of the accused and that the Military Tribunal could not be considered as the competent judicial body to control the legality of the detention of a civilian.

59- Concerning allegations on persecution because of the exercise of freedom of assembly and expression, the WGAD observed that though the Source presented elements that, *prima facie*, could sustain the allegation,

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the Government on its part presented credible evidence that restrictions regarding the exercise of these rights were perhaps applicable. However, the WGAD stated that it could not hold that Mr **MANCHO BIBIXY TSE was discriminated** against based on the lone fact that he was in detention while other leaders of the crisis had been released.

60- Regarding the right to fair trial, the Group does not find that the accused was tried within an abnormally long period. It finds that military tribunals are not competent to try civilians, whatever the charges brought against them, even if the Government made mention of several guarantees of fair trial that were respected in this case.

61- In general, the Group finds that the detention of Mr **MANCHO BIBIXY TSE** was vitiated by irregularities connected with his arrest and his trial before the Military Tribunal. Accordingly, it requested the Government to take, without delay, appropriate measures, to remedy his situation, making it compatible with relevant international standards. The Group held that the appropriate measure will consist in releasing him immediately and granting him the right to obtain compensation in conformity with International Law. Finally, the WGAD requested that the Government should ensure that independent and thorough investigation is conducted on the circumstances under which Mr **MANCHO BIBIXY TSE** was deprived of his liberty.

62- The recommendations are followed up by an Inter-Ministerial Committee housed in the Prime Minister's Office.

PART ONE

CIVIL AND POLITICAL RIGHTS



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INTRODUCTION TO PART ONE

63- In 2019, concerns for civil and political rights in a crisis context led the Government and its partners to lay particular emphasis on the promotion and protection of the right to life, physical and moral integrity, freedom of movement, security and the right not to be subjected to torture.

64- As safeguard against arbitrariness, the right to access justice and its corollary, the right to a fair trial, were guaranteed, in particular through the search for consensual solutions to various threats looming over the optimal implementation of this right.

65- Freedom of expression and communication continued to be freely exercised, characterised by the freedom of speech of media professionals, their concern for accountability and, above all, the limitation of obstacles to the exercise of this right.

66- With regard to the right to participate in the management of public affairs, activities relating to political rights included the continuation of biometric registration and the adoption of a new law on decentralisation.

67- On the basis of the above, the first part of this Report will address the following:

- Right to Life, to Physical and Moral Integrity, Right to Liberty and Security, Right not to be subjected to torture (Chapter 1);
- Right to Fair Trial (Chapter 2);
- Freedom of Expression and Communication (Chapter 3);
- Right to Participate in the Management of Public Affairs (Chapter 4).



CHAPTER

1

**RIGHT TO LIFE, RIGHT
TO PHYSICAL AND
MORAL INTEGRITY,
RIGHT TO LIBERTY
AND RIGHT NOT TO
BE SUBJECTED TO
TORTURE**



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68- Considering the restrictive security context, the right to life, the right to physical and moral integrity, the right to liberty and security and the right not to be subjected to torture received particular attention in 2019 through a significant institutional development, including attribution of the mandate to prevent torture in places of detention to the National Human Rights Institution (NHRI), which will be discussed below²², clear and specific strategic orientations to fight against impunity, preventive action coupled with the sanctioning of cases of violation and redressing irregularities.

SECTION 1: STRATEGIC GUIDELINES ON THE FIGHT AGAINST IMPUNITY

69- By Circular Letter No. 190256/DV/MINDEF/1 of 18 January 2019 addressed to all defence and security services under his authority, the Minister of Defence reaffirmed the Government's strategic guidelines to fight against torture. The Circular Letter provides that *"Whoever commits, orders, tacitly authorises acts of torture is an accomplice, and will be held personally responsible before the law"*.

70- This reminder was followed by prescriptions aiming at:

- conducting investigations and prosecuting the offenders, including those in positions of command;
- putting an end to arbitrary detention practices;
- opening a central register of persons arrested and remanded in custody that can be consulted by families;
- authorising controlled access by Human Rights Observers to places of detention.

71- In the same Circular letter, the Minister of Defence gave specific instructions to Military Officials of the Far North, North West and South West Regions to ensure continuous and permanent training of all personnel under their authority, on the use of force, especially during demonstrations, in accordance with the basic principles of the United Nations on the subject. They were also instructed to ensure effective prosecution and punishment of military personnel alleged to have resorted to excessive force, extrajudicial executions, ill-treatment and arbitrary arrest, and regularly report all cases handled to hierarchy.

²² See Chapter on the changes at the NHRI § 688.

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SECTION 2: PREVENTIVE ACTIONS

72- Preventive actions include capacity-building for law enforcement personnel and the fight against road accidents.

§1: Capacity Building for Law Enforcement Personnel

73-In addition to the conventional Human Rights modules in initial training curricula, Judicial and Legal Officers, Police Officers, Gendarmes, Defence Forces and Penitentiary Administration staff participated in various training courses, the general goal of which was to enhance their mastery of Human Rights-related concerns in the performance of their duties. In this connection, the Ministry of Justice, with the support of UNICEF, trained 46 Judicial and Legal Officers, 19 Police and Gendarme Officers, and 19 Penitentiary Administration staff on the rights of the child, particularly children in contact or in conflict with the law. In addition, 2 272 Police Officers were trained on gender-based violence in crisis situations and protection of refugees and displaced persons. Furthermore, training on the preparation and presentation of reports to Human Rights Treaty Bodies was provided to some 30 Judicial and Legal Officers, Police Officers, Gendarme Officers and Penitentiary Administration staff by the Ministry of Justice with the support of the United Nations Centre for Human Rights and Democracy in Central Africa.

§2: Fight against Road Accidents

74-The Government and its partners carried out various actions to prevent the occurrence of road accidents, including:

- further reform of the driving licence-issuing system through organisation of 8 ordinary sessions and 64 special sessions of the driving licence examination following online registration of candidates, 92, 176 of whom succeeded out of a total of 122, 428;
- the organisation of 475 operational field visits by teams of Judicial Police Officers with special competence from the central and decentralised services of the Ministry of Transport;
- further upgrade of interurban transport companies in order to match them with the reference norms and standards. In all, there were

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- the organisation, with the assistance of some national and international NGOs, of awareness-raising campaigns, training of road users via mobile telephone channels, as well as the production and distribution of more than 20,000 copies of the illustrated version of the Highway Code in easy-to-understand language, the training of 3,022 peer educators and sensitizers in first aid and establishment of 100 road safety clubs in schools, bringing the total number of such clubs to 500;
- the acquisition of road monitoring equipment, including tables, chairs, etc., for use by road safety teams on some major roads;
- acquisition and provision of a software to control and verify the authenticity of the roadworthy certificates to law enforcement staff involved in road safety activities;
- securing the process of issuing roadworthy certificates for vehicles by the process called PROOTAG of the CASTIS company;
- effective establishment of the network of Members of Parliament for road safety, and continuation of refresher courses and the screening of eye/visual problems for professional drivers throughout the national territory.

SECTION 3: SANCTIONS AGAINST VIOLATION OF RIGHTS: FIGHT AGAINST IMPUNITY

75- As part of the response to Human Rights violations, an overview of statistics on violent crime makes it possible to assess sanctions taken, which were both disciplinary and judicial, particularly with regard to law enforcement staff.

§1: Statistics on Violent Crime

76- The Police, the Gendarmerie and the Courts compiled statistics on violent crime in 2019.

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Table 1: Police Statistics on Crime

Offences	Number of investigation reports	State of proceedings
Capital Murder	534	Forwarding of judicial police case files to the Legal Department alongside suspects
Murder	210	
Rape	159	
Assault and battery	2,846	
Armed robbery	1,299	
Burglary	1,134	
Kidnapping by force or fraud	53	

Source: DGSN

Table 2 : Gendarmerie Statistics on Crime

Offences	Number of investigation reports	State of the proceedings
Capital Murder	139	Forwarding of judicial police case files to the Legal Department alongside suspects
Murder	289	
Assault occasioning death	509	
Grievous harm	3,109	
Simple harm	119	
Slight harm	14	
Unintentional killing	116	
Torture	7	
Kidnapping by force or fraud	378	
Indecency to child under 16	1 080	
Indecency to child between 16 and 21	4	
False arrest	12 350	
Terrorism	86	

Source: MINDEF

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Table 3: Court Statistics on Violent Crime

Offences	Number of investigation reports received	Number of proceedings registered		Number of persons convicted	Number of persons acquitted/discharged	Number of victims				Number of victims compensated	Perpetrators of the offence	
		At preliminary inquiry	Before trial courts			Men	Women	Children			Law enforcement personnel	Persons with authority over the victim
								Boys	Girls			
Capital Murder	225	193	137	56	36	17	30	26	00	35	0	3
Murder	211	180	214	80	25	17	26	5	7	20	0	5
Unintentional killing	912	37	959	589	47	55	193	66	31	133	4	9
Assault occasioning death	115	117	132	68	8	10	23	18	10	4	0	4
Assault occasioning grievous harm	52	22	17	8	0	21	5	0	0	2	3	4
Torture	2	2	3	0	2	1	1	0	0	0	0	0
Grievous harm	95	71	48	34	00	47	08	06	0	19	0	01
Simple harm	559	23	525	296	139	26	134	21	12	82	0	13
Slight harm	1584	37	1,547	984	301	46	348	57	26	167	1	13
Rape	224	131	163	105	20	10	78	10	10	23	1	9
False arrest	33	2	47	41	3	34	5	0	2	4	0	1
Forced Labour	1	0	1	0	0	1	2	0	0	0	0	0
Trafficking in persons	7	7	10	6	4	0	0	4	05	0	0	2
Slavery of persons	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Kidnapping of child	86	32	67	47	12	8	8	15	26	6	0	3
Kidnapping by force or fraud	47	38	67	28	05	14	18	12	26	04	0	00
Indecency to child under 16	533	441	283	280	31	23	26	13	32	105	4	30

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Offences	Number of investigation reports received	Number of proceedings registered		Number of persons convicted	Number of persons acquitted/discharged	Number of victims				Number of victims compensated	Perpetrators of the offence	
		At preliminary inquiry	Before trial courts			Men	Women	Children			Law enforcement personnel	Persons with authority over the victim
								Boys	Girls			
Indecency to child under 16-21	117	79	86	72	6	0	27	5	74	16	1	03
Forced marriage	2	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0
Prostitution	8	1	10	4	1	1	0	0	1	0	0	0
Incest	3	1	2	2	0	0	1	0	2	0	0	01
Homosexuality	17	7	8	7	1	4	1	4	2	2	0	0
Pollution	6	1	5	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0

Source: MINJUSTICE

§2: Disciplinary Sanctions

77- Disciplinary sanctions against Law enforcement personnel are as follows for the year 2019:

Table 4: Situation of Disciplinary Sanctions in 2019

Sanctions	Police	Gendarmes	Penitentiary staff
Warning	0	4	17
layoff	12	0	00
Reprimand	9	0	41
Deferment of increment	3	0	7
Removal from the promotion list	0	0	00
Demotion of incremental position	8	0	00
Demotion of grade	5	0	01
Dismissal	1	0	42

Source: DGSN

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78- It is important to indicate that the scale of sanctions of the Ministry of Defence which the National Gendarmerie applies does not include sanctions such as layoff or deferment in increment. However, it provides for sanctions such as days of close arrest and days of imprisonment, which are likely to result in a deferment in increment or grade. Regarding these specific cases, during the reference year, the National Gendarmerie recorded 9 cases of sanction by close arrest and 2 cases of sanction by days of imprisonment for misconduct relating to Human Rights violations.

79- In addition, following the implementation of various measures to prevent the occurrence of road accidents, sanctions were imposed on offenders. These include the suspension of 85 clandestine travel agencies, the suspension of 11 public transport licences, the suspension of 45 and withdrawal of 8 driving licences.

80- In addition, the sum of CFAF 16, 851, 676²³ was paid into the Public Treasury in settlement of fines for road traffic violations.

§3: Judicial Sanctions

81- In 2019, proceedings were initiated and sanctions imposed on members of Defence and Security Forces who were guilty of Human Rights violations. Thus, before the Bamenda Military Tribunal, 31 soldiers were prosecuted in 10 cases, 7 of which were on trial, with sentences ranging from 12 months to 7 years in prison for the following offences: violation of instructions, destruction, kidnapping by force or fraud, abuse of function, unlawful retention of another person's property, rape, conditional threats, murder, failure to report, as provided for and punishable under the Penal Code and the Code of Military Justice. For example, Private First Class **M. Arthur** was sentenced to 7 years in prison by the Bamenda Military Tribunal for rape.

82- At the Buea Military Tribunal, as at 7 November 2019, 48 proceedings were pending against 88 members of Defence and Security Forces for various offences against individuals, including violation of instructions, aggravated theft, capital murder, oppression (abuse of office), unlawful detention of another person's property, attempted murder, slight and simple

²³ About 25,727.75 Euros

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harm, destruction, conditional threats, invasion of residence, indecency to child under 16 and subsequent rape, false arrest and false pretences. At that date, 5 cases had already been tried and sentences passed ranged from 12 months to 18 months.

83- Furthermore, criminal proceedings were initiated against 2 Police Officers in 2019 for improper use of firearms and violence against a person in police custody. Moreover, at the end of the year, the case of **Ibrahim BELLO** was adjourned for deliberation over the guilt of Police Officers prosecuted for acts of torture and grievous harm²⁴.

SECTION 4: ACTIONS TO REMEDY VIOLATION OF THE RIGHT TO LIBERTY

84- In 2019, litigants regained liberty both as part of releases during proceedings and following habeas corpus procedures. The Supreme Court's Commission for Compensation of Victims of Abusive Detention (hereinafter Compensation Commission) equally registered files.

§1: Situation of Liberty-related Litigation in 2019

85- Though the judicial protection of the right to liberty which is laudable, made it possible, to redress various irregularities by releasing²⁵ several detainees, mention should however be made of the abnormally long duration of habeas corpus procedures. It is the case with **Mr. W. Romanus**, who has been detained since 2015 for trafficking in human bones and who has not been tried since then by the Douala-Ndokoti Court of First Instance. Having filed an application before the Wouri High Court 19 October 2018 for immediate release, he was not released until 12 June 2019. Moreover, the situation of liberty-related litigation in 2019 is as follows:

²⁴ The verdict was pronounced on 6 May 2020 by the Mbam and Inoubou High Court All the accused were found guilty of torture and grievous harm. Police Inspector **SACK Joseph Désiré** and Police Officer **BIKOUO NZIE Joël Cyrille** were sentenced respectively to 4 years in prison and 3 years in prison suspended sentence, FCFA 50,000,000 (About 76,335.88 Euros) in damages to compensate for the harm caused to **Ibrahim BELLO**, the victim.

²⁵ See for example of Habeas corpus Ruling No. 41/HC/019 of 20 November 2019 (**BOUBA Jean**) (non-renewal of the remand warrant issued since 19 September 2017).

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Table 5: Situation of Liberty-related Litigation

Court	Number of persons remanded in custody	Number of applications for bail				Number of persons released on Bail			Release/acquittal	Release Decisions reviewed by courts of appeal and the Supreme Court
		Granted (G),		Rejected (R)		By Court on its own motion	Granted bail with surety	Granted bail with surety		
		At preliminary inquiry	At hearing	Gr ant ed	Rej ect ed					
CFI	5788	375	225	861	485	1989	1359	912	770	00
HC	3428	502	321	126	175	205	102	123	152	08
CA	670	238	24	50	11	163	143	49	54	04
HABEAS CORPUS										
Court	Number of applications	Administrative remand in custody			Military custody		Ordinary Law detention			
		Granted	Rej ect ed	Rej ect ed	Granted	Rej ect ed	Granted	Rej ect ed		
HC	102	40	63		03	04	7768	227		
CA	223	02	01		01	00	119	14		

Source: MINJUSTICE

§2: Referrals to the Compensation Commission

86- The Supreme Court’s Commission for Compensation of Victims of illegal detention received 43 applications in 2019. These were still under examination at the end of the year. It can be noted that the rigorous formalism of proceedings at the level of the Supreme Court still eludes many claimants, whose applications are delayed due to failure to comply with

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certain legal requirements, such as the filing of a memorandum of submissions. This situation leads to adjournments of sessions of the Commission.

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87- As in the previous years, in 2019, protection of the right to life, the right to physical and moral integrity, the right to liberty and the right not to be subjected to torture was guaranteed through multifaceted actions carried out by law enforcement staff. Nevertheless, major challenges were yet to be addressed for the optimal guarantee of these rights, particularly the fight against impunity in its pedagogical and repressive aspects, as well as the fight against road accidents. There was a ray of hope considering expected results from the effective functioning of the Supreme Court's Commission for Compensation of Victims of Illegal Detention and the operationalisation of the National Mechanism for the Prevention of Torture.



CHAPTER 2
RIGHT TO FAIR TRIAL



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88- In 2019, the judicial sector was marked by a decision of the Cameroon Bar Council to suspend the wearing of robes. The institution expressed concerns, most of which were related to the right to fair trial regarding both the organisation and functioning of judicial institutions as well as rights guaranteed to litigants. Beyond the response to the Bar, there were several developments relating to these concerns.

SECTION 1: DECISION OF THE BAR COUNCIL TO SUSPEND THE WEARING OF ROBES AND GOVERNMENT'S RESPONSE

89- Due to various grievances, the Cameroon Bar Council, by a Resolution of 31 August 2019, decided to strike from 16 to 20 September 2019, specifying that other measures were likely to be taken at the end of that period. Government promptly reacted to this decision by organising consultations.

§1: Grievances outlined in the Resolution

90- The Resolution expressed grievances related to practice at the Bar and also addressed the following issues: constraints hindering Advocates from having free access to their clients in places of detention (Police stations, Gendarmerie Brigades, prisons, Secretariat of State for Defence); recording of statements and conduct of hearings in languages other than that of prosecuted persons; appearance of detainees at public hearings without clothes; confessions obtained by torture and fraud; illegally prolonged detentions; illegal transformation of police custody into administrative custody; illegal detention of persons despite decisions to release them; failure to meet certain requests made by Advocates; refusal to acknowledge receipt of correspondences; demand of illegal costs, including inconsistent and illegal amounts for deposits, as well as exorbitant costs for visits to *locus in quo*; monopolising of case-files by some Heads of Courts, thereby creating avoidable bottlenecks which lead to unacceptable judicial delays; arbitrary arrest and detention of Advocates in some Gendarmerie brigades and Police stations; and recurrence of physical violence on Advocates by Forces of Law and Order.

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§2: Government's Response

91- The Government resorted to a participative approach in its response to the decision of the Bar Council. Consultations served as a platform for the proposal of possible solutions.

A: Participative Approach

92- Consultative meetings were organised, audiences were granted, and an *ad hoc* Working Group was set up. In this regard, on 4 September 2019, in the presence of the Secretary of State in charge of Penitentiary Administration, of representatives of the Secretary of State for Defence in charge of the National Gendarmerie and the Delegate General for National Security, the Minister Delegate to the Minister of Justice presided over a consultative meeting with the President of the Bar who was accompanied by the President of the General Assembly of the Cameroon Bar Association, 2 former Presidents of the Bar, members of the Bar Council, the President and Vice President of the Human Rights Commission of the Cameroon Bar Association, as well as former members of the Bar Council.

93- On 9 September 2019, the Secretary of State for Defence in charge of the National Gendarmerie granted an audience to a delegation of the Bar Association.

94- Thereafter, an *ad hoc* Working Group was established under the coordination of the Minister of Justice to propose solutions to problems raised by the Bar Association which Group held meetings. The Group consisted of representatives of the Bar Association and the Administration (Ministry of Justice, Ministry of Defence (National Gendarmerie and the Department of Military Justice) and General Delegation for National Security).

B: Possible Solutions

95- Short term measures were taken pending those which required legal and regulatory reforms. In the short term, officials of various Administrations represented issued instructions mandating the respect of legal provisions, particularly the Criminal Procedure Code, regarding the grievances raised.

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96- In this connection, instructions were given to:

- Procureurs General of the 10 Courts of Appeal to ensure unhindered practice of the profession of Advocate and the respect of the rights of the defence through sound application of provisions of the Criminal Procedure Code and international Human Rights legal instruments;
- Regional Delegates of Penitentiary Administration to ensure that policing measures prescribed by the internal rules and regulations of every prison be implemented such as to facilitate Advocates' access to their clients in detention;
- Heads of Military Tribunals to observe rules relating to the conduct of investigations and judicial procedures as prescribed by the Criminal Procedure Code; and
- Heads of police and gendarmerie units, to facilitate access to and practice by Advocates in police units and before Judicial Police Officers.

97- Furthermore, collaboration between the National Gendarmerie and the Bar Association was established, with focal points from both institutions designated at the central and decentralised levels²⁶. Among other missions, they are tasked with examining potential incidents and taking appropriate remedial measures in real time.

98- To contribute to mutual understanding of modalities for intervention of Advocates in judicial police investigations, it was decided that the Bar Association should participate in training activities or refresher courses organised for National Gendarmerie staff²⁷.

99- Issues discussed involving medium and long term solutions, were those that required legislative and regulatory reforms. These concerned the organisation of Practice at the Bar, Advocates' emoluments, Advocates Autonomous Pecuniary Payment Fund and judicial delays.

²⁶ For the National Gendarmerie, 11 Legion Commanders are the focal points.

²⁷ Representatives of the Bar Council thus participated in the capacity-building Seminar for Brigade Commanders and Heads of Command Posts in several legions of the Gendarmerie (from 18 to 21 September 2019) in the Centre Region.

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SECTION 2: PROGRESS ON GUARANTEES RELATED TO THE ORGANISATION AND FUNCTIONING OF COURTS

100- To guarantee the right of access to courts, means were allocated to the justice sector. These helped with continuous implementation of the programme to increase judicial infrastructure, improve the number and quality of human resources and compliance with the requirements of impartiality and independence. The year was equally marked by debates on public hearings relating to certain proceedings.

§1: Slight Increase in Financial Allocations

101- The budget allocated to the Justice sector in 2019 slightly increased. Out of a State budget of CFAF 4,850,500,000,000²⁸, the Ministry of Justice was allocated CFAF 66,316,000,000²⁹, compared with CFAF 63,454,000,000³⁰ in 2018, representing an increase of 4.31% compared to 2018, and representing 1.37% of the State budget compared with 1.40% in 2018. The budget of the Supreme Court also increased. It was CFAF 4,594,000,000³¹ compared with CFAF 3,336,000,000³² in 2018, representing an increase of 27.38%. Despite this increase, the standard budgetary proportions proposed by the United Nations³³ were not attained.

§2: Continuation of the Programme to Increase Infrastructure

102- Without any evolution in the judicial map, emphasis was laid on the construction and rehabilitation of judicial infrastructure as well identification of sites for the construction of Court Houses.

²⁸ About 7,405,343,511.5 Euros.

²⁹ About 101,245,801.53 Euros.

³⁰ About 96,876,335.88 Euros.

³¹ About 7,013,740.46 Euros.

³² About 5,093,129.77 Euros.

³³ The special Rapporteur of the Human Rights Council on the independence of Judges and Lawyers recommends a proportion between 2 and 6 %. See the Special Rapporteur's Report on the independence of Judges and Lawyers, **Leandro DESPOUY** at the Human Rights Council, doc. A/HRC/11/4, distribution of 24 March 2009 §76.

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§3: Increase in the Number and Quality of Staff

103- The number of persons involved in the administration of justice increased. The recruitment of 300 Assistant Court Registrars and 200 Secretaries³⁴ was launched following Order No. 7316 of 31 May 2019³⁵. They add to the 28 Court Registry Administrators and 12 Court Registrars from ENAM who took an oath on 21 October 2019.

104- There were 1,646 Judicial and Legal Officers, 1,151 civil servants and 151 non-civil servants.

105- Furthermore, out of the 130 offices of Notaries Public, 69 were assigned: 25 to men, 44 to women. As concerns the 792 Bailiffs' offices, 498 were assigned: 349 to men and 149 to women.

§4: Requirements of Impartiality and Independence of Staff

106- To ensure probity of staff in the administration of justice, missions to assess and control courts were conducted, particularly in the Ambam, Ebolowa and Sangmelima courts.

107- Regarding discipline, after studying 1,237 petitions and reports against Judicial and Legal Officers for breach of ethical obligations or various misconducts, 29 investigations were requested, 3 query letters, 18 observation requests and 1 observation letter were issued, while 3 files were forwarded to disciplinary bodies.

108- As concerns procedure, compared to 33 registered in 2018, 2 applications were granted, out of 37 applications challenging Judicial/Legal Officers.

109- Competence being a condition for independence, the staff³⁶ attended capacity-building activities in and out of the country on various topics including, resolution of banking conflict, birth registration, cooperation with

³⁴ Including 50 holders of BTS/HND, 60 holders of Baccalaureat/GCE A Level, and 50 holders of Probatoire, 40 BEPC/CAP/GCE O Level

³⁵ The competitive examinations were written on 21 September 2019 and the results published on 1 March 2020.

³⁶ According to the Service for Training, 479 persons were trained: 314 Judicial and Legal Officers, 137 Court Registrars, 8 Computer Scientists, 18 Contract Employees, 2 from the Penitentiary Administration.

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the International Criminal Court, International Law, Human Rights, OHA-DA Law³⁷, CEMAC Law, Intellectual Property, fight against terrorism, prevention of conflicts and peace keeping, cyber-crime, maritime crime, wild life and forest crime, fight against counterfeit medicines, evidence in criminal proceedings, digital evidence, judicial cooperation, and modernisation of the Trade and Personal Property Credit Register.

§5: Concerns Regarding Access to Justice

110- The legality of the composition of the court was questioned in several cases. The Littoral Court of Appeal quashed judgments on the grounds of irregular composition of the court in labour matters where Judges conducted hearings in the absence of Assessors, without complying with procedures for summoning Assessors provided for under the Labour Code³⁸

111- As concerns access to finance, the Anti-Corruption Unit of the Ministry of Justice organised 2 meetings and conducted a campaign to display the costs for court documents, which included putting up bilingual and protected boards, all these to guarantee the public's right to information on the official costs of Justice-related services to the public.

112- Moreover, support to indigent litigants was provided as part of legal aid, which, benefitted several of vulnerable groups including internally displaced persons, indigenous populations and persons living with a disability. However, the provision of legal aid faced structural difficulties related to the functioning of Commissions dedicated thereto. Regardless of incentive measures implemented by some Heads of Courts, the challenge of providing finance to members of commissions and the quorum remained, as well as that of the absence of such commissions in Administrative Courts.

³⁷ Statistics from the Service for Training and Refresher Course: 277 staff trained.

³⁸ See Ruling No. 142/SOC of 5 April 2019, Re: Company ICON PRODUCTION vs/ M. **ENONE EWANE Alain Laurent** (wrongful dismissal); No. 406/SOC of 2 August 2019 Company ADSNET Sarl vs/ **TSA- FACK MENKEM Hervé** (wrongful dismissal)

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Table 1: Attribution of Legal Aid in 2019

Courts	Number of applications for legal aid recorded	Number of applications for legal aid rejected	Number of applications for legal aid granted		Number of beneficiaries		
			full grant	partial grant	Number of men	Number of women	Others (Detainees, refugees, internally displaced persons, indigenous populations pygmies, mbororos) + persons with disabilities
CFI	88	12	16	20	28	08	0
HC	150	52	82	0	57	25	0
CA	21	10	05	03	15	01	08

Source: MINJUSTICE

CFI : Court of first Instance

HC : High Court

CA : Court of Appeal

113- Commissions that were able to seat granted legal aid to both natural persons³⁹ and legal persons⁴⁰. Certain decisions were appealed against. Thus, upon the convocation of the Regional Representative the President of the Bar⁴¹, the Legal Aid Bench of the West Court of Appeal reviewed the decision of the Legal Aid Commission of the Mifi HC which, by Decision No. 6/AJ of 18 December 2018 withdrew its Decision No. 2/AJ of 24 January 2018 granting legal aid to Ms **MOTUE Jeannette** due to the fraudulent nature of the application.

114- The Bench held that the annulment decision was not justified, especially as documents provided by the applicant in support of her application were not contested, and both investigations conducted by Social Affairs Agents and by the Commission were constant on the indigence of the applicant.

³⁹ See Decisions No. 2/CAJ/TGI/W/DLA of 5 February 2019 (LOBE Christian vs/ SOCADIE and Communication Agency MARABOO); No. 3/CAJ/TGI/W/DLA of 5 February 2019 (**TOUKO née CHOUAN-HOU SIEWE Eveline** vs/ PRO-ASSUR); No. 4/CAJ/TGI/W/DLA of 5 February 2019 (**JANGWA Eugène** vs/ Société Ingénieurs Constructeurs)

⁴⁰ Decisions No. 1/CAJ/TGI/W/DLA of 5 February 2019 (SOCOMUDES against AFRILAND FIRST BANK); No. 10/CAJ/TGI/W/DLA of 7 May 2019 (Global Transport Company Limited against CORLAY CAMEROUN SA.); No. 16/CAJ/TGI/W/DLA of 7 May 2019 (SIMPOC SARL vs METAFRIQUE CAMEROUN)

⁴¹ Decisions by legal aid commissions shall not be subject to appeal by parties. Only the Legal Department or the President of the Bar may file an appeal (Section 24 of Law 2009/4 of 14 April 2009 to organize Legal Aid).

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115- At the level of the Supreme Court, though 16 applications were recorded, the Legal Aid Commission was unable to sit due to dysfunctions related to some members whose term of office had reached expiration, but were yet to be replaced.

§6: Guarantees Regarding the Right to Public Trial

116- In general, cases were tried in public, with a small proportion heard in camera as illustrated in the table below:

Table 2: Right to a Public Trial 2019

Courts	Number of public hearings	Number of proceedings in camera			Remarks
		On the court's own motion		At the request of the parties	
		Minors			
		Offenders	Victims		
CFI	77,219	719	92	112	
<i>Tribunal de Première degré (TPD)</i>	52,371	07	27	39	
HC	11,774	04	28	18	
CA	57,501	0	02	01	
SC					

Source: MINJUSTICE

117- There was a debate in certain courts on whether some cases such as those relating to *habeas corpus* should be heard in public, whether they should be heard in open court or in chambers. Some persons were of the opinion that *habeas corpus* falls within the scope of criminal matters and that proceedings thereto had to be held in public hearings subject to limitations provided for by Law. For others, as only the President of the court is competent to rule on applications for *habeas corpus*, these matters should be heard in chambers⁴². Both modalities can be implemented before the courts.

⁴² See Ruling No.23/TGI/W/DLA of 26 June 2019.

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118- Before the Supreme Court, *habeas corpus* cases are heard in chambers given that the procedure followed therein is that of case files coming from the Inquiry Control Chamber of Courts of Appeal (Section 596 (b) of the CPC referring to Section 274 CPC).

SECTION 3: GUARANTEES TO LITIGANTS

119- Some aspects of the right to Counsel, of the principle of full hearing, of the right to be judged within a reasonable time, the right to be tried in the language that one understands best, and the right to appeal for one’s case to be examined by a higher Court made it possible to assess the guarantees of litigants’ rights to fair trial in 2019.

§1: Right to Counsel

120- As at 31 December 2019, the Cameroon Bar Association comprised 2,435 Advocates including 1,800 men and 685 women.

121- Beyond the events presented above, which to some extent, had an impact on the right to be assisted by a Counsel, litigants were generally assisted either by Counsel briefed by them or by those assigned by courts as indicated in the following table:

Table 3: Right to Counsel in 2019

Court	Number of pre-trial detainees (PTD), Accused (AC), Complainant (CMP), Applicants (APL), Defendants (DF) assisted by Counsel										Lawyers assigned by Courts	Counsels briefed by the parties
	Civil		Labour		Customary Law		Misdemeanour		Felony			
	APL	DF	APL	DF	APL	DF	CMP	PTD	CMP	AC		
CFI	3,083	2,812	550	768	14,619	5,247	10,978	15,684	09	19	219	1,298
HC	1,050	880	260	243	72	10	0	0	1,085	1,453	511	521
CA	828	624	160	92	30	54	268	394	1,399	866	68	370
SC												

Source: MINJUSTICE

122- The quality of assistance also depends, among other things, on the competence, independence and financial security of Advocates. The Bar thus explored *The New Markets of Law* during its solemn reopening (expected to hold henceforth) which held from 5 to 7 June 2019. Emphasis was laid on the need for specialisation of these professionals with a view to improving their income.

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123- With regard to the discipline of Advocates, 21 cases were under examination by the end of the year and no sanctions were taken for the 385 cases examined.

124- Regarding the Bar's independence, the President of the Bar made a clarification reiterating that Advocates' robes must only be worn on occasions enshrined in age-old customs and traditions and not in private residences⁴³.

§2: Adversarial Principle

125- The right to an adversarial procedure was raised in several cases. Thus, in the case of *The People and Rearing Development Fund for the North v Amadou Nestor* wherein the SCC had ruled in absentia against the civil party without the latter been summoned to appear, the Specialised Bench of the Supreme Court quashed Decision No. 024/CRIM/TCS of 29 July 2016, and referred the case back to the same court for a ruling on civil claims.

126- In another case, concerning *Habeas Corpus*, the Littoral Court of Appeal, quashed the decision of the lower court, on the grounds that the latter had relied on facts not submitted before the court. Undoubtedly, these were facts got out of the proceedings⁴⁴. In the case in issue, though the petitioners had been released after the closing of the hearing and the case adjourned for judgement, the Judge rejected the application for immediate release of the detainees on the ground that it was unfounded⁴⁵.

§3: Right to be judged within a Reasonable Period

127- Based on the results of inspections conducted by the Inspectorate General of Judicial Services in certain Courts in 2019, judicial delays remained a challenge in the justice sector. For example, in the third quarter of the said judicial year, of the 38,148 cases registered on the cause list of the Littoral Court of Appeal, only 11,497 had been tried and 7,854 decisions signed. Such a situation had an impact on the prison population.

⁴³ See Communiqué of 18 October 2019 following the publication on social media of a photo on which some Advocates were wearing their robes, very likely in a private residence and gathered around a political personality.

⁴⁴ Ruling No. 22/Habeas corpus/PTGI/W/DLA of 26 June 2019.

⁴⁵ Ruling N.1/HB/PCA/LIT/19 of 6 August 2019.

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128- Within this context, and well before the aforementioned decision of the Bar Council, the Keeper of the Seals initiated consultations on the fight against judicial delays. These consultations were notably marked by a meeting, on 17 and 18 October, specifically dedicated to the issue, and the inclusion of this topic on the agenda of the Meeting of Heads of Courts of Appeal and Regional Delegates of Penitentiary Administration on 16 December 2019⁴⁶.

129- With a view to preventing, controlling and remedying delays, proposals were made for legislative and regulatory reforms, as well as operational actions to be implemented by the various stakeholders in the justice distribution chain. In this regard, Heads of Courts of Appeal were called upon to lay emphasis on the effective supervision of staff under their responsibility, and to ensure systematic control of pre-trial detention, of Court Registries, Examining Magistrates' and Bailiffs' offices, the effective drafting of decisions before they are pronounced and the control of the conduct of hearings by Judges.

130- The Keeper of the Seals instructed a better organisation of work within the various institutions, a better coordination between services, particularly with the establishment of frameworks for consultation between judicial services and prisons.

131- Solutions envisaged also included improving provision of infrastructure and equipment, posting of a sufficient number of staff to the various courts, awareness-raising, capacity building for all stakeholders and motivating staff.

132- Recommendations were made to explore the possibility of avoiding the holding of concurrent offices of Judge and Examining Magistrate, to establish a Judge for the preparation of case files and to create a Specialised Judicial Police Corps attached to the Judiciary.

§4: Right to be tried in the Language Best Understood

133- Overall, courts requested the services of *ad hoc* Interpreters, some of whom interpreted into local languages and a greater number into official languages. The main difficulty was the payment of the fees of In-

⁴⁶ As concerns judicial delays, the topic read as follows: *The role of judicial and penitentiary personnel in the fight against judicial delays. There were two other topics: The role of the Judiciary in the conduct of legislative and municipal elections and Examining applications for Habeas corpus.*

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interpreters who interpreted into local languages. To better guarantee the right to an Interpreter, 28 newly recruited Translators/Interpreters⁴⁷, were posted⁴⁸ to the Supreme Court (5), to the SCC (2), the Translation Unit of the Ministry of Justice (2) and to 8 out of the 10 Courts of Appeal⁴⁹. These figures raised the number of Translators/Interpreters assigned to the Judiciary to 35. The number will probably increase with the recruitment of 500 Translators as a sequel to the Major National Dialogue.

§5: Right to Appeal

134-The right of litigants to appeal for the examination of their cases by higher courts was subject to compliance with some requirements, notably the payment for the reproduction of records of proceedings, which led to the non-transmission of 380 files to Courts of Appeal and 419 files to the Supreme Court. In 2019, the right to appeal was exercised as follows:

Table 4: Appeals in 2019

Appeals	Number of appeals received								Appellants					Number of appeals not transferred due to non-payment of fees for the reproduction of records of proceedings					Outcome of appeals									
																			Number of inadmissible appeals					Number of decisions quashed or partially quashed				
	T P D	C F I	H C	C A	S C	L D	Pa rti es	O f h e r s	TP D	C F I	H C	C A	S C	TP D	C F I	H C	C A	S C	T P D	C F I	H C	C A	S C					
Third party proceedings	1	6	1	7	0	5	10	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Application to set aside judgment in default	3	9	6	7	0	8	10	0	0	4	0	5	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	3	1	0	0	0	3	1	0	
	6	2	2	1	8	0	0	6	0	2	1	4	0	0	0	0	5	0	2	5	3	0	0					

⁴⁷ The special recruitment process was launched in 2017 in the Ministry of Justice.

⁴⁸ Decision No. 115/MJ/DAG of 9 April 2019 to post judicial personnel.

⁴⁹ Adamawa (2); Centre (4); Littoral (4), North West (2); West (2); South (3); South West (2).

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Appeals	Number of appeals received					Appellants			Number of appeals not transferred due to non-payment of fees for the reproduction of records of proceedings					Outcome of appeals									
														Number of inadmissible appeals					Number of decisions quashed or partially quashed				
Appeal	4	3	5	4	0	5	62	3	0	1	3	3	0	0	0	0	3	0	0	0	0	2	0
	8	2	8	5		1	24	0	8	4	1	8			2	1	8			3	2	0	
	4	2	3	3		5		7		7		0					6					1	
				0																			
Appeal before the Supreme Court	0	1	2	1	0	4	64	2	0	0	0	4	0	1	1	0	1	0	4	0	0	2	0
	0	7	0	3		0	7	8		7	7	3	0	8	5	3	1	6	8	8	3	8	
				0								0					6						
				1																			
Review	3	1	5	0		1	80	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	2	0	0	1	0	1	0
	9	4	1			7		5		4	1	5			6	4	0			1	5	6	

Source: MINJUSTICE

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135- In sum, the guarantee of the right to fair trial was subject to wide-ranging development. There was relative progress regarding the budget allocated to the justice sector, and this helped to pursue the enhancement of infrastructure, equipment and human resource offer, the level of which is however not yet compliant with standards. Guarantees related to proceedings were not disregarded. Courts effectively implemented the rights of litigants at various levels. The persistence of judicial delays remained a challenge just like difficulties to access justice, particularly financial difficulties, in the light of irregularities observed in the functioning of legal aid Commissions. Another challenge was the improvement of the guarantee of rights of the defence through concerns voiced, among others, by Advocates.



CHAPTER 3

FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION AND COMMUNICATION



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136- Freedom of expression and communication was guaranteed through securing Cameroon's cyberspace, enhancing access to Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) and re-establishing order in the exercise of this freedom.

SECTION 1: SECURING CAMEROON'S CYBERSPACE

137- The security of Cameroon's cyberspace was guaranteed through organising capacity-building workshops for stakeholders, security audits and a security watch.

§1: Capacity-building Workshops for Stakeholders

138- In 2019, the National Agency for Information and Communication Technologies (ANTIC) organised trainings on the fight against cybercrime, while promoting at the same time, access to ICTs.

139- These seminars included among others:

- the Seminar to raise awareness of the population of Dja and Lobo in the South Region on cyber security and cybercrime, from 26 February to 1 March;
- the Cyber risk Assessment Workshop in Yaounde, from 2 to 4 April;
- the National Internet Governance Forum under the theme "Digital Transformation: opportunities and threats" in Douala from 24 to 25 April;
- the Seminar to raise awareness of Judicial/Legal Officers and Judicial Police Officers (JPO) of the East Region on cyber security and cybercrime in Bertoua, from 22 to 24 May;
- the Forum on the contribution of Start-ups to the Development of the Economy, under the theme "Agricultural transformation through the use of ICT" in Yabassi, from 3 to 5 July; and
- the 3rd International Conference on ICT for African Development in Yaounde from 26 to 28 November.

140- Also, a training seminar for public Administrations relating to social media communication techniques was organised in Kribi from 19 to 23 August 2019 by the Minister of Posts and Telecommunications.

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141- Furthermore, as part of activities to monitor the fight against cyber-crime, ANTIC conducted operations to inform Focal points identified in Public Administrations, private and public organisations on the vulnerability of their information systems and on means of preventing unauthorised intrusions in the said systems.

142- Moreover, ANTIC assisted various national security entities in identifying cyber criminals in the area of digital evidence gathering.

§2: Security Audits

143- ANTIC conducted security audits over information systems with a view to detecting threats and possible security threats in the systems and electronic communication networks. At the end of the said security audits, reports which included corrective action plans to tackle the security threats identified were drawn up.

144- The Security audits were conducted in 36 Ministries, 47 public establishments and corporations, 8 credit institutions, 4 mobile telephone operators (CAMTEL, MTN, NEXTTEL and ORANGE) and 1 internet service provider (YOOOME). Overall, during the 96 audit missions conducted, ANTIC detected 7,375 threats.

§3: Security Watch

145- In addition to updating the best practice guidelines and benchmarks on security, security watch in 2019 led to the detection of 1,628 cases of Government members' identity theft, mainly on social media, of which 1,216 were deleted. ANTIC also certified 14 accounts. It is also worth mentioning that the security watch resulted in the detection of 2 cases of web defacement attacks on Public Administration websites, and 542 posts on Facebook discrediting the image of the State and inciting to violence and rebellion.

146- Finally, security watch allowed the detection of 11,617 threats on Public Administration websites, the issuance of 24 security bulletins, leading to the filing of over 2,050 complaints on scamming and phishing, then involved ANTIC in the conduct of 3,613 investigations on cybercrime in collaboration with Interpol.

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SECTION 2: ENHANCING ACCESS TO INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGIES

147- Access to digital terrestrial television in Cameroon in 2019 led to the equipment of 300 villages. Each of them was attributed video projectors, a 32-inch digital TV, 20 decoders, 23 satellite dishes and 3 solar power systems. Also, 20 homes and 3 public squares were equipped.

148- Regarding internet access, the implementation of the first phase of works to deploy additional 1,000 km of fibre optics as part of the interconnection between Cameroon and the CAR via Kentzou, Congo via Ntam and Nigeria via Ekok was ongoing. These endeavours led to the increase of internet penetration rate to 34% in urban areas and 7% in rural areas.

149- As concerns the postal sub-sector, 2 post offices were constructed in Mboma (East) and in Meyo-Centre (South). In addition, the post offices of Douala-Bassa, Edea, Yokadouma, Batouri, Foubot, Meiganga, Mbey, Kaele and Guider were rehabilitated. Also, the number of functional postal contact points increased to 1,164 for a target of 1,220 and the number of postal contact points with high-speed Internet connection increased to 840, for a target of 909.

150- As part of the implementation of the national ICT access policy, officials of the Ministry of Communication (MINCOM) met with representatives of Facebook Inc. Company during their visit to Cameroon from 19 to 23 August 2019. The objective of the visit was to discuss with Government and civil society stakeholders involved in eradicating fake news and to set up an alert system on same.

151- This visit was consonant with Cameroon's decision to criminalize hate speech⁵⁰ and its view according to which the profession of Journalist is an aggravating circumstance of this offence.

152- It should also be noted that the Virtual Information Agency effectively took shape with the acquisition of certain equipment provided for its optimum functioning. This agency, the long term goal of which is to become a full-scale information agency will promote digital communication on the national territory.

⁵⁰ See Chapter on the Right to Peace, Security and Living Together, §730-732

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SECTION 3: RE-ESTABLISHING ORDER IN THE EXERCISE OF THE FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION AND COMMUNICATION

153- In a context marked by a relative increase in the number of media organs⁵¹ and the absence of State support for private communication, the effort to re-establish order in the exercise of the freedom of expression and communication required prior training and awareness-raising of stakeholders then, control and sanctions for non-compliance.

§1: Training and Awareness-raising for Media Professionals

154- As concerns capacity-building seminars programmed for media Professionals, mention can be made of the Discussion Workshop for the 38 Communication Unit Heads of Administrations, which held on 18 and 19 July 2019 at MINCOM under the theme: “*Revitalisation of communication*”.

155- By the same token, an Orientation Session⁵² was organised on 8 and 9 November 2019 in Kribi, for 30 Communication Unit Heads of the various Ministries, UNICEF officials including those of the *Partnership Advocacy and Cooperation Section*, and the Network of Journalists for the Defence of Children’s Rights and Vulnerable Groups. At the close of the deliberations, recommendations made focused on the establishment of a platform by MINCOM to ease access to civil status documents.

156- Furthermore, 400 media professionals from Cameroon and abroad participated in the deliberations of the 48th Assemblies of the Francophone Press Union which held from 18 to 22 November 2019 in Yaounde under the theme: *Emotional journalism, information journalism?* Recommendations made included the enhancement of respect for journalism ethics.

157- As part of activities to raise awareness of stakeholders, the National Communication Council (NCC) organised 4 national seminars and 1 international seminar. Illustratively, an awareness-raising Seminar, from 17 to 21 July 2019 was organised in Bafoussam, mainly for communication

⁵¹ More than 600 newspapers, 32 television channels, 200 radio stations, more than 50 community radio stations, more than 10 online media outlets and more than 150 cable distribution companies were identified. It should be recalled that in 2017, 1,300 authorised newspapers, 20 television stations, more than 177 radio stations, about 50 online media outlets and more than 500 cable distribution television companies were identified.

⁵² The goal of the said Session was to establish a Cameroon-UNICEF cooperation cycle by edifying the officials on the cooperation programme.

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professionals and public authorities on the specificities of community radio and its non-political nature⁵³.

158- The NCC also conducted a mission to raise awareness of Communication Professionals in the city of Sangmelima, from 5 to 10 August 2019 under the theme: *Social responsibility of Journalists in the face of hate speech and incitement to violence*. The mission was conducted following animosity between political leaders on two community radio stations.

159- An awareness-raising mission took place in Douala from 10 to 15 November 2019 under the theme: *“Media at the service of the promotion of peaceful and responsible citizenship”*. The aim was to federate the viewpoints of media professionals on the respect of national values, especially in times of security crisis.

160- On 27 August 2019, the NCC organised a seminar to validate criteria of the diversity barometer as part of the framework of the NCC/UN Women Protocol for the purpose of developing a gender barometer in the media in Cameroon.

161- In conjunction with the African Communication Regulation Authorities Network and Association Convergence, NCC organised an international seminar on the fight against piracy of audiovisual content via internet⁵⁴, from 25 to 26 November 2019 in Yaounde, with participants from 11 countries in Africa, Europe and America.

162- As concerns consultations to reorganise activities of the cable distribution sector on piracy of programme editors' signals, the NCC participated in 2 meetings with television distributors in Douala from 4 to 7 July 2019 and from 6 to 11 October 2019 at the request of Tam-Tam Communication economic interest group, with a view to resolving the dispute between the latter and Canal+ International.

⁵³ It should be noted that the seminar held in Bafoussam due to the need to settle disputes between the elites of Bangou village over the editorial line of the local community radio.

⁵⁴ The goal of the Seminar was to build the capacities of professionals of the communication and judicial sector in the light of abuses caused by new methods used to pirate audio-visual content and their consequences on the violation of intellectual property, and on economic equilibrium by extension.

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§2: Monitoring and Sanctions for non-Compliance

163- In terms of monitoring activities, NCC registered 45 complaints, including 14 applications initiated by ordinary citizens, 7 by public authorities and 12 by various institutions, in addition to 12 cases by NCC on its own motion. In addition, some complaints were sanctioned by formal notices, particularly in cases where the fault was proven.

164- NCC's action is without prejudice to complaints before competent courts, filed by media professionals themselves or against them.

165- Regarding lawsuits brought against Journalists and other media professionals in 2019, a number of cases can be mentioned: the case of **Calixthe BEYALA** against the Journalist named **Paul CHOUTA**, prosecuted before the Yaounde CFI for defamation and propagation of false information. Mr. **Paul CHOUTA**, remanded in custody on 28 June 2019 is suspected of having published on his FACEBOOK page "Le TGV de l'information", a video showing the writer in the middle of an altercation with a man. The case was pending and was adjourned to 24 June 2020.

166- Also, the case of Honourable **Faustine FOTSO** against the Journalist named **Christophe BOBIOKONO**, Director of the weekly Publication, "Kalara"⁵⁵. In another case, **Christophe BOBIOKONO** and his collaborator **Irène MBEZELE** were sentenced⁵⁶ to a 2 year suspended imprisonment term for defamation and contempt of public bodies. They were sentenced to pay pecuniary awards which they did.

167- Mention can also be made of the case of The People and **NJOCK Louis Richard vs. Adalbert HIOL**. The accused, a Journalist, was prosecuted for propagation of false information, insults and defamation, offences committed through the press. On 27 December 2019, the Douala-Bonanjo Court of First Instance found him guilty on all these counts and sentenced him to 18 months in prison with a fine of CFAF 2,000,000 and ordered him to pay damages of CFAF 10,560,000. The Court went further to order the suspension for 6 months of the social media through which the act had been committed.

⁵⁵ The articles published in October 2018 relayed comments recorded without the knowledge of MP **Faustine FOTSO**. Allusion was made to the manoeuvres she allegedly used to influence the decision of the Judges in a case between two members of the **TANDENG MUNA** family.

⁵⁶ The judgement was pronounced on 20 December 2019.

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168- In 2019, NCC did not take any measure to suspend Journalists and promoters of press or audio-visual communication enterprises, but rather implemented a more flexible regulation, including formal notices, with a view to promoting freedom of the press and hence freedom of expression and communication.

169- Although Internet penetration rate remained low, particularly in rural areas, efforts were made to ensure that the right to freedom of expression and communication is effective in Cameroon, particularly with regard to electronic communication.



CHAPTER 4

RIGHT TO PARTICIPATE IN THE MANAGEMENT OF PUBLIC AFFAIRS



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170- The reference year was characterised by the following efforts: implementing measures to rationalise and ensure equitable access into the Public Service; controlling misconduct in the dissemination of political ideas and giving a new impetus to the decentralisation process.

SECTION 1: MEASURES TO RATIONALISE AND ENSURE EQUITABLE ACCESS TO THE PUBLIC SERVICE

171- With a view to guaranteeing equal access of citizens into the Public Service, taking into consideration available resources and the Administration's operating needs, an inclusive recruitment policy was promoted and the option for capacity-building continued. Furthermore, disciplinary sanctions were imposed while guaranteeing the rights of the persons concerned. Innovative approaches were adopted by the Ministry of Public Service and Administrative Reform (MINFOPRA) in the fight against corruption.

§1: Inclusive Policy for Recruitment into the Public Service

172- In 2019, 36 Orders⁵⁷ were signed to launch 92 competitive examinations for 5,411 positions⁵⁸ compared to 5,179 in 2018, indicating an increase of 232 posts. Various aspects of the country's linguistic and sociological diversity were taken into account during recruitments. By the end of the year, a total of 2,539 persons were recruited, including 1,305 women. These figures do not include the results of competitive entrance examinations into the National School of Administration and Magistracy (ENAM) and those launched by the Ministry of Higher Education (MINESUP) on behalf of the Ministry of Secondary Education (MINESEC).

173- As concerns considerations for linguistic specificities, the special recruitment into ENAM, of 50 English-speaking Pupil Magistrates and 30 English-speaking Court Registrars into the Magistracy and Court Registry Division, initiated in 2017, continued with the second batch in 2019. In addition, the recruitment of 500 Translators and Translators/Interpreters in the 2 official languages between 2020 and 2025 was launched in 2019, with 100 positions available for that year.

⁵⁷ See MINFOPRA website, www.minfopra.gov.cm

⁵⁸ The recruitment on contract of 5,600 ex-temporary personnel was envisaged in 2019

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174- Apart from these special recruitments, the 2 official languages were systematically used in 2019 for the dissemination of Orders launching direct competitive training and professional examinations, publication of results, information notices and communiqués of the Minister of Public Service and Administrative Reform. This practice needs to be strengthened, because despite the establishment of a Bilingualism Day, users still face challenges to access public services and information in both official languages⁵⁹. It is against this backdrop that 151 more candidates, (116 English-speaking and 35 French-speaking), completed formalities for assumption of duty on 18 February 2019, following results for the recruitment of 1,000 young bilingual graduates into the Public Service for the year 2017.

§2: Capacity-Building of Public Service Staff

175- In 2019, priority was given to in-service training of Government employees, with a preference for training at national rather than international level, due to budgetary constraints. A total of 1,516 Orders to authorise training were signed, compared with 3,878 in 2018.

176- In this regard, MINFOPRA organised 4 seminars/workshops on several themes. Training in computer science and office automation techniques for more than 600 staff members was conducted with the support of the African Institute of Computer Science. Heads of Regional Services (Regional Secretaries and Inspectors General, Regional Protocol Service Heads), and some technical staff of MINFOPRA (Regional Delegates, Staff in charge of reception, mail and liaison, communication and public relations, as well as those in charge of protocol) were instructed on Standard 1,756 relating to service quality. The seminar on administrative and legal drafting was attended by 130 staff. Finally, the capacities of human resources managers of various administrations were strengthened regarding the organisation of recruitment into the public service.

§3: Pursuing Efforts to Update the Payroll Database and Disciplinary Action

177- The operation to update the State Payroll Database went alongside disciplinary sanctions.

⁵⁹ Constraints include: lack of proficiency in both official languages by personnel assigned to provide information to users; failure to prepare management tools in both official languages. To resolve these problems, particular emphasis should be laid on the training of the personnel, so that they will be proficient in the 2 official languages.

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A: Continued Operation to Update the State Payroll Database

178-As at 31 December 2019, the salaries of 14,431 Civil Servants were suspended, including 11,215 in active service, 555 pensioners maintained in active service and 2,665 deceased pensioners or traditional rulers, representing an annual budget saving of CFAF 3,246,000,000⁶⁰, that is about 3.5% of the projected wage bill.

179-The Physical Head Count of State Employees⁶¹ (COPPE) continued in 2 phases.

180-Activities carried out in the first phase included the following: initiating disciplinary procedures against personnel concerned; studying the implementation of a legal framework; making use of computer and hardcopy data; taking decisions to establish unauthorised absences, preparing written queries and radio releases; and training personnel involved with processing of files from the COPPE.

181-The second phase consisted in settling litigation before the Permanent Disciplinary Board of the Public Service⁶² regarding 8,766 cases, including 5,045 cases of Civil servants and 3,721 cases of Government employees under the Labour Code. Government employees whose salaries⁶³ were suspended for unauthorised absence or resignation were called upon on Monday 30 December 2019, to justify⁶⁴ themselves before implementation of possible disciplinary sanctions. Other persons concerned included third parties who received salaries for undeclared dead persons.

⁶⁰ About 4,955,725.19 Euros.

⁶¹ At the end of the 2018 headcount operation and the pre-litigation phase, ensuing results were assessed from three angles, notably, direct update of the State Payroll Database enhancement of characteristics of State Personnel and major lessons likely to bring reforms in the management of State human resources.

⁶² At the end of this phase, disaggregated statistics of fictitious personnel will serve as a basis for an Audit of the identified salary accounts. It was scheduled for 2021 with the objective of transferring the unduly received salaries to the Public Treasury.

⁶³ Launched in April 2018, the COPPE allowed the Public Service to proceed with identifications within and update the State Payroll Database, thereby saving about CFAF 30,000,000,000 (About 45,801,526.76 Euros) in 2019.

⁶⁴ The persons concerned were invited to consult the lists available on the MINFOPRA website at <http://minfopra.gov.cm> and contact its competent services for the Centre Regional Delegation until 24 March 2020.

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B: Disciplinary Sanctions against Employees

182- As compared to 2018, the number of Government employees brought before disciplinary bodies⁶⁵ decreased. Some 268 Government employees, of which 102 at the central level and 166 at the level of the Regions, were sanctioned for various reasons. The most recurrent sanctions included reduction in incremental position, reprimands, warnings and outright dismissal. Also, 2 Government employees who had been sanctioned were rehabilitated. The table below summarises sanctions imposed at the end of the sessions of the Permanent Disciplinary Board of the Public Service (CPDFP) for the 2019 financial year:

Table 1: Activities of the Permanent Disciplinary Board of the Public Service for the 2019 financial year

Designation		Number of cases
Employees summoned before the Board		102
Employees heard by the Board		94
Sanctions	Reduction in incremental position	16
	Warning	19
	Retirement in case of fraudulent extension document	2
	Dismissal	3
	Salary suspension	43
	Reprimand	11

Source: PDCCS

⁶⁵ Some 363 civil servants, including 123 at the central level and 240 at the level of the Regions, were brought before disciplinary bodies for reasons, ranging from unauthorised absences (87%), misconduct under ordinary law (1%), false career management documents (8%) and forged documents (2%) to professional misconduct (2%).

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Table 2: Activities of the Regional Disciplinary Board of the Public Service for the 2019 financial year

Region	Number of sessions	Number of cases examined
Adamawa	1	1
Centre	1	18
East	1	54
Far North	2	18
Littoral	5	45
North	1	4
North West	0	0
West	4	4
South	1	8
South West	0	0
TOTAL	16	158

Source: PDCCS

§4: Innovative Approaches to Fight Corruption among Staff

183- With regard to the right to information, MINFOPRA developed User Manuals and Procedure Guides. Hotlines and e-mail addresses to report malpractices were made available to users, in addition to the media or information campaigns usually conducted via information notes, spots, SMS, radio and television press releases, radio and television programmes and the publication of sanctions as part of the fight against corruption⁶⁶.

184- Furthermore, rapid information management tools were developed and free calls to digital information centres were guaranteed. These centres provide information on the status of files being processed, in order to strengthen proximity between users and Public Service Officials. It is in this regard that all Regional Delegations in the country received the SIGIPES computer application, with a view to facilitating the processing of personnel requests⁶⁷.

⁶⁶ MINFOPRA provides support to various Ministries regarding users' right to information. This is seen through the Guide on the payment of entitlements of Government employees.

⁶⁷ However, a third party user who wishes to withdraw a document on behalf of another person must present a power of attorney signed by the said beneficiary, so as to spare the latter long-distance displacements.

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SECTION 2: REGULATING THE DISSEMINATION OF POLITICAL IDEAS

185- Though the municipal and legislative elections process was initiated in 2019⁶⁸, developments on these elections will be contained in the 2020 Report. A significant part of electoral activities focused on strengthening the system, while concerns related to the dissemination of political ideas were recorded. By the same token, the desire to strengthen the rule of law was equally a major concern.

§1: Issues Related to the Dissemination of Political Ideas

186- In 2019, the sphere of political ideas was particularly dynamic, reflected by a multiplicity of initiatives by political stakeholders. These initiatives accentuated the attention of the political class on various topics relating to the aftermath of the presidential election of October 2018 and social cohesion, among others.

187- These initiatives were characterised by demonstrations and mobilisation on social media, which raised concerns about the scope and limits of the exercise of the various freedoms needed to strengthen democracy⁶⁹. Divergence of perception on the balance between these concerns was brought before both judicial and administrative courts.

188- For example, the legality of certain acts prohibiting public demonstrations was challenged before administrative courts, notably the Yaounde Administrative Court, which registered 2 appeals for abuse of power. They concern the cases of **MEKAK MBACK Christian** and *others against the State of Cameroon (MINAT)* and **DZONGANG Albert** *against the State of Cameroon (MINAT)*, which were pending at the end of the year.

189- Debates during proceedings before law courts revealed the viewpoints of some litigants who deduced that lawsuits against them were linked

⁶⁸ The term of office of Members of Parliament, extended for a period of 2 months by Decree No. 2019/15 of 19 July 2019, expired on 30 December 2019, deadline for the convening of the electorate on 27 February 2020. By Decree No. 2019/612 of 10 November 2019, the President of the Republic convened the electorate for the election of Members of Parliament on 9 February 2020. By Decree No.2019/378 of 15 July 2019, the term of office of Municipal Councillors elected during the September 2013 election, previously extended by 12 months by Decree No.2018/406 of 11 July 2018 was extended again till 29 February 2020.

⁶⁹ These include freedom of expression and communication, freedom of assembly and public demonstrations.

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to their political stance. While proceedings were discontinued in several cases owing to the Major National Dialogue, the decisions rendered in other cases included either releases or acquittals, prison sentences or fines for infringement of the laws of the Republic.

§2: Strengthening the Electoral System

190- The Biometric Register was updated, the distribution of electoral cards continued, capacity-building of stakeholders of the electoral process was conducted and new members of the Electoral Council took oath in 2019.

A: Updating the Electoral Register

191- Voter registration took place from 2 January to 31 August 2019. As at 31 December 2019, the number of registered voters was 6,853,498, including 3,234,495 women and 34,180 persons with disabilities, as presented in the table below:

Table 3: Status of Voter Registration by Region on 31 August 2019

Region	Able-bodied Voters		Voters with a disability ⁷¹	
	Male	Female	Male	Female
Adamawa	202,293	246,079	540	1,380
Centre	528,363	685,281	1,660	3,629
East	146,715	184,431	394	908
Far North	568,938	577,852	2,642	4,466
Littoral	421,160	575,539	1,164	2,695
North	330,483	365,849	1,821	2,873
North West	322,079	278,345	849	1,548
West	407,838	366,968	1,914	3,214
South	123,127	149,229	441	775
South West	171,680	201,249	384	865
TOTAL	3,222,676	3,630,822	11,819	22,361

Source: ELECAM

B: Continued Distribution of Voters' Cards

192- Biometric voters' cards were produced so as to be distributed to the beneficiaries. Thus, 7,167,162 cards were produced and 6,910,377 dis-

⁷⁰ The recurrent types of disabilities identified among registered persons include motor, visual, hearing, height, speech and multi-disability.

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tributed since the launch of this process from 2013 to 31 December 2019. The table below is an illustration of the evolution of distribution by Region.

Table 4: Breakdown of Biometric Cards Distributed by Region in 2019

Region	Cards distributed from 2013 to 2018	Cards distributed in 2019
Adamawa	486,133	2, 593
Centre	1,171,537	4,704
East	357,590	1,087
Far North	1,187,865	1, 623
Littoral	969,244	6,645
North	710,001	1,966
North West	548,856	19
West	783,966	3,495
South	289,972	9,956
South West	372,586	539
TOTAL	6,877,750	32,627

Source: ELECAM

C: Capacity-Building of Stakeholders of the Electoral Process

193- With regard to persons with disabilities and indigenous peoples, a Workshop organised by the *Cameroon National Association for the Blind* in partnership with the Ministry of Social Affairs, the British High Commission, the National Commission on Human Rights and Freedoms and ELECAM was held on 19 December 2019 in Yaounde.

194- On 19 and 20 December 2019, ELECAM organised in Yaounde a Training of Trainers workshop on the operational management of elections, with a view to the peaceful organisation of the twin legislative and municipal elections.

195- Modalities for State funding of political parties remained unchanged in 2019. Elective offices were interrupted due to the death of 7 Mayors⁷¹.

⁷¹ The following Mayors died in 2019: Mr **SADJO Hamawa** of Mindif, Mr **NENGHABI Bernard TOSA** of Belo, Mr **NDJOCK NANG** of Bibey, Mr **BOSSI Raymond** of Ndelele, Mr **EKEMA ESUNGE**

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D: Oath-taking of Members of the Electoral Council

196- Pursuant to the provisions of Section 12 (6) of Law No. 2012/1 of 19 April 2012 relating to the Electoral Code, as amended and supplemented by Law No. 2012/17 of 21 December 2012, on 16 October 2019, new members of ELECAM's Electoral Council took oath before the Constitutional Council: Mrs **TSANGA Delphine**, Msrs **TITI NWEL Pierre**, **TIKU TAMBE Christopher**, **MOHAMADOU BOUBAKAR** and **NJIPENDI SALIFOU**.

SECTION 3: STRENGTHENING THE DECENTRALISATION PROCESS

197- In the wake of the African Charter on values and principles of decentralisation, local governance and local development ratified following Decree No. 2019/583 of 31 October 2019, Law No. 2019/24 of 24 December 2019, to institute the General Code of Regional and Local Authorities was adopted. During the year, and with a view to better apply the principle of subsidiarity, development of decentralised cooperation was encouraged. The overall amount of funds transferred under decentralisation was CFAF 97,900,000,000⁷², that is, CFAF 92,000,000⁷³ for investment and CFAF 5,900,000 000⁷⁴ for functioning.

§1: Major Axis of the General Code of Regional and Local Authorities

198- With the objective of allowing transfer of specific competences and adequate resources by the State to Regional and Local Authorities (RLAs), decentralisation is defined in the new law as the fundamental axis for the promotion of development, democracy and governance at the local level. As such, it hinges on the principle of free administration of RLAs, includes specific regional organs, confers a special status on the North West and South West Regions and establishes City Councils as "Cities of ...", provides RLAs with a specific financial regime and lays down rules for controlling the budget and management of RLAs.

Patrick of Buea, Mr **GBEUNGBA TOULALE** of Mayo-Darle and Mr **KONGNYUY Francis** of Nkor.

⁷² About 149,465,648.85 Euros.

⁷³ About 140,458.02 Euros.

⁷⁴ About 9,007,633.59 Euros.

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A: Principle of Free and Inclusive Administration of RLAs

199- RLAs are freely administered by elected organs that derive their power from universal suffrage. They enjoy administrative and financial autonomy and are solely responsible for their decisions (Section 13). As a corollary of this autonomy, the Law has established a local public service through the direct recruitment and management of staff at local level. In this sense, sub-divisional councils shall ensure the recruitment and management of Nurses and paramedical staff of Integrated Health Centres (IHC) and Sub-divisional Health Centres (CMA), and pre-school, primary and nursery school Teachers.

200- Also, there was a noticeable increase in the participation of citizens in the management of RLA. Pursuant to Section 40 (1), any natural or legal person may propose, to the Council or Regional executive, any measures aimed at fostering the development or improving the functioning of the Local Authority concerned. Indeed, the population is involved in all the phases of the preparation and execution of Budgets, Projects and Programmes, as well as the selection of priority projects, through neighbourhood and village representatives.

201- Neighbourhood or village committees were set up. Within this framework, any taxpayer of a Local Authority may, at his or her own expense, request the disclosure or obtain a complete or partial copy of the reports of deliberative organs, Budgets, Projects and annual performance reports, Development Plans, accounts or orders, according to the terms and conditions laid down by laws in force. The Law thus enables the population to participate in the management of the national heritage.

202- The position of City Mayor was established to replace the Government Delegate who used to be appointed by the President of the Republic. The City Mayor shall be elected by fellow Municipal Councillors of the said City. Nevertheless, some stakeholders expect further clarification of the concepts of "native" and "sociological components", with a view to strengthening national and social cohesion.

203- However, the State supervises and provides advisory support to RLAs through legality control exercised under the authority of the President of the Republic by the Minister in charge of RLAs and the representative of

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the State in the Local Authority (Section 73). The latter may refer documents he considers illegal to the Administrative Court, within one month from the date of their receipt.

B: Clarification of the Status of Local Elected Official and Organs of RLAs

204- The law clearly defines the status of a local elected official, which applies to any person holding an elective office in a RLA. This status concerns Municipal Councillors, Regional Councillors, City Councillors, Union Board members, and Members of local authority bodies representing traditional rulers designated *ex officio*. The attributes, rights and obligations attached to this status are also specified. Regarding attributes, the local elected official is, for example, entitled to an insignia and a sash in the national colours.

205- As a deliberative organ, the Regional Assembly is composed of 90 Regional Councillors for a 5-year term of office. Moreover, Section 342 provides for the procedure of impeachment against the Regional Executive Council in the special status. This procedure for the impeachment of an Executive, which is peculiar to the Anglo-Saxon system, was introduced as a specificity of the North West and South West Regions. It gives the Regional Assembly the possibility to impeach the Regional Executive Council⁷⁵.

206- As deliberative organ of the Region, the Regional Executive Council shall comprise Divisional Representatives elected by universal suffrage and representatives of Traditional rulers elected by their peers.

207- The Regional Executive shall be composed of a President, a Vice-President, two Secretaries, a Questor, and three Commissioners for economic development, health and social development and educational, sports and cultural development respectively. The President and Vice-President of the Regional Executive, who shall be native personalities of the Region, as well as the other members of the Regional Executive Council shall be elected in the Regional Assembly for the duration of the term of office. The President of the Regional Executive Council shall come from the category of Divisional Representatives, while the Vice-President of the said Council shall come from the category of representatives of Traditional Rulers.

⁷⁵ Nevertheless, in view of the serious nature of this procedure, the legislator has prescribed that it should be implemented when the two Houses sit in joint sessions.

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208- The House of Divisional Representatives which is also presided over by the President of the Regional Executive Council shall comprise 70 members. The House of Chiefs shall be presided over by the Vice-President of the Regional Executive and shall comprise 20 members elected in accordance with the legislation in force. The House of Chiefs shall give its opinion on issues relating to traditional chiefdoms, historical sites, monuments and vestiges, cultural and traditional events, oral tradition and the regional language map.

209- The deliberations of the Regional Executive Council⁷⁶ shall be adopted by a simple majority of the members present and voting. Also, Section 290 (2) stipulates that reports of the Regional Councillors shall be forwarded to the Representative of the State and the Senate for information.

C: Granting a Special Status to the North West and South West Regions and Establishment of "City Mayors".

210- Although RLAs composed of Councils and Regions have equal status, the Law, pursuant to the provisions of Section 62 (2) of the Constitution, and in accordance with the recommendations of the Major National Dialogue on the socio-political crisis in the North West and South West Regions, grants a special status to the said Regions, by virtue of their linguistic specificity and historical heritage reflected in the unique organisation and functioning of these Regions. It is also reflected in the distinctness of the English-speaking education system, and the integration of common law-based specificities of the Anglo-Saxon judicial system in these Regions.

211- In these Regions, the Regional Assembly shall comprise 2 Houses: the House of Divisional Representatives and the House of Chiefs. The 2 Houses shall meet on the same dates, separately or jointly, depending on the items on the agenda.

212- Also, the Public Independent Conciliator⁷⁷ is an independent authority responsible for receiving complaints from the population regarding the functioning of Public Administrations, businesses and institutions at the Regional

⁷⁶ Section 276(2,) provides that: "Senators and Mayors of the Region may attend meetings of the Regional Executive Council in an advisory capacity."

⁷⁷ The Public Independent Conciliator shall notably be responsible for amicable settlement of disputes between users and the regional and council administration, defending the rights of citizens against abuses of which they may be victims, carrying out investigations into the functioning of public offices of Regional and Local Authorities.

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level. He shall also ensure that regional specificity is respected in the use of English language, in the practice of Common Law and in the implementation of the English education sub-system. He shall be appointed by Decree of the President of the Republic upon the joint recommendation of the President of the Regional Executive Council and the representative of the State, for a non-renewable term of 6 years.

213- Finally, the special status of the North West and South West Regions comes with an advantageous tax system and a special financial allocation.

214- The Urban Council shall henceforth be called "City Council", and shall be headed by an elected City Mayor, who is a Municipal Councillor of a sub-divisional Council of the said City Council. The City Mayor and his deputies shall be elected by a college comprising all the Municipal Councillors. The office of Government Delegate of the City Council is henceforth abolished.

D: Financial Regime of RLAs

215- In the past, competences were transferred from the State to RLAs, which were endowed with functional autonomy and transferred resources, such as the Common Decentralisation Fund, intended for the partial funding of decentralisation ordered by the National Decentralisation Board. In this context, financial resources related with the transfer of competence were included in the Budgets of Ministries. Subsequently, public expenditure was subject to audit and control, which could lead to the opening of criminal proceedings.

216- Moreover, cohabitation between local and national taxation was sometimes a source of confusion and conflict between stakeholders in communities.

217- Henceforth, financial resources related to Projects and Programmes will be directly allocated to RLAs. Indeed, the financial implications of the transfer of resources are defined by the Finance Law during the budget year. The 15% share of annual State revenue shall be allocated to RLAs, in accordance with the provisions of Section 25 (3), as part of the Common Decentralisation Fund.

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218- By consecrating the amending budget⁷⁸, the Decentralisation Code, in its Chapter V which relates to the financial regime of RLAs, addresses one of the difficulties hitherto encountered by Councils in including in the initial budget, new or additional resources which were either allocated to them by the State within the framework of the Finance Law, or from loans, decentralised cooperation or donations and legacies, or from certain expenditure.

219- Notwithstanding the extension of the voting period from 15 November to 15 December as provided for in Section 422, the budget of RLAs shall be subject to adjustments during the financial year. For example, this will be the case when it comes to including resources allocated by the State as part of the common decentralisation fund, the final amount of which is known only after the State Finance Law is voted, which is later than the deadline for voting the budget of RLAs. The amending budget shall be prepared, voted and approved in the same manner as the initial budget.

220- The budget of RLAs shall be subject to administrative control, judicial control, and control by the deliberative organ and audits.

E: Role of the Judge in the Regulation of Decentralisation

221- The role of the courts was strengthened as regards regulation of administrative disputes, criminal offences and irregularities in accounts keeping.

222- First of all, the role of the Administrative Judge was strengthened as an arbitrator of disputes between RLAs among themselves, and between RLAs and representatives of the State. The provisions of Section 77 of the above-mentioned Law give the representative of the State the possibility to refer to the administrative court, documents of RLAs, which he/she considers to be illegal. Similarly, where a representative of the State annuls a document of RLAs that he/she deems to be out rightly illegal, the Head of the Executive may refer the matter to the competent Administrative Judge.

⁷⁸ The amending budget shall be prepared, voted and approved in the same manner as the initial budget. The extension of the deadline for voting the budget of RLAs from 15 November to 15 December as provided for in Section 422 may be subject to adjustments during the financial year. For example, this will be the case when it comes to including resources allocated by the State as part of the common decentralisation fund, the final amount of which is known only after the State Finance Law is voted, which is later than the deadline for voting the budget of RLA.

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223- The Administrative Judge, more particularly the President of the Administrative Court, can on his own motion or at the request for annulment by the representative of the State, order stay of execution of documents of RLAs including public contracts. He shall also rule on instruments likely to undermine the exercise of a public or individual freedom.

224- The innovation in Section 79 resides in the fact that the denial to approve instruments of the local authority, on the grounds of abuse of power can be challenged before the competent Judge. The decision of the Court shall be tantamount to approval once it is served on the RLA. Section 241 also provides that in the event of conflict of powers between the City council and the sub-divisional councils, the Mayor of the City council or of the sub-divisional council shall refer the matter to the Administrative Judge who has territorial jurisdiction.

225- The Administrative Judge shall equally rule on instruments signed by the Ministry in charge of RLAs establishing the resignation of a Councillor.

226- Furthermore, in Section 129, the Judge in charge of Criminal matters guarantees the protection of the local elected official against threats, contempt, violence, insults or defamation committed against him/her in the exercise or because of their duties. The elected official may therefore institute a civil action against the perpetrators of such acts.

227- Finally, the Audit Bench shall rule over the regularity of the accounts of Authorising Officers and Accountants, including de facto Accounting Officers as provided for in Sections 475, 476 and 485.

§2: Rationalising Decentralised Cooperation

228- In 2019, besides a session of international training on Decentralised Cooperation and International Action of Regional and Local Authorities organised in Yaounde from 30 September to 4 October 2019 by *United Councils and Cities of Cameroon*, the other arm of rationalisation focused on the preparation of guideline documents.

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229- To ensure promotion of Diplomacy in RLAs, the deliberations of the Inter-ministerial Commission for Cooperation and Decentralisation (CICOD) held on 9 May and 29 July 2019, under the chairmanship of the Minister of Decentralisation and Local Development. Recommendations were made for the preparation of the National Decentralised Cooperation Guide.

230- A mission was conducted to renew the framework cooperation agreement between the Douala City Council and the Bordeaux Council.

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231- In a nutshell, in 2019, decentralisation of human resource management, simplification of administrative procedures, the drafting and dissemination of user guides, participated in promoting good ethics and transparency in the running of public institutions. The Law on decentralisation capitalises on the recommendations of the General Meeting of Councils and the Major National Dialogue to accelerate and consolidate the decentralisation process.

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CONCLUSION OF PART ONE

232- The year under review was characterised, among other things, by the implementation of measures to prevent vertical and horizontal infringements of fundamental rights, including various sentences imposed on some law enforcement staff. Furthermore, the search for consensual solutions to the strike by Advocates of the Cameroon Bar Association contributed to the preservation of the right to counsel which is a key element of the right to fair trial.

233- Regarding communication, the NCC imposed sanctions such as formal notices against journalists and promoters of social communication companies for misconduct, instead of more severe sanctions such as suspension from the profession or outright dismissal.

234- Similarly, decentralisation expected to accelerate participation of citizens in the management of public affairs received new impetus by the adoption of a law thereon.

235- Though these efforts are to be lauded, major challenges linger, such as increasing internet penetration rate, especially as regards electronic communications in rural areas, and ensuring free public demonstrations in a context of security crisis and the optimisation of decentralised cooperation. Furthermore, the punishment of acts of torture and other cruel, inhuman and degrading treatment, as well as the fight against judicial delays should be stepped up.

236- Due to the indivisibility of Human Rights, economic, social and cultural rights are just as relevant as civil and political rights.



PART TWO

ECONOMIC, SOCIAL AND CULTURAL RIGHTS AND RIGHT TO A HEALTHY ENVIRONMENT



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INTRODUCTION TO PART TWO

237- In 2019, economic, social and cultural rights and the right to a healthy environment continued to be implemented, despite security constraints in some regions of the country. As the main duty bearer of these rights, the State was concerned with guaranteeing their full enjoyment.

238- In this regard, public authorities, in a multisector approach, worked hard to ensure education offer, prevent diseases, fight against food insecurity, promote access to water, energy and decent housing. Other focuses included access to jobs, promotion of culture and tourism, and strengthening of the legal and institutional framework for the protection of the environment.

239- However, these rights were not enjoyed without constraints because of the drop of State revenue due to the insecurity prevailing in some regions of the country and some multisector programmes and policies did not always optimally meet the expectations of beneficiaries.

240- The following shall be developed:

- Right to Education (Chapter 1);
- Right to Health (Chapter 2);
- Right to an Adequate Standard of Living (Chapter 3);
- Right to Work and Social Security (Chapter 4);
- Right to Culture and Leisure (Chapter 5);
- Right to a Healthy Environment (Chapter 6).



CHAPTER 1

RIGHT TO EDUCATION



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241- On a global budget of CFAF 4,805,500,000,000, the education sector was allocated a budget⁷⁹ of CFAF 675,000,000,000⁸⁰ in 2019 as against CFAF 637,000,000,000⁸¹ in 2018, that is, an increase of CFAF 38,000,000,000⁸² in absolute value and 5.63% in relative value on a global budget of CFAF4, 805,500, 000, 000⁸³. Despite security concerns in some Regions of the country, the budget allocated allowed the State to continue its efforts towards improving the education system through relevant measures to guarantee the right to education which concerned nursery and primary education secondary education and Teachers' training and Higher Education.

SECTION1: GUARANTEE OF THE RIGHT TO NURSERY AND PRIMARY EDUCATION

242- The budget of the basic Education sub-Sector increased from CFAF 210,553,399,000⁸⁴ in 2018 to CFAF 222,331,065,000⁸⁵ in 2019⁸⁶, that is, an increase of CFAF 11,777,666,000⁸⁷ in absolute value and 5.29% in relative value. With this budget, the education offer increased at nursery and primary school levels, literacy was further encouraged, as well as non-formal basic education. Besides, special measures were also taken for children living in areas subject to security risks.

§1: Access to Nursery Education

243- The number of nursery schools increased, as 573 nursery schools were set up all over the national territory. Moreover, equipment was pur-

⁷⁹ The employment and vocational training sector was allocated a budget of CFAF 20,787,000,000, that is, 31,735,877.86 Euros.

⁸⁰ 1,030,534,351.15 Euros.

⁸¹ About 972,519,083.97 Euros.

⁸² About 58,015,267.18 Euros.

⁸³ About 7,336,641,221. 37 Euros.

⁸⁴ About 321,455 .57 Euros.

⁸⁵ About 339,436,740.46 Euros.

⁸⁶ The sum of CFAF 7,178,417,000 CFAF out of this amount were allocated to operation. The sums transferred as part of decentralisation amount to CFAF 17,673,216,000 (that is, CFAF 13,585,032,000 allocated to the construction, maintenance and equipment of schools and CFAF 4,088,184,000 for the minimum package).

⁸⁷ About 17,981,169.46 Euros.

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chased and infrastructure increased in Community-based nursery schools and Parents' schools as well as in classic nursery schools.

A: Community-based Nursery Schools and Parents' Schools

244- During the 2018/2019 school year, the number of community-based nursery centres increased to 330, as 10 were newly constructed. Moreover, 200 Heads of management committees received training in management to guarantee the smooth functioning of these Centres.

B: Classic Nursery Schools

245- Some 19 latrine blocks and 3 fences were built while 21 classrooms were built and equipped in nursery schools in rural areas.

§2: Access to Primary Education

246- Education offer was maintained in order to match demand. Moreover, the quality of education was strengthened and this had an impact on examinations results.

A: Education Offer

247- Concerning Government primary schools, the offer was maintained through purchase of equipment, development and rehabilitation of infrastructure. Subsidies continued to be granted to private primary schools. On another score, recruitments of Teachers were launched.

1) Purchase of Equipment, Development and Rehabilitation of Infrastructure for Government Primary Schools

248- As part of strengthening the school network, 88 schools were set up.

249- Moreover, 21,834 benches were purchased, 7,050 with State funds and 14,784 with C2D funding and through the School-Building Support Project in Priority Education Areas (PASZEP).

250- Some 1,703 classrooms were also built, 850 with State funds, 613 with funding from the 3rd C2D and 240 with PASZEP. To secure Government primary schools, 24 fences were built, 20 of which were funded by PASZEP and 4 by State funds. As concerns toilets, 80 latrine blocks were built with State funds.

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251- Some 8 schools built within the framework of the partnership between Cameroon, Japan and the Islamic Development Bank were rehabilitated.

2) Grant of Subsidies to Private Primary Schools

252- Subsidies amounting to CFAF 4,454,170 000⁸⁸ were granted to Catholic, Islamic, secular and Protestant schools to enable them offer quality education.

3) Recruitment of Teachers

253- The 1st operation to recruit Teachers as part of the 3rd Programme of recruitment on contract of 12,000 Teachers holders of the Teachers' Grade 1 Certificate was launched. The goal is to recruit 3,000 Teachers per year during 4 years.

B: Education Demand

254- To meet education needs, incentives were granted to promote economic accessibility, with particular emphasis on girls.

1) Incentives

255- As part of incentives, 64,800 citizenship and moral education books were shared, 35,700 in French-speaking schools and 29,100 in English-speaking schools. Some 300 micro-science kits were shared to Government schools to enhance teaching of science subjects.

256- Some 80 desktops were distributed to school Head Teachers, 4000 XO computers were shared to pupils and 40 servers were purchased and made available as part of the promotion of ICT through PASZEP.

2) Special Measures for Young Girls

257- As part of these measures, 3,000 school kits were offered to 2,100 girls in French-speaking schools and to 900 girls in English-speaking schools.

258- To make sure young girls stay in school, foodstuffs were distributed to 84,770 of them.

⁸⁸ About 6,800,259.54 Euros, as follows: CFAF 948,707,441 (About 1,448,408. 31 Euros) for Catholic schools; CFAF 286,532,020 (About 437,453.46 Euros) for Islamic schools; CFAF 2,769,521,721 (About 4,228,277. 44 Euros) for secular schools; CFAF 449,408,818 (About 686,120. 33 Euros) for Protestant schools.

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259- Moreover, awareness was raised among members of the national education community on sending and maintaining young girls in school through the *Réseau Camerounais des Mères Elèves Filles* (Cameroon Network of Students who are Mothers).

C: Enhancing the Quality of Education

260- To strengthen the quality of education, several approaches were considered.

1) Drafting and Implementation of New Curricula

261- With the support of PASZEP, 138,406 copies of the new curricula were produced to be freely distributed in all Government and private schools all over the country from October 2019⁸⁹.

2) Capacity Building for Teachers

262- Within this framework, 4,382 Teachers were trained on the use of the new curricula and 330 others of the Littoral and West Regions were trained to use education methods in emergency situations for better supervision of children from the North West and South West Regions.

263- The use of the writing system and pedagogy of national languages in a multilingual environment was implemented.

264- Within the framework of distance training of Teachers, the programme dubbed *Initiative Francophone pour la Formation à Distance des Maîtres* (Francophone Initiative for Distance Training of Teachers) completed the drafting of training booklets and envisaged, for the next stages, the supervision of Teachers in ICTs and classroom practices in the 10 Regions of the country.

3) Promotion of Health and Sports in Schools

265- As part of promoting sports, the 14th edition of the national finals of Federation of National School Games (FENASSCO), League B was organised in Maroua in the Far North Region from 16 to 23 June 2019 under the theme: *sports in school, factor of national integration and peace*

⁸⁹ Following Ministerial Letter No. A/426/L/MINEDUB/IGE of 9 October 2019.

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strengthening in Cameroon. Some 1,250 Athletes, 150 Supervisors, 70 Heads of Regional Committees and 250 Technical Officials participated in the games.

266- With regard to health, emphasis was laid on the fight against cholera, the promotion of hygiene and sanitation in schools, de-worming of children, the organisation of oral hygiene campaigns and the fight against HIV/Aids and sexually transmitted infections.

267- In all, under the supervision of teams from the Ministry of Public Health, about 365,177 children received Vitamin A, 386,600 children were vaccinated against measles, especially with the introduction of the 2nd dose. Some 6,796,887 children were dewormed against helminths and 4,853,043 against schistosomiasis.

4)- Improving Teachers' Working Conditions

268- In rural areas, 14 blocks of 2 houses each were built for Teachers. Some 3 Divisional Delegations (Faro and Deo, Mayo Tsanaga and Mbam and Kim) and 5 Sub-divisional Inspections of Basic Education were also built.

269- Furthermore, central and decentralised services of Ministry of Basic Education (MINEDUB) were equipped with office furniture and computer hardware. Some 2,051 Teachers' tables were purchased in Government primary schools.

270- Special allowances were also granted to Teachers working in retroceded border areas or areas difficult to access (Darack and Bakassi).

5) Improvement of School Governance

271- School governance was improved through combating illegal schools and violence in schools. Some 203 private schools were closed in the 10 Regions of the country, as against 179 in 2018.

272- Concerning violence in schools, education authorities took strong measures, especially the systematic search of satchels, school bags, pockets, didactic material by supervisors, Teachers and peer educators. Furthermore, pupils were reminded of the internal rules and regulations and clubs promoting peace and tolerance set up.

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273- Moreover, tripartite discussions were organised 2 times per term between Teachers, parents and pupils. Each time the flag was raised, the advantages of peace between pupils and Teachers were reiterated.

274- To combat the consumption of drugs in schools, awareness-raising messages were displayed in several public or private schools. Awareness was also raised through clubs under the National Drug Control Committee and during assemblies on Mondays or Fridays. To support them in this fight, schools in Yaounde benefited from the collaboration of the Police Station in charge of schools based in Soa and from some Civil Society Organisations such as the *Foi et Justice* (Faith and Justice) Association which trained peer educators in several schools.

D: Examination Results

275- Statistics presenting examination results feature in the table below:

Table 1: Statistics of Registration and Results of Official Examinations for the 2018/2019

EXAMINATIONS	YEAR	REGISTERED	SAT	PASSED	SUCCESS RATE
CEP	2018	30,4516	298,535	250,073	83.77
	2019	299,337	293,672	226,212	77.03
FSLC	2018	73,805	71,852	66,517	92.57
	2019	69,476	68,627	63,128	91.99
CE	2018	64,467	62,260	53,569	85.22
	2019	63,375	62,299	55,983	89.86
Total	2018	442,788	432,647	370,159	87.19
	2019	432,188	424,598	345,323	81.33

Source: MINEDUB

KEY:

CEP: *Certificat d'Etudes Primaires*;

FSLC: First School Leaving Certificate;

CE: Common Entrance.

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§3: Promotion of Literacy, Non-formal Basic Education and National Languages

276- On the promotion of literacy and non-formal basic education, MINE-DUB produced survey tools to assess the benefits of learning in Functional Literacy Centres (CAF) and Non-formal Basic Education Centres (CEBNF). To master the map of these institutions, a directory of CAF and CEBNF was drawn up.

277- Moreover, in the context of capacity-building, 70 Officials of CAF and CEBNF were trained on the mastery of the assessment framework of the *Action Research relating to measuring the learning outcomes for participants to literacy programmes*.

278- With regard to national languages, manuals continued being produced and the programme named *School and National Languages in Africa* which is characterised by the teaching of 5 national languages (Ewondo, Duala, Bassa, Ffuldé and Ghomala) in primary schools was implemented.

§4: Special Actions for Children Living in Areas with Security Challenges

279- To face insecurity in the Far North, North West and South West Regions, activities enabling pupils to enjoy the right to education were carried out. These are: the strengthening of pedagogic follow-up of Teachers through proximity supervision, grant of school and pedagogic kits to pupils and Teachers, training of pedagogic supervisors and Teachers on living-together, awareness-raising among communities to put an end to attacks against education. Other activities included call for restoration of peace and normalcy in the above-mentioned Regions and the training of Teachers on psychosocial support and reduction of conflicts and disaster risks in schools.

280- Thus, under the *Safe School Declaration*, an advocacy workshop was organised with the support of UNICEF in May 2019, at Hotel Mont Febe in Yaounde. Representatives of MINEDUB, MINEPAT, MINAS, the National Gendarmerie, Police and Civil Society Organisations attended the workshop. The aim was to disseminate the said Declaration and to develop dissemination strategies from ensuing guidelines at national and regional levels.

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281- Moreover, within the framework of “*Education Cannot Wait*” (new global fund to transform the delivery of education in emergencies), the first emergency response in Cameroon was initiated by MINEDUB and UN-ESCO in October 2019 to ease access to education in the North West and South West Regions. It targeted 17,085 children, out of which 50% were girls, under the supervision of 97 officials of the pedagogic supervision chain.

282- In addition, a 2-day national training workshop on education in emergency situations was organised in Yaounde in November 2019 with the support of UNICEF, the goal being to promote and ensure the protection and security of schools during conflicts. Some 110 participants from MINE-DUB and MINESEC attended the workshop.

283- In October, November and December 2019, training sessions were organised for 1,221 Teachers and 237 members of communities from the Littoral, North West, West and South West Regions on psychosocial support and on strategies of reduction of disaster risks in schools and protection of school environment with financial support from UNICEF and PLAN Cameroon.

SECTION 2: GUARANTEE OF THE RIGHT TO SECONDARY EDUCATION

284- During the 2018/2019 school year, the activities of the Ministry of Secondary Education (MINESEC) took place within the framework of access to secondary education and improving the quality of education for more outstanding results.

§1: Strengthening Access to Secondary Education

285- Endowed with a budget of CFAF393,079,000,000⁹⁰ MINESEC worked towards increasing the intake capacity of High Schools to better meet the demand.

A: Increasing Intake Capacity

286- Activities carried out varied according to public and private high schools and with the number of Teachers.

⁹⁰ About 600,120,610 .69 Euros.

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1) Government Secondary Education

287- In 2019, as concerns general education, 140 schools were set up, opened or transformed. In all, 2 Technical High Schools were changed into Bilingual Technical High Schools: the Nkolbisson Technical High School in Yaounde and the Akwa Technical High School in Douala. These changes took the number of Bilingual Technical High Schools from 5 to 7.

288- The construction of Government Technical Teacher Training College Edea was completed. Two dormitories were built in 2 schools in Bamenda and Limbe. Some 105 blocks of 2 classrooms each were built in several schools. Fences were built in schools and 11 laboratories for practicals were built in Government Technical High Schools and Government Technical Colleges. Moreover, emergency rehabilitation started in 19 operational schools in the North West and South West Regions.

289- With regard to equipment, the following purchases were made: benches for 214 classrooms, micro-science kits for 60 science laboratories, other kits for 122 laboratories for practicals and 3 IT rooms.

2) Private Secondary Education

290- Demand in private secondary education was high in particular for internally displaced children. To meet this demand, 23 private high schools of the French-speaking sub-system in the Centre, Littoral and West Regions, where numerous displaced students are registered, were changed into bilingual private high schools.

291- With regard to finance, private secondary education received subsidies amounting to CFAF 2,300,000,000⁹¹ for 718 schools.

3) Number of Teachers

292- Despite the recruitment of 865 bilingual Teachers, 681 of whom were posted to the North West and South West Regions, the number of Teachers which stood at 90,000 in 2019⁹² did not change much.

⁹¹ About 3,511,450.38 Euros.

⁹² Such recruitments were carried out within the framework of the special recruitment of 1,000 bilingual graduates ordered by the Head of State in 2018.

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B: Demand for Secondary Education

293- Due to the afore-mentioned security crises, the number of students decreased from 2,205,778 during the 2015/2016 school year to 1,778,385 during the 2018/2019 school year.

§2: Strengthening Education Quality

294- Through school governance, enhancement of human resource management and working conditions, capacity-building, training curricula reform, the development of entrepreneurship and the fight against violence, drug and HIV/Aids, the quality of education was improved.

A: School Governance

295- To improve on school governance, special attention was given to the digitalisation of payment of required fees and fees for end of course and competitive examinations that was initiated during the 2018/2019 school year. As a result, there was better transparency and accountability of fees collected. Also, statistics on the number of students were accurate, thus facilitating expenses towards essential needs. Fees collected electronically through various operators (CAMPOST, *Express Union*, MTN, and UBA) shall henceforth be transferred to an account at *Afriland First Bank*.

296- Besides, Rapid Results Initiatives were established in 6 schools of the Centre Region with the goal to reduce by 80%, within 100 days, acts of mismanagement of funds of Parents-Teachers Associations in Government schools.

297- Some 62 schools were closed as a result of the campaign for the fight against illegal schools.

B: Improving Human Resource Management and Working Conditions

298- With regard to human resource management, 6,026 new Teachers from the Higher Teacher Training Colleges and Higher Technical Teacher Training Colleges were posted without delay. For better follow-up of career-related documents, 4,552 recruitment files, 20,835 advancement

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decisions, 3,412 files for payment of entitlements were processed in the Central Administration and in Regional Delegations of Secondary Education through the installation of the Computer System for Integrated Management of Government Employees and the Payroll (SIGIPES).

299- As concerns to the improvement of working conditions, various schools received furniture for offices and classrooms. Moreover, transportation allowances were paid to Teachers in the process of recruitment and 1,163 personnel from various education types were awarded Academic Palms.

C: Capacity Building

300- For some new fields of the second cycle of secondary education to become effective, the training of 100 Teachers of film arts was launched. The development of methods and techniques for the teaching of mathematics continued within the framework of the *African Institute of Mathematics and Science* project, through the training of 288 Teachers and awareness-raising among 168 school Heads.

301- In all, 27,304 Teachers received continuous education and 6,965 trainee Teachers were followed up and assessed.

D: Training Curricula Reform

302- The training curricula reform was characterised by the review of teaching programmes of the classes of 1^{ère}, Lower Sixth and Upper Sixth. Some fields of study were adapted to agro-ecologic areas and to major projects being implemented in Cameroon. These include agriculture in the Technical High Schools of Lagdo and Yagoua, tanning in Maroua Technical High School, biomedical sciences at the Technical High Schools of Garoua, Bertoua and Nkolbisson.

303- Innovative fields such as chemical engineering, construction and after sales maintenance, plumbing facilities and water networks were also developed.

304- Moreover 3 training curricula were drawn up and 19 professional capacity building workshops were organised as part of the establishment of strategic fields of study such as the digitalisation, agro-forestry, energy, construction and public works.

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E: Development of Entrepreneurship

305- The entrepreneurship module was introduced as an experiment in numerous Government technical high schools in the field of Sciences and Technologies of the tertiary sector. To complement this module, 400 entrepreneurship clubs were set up in schools for the promotion of corporate social and financial education. Moreover, 596 internships in companies were provided as part of refresher courses and school/work training for Teachers. During the open-door days of Secondary Technical High Schools in March 2019, productions of the best 30 students' were awarded prizes.

F: Combating Violence, Drugs and HIV/Aids

306- With regard to the fight against violence, the capacities of 150 school Heads were built in inclusive education, prevention of risks and emerging social plagues and on the psychosocial care of students and Teachers during a workshop organised under the aegis of the Ministry of External Relations on the *Safe School Declaration*.

307- As concerns the fight against drugs, risks and vulnerability mapping related to drugs and HIV/AIDS was drawn up in 20 schools and campaigns to fight the consumption of drugs in school were organised in several schools.

308- Moreover, awareness was raised among 1,500 students and 1,200 Teachers on the prevention of sexually transmitted diseases and HIV/AIDS within the framework of the "social Vaccine" Programme of the Chantal BIYA International Reference Centre. Also, 80 peer educators and 20 Supervisors in adolescents' reproductive health were trained.

§3: Examination Results

309- In all 1,023,639 candidates registered for the 2019 session of official examinations as against 1,081,910 in the 2018 session, representing a drop of 58,271 in absolute value and 5.38 % in relative value.

310- These candidates are distributed per institution as follows:

- Department of Examinations and Certification (DECC): 541, 232 candidates as against 588, 716 in 2018, that is a drop of 8.06%;

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- General Certificate of Education Board (GCE Board): 110,543 candidates as against 133,104 in 2018, that is, a drop of 16.95%; and
- Cameroon Baccalaureate Board (OBC): 378,414 candidates as against 360,140 in 2018, that is, a drop of 5.07%;

311- The results are presented in the following table:

Table 2: National results of OBC Examinations for the 2019 Session

Examinations	Registered	Sat	Passed	Success Rate
General Secondary Education				
Literary <i>Baccalaureats</i>	74,596	73,928	46,386	62.74%
Scientific <i>Baccalaureats</i>	64,175	63,515	36,766	57.89%
Literary <i>Probatoires</i>	85,441	84,040	41,303	49.15%
Scientific <i>Probatoires</i>	78,324	77,341	29,557	38.22%
Totals	302,536	298,824	154,012	51.54%
Technical and Professional Secondary Education				
<i>Bac AF, C I, F</i>	8,079	8,018	5,097	63.57%
<i>BT IND</i>	6,933	6,880	3,023	43.94%
<i>BAC STT</i>	10,015	9,920	6,323	63.74%
<i>BT STT</i>	2,792	2,769	2,164	78.15%
<i>BT IND</i>	303	298	194	65.10%
<i>BP COM</i>	15	15	5	33.33%
<i>PB AF, C I, F</i>	23,165	22,879	7,275	31.80%
<i>PB de BT IND</i>	9,662	9,538	6,236	65.38%
<i>PB STT</i>	11,504	11,350	6,663	58.70%
<i>PB de BT STT</i>	3,406	3,366	2,386	70.88%
<i>BEP IND</i>	4	4	00	00.00
TOTALS	75,878	75,037	39,366	52.46%
Grand Total	378,414	373,861	193,378	51.72%

Source: MINESEC

SECTION 3: GUARANTEE OF THE RIGHT TO HIGHER EDUCATION

312- With a budget of CFAF 65,228,000,000⁹³, the right to education continued to be guaranteed at higher education level through maintained access, preservation of quality and academic tools and the quest for efficiency.

⁹³ About: 99,584,732 .82 Euros.

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§1: Sustained Access to Higher Education

313- Thanks to the enhancement of the university offer to absorb the flow of students, access to higher education was maintained.

A: University Offer

314- Infrastructure was developed, equipment was purchased and the number of Lecturers was maintained to guarantee the university offer.

1) Construction of Infrastructure and Purchase of Equipment

315- Several buildings continued to be put up in universities and Professional Schools in Cameroon. Equipment was purchased for various of field study to allow students enabling environment.

316- Teaching Field: At the University of Bamenda, various roads and utilities were developed and laboratory equipment was purchased for the Higher Technical Teacher Training College (ENSET) of Bambili. At the University of Douala, laboratory equipment was also purchased for the Higher Technical Teacher Training College.

317- At the University of Maroua, various roads and utilities were developed and furniture was purchased for the Higher Teacher Training College. At the University of Yaounde I, Academic and administrative block was built at the Higher Teacher Training College and equipment was purchased for the laboratories.

318- Medical Field: At the Faculty of Health Sciences of the University of Buea, laboratories were equipped. At the Faculty of Health and Biomedical Sciences of the University of Bamenda a teaching and administrative block was built. Laboratory equipment was purchased at the Faculty of Health and Biomedical Sciences of the University of Yaounde I and the Faculty of Health Sciences of the University of Douala.

319- Technological Field: A teaching and administrative block was built at the Faculty of Engineering and Technology at the University of Buea and at the National Higher Polytechnic Institute Bamenda. An administrative block was built at the Geology and Mining School of the University of

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Ngaoundere. At the Faculty of Plant Engineering of the University of Douala, laboratory equipment was purchased. At the University Institute of Technology of the same university, a 6-room academic block and a lecture hall were built. Laboratories were also equipped in the same Institute.

320- Professional Fields: Rehabilitation works were carried out at the Advanced School of Mass Communication of the University of Yaounde II. In the same university, extension works were carried out and furniture was purchased for the Cameroon Institute of External Relations.

321- At the Advanced School of Economic and Commercial Sciences of the University of Douala, furniture and equipment were rehabilitated while at the Advanced School of Translators and Interpreters of Buea, various roads and utilities were developed and furniture was purchased.

322- Agronomic Field: At the Faculty of Agronomy and Agricultural Sciences of the University of Dschang, the e-learning Centre was rehabilitated and at the Institute of Halieutic Sciences of the University of Douala, an administrative block was built.

2) Increased Number of Lecturers

323- The number of Lecturers was increased through the special recruitment of 1,237 young Ph.D holders in State Universities followed by the signing of contracts and posting to various universities and Professional Schools. So, the total number of Lecturers rose from 4,432 in 2018 to 4,961 in 2019, giving a student/Lecturer ratio of 1:109 in 2018 as against 1:84 in 2019.

B: Demand for Higher Education

324- The number of students and measures concerning economic accessibility highlighted the education demand at higher education level.

1) Number of Students

325- The number of students in both Government and private institutions increased from 451, 504 students in 2018 to 520, 000 in 2019, with 30, 997 girls registered in professional and technological fields.

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2) Incentive Measures

326- In order to support economic accessibility, scholarships and grants continued to be awarded to some students. A total of 517 students were awarded scholarships and grants and 1,100 benefited from holiday jobs and from the work study program for a 3-month period.

327- Moreover, 90,000 students in 2019 as against 100,000 in 2018 continued to be awarded the academic excellence grant and the distribution of 500,000 computers to students that was launched in 2017 came to an end.

§2: Maintaining the Quality of Teaching and Academic Tools

328- The quality of teachings provided in universities was preserved and the academic tools were more oriented towards professionalisation.

A: Maintaining of the Quality of Teaching

329- The quality of teaching was preserved by improving on the working conditions of Lecturers and by continuing to promote ethics and deontology.

330- So, 5,000 Researcher Lecturers continued to benefit from the academic research grant under the earmarked account for the modernisation of research. The grant which remained the same in 2019 amounted to CFAF 10,500,000,000⁹⁴.

331- Moreover, 64 Lecturers and PhD students benefited from mobility grants and trainings abroad within the framework of cooperation and special mobility programmes.

332- With regard to continued promotion of ethics and deontology, despite awareness-raising among students on respect of deontological values in universities, the number of students sanctioned for examination fraud and indiscipline was 252 as against 99 in 2018.

B: Progressive Orientation of Academic Tools towards Professionalisation

333- The National Higher Education Qualification Framework was implemented, the approval process for the Higher National Diploma curricula

⁹⁴ About 16,030,534.35 Euros.

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finalised, teaching programmes in nutrition were drawn up and validated, while professionalisation of traditional faculties continued.

334-Moreover, the 2nd Conference on academic and professional counselling held and a digital counselling platform was developed.

§3: Sustained Efficiency of Higher Education

335-As shown in the table below, the rate of success in national official examinations organised respectively in 2017/2018 and 2018/2019 did not improve significantly.

Table 3: Comparative results of National Examinations in 2017/2018 and 2018 /2019

Examinations	Years	Number of registered candidates	Number of successful candidates	Percentage
DSEP	2017/2018	2,608	1,930	74%
	2018/2019	1,446	1,070	74%
BTS	2017/2018	14,627	10,974	75.02%
	2018/2019	14,684	11,017	75.03%
HND	2017/2018	7,003	5,873	83.86%
	2018/2019	5,320	4,460	83.83%
HPD	2017/2018	411	397	96.59%
	2018/2019	391	385	98.41%

Source: MINESUP

Key: BTS: *Brevet de Technicien Supérieur*; DSEP: *Diplôme Spécialisé de l'Enseignement Professionnel*; HND: *Higher National Diploma* ; HPD: *Higher Professional Diploma*

336- Besides, 4,100 certificates of equivalence were issued in 2019 as against 4,416 in 2018.

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337- Despite the challenging security context in several Regions of the country, the State continued to guarantee the right to education by developing infrastructure and purchasing equipment. Besides, the quality of the education offer was raised through the reform of curricula, improvement of teachers' working conditions, combating corruption and illegal schools, professionalisation of teaching and matching curricula with entrepreneurship.

338- Nevertheless, there were still challenges such as those related to education offer in emergency context, the consumption of drug and acts of violence against children and Teachers in schools.

CHAPTER 2

RIGHT TO HEALTH



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339- A new impetus was given to the health sector with an increase of 20% of the budget of the Ministry of Public Health (MINSANTE) compared to 2018⁹⁵. Policy documents were adopted and some strategic documents evaluated in a bit to improve on the health sector. Actions were taken in the following areas contained in the Health Sector Strategy 2016-2027: disease prevention, case management, health system strengthening, and governance.

SECTION 1: HEALTH PROMOTION

340- Measures taken to promote the health of the population concerned among others, the living environment of the population, combating illicit or harmful substances and combating malnutrition.

§1: Living Environment of the Population

341- A national policy document on Hygiene was validated and the fight against open defecation continued with Community Led Total Sanitation (CLTS) initiated in several villages including 270 in the East and Far North Regions. However, only 18.52 on 55% of Health Districts targeted practiced CLTS. Besides, 30 water purifiers were supplied to Districts affected by cholera in the North and Far North Regions.

§2: Combating Illicit or Harmful Substances

342- Measures were taken by the National Committee for the Fight against Drugs to combat hard drugs. These included those on the reduction of the demand for addictive substances among which the production of awareness-raising materials and communication tools as well as the identification, mobilization and support of stakeholders in the organisation of mass awareness campaigns on drugs and drug addiction in the community. Furthermore, 17 specialised units for the prevention and care of drug addiction were established.

343- The Committee also supported relevant stakeholders in operations to seize and destroy addictive substances. Between 2018 and early 2019, 678,224 tons of cannabis were seized.

⁹⁵ However its budget of CFAF207,943, 000,000 (About 317,470,299.01 Euros) represented 4.33% out of the national budget of CFAF4,805,500,000,000(About 7,336,641,221.37 Euros) which is far below the 15% recommended by the Abuja Declaration on HIV/AIDS, Tuberculosis and other Infectious Diseases of 2001.

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§3: Combating Malnutrition

344- The Standardised Monitoring and Assessment of Relief and Transitions (SMART) 2019 survey sets the level of chronic malnutrition of children in the northern regions and the East Region at 37%.

345- On 17 and 18 January 2019, Hellen Keller International organised in Bertoua, a workshop for local elected officials and members of civil society. At the end of the workshop whose objective was building capacity on social mobilisation, advocacy and communication in the fight against malnutrition, local elected officials entered into an undertaking to henceforth integrate nutrition actions into their budgets.

SECTION 2: DISEASE PREVENTION

346- Efforts continued to be made to reduce the prevalence of major communicable diseases and non-communicable diseases.

§1: Communicable Diseases

347- Prevention measures were taken as regards priority communicable diseases, neglected tropical diseases and epidemic prone diseases

A: Priority Communicable Diseases

348- HIV/AIDS, Malaria, Tuberculosis, and Viral Hepatitis which are considered Priority communicable diseases benefited from preventive actions.

349- With respect to **HIV prevention**, it was necessary to take measures to reduce new HIV infections. Intensification of communication for behaviour change was done through a number of activities among which awareness raising campaigns including those targeting vulnerable populations like persons with disabilities, prison inmates, refugees in camps and out-of-school youths. Prevention activities were extended to social media and the National Aids Control Committee saw its followers on Facebook rise from 2,567 in 2018 to 30,068 in 2019.

350- Condoms were also distributed to the population, notably 31,180,522 male condoms representing 57.5% of the targeted number and 2,674,392 female condoms representing 37.3% of the targeted num-

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ber. Moreover, Prophylaxis doses of antiretrovirals (ARVs) were also administered to persons who had been exposed to HIV (see developments under § 400.

351-With regard to the strengthening of **malaria prevention** measures, within the framework of the campaign for the free distribution of long-lasting impregnated mosquito nets (LLINs), 6,729,330 LLINs were provided to 2,526,882 households, thus covering a population of about 12,074,201 inhabitants in 7 Regions⁹⁶. Furthermore, intermittent preventive treatment was administered. See § 387.

352- Concerning tuberculosis, the implementation of the National Strategic Plan on the fight against tuberculosis (2015-2019) was evaluated and a new Plan adopted for the period 2020-2024. The main achievements of the old Plan included the rate of testing of tuberculosis patients which rose from 82% in 2013 to 95% in 2018 and therapeutic success rate that rose from 80% in 2013 to 85% in 2018. The 2020-2024 Plan aims at reducing the incidence of tuberculosis from 186 per 100,000 inhabitants in 2018 to 130 per 100,000 by 2024 and decrease deaths from tuberculosis from 54 per 100,000 in 2018 to 32 per 100,000 in 2024.

353- Some 24,582 cases of tuberculosis were diagnosed in tuberculosis diagnostic and treatment centres in 2019. Men represented 61% while women represented only 39% of the cases. A total of 1,273 of all diagnosed cases were children aged between 0 and 14 years, that is a proportion of 5.2%. The percentage of patients co-infected with HIV stood at 27.

354- Among actions initiated **to prevent hepatitis** were free screening campaigns and sensitisation campaigns including one from 28 to 30 October 2019, organised at the Paul Emile Leger National Rehabilitation Centre Yaounde for the screening of hepatitis C for persons with disabilities.

B: Neglected Tropical Diseases (NTDs)

355- The National strategy for integrated control against cutaneous neglected tropical diseases and morbidity linked to Lymphatic Filariasis 2020-2024 was validated.

⁹⁶ East, Far North, Littoral, North, Littoral, West and South Regions.

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356- Additionally, routine activities such as public awareness of NTDs were carried out including the sensitisation of 150 people on change in behavior of the population in order to combat onchocerciasis and filariasis.

C: Epidemic-Prone Diseases (EPDs)

357- With regard to the prevention of epidemic prone diseases, epidemiological surveillance led to the detection of 607 cases of Acute Flaccid Paralysis (AFP), 3,642 suspected cases of measles, 1,458 cases of Yellow Fever and 13 cases of neonatal Tetanus. No case of PVS (Wild Poliovirus) was detected, but 2 cases of circulating vaccine-derived poliovirus type 2 (cVDPV 2) were detected at Kousseri and Mada as part of environmental monitoring. The response to this was the organisation of vaccination sessions in the areas concerned in June, July, August, September, November and December 2019 by the Expanded Programme on Immunization.

358- Some 30 health staff were trained on *Integrated Disease Surveillance and Response (IDSR)* in the Far North from 1 to 6 May 2019 as well as 85 Focal Points of Health facilities of the South Region.

359- By September 2019, there were 249 suspected cases of cholera in the Far North Region with 12 deaths following an outbreak of cholera in the Region several months before.

360- A number of measures were quickly taken to contain the spread of the disease, including making treatment kits available in District Hospitals, disinfecting areas where there were reported cases, and raising awareness of the public on the importance of practicing basic hygiene rules.

§2: Non-Communicable Diseases (NCDs)

361- In order to enhance the diagnosis of **heart diseases**, on 5 December 2019, ADDAX Petroleum handed to MINSANTE 78 Cardiopads worth CFAF145,000,000⁹⁷ destined for medical facilities in the 10 Regions.

362- Relating to **cancer**, free screening campaigns were carried out for cancer including at the Etoug-Ebe Baptist Hospital in Yaounde during which

⁹⁷ About 221,374.05 Euros.

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57,116 cases of precancerous lesions were treated and 8,288 women were screened for cervical cancer.

363- In the context of the Cameroon National **Diabetes and Hypertension** Programme, 3,500 persons were screened and cared for per semester in 8 Regions (the North West and the South West Regions excluded).

364- Furthermore, 2,191 persons were screened for **sickle cell** and there was 15,7% infection rate. Some 35 health staff in the East Region were trained on the management of the disease.

SECTION 3: CASE MANAGEMENT

365- In order to reduce mortality among the population, measures were taken to offer appropriate treatment, both for communicable and non-communicable diseases. In so doing, much attention was paid to maternal, adolescent and child health.

§1: Management of Diseases

366- Measures were taken as regards management of diseases in order to reduce the general mortality rate and lethality in hospitals and in the community as a result of both communicable and non-communicable diseases. In 2019, 9,372,775 consultations were registered including 2,022,052 hospitalisations.

A: Communicable Diseases and Neglected Tropical Diseases

1) HIV/AIDS, Malaria, Tuberculosis and Hepatitis

367- As concerns care for HIV/AIDSs, with the category of health facilities empowered to provide specialised care for HIV extended to the 5th and 6th categories in 2018, the number of such facilities providing care for HIV/AIDS increased exponentially from 848 to 1,625 in 2019. However these facilities are not evenly distribute across the country⁹⁸.

368- Some 2,891,033 HIV tests were performed, excluding tests for early detection by polymerase chain reaction of exposed children, compared

⁹⁸ Adamawa Region has 32, Centre 1,009, East 33, Far North 19, Littoral 43, North 34, North West 108, West 41, South 270, and South West 36.

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to 3,078,662 in 2018. Of those tested, 73,154 were HIV positive against 89,172 in 2018.

369- Furthermore, on 4 April 2019, the Minister of Public Health signed a decision that from 1 January 2020, persons living with HIV/AIDs will receive free healthcare for HIV related issues in public health facilities and Community based Organisations providing HIV care. Services offered are; rapid screening of HIV; consultations; medical booklets; follow up tests (CD4 count and Viral Load) and Medication for the prevention of opportunistic Infections. This is in addition to antiretrovirals which have been distributed free of charge for several years.-

370- Some 322,477 Persons living with HIV were targeted for treatment. However only 312,124 were on ARVs free of charge as of 31 December 2019. Despite all efforts, from SPECTRUM estimates, 18,068 persons living with HIV died in 2019 with 13,380 of such deaths notified by health facilities.

371- With respect to **malaria**, the National Malaria Strategic Control Plan (2019-2023) was adopted. It has 4 main pillars: strengthening political will, using health information for decision-making, control policies and strategies, and coordinating the response of partners. It takes into account the High Burden to High Impact (HBHI)⁹⁹ approach.

372- Some 2,819,803 persons suffered from malaria in 2019 compared to 2,126,039 in 2018. For some actions taken on the treatment of malaria, see § 402 under Neonatal, Infant and Child Health and § 387 under maternal health.

373- The **treatment of tuberculosis** continued to be free of charge. There were 261 tuberculosis diagnosis and treatment centres and 11 centres for the management of multi-resistant tuberculosis. The therapeutic success rate stood at 84%. Of the patients co-infected with HIV and tuberculosis, 98% were on Cotrimoxazole and 99% on antiretrovirals.

374- As concerns **hepatitis**, the guide on the diagnosis and management of viral hepatitis in Cameroon was validated during a workshop that held from 14 to 16 November 2019.

⁹⁹ "High burden to high impact" which is catalyzed by WHO and the RBM Partnership to End Malaria, is an aggressive country-led approach to accelerate progress against malaria.

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2) Neglected Tropical Diseases (NTDs)

375- As part of the implementation of activities of the National Programme on the Control of Schistosomiasis and Intestinal Helminthiasis, the 2019 national campaign to deworm children and adults in high-risk health districts was organized. This led to the training of 155,502 operational stakeholders, the treatment of 11,169,545 persons for intestinal worms including 6,796,887 school-aged children (5-14), the deworming of 4,372,658 children of preschool age (0-59 months) during the Action Week for Infant and Maternal Health and Nutrition (SASNIM) and the treatment of 7,149,304 people for Schistosomiasis.

376- Some 308 cases of leprosy were under treatment, 78 cases of Buruli ulcer were diagnosed and treated in endemic areas and 8 cases of Leishmaniasis were diagnosed and treated at the Mokolo Annex Hospital. In addition, some 5 cataract and trichiasis surgeons in the Far North and North Regions underwent refresher courses and 150 cases of cataract and trachoma screened and treated in those Regions

B: Non-Communicable Diseases (NCDS)

377- Regarding **Chronic Renal Diseases**, in spite of an increase in the capacity for providing dialysis in the country including the acquisition of new dialysis equipment by institutions such as the IDIMED Clinic in Douala, capable of catering for 60 patients a day and the fact that patients continued to receive care at a subsidized cost, challenges subsisted in the management of renal diseases especially due to the frequent breakdown of dialysis machines or unavailability of dialysis kits. There were 11 dialysis centres.

378- For actions taken on diabetes, hypertension and cancer, see § 363, 402 and 415.

§2: Maternal, Neonatal, Infant, Child, and Adolescent Health

379- Comprehensive management of maternal, adolescent and child health which is to reduce mortality rate was fostered.

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A: Maternal Health

380- From the results of the Demographic and Health Survey 2018- Key indicators (DHSC V) published in May 2019, 69% of live births in the 5 years preceding the survey were with the assistance of a trained health provider, and 67% of births took place in a health facility.

381- Within the framework of the implementation of the Project for the Support to Maternal, Neonatal and Child health (*PASMNI*), with the technical support of UNFPA which started in September 2018, some valuable results were achieved by the end of the first semester of 2019.

382- As regards development of institutional and human capacity, 512 health personnel were trained in various reproductive health fields, 225 midwives received pre-employment training in Emergency Obstetric and Neonatal Care (EmONC), Family Planning and management of Gender Based Violence and harmful practices, a national Obstetrics fistula identification strategy was developed and free fistula repair campaigns were conducted during which 103 women with obstetric fistula were treated.

383- With regard to supervision of activities of the Action Week for Infant and Maternal Health and Nutrition activities, 121 health personnel from regional and district multisectoral teams were trained and 125 health personnel were trained in reviewing maternal deaths and response.

384- Furthermore, as part of the implementation of the *PASMNI*, a significant amount of medical and non-medical equipment as well as reproductive health materials and inputs worth CFAF1,064,477,150¹⁰⁰ was acquired with the support of UNFPA. The material was intended for health facilities in the Far North, North and Adamawa Regions where maternal health indicators are the most worrying.

385- Moreover, in 2019, in the context of the National Multisector Programme to Combat Maternal, Newborn and Child Mortality, 21 maternities of District hospitals and 89 delivery rooms of Integrated Health Centers received technical equipment and a system of long-term maintenance of the said equipment was put in place.

¹⁰⁰ About 1,625,155.95 Euros

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386- The number of pregnant women who went for antenatal care stood at 638,299 for the first phase, 502,435 for the second phase and 386,619 for the third phase.

387- As regards prevention of malaria in pregnant women, the number of pregnant women who received Intermittent Preventive Treatment (IPT)¹⁰¹ was 536,615 for the first dose, 422,959 for the second dose and 309,999 for the third dose compared to 476,382 for the 1st dose 358,290 for the 2nd dose and 246,266 for the 3rd dose in 2018. The percentage of pregnant women who received all 3 doses was 48.6. Furthermore, 384,345 LLINs were distributed to pregnant women.

388- Additionally, the supply chain of family planning inputs was assessed and the availability of inputs strengthened. Several awareness raising campaigns, and actions for behaviour change were carried out and the capacity of providers enhanced. However, only 19.3% of women of child-bearing age (15-49) used a method of contraception which is still far from the target of 30% by 2020 envisaged by the National Strategic Plan for Reproductive, Maternal, Newborn and Child Health (2014-2020).

389- Some 224 midwives and male midwives were recruited in 2019.

390- As at 2018, maternal mortality rate stood at 467¹⁰² for 100,000 live births.

B: Adolescent Health

391- As regards adolescent reproductive health, the *Jeune S3* (Health, Sexuality, Security) Project implemented by the *Association Camerounaise pour le Marketing Social (ACMS)* in collaboration with MINSANTE since 2016 was ongoing. Its aim is to allow young people to have easy and free access to reproductive health services while enforcing their rights, mainly in the East and Far North Regions. The hot line of the Project for emitting messages on sexual and reproductive health was operational and

¹⁰¹ Statistics are based on pregnant women who attended ante natal clinic

¹⁰² Tracking 100 core health indicators in Cameroun in 2019: Using the former calculation method which corresponds to past DHS, the rate is 467. However, using the new calculation method by the WHO, the rate is 406.

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for the first half of 2019, 2,299 calls were received (1021 girls, 1278 boys). Some 122 health workers were also trained on adapted youth health services during the same period.

392- With regard to HIV/AIDS, in the context of the 2019 edition of the Holidays Free Campaign 7,268 educational talks and 9,871 one-on-one conversations were carried out by 680 peer educators in the 10 Regions of the country.

393- Furthermore, on 21 August 2019, a partnership agreement was signed between the Ministry of Youth and Civic Education and Brain Research Africa Initiative aimed at promoting the mental health of youths in particular and the population in general. Specifically, this partnership agreement has as objective to care for young people through education, awareness raising on mental and neurological diseases, drug addiction; training of support groups and providing neurological and psychiatric support for young drug addicts and people with brain problems; strengthening the capacities of Multifunctional Youth Promotion Centers (MYPC) supervisors and young leaders on brain health, including mental health, in particular on the consumption of toxic or addictive substances; the care of MYPC members with epilepsy or any other brain diseases.

C: Neonatal, Infant and Child Health

394- The guarantee of the health of the child continued to be a priority in Government action.

1) Prevention of Diseases

395- Steps were taken to prevent diseases in children. These included vaccination, prevention of mother to child transmission of HIV, protection against malaria and the fight against malnutrition.

396 -The table below shows vaccination coverage for various vaccines covered by the Expanded Programme on Immunization (EPI).

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Table 1: Vaccination Coverage in 2019 Disaggregated by Region

REGION	BCG	PENTA1	ROTA1	PENTA2	ROTA 2	VPI	VPO3	PENTA3	PNEUMO 3	RR	VAA	Td2+	TAS	TAG
Objectives of the EPI	95%	95%	90%	89%	89%	89%	89%	89%	89%	83%	83%	72%	<7%	<10%
ADAMA WA	92%	98%	95%	91%	89%	87%	88%	89%	88%	75%	77%	64%	9%	23%
CENTRE	103%	101%	99%	97%	95%	94%	98%	96%	95%	84%	85%	50%	5%	22%
EAST	105%	112%	108%	106%	102%	101%	104%	105%	104%	93%	92%	69%	6%	17%
FAR NORTH	80%	81%	79%	80%	76%	74%	75%	75%	75%	68%	68%	42%	7%	17%
LITTORAL	84%	84%	85%	82%	85%	81%	81%	81%	80%	70%	74%	49%	4%	20%
NORTH	96%	95%	90%	87%	84%	85%	84%	86%	86%	85%	83%	62%	10%	15%
NORTH WEST	45%	49%	49%	49%	48%	47%	53%	48%	48%	46%	47%	34%	3%	6%
WEST	85%	81%	72%	76%	68%	73%	73%	74%	73%	64%	65%	44%	9%	24%
SOUTH	94%	94%	93%	87%	86%	86%	86%	86%	85%	74%	77%	43%	9%	26%
SOUTH WEST	40%	43%	42%	42%	41%	41%	40%	41%	40%	39%	42%	36%	5%	8%
TOTAL	83%	84%	81%	80%	78%	77%	78%	78%	78%	71%	71%	48%	7%	19%

Source: MINSANTE

397- The persistence of the socio-political crisis in the North West and South West Regions with as a corollary, the displacement of the population in search of safer areas and the disintegration of the local health system has impacted on vaccination coverage. Hence coverage is 48% and 39.7% respectively for the North West and South West Regions, the lowest in the

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country in 2019, just as was the case in 2018. The number of children vaccinated in these Regions decreased by 67,308 compared to 2017.

398- Challenges in the immunization of children included insufficient integration of community stakeholders in health activities at the operational level as well as inadequate numbers of skilled personnel in the field of vaccination.

399- According to the DHSC V 2018 which was published in 2019, with regard to breastfeeding and complementary feeding, 92% of children under 6 months of age are breastfed and 65% of children 12-15 months of age were still breastfed. However, as concerns children under 6 months of age who are exclusively breastfed, only 40% in the 0-5 months age group are, which is contrary to the recommendation of World Health Organization that children should be exclusively breastfed for the first 6 months.

400- Regarding Prevention of Mother to Child Transmission of HIV (PMTCT), 82.6% of health facilities offered it compared to 83.3% in 2018. Out of 939,055 pregnant women who were expected to attend 1st antenatal clinic, 737,161 attended or were who received in the delivery room, representing 78.5% compared to 83.1% in 2018. Some 610,161 out of these 737,161 women were tested for HIV, representing 82.8% and 10 158 (1.7%) were newly tested positive adding to 10,010 who were already positive, bringing the total to 20,168 HIV positive pregnant women. Some 84.5% of HIV pregnant women received ARVs as opposed to the 87.4% targeted. Only 15,195 newborns exposed to HIV were identified of who 13,251 were on Nevirapine as prophylaxis representing 87.2%, way beyond the 72.6% targeted.

401- Besides, 1,457,309 children aged 03-59 months, representing 86.3% of those targeted were protected against malaria in the North and Far North Regions through Seasonal Malaria Chemoprevention (SPC).

2) Treatment of Sick Children

402- Some 47% and 25% of children under the age of 5 suffering from simple and severe malaria respectively received free treatment and through the Changing Diabetes in Children Programme, treatment of children and adolescents aged less than 21 with diabetes continued to be free.

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403- In March 2019, and between November and December 2019, *Children Action* consulted and carried out corrective surgeries on children suffering from Uro-genital congenital malformations at the *Yaounde Gynaeco-Obstetric and Pediatric Hospital*. For the November to December session, 80 children were consulted and 13 operated upon. The cost of the surgery was subsidised and each patient paid CFAF50,000¹⁰³ for surgery estimated at CFAF 800,000¹⁰⁴.

404- In October 2019, the Elizabeth Glaser Pediatric AIDS Foundation offered to MINSANTE Point-of Care- Early Infant Diagnosis- POC EID¹⁰⁵ platforms which facilitates the diagnosis of Pediatric AIDS.

SECTION 4: HEALTH SYSTEM STRENGTHENING

405- Efforts continued to be made to increase the number of health facilities and healthcare providers as well as to improve on access by the people to quality services.

§1: Availability of Healthcare Facilities and Human Resources

406- The availability of healthcare facilities was enhanced and new health staff recruited.

A: Availability of Healthcare Facilities

407- There were 6,202 health facilities including 46% in the public sector, 41% in the private for profit sector and 13% in the faith based sector. Through the PASMNI Project, more than 250 health facilities in the northern regions were equipped.

B: Human Resources

408- With regard to human resources, a committee for transfers was set up with the aim of rationalising their deployment. The said committee processed just over 800 files for posting of staff. Some 466 new gradu-

¹⁰³ About 76.34 Euros

¹⁰⁴ About 1,221.37 Euros

¹⁰⁵ POC EID allows non-specialized healthcare workers to run tests in decentralised clinics and can return results within hours.

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ates of national medical schools, including 335 general practitioners, 42 medical specialists, 63 pharmacists and 26 dentists were deployed while some 523 staff of the health sector went on retirement. In all, there were 15,910 health staff in the public sector in 2019

409- For the implementation of community interventions, there were 6,206 Community Health Workers, distributed in 802 health areas out of 931.

§2: Accessibility to Healthcare

410- Initiatives were undertaken to provide low cost treatment and make drugs accessible.

A: Access to Low Cost Healthcare

411- Work continued to be done towards the operationalization of the Universal Health Coverage (UHC). For the strengthening of community participation, a Strategic Communication Plan for the UHC was developed and 3,000 communication material produced. The criteria for the accreditation of health facilities for the UHC was also defined.

412- Additionally, the 2019-2027 Health Financing Strategy, emphasizes among other things, **demand-side financing** in order to reduce direct household payments and catastrophic disease-related expenses.

413- In order to ensure that the poor also have access to healthcare, the Minister of Public Health in a letter dated 21 March 2019, called on all heads of public health establishments to release patients held hostage for unpaid bills.

B: Accessibility to Quality Medicines and other Pharmaceutical Products

414- There were 7 pharmaceutical companies producing drugs and as at July 2019, there were 41 licenced institutions distributing pharmaceutical products in Cameroon.

415- Tuberculosis drugs, ARVs and diabetes drugs for children and adolescents continued to be free. Free medicines were distributed during cam-

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paings like those relating to deworming. See § 375. The number of stock out days for tracer drugs was 10 days which is same as for 2018.

416- In order to monitor the quality of medicines imported into the country, by Letter Circular N ° D36-27 / LC / MINSANTE / SG / DPML of July 17, 2019 direct importation of Pharmaceutical Products by retail pharmacists was banned.

417- With regard to the **fight against fake medicines and pharmaceutical products**, by Order No. 102 / CAB / PM of 18 November 2019, the Multisectoral Committee to combat fake medicines and the illicit traffic in pharmaceutical products was set up. Other actions were carried out to combat fake medicines and the illicit traffic in pharmaceutical products, included the seizure of: 293,540 tablets, 70,626 capsules, 1,830 injectable ampoules and 2,400 oral sachets in the Adamawa Region; 240,000,000 worth of drugs in the East Region; 6,000 ampoules of Diazepam, 17,280 vials of ketaminehydrochloride, 2,400 tablets of Roche valium and 270 tablets of Triumeg in the Littoral Region; and 60 vials of Pentax, 5,000 vials of gentamicin, 100,000 tablets of Diclo fort, 4,320 tablets of Latrim, 48,000 tablets of danacid, 12,000 tablets of Ketofen in the North Region.

418- For more on accessibility to medicines, see § 370,373,375 and 402.

SECTION 5: GOVERNANCE AND STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT

419- Measures were taken to enhance the performance of the health system. These related to areas such as health information system and health research, fight against corruption, respect of standards, and the fight against fake medicines and pharmaceutical products.

420- With regard to the development of the **health information system and health research**, the process of harmonisation of health data collection and reporting tools through the monthly activity register and the District Health Information Software (DHIS2) continued to be strengthened and completion rate stood at **88.3%**.

421- In the context of the **fight against corruption** in 2019, some 131 complaints were filed at the Anti-Corruption Unit of MINSANTE, 68.7%

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of which were treated, resulting in 89 persons sanctioned negatively and 290 positively while some 7 complaints were declared unfounded.

422- With regard to the **respect of standards**, 94 establishments were subject to inspection, evaluation and investigation. These included wholesale pharmaceutical establishments, pharmacies, establishments selling biomedical reagents and consumables, and medical analysis biology laboratories.

423- Efforts were made to uphold **medical ethics** which resulted for example in the suspension of the nurses at the Deido District Hospital who filmed and circulated images of **TSANOU Blériot**, a student killed by his schoolmate as well as relieving the Director of the said hospital of his post of responsibility.

424- Moreover, the Report, Tracking 100 Core Health Indicators in Cameroon for 2019 and Focus on the SDGs was published. The Report is a tool for monitoring the country's health situation and measuring its positioning in relation to the SDG Goals to help improve its information health system and increase production and use of reliable data in order to enhance the achievement of the 2030 SDG agenda.

425- The performance based financing approach was extended with the enrollment of 161 out of 190 Health Districts.

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426- Strides were made in the health sector including an increase in the number of health facilities, rapid containment of epidemics and the intensification of the fight against fake medicines. This notwithstanding, there were challenges in the management of some diseases like renal diseases especially due to the frequent breakdown of dialysis machines or unavailability of dialysis kits. Furthermore, the Universal health coverage was yet to become effective and the crisis in the North West and South West had an impact on the delivery of health services in these Regions just like in 2018.

CHAPTER 3

RIGHT TO AN ADEQUATE STANDARD OF LIVING



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427- The implementation of the right to an adequate standard of living was flexible notably because of the impact various crises had on the right to food, challenges in the supply of water and energy and access to decent housing.

SECTION 1: RIGHT TO FOOD

428- Although the General Census of Agriculture and Livestock was on going, an analysis of the food security situation in Cameroon revealed persistent risks of food insecurity, which had an impact on the availability, accessibility and acceptability of foodstuffs.

§1: Persistent Risks of Food Insecurity

429- The survey to collect data on food and nutrition security for the 4th quarter of 2019¹⁰⁶ revealed a relatively good health and nutrition situation given that no Division reached a state of emergency or famine. However, 1.4 million persons suffered food insecurity.

430- Indeed, the different security crises had a negative impact on food security, thus resulting in a regional disparity in foodstuffs caused by the degradation of livelihoods in crises-stricken Regions. Out of 40 Divisions analysed, the food and nutrition situation was good in 15 Divisions, fair in 16 Divisions and critical in 9 Divisions, particularly in the North West and South West Regions with pressure on available resources due to the presence of Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs). With the exception of Mayo Danay, the other Divisions in the Far North Region were under pressure. The rate of chronic malnutrition reached 35.9% in some Divisions¹⁰⁷.

431- Hence, it was recommended that humanitarian aid be deployed to the population affected by the crises, with the aim to improve resilience of the population under pressure by providing support for plant and animal production.

432- Moreover, prior to the drafting of a food security strategy for the city of Douala, a survey of the Urban Food System of Douala was carried out

¹⁰⁶ The survey was carried out in these 7 Regions: Adamawa, East, Far North, North, North West, West and South West.

¹⁰⁷ Case of Mayo Tsanaga.

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by the *Cheikh Anta Diop* Learned Society of the University of Douala. It revealed that 94% of households have 2 meals a day whereas 6% merely get a single meal, thus attesting to an inconsistent availability of foodstuffs.

§2: Inconsistency in the Availability of Foodstuffs

433- The availability of food supplies was guaranteed by improving factors of production, which helped in ensuring production.

A: Improving Factors of Production

434- Factors of production included financing, seeds, inputs and the training of agropastoral stakeholders.

1) Funding in the Agropastoral Sector

435- Funding from the State budget declined. MINADER received a budget of CFAF 84, 380,000,000¹⁰⁸ in 2019 compared to CFAF86,613,000,000¹⁰⁹in 2018, that is a reduction of CFAF 2,233,000,000¹¹⁰. The development of plant production sector was allocated the sum of CFAF 30,184,244,000¹¹¹.

436- The budget of MINEPIA stood at CFAF 32,343,179,000¹¹² as opposed to CFAF 35,099 510, 000¹¹³in 2018, representing a drop of at least 7% in relative value.

437- Additional resources were mobilised, notably under the framework of agropastoral programmes and projects¹¹⁴.

¹⁰⁸ About 1,298,153,846.15 Euros.

¹⁰⁹ About 132,233,587.79 Euros.

¹¹⁰ About 3,409,160.31 Euros.

¹¹¹ About 46,082,815.27 Euros.

¹¹² About 49,378,899.24 Euros.

¹¹³ About 53,587,038.17 Euros.

¹¹⁴ For example, as part of the Support Programme for Renovation and Development of Professional Training in Agriculture, Livestock and Fisheries Sectors (AFOP), 74 Fishery projects of young professional fishers were financed. The funding was distributed as follows: 30 marine fishing projects to the tune of CFAF 81,612,631 (about 124,559.44 Euros) and 44 continental fishing projects to the tune of CFAF 63,710,500 (about 97,267.94 Euros). Regarding training, 215 young professional fishers were undergoing training in Training Centres of the Support Programme for Renovation and Development of Professional Training in the Agriculture, Livestock and Fisheries Sectors (AFOP). In the context of the Pro-

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2) Development and Provision of Seeds

438- The sum of CFAF 1,700,000,000¹¹⁵ was allocated to the Support Project for the Production of High Quality Plant Material (Papmav-Q) for the purchase and distribution of crop seeds such as maize, plantains, Irish potatoes, cassava, mushroom, cocoa, coffee and rice. The schedule for 2019 provided for the acquisition and distribution of 298 tons of maize, 38 tons of sorghum, one million certified banana saplings, 400 certified grafted kola trees and 1.7 million certified cassava cuttings.

439- Regarding seeds, 135 certificates were issued, 936 samples of seeds collected for laboratory analysis and 66 bottles of mushroom spawns inspected.

440- Quality plant material was acquired and distributed to producers. This included 2, 294 tons of maize, 27,614,500 cassava cuttings, 10,000 cocoa pods, 43 500 pre-sprouted oil palm nuts, 158, 000 Gnetum Africanum (*eru*) plants, 2,380,550 banana saplings, 1 681 tons of rice, 263 tons of Irish potato seeds, 238 tons of sorghum seeds, 800kgs of mushroom spawns AND 379kgs of vegetable crops.

441- An animal seed production centre and 3 relay centres at Lougguere, Dogba and Jakiri were constructed, equipped and rendered operational.

3) Inputs for the Development of Agropastoral Sectors

442- In the agricultural sector, 36 operators were listed in the register of the fertiliser sub-sector as part of the consolidation of this sub-sector, while import declarations and the conduct of tests for the approval of fertilizers were made systematic. About 200 fertiliser import declarations were issued, a total of 3,132,798 tons and 185,724 litres of fertiliser declared for import and 20 fertiliser samples tested on the field for approval.

443- Inputs were acquired and distributed to farmers, including 569 tons of fertiliser, 100 litres of foliar fertilisers, 1,806 litres of insecticides, 199,873 tons of fungicides, 350kgs of insecticides, 651 litres of herbicides.

gramme for the Consolidation and Perpetuation of the Agropastoral Council (PCP-ACEFA), 130 animal husbandry and animal production projects were financed to the tune of CFAF 696,000,000 (About 1,062,595.42 Euros). Also, the Livestock Marketing and Infrastructure Development Project (PD-COBIE) worth CFAF28,000,000,000 (About 42,748,091.6 Euros) was launched and effectively started with the support of the Islamic Development Bank.

¹¹⁵ About 2,595,419.87 Euros.

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444- Actions carried out as part of the development of the animal sectors included issuing of 150 authorisations to livestock promoters to set up and/or open new production and operating facilities, 63 technical notices on importation with 38 authorisations for poultry imports and 4 authorisations for the import of livestock (cattle, piglets and goats) and cattle semen to importers. It also included issuing of 42 authorisations for the setting-up of 31 compound feed manufacturing facilities and 11 facilities for the sale of compound animal feed to promoters of such facilities. In addition, 3,000 guides to good animal feed production practices were designed and distributed to promoters of these facilities.

4) Capacity Building for Stakeholders

445- Besides capacity building of 40,801 rural stakeholders, 150 staff from phytosanitary check points and central services were trained on advanced phytosanitary inspection methods and techniques, phytosanitary surveillance and phytosanitary risk analyses.

446- Within the context of youth training in animal rearing and fishing, major results obtained included the award of end of training attestations to 689 trainees in the Maroua, Fouban and Jakiri National Zoo technical and Veterinary Training Centres and to 71 trainees specialised in industrial fishing, sailing, mechanical marine and fishing technology of the Limbe National Fisheries Institute(LINAFI).

447- In addition, capacity building was carried out for 532 Heads of Zoo technical and Veterinary Centres in sanitary and veterinary inspection in slaughter houses, particularly on the role of the Head of the Zoo technical and Veterinary Centre, the monograph of a Zoo technical and Veterinary Centre, collection of samples, management of a veterinary clinic, cattle fattening, ethics and deontology.

B: Guaranteeing Agropastoral Production

448- Agricultural, animal and fish production was guaranteed and this yielded results in the different sectors.

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a) Results of Agricultural Production

449- The sum of CFAF 1,500, 000¹¹⁶ was allocated in 2019 to 49 Agropoles spread across the country. This yielded the following production results:

Table 1: Results of Agricultural Production of AGROPOLES in 2018 and 2019

Crop	Production in 2018 (in tons/heads)	Production in 2019 (in tons/heads)
Maize	11,745	7,301
Soya Bean	35,000	40,000
Pineapple	23,253	23,800
Cocoa	ND	10,764. 4
Irish potatoes	66,000	71,070
Avocado	1,437	2,500
Palm oil	9,015	10,200
Cassava	7,050	8,075
White pepper	ND	80
Chicken (per head)	ND	2,929,200
Pig (per head)	ND	28,343
Fish	ND	2,524
Eggs	ND	350,996,100

Source: Agropoles

ND: Not determined.

2) Animal and Fish Sector Production

a) Animal Sector

450- Animal production results were relatively lower in 2019 as presented in the table below:

¹¹⁶ About 2,290.1Euros.

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Table 2: Comparative Balance Sheet of Animal Production in 2018 and 2019.

Sectors	Production in 2018 (in tons)	Production in 2019 (in tons)
Cattle (meat production)	142,436	91,408
Pig (pork production)	53,878	35,384
Apiarian (honey production)	5,461	9,298
Poultry (chicken production)	140,787	101,951
Dairy (milk production)	274,630	214,521
Goat	ND	24,031
Table eggs	ND	82,761
Ovine	ND	15 982

Source: MINEPIA

b) Fish Sector

451- Aquaculture development is an important lever in the availability of fish resources¹¹⁷. Within the framework of developing the fishery sector, 21 authorisations to create and 16 authorisations to open facilities for the treatment, storage and sale of fishery products were issued while 16 authorisations to create fish farms, 46 licences for industrial fishing and 3,500 non-industrial fishing permits were also issued. All these actions allowed for an estimated fish production in 2019 of 271,317 tons of fish for non-industrial fishing, 11 370 tons of fish for industrial fishing and 7,077 tons of fish for aquaculture, thus a total production of 289,764 tons. The quality of and access to these foodstuffs was guaranteed.

§3: Guaranteeing Accessibility and Acceptability of Foodstuffs

452- The right to food was also assessed through accessibility and acceptability of foodstuffs provided to the population.

A: Measures to Facilitate Access to Food

453- These measures involve infrastructure construction and poverty alleviation.

¹¹⁷ This is the case with the follow-up of implementation of the Aquaculture Entrepreneurship Promotion Project (PPEA).

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1) Infrastructure Construction

454- Regarding marketing infrastructure, about 12 market halls were constructed. Production basins were consolidated and rural roads and boreholes developed.

455- Three new ice production units were acquired in Douala, Limbe and Idenau by the Fisheries Development Mission in Cameroon to further reduce post-harvest fish losses.

2) Combating Poverty and High Cost of Living

456- Measures were adopted to counter speculation on certain basic foodstuffs, including rice, non-alcoholic and alcoholic drinks. In March 2019, the Ministry of Trade (MINCOMMERCE) organised consultations with brewing companies on the variable and uncontrolled application of new prices for beer and non-alcoholic drinks. Consequently, the Ministry ordered the suspension of the implementation of prices it had approved (an increase of CFAF 32 per bottle), pending an agreement between stakeholders of the industry.

457- To alleviate chronic poverty, the sum of CFAF 2,755,400,000¹¹⁸ was sent to beneficiary households of the direct cash transfer programme in 2019 within the framework of the *Social Nets* Project, thus increasing to 82,000 the number of beneficiaries of this project, for which phase II came to an end.

458- Moreover, mechanisms against inflation and high cost of living were developed. Thus, discount sales of widely consumed products were organised, that is 6 days of discount sales, and 2,700 operations carried out in 172 localities with the participation of 200 economic operators.

459- The Consumer Products Supply Regulation Authority (MIRAP) re-launched its traditional tools, which include Pilot Periodic Markets (MTP), Roving Markets (MF), Pilot Sales Stores (MTV) and Special Markets (MS) with the following results:

¹¹⁸ About 4,206,717.56 Euros.

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**Table 3: Summary of Transactions carried out by MIRAP in 2019
per Market Type**

Types of Markets Organised	Tonnage of Sales	Costs of Sales (in millions)	Number organised per year
MTP	8,387.5	2,099.20	182
MF	226.48	668.84	48
MTV	4,590.8	1,625.27	192
TOTAL	13,204.8	4,393.3	422

Source: MIRAP

B: Guaranteeing Acceptability of Foodstuffs

460- The World Food Day was celebrated on 16 October 2019 under the theme: “*Educating people about quality, balanced and affordable food for a better future*”. It provided an opportunity to raise awareness among the population on the importance of access to healthy and nutritive food. The health security of plant and animal foods as well as the fight against fraud were promoted.

1) Health Security of Plant Food

461- Authorities adopted several measures to control the quality of inputs used in agropastoral activity both for the environment and human health.

462- Regarding pesticides and treatment devices, Order No. 00072/19/A/MINADER/SG/DRCQ/SDRP/SRP of 18 April 2019 was signed prohibiting the import and accreditation of Paraquat-based pesticide formulations in Cameroon, which were recognised to have carcinogenic effects. Similarly, 65 formulations were approved and 56 treatment devices certified and this increased the number of approved pesticide formulations to 1,257 and certified dressers to 56 (22 in class A and 34 in Class B) in circulation in the CEMAC Region. About 78 phytosanitary certifications were issued to operators in this sector, bringing the total number to 187; 120 agricultural products analysed for pesticide residue; 3 phytosanitary controls were organised at the end of which several tons of counterfeit products were seized and shops of offenders sealed in the Centre, Littoral and West Regions.

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463- On the promotion and protection of consumers, awareness-raising campaigns were organised on the advantages of standardisation and quality. Pursuant to Decree No. 2019/143 of 19 March 2019 to reorganise the Standards and Quality Agency, quality control of products in the market was assigned to this institution in collaboration with the other relevant Administrations. In addition, 8 standards were drafted on agro-food technologies.

2) Health Security of Animal Food

464- To limit the effect of animal diseases, veterinary health inspections in slaughter houses and slaughter areas led to the seizure of 78, 529kg of meat. Furthermore, 100 trademarks and 1, 300 litres of food ink were acquired in a bid to certify meat fit for human consumption. To prevent some animal diseases, 3,698,104 small ruminants were vaccinated against the sheep and goat plague and 1,940,827 doses of vaccines were administered to cattle against various epizootic diseases.

465- The National Veterinary Laboratory (LANAVET) was accredited to ISO 17025 standard for the diagnosis of animal diseases (PPCB and PPR). LANAVET produced over 25 million doses of vaccines against major animal diseases found across the country. A million small ruminants were vaccinated during the pilot phase of the National Programme for Sheep and Goat Plague Control and Eradication in Logone and Chari and Mayo-Sava Divisions.

466- Human resource was strengthened with the approval by the Bureau of the National Order of Veterinarians in Cameroon of 100 Veterinarians. It was also strengthened by setting up 33 private Veterinary Clinics, with a CFAF 10,000,000¹¹⁹ subsidy to each beneficiary. Some 73 technical import advices for drugs and veterinary products were issued to importers.

3) Fight against Fraud

467- In order to re-establish order in the market, 10,600 missions to control quality, quantity and price of products were carried out by the National Fraud Control and Prevention Brigade. The results were 7,784 sanctions for price and competition fraud, 3,589 sanctions for metrology fraud

¹¹⁹ About 15,267.18 Euros.

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and 888 sanctions for quality and after sales service fraud. Moreover, 500 poor quality bags of rice (a mixture of rice for livestock and rice for human consumption) were seized.

SECTION 2: RIGHT TO WATER AND ENERGY

468- To tackle challenges in accessing energy and water, Government worked towards guaranteeing these rights for all citizens.

§1: Right to Energy

469- To provide solutions to the challenges linked to electric energy supply, its capacity was increased in a bid to guarantee energy security as well as conditions to access energy.

A: Constraints in Energy Supply

470- Energy deficit was particularly high in 2019. Characterised by power cuts and low voltage, shortage in electrical energy supply highly differed from one Region to another. The Regions most affected were the Far North, North, East, Centre and Littoral. Localities most affected by long hours of power cuts include Tiko, Kumbo, Minta, Sangmelima, Obala, Abong-Mbang, Mamfe, and Wum.

471- In August 2019, the city of Yaounde and its environs suffered serious disruptions in the distribution of electrical energy¹²⁰ due to the accident which occurred on the technical installations of the electrical substation of the former Geology and Mining Information Brigade (BRGM) at Melen. In November and December 2019, several quarters in Douala were without electricity and one of the causes was the explosion of a transformer substation.

472- Generally, the dilapidated state of electricity transmission and distribution infrastructure, such as electric poles¹²¹ which are scarce, the aggressive weather¹²², unstable voltage on the transmission network, overload on transformer substations and power lines and the low voltage on

¹²⁰ Statement of the Ministry of Communication during a Press briefing on this topic on Wednesday 14 August 2019.

¹²¹ Yaounde alone had 10,000 faulty poles in April 2019 according to a diagnosis by the Minister of Energy and Water Resources.

¹²² With torrential rains throwing these poles down.

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the distribution network¹²³ are amongst the causes of regular electrical energy disruptions. Furthermore, there was disruption of fuel supply in the thermal power plants supplying, for example, the East Region.

473- Moreover, a fire on the night of 31 May 2019 at the National Refining Company (SONARA) burnt 4 out of the 13 production units causing a halt in the production chain.

474- Considering this situation, the Head of State¹²⁴ called the stakeholders of the energy sector to double efforts to guarantee energy supply.

B: Actions to Guarantee Energy Supply

475- With the aim of achieving Sustainable Development Goal No. 7, efforts to address the energy deficit focused in particular on improving the legal framework, securing the supply of electricity and making use of renewable energy sources.

1) Changes in the Legal Framework Relating to Energy

476- In order to increase the performance of companies in the water and energy sub-sector, legal instruments governing this sub-sector were aligned with Law No. 2017/10 of 12 July 2017 to lay down the General Rules and Regulations governing Public Establishments and Law No. 2017/11 of 12 July 2017 to lay down the General Rules and Regulations governing Public Corporations¹²⁵.

477- Regarding oil production, Law No. 2019/8 of 25 April 2019 to institute the Petroleum Code was adopted. The aforementioned law aims to promote oil operations all over the country, determines the conditions for prospecting, research, production, transportation, storage and processing of hydrocarbons upstream, identifies the legal, tax, customs and exchange system for oil operations and determine the rights and obligations relating to these operations. Lands which contain hydrocarbon deposits or natural accumulations belong to the State. However the State may authorise

¹²³ The Centre and South Regions are situated at about 166km from the Song-loulou dam, thus requiring electric lines to cover a long distance. Energy supply from these lines can be affected by voltage instability.

¹²⁴ The Head of State's address to the Nation on 31 December 2018 auguring the prospects for the year 2019.

¹²⁵ Decree No. 2019/342 of 9 July 2019 transforming the National Hydrocarbons Corporation into a public company; Decree No. 2019/32 of 24 January 2019 to reorganise the Hydrocarbons Prices Stabilization Fund.

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physical or legal persons to undertake oil operations on these lands. The law also indicates the conditions under which oil contracts can be signed to allow them exclusively carry out hydrocarbons research and production within a defined perimeter.

2) Guaranteeing Electrical Energy Supply

478-Infrastructure projects aimed at increasing national energy production and transmission to consumers continued and some were completed or significantly advanced than others¹²⁶.

479- Thus, the launching of the Lom Pangar reservoir dam brought an additional 170 MW to the South Interconnected Network (RIS)¹²⁷ through the optimal functioning of the Song-loulou and Edea dams. The completion rate of construction works for the foot plant, which started in 2018 stood at about 23%.

480- As concerns development of the Memve'ele hydroelectric dam, the progress rate stood at 97%. The different energy production machines were switched on, thereby generating approximately 90 MW of power, which was injected into the RIS and supplied the towns of Ebolowa and Mbal-mayo. Construction of the 225 kilovolt (kV) power transmission line and associated substations of Nyabizan-Ahala-Nkolkoumou had an execution rate of 90%.

481- After completion of the construction of major structures of the Mekin hydroelectric power station, commissioning tests on turbines 1 and 3 were successfully completed, offering in perspective the injection of the 10 KW available to the RIS out of the 15 to be produced upon completion and connection to Energy of Cameroon's (ENEO) power lines. The construction of the spillway and the transmission line were also completed.

482- Regarding energy transmission, the National Electricity Transport Company (SONATREL) became operational in January 2019, hence the strong drive observed in the construction of electricity transmission lines and cor-

¹²⁶ To reduce the energy divide, other projects such as the Bini A Warak (75 Mw), Menchum (72 Mw) and Nachtigal (5,420 Mw) hydroelectric power plants were ongoing. The small Mbakaou hydroelectric power plant was launched while public consultations for the Grand Eweng dam in Centre and Littoral Regions took place in November 2019.

¹²⁷ It serves Centre, Littoral, North West, West, South, and South West.

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ridor maintenance to limit network incidents. Other notable achievements include the successful acquisition and installation of three 50 MVA transformers at Ahala, Kondengui and in Limbe, the shifting of the 225 kV Ebolowa-Yaounde line to the 90 kV substation in Mbalmayo to begin closing the energy gap, and the intensification of works involving network interconnections¹²⁸.

3) Renewable Energy

483- On 16 July 2019, ENEO and the consortium of developers including SCATEC Solar, IZUBA Energy and Sphynx Energy signed a memorandum of understanding to develop 2 photovoltaic solar plants in the localities of Guider and Maroua for a total cost of CFAF 14,000,000,000¹²⁹. Scheduled for 2020, the completion of these works will provide 49GWh to the North interconnected Network thus improving Cameroon's energy mix.

484- A solar power plant built by the Chinese company *Huawei Technologies* was commissioned in March 2019 in the locality of Doumaintang in the East Region, out of the 350 localities expected to benefit from the pilot phase of this Government-led rural electrification project.

485- As far as rural electrification is concerned, electrification projects carried out with State funds included 4 solar power plants with a capacity of 3kWp in Meiganga, Minta, AbongMbang and Yabassi, 63 street lighting points in Ngaoundere 2, Martap, Demsa and FongoTongo, as well

¹²⁸ For the year 2020, the action plan to be implemented by SONATREL is structured into three main priority areas, ranging from priority 0 to priority 2:

The actions within the framework of the BIRD Project include the construction of the 225 kV Nachtigal-Ngaoundere line; the construction of 225 kV substations in cities such as Nachtigal, Yoko, Tibati, and Ngaoundere.

Other projects were classified following priority criteria:

Priority 0: the construction of the National Driving Centre Building at Ngouso; the increase in capacity of the switching station; the replacement of the No.1 Logbaba 225/90 kV transformer; the rehabilitation of the No.1 Reserve 90 kV Outgoing Feeder at the Oyomabang substation; the rehabilitation of HTB lines; the reconstruction of the 90/15 kV BRGM substation; the construction of the demand forecasting model.

Priority 1: The replacement of step down pole power transformers; the construction of the Olembe substation, the over flight of LIDAR lines; the photometric construction of substations; the construction of the physical separation between Transmission/Distribution in some substations.

Priority 2: the acquisition of large specific tools; the construction of the 225/30 Kv Awae substation; the construction of a secure telecommunications network for SONATREL; the construction of a system for monitoring power transformers; the implementation of an Asset Management and a GMAO system; provisions for the functioning of Findings and Evaluations Committees and compensation of population affected by SONATREL Projects.

¹²⁹ About 21,374,045.80 Euros.

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as 9 transformers installed in Obala, Melong, Demsa, Batcham, Fongo-Tongo and Nlonako.

C: Guaranteeing Access and Quality Electrical Energy

486- Besides rationing to manage the challenges of electricity distribution, wooden poles were replaced with cement and metallic poles while cables on the main sections of power lines were reinforced to the tune of over CFAF 2,000,000,000¹³⁰. Bulldozing to clean the corridors of important lines were carried out in the West Region, in the Sanaga Maritime Division, in the Ocean Division and in Yaounde while the project to replace 1,500 poles in Yaounde was ongoing.

487- Between January and August 2019, 45,000 new connections were established, 3,000 prepaid meters were set up between April and June bringing the customer base to 7,000. Some 65,000 other free connections were planned for 2020 as part of the Project to reinforce and extend electricity transmission and distribution networks and is expected to benefit 200,000 families¹³¹ at a cost of CFAF 41,000,000¹³². Its execution rate was about 68%.

488- Regarding the quality of services, overbilling, irregular bills and duration of handling complaints, remained major concerns. The Electricity Sector Regulatory Agency recorded 399 complaints from consumers in the Centre, Littoral, West, East, South, North West and Far North Regions compared to 346 in 2018. It organised 41 conciliation sessions as opposed to 29 in 2018, including 28 in Yaounde, 11 in Douala, 1 in Bertoua and 1 in Ebolowa. As a result, 70 cases were resolved as opposed to 258 in 2018, 35 dismissed because the complainants were not present, 4 rejected because complaints were forwarded after the statutory deadline, 4 rejected for the plaintiffs' lack of *locus standi*, 10 closed for non-conciliation and 276 cases forwarded for enlisting in 2020. This drastic drop in the number of cases resolved can be attributed to the reduction of the budget allocated to this activity. The Call Centre registered 1,645 claims from users relating to untimely power cuts, poor quality of electricity supplied, collapse of poles, etc.

¹³⁰ About 30,769,230.77 Euros.

¹³¹ Financed by Government, the World Bank and JICA.

¹³² About 62,595.42 Euros.

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489- Regarding the ERD-RUMPI Project¹³³, construction of the small hydroelectric power plant continued: the off-take structure with spillway and the head pond with spillway were at 98% completion rate, while the building of the hydroelectric plant was at 84.5%.

§2: Right to Water

490- Government actions were guided by efforts to improve water supply and accessibility.

A: Improving Water Supply

491- In urban and semi-urban areas, measures taken facilitated an increase in the global supply of potable water.

492- Production capacity was 545,350 m³. The length of the distribution pipeline increased from 5,161 km to 6,772 km, representing an increase of 23.79%.

493- The powering up of the Memve'ele Dam made it possible to optimise the production capacities of Akomnyada and Mefou treatment plants, with production increasing from 130 000 m³/day and 40 000 m³/day to 150 000 m³/day and 50 000 m³/day respectively.

494- Infrastructure construction within the framework of the Potable Water Supply Project in Yaounde and its Environs (PAEPYS) advanced to 51% in August 2019.

B: Access to Water

495- After the merger in 2018 of the company in charge of production and that in charge of distribution of water¹³⁴, Cameroon Water Utilities Company (CAMWATER) focused on processing pending subscription and extension requests, streamlining procedures for connection to the public water network and speeding up the processing of requests.

496- Generally, the number of new subscribers increased from 270,607 to 426,591 in April 2019, that is, a progress rate of 31.56%.

497- In September 2019, a campaign dubbed *One household, One connection*, aimed to install meters and connect 6,000 clients awaiting con-

¹³³ Rumpi-Decentralised Rural Electrification Project.

¹³⁴ Refer to the Report on Human Rights in Cameroon in 2018, §532.

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nection to the public water network was launched in 11 towns covered by the said network.

SECTION 3: RIGHT TO DECENT HOUSING

498- In order to solve problems of social housing and guarantee decent living conditions for the population, efforts focused on land development, access to decent housing and a clean living environment.

§1: Access to Land and Land Development

499- The land development sector was marked by the improvement of the legal framework through the transformation of the Urban and Rural Land Development Equipment Authority (MAETUR) into a State corporation following Decree No. 2019/208 of 25 April 2019. This change in legal framework is in line with the implementation of the MAETUR Strategic Development Plan updated for the 2019-2024 period.

500- Regarding the constitution of forest reserves, the procedure to acquire the Nkondom III site around Mfou, of a surface area of 33 ha was completed. The procedures on the Nkondom IV site around Mfou (60 ha) and Oloapar Nsimalen site (23 ha) were in progress.

501- Projects to develop land spaces accessible to the population were in progress, several of which were managed by MAETUR. These include:

- drainage, road works and paving on the Ngoulmekong site (40ha) which were about to be accepted. Drinking water supply works were 90% complete, while the electrical power supply works were about to be launched;
- earthworks, drainage and construction of gutters were underway (50%) at Nkondom I and II (50 ha); and
- earthworks and partial drainage works at Gbego (52 ha) around Bertoua were received.

502- To ensure legal security of tenure, 13,525 land titles, including 7,681 for men, 2,750 for women and 3,094 for communities were issued in 2019, compared to 14,498 in 2017 and 16,758 in 2018. This decrease can be explained by the low rate of land title delivery in the North-West and South West Regions, due to the security crisis there.

503- The table below presents a picture of the issuance of land titles all over the country in 2019:

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Table 4: Distribution of Land Titles Issued per Region and Status of Applicant according to the Type of Procedure in 2019.

Region	Status of the Applicant		Direct registrations	Subdivisions	Transformation of a deed to a Land Title	Complete transfers	Total
Adamawa	Natural persons	Men	183	81	0	0	264
		Women	91	24	0	0	115
	Legal persons	Communities	7	0	0	0	7
Centre	Natural persons	Men	473	2245	85	340	3143
		Women	185	936	28	135	1284
	Legal persons	Communities	605	470	52	223	1350
East	Natural persons	Men	57	27	0	10	94
		Women	14	11	0	2	27
	Legal persons	Communities	5	8	0	1	14
Far North	Natural persons	Men	204	27	0	3	234
		Women	39	6	0	0	45
	Legal persons	Communities	3	0	0	0	3
Littoral	Natural persons	Men	229	1698	0	208	2135
		Women	59	517	0	96	672
	Legal persons	Communities	114	344	0	131	589
North	Natural persons	Men	12	1	0	10	23
		Women	2	0	0	0	2
	Legal persons	Communities	0	0	0	0	0
North West	Natural persons	Men	169	152	0	30	351
		Women	52	67	0	13	132
	Legal persons	Communities	86	82	0	23	191
West	Natural persons	Men	554	226	7	109	896
		Women	189	52	1	42	284
	Legal persons	Communities	237	96	0	65	398
South	Natural persons	Men	123	205	4	3	335
		Women	54	87	1	2	144
	Legal persons	Communities	380	47	2	1	430
South West	Natural persons	Men	139	62	5	0	206
		Women	34	9	2	0	45
	Legal persons	Communities	79	28	5	0	112
ALL	Natural persons	Men	2 143	4 724	101	713	7 681
		Women	719	1 709	32	290	750
	Legal persons	Communities	1 516	1 075	59	444	3 094
TOTAL			4 378	7 508	192	1 447	13 525

Source: DAF /MINDCAF

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Table 5: Distribution of the Number of Plots Fit for Building per Surface Area and Lot According to Divisions in 2019.

Division	Neighbourhood	Surface Area	Number of lots
Wouri	BWANG-BAKOKO I	8ha 93a 86ca	238
	BWANG-BAKOKO II	7ha 00a 54ca	186
Mfoundi	OLEMBE	14ha 4a 59ca	296
	MBALNGONG	17ha 4a 59ca	384
Fako	BIMBIA	2ha 00a 00ca	282
ALL		49ha 50a 58	1 386

Source: DCAD/MINDCAF

504- The Constitutional Council was seized of a petition concerning the refusal by the Land Registrar of Wouri "A", to execute Decisions No.153, 155 and 156/Com rendered on 17 November 2017 by the Littoral Court of Appeal, ordering the transfer of land titles No. 13317/W, 13460/W and 13315/W in favour of **MBA Gibson NJEY TEGHA, NNOMO Joachim** and **MVONDO ZENG Bertin** respectively, petitioners in this case. These complaints were found inadmissible for lack of qualification as plaintiff.

§2: Access to Decent Housing

505- The construction and distribution of low cost houses continued and access to housing was facilitated.

A: Further Construction and Distribution of Low Cost Houses

506- The implementation of the Housing Development Programme continued, notably the programme to construct 10,000 low cost houses. The pilot project for the construction of 1, 675 low cost houses by SMEs in Cameroon had progressed by 81% at Mbanga-Bakoko in Douala and 86% at Olembe in Yaounde. Thus, 83 of the 230 houses already completed were made available to buyers with 32 at Olembe and 51 in Douala¹³⁵.

¹³⁵ The first buyers of houses on these sites received their keys on 31 July 2019 at Olembe and on 2 August 2019 at Mbanga Bakoko.

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507- Works carried out by MAETUR to render the Olembe and Mbanga-Bakoko areas habitable reveal the following results:

- at Olembe, public lighting (100%), drainage and landscaping (100%) were completed, sanitation works were in their final phase (90%), while bricklaying (73%), external works (2%) and EDDs (54%) continued;
- at Mbanga Bakoko, public lighting (100%), sanitation and landscaping of green spaces were completed (100%). bricklaying were being completed (90%), while outdoor works (51%), EDD (77%) and green spaces (23%) were in progress.

508- Concerning the project to build 800 houses in 8 regional headquarters excluding Yaounde and Douala as part of the three-year Emergency Plan to accelerate economic growth, a temporary case of reception (100 houses in Ebolowa) was recorded while various rates of progress were noted (Bertoua, 95%; Bafoussam, 90%; Ngaoundere, 96%; Garoua, 93,3%; Maroua, 87,44%)¹³⁶.

B: Easing Access to Housing

509- Besides access to real estate loans, measures were taken to reduce the burden of construction costs.

510- As regard measures to facilitate access to housing, a partnership agreement was signed on 18 February 2019 between MINDUH and the company *Cimenteries du Cameroun* for the provision of construction material at affordable costs.

511- Between 1 January and 31 December 2019, 467 loans were granted by the Cameroon Housing Loan Fund (CFC) at preferential rates for a global amount of CFAF 17, 725, 552, 195¹³⁷, for the construction of 1,571 houses and the purchase of 99 building plots. In order to ensure financial inclusion and take into account difficulties of access to housing encountered by certain underprivileged social groups, CFC introduced

¹³⁶ The assessment of works in Bamenda and Buea could not be carried out due to the crises in North West and South West Regions which affected the progress of works.

¹³⁷ About 27,061,911.75 Euros.

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a social component for each of its products, which involves more flexible access conditions¹³⁸.

§3: Improving Living Environment

512- On the improvement of living conditions in unsafe neighbourhoods, studies were carried out to identify such neighbourhoods in some city councils. These studies led to the participative design of restructuring plans to be implemented to satisfy the needs of the population relating to the provision of infrastructure, basic services, living environment, socio-educational equipment supply and regularise the real estate situation of inhabitants. At the end of 2019, studies on the development of resettlement sites as well as the development proper of these sites, in depth studies of infrastructure and equipment, deployment of evaluation committees to the field for compensation and the release of land were envisaged.

513- The total percentage of households in unsafe neighbourhoods was 55.27%, as follows:

Bafoussam (96.5%), Bertoua (44.7%), Bamenda (74.27%), Yaounde (30.23%), Douala (61.09%), Kribi (...); Garoua (80%).

514- As part of the implementation of the MINHDU-MAETUR framework Agreement relating to the restructuring/renovation of under-structured neighbourhoods in cities across Cameroon, MAETUR completed studies of the areas to be restructured in Bafoussam (150 ha), Garoua (150 ha), the Feicom area in Yaounde (50 ha), while studies on restructuring some areas in Douala (700 ha) were ongoing (70%)¹³⁹

¹³⁸ This is the case with the product called "Classical Low Cost Housing Loan" for which the interest rate is only 4.193% tax free for a maximum of CFAF 30,000,000, (About 45,801.53 Euros) refundable over a period from 25 to 300 months, as opposed to the "Classical Housing Loan" with interest rate at 5.032%.

¹³⁹ The impact of these studies is as follows:

In the city of Douala, due to MAETUR's intervention, 18% of all un-structured areas were structured except for the Nylon area. This intervention is distributed as follows:

- Makepe Missoke: 33,021 beneficiaries, occupying a surface area of 155 ha;
- Bonaloka: 12,126 beneficiaries, occupying a surface area of 52 ha;
- Grand hangar: 9 095 beneficiaries, occupying a surface area of 69 ha.

In Bafoussam, owing to MAETUR's intervention, 18% of all un-structured areas were structured, including 7 neighbourhoods for 16,621 beneficiaries, occupying a surface area of 164 ha.

In Garoua, thanks to MAETUR's intervention, 23% of all un-structured areas were structured, including 12 neighbourhoods for 15,216 beneficiaries, occupying a surface area of 151 ha.

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515- In terms of concrete achievement, road construction and drinking water supply projects were received in the Nylon restructuring area and in Bilongue neighbourhood (100%). Works to open the Nylon-Nkolmintag roads were being completed (95%).

516- To realize the Inclusive Cities Development Project, a credit agreement to the tune of CFAF 93,600,000,000¹⁴⁰ was signed to finance this Project which will be implemented in 7 cities including Batouri, Douala, Kousseri, Kumba, Maroua, Ngaoundere and Yaounde.

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517- Overall, various events that affected the right to an adequate standard of living did not deprive the population of food, energy and water as well as decent housing. Progress made included strengthening factors of production that were beneficial to agro-pastoral production as well as measures to combat poverty. In terms of access to water and energy, the structural imbalance between supply and demand remained, forcing stakeholders to resort to alternative measures. However, the multiplication of solutions such as the replacement of defective poles or the handing over of the keys of first houses as part of the promotion of low cost housing augurs new prospects.

¹⁴⁰ About 142,900,763.36 Euros.



CHAPTER 4

RIGHT TO WORK AND SOCIAL SECURITY



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518- In 2019, which was the year of the commemoration of the Centenary of the International Labour Organization (ILO), apart from the Guideline¹⁴¹ adopted in December 2019 at Madagascar by the Council of Ministers of the Inter-African Conference on Social Security (CIPRES), other measures towards strategic objectives for the promotion of employment, decent working in all sectors of activity and quality social security for all were also taken.

SECTION 1: SUSTAINED PROMOTION OF EMPLOYMENT

519- Actions to increase job offer continued, as well as those to match training and employment and improve the efficiency of the labour market for socially vulnerable groups.

§1: Actions to Increase Job Offer

520- Policy to increase job offer was structured around supporting companies, particularly Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (SMEs) and Small and Medium-sized Industries (SMIs) in the formal and self-employment sectors, including specific programmes for the disadvantaged.

A: Government Support to Companies for the Promotion of Employment

521- SMEs benefited from Government's financial and non-financial support.

1) Non-financial Support to Small and Medium-sized Enterprises

522- Thanks to facilities offered by Centres for Business Creation Formality, 13,146 companies were established in 2019 as against 13,423 in 2018, contributing to the creation of more than 20,000 direct jobs.

523- Moreover, 7,370 artisans were registered, bringing the total number of registrations to 77,249 since the process was launched in 2014. With the support of the French Development Agency within the framework of the C2D contract¹⁴², the TRANSFAGRI Programme¹⁴³ made it possible

¹⁴¹ This legal framework which applies to Social Security Organisations comes to strengthen management rules of those Organisations and will enter into force after 4 years.

¹⁴² It is the Debt-Reduction Development Contract.

¹⁴³ It is a Programme meant to assist or support enterprises in the transformation of agriculture products.

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to support about 260 agricultural and agri-food SMEs, and to train 90 Companies Support Services on consulting, diagnosis and business plan drafting, in the Basins of the Adamawa, Centre, Littoral and North Regions.

524- Some 4 training sessions on management techniques to improve performance were organised in Bafoussam, Douala, Kribi and Yaounde in partnership with the Japan International Cooperation Agency.

525- It should also be highlighted that the National Civic Service Agency for Participation in Development developed 18 sites, including 15 pioneer villages and 3 pilot production centres with a total of 837 volunteers involved, that is 637 pioneer volunteers distributed in the 15 pioneer villages and 150 volunteers for the 3 pilot production centres.

Table 1: Breakdown of Pioneer Villages in 2019

A. PIONEER VILLAGES IN 2019					
No.	REGIONS	SUB-DIVISIONS	PIONEER VILLAGES	NUMBER OF VOLUNTEERS INVOLVED	CROPS CULTIVATED
1.	ADAMAWA	TIBATI	BOLAGALE	39/ 50	Beans
		NGAOUNDAL	MBARANG	43/ 50	Beans
2.	CENTRE	AWAE	ELAT	48/ 50	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plantain • Corn • Cassava
		OBALA	NKOLGUEM	50/ 50	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plantain • Corn • Cassava
		NTUI	NDIMI	50/ 50	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plantain • Corn • Cassava
3.	EAST	GAROUA-BOULAÏ	NANAMOYA	50/ 50	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yam • Corn • Beans

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A. PIONEER VILLAGES IN 2019					
No.	REGIONS	SUB-DIVISIONS	PIONEER VILLAGES	NUMBER OF VOLUNTEERS INVOLVED	CROPS CULTIVATED
4.	FAR NORTH	MERI	DOULEK	48/ 50	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • White Millet • Red Millet • Cowpea
		MAROUA 2	MANGAVE	50/ 50	White Millet
5.	LITTORAL	PUMA	NGOMPEN	29/ 50	Banana Saplings
6.	NORTH	MAYO HOURNA	HOURO ARDO REY	42/ 50	Corn
		TCHEBOA	MALA TCHEBOA	38/ 50	Corn
7.	NORTHWEST	NDU	NTUMBAW	50/ 50	Potato Corn
8.	WEST	GALIM	KIENEGHANG	50/ 50	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Beans • Banana Saplings • Tomato
9.	SOUTH	OLAMZE	MBE ETO'O	50/ 50	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Banana Saplings
10.	SOUTHWEST	LIMBE 1	LOWER BWANDO	50/ 50	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cassava
TOTAL/STATISTICS			15 PIONEER VILLAGES	687/ 750	10 crops
B. PILOT CENTRES 2019					
No.	REGIONS	SUB-DIVISIONS	PILOT CENTRES	NUMBER OF VOLUNTEERS INVOLVED	CROPS CULTIVATED
1.	ADAMAWA	NGAOUNDERE 2	MBALANG	50/ 50	Cassava Beans
2.	EAST	MESSAMENA	LABBA	50/ 50	Cassava Banana Saplings
3.	NORTH	PITOA	LANGUI	50/ 50	Corn
TOTAL/STATISTICS			3 PILOT CENTRES	150/ 150	4 crops
OVERALL TOTAL			18 sites developed	837/ 900	10 crops cultivated

Source: FONIJ

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2) Financial Support to Small and Medium-sized Enterprises

526- The Small and Medium Enterprises Promotion Agency helped Small and Medium Seized Enterprises (SMEs) to have access to financing. Thus, 8 agreements were signed with banks and 50 promoters' projects were presented to those banks for financing. Also, in order to help SMEs be eligible for one of the schemes of the Investment Charter, 12 agreements were signed for an investment volume of CFAF 12,295,887,110¹⁴⁴, with 800 direct jobs created.

527- Furthermore, financial support was provided to 236 Social Economy Organisations, for an overall amount of CFAF 668,000,000¹⁴⁵ in 2019 for the implementation of their projects, compared to CFAF 710,000,000¹⁴⁶ in 2018. Sectors concerned included agriculture, agro-processing, livestock and small industry. In addition, within the framework of support to SMEs by the Cameroon Subcontracting and Partnership Exchange, 573 SMEs were profiled or reprofiled, 153 SMEs were put in contact with Authorising Officers resulting in 14 partnership contracts signed and worth CFAF 835,626,175¹⁴⁷, thus contributing to the creation of 267 jobs.

528- As at 31 December 2019, the Cameroon SMEs Bank (BC-PME) recruited 745 new SMEs customers¹⁴⁸ against 1,058 in 2018. Those customers benefited from an overall financing of CFAF 6,773,580,560¹⁴⁹ against CFAF 13,103,065,000¹⁵⁰ in 2018, that is, a decrease of CFAF 6,329,484,440¹⁵¹. The BC-PME applied an overall effective interest rate of 15.3%.

529- With regard to credits, there was a strong focus of the BC-PME on short term financing which alone accounted for about 80% of the portfolio. This was as a result of the quality of BC-PME resources which are essentially deposits¹⁵².

¹⁴⁴ About 18,772,346 .73 Euros.

¹⁴⁵ About 1,019,847 .33 Euros.

¹⁴⁶ About 1,083,969 .46 Euros.

¹⁴⁷ About 1,275,765 .15 Euros.

¹⁴⁸ They include artisans and SMEs from the agro-industry, the energy, the building and public works, the forestry and wood, and the services (trade and transport, ICTS and tourism) sectors.

¹⁴⁹ About 10,341,344 .37 Euros.

¹⁵⁰ About 20,004,679.39 Euros.

¹⁵¹ About 9,663,335 .02 Euros.

¹⁵² These are resources that do not allow for long term commitments.

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530- MINEFOP organised a *business challenge* to select the 5 best projects, for a total cost of CFAF 14,000,000¹⁵³.

B: Promoting Self-Employment

531- The enactment of Law No. 2019/4 of 25 April 2019 which is the framework law that governs social economy in Cameroon¹⁵⁴ includes the promotion of activities which contribute to the development of self-employment. Social economy organisations and enterprises that are recognised under the status of Social Economy Unit are listed in the General Register of Social Economy Units housed at the Ministry of Small and Medium-sized Enterprises, Social Economy and Handicrafts (MINPMEESA). These social economy units can benefit from subsidies from the Government and Regional and Local Authorities (RLAs), donations and bequests, as well as funding from calls for public generosity. Those eligible are: Common Initiative Groups, Associations, Mutual benefit organizations and Cooperatives.

532- Still within the framework of implementing the above-mentioned law, the celebration of the 4th edition of Social Economy National Days was held from 29 to 31 October 2019 under the theme: *Economy at the heart of inclusive development in Cameroon*¹⁵⁵.

C: Sustained Implementation of Specific Programmes

533- Thanks to the Biometric Youth Card, 8,239 youths registered with the National Youth Observatory¹⁵⁶ (ONJ) and ¹⁵⁷about forty partnerships were mobilised to offer those youths services at preferential tariffs. Thus, 5,024 youths, holders of the biometric youth card benefited from services in the health, transport and training sectors. These youths were consulted free of charge in some health facilities and benefited from more than 50% discount on some trainings.

¹⁵³ About 21,374. 05 Euros.

¹⁵⁴ A Decree on the organisation and functioning of social economy units was signed for the implementation of this Law

¹⁵⁵ Selected activities included trade fairs and exhibition of products of Social Economy Units, Conferences-debates and information and awareness-raising activities on opportunities offered by existing support programmes and financing mechanisms. The purpose of this celebration was to induce an inclusive development in Cameroon thanks to the activities of Social Economy Units through multi-faceted partnerships.

¹⁵⁶ The completion of the construction (1 building) and equipment of ONJ headquarters and vehicles purchased for the mobilisation of youths in 2019.

¹⁵⁷ A software for enrolment and production of biometric cards for youths was purchased with a *data center*.

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534- As at 31 December 2019, about 125,755 youths had registered with the ONJ platform, bringing to 896,811 the number of youths registered for 92 committed partners. The referral of 29,586 youths registered at various support counters in several support and financing structures, including projects under MINADER and MINEPIA, was organised.

535- Among those registered, 793 youths participated in projects aimed at enhancing their entrepreneurial skills through the Rural and Urban Youth Support Programme (PAJER-U) and were referred to various support and financing institutions, including 31 youth projects to the National Fund for Youth Integration (FONIJ) for an amount of CFAF 132,000,000¹⁵⁸. FONIJ public support is presented in the table below:

Table 2: Breakdown of Government Support to Youths between 2015 and 2019

Profile	Number of youths financed	Number of jobs created	Gender		People with disabilities
			Female	Male	
Young entrepreneurs	222	660	207	459	15
Youths whose entrepreneurial and SME/VSE management skills were enhanced	850		275	575	35

Source: MINJEC

536- FONIJ financed and enabled 659 youths to start their activities, including 28 Junior Enterprises and 631 micro-activities for a total amount of CFAF 500,000,000¹⁵⁹, thus bringing to 873 the number of youths who received support since 2016 for a total amount of CFAF 1,000,000,000¹⁶⁰, and at 332 the total number of youths' projects for a total amount of CFAF 761,016,655¹⁶¹. Challenges related to management of account of projects included delays in the provision of funds to beneficiaries and the splitting of FONIJ's financial resources.

537- Within the framework of the implementation of the Three-Year "Special Youth" Plan, support was given to Multipurpose Youth Empowerment

¹⁵⁸ About 201,526. 72 Euros.

¹⁵⁹ About 763,358. 78 Euros.

¹⁶⁰ About 1,526,717. 56 Euros.

¹⁶¹ About 1,161,857. 49 Euros.

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Centres (CMPJ) for the development of 32,026 business plans for youth projects, including 33.70% for agriculture and livestock, 28.84% for industry, 22.85% for digital economy, 10.48% for innovation and 4.4% for other sectors, for a demand of more than CFAF 32,000,000,000¹⁶².

538- Institutions for the supervision of youths were developed through the construction of 3 CMPJ delivered and received (Maroua III, Vina and Garoua I), 1 completed but not yet delivered (Bayangam), 6 rehabilitated (Poli, Yagoua, Vina, Batchenga, Kette and Buea¹⁶³), 6 uncompleted (NjombePenja, Meri, Gobo, Bamendjou, Lokoundje and Manfe), and 31 equipped. Within this framework, 12,500 youths were trained in small urban and rural trades in CMPJ. Moreover, 10,000 youths received support to start businesses in the cities of Yaounde and Douala to work in multi-service and financial inclusion digital kiosks, and likely to serve as role models for other young people working in the informal sector. Some 50 Junior Enterprises were established for youths trained in CMPJ business incubators.

539- Concerning the implementation of the National Volunteer Programme, about 340 volunteers in the agropastoral, education and health areas were deployed, as well as 390 Supervised Holiday Volunteers.

540-With regard to the Socio-Economic Resilience Support Project for Vulnerable Youths of the North, Adamawa and the Far North (PARSE), implemented with the technical and financial support of the German Cooperation Agency (GIZ), 1,700 young people were involved in the High Labour Intensive Approach (HIMO) and 4,718 youths were trained and received support to start business in various fields of activity, for a total amount of CFAF 720,500,000¹⁶⁴. In addition, 27 fora for intergenerational dialogue were organised in the 17 Intervention Councils and RLAs each supported the organisation of at least 2 activities initiated by youths.

541- As part of the implementation of the Economic Resilience Support Project (PAREC) financed by the UNDP, MINJEC also trained 360 young men and women in the 12 intervention Councils. At the end of the training, 65 projects were financed leading to the creation of about 250 direct and indirect jobs.

¹⁶² About 48,854,961. 83 Euros.

¹⁶³ "LAB-Jeun", an incubator for Junior Enterprises, was set up at the CMPJ of Buea.

¹⁶⁴ About 1,100,000 Euros.

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542- Migrants received support. As part of the awareness-raising campaign against illegal migration organised over the last 3 years by *The African Network of Germany* (TANG), with the institutional support of the Ministry of Youth Affairs and Civic Education (MINJEC), the latter organised in 2019 a campaign to combat illegal migration among youths, through the operation “*Lost dream 2019*”. This operation led to the training of 300 community liaisons who, thanks to the localised approach to prevent migration, organised an awareness-raising campaign for more than 30,000 people through direct contacts. Mention can also be made of the awareness-raising of 40,000 youths on migration issues, the training at the CMPJ of 200 young migrants in agro-pastoral and fast-food professions, in collaboration with the International Organisation for Migration (IOM), the support of 10 youths from the diaspora to set-up their business plans which were presented to financial institutions for funding, and the early recovery of 20 returning migrants in distress situation, in the context of the implementation of the Support Programme for the Return and Integration of Youths from the Diaspora (PARI-JEDI).

543- Activities were organised to enhance the entrepreneurial skills of 793 young people, through other projects implemented as part of the Rural and Urban Youth Support Programme.

544- The Youth Entrepreneurship Promotion Programme (PPEJ) made it possible to finance 9 youths to the tune of CFAF 19,860,000¹⁶⁵ for 27 direct jobs, and incentive-based financing of youth projects to the amount of CFAF 2,225,000¹⁶⁶.

545- In view of intensifying the offer of youth support, the *Youth Connekt Cameroon* initiative, which aims at connecting young people to various opportunities and strengthen their participation in development by the creation of 5,000 jobs through youth entrepreneurship in its pilot phase of 3 years, was officially launched on 9 December 2019 under the distinguished patronage of the Head of State. On that occasion, 5 innovative initiatives were awarded in the context of a special *Business challenge*.

¹⁶⁵ About 30,320. 61 Euros.

¹⁶⁶ About 3,319. 95 Euros.

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§2: New Impetus in Matching Employment Demand

546- The supply of vocational training was strengthened, as well as opportunities to ease access to this type of training, with the purpose of meeting a demand for 260,000 jobs in the private sector.

A: Increasing Supply of Vocational Training

547- On 31 December 2019, the number of Vocational Training Centres was 2,164, including 294 Government centres and 1870 private centres.

548- An assessment of the situation of 4 Vocational Training Centres revealed some challenges such as the deficit in Teachers and logistics, and inadequate infrastructure.

549- In addition to the Trades Training Centre of Nkongsamba which is already functional, the construction of 3 additional Training Centres was initiated in the cities of Edea¹⁶⁷ and Douala¹⁶⁸, following a C2D financing of CFAF 16,000,000,000¹⁶⁹ and in Nanga-Eboko¹⁷⁰, for an amount of CFAF 3,279,785,000¹⁷¹.

550- Furthermore, the 1st International Show of Senior Entrepreneurship was organised under the theme: *“Enhancing employment and Senior entrepreneurship for better economic growth”* from 26 to 27 June 2019 in Yaounde by the *Centre d’Accompagnement des Retraités et Préretraités (Retirees and Pre-retirees Support Centre)*¹⁷². During the deliberations, it was revealed that companies set up by seniors have a longer lifespan.

B: Easing Access to Professional Training

551- The School, University and Professional Guidance Centres of Douala, Maroua, Ngaoundere and Yaounde received and guided job

¹⁶⁷ The Trades Training Centre in industrial maintenance, transport and logistics.

¹⁶⁸ This Centre will train in the area of pastry and butchery.

¹⁶⁹ About 24,427,480. 92 Euros.

¹⁷⁰ The 8 trades dealt with wood chain, car mechanics, welding, mechanical manufacturing, agricultural machineries repairs, ICTs and plumbing.

¹⁷¹ About 5,007,305. 34 Euros.

¹⁷² CARE offers to people who are at the verge of retirement the possibility to develop projects and support them in successfully implementing those projects. The Centre is also planning to create a Bank just for seniors or retired people.

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seekers. Likewise, the Academic and Professional Guidance Fair opened on 23 October 2019 in Ngaoundere.

§3: Actions to Improve the Efficiency of the Labour Market

552- In order to make the labour market more accessible and successfully integrate as many job-seekers as possible, the National Observatory of Employment and Vocational Training (ONEFOP) continued its activities in 2019.

553- At the National Employment Fund (NEF), 70,524 job-seekers were received, interviewed and guided as at 31 December 2019 out of the 100,000 projected, representing an achievement rate of 70.52%. Moreover, the NEF financed 117 project developers in 2019, including 108 under the Support Programme for the Development of Rural Employment (PAD-ER) given the limited resources, for a total of 284 jobs created.

554- In addition, the Support Programme for the Integration and Reintegration of Vulnerable Persons (PAIRPPEV), in partnership with the Ministry of Social Affairs, made it possible to finance 660 people, bringing the total number of beneficiaries of this programme to 1,461.

555- Concerning intermediation activities in 2019, the NEF placed 173 young graduates in pre-employment internships (PED Programme), which brought the total number of beneficiaries of this Programme to 10,814. The Fund also integrated 41,766 job-seekers out of 65,000 projected, representing an achievement rate of 64%.

556- With regard to training, the NEF through vocational trainings enabled 327 youths to acquire skills in various fields of activity. This represents a significantly lower achievement rate (6.33%), given the difficult financial situation the Fund was currently facing.

557- Other activities carried out in 2019 include the organisation of 2 Workshops by the Youth Entrepreneurship Information Centre (CIIEJ) on "Marketing as Sales Force" and "Pricing Methods in the Processing Sector", which brought together 65 participants who registered for the workshops. Some 215 visitors were received at the Centre during the same period. Also, 168 companies visited the Douala Skills Assessment Centre, 20 of which requested recruitment tests. Out of the 1,000 job-seekers expected, 953 were received.

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558- To improve labour market transparency, in 2019, ONEFOP carried out activities to boost its network of partners for a better visibility of labour market trends.

SECTION 2: PROMOTION OF DECENT WORKING CONDITIONS

559- The promotion of health and safety at work, the promotion of social dialogue to encourage the expression of workers' concerns, as well as the control of the quality of working conditions continued. Workers rights to seize the courts of labour disputes was guaranteed.

§1: Pursuing Promotion of Health and Safety at Work

560- With regard to the promotion of health and safety in companies, 236 Health and Safety Committees (HSCs) were set up. The functioning of 77 of them was assessed in 2019, bringing the total to 1,332 per branch of activity.

561- Some 23 authorisations to practise occupational medicine were granted in 2019, while 93 healthcare check-up agreements were signed. Moreover, a workshop was organised in the West Region to build the capacities of Labour Inspectors in the areas of health and safety at work. As a reminder, in 2018, there were 55% of companies with Medical Doctors licensed to practice occupational medicine or having an autonomous or inter-company medical service, and those that signed a healthcare check-up agreement.

§2: Promoting Social Dialogue

562- The tripartite consultation between the Government, employers and workers was strengthened in order to promote social dialogue and guarantee social peace. Thus, sessions of the Social Dialogue Consultation and Monitoring Committee were held.

563- A total of 12,014 Staff Representatives were elected nationwide for the 2018-2020 term of office. The Ministry of Justice organised its 1st consultation on 1 March 2019 which led to the election of 7 Permanent Staff Representatives for Government Employees under the Labour Code¹⁷³.

¹⁷³ For the Representatives of the 2 Colleges of Government Employees under the Labour Code for the Justice sector per category, Mr **ZANGA NDJOAN Yves John** and **AZINE Emmanuel** (from the 1st to the 6th), then Mr **ESSOMBA EBENGUE Jackson**, Mr **FOTOUO TCHINDA Mitterrand**, **AMINATOU, Eva Martin** and Mr **KWAMO ISAAC** (from the 7th to the 12th).

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564- Furthermore, the construction of the Trade Union Organisations Information and Training Centre (CIFOS) continued, while the reorganisation of the trade union file and identification of trade union headquarters in 2019 made it possible to identify 95 headquarters, 85 of which were regular, and also led to the regularisation of 39 Registration Certificates.

565- The registration system of trade unions was modernised through the design and deployment of a software called *Trade Union Manager* in charge of managing the trade union file. As at 31 December 2019, the files of 756 professional organisations were digitalised and entered into the said application.

566- The regularisation of 39 Registration Certificates signed by non-accredited authorities was effective by 31 December 2019.

567- Concerning collective bargaining, 5 National Collective Agreements¹⁷⁴ were signed in various sectors of activity, as against 3 in 2018¹⁷⁵. In addition, the salary scale of the National Collective Agreement of Sea Carriers, Shipping Agents and Auxiliary Transport Services of Cameroon was revised upward.

568- With regard to calming the social climate, negotiations with stakeholders were conducted in the various sectors of activity or with various companies, and resulted in the lifting and of strike notices and control of social uprisings. Thus, a Memorandum of Understanding was signed on 8 October 2019 at the Ministry of Tourism between the stakeholders of the road transport sector in Cameroon, following a notice by the Cameroon Land Carriers Group, Cameroon National Union of Professional Drivers and the inter-trade union for an indefinite general strike from 10 October 2019. Government therefore committed itself to find solutions to various concerns and called upon all the stakeholders of the transport sector to carry out their activities normally.

¹⁷⁴ Activities in 2019 included security services, exploitation and processing of forest products and related activities; activities with Port and Autonomous Agencies: energy; waste management and sanitation.

¹⁷⁵ Sectors of activity in 2018 included cargo handling, hydrocarbons and bakery.

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§3: Controls on Working Conditions

569- The Labour Inspectorate was further strengthened through an increase of the number of staff, and of material and financial resources. Thus, the number of Labour Inspectors increased to 186 in 2019. A local computer network with optical fibre and interconnection between Yaounde and Regional Delegations was set up at the MINTSS. Some 8 vehicles (4x4 pick-up) were purchased, taking the number to 20 vehicles in 2 years for Regional Brigades of Labour Inspectorates. Also, about CFAF 684,536,800¹⁷⁶ was allocated for inspection visits.

570- Hence, inspection visits to companies increased from 2,500 in 2018 to 5,525 in 2019¹⁷⁷. These inspection or re-inspection visits resulted in sanctions contained in 57 formal notices and infringement reports, the majority of which in areas with strong labour concentration (Littoral, Centre and South West Regions).

§4: Judicial Guarantee of Workers' Rights

571- Concerning labour disputes, 9,546 conciliation reports were drafted by Labour Inspectorates, about 25% of which resulted in non-conciliation reports, leading to court referrals.

572- Cases brought before courts were, for the most part by ex-workers, most of which related to wrongful dismissals.

573- By way of illustration, the Littoral Court of Appeal in Judgment No. 142/SOC of 5 April 2019, declared the dismissal of Mr. **ENONE EWANE EWANE Alain Laurent** wrongful, following the non-payment of his wages for two consecutive months, thus forcing him to stop work, and ordered *Icon Production Cameroun Sarl* Company to pay him the sum of CFAF 7,718,889¹⁷⁸. However, the Judge did not order severance pay in favour of the employee for wrongful dismissal.

574- Similarly, the Littoral Court of Appeal's Judgment No. 305/Soc of 7 June 2019 considered the dismissal of Mr. **JOMBI Paul Aimé** wrong-

¹⁷⁶ About 1,045,094. 35 Euros.

¹⁷⁷ Concerning the West Region, 80 inspection visits were carried out in 2019, about 20 visits per quarter. In this context, 5 criminal proceedings were initiated by the Inspection Brigade of Bafoussam concerning a litigation on social insurance.

¹⁷⁸ About 11,784. 56 Euros.

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ful, not that he participated in an unnotified strike within the company, but rather due to his membership in a committee set up to follow-up the implementation of a memorandum of understanding. Thus, *LES ABEILLES DU CAMEROUN* Company, now *BOLUDA CAMEROUN S.A.* was ordered to pay Mr. **JOMBI** the sum of CFAF 4,555,275¹⁷⁹.

575- Furthermore, the Littoral Court of Appeal in Judgment No. 406/SOC of 2 August 2019, concluded that Mr. **TSAFACK MENKEM Denis Hervé's** breach of contract was an indirect dismissal, thus a wrongful one. Indeed, the latter had to quit his job due to the non-respect of the contract terms by his employer, *ADSNET Sarl* Company. Thus, the Court ordered the said company to pay the sum of CFAF 3,000,000¹⁸⁰ to the employee.

SECTION 3: PROMOTING SOCIAL SECURITY

576- In addition to enhancing the value of Social Security Associations in 2019, the Nation Social Insurance Fund (NSIF) increased the number of insured persons by improving the quality of its services. Moreover, social security litigation was vibrant.

§1: Enhancing the Value of Social Security Associations

577- Enhancing the value of Social Security Associations in 2019 was achieved through the update of the Directory of Functional Social Security Associations nationwide, community awareness campaigns to facilitate employees' adherence, as well as workshops and participation in a Commemorative Day.

578- With regard to workshops held in 2019, mention should be made of the one organised in collaboration with the International Labour Office from 17 to 18 April in Yaounde on improving access to social protection for workers in the informal sector and rural areas. During this workshop, an agreement was signed between the NSIF, Social Security Associations and Socio-professional Associations for the social coverage of their members through Voluntary Insurance. Other workshops, such as that on the Capacity Building of judicial stakeholders on Social Benefits Litigation Mechanisms, and the Operational Capacity Building of Promoters, Managers and other stake-

¹⁷⁹ About 6,954. 62 Euros.

¹⁸⁰ About 4,580. 15 Euros.

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holders involved in the management of Social Security Associations, enabled various stakeholders to discuss, among other things, the implementation of Universal Health Coverage and their role in this regard.

§2: Increase in the Number of Social Security Contributors

579- The number of active insured persons increased from 897,717 in 2018 to 947,146 in 2019 bringing the rate of the national social insurance coverage to 22.7% in 2019.

580- Some 11,414 new employers registered, for a total of 38,620 active employers. There were also 57,936 new registrations of social security contributors¹⁸¹. Concerning recovery activities, workers who paid online increased from 421,129 to 437,067 in 2019, a 3.8% rise.

§3: Improvement in the Quality of Services Provided to Social Security Contributors

581- Thanks to the automation of processing of files relating to social benefits, there was an increase in the recovery of contributions at the NSIF. With regard to formal notices¹⁸² for failing to register online or failure to pay, about 16,726 reminders per month were delivered, resulting in *Cameroon Telecommunications* paying part of its debt.

582- Furthermore, forceful recoveries were ordered during the period, as well as joint controls, particularly for employers who had not been controlled over the past 5 years. Thus, 57,310 controls of employers were carried out in 2019 against 24,527 in 2018.

583- The amount recovered from social security contributions which increased by 6.3% as compared to the previous year, was CFAF 190,371,511,927¹⁸³, including CFAF 376,213,519¹⁸⁴ recovered from voluntary insured persons as at 31 December 2019.

¹⁸¹ As at 31 September 2019, there were 11,414 new employers' registrations (against 5,349 in 2018) and 76,480 new registrations of social security contributors (against 81,578 in 2018), including 18,544 insured in the voluntary scheme and 12,516 (or 21%) pre-registrations through the NSIF Website: www.cnps.cm.

¹⁸² 188,132 formal notices delivered in 2018.

¹⁸³ About 290,643,529. 66 Euros.

¹⁸⁴ About 574,371. 78 Euros.

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584-The State's claims from employers increased from CFAF 191,500,000,000¹⁸⁵ in 2018 to CFAF 197,800,000,000¹⁸⁶ in 2019, including CFAF 102,800,000,000¹⁸⁷ for Councils, public establishments and other Government projects.

585-As at 31 December 2019, NSIF authorised CFAF 870,437,652¹⁸⁸ of surcharges for late payment and CFAF 146,576,286¹⁸⁹ relating to other penalties. Some 236 debt reschedulings worth CFAF 15,200,000,000¹⁹⁰, including CFAF 10,300,000,000¹⁹¹ for 33 State-owned portfolio companies (against 265 in 2018 for CFAF 8,600,000,000¹⁹²) and 98 exemptions from surcharges and penalties for late payment (against 108 in 2018) for a total amount of CFAF 466,000,000¹⁹³ were granted.

586-Social security activities included the double control a priori of all expenditures equal to or over CFAF 1,000,000¹⁹⁴, the immediate payment of social security benefits (that is 72% for family benefits and 38% for old-age, invalidity and death pensions) and the examinations of 1,634 claims.

587-Regarding NSIF's financial and accounting management in 2019, the budget increased from CFAF 74,920,508,177¹⁹⁵ in 2018 to CFAF 76,622,750,529¹⁹⁶ in 2019. There after, the execution rate of capital and operating budgets stood at 59.03% and 86.48% respectively, against 95% and 84.02% respectively in 2018.

¹⁸⁵ About 292,366,412.21 Euros.

¹⁸⁶ About 301,984,732.82 Euros.

¹⁸⁷ About 156,946,564.89 Euros.

¹⁸⁸ About 1,328,912. 45 Euros.

¹⁸⁹ About 223,780. 59 Euros.

¹⁹⁰ About 23,206,106. 87 Euros.

¹⁹¹ About 15,725,190. 84 Euros.

¹⁹² About 13,129,770. 99 Euros.

¹⁹³ About 711,450. 38 Euros.

¹⁹⁴ About 1,526. 72 Euros.

¹⁹⁵ About 114,382,455. 23 Euros.

¹⁹⁶ About 116,981,298. 52 Euros.

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588- In 2019, NSIF achieved a turnover of CFAF 212,900,000,000,000¹⁹⁷ as presented in the table below:

Table 3: Breakdown of NSIF Turnover Assets in 2019

Heading	Amount in CFAF
Social security contributions	190,400,000,000,000 ¹⁹⁸
Financial products	13,800,000,000,000 ¹⁹⁹
Incomes of healthcare facilities	4,100,000,000,000 ²⁰⁰
Rental revenues	3,200,000,000,000 ²⁰¹
Administrative revenues	1,400,000,000,000 ²⁰²

Source: MINTSS

589- The payment of social benefits and other related expenses broadly stood at CFAF 97,000,000,000,000²⁰³, an increase of 5% compared to 2018. Various benefits paid in 2019 are presented as follows:

¹⁹⁷ About 325,038,167,938.93 Euros.

¹⁹⁸ About 290,687,022,900.76 Euros.

¹⁹⁹ About 21,068,702,290.08 Euros.

²⁰⁰ About 6,259,541,984.73 Euros.

²⁰¹ About 4,885,496,183.21 Euros.

²⁰² About 2,137,404,580.15 Euros.

²⁰³ About 148,091,603.05 Euros.

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Table 4: Breakdown of Social Benefits Payment per Number of Beneficiaries and Amount in 2019

Benefits	Number of beneficiaries	Amount in CFAF paid in 2019
Family benefits	81,283	12,800,000,000 ²⁰⁴
Occupational risks	5,453	3,100,000,000 ²⁰⁵
Old-age, invalidity pensions and death benefits	118,404	81,100,000,000 ²⁰⁶
TOTAL BENEFITS PAID	205,140	97,000,000,000

Source: MINTSS

590- Concerning occupational risks, 9 occupation-related diseases were declared in Cameroon, all sectors of activity included. Some 459 occupational accidents were also registered. Some 4 people died from these occupational accidents.

591- As regards payment of pension, 99.7% of pensioners used the banking system while 7% used the electronic wallet.

592- The healthcare benefits of retired persons on pension was extended by 50% in health facilities other than the NSIF's, all over the national territory, was decided on 27 March 2019.

§4: Social Security Litigation

593- With regard to social security litigation, pre-litigation complaints relating to social benefits were processed by the NSIF and social security litigation proper was heard by Courts.

²⁰⁴ About 19,541,984. 73 Euros.

²⁰⁵ About 4,732,824. 43 Euros.

²⁰⁶ About 123,816,793. 89 Euros.

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A: Administrative Settlement of Disputes relating to Social Benefits

594- Disputes relating to social benefits in 2019 were heard by the Pre-litigation Complaint Committee and the Regional Commission on Social Security Disputes.

B: Settlement of Social Security Litigation before the Courts

595- In 2019, the legal response to social security litigation was given by Constitutional, Administrative and Ordinary Law Courts.

596- Mr. **DIALLO DJANKO François** seized the Constitutional Judge through a motion against the President of the Republic and others, for purposes of checking conformity to the Constitution of Decree No. 2016/72 of 15 February 2016 to fix the rates of social contributions and ceilings of remunerations applicable to family benefits, old-age, invalidity pension, death benefits, industrial accidents and occupational diseases managed by the NSIF. After consideration, the Council declared the motion inadmissible on the grounds that the plaintiff lacked capacity to file the suit.

597- The situation of litigation before Administrative Courts relating to NSIF contributions base and recovery between 2018 and 2019 is broken down as follows:

Table 5: Situation of Litigation relating to Social Contributions Base and Recovery in 2018/2019

Years	Number of files received during the year	Number of Judgements and Rulings rendered	Number of files pending	Number of Decisions in favour of the State	Number of Decisions against the State
2019	140 ²⁰⁷	21	119	15	8
2018	130	34	95	24	10
Variation	+10	-13	+24	-9	-2

Source: MINJUSTICE²⁰⁸

²⁰⁷ Statistics from Administrative Courts in 2019, excluding those of Bamenda, Buea, Ebolowa and Maroua.

²⁰⁸ National statistics from courts does not include those of the Buea, Ebolowa and Maroua Administrative Courts.

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598- Litigation in labour matters relating to social security brought before Ordinary Law Courts is presented in the table below:

Table 6: Social Security Litigation before ordinary Law courts in 2019

Social Security Litigation	Cases filed by employers	Cases filed by employees	Cases tried:	
			Decisions in favour of the employee	Decision in favour of the employer
HC	00	1	1	00
CA	1	1	1	1
SC	00	00	00	00

Source: MINJUSTICE²⁰⁹

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599- Although progress was made in improving social security coverage, boosting the Labour Inspectorate, promoting social dialogue, health and safety in the workplace, and strengthening the information system, challenges remain, particularly with regard to extending social security coverage, raising the quantum of various allowances and improving working conditions.

²⁰⁹ Statistics are from the following courts: the Adamawa, Centre, East, Littoral, West, South, and North Regions, as well as the Maroua CFI and the Diamare CFI for the Far North and some courts in the North West. The following courts are excluded: South West Region, Far North CA, Mora CFI and HC, Kaele CFI and HC, Kousseri CFI and HC, Mokolo CFI and HC and the Yagoua, Kumbo and Ndop CFI and HCs.

CHAPTER 5

RIGHT TO CULTURE AND LEISURE



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600- Availability of cultural heritage was advanced considerably, particularly as regards the preservation of archives and the people had access to cultural heritage. Furthermore, tourism and leisure continued to be promoted, infrastructure was strengthened and the cleaning up of the sector pursued.

SECTION 1: ENHANCEMENT OF CULTURAL HERITAGE

601- Enhancement of cultural heritage was undertaken like in previous years. Hence, the inventory of cultural heritage continued and a milestone was reached in the preservation of achieves.

§1: Inventory of Cultural Heritage

602- The inventory of cultural heritage launched in 2016 continued²¹⁰. On 7 August 2019, in Maroua, the inventory of cultural heritage in the North and Far North Regions was launched. The inventory of the cultural heritage of Cameroon is aimed at having a global idea of the heritage of the country.

603- Hence, the Ministry of Arts and Culture (MINAC) published the 2019 edition of the directory and mapping of the cultural and creative industries of the city of Yaounde. This 66 page document provides the names, fields of activity, locations and addresses of 644 cultural and creative industries in Yaounde²¹¹.

§2: Preservation of Cultural Heritage

604- Great strides were made in the preservation of archives, as on 24 September 2019 in Yaounde, the Ambassador of the Federal Republic of Germany handed to the Minister of Arts and Culture, a hard disk containing 10,000 electronic files which trace the period of German occupation in Cameroon between 1884 and 1916. The files contain photographs, films, letters and notes, mainly manuscripts. These archives were hitherto not available in Cameroon.

²¹⁰ 7 Regions have already been covered: Adamawa, Centre, East, Littoral, North West, West and South.

²¹¹ This includes: performance halls and venues (86); libraries and reading rooms (72); fashion and design industries (68); recording studios (25); film production companies (21); media (including TV stations (25), radio stations (38), satellite packages (5), print media (74) and online media (31)) totaling 173; publishers (100); advertising houses or advertising agencies (38); museums (7); art galleries (14); and printing press (40).

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605- Furthermore, a week-long Open-Door-Days was organised in Yaounde in the context of the 6th International Archives week from 3 to 9 June 2019 under the theme, “Long term management and conservation of archives in the 21st century: what archival infrastructures for an emerging Cameroon?”

606- The sum of CFAF153,000,000²¹² was allocated to 42 councils nationwide to support the conservation of community museums.

607- MINAC also worked for the return of relics and human remains of the Batanga people which had been exhibited in museums of the western world for decades. The related ceremony took place on 10 October 2019.

SECTION 2: ACCESSIBILITY TO CULTURAL HERITAGE

608- Measures continued to be taken to ensure the population has access to cultural heritage including the organisation of cultural and artistic events and encouraging a reading culture.

§1: Organisation of Cultural and Artistic Events

609- As in previous years, cultural and Artistic Events were organised to enable the people access cultural heritage both by the State and private concerns, sometimes with the financial and institutional support of the State. Unlike in previous years when the National Cultural and Artistic Season (RECAN), the Traditional Music and Patrimonial Dance Festival (FES-MUDAP) and the Heritage Arts and Archaeology Fair (SAPAR) were localised mainly in Yaounde, in 2019 these festivals took place in the 10 regions of the country.

610- The 4th edition of RECAN took place from 10 September to 1 October 2019, under the theme, *Celebration of culture and arts at the service of peace and national integration*. Activities included debates on arts and culture, exhibitions on plastic and graphic arts, training workshop on trades, musical concerts, traditional dances and cinema.

²¹² About 233,587.79 Euros.

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611- Moreover, the second edition of FESMUDAP and SAPAR was organised from 10 to 21 December 2019 under the theme, contribution of cultural, archaeological and traditional heritage in the consolidation of unity and living harmoniously together in Cameroon This festival aims to exhibit the rich cultural diversity of Cameroon.

612- The Yaounde Contemporary Art Gallery played a significant role in promoting plastic arts in 2019 as several exhibitions were organised there including the exhibition "237 Stories" by a group of young artists from 15 February to 29 March 2019 and the photo exhibition "Rémanences" by the group *La Quinzaine de la Photographie de Yaoundé (Ya Photo)* from 13 to 31 March 2019. Furthermore, on 28 July 2019, the Gallery opened its doors to the public as part of the exhibition of contemporary art of the culture of the Tikar people of the artist **Timothée Bekaba** called "*Peu Wum, au cœur du feu sacré et des divinités.*"

613- Activities that marked *World Storytelling Day on 20 March, World Poetry Day on 21 March and World Theatre Day on 27 March* included the organisation by the *National Ensemble* of round table conferences and live shows at the Cameroon Cultural Centre.

614- The State provided financial and institutional support for the organisation of a number of cultural events including the FOMARIC Festival, NGONDO festival, NGUMBA MABI Festival and the activities of the caravan of the National Council of Traditional Chiefs of Cameroon.

§2: Accessibility to Books

615- The Mobile Library, *Bibliobus* continued to bring books closer to the people. It made books available for reading to college and high school students in various divisions of the Centre Region. During each passage of the Mobile Library, 1,500 books were available for reading.

SECTION 3: THE PROTECTION OF THE MORAL AND MATERIAL INTERESTS OF ARTISTS

616- Dialogue with Management Collective Bodies (CMBs) was fostered and the Commission for the Control of Collective Management Bodies (CCCMBs) continued to supervise the work of CMBs. Furthermore, royalties were collected and distributed and Cultural and artistic actors recognized for their work.

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§1: Dialogue with and Supervision of Collective Management Bodies

617- As regards dialogue, the Minister of Arts and Culture granted a series of audiences to the 5 licenced CMBs,²¹³ during which discussions centred on challenges faced by these Bodies as well as proposed solutions.

618- The CCCMBs took measures to safeguard the rights of artists to royalties collected for copyrights and neighbouring rights. Considering the fact that some CMBs, were found to be using money collected as royalties without putting aside the share intended for artists, the Commission ordered that CMBs transfer all money collected into a special deposit account.

§2: Collection and Distribution of Royalties

619- As part of a vast campaign for the collection of royalties, the CCCMBs from 3 September to 29 December 2019, assisted CMBs in the collection of royalties from users of copyrighted works. This led to the collection of the sum of CFAF290,000,000²¹⁴ which was shared among the 5 CMBs. Distribution of royalties to artists was to begin on 30 December 2019.

§3: Awards to Artistic and Cultural Actors

620- During RECAN, some 7 Cameroonian artists were decorated for their contributions to culture. They are 5 artists of the cinema sector, namely Gerard Essomba, Dikongué Pipa, Quinta Eyong Ashu, Alenne Menguot and Edouard Elvis Bvouma and 2 authors namely, Djaili Amadou Amal, Jeanne Liliane Mani Mendouga.

621- There was a total of 20 winners of the Young Writers National Contest, 10 in the poetry category and 10 in the novel category. Financial rewards ranged from CFAF500,000²¹⁵ to CFAF100,000²¹⁶. Winners also received books and certificates.

²¹³ The Cameroon National Musical Art Corporation (SONACAM), the Cameroon Neighbouring Rights Corporation (SCDV), Copyright Cooperation for Literature and Dramatic Arts (SOCILADRA), Copyright Society for Audio visual and Photographic Arts (SCAAP) and Copyright Cooperation for Plastic and Graphic Arts (SOCADAP)

²¹⁴ About 442,748. 09 Euros.

²¹⁵ About 763. 36 Euros.

²¹⁶ About 152. 67 Euros.

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SECTION 4: PROMOTION AND DEVELOPMENT OF TOURISM AND LEISURE

622- Actions initiated in the tourism and leisure sector in 2019 included the development of offer and enhancing visibility, strategic axes for promoting tourism and leisure as well as cleaning up of the said sector.

§1: Strengthening of Offer and Visibility in the Tourism and Leisure Sector

623- Efforts were pursued in strengthening offer and improving the visibility of Cameroon's tourism potential.

A: Enhancement of Offer in the Tourism and Leisure Sector

624- Sessions of the National Technical Commission of Tourism Establishments held regularly as a result of which out of 381 applications were examined and some authorisations granted: A total of 90 applications for the construction of hotels out of 143 examined were granted; of the 110 applications for the opening of hotels, 94 were granted; out of 19 applications to practice as tourist guide, 13 were approved; out of 36 applications for travel agencies, 19 were approved and with regard to leisure establishments, 41 applications were studied and 29 approved.

625- Furthermore, for the 2020 African Nations Championship scheduled from 4 to 25 April 2020 and Africa Cup of Nations (ACN) planned for 2021 both in Cameroon, the *Atlantic Beach hotel* in Limbe and *La Benoue hotel* in Garoua were renovated, while 2 four-star hotels with 70 and 100 rooms respectively were constructed in Garoua. Also, 4 private hotels in the West and North Regions received state subsidies from the special ACN budget, namely *BanaValley hotel*, *Tangidor Garden* in Bangou, *Saint Hubert hotel* in Garoua and *Motel Piazza* in Garoua.

B: Promoting Visibility

626- Visibility was enhanced both at the national and international levels by the exhibition of Cameroon's tourism potential at events as well as through other actions.

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627- At the international level, MINTOUL participated at events, among which the 63rd Meeting of the UNWTO Commission for Africa in April 2019, the 23rd session of the UNWTO General Assembly in Saint Petersburg in Russia in September 2019, the FITUR International Tourism Fair in Madrid, Spain in January 2019 and the meeting of the 7th Forum of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) in Istanbul in December 2019. During these events, stands were set up to display the tourism potential of the country through the exhibition and distribution of flyers and brochures and the projection of documentaries.

628- At the national level, MINTOUL was present at cultural, touristic and other events to display the tourism potential of the country. MINTOUL participated in 2 children's summer camps in Garoua and Kribi for 200 children from all regions of Cameroon from 26 to 29 August 2019 as well as in an excursion for women on 2 March 2019 as part of the celebration of the International Women's Day and another on 29 April 2019 for workers as part of the celebration of the International Labour Day²¹⁷.

629- Besides, documents were developed including the "User Guide", the Tourist Code of Conduct in Cameroon and the Directory of Tourism and Leisure Statistics in 2019.

§2: Strategic Axes for the Promotion and Development of tourism and Leisure

630- In order to boost tourism and leisure and make Cameroon a reference tourist destination, actions were taking including the drafting of the directory of tourism and leisure statistics, the preparation of a study on a leisure development strategy in Cameroon, the distribution of promotional materials for the "Destination Cameroon" including brochures, flyers, and documentary videos, and for the implementation of the ecotourism development strategy. The implementation of the strategy included the effective transfer of resources and skills to local and regional councils with a view to promoting ecotourism, the construction of eco lodges in certain tourist sites, for example, Ebogo and Akok-Bekoe both in the Centre Region.

²¹⁷ Further events include the Baka Dreams Days from 25 to 31 March 2019 in Mintom, Mvet-Oyen from 8 to 20 July 2019 in Ambam, the 10th edition of the Douala International Development Fair from 29 March to 13 April 2019 and the CEMAC kye-Ossi Transboundary Fair from 25 June to 4 July 2019.

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631- Additionally, capacity building seminars were organised for stakeholders, in particular: hotel managers, restaurant managers, tourist guides and managers of travel agencies in terms of safety, hospitality, hygiene and quality services including one in Ebolowa, from 12 to 14 August 2019.

632- Also, the digital tourist map and the marketing plan for the “Destination Cameroon” was prepared to ensure monitoring of Cameroonian tourism before, during and after major sporting events.

§3: Cleaning up of the Tourism and Leisure Sector

633-The cleaning up of the tourism sector was continued. The classification or downgrading of tourism and leisure establishments continued in a bid to improve the quality of services. Also, inspection and control missions were carried out for tourist and leisure establishments through awareness-raising among promoters and staff on the quality of reception, services and hygiene.

Campaigns by MINTOUL and relevant Administrations were pursued to combat clandestine establishments with a view to cleaning up the sector.

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634- Major progress was made as regards culture and leisure with the handing over by the German Government to the Government of Cameroon, of electronic files tracing the period of German occupation of Cameroon, the return from museums of the western world of relics of the Batanga people and an increase in the number of tourism establishments. However, some challenges were noticed in the management of royalties by Collective Management Bodies. Furthermore, inadequate resources limited inspection and control missions, as well as campaigns against clandestine establishments.



CHAPTER **6**
**RIGHT TO A HEALTHY
ENVIRONMENT**



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635- Actions geared towards promoting and protecting the right to a healthy environment focused on the strengthening of the legal and institutional framework, fighting against desertification and climate change and ensuring sustainable management of biodiversity as well as the fight against pollution, nuisance and harmful and/or dangerous chemical substances. Emphasis was also laid on the promotion and protection of forests and wildlife species.

SECTION 1: STRENGTHENING THE LEGAL AND INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK

636- There were several developments in 2019 in terms of improvement of norms and institutions.

§1: Improvement of Norms

637- Normative improvements include:

- the ratification of the Kigali Amendment for the elimination of hydrofluorocarbons adopted on 16 October 2016 following Decree No. 2019/582 of 31 October 2019;
- the ratification of the Agreement on the conservation of African-Eurasian migratory water birds (AEWA), signed on 15 August 1996 at The Hague following Decree No: 2019/587 of 31 October 2019;
- Law No. 2019/8 of 25 April 2019 to institute the Petroleum code, Section 130 of which provides that “ Within the meaning of this law, the following shall be considered as offences (e) non-compliance with the provisions of Law No.96/12 of 5 August 1996: Framework law on environmental management and the implementing instruments thereof”; and
- Law No. 2019/12 of 19 July 2019 to lay down the general framework for radiological and nuclear safety, nuclear security, civil liability and safeguards enforcement one of the purpose of which is to establish “rules for the protection of persons of present and future generations, property and the environment against risks associated with radioactive and nuclear materials...”.

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638- Worthy of note is that on 22 February 2019, the collection of environmental legal texts of Cameroon was officially presented. This compilation of texts brings together all international and national legal texts in a single book and eases both material and intellectual accessibility to these legal instruments.

639- Furthermore, 2 Decisions were signed on 26 April 2019:

- Decision No.209/D/MINFOF/CAB on the classification of Special Forest Products and Non-Timber Forest Products;
- Decision No.210/D/MINFOF/CAB on the modalities of collection and circulation of non-timber forest products.

§2: Improvement of Institutions

640- They include:

- Operationalisation of environmental control posts with the appointment of the first batch of officials who will give greater visibility to actions carried out by the Ministry of Environment, Nature Protection and Sustainable Development (MINEPDED);
- Reorganisation of services under supervision, including, the National Observatory on Climate Change (ONACC) by Decree No. 2019/26 of 18 January 2019 and the Inter-Regional Committee for Drought Control in the North by Decree No.2019/166 of 2 April 2019 followed by the appointment of officials of the said services.

641- Concerning the forest sector, it should be mentioned that on 19 July 2019, the National Plan for the Development of non-timber products was revised during a workshop devoted to the drafting of simplified procedures for non-timber forest products. On the same occasion, an Information and Awareness -Raising Manual on the co-management of non-timber forest products in concessions and some protected areas was drafted.

642- Also, the 1st National Forum on Green Economy held in Cameroon in November 2019. It brought together various stakeholders who discussed about the emergence of green economy in the country.

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SECTION 2: FIGHT AGAINST DESERTIFICATION AND CLIMATE CHANGE AND SUSTAINABLE MANAGEMENT OF BIODIVERSITY

643- This fight aims at reducing land degradation and promoting climate change resilience, mitigation and adaptation measures. Its implementation is based on three issues namely, the restoration of nature, fight against climate change and sustainable management of biodiversity.

§1: Restoration of Nature

644- In 2019, promotion and restoration of nature consisted in continuing the *Green Sahel* Project, developing the banks of the Benoue basin, popularising the use of enhanced stoves and improving the rate of reforestation in urban areas.

645- As a reminder, according to the most recent estimates, the surface of degraded forests and land stood at 12,062,768 hectares (ha), with the phenomenon generally worsening due to natural and human factors.

646- Considering the available resources, the preferred option was to restore lands in highly degraded areas of the Far North. Indeed, 1,116,700 ha of highly degraded lands are located there. The actions taken made it possible to restore 31,500 ha during the reference year.

647- Moreover, within the framework of the *Green Sahel* Project:

- 1,250 ha of land spread across 5 sites of 250 ha each were restored;
- 150,000 seedlings were planted; and
- 9,300 enhanced stoves were produced and distributed.

648- In 2019, with regard to the continuation of the development of banks of the Benoue basin, four councils benefitted from the transfer of CFAF 35,000,000²¹⁸ for the maintenance of reforested sites. These are the councils of Pitoa, Ngong, Garoua II and Garoua III.

649- In addition, the restoration of biodiversity using bamboo species was strengthened especially in the banks of the Benoue basin with 15,000 seedlings produced and planted in the councils of Pitoa, Garoua II Garoua

²¹⁸ About 53,435.11 Euros.

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Ill and Lagdo. In August 2019, the support project for landscape restoration using bamboo and other local species was launched and concerns 4 localities including Douala-Edea, Mbalmayo and Waza Logone. This project was financed by the Global Environmental Facility (GEF) in collaboration with the International Network for Bamboo and Rattan for a period of 4 years.

650- The improvement of the reforestation rate in urban areas was achieved through the transfer of FCFA 1 60,000,000²¹⁹ to 16 Councils for the development of green spaces.

§2: Fight against Climate Change

651- Within the framework of the fight against climate change, implementation of the REDD+ mechanism was pursued with the:

- submission and approval of the Self-Assessment (R-Package) document by the Participants Committee of the Forest Carbon Partnership Facility;
- continued development of the National Greenhouse Gas Emission Inventory System and acquisition of computer equipment for the National Greenhouse Gas Emission Inventory System
- drafting of three concept notes of projects to be submitted to the Green Climate Fund.

652- At the level of ONACC, a structure under the supervision of MINEPDED, the following major achievements can be cited:

- 4 quarterly Agro-meteorological bulletins on the 5 ecological zones of Cameroon were prepared and disseminated. It is important to note that these bulletins predicted the floods of Maga and the landslides of Bafoussam;
- 30 ten-day weather forecast alert bulletins were prepared and disseminated;
- 5 studies on "rainfall and temperature in 5 Regions (East, Centre, South, Adamawa and West): analysis of the evolution from 1950 to 2015 and forecast by 2090" were finalised and disseminated;

²¹⁹ About 244,274.81 Euros

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- 11 monthly climate reports from January to November 2019 were drafted;
- Study on economic assessment of the impact of climate change on food crop yields was carried out in the Centre, East, Far North and South West Regions.

§3: Sustainable Management of Biodiversity

653- Sustainable management of biodiversity aims at restoring ecosystems and degraded stretches of water. In this regard, actions for their restoration focused on:

- strengthening environmental assessments. In this regard, the Inter-ministerial Committee on the Environment examined: 150 Terms of Reference, 129 environmental assessment reports, and issued 130 environmental certificates of conformity and 30 authorisations in 14 sessions. The Committee organised 27 public hearings. It is worth noting the growing awareness on the importance of developing Environmental Impact Statements (EIS) by locally elected authorities through the significant increase in the number of these EIS reports drafted by the promoters of institutions subjected to such environmental assessment.
- Environmental and Social Management Plans (ESMPs). In this regard, 1160 monitoring guides for implementation of the ESMPs were published; the Sub-Department of ESMPs undertook 13 follow-up missions, 111 ESMPs were forwarded to the devolved services of MINEPDED alongside the updated list of studies approved in each Region. It should also be noted that out of the 121 mid-year implementation reports of ESMPs received, 88 have already been used. Furthermore, out of the 29 requests for Certificates of Conformity with Environmental Obligations (AROE) received, 21 were issued.
- Environmental awareness and education. In this respect, various international Days regarding various sub-sectors were organised with the growing involvement of young people from Primary, Secondary and Higher Education both from central and decentralised services.

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- Development and Dissemination of environmental information. In this connection, efforts were made to facilitate the mastery of the IRIS software that will henceforth generate reports on statistical data more easily in Cameroon. In the same light, the very first statistical Year-book of MINEPDED was produced.
- Restoration of mangrove in the coastal area. It is worth mentioning that 1.32 ha of mangroves were reforested with 13,200 mangrove seedlings produced in tree nurseries and transplanted.

654- Moreover, to preserve streams and stretches of water, MINEPDED pursued the fight against water hyacinth and other invasive aquatic plants by transferring powers to the Councils of Douala IV and V, Ngaoundere III, Lagdo and Akono.

- Activities of the project entitled "*Management Plans for Bakassi Post Conflict Ecosystems*". In this connection, implementation of a communication plan and strategy as well as awareness raising of all stakeholders on the Bakassi mangrove were at the top of the agenda.

SECTION 3: FIGHT AGAINST POLLUTION, NUISANCE AND HARMFUL AND/OR DANGEROUS SUBSTANCES

655- The fight against pollution, nuisance and harmful and/or dangerous substances consisted in:

- the holding of 6 sessions of the Environmental Permit Review Committee, at the end of which 156 environmental permits were issued;
- the inspection of 506 vessels in Autonomous Sea Ports of Kribi and Douala to ensure that they comply with the standards contained in the Marpol Convention on the Prevention of Pollution from Ships;
- the conduct of joint environmental monitoring and inspection missions in 4,643 classified institutions;
- the seizure and destruction of 26.349 tons of plastic packaging; and
- the financial support granted to 37 sub divisional councils for the collection of plastic waste.

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656- In addition, within the framework of the implementation of the project titled “*elimination of persistent and obsolete organic polluting pesticides (POPs) and the strengthening of the rational management of pesticides in Cameroon*”, 2 “pilot” micro-projects for the management of pesticide empty packaging (harmful waste) were implemented in the Littoral (Loum) and North (Garoua) Regions. Besides, a Strategy Paper on public awareness to the management of empty pesticide packaging for 2 pilot sites in the North (Garoua) and Littoral (Loum) Regions were drafted and a complementary inventory of obsolete pesticides in the Littoral and South Regions produced.

657- Futhermore, the Project titled “*PCB-Reduction in Cameroon through the use of local expertise and the development of national capacities*” enabled the implementation of applications of import/export control system and the Geographic Information System for polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs), the acquisition for the University of Ngaoundere of a gas-phase chromatograph for the analysis of PCBs, conduct of inventories of PCB equipment across the country, which identified more than 500 tons of PCBs, followed by a study on the calculation of energy efficiency and the reduction of CO₂ due to the replacement of PCB transformers.

658- Within the framework of the “Ozone Project”, 250 refrigeration and air conditioning technicians from Douala were trained on equipment containing Ozone Depleting Substances (ODSs), while 100 Custom Officers were trained on ODSs control procedures. In addition, 542 technical visas for a total amount of FCFA 27,100,000²²⁰ were issued.

659- With regard to the “Minamata” Project on Mercury, an initial assessment of the Minamata Convention on Mercury in Cameroon was carried out, waste disposal sites potentially mercury-contaminated were identified and awareness tools on the impact of mercury on human health and the environment were developed.

660- Finally, it is worth mentioning that on 20 March 2019, the first waste collection point for electrical and electronic equipment in Central Africa was launched in Cameroon.

²²⁰ About 41,374.05 Euros.

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SECTION 4: PROMOTION AND PROTECTION OF FORESTS AND WILDLIFE SPECIES

661- Promotion and protection of forests and wildlife species consisted upstream in organising capacity building sessions for various stakeholders, improving plant cover, organising checks to combat the endangerment of fauna and flora and punishing against infringements noticed.

§1: Capacity Building of Stakeholders

662- Within the framework of capacity building of stakeholders, the following actions were carried out:

- from 17 to 18 January, a kick-off workshop of the inter-African programme to improve the livelihoods of small-scale Bamboo farmers was chaired by the Ministry of Forestry and Wildlife in Yaounde;
- from 4 to 6 March, in Mbalmayo, a workshop was organised for Heads of Forest and Wildlife Programmes of Nyong and So'ô and Mbam and Kim Divisions;
- On 14 March, a capacity building workshop intended for the staff of the *Special Development fund Expenditure Chain on the new procedures* was organised in Yaounde;
- On 5 June, a workshop was organised in Tonga (Nde Division) on procedures for obtaining bush meat collection permits, the rights of vendors and local people. This workshop, which resulted in the arrest of 3 persons suspected of selling bush meat illegally, was attended by bush meat vendors, local and administrative authorities and Forces of Law and Order of Tonga.

§2: Improvement of Plant Cover

663- Deforestation is a phenomenon that not only threatens biodiversity but also contributes to global warming. This phenomenon that is mainly observed in Douala and in several areas of the South West Region, fosters floods and losses of all kinds. Therefore, it is paramount to restore the plant cover. In this light, in May 2019, an activity to restore plant cover

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was launched for 37 councils with a forest reserve management contract, 3 city councils, 25 ordinary councils by the *Alpha Abdel Aziz Association* which received funding to plant trees around councils and schools. In all, 220 trees should be planted in some parts of the country covering a surface area of 12 million hectares of land at a cost of CFAF 220,000,000²²¹.

664- Moreover, the International day of Forests, organised under the theme *Tree is life. Together with our children, let's plant for the well-being of all* was an opportunity for the Minister of Forestry and Wildlife and the Minister of Basic Education to launch the "Green Campus" operation on 21 March 2019 at the Mfandena Government Primary School in Yaounde. This operation aimed at raising awareness of youths on the importance of trees and to get them involved in reforestation.

665- In addition, Cameroon welcomed the 10th Session of the Council of Ministers on the conservation and sustainable management of forest ecosystems. Thus, awareness raising meetings were organised with local authorities of Mbam and Kim.

666- Finally, on 21 June 2019, the National Forestry School of Mbalmayo, in collaboration with *Green Connexion* celebrated World biodiversity day during which stakeholders were informed of the importance and the preservation of biodiversity necessary for human life.

§3: Fight against Poaching and Illicit Trafficking of Animal and Plant Species

667- Actions related to the fight against poaching and illicit trafficking of animal and plant species are carried out in protected areas and forest reserves, which are the protected habitat of wildlife and harbour various types of animals such as big cats, elephants and gorillas. These actions are intended to preserve diversity and consist in unannounced checks in parks as well as repression and conservation activities.

668- The table below reports on the unannounced checks conducted in 2019 and their results.

²²¹ About 335,877.86 Euros.

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Regional Parks	Unannounced Checks	Number of weapons seized (Kalashnikov)	Number of poachers arrested	Number of cartridges seized	Number of packs of cartridges	Equipment seized
Faro National Park	32	13	12	82	27	2 hippopotamus trophies and buffalo carcasses
Bouba Ndjida National Park	3 & 184 air surveillance		15			
TOTAL	219	13	27	82	27	4 total has a problem

Source: MINFOF

669- Other checks were carried out to detect illegal logging and 46 reports were drawn up. Of these, final settlements were reached for 25 and 4 cases were referred to the courts.

670- To strengthen these controls in the future, on 20 June 2019, 96 motorcycles were made available to some decentralised services of the Ministry in charge of Wildlife.

§4: Repression of Wildlife Offences

671- Cases of repression of wildlife-related offences declined from 30 in 2018 to 23 in 2019.

672- However, there were sanctions. Thus, in Douala, 219 kg of pangolin scales, 472 kg of elephant tusks and 1000 kg of bush meat were seized and a sum of FCFA 204, 000,000²²² collected during the auction sale²²³ of these products.

²²² About 311,450.38 Euros.

²²³ These figures were published at the occasion of the 10th Regional anti-Poaching Committee, held in Douala on 27 May 2019.

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673- On 24 May 2019, four (4) traffickers appeared before the Douala-Bonaberi Court of First Instance. They were caught with 2 tonnes of pangolin scales and 200 kg of ivory.

674- On 24 July 2019, 3 persons were arrested in Loum and brought before the courts for illegal selling of panther skin.

675- In the Mfoundi Division, 2 persons were arrested in possession of pangolin scales and brought before the court.

676- On 17 May 2019, a Police Constable in charge of wildlife protection in the Bouba Ndjida Park was caught in Odza (Yaounde) with an elephant tusk, panther skin and lion skulls, which he had transported from Garoua to sell. On 18 May 2019, an investigation report was drawn up, the file transmitted to the Legal Department of the Yaounde Ekounou Court of First Instance Yaounde-Ekounou and legal proceedings were ongoing.

677- In May 2019, at Tonga in the Nde Division, 3 persons were arrested with 100 kg of pangolin scales. The settlement that took place resulted in the payment of CFAF 23,623,500²²⁴ into the coffers of the Ministry in charge of Wildlife.

678- On 29 May 2019, in Kribi, a well-known trafficker of grey parrots was arrested and brought before the court. Lastly, in the Dja and Lobo Division, 3 persons were prosecuted for killing a baby elephant and for illicit trafficking in ivory.

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679- The right to a healthy environment is a right, the full implementation of which will depend on the involvement of local communities and from this point of view, effectiveness of decentralisation will surely contribute to its total achievement.

²²⁴ About 36,066.41 Euros.



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CONCLUSION OF PART TWO

680- Public authorities spared no effort to guarantee economic, social and cultural rights. In this regard, substantial progress was recorded in the professionalisation of education and efforts made to match it to entrepreneurship. Continuation of the fight against counterfeit drugs and epidemics highlighted the actions carried out within the framework of the right to health.

681- In addition, the strengthening of production factors had a positive effect on agro pastoral production as well as measures to combat poverty. Furthermore, to promote decent working conditions, progress was made in social security coverage, boosting labour inspection and promoting social dialogue.

682- Lastly, the development of tourism establishments and the return of the relics of the Batanga people to the national museum shed light on the dynamism of the tourism and leisure sector.

683- In spite of this significant progress, there were still challenges, such as, violence and consumption of drugs in schools, stock out of dialysis kits and break down of dialysis machines for patients with renal failure, structural imbalance that remains between supply and demand with regard to access to water and energy, extension of social security coverage, sharing of funds from collective management of copyrights.

684- More efforts made in the management of constraints will allow full enjoyment of economic, social and cultural rights by the population.



PART THREE

CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES AND SPECIFIC RIGHTS



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INTRODUCTION TO PART THREE

685- The National Human Rights Institution was given a facelift with the adoption of a new law to set up and organise the Cameroon Human Rights Commission with the aim of aligning it with the Paris standards. In addition, the organisation of the Major National Dialogue and legal, security, economic, humanitarian and judicial initiatives were solutions advocated by public authorities to deal with various security crises, worsened by the upsurge of hate and speeches against tribes, that affected peace and living together. Measures aiming at improving quality of good governance and fight against corruption, working conditions of penitentiary staff as well as living conditions of detainees were taken.

686- Inclusion of persons with disabilities and protection of the rights of children, the elderly, indigenous peoples and internally displaced persons in the Far North, North West and South West Regions were also taken into account.

687- In addition, women's participation in conflicts resolution and quest for peace, as well as the continuation of measures aimed at voluntarily repatriation of Central African and Nigerian Refugees were significant events in 2019, which are discussed in 7 chapters of part 3 of the Report including:

- significant changes in the National Human Rights Institution (Chapter 1);
- right to peace, security and living together (chapter 2);
- promotion of good governance and fight against corruption (chapter 3);
- detention conditions (chapter 4);
- promotion and protection of the rights of socially vulnerable persons (chapter 5);
- promotion and protection of women's rights (chapter 6) and
- Protection of the rights of persons in a situation of involuntarily displacement (chapter 7).



CHAPTER 1

CHANGES IN THE NATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS INSTITUTION



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688- Law No. 2019/14 relating to the establishment, organisation and functioning of the Cameroon Human Rights Commission (CHRC)²²⁵ was promulgated on 19 July 2019. Apart from a change of name, this law which repeals previous legal provisions²²⁶, entails significant changes of the National Human Rights Institution (NHRI) with a view to better aligning it with the Paris Principles²²⁷ to strengthen its effectiveness and independence. In addition to traditional missions of the NHRI, the major innovation is the attribution of the mandate of National Mechanism for the Prevention of torture in places of detention (National Preventive Mechanism (NPM)). Therefore, in order to enable the CHRC to assume its prerogatives which have been strengthened and further clarified, the organic structure has been thoroughly overhauled.

SECTION 1: SIGNIFICANT INNOVATIONS AS REGARDS STRUCTURE

689- The composition of the CHRC was reorganised and its institutional architecture was reviewed.

§1: Reorganised Composition

690- Concerns for efficiency, independence and inclusiveness underpin rules relating to the composition of the CHRC and relate to the number, profile and status of members.

691- The number of the CHRC members was reduced from 30 to 15. Moreover, the administrative and political representation was suppressed²²⁸ in favour of technical skills which remain diversified²²⁹, with proven knowl-

²²⁵ The name changed from National Commission on Human Rights and Freedoms to Cameroon Human Rights Commission.

²²⁶ Law No. 2004/16 of 22 July 2004 to set up the National Commission on Human Rights and Freedoms as amended by Law N°2010/4 of 13 April 2010.

²²⁷ The Paris Principles relating to the status of national institutions

²²⁸ Administrations whose members lost their voting rights with the 2010 reform are no more represented, the Parliament neither.

²²⁹ The CHRC comprises, in addition to its Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson, a Judicial or Legal Officer, an Expert in Penitentiary Administration and in the management of places of detention, a Lawyer representing the Bar Association, a Diplomat, a religious Expert, a medical Officer representing the Cameroon National Order of Medical Doctors, a traditional ruler, a journalist designated by the Trade Union Journalists, an Expert in social work, a Gender Expert, an expert in trade unionism, designated by workers' unions, 2 members from organisations working on promoting the rights of certain categories of persons, including one representative of persons with disabilities.

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edge in the field of Human Rights being a minimum requirement. Members now work full-time. The office of member is thus incompatible with the exercise of any other public or private office, whether elective or non-elective with the exception of research, teaching or consultancy activities (Article 15).

692- The composition of the CHRC is intended to be inclusive and takes into account linguistic, regional and gender balance, with at least 30% of women, without forgetting the vulnerable approach with the mandatory representation of persons with disabilities or the cultural dimension with the inclusion of traditional authority²³⁰.

693- The independence of the members is strengthened with the transparency of loss of membership procedure. In fact, whereas the previous legislation simply provided for the end of the term through loss of status that motivated the appointment or dismissal for serious misconduct in the event of conduct incompatible with the office, the new instrument adds unavailability, prolonged absence and final sentence of loss of liberty. It institutes procedural guarantees. Grounds for loss of membership must first be established by the Commission, by a qualified majority of two-thirds of the votes cast for ineligibility, before the Decree by the President of the Republic is issued.

694- Members shall continue to enjoy immunity from prosecution for ideas and opinions expressed when carrying out their duties.

§2: A Revised Institutional Architecture

695- The CHRC now comprises 3 bodies with the institution of a General Assembly of members alongside the Presidency and Permanent Secretariat, which is no longer headed by a Secretary General, but by a Permanent Secretary performing its duties under the authority of the Chairperson and whose missions are clarified in the Law. This mission includes, among other things, the management of staff, protection of which has been

²³⁰ There was a heated debate on the presence of a traditional ruler during the adoption of the text, some considering that custodians of the tradition in some respect undermine Human Rights, others underscoring the cultural dimension that enriches Human Rights universality and thus facilitates their appropriation by individuals and communities. In this respect, the United Nations Independent Expert in cultural rights said: *"to breathe life into international Human Rights standards, there must be ownership of these norms and standards among all communities of the world. This implied an acceptance and assimilation of concepts through local lexicons"*.

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improved. Managers recruited in internal structures of the CHRC now take oath before the High Court which has territorial jurisdiction²³¹. Staff who are bound by the obligation of discretion and reserve may not receive instructions from public authorities or any interest group²³².

696- Although the CHRC may set up working groups and any other structure that may assist it to perform its tasks, the new instrument sets up 3 permanent Sub-commissions corresponding to the missions of Human Rights promotion and protection as well as prevention of torture in places of detention. They are permanent, unlike the 4 Sub-commissions of the previous NHRI.

SECTION 2: EXTENDING AND STRENGTHENING PREROGATIVES OF THE INSTITUTION

697- The major innovation is the attribution of the NPM mandate to the NHRI whose traditional missions of Human Rights Promotion and Protection are better outlined while its means of action and prerogatives are strengthened.

§1: Designation as National Preventive Mechanism (NPM) of Torture in Places of Detention

698- As part of its obligations under the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment and Punishment (OPCAT), the State of Cameroon has to put in place an NPM. The State opted not for a new institution but rather for the extension of the competence of the CHRC by conferring upon it the prerogatives of the NPM.

699- Within the meaning of Sections 8 and 9 of Law No.2019/14, the CHRC, as NPM, « *shall carry out regular visits to all places of detention, initiate constructive dialogue with the authorities in charge of the administration and management of places of detention or any other authority, participate in monitoring the implementation of the observations made by the United Nations Sub committee on Prevention of Torture... ; conduct private interviews, with or without witnesses; with detainees... ; make recommendations to the competent authorities to improve the treatment and situation of detainees and to prevent torture... »*

²³¹ Section 58.

²³² Section 59.

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700- CHRC's means of actions are thus strengthened. Therefore, unexpected or notified visits which only concern detention conditions may be opposed by officials of the detention centre concerned only under limited circumstances. Such a situation is only possible, in accordance with Article 14 of the OPCAT, only on serious and overriding grounds relating to national defence, safety, security and public order, as well as serious disturbances in places visited. There are guarantees including stating reasons of the objection with a view to scheduling a new visit date and communication in writing of minimum information on the situation of persons deprived of liberty present in the establishment concerned.

701- In addition, this mission benefits from a specific allocation in the CHRC budget.

702- The setting up of the NPMs aims to establish dialogue with the State towards improving detainees' conditions. In this regard, an annual report on the prevention of torture in places of deprivation of liberty in Cameroon shall be drafted by the CHRC and addressed to the President of the Republic, the Minister in charge of Justice, Minister in charge of Territorial Administration, Minister in charge of Defence, Minister in charge of Public Health and the General Delegate for National Security, as well as to all administrations concerned.

§2: A Better Definition of Attributions

703- Whereas the previous legislation listed NCHRF's attributions in a broad manner, Human rights promotion and protection missions are specifically addressed in the new law. Protection thus aims at consolidating the rule of law and fighting impunity through reaction to human rights violations. Promotion is more geared towards the development of a Human rights culture and is centred around the popularisation of instruments, awareness raising of the public, capacity building, advocacy and cooperation.

§3: Strengthening Prerogatives and Means of Action

704- The CHRC can henceforth intervene as *amicus curiae* (friend of the court) before the court and before any decision on the merits is reached. Therefore, all authorities, are unless otherwise provided for by law, obliged to provide the Commission with all information and intelligence, as well as any document it requests during investigation. The criminalisation of non-

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response to summons by the CHRC is maintained. The presence of the State Counsel or State Prosecutor of the Military Tribunal is no more required or compulsory for the visit to a place of detention. These authorities must nevertheless be informed in advance of any planned visit.

705- Inviolability of the CHRC premises and their protection by the forces of law and order is provided for. Commissioners and staff of CHRC in the performance of their duties shall be considered as civil servants.

706- Financial provisions are more detailed, in particular as regards control and monitoring of management.

707- In addition to the specific allocation for the prevention of torture already mentioned, the draft annual budget and investment plan of the CHRC are now submitted not to the Prime Minister, but to the Minister in charge of Finance and to the Minister in charge of Investments. The possibility to appoint Authorising Officers by delegation is no more limited²³³. Secondary Authorising Officers may now be appointed.

707-1- In addition to changing the name of the NHRI, the new Law has brought innovations as concerns the structure of the NHRI by reviewing its composition institutional architecture and with regard to its functions, making it play the role of the National Mechanism for the Prevention of Torture, clarifying its traditional mission of promotion and protection of Human Rights, strengthening its prerogatives and increasing its means of action. All these innovations, which aim to bring the CHRC in line with international standards of NHRIs, will undoubtedly enhance its independence and boost its effectiveness, in the sense of better protection of the rights and interests of victims of Human Rights violations in Cameroon.

²³³ The previous law provided for the appointment of the Secretary General as Authorizing Officer by delegation.



CHAPTER 2

RIGHT TO PEACE, SECURITY, AND LIVING TOGETHER



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708- As last year, peace and security were seriously jeopardised in some Regions and localities of Cameroon. Peace, which is an essential condition of living together, was also compromised by the escalation of hate speech which jeopardised security and social cohesion. To meet security challenges, the Government gave priority to appeasement while continuing the fight against impunity.

SECTION 1: PERSISTING OBSTACLES TO PEACE, SECURITY AND SOCIAL COHESION

709- Apart from various attacks or crisis spots which required the intervention of Defence and Security Forces (DSF), public authorities had to deal with threats to living together due to the escalation of hate speech or tribalism-related incidents.

§1: Security Threats

710- Incursions of the *Boko Haram* terrorist group persisted in the Far North Region. Acts of violence committed by highwaymen in the East Region and atrocities committed by secessionists organised in armed groups in the North West and South West Regions remained a concern for public authorities.

711- As concerns attacks by *Boko Haram*, a position of the Cameroonian army at Blangoua, Lake Chad, was targeted in the night of 27 April 2019, resulting in the death of a Soldier from the Cameroonian navy and 3 civilians while 5 others were wounded²³⁴. More serious was the attack perpetrated in the night of 9 to 10 June 2019 in the locality of Darak, Logone-and-Chari Division during which 17 Soldiers and 8 civilians were killed while 8 Soldiers and 1 civilian were wounded.

712- In the Adamawa and East Regions, abductions and hostage-taking followed by ransom demands gained ground. In the Adamawa Region, the localities of Ngan-Ha, Belel, Martap, Nyambaka, especially, were the epicentres of crimes such as abduction of shepherds, herd owners and their family members followed by ransom demands. As at 14 January 2019,

²³⁴ According to General **Bouba DOUBEKREO**, Commander of the Mixed Force, attackers assaulted the advanced command post of the Multinational Mixed Force (MMF) at Kofia in Blangoua where they killed people and "carried away a generator and a boat of the army where there was a machine gun" Five houses were set on fire by attackers before they fled "in the swamps of Darak which are hardly accessible".

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about CFAF 1, 200, 000,000²³⁵ had been paid as ransom, about 8,000 cattle stolen and about 30 persons killed.

713- The crisis in the North West and South West Regions highlighted a resurgence of cases of attacks on property and persons, as well as destruction of symbols of the State by armed groups. There were attacks against protected property, such as the Kumba Sub-divisional hospital that was destroyed by fire in the night of 10 to 11 February 2019 after an incursion of armed secessionists. Some 4 persons died, among which 2 sick persons who were burnt alive. Some 7 staff vehicles were set on fire and the hospital infrastructure was almost entirely burnt down.

714- Blatent infringements of the right to education increased, especially with the beheading and cutting of Mr. **Olivier WOUTAÏ**, Teacher of History and Geography in Bamenda on 21 May 2019.

715- Cases of rape, mutilation and capital murder of members of the DSF, administrative and civil authorities, abductions followed by ransom demands and acts of brutality were recorded. Criminal gangs, perpetrators of these acts, became notorious by making shocking videos and sharing their atrocities on social media. This was the case with the video of the dismembering, rape, murder and beheading of **Ms Florence AYAFOR**, Prison Warder who was abducted on 27 September 2019 at Pinyin in the North West Region. A preliminary inquiry was opened at the Bamenda Military Tribunal. Another example is that of **AWA Lovias TENENG**, who, with fugitive co-offenders, in September and October 2019, killed 4 people from *Atielah* village and ate the flesh of 2 of them because according to them, they did not respect the ghost towns.

716- Generally, the statistics relating to acts of violence and attacks by secessionist groups were as follows in September 2019: 370 attacks against institutions, convoys and personnel of DSF, attack of an ambulance and the burning of 2 hospitals, 260 arsons of 210 schools and 50 cases of fire of which arsons of public buildings and private residences, 65 vehicles of DSF destroyed; 41 attacks with improvised explosive devices, 70 attacks against traditional rulers, 238 members of DSF killed, including 81 Gendarmes, 100 Soldiers, 53 Police Officers, 1 Employee of forestry and wildlife and 3 Prison Warders, 440 members of DSF wounded, 116

²³⁵ About 1,832,061. 07 Euros.

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civilians killed and 174 wounded, 6 members of religious orders killed, 1935 persons abducted or missing; of 180 cases of escape of detainees.

717- At humanitarian level, as at 31 December 2019, there were 406,277 refugees as against 417,374 in 2018 and 432,870 internally displaced persons as against 403,725 in 2018.

§2: Obstacles to Social Cohesion

718- Social cohesion and national unity were also jeopardised by the escalation of abuse in communities characterised especially by falling back on ethnic identity and by calls to tribal hatred through the media.

719- Some acts of violence between communities were recorded in Obala in April 2019 following a quarrel between 2 youths and in October 2019 at Sangmelima as a result of the violent killing of a young motorcycle rider.

720- These scourges caused serious worry and indignation among the Cameroon population, hence discussions and calls from public authorities, the civil society and religious organisations. In response, one of the concerns of the Cabinet meeting of 31 October 2019 was the development of national consciousness through the media. The Prime Minister, Head of Government instructed the institutionalisation of terms of reference in media management procedures by including the obligation relating to the production and dissemination of contents that guarantee the promotion of national consciousness.

721- Discussion workshops ²³⁶were organised by the National Commission for the Promotion of Bilingualism and Multiculturalism (CNPBMC). The Commission set up an ad hoc Committee to fight against hate speech. Other stakeholders were also involved, especially the Cameroon Episcopal Conference, that published a pastoral Letter in December 2019. On 10 October 2019, the Cameroon Council of Imams and Muslim Dignitaries

²³⁶ Worthy of note is the discussion day on living together organised on 11 April 2019. On that Day, the CNP BMC gathered experts to identify concrete actions likely to be carried out especially by public and private stakeholders, civil society, traditional communities and religious denominations to curb falling back on ethnic identity and hate speech. Also, a colloquium was organised on 24 April 2019 in Yaounde, under the theme: *Multiculturalism at the crossroads between tradition and modernity*. Its goal was to assess the progress of multiculturalism in Cameroon and identify discussion strategies among various cultures. A conference-debate was organised by the Friedrich Ebert Stiftung Foundation on 29 April 2019 on *Hate speech on the media in Cameroon: manifestations, consequences, standards and good practices*.

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(CIDIMUC) organised an advocacy Conference for 300 Imams and preachers for the promotion of preaching focused on peace, tolerance, living together, fight against radicalisation and religious extremism.

722- The people of Cameroon also expressed disapproval towards the calls to hatred through regional mobilisations as “intercommunity dialogue” meetings were organised along the Government’s responses to the various crises.

SECTION 2: RESPONSES TO THE VARIOUS CRISES

723- The preservation of peace and national cohesion was the reason why priority was given to consensual measures though other measures were not neglected.

§1: Priority to Consensual Solutions: the Major National Dialogue (MND)

724- Apart from the benefits resulting from the measures already taken by the Government to bring about solutions to the various crises²³⁷, the Head of State, in a message to the Nation on 10 September 2019, decided to convene a Major National Dialogue in order to “seek ways and means of meeting the high aspirations of the people of the North West and South West Regions, but also of all the other components of our Nation”. With the goal of discussing the crisis prevailing in the North West and South West Regions, the MND held from 30 September to 4 October 2019. Issues of national interest such as national unity, national integrity and living together were also discussed.

725- The MND ended with numerous recommendations²³⁸ relating to the 8 themes discussed: Bilingualism, cultural diversity and social cohesion, education system, judicial system, return of refugees and internally displaced

²³⁷ Such measures include, at the institutional level, the reform of the Supreme Court and the National School of Administration and Magistracy (ENAM), the setting-up of the Ministry of Decentralisation and Local Development, the setting-up of the National Commission for the Promotion of Bilingualism and Multiculturalism, the setting-up of the National Disarmament, Demobilisation and Reintegration Committee and the setting-up of an Emergency Humanitarian Assistance Plan for the North West and South West Regions. As regards court action, there was an offer of peace through the discontinuance of proceedings in favour of 239 persons in 2018; See Report on Human Rights 2017 (§694 et seq) and 2018 (§835 et seq).

²³⁸ See website of the Major National Dialogue, visited on 13 April 2020.

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persons, reconstruction and development of the Regions in conflict, disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration of former combatants, involvement of the diaspora in the crisis and its participation in the development of the country as well as decentralisation and local development.

726- Special emphasis was laid on some recommendations due to their expected impact on the resolution of the crisis. Such recommendations were to:

- grant a special status to the North West and South West Regions, in accordance with Article 62 (2) of the Constitution;
- take specific measures to ensure equal status to English and French in all aspects of national life;
- strengthen the autonomy of regional and local authorities;
- improve on the infrastructure of judicial services all over the country;
- strengthen the humanitarian assistance Programme to better meet the needs of internally displaced persons;
- set up a special reconstruction plan for areas affected by the crisis;
- widely disseminate the amnesty offered by the Head of State to combatants who lay down their arms and agree to the reintegration process; and
- set up a team in charge of discussing with radicalised members of the diaspora.

727- At the end of 2019, some resolutions were already being implemented. This is the case with Law No.2019/24 of 24 December 2019 to institute the General Code of Regional and Local Authorities²³⁹, which notably provides for a special status to the North West and South West Regions and other complementary measures for the resolution of the conflict.

§2: Complementary Measures for the Resolution of the Crisis

728- Government deployed several measures to curb insecurity and promote living together. These mainly concern: the legal framework for the

²³⁹ See Chapter on the management of public affairs §210

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promotion of official languages, heavier sanctions provided for by the law against hate speech, the security system, measures towards economic recovery, continuation of activities of the National Disarmament, Demobilisation and Reintegration Committee and actions in support to victims.

A: Strengthening the Legal Framework for the Promotion of Official Languages

729- Law No.2019/19 of 24 December 2019 on the promotion of official languages in Cameroon was enacted. The aim of this Law is notably to guarantee equal use of English and French in public Administrations and institutions and to encourage Cameroonian citizens to speak both English and French. It ensures the use of the 2 official languages in interacting with Public Administrations and Parastatals, the education system, in access to justice as well as the publication of general legislative and statutory instruments. The same applies to placards, logos, insignia and notices including those relating to the security system.

B: Toughening Legislation against Hate Speech

730- As criminal response to the escalation of hate speech, Law No. 2019/20 of 24 December 2019 to amend and supplement certain provisions of the Penal Code was passed. In the new Law, the social value protected by the offence of "contempt of race and religion" has been extended to tribes and ethnic groups and the sentence increased.

731- In Section 241-2 (new) television and social media are added to the press and radio as means of commission of the offence.

732- Furthermore, Section 241-1 (new) provides for a new offence termed "contempt of tribe". It sanctions whosoever, by any means, makes hate speech or incites to violence against people because of their tribe or ethnic group.

733- Finally, penalties are doubled, mitigating circumstances and suspended sentences are excluded in some cases, taking into consideration the motive²⁴⁰ for the commission of the offence or the occupation of the author

²⁴⁰ In Section 241-3 (new), the sanction is doubled when the offence is committed with the intent to arouse hatred or contempt among citizens and residents.

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of the hate speech. So, Civil Servants, leaders of political parties, media, NGOs or religious institutions are concerned by this clause on occupation.

C: Strengthening Security System and Respect for Human Rights

734- With regard to the prevailing situation, efforts were made to preserve the integrity of the territory and institutions, protect the population and their property through a progressive adjustment of the security system. These security measures were carried out taking into consideration the Human Rights obligations of the State

1) Progressive Adjustment of the Security System

735- At the strategic level, the fight against illicit trafficking of small arms and light weapons continued and was materialised by the holding of workshops for the follow-up of the implementation of the Central African Convention for the Control of Small Arms and Light Weapons signed in Kinshasa. From 24 to 26 April 2019, Cameroon hosted a sub-regional workshop for the capacity building of stakeholders on data collection and data base on arms, the drafting of plans for the implementation of the said Convention and reporting.

736- By Decree No. 2019/395 of 6 August 2019, a 6th Rapid Intervention Battalion named 6th BIR was established in Mabanda (Kumba) in the South West Region following the transformation of "Opération Chacal".

737- To tackle serious crime in the East and Adamawa Regions, the Multipurpose Intervention Group of the National Gendarmerie (elite unit), was deployed alongside other forces to put an end to abductions and organised crime. Vigilante groups were revamped in these localities and new Officials of the Military and National Gendarmerie were appointed.

738- At the operational and logistic levels, a video-surveillance Command Centre was established in Yaounde with a video-surveillance-vigilance system installed in 4 towns of the country²⁴¹. Rolling stock was purchased, notably 157 new vehicles made available to strengthen the capacities of DSFs.

²⁴¹ In the Centre, camera surveillance is conducted in order to prevent crime, search for and identify perpetrators. These centres are hosted in the Yaounde Stadium, the Bafoussam Stadium, the Garoua Stadium and the Buea Stadium.

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2) Respect of Human Rights Commitments in Deploying Defence and Security Forces

739- The Minister of Defence reiterated his permanent instructions relating to the respect of Human Rights in the deployment of DSFs through his Circular-Letter No.190256/DV/MINDEF/01 of 18 January 2019 mentioned above.²⁴²

740- This approach is supported by continuous capacity building of staff in Human Rights and International Humanitarian Law²⁴³.

C: Economic Recovery Measures

741- Insecurity in the Far North, North West and South West Regions contributed in weakening the local economy. To promote the resumption of economic activities, these Regions were granted the status of economically distressed areas by Decree No.2019/3179/PM of 2 September 2019. Article 1 provides: *"The status of economic disaster areas is accorded to the Far North, North West and South West Regions pursuant to the provisions of Section 121 and 121 (a) of the General Tax Code"*.

742- The implementation modalities of this status provided for by the General Tax Code ²⁴⁴and the conditions to be granted related to financial benefits were set in Decree No.2019/3178/PM of September 2019 as a result of this status, these areas are exempted from a category of taxes for new investments.

743- Also, Cameroon was allocated CFAF 8, 500, 000, 000²⁴⁵ as part of the United Nations Peace Building Fund, to bring about immediate solutions for the country's recovery. These funds will among others benefit the implementation of disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration²⁴⁶.

²⁴² See above, Chapter on the right to life, §69.

²⁴³ For training sessions organised in 2019, see Chapter 1 on the right to life and others, §73.

²⁴⁴ Article 1 (2) of this Decree defines an economic disaster area as a precise territory in which economic activity is structurally and sustainably affected by insecurity or any kind of disaster such as floods and drought.

²⁴⁵ About 12,977,099. 24 Euros.

²⁴⁶ So, Cameroon has to identify projects relating to decentralisation, disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration and promotion of bilingualism which should be financed in priority by the Fund.

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D: Activities of the National Disarmament, Demobilisation and Reintegration Committee

744- One year after it was established, the National Disarmament, Demobilisation and Reintegration Committee (NDDRC) demobilised 252 persons from various armed groups. Measures were taken for their socio-economic reintegration through income generating activities such as breeding, agriculture, sewing and small business.

E: Support to Victims of Terrorism and Insecurity

745- Within the framework of the Emergency Humanitarian Assistance Plan for the North West and South West Regions adopted in 2018, Government and its partners gave support to displaced persons²⁴⁷.

746- The Project “*Youth and Stabilisation for peace and security in the Far North Region*”, amounting to CFAF 1,500, 000, 000²⁴⁸, was launched on 24 July 2019 by the Governor of the Far North Region to assist 30,000 girls and boys from councils most affected by the security crisis related to *Boko Haram*. Such assistance was carried out through financing the training and reintegration of the said youths and by promoting peace and living together.

747- Moreover, in 2019, as part of improving the resilience of poor communities affected by conflicts in the Far North and North Regions, 1,400 households in 13 councils received 14,000 small ruminants²⁴⁹. Thus support to victims appeared as a complement to the fight against impunity.

SECTION 3: FIGHT AGAINST IMPUNITY IN THE RESPECT OF HUMAN RIGHTS

748-As “*respect for the rule of law and the fight against impunity are pillars in the consolidation of a State ruled by law*”²⁵⁰, the fight against Human Rights violations was centred on capacity building of judicial stakeholders for efficient prosecutions. The desire for appeasement motivated

²⁴⁷ See Chapter on the protection of refugees and displaced persons, §1051.

²⁴⁸ About 2,290,076. 34 Euros.

²⁴⁹ The Tokombere, Kolofata, Logone-Birni, Blangoua, Kaele, Dziguilao, Kar-Hay, Meri, Maroua 1, Hina, Figuil, Garoua 3 and Bogo Councils.

²⁵⁰ Head of State’s address to the nation on 10 September 2019.

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the discontinuance of prosecution against those who committed the less serious crimes.

§1: Capacity Building of Judicial Stakeholders

749- Since an efficient judicial response in the fight against terrorism also depends on the capacities of stakeholders, numerous training sessions for judicial stakeholders were organised. Worthy of note is the project on “access to justice and good governance” steered by the National School of Administration and Magistracy (ENAM) and the Global Center on Co-operative Security, within the framework of which about 60 judicial stakeholders were trained on the respect of Human Rights in the fight against terrorism. The first phase of the said project was launched in November 2018 and ended in October 2019 with a Workshop for the review of recommendations²⁵¹ made during the various training sessions for proposal to the Government.

750- A workshop on the “role of the criminal justice system in the fight against Boko Haram in the Lake Chad Basin was also held in ENAM, from 24 to 27 September 2019. This workshop which was organised with the support of the US Embassy in Cameroon emphasised on the need to strengthen and harmonise criminal justice with the respect of Human Rights, the judicialisation of evidence obtained in a non-conventional way, the reduction of the duration of police custody, the introduction of a module on terrorism in military and judicial schools and the conduct of criminal proceedings in the respect of Human Rights.

§2: Judicial Proceedings for various Human Rights Violations

751- To fight against impunity, authorities received instructions to systematically open investigations on all cases of abuse and violation of Human Rights recorded and brought to their knowledge, whether committed by DSFs or by members of armed groups. Investigations and criminal proceedings were initiated both in vertical²⁵² and horizontal²⁵³ Human Rights violations.

²⁵¹ Recommendations included the amendment of Law No.2014/28 of 23 December 2014 on the suppression of acts of terrorism, especially an amendment of the definition of acts of terrorism, provisions concerning preventing acts of terrorism from being committed, in accordance with the principle of legality in criminal law, the preservation and the production in court of evidence collected on the crime scene, protection of victims and witnesses.

²⁵² Vertical Human Rights violations are those committed by State employees, as they have a vertical relationship with the people under their jurisdiction.

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A: Vertical Human Rights Violations

752- Misbehaviour and abuse by members of DSFs gave rise to investigations followed by proceedings before military tribunals²⁵⁴. Details are mentioned above²⁵⁵.

753- Proceedings against the Soldiers involved in the murder of some women and children in the Far North Region were pending before the Yaounde Military Tribunal.

B: Horizontal Human Rights Violations

754- Proceedings initiated before national courts against members of armed groups are evidence of the will to sanction their atrocities. On 27 December 2019, 41 proceedings were pending before the Bamenda Military Tribunal against 40 persons for capital murder, murder, illegal possession and carriage of arms, illegal wearing of military uniform, false arrest, grievous harm and destruction. As concerns ordinary law courts, 19 proceedings were pending at the end of the year before lower courts of the North West Region for various Human Rights violations.

755- Some 169 persons were prosecuted before military tribunals nationwide for terrorism.

§3: Will for Appeasement: Discontinuance of Criminal Proceedings

756- To translate the will for appeasement and pardon, the Head of State ordered²⁵⁶ *“the discontinuance of proceedings against 333 persons arrested and detained for misdemeanours committed in the North West and South West Regions”*. This measure was materialised by decisions rendered by the various military tribunals of the country²⁵⁷.

²⁵³ Horizontal violations are those committed by individuals towards others.

²⁵⁴ Data were collected on 30 November 2019.

²⁵⁵ See Chapter on the right to life, physical and moral integrity, §81-82.

²⁵⁶ In his message of 10 September 2019, the Head of State declared: *“Admittedly, however, in the context of a dialogue, a peace process or national reconciliation, the possibility of pardon may be considered, under certain conditions”*.

²⁵⁷ Judgement No. 69/19 of 4 October 2019 of the Bafoussam Military Tribunal.

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757- Despite various threats against territorial integrity, the preservation of institutions, persons and goods and the safeguard of national cohesion, Government took up all these challenges without foregoing its commitments towards the respect and guarantee of Human Rights. Some recommendations of the MND were yet to be implemented, but the General Code of Regional and Local Authorities was a great step that opened a new era in the management of public affairs.

CHAPTER 3

PROMOTING GOOD GOVERNANCE AND COMBATTING CORRUPTION



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758- In 2019, the promotion of good governance remained one of the main thrusts of Government policy. Actions carried out to this effect were included in the framework established by the Growth and Employment Strategy Paper²⁵⁸ (GESP). These actions focused on improving the quality of governance as well as combating corruption and misappropriation of public property.

SECTION I: IMPROVING THE QUALITY OF GOVERNANCE

759- In a bid to render the finance sector more efficient, public authorities put in place a legal framework. Transparency and predictability in the management of public corporations and establishments were improved, procedures for implementing the Public Contracts Code were clarified and accountability in the said sector was strengthened. In addition, some progress was made in the management of public finance and the participatory approach in the economy and investment incentive policy pursued.

§1: Establishment of a Legal Framework to Boost Efficiency of the Finance Sector.

760- The finance system was improved and boosted and its security enhanced.

A: Reinforcing Credit Security

761- Credit security appears to be a major constraint to the financing of the economy and development of Cameroon's Finance system in general. Indeed, the banking and micro-finance sectors were marked by a high level of overdue or compromised debts amounting to CFAF 599 700 000 000²⁵⁹ for Credit Institutions and CFAF 96 600 000 000²⁶⁰ for Micro-finance Institutions for the 3rd quarter of 2019, sums which represent 16.7% and 32.6% of customer loans respectively.

762- To address this worrying situation and with no clarification from CEMAC regulations relating to loan agreements, Law No. 2019/21 of 24 December 2019 to lay down some rules governing credit activities in the banking and micro-finance sectors in Cameroon was adopted. This new Law shall

²⁵⁸ This Strategy Paper has been replaced by the 2020-2030 National Development Strategy which is the new ten year reference framework for Government policy was approved on 28 November 2019.

²⁵⁹ About 915,572,519.08 Euros.

²⁶⁰ About 147,480,916.03 Euros.

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apply to credit providers (credit and micro-finance institutions) operating within the national territory, to borrowers and customers/members of these institutions and to loans granted to borrowers by credit providers (Section 2 of the Law). It sets out conditions to conclude a loan transaction, obligations of the parties (Borrower and Lender) to a loan transaction and liabilities in the event of non-repayment (Section 1 of the Law). This includes criminal liability for bankruptcy fraud by the debtor to avoid repayment of the loan (Sections 20, 21, 22 and 23 of the Law).

763- Moreover, the new Law subjects the initiation of criminal proceedings to a complaint from the credit provider, who, just like the borrower, may request a discontinuance of proceedings upon repayment of the loan subsequent to proceedings instituted against the latter and prior to delivery of a decision on the merits (Section 28 (2) of the Law). Hence, bad faith and fraud are sanctioned more, compared to the non-fulfilment of a contractual obligation²⁶¹.

B: Improving and Boosting the Finance Sector

764- Among measures adopted by public authorities to improve and boost this sector are the issuance of 54 accreditations to managers of Micro-Finance Institutions (MFIs), publication of a list of authorised MFIs, fight against capital flight with an effective repatriation of CFAF 644,721,000,000²⁶² by companies.

§2: Improving Transparency and Predictability in the Management of Public Corporations and Establishments

765- With a view to pursuing the reform, which aims to improve transparency and predictability in the management of public corporations and establishments, 3 Decrees were signed on 19 June 2019. These are: Decree No. 2019/320 to lay down conditions for implementing some provisions of Law No. 2017/10 and Law No. 2017/11 of 12 July 2017

²⁶¹ The Human Rights Committee, in its jurisprudence on article 11 of the ICCPR on the prohibition of imprisonment for debt, considers that this provision does not apply to criminal offences relating to civil debts and that in case of fraud or simple or fraudulent bankruptcy, the person concerned is liable to imprisonment even if he is no longer able to repay his debts. See Communication No. 1342/2005, Gavrilin c/Belarus, findings adopted on 28 March 2007, §7.3.; Communication No. 2764/2016, Achille Benoit Zogo Andela c/ Cameroon, §6.11.

²⁶² About Euros 984,306,870.23.

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to lay down the general rules and regulations governing public establishments and public corporations; Decree No. 2019/321 to lay down the categories of public corporations and the remuneration, allowances and benefits of their managers; and Decree No. 2019/322 to lay down the categories of public establishments and the remuneration, allowances and benefits of their managers.

766- Decree No. 2019/320 of 19 June 2019 in Article 3 indicates the conditions for exercising supervisory authority while stating relations between executive bodies.

767- Furthermore, about 23 instruments reorganising public corporations and establishments were signed in 2019²⁶³.

§3: Clarification of Conditions for Implementing the Public Contracts Code and Strengthening Transparency in this Area

768- Conditions for implementing the Public Contracts Code were clarified and transparency in the public contracts sector reinforced.

A: Clarification of Conditions for Implementing the Public Contracts Code

769- Following the publication of the Public Contracts Code adopted in 2018, 12 enabling instruments out of 19 were finalised in collaboration with the relevant sector Ministries and Agencies²⁶⁴.

770- In addition, 3 Orders were signed on 21 October 2019 by the Minister Delegate at the Presidency in charge of Public Contracts²⁶⁵.

²⁶³ These include Decree No. 2019/32 of 24 January 2019 to reorganise the Hydrocarbons Prices Stabilization Fund, Decree No. 2019/143 of 19 March 2019 to reorganise the Standards and Quality Agency, Decree No. 2019/174 of 9 April 2019 on the reorganisation and operation of the Cameroon Civil Aviation Authority, Decree No. 2019/205 of 24 April 2019 relating to the transformation of the Industrial Zones Development and Management Authority into a Public Limited Company, Decree No. 2019/263 of 28 May 2019 to reorganize Cameroon Telecommunications Corporation and Decree No. 2019/264 of 28 May 2019 to approve the statutes of the Cameroon Telecommunications Corporation.

²⁶⁴ These include the Ministry of Public Works, Ministry of Finance, Ministry of Housing and Urban Development, Ministry of External Relations, Ministry of Small and Medium Sized-Enterprises, Ministry of Social Economy and Handicrafts, Public Contracts Regulatory Agency, Agency for Small and Medium-sized Enterprises and the Investment Promotion Agency.

²⁶⁵ These are Orders fixing: the nature and thresholds of contracts reserved for craftsmen, small and medium-sized enterprises, community-based organisations and civil society organisations as well as the procedures for their application; the thresholds for the use of private project supervision and the terms and conditions for carrying out public project supervision; and the ceiling price of compensation paid

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771- Besides the normative framework, the Ministry of Public Contracts (MINMAP) set up Tenders Boards as stipulated in the new Public Contracts Code taking the number to 611 of the 637 provided for by the Code.

772- As concerns the mastery of the said Code by stakeholders, the Annual Conference of Officials of Central and Devolved Services held on 28 and 29 August 2019 in Yaounde, under the theme: *Public Contracts Reform: assessing the issues and overcoming new challenges*. In addition, a series of training seminars²⁶⁶ were organised over the national territory to ensure effective and efficient mastery and application of the new public contracts regulatory framework in-house before it is made available to other stakeholders of the public contracts system.

B: Strengthening Transparency in the Public Contracts Sector

773- Managing disputes, intensifying the control of public contracts and services as well as sanctioning dishonest stakeholders helped improve transparency in the public contracts sector.

1) Managing Disputes relating to the Award of Public Contracts

774- The table below summarizes MINMAP activities relating to dispute management in 2019. It is essentially the management of disputes resulting from the award of contracts by various Project Owners and Delegated Project Owners to Chairpersons.

by the Project Owners and Delegated Project Owners to the Chairpersons, members and rapporteurs of the Follow-up and Technical Validation Committee.

²⁶⁶ The following training seminars can be cited: the seminar of 3 to 4 July 2019 held in Yaounde on *the stakes of reform and the new structure of the public contracts system, the role and missions of stakeholders of the said system, that of June 2019 held in Yaounde on the mastery of the new public contracts normative framework provided for by the Decree of 20 June 2018, for the proper execution of the State and that of 31 October to 1 November 2019 held in Maroua on the mastery of the new Public Contracts Code by stakeholders involved in the award, procurement, execution and control of public contracts in the North and Far North Regions.*

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Table 1: Summary of MINMAP activities relating to dispute management in 2019

Files received by MINMAP	Requests processed	Files processed in collegiality	Bidders' requests	Requests for arbitration	Other requests	Files not processed in collegiality	Bidders' requests	Requests for arbitration	Other requests	Files pending	Justified requests	Contracts scheduled for 2019
321	278	113	77	5	31	165	114	0	51	43	24	6,896

Source: MINMAP

775- Percentage of justified requests compared to requests received is 7.47 %.

2) Intensifying the Control of Public Contracts and Services

776- In 2019, 6 896 contracts were recorded to the tune of CFAF 499,017,478,978²⁶⁷. A total of 217 contracts were awarded to the Central Contracts Control Board (CCCB) worth a total of CFAF 112,782,863,196²⁶⁸.

777- Regarding prior CCCBs control of contracts of a certain threshold awarded by Project Owners and Delegated Project Owners in 2019, the 5 CCCBs examined a total of 395 files amounting to CFAF 849,657,661,636²⁶⁹.

778- Concerning the control of execution, the CCCBs controlled 1,646 executed contracts amounting to CFAF 3,801,787,904,850²⁷⁰. They also processed 437 payment documents representing a total amount of CFAF 163,126,409,487²⁷¹. In addition, they conducted a series of control missions in the Adamawa, Far North, Centre, Littoral, North and West Regions to monitor the execution of some major projects²⁷².

²⁶⁷ About 761,858,746.53 Euros.

²⁶⁸ About 172,187,577.40 Euros.

²⁶⁹ About 1,297,187,269.67 Euros.

²⁷⁰ About 5,804,256,343.28 Euros.

²⁷¹ About 249 047 953.41 Euros.

²⁷² These include notably highway projects, projects of the three-year emergency plan for economic growth, construction projects related to the Africa Cup of Nations, projects for buildings and public facilities as well as other major infrastructure project.

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3) Sanctions against Fraudulent Practices

779- Sanctions were imposed on both internal and external stakeholders of the public contracts system.

780- As concerns internal stakeholders who were sanctioned, 5 exclusion decisions were taken, 3 against chairpersons and members of the Tender Boards and 2 against MINMAP staff who were sent back to their initial Administrations.

781- With regard to external stakeholders, the Ministry of Public Contracts suspended 4 Mayors stripped of their powers as contracting authority. Furthermore, 334 companies were debarred from public procurement for abandoning the services they had to provide and 71 service providers suspended for fraudulent practices during the contract award procedure.

782- Concerning the examination of 69 requests for waiver resulting from the termination of contracts of 334 companies, 30 cases received a positive response while 39 were rejected for lack of adequate supporting documents.

§4: Improving Public Finance Management Measures

783- In an effort to strengthen public finance management, Government adopted a series of measures. These include further reforming the single account and reducing payment delays by opening sub-accounts for all Central Government Public Accountants, financing decentralization by funding the escrow account opened at BEAC for the payment of additional council tax and managing cash needs of local authorities, ensuring the dematerialisation of cash vouchers and pursuing the process of modernizing public accounting through individualized payment of salaries of State employees via the Central African Remote Clearing System platform²⁷³ (SYSTAC).

784- Regarding debt management, the State met its commitments during the year under review. Thus, the credibility of the State improved and investors' confidence in Government was strengthened through the reim-

²⁷³ It is a clear, secured, computerised and dematerialised system which handles substantial amounts in debit and credit transactions (transfers and checks) which are not urgent and where the unit amount is less than CFAF 100 000 000 (about 152,671.76 Euros).

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bursement of CFAF 309,000,000,000²⁷⁴ in 2019, subscribed under treasury loans and the bond loan known as “ECMR 5.5% 2014-2019”.

§5: Maintaining the Participatory Approach in the Economic Sector

785- On 18 March 2019, the 10th edition of the Cameroon Business Forum (CBF) – a platform for dialogue between the public/private sectors and development partners – was organised in Douala under the theme: “Emergence and Development of Private Investment in Cameroon”.

786- Operational since 2010, the CBF emanates from the joint willingness of stakeholders, namely the State, the private sector and development partners, to promote efficient public-private dialogue, encourage the productive sector and accelerate the formulation of reforms that improve the business climate and promote local and foreign investment in Cameroon.

787- At the end of the 2019 Session, 22 recommendations covering 10 reform areas were adopted. These recommendations were centred around business development (2), driver’s licence (3), access to electricity (1), access to property (3), access to credit (2), facilitating cross-border trade (3), commercial disputes/execution of contracts (1), investment promotion (4) and payment of taxes (3).

§6: Continuation of Investment Incentive Policy

788- The investment incentive policy continued through investment promotion. Investment promotion focused in particular on transparency in mining activity and investment facilitation.

A: Transparency in Mining Activity

789- In a bid to ensure transparency in the conduct of mining activity, the Ministry of Mines, Industries and Technological Development (MINMIDT) undertook several actions in 2019. These include, the awareness-raising of mining and quarry operators on their obligations through preparing and distributing leaflets and undertaking field visits relating thereto, conducting scheduled and unannounced missions as well as missions to follow-up recommendations from the inspections of these operators with the aim to ensure compliance with relevant regulations.

²⁷⁴ About 471,755,725.19 Euros.

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790- MINMIDT also proceeded with the collection of mining and quarry taxes and fees from insolvent companies with the assistance of the Ministry of Finance. It continued the centralisation of information relating to mining control across the country by archiving all biannual and annual reports of the Regional Mining Control Brigades (BRCAM) and the settlement of disputes. In addition, it sought the deduction of a combined flat-rate mining tax of 25% of the gross production of every semi-mechanized non-industrial mining site, while the operator shall freely dispose of the remaining 75% without prejudice to payment of the other taxes, fees and duties to which they are liable (Section 28 of the Mining Code).

791- Moreover, the amounts of fixed duties, area royalties or state land concession rights and those of value-based royalties are fixed by Sections 171, 173 and 174 of the said Code.

792- Since Cameroon joined the Kimberley Process Certification Scheme (KPCS) in August 2012, it has complied with the principles and requirements of the Kimberley Process. For the year under review, the Permanent National Secretariat of the Kimberley Process (SNPPK) carried out actions relating to the implementation of internal control and traceability measures through various actions. These include deploying SNPPK staff in diamond production areas and exit points (airport, borders), preparing a legal framework regulating the export and import regime for rough diamonds in accordance with the principles and requirements of the Kimberley Process, publishing on the KPCS website of national production statistics, import and export of rough diamonds, participating in all activities aimed at improving the effectiveness of the KPCS, including statutory meetings, teleconferences and review visits as well as training and raising awareness among various stakeholders on the principles and requirements of the Kimberley Process.

B: Investment Facilitation

793-The 3rd edition of the Cameroon Investment Forum (CIF), a crossroad of meetings, exchanges and agreements between entrepreneurs, project leaders and financial partners, was organized by the Investment Promotion Agency from 27 to 29 November 2019 in Douala under the theme: Industrialization through import-substitution: Focus on aquaculture, rice and

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maize farming. One of its objectives was to display efforts that contribute to strengthening the resilience of Cameroon's economy by encouraging the implementation of projects that can reverse the current trend of consumption through import-substitution. In addition to this, opportunities of participation and co-financing were offered to investors.

794- Furthermore, 500 foreign investors were received by the staff of the Investment Promotion Agency (IPA) located at the reception desks of the Douala and Yaounde international airports.

795- In addition, and in order to ensure close support to investors, API signed 25 agreements in 2019 with investment promoters, giving them access to incentives for private investment with a total projected amount of CFAF 267,414,460,491²⁷⁵ for 4,997 jobs to be created.

SECTION 2: COMBATING CORRUPTION AND MISAPPROPRIATION OF PUBLIC PROPERTY

796- In order to improve the management of public assets, Government continued its preventive efforts through awareness raising and communication, control and detection of acts of corruption and misappropriation of public property as well as sanctioning of perpetrators of such acts.

§1: Awareness-Raising and Communication Activities

797- In 2019, the National Anti-Corruption Commission (NACC) organised awareness raising campaigns for youths on Education, Integrity and Combating corruption during FENASSCO games²⁷⁶ « League A²⁷⁷ » and « League B²⁷⁸ » which held from 16 to 22 June 2019 in Maroua and in Yaounde, and during university games organised from 4 to 11 May 2019 in Bandjoun, in Dschang and in Foumban. Within the framework of the celebration of the International Anti-Corruption Day, NACC organised an awareness raising tour dubbed "Integrity Tour" in schools across the capital city Yaounde. NACC also raised the awareness of participants during national events such as the International Exhibition for Enterprises and

²⁷⁵ About 408,266, 351.89 Euros.

²⁷⁶ National Federation of School Sports.

²⁷⁷ League bringing together students from schools under the supervision of the Ministry of Secondary Education.

²⁷⁸ League bringing together pupils from schools under the supervision of the Ministry of Basic Education.

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SMEs, PROMOTE 2019 and the commemoration of the Commonwealth week during which 9,020 stickers, 8,000 pocket calendars, 31,000 flyers, 850 T-shirts, 350 caps and 1,000 bags bearing anti-corruption messages were distributed.

798- In November 2019, NACC organised awareness-raising campaigns dubbed “Corruption-free Elections”, with teams sent to the field during a “Road show”, to raise the awareness of the population on the ills and dangers of corruption in 8 of the 10 Regions of the country²⁷⁹. Moreover, the Commission produced and aired 85 “Espace CONAC” radio and television programmes in English and French in order to inform the national and international community about major stakes in the fight against corruption.

§2: Intensifying Control Activities

799- NACC, Supreme State Audit (CONSUPE) and the Audit Bench of the Supreme Court intensified control activities.

A: NACC’s Activities

800- With a view to preventing misappropriation of public property and infringement of private property, NACC carried out investigations and control activities. As a result, it received and studied 21,222 reports, among which 17,350 were from calls on the toll-free number “1517” and 3,872 by electronic or administrative mails as opposed to 4,498 in 2018. Most of these reports related to corrupt acts and practices.

801- Thanks to the deployment of its Rapid Intervention Antenna, NACC also carried out 16 rapid intervention missions in 2019 compared to 41 in 2018. During these missions, 50 cases of fraud and corruption were discovered. In most of these cases, reports proved to be true and the suspects were handed over to the Judicial Police for investigation.

B: Activities of the Supreme State Audit

802- CONSUPE received and investigated denunciations and also carried out control missions. In addition, as part of the activities of the Budget and Financial Disciplinary Council (BFDC), files were received and proceedings commenced against unscrupulous managers.

²⁷⁹ The North West and South West Regions were not covered due to the socio-political crisis ongoing in these Regions.

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1) Examination of Reports

803- CONSUPE Operational Units received and examined²⁸⁰ reports.

a) Reports Examined by the Department of Legal Affairs and Information Exploitation (DAJEI)

804- This Department received and examined 212 denunciations in 2019 as opposed to 111 in 2018, that is an increase of 101 denunciations compared to the previous year as indicated in the table below:

Table 2: Comparative table of Reports received and Examined by DAJEI in 2018 and 2019

No.	Stakeholders concerned	2018	2019
1	Public Administrations	29	90
2	Public Administrative Establishments	8	10
3	Private Establishments	2	21
4	Individuals	49	41
5	Regional and Local Authorities	2	1
6	Trade Unions	4	6
7	Anonymous	15	10
8	Associations/NGOs/Cooperatives	2	32
9	Traditional Chiefdoms	0	1
Total		111	212

Source: DAJEI/CONSUPE

b) Reports Examined by the Inspection and Control Divisions

805- Inspection and Control Divisions received and examined 212 reports in 2019 as opposed to 89 in 2018, at times as part of special missions requested by the President of the Republic and missions to crosscheck as illustrated in the table below:

²⁸⁰ Some were considered when carrying out mobile control missions.

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Table 3: Comparative Table of denunciations received and investigated by the Inspections and Control Divisions in 2018 and 2019

Operational Units	Number of reports received		Number of reports examined		Reports which resulted in special missions		Reports which resulted in missions to crosscheck		Pending files	
	2018	2019	2018	2019	2018	2019	2018	2019	2018	2019
DIESP ²⁸¹	4	13	4	13	1	1	0	1	0	1
DICTD ²⁸²	30	71	30	71	0	0	0	4	0	0
DIAP ²⁸³	49	113	49	113	2	4	0	0	0	0
DIEPOS ²⁸⁴	6	15	6	15	0	6	0	0	0	1
Total	89	212	89	212	3	11	0	5	0	2

Source: CONSUPE

2) Control Missions

806- CONSUPE's Inspection and Control Divisions carried out 21 control missions in Public and Semi-public Enterprises, Specific Institutions and Public Administrations as part of the implementation of the Public Investment Budget while 8 missions were carried out in 2018 as indicated in the table below:

Table 4: Comparative table of Control Missions carried out by the Inspection and Control Divisions in 2018 and 2019

Operational Units	Missions initiated		Missions completed		Pending missions		Number of Reports forwarded to the Presidency of the Republic	
	2018	2019	2018	2019	2018	2019	2018	2019
DIESP	1	3	1	3	5	0	2	9
DICTD	0	6	0	0	0	2	0	0
DIAP	3	8	0	2	3	6	5	6
DIEPOS	4	4	3	3	4	1	0	1
Total	8	21	4	8	12	9	7	16

Source: CONSUPE

²⁸¹ Inspection and Control Divisions for Public and Semi-public Enterprises.

²⁸² Inspection and Control Divisions for Regional and Local Authorities.

²⁸³ Inspection and Control Divisions for Public Administrations.

²⁸⁴ Inspection and Control Divisions for Public Establishments and Specific Institutions.

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C: Control by the Audit Bench of the Supreme Court

807- The Audit Bench carried out judicial and administrative controls as well as provided assistance and advice to public authorities and Parliament.

1) Judicial Control

808- In 2019, judicial control was carried out on the accounts of 4,591 Public Accountants' including those for previous years not yet produced as at 31 December 2018. These accounts were distributed between Senior Treasury Accountants (15), the Accountants of Public Administrative Establishments (636) and Council Revenue Collectors (3,945).

809- The Audit Bench examined 171 accounts. These included 15 for the First Division (in charge of controlling and ruling on accounts produced by accountants of public and semi-public enterprises), 78 for the Second Division (in charge of controlling accountants of regional and local authorities and their public establishments) and 78 for the Third Division (in charge of controlling accountants of public establishment of the State). Moreover, it rendered 11 final judgements, including 1 ruling for the Joint Benches and 10 rulings concerning balance due for the Public Accountants' Control and Judgement Section.

810- The Joint Benches office issued a final ruling on the management account of the Ministry of Arts and Culture on the control of the quality of expenditure.

2) Administrative Control

811- The control of the accounts of public and semi-public enterprises concerns 67 bodies yearly. During the 2019 Financial year, these controls gave rise to 3 interim observation reports (DOR) which were sent to the persons concerned to respect the adversarial principle

3) Assistance and Advice to Public Authorities

812- In addition to drafting the 2017 Annual Public Report²⁸⁵, the Audit Bench continued giving assistance and advice to the Executive and Parliament.

²⁸⁵ This Report informs the President of the Republic, the President of the National Assembly and the President of the Senate of the general outcome of its work and the observations that it considers necessary to make with a view to reforming and improving the keeping of accounts and the discipline of accountants.

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813- The Audit Bench assisted public authorities²⁸⁶ through the certification of the 2017 General Account of the State produced by the Ministry of Finance, the deliberations of MINFI-Audit Bench Permanent Consultation Framework and the audit of the Audit Bench with regard to the budget support from the African Development Bank (AfDB).

814- Moreover, in 2019, 4 Sessions of the MINFI-Audit Bench Permanent Consultation Framework were organised. The main recommendations from these discussions concern organising seminars for Authorising Officers and Financial Controllers, improving the procedure for notification of decisions and monitoring of Judgements of the Audit Bench, implementing a support pool for accountants and oath taking by Public Accountants.

815- At the behest of the Minister of Economy, Planning and Regional Development, the Audit Bench carried out *the audit of financial flows of the first phase of PAACE* amounting to Euros 180, 000, 000 (CFAF 117, 900, 000, 000) executed through Loan Agreement No. 200200001855 signed on 15 December 2017. This Audit Report was forwarded to the Minister.

4) Assistance and Advice to Parliament

816- During the 2019 Financial year, the Audit Bench submitted its report on the implementation of the 2018 Finance Law with the opinion on the Settlement Bill²⁸⁷ It also organised forums for exchange between the National Assembly and the Senate.

817- The Audit Bench organised 4 forums for exchange with the Budget and Finance Committee of the Senate on 3 July and 12 December 2019 and with the National Assembly on 2 July and 9 November 2019 respectively.

818- During these meetings, discussions centred notably on the presentation of the annual public report for the 2018 Financial Year and on "New

²⁸⁶ The Audit Bench welcomed the promulgation of Decree No. 2019/3186/PM to lay down the framework for the presentation of the State Financial Operations Table (TOFE), Decree No. 2019/3187/PM to lay down the general framework for the presentation of the budget nomenclature of the State and Decree No. 2019/3199/PM to lay down the general framework for the presentation of the State Accounting System on 9 and 11 September 2019 respectively. These Decrees represent major progress in the transposition of CEMAC guidelines.

²⁸⁷ This document was drafted in application of Section 21(1-i) of Law No. 2018/12 of 11 July 2018 relating to fiscal regime of the State and other public entities.

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relations between Parliament and the Audit Bench in compliance with Law No. 2018/11 and Law No. 2018/12 of 11 July 2018". After deliberations, recommendations were made on providing the Audit Bench with sufficient funds for the fulfilment of its new missions, the review of the organic law of the court, the setting up of Regional Audit Courts and internalisation of CEMAC Directive No. 02/11-UEAC-190-CM-22 on the General Regulations of Public Accounting.

§3: Detection Actions

819- In addition to the fight against the financing of terrorism undertaken by the National Financial Investigation Agency (NAFI), the staff in charge of detection²⁸⁸ took part in a workshop²⁸⁹ on the pre-assessment of the Cameroonian mechanism for combating money laundering and terrorism financing organised from 25 to 28 February 2019 in Douala by the Task Force on Money Laundering in Central Africa (GABAC).

820- Furthermore, NAFI received 615 suspicious reports from reporting institutions as against 670 in 2018 and forwarded 65 files to the competent judicial authorities unlike 87 in 2018. The files forwarded particularly concerned offences relating to money laundering, misappropriation of public funds, corruption, swindling, scamming, tax and customs fraud. Regarding the financing of terrorism, NAFI forwarded 38 files to Military Tribunals and other competent authorities compared to 6 in 2018.

§4: Punishment of Perpetrators of acts of Corruption and Misappropriation of Public Property

821- Punishment of perpetrators of acts of corruption and misappropriation of public property included administrative and judicial sanctions.

A: Administrative Sanctions

822- BFDC received and examined files during its diverse sessions. This body rendered decisions, some of which were appealed against. It also forwarded files to other institutions.

²⁸⁸ Staff from public administrations and financial institutions such as NAFI.

²⁸⁹ The objective of the meeting was the mutual assessment of the Cameroonian mechanism for combating money laundering and terrorism financing as well as Proliferation of capital. At the end of the workshop, a questionnaire to be filled by Cameroon was handed out to the Minister of Finance, Chairperson of the deliberations and Government's representative. This is first phase of this process that shall continue in 2020.

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1) Files Received and Examined

823-BFDC received 5 files in 2019 compared to 8 in 2018 and executed disciplinary sanctions against 48 dishonest managers or public agents compared to 34 in 2018 as illustrated in the table below:

Table 5: Comparative Table of files received and examined by the BFDC in 2018 and 2019

CASES	2018	2019
Number of Files received	8	5
Number of referral files	34	48
Number of sessions organised	25	20
Number of cases examined	37	32
Number of decisions rendered and published	51	14

Source: CONSUPE

824- Following the sessions organised and the disciplinary action taken, BFDC passed sanctions against dishonest managers as indicated in the table below:

Table 6: Comparative table of sanctions imposed on dishonest managers by BFDC in 2018 and 2019

Sanctions imposed	2018		2019	
	Deficits	Special fines	Deficits	Special fines
Amount of deficits and special fines	CFAF 8,399 479 523 ²⁹⁰	CFAF 6,500 000 ²⁹¹	CFAF 2,733,911,861 ²⁹²	CFAF 18,400,000 ²⁹³
Persons with deficits	15	26	8	11
Persons subject to special forfeiture	0		1	

Source: CONSUPE

825- In addition, BFDC forwarded 5 files to the Ministry of Justice as complaints on behalf of the State.

²⁹⁰ About 12,823,632. 86 Euros.

²⁹¹ About 9,923. 66 Euros.

²⁹² About 4,173,911. 24Euros.

²⁹³ About 28,091. 60 Euros.

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2) Appeals lodged against BFDC Decisions

826- Administrative courts received and examined 5 appeals for annulment of BFDC decisions and suspension of the effects of same in 2019 compared to 3 in 2018. Thus, among the 6 cases pending before these courts, 2 judgements were rendered in favour of the State and none against it.

B: Judicial Sanctions

827- Punitive measures continued throughout the year under review before the Special Criminal Court (SCC) and ordinary law courts on offences relating to acts of corruption and misappropriation of public property.

1) Increase in Litigation before Specialised Courts

828- The number of cases enlisted for hearing increased from 45 in 2017 to 52 in 2018 and then to 66 in 2019 as presented in the table below:

Table 7: Comparative table of decisions rendered by the SCC in 2017, 2018 and 2019

No. / Year	Number of matters enlisted	Number of judgments delivered	Number of convictions	Number of discharges or acquittals	Number of proceedings discontinued	Amounts recovered
2017	45	18	27	2	4	0
2018	52	18	43	15	1	0
2019	66	19	48 ²⁹⁴	18	6	0

Source: SCC

829- The number of preliminary inquiries increased from 56 in 2017 to 65 in 2018, then dropped to 54 in 2019, decreasing by 11 proceedings compared to 2018. The number of persons who benefited from no-case rulings went from 31 in 2017 to 1 in 2018 and then to 7 in 2019. The table below presents a comparative analysis of rulings rendered by Examining Magistrates of the SCC in 2017, 2018 and 2019.

²⁹⁴ As at 31 December 2019, a total of 351 convicts subject to forfeiture since the creation of the Special Criminal Court.

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Table 8: Summary of Rulings rendered by Examining Magistrates of the SCC in 2017, 2018 and 2019

No. Year	Number of preliminary inquiries initiated	Number of preliminary inquiries completed	Number of persons committed for trial before the SCC	Number of persons who benefited from no-case rulings
2017	56	27	129	31
2018	65	24	40	1
2019	54	27 ²⁹⁵	104	7

Source: SCC

830- Amounts refunded significantly decreased from CFAF 341,634,919²⁹⁶ in 2018 to CFAF 230,561,918²⁹⁷ in 2019, while no amount was recovered like in the previous year as shown in the table below:

Table 9: Comparative table of the Number and Profiles²⁹⁸ of Persons Prosecuted, Amounts required as Claims or Amounts Refunded or Recovered in 2017, 2018 and 2019

No. Year	Number of persons prosecuted		Total Number of persons prosecuted per year	Amounts claimed			Amounts refunded	Amounts Recovered	Cameroonians	Foreigners
	H	F		Fines	Costs	Damages				
2017	210	50	260	CFAF 200,000 ²⁹⁹	CFAF 4,190,978,805 ³⁰⁰	CFAF 8,726,103,507 ³⁰¹	CFAF 1,008,001,278 ³⁰²	0	259	1

²⁹⁵ As at 31 December 2019, a total of 157 no-case rulings had been rendered by Examining Magistrates since 2012.

²⁹⁶ About 521 580. 03 Euros.

²⁹⁷ About 352 002. 93 Euros.

²⁹⁸ Litigants appearing before the SCC are mostly former members of Government, General Managers of public Establishments and Corporations, Administrative Authorities, Mayors and officials of councils, service providers, military staff and civilians, etc... Indeed, all dishonest managers of public funds who are denounced.

²⁹⁹ About 305. 34 Euros.

³⁰⁰ About 6 398 440. 92 Euros.

³⁰¹ About 13 322 295. 43 Euros.

³⁰² About 1 538 933. 25 Euros.

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No.	Number of persons prosecuted		Total Number of persons prosecuted per year	Amounts claimed			Amounts refunded	Amounts Recovered	Cameroonians	Foreigners
	H	F		Fines	Costs	Damages				
Year										
2018	230	46	276	0	CFAF 2,338,006,905.7 ³⁰³	CFAF 46 539 943 904 ³⁰⁴	CFAF 341,634,919 ³⁰⁵	0	275	1
2019	271	69	340	0	765,322 CFAF 157 ³⁰⁶	CFAF 15 193,046 440 ³⁰⁷	CFAF 230,561,918 ³⁰⁸	0	340	0

Source: SCC

831- In addition to uncertainties concerning the notification and continuation of the restitution of allegedly misappropriated funds, the poor recovery of misappropriated funds is due to other challenges relating to forced execution. The latter notably has to do with the limitations of the law on matters of foreclosure of immovable property or accounts of persons prosecuted as well as the fact that most of the SCC judgments can be appealed against before the specialised Bench of the Supreme Court.

832- The SCC received 27 cases in 2019 compared to 16 in 2018 and rendered 12 judgments unlike 13 in 2018. There were no imprisonments and acquittals in 2019 compared with 3 and 2 respectively in 2018. Moreover, as at 31 December 2019, the number of cases was 40 compared to 36 at the same time in 2018. After examining the said appeals, the SCC forwarded 11 files to the Judicial Bench of the Supreme Court due to lack of jurisdiction compared to 13 in 2018 and 11 files addressed to Rapporteurs as against 10 in 2018. Of the 12 judgments rendered

³⁰³ About 3 569 476. 19 Euros.

³⁰⁴ About 71 053 349. 47 Euros.

³⁰⁵ About 521 580. 03 Euros.

³⁰⁶ About 1,168 430.77 Euros. As at 31 December 2019, the amount for fines and legal costs pronounced since 2012 stood at CFAF 9,476,722 885 (about 14,468,279. 21 Euros).

³⁰⁷ About 23,195,490.75 Euros. This takes the total amount for damages ordered by the court since 2012 to CFAF 170,412,752,858 (About 260,172,141.77 Euros).

³⁰⁸ About 352 002.93 Euros. With this amount, the total sum recovered since the functioning of the court in 2012 stood at CFAF 6,470,496,725 (About 9,878,620.95 Euros).

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by this court, one of the matters was referred to the SCC to decide on the civil claims of the North Development and Breeding Fund³⁰⁹.

833- Furthermore, the Inquiry Control Chamber of the Specialised Division of the Supreme Court received 7 appeals against acts taken during preliminary inquiry in 2019 compared to 4 in 2018 and rendered 2 rulings. As at 31 December 2019, 10 proceedings were pending before this chamber compared to 1 in 2018.

834- Regarding cases of misappropriation of public property where the amount is less than CFAF 50,000,000³¹⁰, litigations before the Criminal Section of the Supreme Court slightly decreased from 14 in 2018 to 13 in 2019. The Court rendered 1 decision in 2019 compared to 4 in 2018 (no conviction and 1 acquittal). As at 31 December 2019, 17 cases were pending before this Court compared to 11 in 2018.

2) Decrease in litigation before other Courts

835- In 2019, the number of cases reduced before these courts compared to the previous year. As such, the number of investigations opened decreased from 6,514 in 2018 to 5,020 in 2019 whereas the number of files at the trial phase dropped from 5,473 in 2018 to 4,464 in 2019 as indicated in the table below:

Table 10: Comparative table of Judgments delivered by Ordinary Law Courts in 2018 and 2019

No. Year	Number of investigations opened	Number of files at the level of preliminary inquiry	Number of judgments	Number of convictions	Number of discharges or acquittals
2018	6,514	2,145	5,473	3,845	824
2019	5,020	1,562	4,464	2,630	669
Variations	-1,494	-583	-1,009	-1215	-155

Source: MINJUSTICE

836- Concerning acts of corruption, the number of files recorded before these courts decreased from 21 in 2018 to 20 in 2019, meanwhile the number of preliminary inquiries dropped from 10 in 2018 to 2 in 2019

³⁰⁹ Case the People of Cameroon and Caisse de Développement et de l'Élevage du Nord Vs **AMADOU Nestor** (Judgment No.11/SSP/CS of 22 October 2019).

³¹⁰ About 76,335.88 Euros.

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and files at the trial phase increased from 13 in 2018 to 14 in 2019 as presented in the table below:

Table 11: Comparative table of judgments delivered by ordinary law courts on acts of corruption in 2018 and 2019

No. Year	Number of investigations opened	Number of files at the level of preliminary inquiry	Number of judgments	Number of convictions	Number of discharges or acquittals
2018	21	10	13	11	3
2019	20	02	14	8	1
Variations	-01	-08	+01	-03	-02

Source: MINJUSTICE

837- Concerning the misappropriation of public property, the number of files recorded before these courts went from 137 in 2018 to 135 in 2019 while the number of files for judicial inquiry has increased from 104 in 2018 to 130 in 2019 and those at the trial phase from 92 in 2018 to 94 in 2019 as illustrated in the table below:

Table 12: Comparative table of judgments delivered by ordinary law courts on misappropriation of public property in 2018 and 2019

No. Year	Number of investigations opened	Number of files at the level of preliminary inquiry	Number of judgments	Number of sentences	Number of discharges or acquittals
2018	137	104	92	52	17
2019	135	130	94	52	24
Variations	-02	+26	+02	+00	+07

Source: MINJUSTICE

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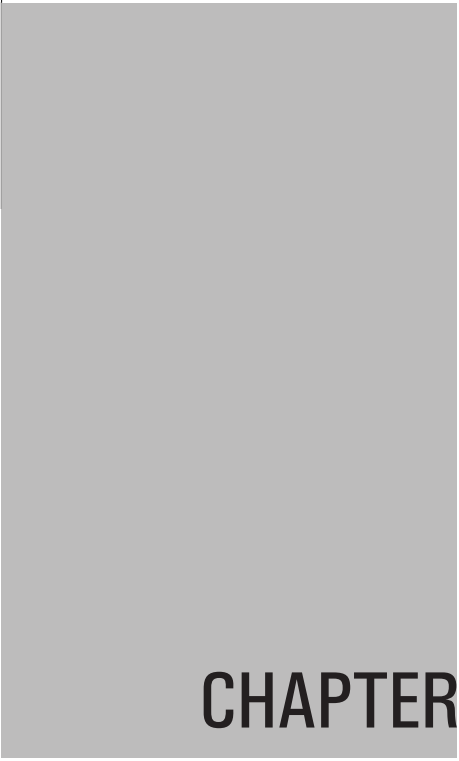
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838- In conclusion, in 2019, Government continued to promote good governance through the pursuit of public/private sector consultation with a view to improving the business climate despite the sluggish economic situation and the cancelation of the 2020 Cameroon Business Forum which would have made it possible to assess the implementation of recommendations adopted in 2019. Furthermore, Government took measures as concern the following: investment incentives, the introduction of new instruments, particularly to improve the performance of public establishments, the competitiveness and profitability of public corporations, in the banking and micro-finance sectors, and the pursuit of reforms in the public contracts sectors. Courts handling criminal matters continued their efforts to punish perpetrators of acts of corruption and misappropriation of public funds despite the poor recovery of embezzled funds and the multifaceted efforts of public authorities to eradicate the phenomenon of corruption, which is considered a social scourge and one of the obstacles to the country's economic growth.



CHAPTER 4
DETENTION
CONDITIONS



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839- In 2019, there were crises in some prisons thus highlighting challenges to be addressed in order to better guarantee the rights of persons deprived of liberty, who exist in significant numbers and diverse categories. Notwithstanding these specific situations, the policy to improve detention conditions was generally geared towards reinforcing prison infrastructure, improving staff working conditions and living conditions of detainees, while preparing the social reintegration of the latter and monitoring prisons through controls and visits.

SECTION 1: MAPPING OF PRISON POPULATION

840- The mapping of prison population made available statistics on the number, the gender and nationality of pretrial detainees and convicts.

§1: Number of Pretrial Detainees and Convicts

841- According to prison statistics as at 31 December 2019, there was still disparity between the number of pretrial detainees and convicts as shown in the table below:

Table 1: Prison Statistics per Region in 2018 and 2019³¹¹

	Year	Adam awa	Centre	East	Far North	Littoral	North	North West	West	South	South West	Total
Intake	2018	1,070	4,270	1,475	1,970	1,550	1,300	1,750	2,720	800	1,010	17,975
Capacity	2019	1,070	4,270	1,475	2,210	1,550	1,300	2,650	2,720	900	1,010	19,155
Awaiting trials	2018	1,307	5,189	1,082	2,291	2,938	1,753	447	1,268	828	1,328	18,435
	2019	1,033	4,769	1,055	1,852	3,261	1,403	447	1,157	643	1,098	16,718
Convicts	2018	1,000	3,068	916	1,514	1,701	1,634	841	1,246	555	909	13,384
	2019	1,056	3,359	952	1,677	1,608	1,609	841	1,394	574	818	13,888
Total per Region	2018	2,307	8,257	1,998	3,805	4,639	3,387	1,288	2,514	1,383	2,237	31,815
	2019	2,089	8,128	2,007	3,529	4,869	3,012	1,288	2,551	1,217	1,916	30,606
Occupan cy rate (%)	2018	215	193	135	193	299	260	73	92	172	221	185.30
	2019	195	190	136	159	314	231	48	93	135	189	159

Source: DAPEN/MINJUSTICE

842- The analyses of this table clearly show that prison intake capacity increased from 17,915 in 2018 to 19,155 in 2019. This increase is as a result of the extension and rehabilitation works, carried out in some prisons, namely Maroua, Bamenda and Ebolowa Central Prisons.

³¹¹ The statistics compiled are those of 31 December of each of the years examined.

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843- The decrease in the number of detainees from 31,815 in 2018 to 30,606 in 2019 may also justify the difference recorded in occupancy rate which dropped from 177% in 2018 to 159% in 2019.

§2: Distribution of Detainees according to Gender and Nationality

844- Female prison population was as follows:

Table 2: Statistics of Female Detainees per Region as at 31 December 2019

No .	Regions	Awaiting trial	Convicts	Total
1	Adamawa	22	10	32
2	Centre	153	106	259
3	East	36	20	56
4	Far North	42	30	72
5	Littoral	68	34	102
6	North	25	14	39
7	North West	20	29	49
8	West	26	20	46
9	South	25	13	38
10	South West	22	11	33
	Total	439	287	726

Source: MINJUSTICE

845- According to this statistics, 726 women were detained as at 31 December 2019, that is 439 awaiting trial and 287 convicts. With 259 women, Centre Region had the highest number of female detainees while Adamawa Region, with 32 women, had the lowest number.

846- The table below comprises statistics on minors in prison.

Table 3: Statistics of Imprisoned Minors per Region as at 31 December 2019

No .	Regions	Awaiting trial	Convicts	Total
1	Adamawa	69	16	85
2	Centre	150	28	178
3	East	98	15	113
4	Far North	82	20	102
5	Littoral	71	3	74
6	North	52	16	68
7	North West	24	18	42
8	West	75	31	106
9	South	26	3	29
10	South West	58	31	89
	Total	705	181	886

Source: MINJUSTICE

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847- Overall, 886 minors were detained, out of which 705 were awaiting trial and 181 were convicts. With 178 minors, the Centre Region had the highest number while with 29 minors, the South Region had the lowest number.

848- Besides nationals, there were also several foreigners detained on various grounds. These imprisoned foreigners continued to have consular protection as observed from the number of consular visits³¹². The table below highlights statistics of foreigners detained in Cameroon.

Table 4: Statistics of foreign detainees per Region as at 31 December 2019

No	Regions	Awaiting trial	Convicts	Total
1	Adamawa	76	93	169
2	Centre	84	29	113
3	East	98	101	199
4	Far North	287	95	382
5	Littoral	33	39	72
6	North	116	180	296
7	North West	5	1	6
8	West	3	5	8
9	South	41	6	47
10	South West	79	79	158
	Total	822	628	1450

Source: MINJUSTICE

849-The highest number of foreign detainees was in the Far North Region, that is, 382 foreigners while the North West Region had the lowest number, which is 6 foreigners. These imprisoned foreigners come from African and Western countries. The majority are citizens of Nigeria, Chad, Central African Republic and Sudan in prisons in the North and East of the country while the other prisons mainly have citizens from Senegal, Mali, Rwanda, Gabon and Congo.

³¹² Douala Central Prison is an example. Foreign detainees regularly have visitors from their consulates.

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850- Among detainees from western countries are Germans (1), French (2), Spanish (2) and Indians (6). Generally, Consular representations of the countries of origin of these foreign detainees are informed that their citizens are in prison.

851- Indeed, Cameroon had 30,606 detainees for a prison intake capacity of 19,155 places in the 76 functional prisons of the country³¹³ that is an occupancy rate of 159%.

852- Prison overcrowding remained a reality that is handled not only by improving infrastructure but also by paying special attention to the efficiency of the principle of freedom and exploring alternative measures to imprisonment.

SECTION 2: CONSTRUCTION AND REHABILITATION OF PRISONS

853- Some infrastructure was constructed and existing ones rehabilitated.

854- Regarding infrastructure construction, it is important to mention continuation of construction works in the Douala Ngoma Central Prison with completion rate at 70%, the construction of 2 infirmaries in the Monatele Main Prison and the Djoum Secondary Prison respectively.

855- Moreover, a fence was constructed at the Mbalmayo Main Prison while water tanks and boreholes were constructed in the Mbanga, Batouri and Monatele prisons respectively.

856- Rehabilitation works were also carried out on buildings in the Yaounde Central Prison, the Mbouda, Tchollire, Yaounde and Yokadouma Main Prisons as well as the Doukoula Secondary Prison.

857- Furthermore, the expansion of the National School of Penitentiary Administration was launched.

³¹³ Only Bengbis Secondary Prison went operational between 2018 and 2019. However, it is important to indicate that due to the crisis in the North West and South West Regions as well as in the northern Regions (Boko-Haram), some prisons were rendered inoperative such as the Fundong Main Prison and Bavenga and Bali Secondary Prisons. In the Far North, Meri Main Prison was also rendered inoperative since March 2019 and converted into a disarmament and social reintegration centre for ex- Boko Haram fighters thus bringing the number of functional prisons in Cameroon to 76.

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SECTION 3: IMPROVING STAFF WORKING CONDITIONS

858- Several actions taken helped improve the working conditions of Penitentiary Administration staff.

§1: Stable Staff Numbers

859- The number of staff remained relatively stable. From 4,674 in 2018 to 4,536 in 2019, the change was due in particular to retirements (126) and deaths (12) as illustrated in the table below:

Table 5: Number of Penitentiary Administration Staff in 2019

Grade	Number	Percentage
Aps ³¹⁴	204	04.49%
IPs ³¹⁵	378	08.33%
GCPs ³¹⁶	724	15.96%
GP ³¹⁷	3211	70.79%
Civilians	19	0.42%
Total	4536	

Source: MINJUSTICE

860- The staff/detainee ratio was 1:7. The staff of categories A and B (Prison Administrators and Prison Superintendents) essentially occupy positions of responsibility, only staff of categories C and D (Chief Prison Warders and Prison Warders) are charged with executive tasks which brings the ratio to 1: 8 detainees.

861- Moreover, 344 staff had specialised skills as shown in the table below:

³¹⁴ Prison Administrators.

³¹⁵ Prison Superintendents.

³¹⁶ Chief Prison Warders.

³¹⁷ Prison Warders.

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Table 6: Specialised Penitentiary Staff

No.	SPECIALISED FIELDS	NUMBER
1	Medical Doctors	23
2	State Registered Nurses	66
3	Nursing Aide	148
4	Psychopathologists	1
5	Veterinary Doctors	2
6	Computer Experts	4
7	Agronomy Engineers	2
8	Civil Engineers	2
9	Medico-Sanitary Technicians	36
10	Sports and Physical Education Staff	13
11	Social Welfare Assistants recruited by the Ministry of Justice	5
12	Staff of the Ministry of Social Affairs	15
13	Agriculture Technicians	10
14	Animal Husbandry Technicians	10
15	Drivers	7
TOTAL		344

Source: MINJUSTICE

§2: Capacity Building of Staff

862- The Ministry of Justice in collaboration with its partners organised seminars on diverse topics, which helped to build the capacities of Penitentiary Administration Staff. Moreover, they also received donations in clothing.

A: Capacity Building Seminars

863- The skills of some Penitentiary Administration staff were enhanced during various Human Rights training seminars organised by the Ministry of Justice in collaboration with the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF). In this light, 29 Penitentiary Administration staff were trained on several Human Rights aspects during 11 workshops.

B: Donations in Clothing

864- Penitentiary Administration staff were offered 4,750 riot gear, 1,500 pairs of combat boots, 1,400 belts, 1,000 berets and 1,000 pocket badges.

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§3: Disciplinary Sanctions against Unscrupulous Staff

865- Disciplinary sanctions pending possible legal proceedings were imposed on 50 Penitentiary Administration staff for unauthorised absences from work or negligence leading to detainees' escape from prison.

866- In addition, disciplinary or judicial proceedings were initiated against some other Penitentiary Administration staff as part of the fight against torture in prison as presented in the table below:

Table 7: Staff Subject to Disciplinary and/or Judicial Proceedings as part of the Fight against Torture in Prison

Name and Surname	Grade	Grounds	Location	Sanctions	Remarks
K.S	IPs	Inhuman treatment of a detainee	Edea PP	Blame with record in the file	In the process of rehabilitation
E.M.S	GCPs	Irregular release of detainees, illegal trafficking of drugs and inhuman treatment of a detainee	Ntui PP	Blame with record in the file	In the process of rehabilitation
M.D.M	GMPs	Inhuman treatment of a recaptured escapee	Ndikinimeki PP	detention	Released
M.A	GPs	Inhuman treatment of a recaptured escapee	Ndikinimeki PP	detention	Released
D.R	GPs	Inhuman treatment of a detainee	Ndikinimeki PP	detention	Released
N.F	GPs	Inhuman treatment of a detainee	Ngoumou PP	detention	Deceased
M.B.W.M	GPs	Inhuman treatment of a detainee	Ngoumou PP	detention	Still in detention

Source: MINJUSTICE

867- To avoid these misconducts, during control missions carried out in 18 prisons across the country, the Inspectorate General of Penitentiary Administration distributed to staff therein, a document on the use of force by penitentiary staff. The distribution of this document was envisaged in other prisons.

§4: Fight against corruption in Prison

868- During the year under review, the Inspectorate General of Penitentiary Administration pursued its missions to raise awareness on the dangers of corruption in prison. In this vein, during controls carried out, the

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Inspectorate continued to emphasise that service in prisons is free of charge by posting notices relating thereto or providing detainees with a number through which they can report corrupt practices of which they are victims.

869- Besides this awareness-raising, during controls by the Inspectorate General of Penitentiary Administration, staff found to be involved in corrupt practices were sanctioned. These include Prison Warder **N.A** for extorting money from a detainee in the Sa'a Prison, Chief Prison Warder **M.M.J.C** who swindled a detainee in the Ntui Prison, Prison Superintendent **T.T.E.P** for extortion in the Mantoum Prison. In addition to disciplinary sanctions, judicial proceedings were instituted against some of them.

SECTION 4: IMPROVING LIVING CONDITIONS AND PREPARING SOCIAL REINTEGRATION OF DETAINEES

870- Public authorities made efforts to improve the living conditions of detainees and prepare their social reintegration by organising social reintegration activities.

§1: Improving the Living Conditions of Detainees

871- The focus here was the provision of food, health coverage, water, energy and transportation for detainees.

A: Feeding of Prisoners

872- The budget allocated for feeding in 2019 stood at CFAF 4,470,000,000³¹⁸, that is a daily ration of CFAF 371³¹⁹ per prisoner for an average number of 33,000 prisoners compared to CFAF 408 in 2018. To overcome challenges relating to quality and quantity, even cooking of food, authorities in some prisons developed good practices, which involved joint purchase of foodstuff giving preference to local products for variety and upgrading cooking equipment. Furthermore, the difficulty to have firewood led prison authorities to develop partnerships with local authorities of the Ministry of Forestry and Wildlife or some sawmills to provide wood offcuts especially given that various biogas systems put in place within the framework of the PACDET II project failed and remained inoperative.

³¹⁸ About 6,824,427.48Euros This amount remained stable compared to 2018.

³¹⁹ About 0.57 Euro.

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B: Health Coverage

873- The budget for health coverage was CFAF 1,050,000,000³²⁰ that is CFA 31,818³²¹ per prisoner per year for an average of 33,000 prisoners. The number of medico-penitentiary staff remained relatively stable compared to 2018, that is 251 staff³²² for a staff / prisoner ratio of 1:112. The new infirmary in the Maroua Central Prison constructed in collaboration with ICRC went operational in 2019.

874- In all, 65,901 routine consultations were carried out. Due to poorly equipped prison health units, 1,455 cases were referred for external consultation which led to 377 cases of external hospitalisations, even to cases of evacuation abroad and some 170 deaths recorded³²³.

875- An analysis of the health situation of prisoners showed that there were communicable diseases, mental illnesses and drug addiction.

876- Communicable diseases included HIV/AIDS and tuberculosis.

877- For **HIV/AIDS**, out of 15,463 prisoners tested in 2019, among whom 7,161 were screened at the time of imprisonment; there were 449 new positive cases, giving a proportion of 2.90% of cases tested. In 2019, out of 7,364 HIV positive detainees, there were 3 pregnant women, 142 cases of co-infections HIV/TB and 28 deaths.

878- Concerning **tuberculosis**, out of 7,523 suspected cases, 461 tested positive (6.12%) including 36 cases of relapse and receiving treatment anew, 9 detainees released during treatment and 12 deaths. A cumulative number of 2,356 tuberculosis patients. However, there was a disruption in the supply of HIV/AIDS and tuberculosis test kits in the second quarter of 2019, owing to financial difficulties of partners.

³²⁰ About 1,603,053.44 Euros.

³²¹ About 48.58 Euros.

³²² Among the 274 medical and penitentiary staff registered in 2018, 9 retired, 2 became state registered Nurses, 1 Social Welfare Assistant; 2 Medical doctors are on UN mission and 5 others are undergoing specialisation.

³²³ Out of which 28 due to HIV, 12 to tuberculosis, 79 unspecified medical ailments, 15 acute septicaemia, 8 complicated lung diseases, 7 cardiac arrests, 5 heart failures, 4 gastroenteritis, 3 cases of severe anaemia, 2 liver disease, 2 cases of severe malnutrition, 2 epilepsy crises, 2 multiple traumas, 2 electrocutions, 2 haemorrhagic or hypovolemic shocks, 2 food poisonings and 1 chlorine poisoning, 1 hanging, 1 kidney failure, 2 haemoptyses, 1 osteitis.

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879- Regarding **mental illnesses**, information on 25,220 prisoners revealed that 223 (0.88%) of them suffered various mental disorders. Among these 223 patients, 153 were old cases while 70 were new cases. According to gender, there were 8 women and 215 men, thus a ratio of 27 men to 1 woman. Only 89 patients out of the 223 were followed up.

880- With respect to **drug addiction**, 7 609 detainees consumed drugs such as cigarettes (3 422), tramadol (1,456), ethanol (352), D10 (147), methamphetamine (113) that is, a proportion of 30.17%.

881- In addition, there were 20 cases of pregnant **female detainees**, 3 cases of delivery and 57 babies with their mothers in prison in 2019 mainly in the Far North Region.

882- To **prevent illnesses**, 879 persons including detainees, staff and their families, babies with their mothers in prison and pregnant women were vaccinated in the North and Far North Regions: 659 against cholera, 209 against meningitis while 10 Oral Polio Vaccines (VPO) and 1 Anti Tetanus Vaccine (VAT) were administered.

C: Water, Energy and Transportation of Inmates

883- To handle challenges relating to access to water and energy, significant investments were carried out. Thus, water supply points were developed such as boreholes in the Monatele and Yabassi Prisons and in the Yaounde Central Prison.

884- To tackle power outages, some prisons were provided with generators and dilapidated electrical circuits were replaced in others.

885- There were no or insufficient vehicles in some Prisons to transport inmates to courts or hospitals, given that Penitentiary Administration did not purchase any rolling stock in 2019.

§2: Social Reintegration Activities

886- Production and education activities help in preparing detainees for social reintegration.

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A: Production Activities

887- To promote production activities in some prisons, a pigsty and a poultry house were constructed in the Yabassi and the Nkongsamba Prisons respectively. Moreover, inmates carried out agriculture, small craft, weaving, basket weaving and jewellery making. Others were taught tailoring, computing and computer maintenance.

B: Education

888- In most prisons, infrastructure is developed to ensure education of inmates. Candidates who wrote official examinations had the following successful results: 1 technical *Baccalauréat, motor mechanics* option in the Bafoussam Prison and 10 *CEP* in the Garoua Central Prison.

SECTION 5: CONTROLS AND VISITS OF PRISONS

889- Judicial and administrative controls were carried out in prisons while visits from the National Commission on Human Rights and Freedoms (NCHRF) and the Department of Human Rights and International Cooperation (DDHCI) of the Ministry of Justice were noted.

§1: Judicial Controls

890- Judicial controls were carried out by the Legal Departments of Courts in prisons under their territorial jurisdiction. The aim of these controls is to verify that detention conditions comply with relevant standards.

§2: Administrative Controls

891- The General Inspectorate of Penitentiary Administration of the Ministry of Justice carried out controls in 18 prisons. These controls were an occasion to distribute the Guide on the use of force, which was prepared by this Service for Penitentiary Administration staff. During such controls, cases of corruption as indicated above, and cases of inhuman treatment of inmates were observed and corrective measures were prescribed immediately pending judicial proceedings.

§3: Visits by the National Commission on Human Rights and Freedoms

892- The NCHRF visited 15 Prisons and 36 Gendarmerie Brigades and Police Stations in 6 Regions across the country namely Adamawa, North,

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Far North, Littoral, North West and Centre. These visits aimed to identify cases of Human Rights violations, investigate the rights to life of inmates, visit cells in police custody units, follow-up the case of some prisoners. It also aimed at discussing with some imprisoned political party activists such as those of the Cameroon Renaissance Movement (CRM) arrested during the January 2019 demonstrations and investigating the right to health of inmates **ZOGO ANDELA** and **NTI BENGALA Jonathan**.

893- Following these visits, 2 women³²⁴ held in the Garoua Central Prison were released, **NTI BENGALA Jonathan** was temporary released from the Yaounde Central Prison for health reasons and several irregularities in Public Security Police Stations of Sa'a and Eseka were identified.

§4: Visits by the Department of Human Rights and International Cooperation

894- As part of drafting the Report of the Ministry of Justice on Human Rights in Cameroon in 2019, delegations from the DDHCI of the Ministry of Justice carried out field visits to Central Prisons and some Principal prisons in 8 Regions of the country.

895- These visits, which aimed to evaluate the respect of Human Rights in prisons served to highlight challenges in improving detention conditions and good practices.

SECTION 6: CRISES MANAGEMENT IN SOME PRISONS

896- In 2019, there were protests in some prisons. These include the Yaounde and Buea Central Prisons. Government adopted a number of measures to deal with the situation and respond to concerns raised.

§1: Protests

897- On 22 July 2019, in the Yaounde Central Prison, a group of detainees remanded in the context of the security crisis in the North West and South West Regions claimed they had grievances to present to State authorities. They began a mutiny despite being urged by competent prison authorities to calm down and dialogue. These protesters, alongside other inmates asking to be released took upon themselves to stir panic within the prison in order to provoke a massive escape of inmates.

³²⁴ After serving their prison term, they remained imprisoned in default of payment of fine.

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898- The Forces of Law and Order who intervened were able to reduce the scope of damages caused by this protest using modern deterrent tools only.

899- Entire services were destroyed and others burnt with material damages evaluated at several tens of millions of CFA francs. As a result, 2 inmates were wounded but there was no loss in human life. Thereafter, 244 inmates were arrested.

900- The same *modus operandi* was observed as regards demonstrations that occurred at the Buea Central Prison on 23 July 2019. The Forces of Law and Order deployed to restore calm and discipline, were able to limit the extent of damages. There was no loss in human life. Out of 45 persons wounded, there were 2 members of the Forces of Law and Order and 43 inmates. About 20 were immediately taken care of at the prison infirmary while one was taken to a Health Centre in Buea given his condition.

901- Moreover, proceedings were initiated against 20 protesters identified as the leaders.

902- The causes of this mutiny include, prison overcrowding, judicial delays, long remands in custody, promiscuity, dilapidated and inadequate prison infrastructure.

§2: Measures Adopted

903- In the short run, persons involved in the mutiny were brought before the courts. Some were sentenced to 1 to 5 years in prison while proceedings against others were discontinued. In addition, it was requested that ongoing legal proceedings be fast-tracked.

904- Furthermore, in a bid to reduce overcrowding in the Yaounde Central Prison, some convicts were transferred to the Douala, Bafoussam and Maroua Central Prisons.

905- The budgets for food and health care were increased. Moreover, a special allocation was provided by the Presidency of the Republic for rehabilitation, extension and equipment of prisons. This allocation of CFAF 2,166,049,169³²⁵ was added to the CFAF 55,081,575³²⁶ made avail-

³²⁵ About 3,306,945.29 Euros.

³²⁶ About 84,094 Euros.

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able for urgent repair and rehabilitation of doors and grids of the Yaounde Central Prison.

906- Other measures were taken for a return to normalcy of work at the Yaounde Central Prison. These include reinforcing staff numbers and screening tools, carrying out unannounced and targeted search operations that facilitated, among other things, the seizure of 343 mobile telephones, followed by the arrest of 2 Penitentiary Administration staff caught red-handed providing mobile telephones and packs of cigarettes in prison. They were handed over to judicial authorities and provisional disciplinary measures taken against them.

907- Furthermore, it was recommended to Procureurs General and Presidents of Courts of Appeal of competent jurisdictions to guarantee the respect for legal provisions on custody and to take measures to fight judicial delays.

908- In addition, speeding up the construction of new prisons to increase intake capacity was envisaged as a priority measure.

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909- The State once more reaffirmed the willingness to improve detention conditions in Cameroon. Thus, efforts were made as concerns prison infrastructure with the increase in intake capacity of prisons, improvement of living conditions of inmates notably in terms of feeding, education, health care and working conditions of penitentiary staff. Similarly, the fight against impunity justified the application of disciplinary sanctions against staff for abuses, without excluding legal proceedings.

910- However, protests in some prisons revealed existing challenges, particularly prison overcrowding owing to, inter alia, judicial delays, dilapidation of some prisons as well as insufficient staff.

CHAPTER 5

PROMOTION AND PROTECTION OF SOCIALY VULNERABLE PERSONS



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911- In line with the sustainable development goals aimed at leaving no one behind, the Government and its partners continued to take measures to promote and protect the rights of socially vulnerable persons³²⁷ through the development of specific public policies or inclusion of different aspects of vulnerability in such policies, strengthen institutions that cater for these persons as well as improved the capacity of stakeholders involved their protection.

SECTION I: PROMOTION AND PROTECTION OF CHILDREN'S RIGHTS

912- Protection measures, including enhancing civil rights and freedoms, protecting children against crimes and protecting children victims of or associated with armed groups were some actions among others taken for the promotion and protection of children's rights in 2019.

§1: Civil Rights and Freedoms

913- Measures were taken to guarantee access to citizenship, participation in decision making as well as guaranteeing alternative care for children in 2019.

A: Right to Citizenship

914- Low birth registration continued to be a concern for the Government due to lack of understanding by some parents of the necessity for children to have birth certificates or lack of knowledge on the process of birth registration. Furthermore, the fact that some Civil Status Registries³²⁸ are not functional contributes to low birth registration.

915- It was within this backdrop that the Government through the National Civil Status Registration Office (BUNEC) in the context of implementing the activities of the *Cameroon Civil Status System Improvement Project for Active Citizenship (PASECA)* in 2019 carried out a series of training workshops and awareness raising campaigns for relevant stakeholders, including BUNEC staff, health workers, civil status registrars and secretaries of civ-

³²⁷ Socially vulnerable persons include children, persons with disabilities, older persons and indigenous peoples.

³²⁸ Example : out of 381 Civil Status Registries in the West Region, 351 are functional and 30 non-functional.

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il status registries, and Civil Society Organizations (CSO) in all the 10 Regions. A total of 133 civil status stakeholders and 62 CSOs were trained giving a rate of 89.86% and 93.93% respectively. The objective was to develop the capacities of all stakeholders concerned with civil status registration especially birth registration.

916- Furthermore, as per Circular Letter No.D36-56/LC/MIN-SANTE/SG/DAJC of 2 November 2019 relating to the declaration of births and deaths, the Minister of Public Health reminded authorities of Public and Private Health facilities of the obligation to declare all births and deaths.

917- Some initiatives were taken to establish birth certificates for children free of charge in collaboration with partners. This includes 11,407 birth certificates in the Far North and 3,302 in Betare-Oya in the East Region by BUNEC with the support of UNICEF. Also, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees in January 2019, handed 1,200 birth certificates to the Governor of the Far North Region for onward transmission to the Regional Office of BUNEC for distribution to children of examination class, CM2 (class 6).

918- In addition, low birth registration made the Junior Parliamentarians of the Far North Region in collaboration with MINAS and UNICEF to carry out a campaign from 10 to 23 October 2020 to raise awareness of their peers in the towns of Maroua, Yagoua and Mokolo on the need for children to have birth certificates. Despite efforts by Government and development partners, more than 40,000 children in the Far North Region of class 6 did not write their final year examination because they did not have birth certificates during the 2018/2019 academic year.

919- As part of the Pilot Project to Combat Child Labour in Cocoa Production Communities, the NGO ASSEJA and its partner SIC CA-CAOS/Barry Callebaut, between October and December 2019, identified 128 children without birth certificates in the districts of Tonga (Nde Division), Mbangassina and Ntui (Mbam and Kim Division) and Monatélé (Lekié Division) and initiated the process of reconstituting their birth certificates.

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B: Participation in Decision Making

920- Government through MINAS organised the 21st Session of the Children's Parliament through which the rights of children to participate in decisions on matters concerning them are promoted. In the course of the session, drug consumption and other psychotropic substances taken by children were discussed. The Junior Parliamentarians questioned Government Ministers especially the Minister of External Relations on measures taken to promote and protect the rights of refugee children.

921- In addition, the 29th Edition of the Day of the African Child was celebrated on 16 June 2019 under the theme "*Humanitarian Action in Africa: Children's Rights First*". MINAS with the support of partners like UNICEF, Plan International Cameroon, CSOs and other stakeholders involved in child protection carried out activities to raise awareness on children's rights nationwide, especially at a Child Protection Village set up at the courtyard of the Yaounde IV Council in the context of the celebration. Also, a delegation of Cameroon made up of MINAS and 2 Junior Parliamentarians took part in festivities organised in New York in December 2019 to mark the 30th Anniversary of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.

C: Alternative Care: Adoption and Guardianship

922- In 2019, the courts continued to take into account the best interest of the child in applications relating to alternative care and sometimes sought the consent of the child in granting the said applications.

923- The High Court Vina³²⁹ in granting an application of a French national resident in Ngaoundere to adopt a child aged 14 to whose mother he was married, sought the adoptee's consent.

924- Furthermore, the High Court of Mifi³³⁰ in Bafoussam granted the custody of a 7 year old child to the father (genitor). The Court said the best interest of the child in terms of care and education can be guaranteed by the father rather than the grand parent³³¹ of the child.

³²⁹ Judgment No.39/CIV of 12 November 2019 of the High Court Vina.

³³⁰ Judgment No.40/civ of 16 July 2019 of the High Court of Mifi.

³³¹ The child was living with the parents of his mother.

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925- Besides, about 144 applications for adoption by nationals and 13 by foreigners were granted by some courts³³². Furthermore, about 116 judgments for guardianship were delivered in favour of nationals and one in favour of a foreigner.

§3: Protection of Children against Crimes

926- The courts continued to prosecute offenders of crimes against children such as capital murder, assault occasioning grievous harm, murder, rape, unintentional killing, assault occasioning death, harm, grievous harm and indecency to child under 16 and those found guilty were punished. Trends from some courts³³³ indicated that about 666 children (253 boys and 413 girls) were victims of crimes.

927- Concerning kidnapping, in Judgment³³⁴ No.45/CRIM of 21 March 2019, the accused who stood trial for kidnapping of a child and aggravated kidnapping of a person under 13 years was sentenced to a 5 year imprisonment term. Similarly, in Judgment³³⁵ No.27/CRIM of 20/02/2019, the accused charged of kidnapping by force or fraud of a 2 year old boy with the intent to obtain a ransom from the parents of the said child was sentenced to 2 years imprisonment.

928- With regard to trafficking and smuggling of persons, the Diamare High Court³³⁶ sentenced the accused for contravening the provisions of sections 74, 96, 342-1(2)(a) of the Penal Code by causing the movement of 2 children (9 and 11 years) from Kousseri to the border with Tchad to meet an unknown person. The court sentenced the accused to a 3 year in prison

929- Furthermore, some courts in 2019 protected minor offenders by applying sections 701 and 702 of the Criminal Procedure Code. Thus in a

³³² With the exception of courts in the South West Region, High Courts and Courts of First Instance of Kumbo and Ndop, Far North Court of Appeal, TPGI Mora, TPGI Kaele, TPGI Kousseri, TPGI Mokolo et TPGI Yagoua.

³³³ With the exception of courts in the South West Region, High Courts and Courts of First Instance of Kumbo and Ndop, Far North Court of Appeal, TPGI Mora, TPGI Kaele, TPGI Kousseri, TPGI Mokolo et TPGI Yagoua.

³³⁴ Tribunal de Grande Instance du Diamare.

³³⁵ Tribunal de Grande Instance de la Benoue.

³³⁶ Judgment No. 214/CRIM of 24 October 2019.

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case involving a minor, the Examining Magistrate³³⁷ ordered his placement in a welfare Centre³³⁸ for 7 months (18 February 2019 to 19 August 2019). In addition, 81 children were placed in public institutions³³⁹, in 2019 with 16 of them by the courts, 57 by administrative order and 8 temporary placements.

§4: Special Protection Measures

930-Capacity development, curbing the phenomenon of street children and protection of children victims of or associated with armed groups were some special measures taken in 2019.

A: Capacity Development

931- Government and partners through seminars and workshops continued to develop the capacity of stakeholders involved in child protection or the administration of juvenile justice in 2019.

932- UNICEF in collaboration with MINAS organized a seminar on the assessment and strengthening of the child protection system in Cameroon from 27 February to 1 March 2019 in Ebolowa with the participation of CSOs and NGOs. The 48 participants from diverse fields agreed on 8 pillars necessary for a veritable child protection system in Cameroon among which the strengthening of Government commitment and capacity to guarantee the protection of children's rights, the adoption and application of adequate legislation on child protection and enhancing the competence, knowledge and participation of children.

933- The Child Protection Programme for the Government-UNICEF Co-operation from 2018 to 2020 was also discussed during the said Seminar. The Programme aims to protect children especially girls in vulnerable regions against violence, exploitation and harmful practices. The Programme also has as objective strengthening Government and community child protection systems in order to identify and combat the violation of children's rights among others.

³³⁷ Littoral Court of Appeal, File No.01/INF/MIN/19.

³³⁸ *Centre d'Accueil de Bépenda, Douala.*

³³⁹ *Institution Camerounaise de l'Enfance de Bétamba (18), Institution Camerounaise de l'Enfance de Maroua (13), Centre d'Accueil, d'Observation et de Rééducation pour Mineur de Bepanda (32), Centre d'Accueil, d'Observation de Bafoussam (5), Centre d'Accueil des Mineurs de Bertoua (11) and Borsal Institute Buea (2).*

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934- ASSEJA with its partner SIC CACAOS/Barry Callebaut raised awareness on child labour in the cocoa production chain, and set up child protection committees in 23 villages in the cocoa zones of the Centre and West Regions. Prior to awareness-raising and the establishment of the committees, regional workshops were held in Ntui, Mbangassina, Monatéfé, Tonga, and a national workshop in Yaounde, in which key stakeholders in the fight against child labour took part. These workshops enabled a better understanding of the phenomenon of child labour and the adoption of an effective strategy to combat same.

935- As regards juvenile justice, MINJUSTICE with the support of UNICEF organised a series of capacity development workshops for stakeholders concerned with the juvenile justice system in 2019, that is, Legal and Judicial Officers, Lawyers, Social Workers, Defence and Security Forces and Staff of Penitential Administration. For instance, a capacity development workshop on juvenile justice for stakeholders in the East Region took place in Bertoua from 24 to 29 March 2019. A similar workshop for stakeholders in the Far North Region took place in Kousséri on the protection of rights of children affected by armed conflicts from 16 to 22 September 2019.

B: Curbing the Phenomenon of Street Children

936- The phenomenon of street children continued to be a preoccupation. Focus was on identification and retrieving of these children from the streets, their socioeconomic integration and returning them to their families.

937- With regard to identification, 365 new street children were concerned in the towns of Bafoussam, Buea, Douala, Ngaoundere and Yaounde. Among them, 181 were retrieved and returned to their families or were placed in specialized institutions.

938- Concerning socioeconomic integration, 90 street children either benefited directly or indirectly from productive resources through the financing of 52 socioeconomic projects within the framework of the Support Programme for the Professional Integration and Reintegration of Vulnerable Persons (PAIRPPEV).

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939- In addition, 3,405 children³⁴⁰ in the East and Far North Regions benefited from holistic care from MINAS and 10,405 internally displaced children were identified by the Technical Operational Units of MINAS and given psychosocial care in the Centre, West and Littoral Regions, 539 of whom were admitted in schools.

940- Furthermore, the First Session of the National Commission for Juvenile Delinquents, Abandoned Children or those in Moral Danger was held on 30 July 2019. During the Session, it was recommended among others that councils should be involved in the fight against the phenomenon of abandoned children, public air spaces should be developed to occupy children and there should be continuous raising of public awareness on the phenomenon of Juvenile Delinquents, Abandoned Children or those in Moral Danger.

C: Protection of Children Victims of or Associated with Armed Groups

941- The incessant attacks from *Boko Haram* in the northern part of the country led to a number of children being victims or suspected to be associated with the said armed group. Thus 234 children who were suspected of association with *Boko Haram* were reintegrated into their families and their communities while 305 separated and unaccompanied children (149 girls and 196 boys) benefited from alternative care and 24 unaccompanied children (11 girls and 13 boys) were reunited with their families. In a nutshell, about 23,052 children in this conflict area benefited from psychosocial support from MINAS.

SECTION 2: PROMOTION AND PROTECTION OF THE RIGHTS OF PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

942- The institutional framework of persons with disabilities was strengthened, and participation in the management of public affairs, inclusive education and participation in cultural activities enhanced.

³⁴⁰ These children were neither refugees nor internally displaced.

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§1: Institutional Framework

943- The institutional framework for promoting and protecting the rights of persons with disabilities was strengthened by Decree No.2019/145 of 20 March 2019 organising the *Cardinal Paul Emile LEGER National Centre for Rehabilitation of Persons with Disabilities (NCRPD)*. The modernised and rehabilitated Centre was upgraded into a Public Administrative Establishment and included in the 2020 finance budget. The Centre has as mission to implement Government policy on rehabilitation and reconversion of persons with disabilities as well as taking psychosocial and medical care, training and socio-professional reconversion of persons with disabilities among others.

944- In addition, the Government through MINAS signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the NGO, Sightsavers on 28 June 2019. The MOU obliges both parties to provide institutional support to organizations of persons with disabilities. MINAS and Sightsavers also have to ensure that all concerns of persons with disabilities are effectively taken into account in policies, programmes and projects in Cameroon.

§2: Education and Socioeconomic Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities

945- Challenges relating to guaranteeing inclusive education, preventing social ills in schools and providing psychosocial support to children with disabilities were discussed in a 2 day Workshop organised by MINAS and MINESEC on 8 October 2019 in Yaounde to assess social action in the school milieu. The Workshop helped to develop the capacity of 150 stakeholders³⁴¹ in the Education sector.

946- Inclusion at the level of education was also strengthened in some institutions such as Government High School Bafoussam where a Resource Centre for visually impaired students was handed over to the authorities on 2 May 2019. The Centre was constructed by the Cameroon Baptist Convention Health Services (CBCHS) in collaboration with Liliane Fonds which made a direct investment of CFAF10,000,000³⁴² on equip-

³⁴¹ Social workers, Counselors and Inspectors of Teacher Training Colleges.

³⁴² About 15,267.18 Euros.

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ment³⁴³ and CFAF3,800,000³⁴⁴ for training of teachers and other staff of the Centre. In addition, MINAS worked for the admission in schools of about 1,844 children with disabilities or born of parents with disabilities or from needy families.

947- Moreover, the CBCHS organised a one day Symposium on 25 September 2019 in Yaounde on the theme: *The Abuse of Children: From Awareness to Action*, aimed at sharing findings of a research conducted in the North West Region from 2016 to 2018 on abuse of children especially children with disabilities. The findings indicated that these abuses occurred at home, schools and in communities and varied from one location to another depending on the risk factors. The research proposed as a way forward, a multi-faceted approach to sensitization, that is, a multi-dimensional strategy to be used to carry out continuous sensitization on the rights of children with disabilities at home, in schools and in communities among others.

948- Besides, the Session of the National Committee for the Rehabilitation and Socio-economic Reintegration of Persons with Disabilities (CON-RHA) took place on 7 August 2019 under the theme *the issue of including persons with disabilities in the development process*, during which a Policy Document for Persons with Disabilities and a Plan of Action (2017-2021) was finalised.

§3: Participation in the Management of Public Affairs

949- Government continued to demonstrate its policy to promote the participation of persons with disabilities in the management of public affairs with the appointment of Mr. **DOUGLAS A. ACHINGALE**, a person with a disability, as Deputy General Manager³⁴⁵ of the NCRPD.

950- Also, a 2 day International Colloquium to discuss the integration of persons with disabilities in the society was organised by the Research Centre of *Institut des Politiques et Initiatives Sociales* (IPIS) on 29 April 2019 at the Catholic University of Central Africa in Yaounde. Participants drawn from universities, MINAS and other stakeholders involved in social sec-

³⁴³ A bus for transportation, Braille machine, free internet connection and computers.

³⁴⁴ About 5,801.53 Euros.

³⁴⁵ He was appointed by Decree No.2019/379 of 16 July 2019.

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tor worked on the theme: *Disabilities, Societies and Territories*. Participants also discussed other political and social challenges faced by this category of persons.

§4: Participation in Cultural Activities

951-The 28th Edition of the International Day of Persons with Disabilities was commemorated in Cameroon on 3 December 2019 under the theme *“Promoting the participation of persons with disabilities and their leadership: taking action on the 2030 Development Agenda”*. Persons with disabilities used the occasion to show their prowess in designing clothes, shoes and bags with local materials, craft-works, painting and sporting activities at the NCRPD in Yaounde.

952- Besides, persons with disabilities took part in activities to launch the 11th Edition of the National Physical Education Day on 5 December 2019 at the NCRPD on the theme: *The practice of physical education: A major assert for social cohesion*. The 2019 Edition was particular as it focused on persons with disabilities.

953- Moreover, within the framework of the celebration of the 2nd International Day of Sign Languages, under the theme *access to sign language in education and public services: stakes, challenges and perspectives*, the Cameroon Deaf Development Organization (CDDO) organised the first National Symposium on Sign Language from 23 to 24 September 2019 in Yaounde. The Symposium focused on the difficulties the deaf face in the area of education, transportation and security, health, culture, media, communication and justice. Proposed solutions included the upgrading of sign language to the same level like English and French in the education sector from primary school to university.

SECTION 3: PROMOTION AND PROTECTION OF THE RIGHTS OF OLDER PERSONS

954- The rights of older persons were strengthened in 2019 through raising the awareness of the public, giving medical care to older persons, the organisation of cultural activities and support to income generating activities for the said group of persons.

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955- Stigmatization, isolation and abandonment of older persons have become some social ills. It is against this backdrop that MINAS carried out a 4 day campaign at the esplanade of the Yaounde IV Council to inform and educate the public on specific measures for the promotion and protection of older persons in prelude to the celebration of the 29th Edition of the International Day of Older Persons on 1 October 2019 under the theme *“The Journey to Age Equality”*

956- With regard to the health of older persons, MINAS in partnership with the Charity Sisters of Simbock in Yaounde organised an ophthalmology campaign for older persons in prelude to the celebration. Older persons equally participated in Cultural and sporting festivities before and during the celebration on 1 October 2019. Meanwhile, officials of MINAS sensitised the public on the need to respect older persons.

957- Concerning socioeconomic reconversion of older persons, material and financial support was given to them to create income generating activities in 2019.

SECTION 4: PROMOTION AND PROTECTION OF THE RIGHTS OF INDIGENOUS PEOPLES

958- Government continued to strengthen institutions implementing programmes and projects for the promotion and protection of the rights of indigenous peoples in 2019. Access to land and cultural rights were also improved.

§1: Strengthening Institutions

959- The Intersectoral Committee to Follow up Programmes and Projects involving Indigenous Peoples (CISPAV) met at its 6th Session on 5 August 2019 to evaluate and assess all strategies set up by Government for the social inclusion of indigenous peoples. During the Session, the Technical and Financial Partners of MINAS involved in the implementation of interventions for the benefit of these categories of peoples presented their balance sheet. For instance, as concerns the balance sheet of the National Community Driven Programme for Development (PNDP), within the

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framework of implementing the 3rd phase³⁴⁶ of the Indigenous People (Pygmy) Development Plan (PDPP) in 2019, 1,345 birth certificates and 128 national identity cards were established, 3,887 pygmy children were in primary schools and 615 in secondary schools, 1,736 children were provided school supplies, 242 traditional midwives trained, 2,630 pygmies attended health centres, 59 community health relay workers were trained and 488 agricultural areas were developed.

§2: Access to Land

960- Due to difficulties faced by indigenous peoples on accessing land and natural resources especially in forest reserves, Government, financial partners and indigenous peoples association signed a series of Agreements to promote and protect the rights of this vulnerable group and also organized capacity development workshops on land rights.

961- MINAS and the World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF) on 10 April 2019, signed a Partnership Agreement related to the promotion and protection of the rights of indigenous peoples in the conservation of biodiversity in Cameroon. WWF agreed to protect the rights of indigenous peoples on biodiversity programmes and to finance the economic aspect of the Partnership Agreement entirely. In the same vein, the Ministry of Forestry and Wild Life signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the *Association Sanguia Baka Buma'a Kpode*³⁴⁷ on 26 February 2019 in Bertoua. The MOU will enable these indigenous peoples to have access to land, increase their standard of living, hunting rights, harvesting of fruits and performance of ancestral rites.

962- In addition, Cameroon Network of Human Rights Organizations (RECODH) organised a Workshop for 40 Indigenous Peoples Land Rights Defenders from 1 to 2 October 2019 in Yaounde. The said Workshop was organised within the framework of monitoring the “*Empowering Indigenous Land Rights Defenders to prevent Climate Change*” Project (2019 to 2021) which RECODH is executing with Minority Rights Groups International. The Project is aimed at strengthening local capacities of 100

³⁴⁶ 2016-2019, with components on citizenship, education, health and agriculture

³⁴⁷ The Association consist of inhabitants living in Boumba-Bek, Lobeke and part of Nki forest reserves in the East Region.

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Indigenous Peoples Land Rights Defenders with key national, regional and international land rights mechanisms and to increase the number of cases of violation of the right to access land brought before the courts and non-judicial institutions.

§3: Cultural Rights and Development

963- During the celebration on 9 August 2019 of the 25th Edition of the International Day of the World's Indigenous People under the theme "*Languages and development of Indigenous peoples*", MINAS organised in Yaounde, a National Colloquium on the Development of Indigenous Peoples in Cameroon. Government, financial and technical partners presented their different strategic plans on the development of Indigenous Peoples on the field and their perspectives. The Colloquium recommended among others that studies to determine indigenous peoples in Cameroon should continue, a national plan of action for the development of indigenous peoples be drafted with focus on health, education, access to land and valorisation of their culture, and that mechanisms for information on the development of the said peoples be strengthened.

964- Besides, Mbororo Social and Cultural Development Association (MBOSCUDA) executed 2 projects in the North West Region aimed at raising the awareness of and developing the capacity of the Mbororos and local communities on cultural diversity, as well as enhancing the capacity of Indigenous Mbororo Women's Resilience to climate change.

965- MBOSCUDA in collaboration with MINPROFF and MINJEC carried out 3 awareness raising and capacity development workshops for leaders of youth associations, dialogue platforms³⁴⁸ and diverse women's groups on cultural diversity. From 25 to 27 July and 3 August 2019, some 80 participants from the North West Region benefited from these trainings organised in Bamenda.

966- Developing Indigenous Women's resilience to climate change through climate-smart agriculture and energy-efficient fireplaces was one of the projects successfully executed in 2019 in the North West Region. Some 45

³⁴⁸ Dialogue Platforms are essentially a mechanism for resolving farmer-grazer conflict in the North West Region.

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Mbororo women benefited from a sheep rearing training and pasture improvement in Bambui, Bambili, Bamunka and Awing in June 2019. At the end of the training 180 sheep were distributed among the trainees. Between the months of September and December 2019, 150 Mbororo women received training on the use of efficient energy fireplaces in the same villages in addition to Ntabang, Akum, Alating, Baba II, Sabga and Jolakiti at the end of which 150 constructed energy efficient fireplaces were handed to the women. Equally, 40 Mbororo women were trained between the months of March and October 2019 on gardening and given technical materials to establish in the same localities.

967- In addition, the linguistic situation of indigenous peoples which is at the verge of extinction was discussed in a Workshop on 7 August 2019 organised by Réseau Recherches Actions Concertées Pygmées to share the results of a study carried out in 22 villages of indigenous peoples in the East and South Regions. The Workshop also aimed at sharing lessons learned and to initiate discussions on the means and strategies to end the possible extinction of the languages of the said Peoples. It was thus recommended among others that indigenous peoples should be recruited as assessors and interpreters in courts where they are located.

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968- In 2019, Government strengthened the legal and institutional framework of child protection and persons with disabilities, signed a MOU to ensure that all concerns of persons with disabilities are effectively taken into account in policies, programmes and projects, and developed the capacity of stakeholders concerned with the protection and promotion of the rights of socially vulnerable persons. However, the rights of older persons remained a challenge as many continue living under poor conditions.



CHAPTER 6
**PROMOTION AND
PROTECTION OF
WOMEN'S RIGHTS**



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969- In a context of security crises, the national policy on the promotion and protection of women's rights aimed at improving the condition of the woman was supported by various legal instruments³⁴⁹. Its main drivers were mainstreaming women's rights in public policies, combating violence against women and girls, promoting women's empowerment as well as protecting rights within the family.

SECTION 1: WOMEN AT THE CENTRE OF PUBLIC POLICIES

970- Women were taken into account in public policies relating to salient concerns of the reference year, whether in the area of crisis resolution with the implementation of the Plan of Action of Resolution 1325 and related Resolutions humanitarian interventions or women's participation in the management of public affairs

§1: Women in Conflict Resolution and Return to Peace: Implementation of Resolution 1325 and Related Resolutions

971- In addition to the awareness raising activities³⁵⁰ and in the pursuit of the implementation³⁵¹ of UN Resolution 1325 of the Security Council Resolutions and its related Resolutions, women took part in conflict resolution and peace-building initiatives.

972- Women were thus able to make proposals at the Major National Dialogue held from 30 September to 4 October 2019. They played a leading role in many commissions, either as chairpersons³⁵² or vice-chairpersons³⁵³, Rapporteurs or resource persons. Beyond the institutional participation, women also made concrete contributions during the consultation that preceded the holding of the Major National Dialogue³⁵⁴.

³⁴⁹ These are the CEDAW, the Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa, the Beijing Platform for Action adopted at the 4th World Conference on Women held in Beijing in 1995 and its Plan of Action, the African Union Agenda 2063, the Sustainable Development Goals (SDO No. 5). At the national level, the National Gender Policy Document and the Multisector Plan for its implementation are the main planning tools in this area.

³⁵⁰ Popularisation of Resolution 1325 and related resolutions among association leaders reached approximately 2,000,000 people in 2019.

³⁵¹ A Technical Secretariat with an Office and staff was established to monitor implementation.

³⁵² Mrs **Dorothy NJEUMA LIMUNGA** was appointed to head Commission No. 2 on the Education System.

³⁵³ Mrs **Emilia NKEZE** and Mrs **Fadimatou IYAWA** were appointed Vice-Presidents of the Dialogue Bureau.

³⁵⁴ This is the case with *Women's International League for Peace and Freedom*, which organised consultations with women, with a view to collecting their contributions for the Major National Dialogue. These contributions were recorded in a memorandum entitled "Voices of Cameroonian Women in the National Dialogue".

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673- With regard to private initiatives, various campaigns³⁵⁵, advocacy sessions³⁵⁶, ecumenical prayers, public exhortations and even lamentations characterized women's call for return to peace. For example, hundreds of women gathered on 15 October 2019 at Presbyterian Church Buea Town under the leadership of Cameroon Women's Peace Movement (CAWOPEM) to raise their voices and pray for a return to normalcy in the North West and South West Regions. Mrs **Leymah GBOWEE**, the 2011 Nobel Peace Prize Winner, in charge of the peace movement *Women of Liberia Mass Action for Peace* gave further impetus to women to mobilise for peace, during her stay in Cameroon in April 2019.

974- In addition, about 500 women were trained on mediation and peace building, that is, 50 women per association, whereas 70 leaders from women's organisations were drilled on the involvement of women in the peace process and violence during conflicts.

975- As part of the implementation of the above-mentioned Resolution 1325 Plan of Action, 150 heads of women's organisations acquired better knowledge on management of violence in conflict situations, mediation and conflict resolution.

976- With a view to supporting this crucial role of women in conflict prevention and peacemaking process, a training manual for women as mediators for peace and social cohesion was drawn up and made public by Government.

§2: Gender Mainstreaming in Humanitarian Response

977- New tools were mobilised during the implementation of humanitarian response plans, in particular the Humanitarian Emergency Plan for the North West and South West Regions to effectively take into account the gender aspect. The tools include, inter alia, the Gender Handbook in Hu-

³⁵⁵ By way of illustration, mention can be made of "Mother for Peace" platform launched on 24 June 2019 in Yaounde by a group of several women's associations in Cameroon in collaboration with the United Nations System, with the aim of leading a campaign calling on women to promote peace and non-violence. The first phase consisted of an ecumenical mass held on 23 June in the South-West Region.

³⁵⁶ On 19 April, leaders of women's organisations handed over a Declaration for Peace to the Governor of the North-West Region for the attention of Government, so that their point of view should be taken into account in the search for solutions to the crisis in the North West and South West Regions.

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manitarian Action and the Inter-Agency Standing Committee Gender with Age Marker. Focal Points (43) and humanitarian actors (102) were trained to use these tools. As regards needs, it is really important to harmonise the care of humanitarian actors in the field and specify activities depending on the missions of each humanitarian actor.

§3: Women's Participation in the Management of Public Affairs

978- In preparation for the 2020 elections, women's political education continued through awareness raising campaigns, training for women leaders as well as advocacy with decision-makers. Therefore, a national Workshop organised in Yaounde on November 2019, under the leadership of More Women in Politics informed hundreds of women of the conditions and characteristics of a candidacy file through an Electoral Assistance Clinic for potential female candidates in the 9 February 2020 parliamentary and municipal elections. In addition, 10 stakeholder platforms on gender and political participation were set up in the 10 Regions and 100 women candidates and political party leaders were trained on the electoral process, electoral law and the importance of women's participation in political decision-making positions.

979- Women were appointed to positions of responsibility both nationally and internationally. They were also appointed as traditional authorities.

980- At the national level, 123 notables were appointed in 9 lamidats and sultanates in the 3 northern regions³⁵⁷. This openness to women's leadership in patriarchally dominated communities contribute to the gradual achievement of gender equality and is a driver for combating gender biases.

981- In the public sphere, the number of female Ministers was maintained at 11 when constituting Government on 4 January 2019. Mrs **Célestine KETCHA COURTES** was appointed to head of the Ministry of Housing and Urban Development and Mrs **ASHERI KILO** was appointed Secretary of State to the Minister of Basic Education. These two women joined the Government. Regarding public Administration and especially in terri-

³⁵⁷ Chiefdoms concerned are Banyo, Demsa, Mokolo, Guider, Djerem, Ngaoundere, Tignere Lamibes as well as Kousseri and Logone Birni sultanates.

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torial administration the number of female Senior Divisional Officers³⁵⁸ remains 2 whereas that of female Divisional Officers increased from 13 to 20 with Decree No. 2019/537 of 7 October 2019. The number of women holding posts of Directors and those ranking as such increased from 2 to 4 in MINEDUB, thanks to the appointment of 2 women at the Department of Human Resources and Examinations, Competitive Examinations and Certification Department. In the Defence sector, Mrs **Seraphine ISSOVA SONO**, Navy Commander, was promoted as Commander of the 11th Marine Rifle Battalion in Limbe. In the managerial sector, Mrs **Andrée Caroline MEBANDE BATE**, agro-economist Engineer was appointed Director General of the National Centre for Study and Experimentation of Agricultural Machinery (CENEEMA).

982- As a tool for assessing women's empowerment in public affairs, the 3rd edition of the 2019 Gender Ranking in Public Administrations showed qualitative and quantitative progress in women's involvement in decision-making, particularly in the public and para-public sector, as shown in the table below:

Year	Public Administration	Para-public Institutions	National Assembly	Senate	Reference
2017	2336 women/9943 that is 23.48%	859 women/2743 that is 31.31%	56 women/180 that is 31.11%	21 women/100 that is 21%	2017 Gender Ranking
2019	2497 women/8393 that is 29.75%	1442 women/4328 that is 33.31%	56 women/180 that is 31.11%	26 women/100 that is 26%	2019 Gender Ranking

MINPROFF: 2019 Gender Ranking

983- At the international level, Mrs **Vera SONGWE**, a Cameroonian Economist and First woman to become Executive Secretary of the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa after her appointment in 2017 was received by the highest national authorities during a visit to Cameroon in April 2019. Mrs **Hermine KEMBO TAKAM GATSING**, Legal Officer, was elected on 8 February 2019 as Member of the African Committee of Experts on the Rights and Welfare of the Child (ACERWC) for a five-

³⁵⁸ Mrs **Antoinette ZONGO née NYAMBONE** was transferred from Koung-Khi Division to Mefou and Akono Division while Mrs **Rachel NGAZANG épouse AKONO** was transferred from Mvila Division to Kadey Division.

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year term. Illustrations above show the willingness to remove obstacles to the improvement of women's conditions, including violence.

SECTION 2: MEASURES TO RESPOND TO VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN AND GIRLS

984- Violence against women and girls was worsened by various crises in the country. The scale of violence led the government to take measures on prevention, repression and care for victims

§1: Type and Extent of Violence recorded against Women in 2019

985- Despite efforts made by public authorities, violence against women persisted. Women living in crisis areas were particularly affected.

986- As regards crisis areas, a new form of violence against women by *Boko Haram* followers emerged. During the night of 29 July to 30 July 2019 in Kangaleri in the Far North Region, women who were abducted during an attack by this terrorist group, were held hostage and later released with one ear each sliced as a warning.

987- In the North West and South West Regions, the most emblematic case of this violence is that of Mrs **Florence AYAFOR** mentioned above³⁵⁹.

§2: Prevention of Violence against Women

988- Based on the National Strategy to combat violence against women, raising awareness against this scourge is the main pillar of prevention, especially as part of the commemoration of the Days dedicated thereto. There was awareness-raising for a total of 16,165 people (refugees, internally displaced persons and members of host communities) on gender-based violence (GBV) including 11,237 women and girls, (7,937 women and 3,300 girls) and 4,928 men and boys (2,684 men and 2,244 boys).

989- Among the commemorations, mention can be made of the celebration of the International Day of *Zero Tolerance for Female Genital Mutilation* on 6 February 2019, which was an opportunity to raise awareness through a press briefing by the Minister of Women's Empowerment and the Fam-

³⁵⁹ See the Chapter on right to peace, security and living together §715.

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ily, the celebration of the 35th edition of the *International Women's Day* on 8 March 2019 under the theme *Crusade against gender inequalities: align with the new impetus*; the organisation of the 13th edition of the campaign *16 days of Activism against gender violence* under the theme *Orange the world, equality generation is opposed to rape*³⁶⁰.

990- In addition, 170 leaders of adolescent groups and clubs were trained on life skills for the prevention of violence, child marriage and risky behaviour. A multisector national action plan for the abandonment of child marriage was developed and adopted. Some 38 women leaders were trained on mitigating the risks of gender-based violence, and a security audit was conducted combined with the mapping of vulnerability risks in the context of GBV.

§3: Punishment of Perpetrators of Violence against Women and Girls

991- Further to the training of judicial stakeholders, in relation to repression, investigations were carried out and offenders were prosecuted before the Courts and sentenced.

992- As part of capacity building, 57 Gendarmes and Police Officers, including 50 women and 7 men, were trained on the protection of women and girls against GBV and humanitarian principles, while 500 security personnel, including 250 Police Officers and 250 Gendarmes, were trained in the North West and South West Regions.

993- The following cases are illustrative: the First class Soldier **M. Arthur**³⁶¹ was sentenced to 7 years in prison by the Bamenda Military Tribunal for rape committed during the crisis in the North West Region; Mr. **T. Armand Bernini** was sentenced to 10 years in prison³⁶², increased on appeal to 20 years by the Littoral Court of Appeal³⁶³, for the murder (physical violence) of his girlfriend **KAMGA KAPCHE Inès**.

³⁶⁰ The ceremony held in Yaounde enabled a victim to testify on violence she was subject to.

³⁶¹ Case reported in the Report of the Ministry of Justice on Human Rights in Cameroon in 2018, §1117.

³⁶² Wouri High Court, Judgment No. 145/CRIM of 28 March 2018.

³⁶³ Judgment 57/CRIM of 11 November 2019; the decision was appealed against to the Supreme Court by the accused.

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994- In total, statistics collected from courts³⁶⁴ show that 224 investigation reports were drawn up for acts qualified as rape involving 78 victims, resulting in 163 decisions and 105 convictions. Regarding acts of indecency to minors under 16 years of age followed by rape or sexual intercourse, 533 reports were drawn up and 280 persons convicted for 328 victims.

§4: Multisector Care for Survivors

995- In addition to punishment, which is part of the legal aspect of care for survivors of violence, medical and psycho-social care was particularly highlighted.

996- At the medical level, a GBV subgroup was set up at the Ministry of Public Health to coordinate the health care of survivors.

997- Specifically in crisis Regions, 18 safe spaces/refuges were set up³⁶⁵ in Bamenda, Buea and Maroua to accommodate families. A total of 583 people were received in these spaces. A total of 1,150 women were received in Call Centers and Genders Desks set up at police stations in Adamawa, East and Far North Regions. In addition, 4,000 displaced women/girls and families who survived GBV were provided with economic kits to meet their basic needs. In total, 1,000 survivors received holistic assistance (psychosocial and legal support as well as medical referrals).

998- In order to ensure efficient and coordinated care, 15 Judicial and Legal Officers (11 men and 4 women), 6 Lawyers (3 men and 3 women), 15 Social Workers (9 women and 6 men) and 25 staff (15 women and 10 men) of MINPROFF and MINJEC were trained to care for survivors in a humanitarian context, which care can also include their empowerment.

SECTION 3: PROMOTION OF WOMEN'S ECONOMIC RIGHTS

999- Actions on economic empowerment focused on moving women from the informal to the formal sector through training for employment, as well as the development of women's entrepreneurship.

³⁶⁴ These statistics were collected within the jurisdiction of the Adamawa, East, Far North (Maroua Court of First Instance and Maroua Diamare High Court only), West, Centre and South (excluding Kribi, Bengbis and Djoum).

³⁶⁵ The Safe Space/Refuge is a temporary reception/accommodation structure for women and children in crisis/distress situations or victim of gender-based violence, whose aim is to facilitate and support social reintegration and guarantee psychosocial well-being in a humanitarian context through socio-educational, psychosocial and recreational activities organised in collaboration with community structures in a safe environment.

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§1: Promotion of Training for Women's Empowerment

1000- Centres for the Empowerment of Women and the Family (CPFF) in Soa, Mvengue, Ngoura and Yaounde 6, Mbanga, Bamenda I, Kribi, and Bipindi were equipped, while those in Muyuka, Tokombere, and Pette were secured, and those in Edea, Yaounde 4, and Fundong were rehabilitated. In the 100 functional CPFF out of the 109 planned, 4,360 women and girls were trained with the support of 582 staff.

1001- A *second-generation education project* for capacity building of refugee girls and girls from host communities developed in the CPFF of Bertoua, Mokolo, Mora, and the refugee camps of Minawao and Ngam was ongoing. Approximately 10,348 people benefited from this project in 2019 in the agriculture, livestock and petty trade sectors.

1002- In addition, 40 trainers in menstrual hygiene management were trained with a view to equipping women so that they do not abandon their activities during these periods.

1003- As part of ISESCO/BADEA's Technical Assistance Programme for women and girls in sewing, embroidery and management, 50 women were trained and received machines to enable them start up thus contributing to the development of women's entrepreneurship.

§2: Development of Women's Entrepreneurship

1004- In order to move women from the informal to the formal sector, 27,486 girls and women were equipped to set up and manage income-generating activities (IGAs). A training manual on IGAs was developed and 533 women were trained to use it.

1005- Furthermore, 58 groups of women received training and support in agro-pastoral equipment, and 301 groups of women were supported in setting up IGAs. Improved stoves and solar lamps were provided to 2,000 women to reduce the risks of vulnerability relating to firewood collection, while 4,000 women/girls and displaced families, survivors of GBV were supported with economic kits to meet their basic needs

1006-The search for equal rights for women in the family was also a priority.

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SECTION 4: PROMOTION AND PROTECTION OF WOMEN'S RIGHTS IN THE FAMILY

1007- Promotion and protection of the rights of the family took into account the interest of women in marriage and in the event of termination of marriage.

§1: Family Promotion and Protection

1008- Promotion and protection of the family involves preventing dysfunctions within families and securing unions.

A: Preventing Conflicts within the Family

1009- During the year under review, 57,611 people, alone or with their families, compared with 62,976 the previous year, benefited from educational talks on the fight against marital, family and domestic violence. Furthermore, aid and assistance was provided to 2,938 needy persons and destitute families.

B: Securing Unions

1010- With a view to promoting legalised unions at the expense of non-marital relationships, MINPROF supported the collective celebration of 2,507 marriages in 2019 against 2,773 in 2018. This reduction in the number of marriages is due to the success of public awareness campaigns against common-law relationship.

§2: Protecting Women's Interests during Marriage

1011- As noted in previous reports, some judges applied the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) in lieu of discriminatory provisions of national laws regarding the administration of joint property. However, some decisions applying these national laws were recorded, such as Judgment No. 214/COM of 16 May 2019 and No. 282/COM of 4 July 2019, in which the provisions of Section 1421 of the Civil Code were applied to refuse to cancel mortgages on joint property entered into by the husband without the consent of his wife.

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§3: Protecting Women's Interests in Case of Termination of Marriage

1012- The termination of marriage by divorce or death poses various challenges regarding the property rights of the divorced woman or widow.

A: The Case of the Divorced Woman

1013- The trend observed in some courts indicates either an ex officio pronouncement by the Judge of the liquidation of property as a consequence of the dissolution of the matrimonial bond³⁶⁶, or a higher proportion of requests for liquidation of property made by women³⁶⁷. In addition, a trend was observed in some courts in the country, where women requested the liquidation of joint property in the event of divorce, reflecting the impact of the various awareness campaigns organised around women's access to justice in defense of their rights.

B: The Case of Widows

1014- Widows are increasingly seeking liquidation and sharing of joint property in the event of the husband's death. By Decision No. 689/CIV of 8 July 2019, **Mrs LEDOM HAMO Veronique**, widow of **Mr FOMO Dieudonne** benefited from the liquidation and sharing of joint property although she had no children with her deceased husband, for the children left by the deceased were entitled to succeed only the share of their father's property.

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³⁶⁶ See Case reported in the Report of the Ministry of Justice on Human Rights in Cameroon in 2018

³⁶⁷ See for example Wouri HC, Judgment No. 406/Civ of 6 May 2019; Judgment No. 416/Civ of 10 May 2019; Judgment No. 449/Civ of 17 May 2019; Judgment No. 458/Civ of 13 April 2019; Judgment No. 970/Civ of 27 September 2019; Judgment No. 800/Civ of 9 August 2019; Judgment No. 448/Civ of 17 May 2019; Judgment No. 747/Civ of 26 July 2019; Sanaga-Maritime HC, Judgment No. 15/Civ/ TGI/19 of 17 April 2019.

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1015- The situation of women in Cameroon continued to improve, due to the combined effect of Government strategies and actions supported by its partners, particularly with regard to efforts to integrate women into conflict resolution and the management of public affairs. However, violence remains a considerable impediment to women's development, a situation worsened by multiple crises. Besides, the fight against violence needs to be improved.



CHAPTER 7

PROTECTION OF THE
RIGHTS OF PERSONS
UNDER INVOLUNTARY
DISPLACEMENT



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1016- In 2019, the lingering socio-political crisis in the Central African Republic, continuous attacks perpetrated by the *Boko Haram* terrorist group and the instability prevailing in the North West and South West Regions of Cameroon caused forced displacements in and out of the national territory. Considering these humanitarian challenges, the management of refugees and asylum seekers continued, with a focus on voluntary repatriation, as well as the preservation of the rights of internally displaced persons.

SECTION 1: PURSUING THE MANAGEMENT OF REFUGEES AND ASYLUM SEEKERS

1017- As in the past, actions undertaken by public authorities, with the support of partners resulted in maintaining hospitality and offering a multifaceted support to refugees and asylum seekers.

§1: Maintaining Hospitality towards Refugees and Asylum Seekers

1018- Efforts to restore calm in neighbouring countries³⁶⁸, reduced the flow of people entering Cameroon. In 2018, in line with its membership in the Global Compact on Refugees, Cameroon continued to welcome new people. Similarly, there were voluntary returns.

A: Statistics on Refugees and Asylum Seekers

1019- In 2019, there were 406, 277³⁶⁹ refugees in Cameroon as against 417,374 in 2018³⁷⁰. The Central African Republic nationals were in greater number, with 292,787 people as against 233,716 in 2018, followed by Nigerians, the number of which dropped from 138, 315 in 2018 to 108.714 in 2019. Thus, Cameroon ranks among the top 15 countries with the largest number of refugees. Refugees make up 2% of the population of Cameroon, 58% of whom are under the age of 18.

1020- There were 9,948 asylum seekers in 2019 as against 8,196 in 2018.

³⁶⁸ Nigeria and the Central African Republic.

³⁶⁹ They were from the Central African Republic, Nigeria, Chad (1,604 persons), DRC (518), Rwanda (334), Sudan (98), Côte d'Ivoire (70), Burundi (69), Congo (54), and other countries (116).

³⁷⁰ The drop can be explained by the number of voluntary returns recorded.

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B: Receiving and Settling Refugees and Asylum Seekers

1021- New comers were received, registered and settled in equipped camps or in communities. Most refugees from Nigeria lived in the Far North Region with 61,897 in the Minawao camp (that is 33,121 women and 28,776 men in 16,346 households). In the surrounding villages, there were 49,817 refugees (24,992 women and 24,825 men with 59% being minors) in the Divisions of Logone-and-Chari (33,952 people/10,046 households), Mayo-Sava (8,221 people/2,753 households), Mayo-Tsanaga (4,538 people/1,273 households) and Diamare (106 people/25 households).

1022- Refugees from the Central African Republic lived in developed sites or in communities in the East, Adamawa and North Regions as well as in urban areas.

1023- A total of 78,299 refugees could be found in developed sites in villages: 112,118 in Borgop, 6,707 in Ngam, 1,226 in Ngarisingo, 15,512 in Lolo, 13,200 in Mbile, 6,967 in Timangolo and 25,569 in Gado Badzere. In the communities, there were 193,260 people, including 44,489 in the Adamawa Region (Djerem, Faro-and-Deo, Mbere, Vina), 124,028 in the East Region (Haut-Nyong, Kadei, Lom-and-Djerem) and 24,743 in the North Region (Benoue and Mayo-Rey).

1024- As in the past, asylum seekers lived in urban areas especially in Douala and Yaounde.

C: Successful Completion of the Voluntary Repatriation Process

1025- The first spontaneous returns of refugees from the Central African Republic and Nigeria to their countries were made in accordance with the Tripartite Agreements signed on 2 March 2017 between the Governments of Cameroon and Nigeria and the UNHCR on the one hand, and the Governments of Cameroon and the Central African Republic and UNHCR on 29 June 2019 on the other hand. Pursuant to this, on 22 August 2019, the return of a first contingent of Nigerian refugees (135 voluntary returnees) since 2013 took place. These refugees from the *Adamawa State in Nigeria* were progressively taken care of until their full repatriation.

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1026- On 23 October 2019, the first contingent of Central African Republic refugees (410 persons) left Cameroon. As at 19 December 2019, a total of 3,309 refugees from the Central African Republic were supported as part of voluntary repatriation, out of an initial target of 4,000 for the reference year. They came from the sites of Lolo (1,039 people), Kentzou (299), Mbile (493), Gado (399), Ngam (370), Timangolo (348) and Borgop (156).

§2: Multi-faceted Care of Refugees and Asylum Seekers

1027- Within the framework of the Emergency Response Plan and the Multi-Year Multi-partner strategy for the 2018-2020 period, Cameroon, in partnership with UNHCR, identified several opportunities to promote protection and global solutions for refugees. Thus, actions carried out covered the institutional framework for refugee protection, their access to basic social services and their empowerment.

A: Progress in Refugee Protection

1028- With regard to registration and determination of refugee status, a Memorandum of Understanding on the sharing of personal data was signed on 7 March 2019, between the MINREX and the UNHCR. Furthermore, an Order was signed on 7 August 2019 establishing the Refugee Eligibility and Appeals Commission following the appointment of members of the said commissions who later took oath on 24 October 2019. Moreover, despite the difficulties relating to the availability of financial resources, activities of the Technical Secretariat of the Eligibility Commission continued with the study of 1,055 cases submitted concerning 1,840 persons. Of these cases, 914 concerning 1,604 persons were heard at first instance, of which 96 cases of 159 individuals were dismissed. Out of the 30 cases of 53 individuals brought before the Appeals Commission, 15 cases concerning 24 individuals were dismissed.

1029- Furthermore, no case of refoulement by the Cameroonian authorities was reported despite the cumbersome procedures for issuing refugee cards and travel documents.

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B: Access to Basic Social Services

1030- Access to basic social services³⁷¹ included health, education and food.

1) Promotion of the Health of Refugees

1031- Alongside the continuation of Government's actions to implement the Agreement signed in August 2016³⁷² between UNHCR and MIN-SANTE and activities geared towards combating cholera and measles epidemics affecting the North and the Far North Regions, the National Aids Control Committee, within the framework of the sub-project HIV/OVG³⁷³, carried out training and awareness-raising activities aimed at changing refugees' behaviour as far as HIV, tuberculosis and Malaria are concerned.

1032- As concern management of social emergencies, MINAS with the support of UNICEF, drafted a psychosocial care guide in emergency situation which enabled various social stakeholders to draw inspiration from and master related approaches and methods of intervention.

2) Training of Stakeholders

1033- Training concerned firstly peer educator trainers working in refugee camps, and secondly the training of refugee peer educators of the 9 targeted camps, including 6 in the East Region, 2 in the Adamawa Region and one in the Far North Region. Thus, training was carried out in 2 hubs, with the first in Bertoua where 14 focal points from 8 camps³⁷⁴ in the East and Adamawa Regions were trained and the second in Moko-lo where 6 focal points from the Minawao camp were trained.

1034- Those who were trained in turn trained refugee peer educator in their respective camps, in English in the Minawao camp and in local lan-

³⁷¹ There is a MINAS/UNHCR triennial plan of action (2018-2020) relating to access to social services by refugees, internally displaced persons and vulnerable host populations.

³⁷² Through this Agreement, Government committed itself to bear 30% of health costs for refugees of the Adamawa, East, Far North and North Regions and the UNHCR committed itself to cover the remaining 70%.

³⁷³ OVG means Other Vulnerable Groups.

³⁷⁴ The camps of Gado, Tihomo, Lolo, Mbile, Garisingo et Timangolo in the East Region and the camps of Ngam and Borgop in the Adamawa Region.

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guages or in French in the other camps. The aim was to equip these camps with peer educator who can raise awareness, motivate fellow refugees to be tested for HIV and adopt behaviours likely to reduce the risk of malaria, tuberculosis and HIV. In all, 20 peer educator trainers working with refugees were trained, as against 106 peer educator who are refugees.

3) Raising Awareness through Educational Talks and Distribution of Material

1035- In 2019, each peer educator actively working in refugee camps carried out an average of 2 sessions of Educational Talks (ET) per month on HIV/TBT/malaria prevention, that is, an average annual attendance rate of 3 sessions of ET per refugee for a total of 19,156 ET. In the end, the number³⁷⁵ of refugees who attended ET, disaggregated by gender, region and attendance rate was 36,140 in the Adamawa Region, 46,853 in the Far North Region and 332,447 in the East Region.

4) Education of Refugees

1036- Efforts made by public authorities to improve education offer had an impact on the education of refugee children.

1037- Actions to ease access to education for refugee children continued. These included free education, distribution of teaching and learning materials, awareness-raising and mobilisation of refugee parents and children on the importance of education, training of Teachers and the provision of teaching staff and equipped educational facilities. For instance, with a view to increase the number of schools in the East and Adamawa Regions, 22 new schools were built for refugees. Similarly, while continuing to implement the new curricula, copies of the said documents were published in French and English and forwarded³⁷⁶ for free distribution in government and private schools of the Adamawa Region (900 for nursery schools and 4,100 for primary schools), Far North Region (700 for nursery schools and 11,300 for primary schools) and East Region (1,000 for nursery schools and 4,500 for primary schools).

³⁷⁵ The number of refugees who took part in ET in the 3 Regions corresponds to the total of monthly data collected in the registers of peer educators during the 12 months. It is not the total number of persons whose awareness was raised in camps in 2019.

³⁷⁶ The partitioning was done in accordance with ministerial correspondence No.A/426/L/MINEDUB/IGE of 9 October 2019.

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1038- In addition, the use of radio to convey knowledge to children with a minimum of 3 years of schooling continued especially in the Far North Region, as well as accelerated education programmes developed and included in curricula since 2019³⁷⁷. Likewise, education components in emergency situations were included in the initial training programmes of Teachers of primary and nursery school levels to equip them to deal with emergency situations that require the attention of educational system.

1039- Schools built in and out of the camps or in Temporary Learning and Child Protection Spaces, received a large number of children, some of whom participated in official examinations as illustrated in the table below.

Table 1: Number of Refugee Pupils in 2019-2020

No.	Region	Number of refugee pupils	Number of host schools	Number of Teachers
1	Adamawa	3,116	6	53
2	East	8,255	16	57
3	Far North	16,144	6	138
Total		27,515	30	248

Source: DEMP/MINEDUB

Table 2: Statistics of Enrolment and Results in Examinations for Refugee Pupils in 2019

EXAMINATIONS	REGISTERED			SAT			PASSED			SUCCESS RATE		
	B	G	T	B	G	T	B	G	T	B	G	T
CEP	938	499	1,437	813	429	1,242	513	256	769	86.67	85.97	86.43
FSLC	279	253	532	218	191	409	191	149	340	78.14	75.49	76.88
TOTAL	1,217	752	1,969	1,031	620	1,651	704	405	1,109	84.72	82.45	83.85

Source: DECC/MINEDUB

Key: B:Boys; G: Girls;T: Total

³⁷⁷ The Accelerated Curriculum for Preparation of Children for the Primary School Entrance (CAPEP), the Accelerated Curriculum for the Reintegration of Out-of-School Children (CARED) and the Alternative, Accelerated and Inclusive Programme for Out-of School Children (PAAIENS).

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5) Food Supply for Refugees

1040- Public authorities and partners continued to ease refugees' access to food and water.

1041- Within the framework of its partnership with the World Food Programme, and following a joint assessment, food assistance was distributed to a number of refugees either in kind or cash, according to needs and not the status of the beneficiaries. About 45.14% of refugees from Central African Republic received this assistance, just like 90% of refugees from Nigeria in the Minawao camp.

B: Continuous Empowerment of Refugees

1042- Alongside multifaceted support and training provided to refugees to empower them and improve their standards of living, Government, in conjunction with the United Nations and development partners, introduced an assistance programme for victims of *Boko Haram*. This programme presents opportunities for recovery such as job creation and support to income generating activities. Therefore, the UNHCR, with the support of the *Credit du Sahel* Bank, launched an initiative to provide economic support to refugees. It included granting credits for income-generating activities and about 15 Common Interest Groups were funded to benefit refugees living in Yaounde and Douala who have been able to take care of themselves and their families.

1043- Moreover, discussions were ongoing for the signing of a Tripartite Agreement between MINAS, NEF and UNHCR, on the inclusion of refugees, internally displaced persons and vulnerable host populations for socio-professional training.

SECTION 2: PRESERVING THE RIGHTS OF INTERNALLY DISPLACED PERSONS

1044- Management of Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) of the Far North Region was different from that of IDPs of the North West and South West Regions.

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§1: Management of Internally Displaced Persons of the Far North Region

1045- The number of people forced to flee their usual places of residence for various reasons, including persistent attacks perpetrated by the *Boko Haram* terrorist group in the Far North Region has increased. Actions continued to be carried out to support them especially in the field of education and help them return to their homes once these homes are safe.

A: Increase in the Number of IDPs

1046- During the year under review, 25,145 new persons found themselves in a situation of involuntary displacement. Therefore, the number of IDPs rose from 245,725 in 2018 to 270,870³⁷⁸ in 2019. They were accommodated in developed sites or communities of Logone and Chari (124,329 people), Mayo-Tsanaga (51,371 people), Mayo-Sava (77,310 people), Mayo-Danay (11,459 people), Mayo-Kani (117 people) and Diamare (6,284 people) Divisions. Various kinds of support were granted to them by public authorities and partners both for their survival and to preserve their children's rights to education.

B: Education of Internally Displaced Children of the Far North Region

1047- Measures to promote school effectiveness such as the distribution of text books and school kits, the enhancement of school facilities, the provision of new curricula, the training of Teachers and financial allocation to schools had an impact on the schooling of internally displaced children. Statistics shown in the table below illustrate the positive impact of incentive measures on the attendance of IDPs pupils especially in CM2.

Table 3: Statistics of Registration and Results of Internally Displaced Children for the 2019 CEP Examination.

EXAMINATION	REGISTERED			SAT			PASSED			SUCCESS RATE		
	B	G	T	B	G	T	B	G	T	B	G	T
CEP	1,913	1,223	3,136	1,827	1,186	3,013	1,100	702	1,802	95.50	96.97	96.08

Source: DECC/MINEDUB

³⁷⁸ This population includes 50.2% of men, 49.8% of women, 62% of persons under 18, 41% of minors aged 0 to 5 and 3% of persons above 60 years, which corresponds to about 44 households.

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1048- At secondary education level, measures were adopted to encourage students to go to school and these also benefited IDPs. These included the introduction of innovative sectors (chemical engineering, automobile construction and after-sales maintenance...), the adaptation of sectors to ecological zones and to ongoing major projects such as tannery sector at the Government Technical High School of Maroua where micro-incubators were equally set up. Thus, at the end of 2019, 2,822 ID children were registered in the Far North Region.

C: Continued Implementation of the Return to Home Option

1049- Owing to efforts made by the Multinational Joint Task Force, backed by vigilante groups, which allowed a gradual return to peace in some areas constantly attacked and looted by *Boko Haram*, the people continued to return to their homes. Thus, 110,574³⁷⁹ returnees were recorded, that is 35,236 in Logone and Chari, 32,068 in Mayo-Tsanaga, 34,043 in Mayo-Sava, 8,261 in Mayo-Danay, 503 in Mayo-Kani and 463 in Diamare in 2019.

§2: Continuing Implementation of the Assistance Plan to IDPs of the North West and South West Regions

1050- As part of the implementation of the Emergency Humanitarian Assistance Plan (EHAP) various types of support were granted to IDPs to guarantee them a decent and autonomous life and access to education. Measures were also taken to protect them from HIV and peace-building was considered as an option³⁸⁰

A: Deployment of the Government Emergency Humanitarian Assistance Plan

1051- As at 31 December 2019, about 162,000 IDPs, as against 158,000 in 2018, were accommodated either by their families or host families in the Centre, Littoral, West, North West and South West Regions. To facilitate the urgent and smooth deployment of the Centre for the Coordination of Emergency Humanitarian Assistance set up in 2018, Regional Coordination Centres³⁸¹ established in June 2019 in Bamenda and Buea and

³⁷⁹ That is, 16,707 households.

³⁸⁰ See Chapter on the Right to Peace and Security, §826-839.

³⁸¹ They are coordinated by Governors with the support of defense and security forces.

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were already operational. Various kinds of assistance was granted to IDPs, under the leadership of MINAT and with the support of international partners³⁸². Hence, the EHAP caravan went in groups

of about 50 lorries, in the Regions hosting IDPs and about 130,000 people³⁸³ received, basic necessities, foodstuffs, building materials, beddings and toiletries, sanitation kits and financial support.

1052- Given the vulnerability of these persons, awareness-raising campaigns were organised against GBV, early marriages, child labour, drug consumption and the recruitment of young people into armed forces. Healthcare was also provided and health kits distributed.

1053- Furthermore, support was granted to enable them meet their needs and thus move from dependence to empowerment. This involved agricultural equipment, financial support, agro-pastoral inputs and technical support.

1054- Beyond their field supervisory role which is part and parcel of their sovereign mission of protecting the territory, and to escort the caravan, Defence and security forces were involved in teaching children, building bridges, schools, hospitals and roads destroyed or dilapidated by secessionists.

B: Protecting the Right to Education of IDPs of the North West and South West Regions

1055- Incentive measures undertaken by public authorities had meaningful results on school attendance of internally displaced children.

1) Incentive Measures to Education

1056- To guarantee education of internally displaced children in spite of their vulnerability, the State took a series of measures, the most significant of which is free schooling for them throughout the country. Among other actions undertaken at primary school level, there is distribution of about 75,000 school kits to pupils and teaching kits to Teachers, strengthening of pedagogical follow-up of Teachers through close supervision, training of Teachers on psychosocial support and reduction of risks, conflicts and

³⁸² A coordination platform of humanitarian assistance with the United Nations was set up to ease humanitarian access to stakeholders from competent agencies.

³⁸³ IDPs and host families.

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disasters in schools, training of pedagogical supervisors and Teachers on peace and living together , awareness-raising of communities to put an end to attacks on education, a call for return to peace and normalcy in the North West and South West Regions, a peaceful resolution of the Anglophone crisis and awareness-raising of Teachers and education Officials by UN-ESCO under the theme “*education cannot wait*”

1057- As far as secondary education is concerned, about 19,762 students received school kits thanks to the disbursement of CFAF 417,920,000³⁸⁴. Government Technical High Schools were transformed to Government Bilingual Technical High Schools, 23 private High Schools of the French-speaking sub-system that hosts IDPs in the Centre, Littoral and West Regions were transformed into bilingual private High Schools, classrooms were added in schools; 2 dormitories were built in 2 schools in Bamenda and Limbe and 718 private schools received a subsidy amounting to CFAF 2,300,000,000³⁸⁵

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1058- Moreover, during a workshop jointly organised by MINESEC and MINAS in October 2019 in Yaounde, the adaptation of these children in schools taking into account their vulnerability was high on the agenda. One of the resolutions of this workshop was setting up of Social Services, the role of which is to implement social barriers which will permit, in conjunction with schools that host IDPs and all educational resources, to substantially prevent social ills in schools and address specific adaptation needs of ID children and children with disabilities to offer them the same opportunities for education and fulfilment at teaching, learning, physical and psychological fronts.

³⁸⁴ About 638,045.80 Euros.

³⁸⁵ About 3,511,450.38 Euros.

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2) Impacts of Incentive Measures on Education

1059- Efforts made to protect the rights of ID children and encourage them to stay in school resulted in increased enrolments and a high success rate in official examinations at the primary level as shown by the table below.

Table 4: Statistics of Enrolment and Results of Official Examinations and Competitive Entrance Examinations in the North West and South West Regions.

REGIONS	REGISTERED			SAT			SUCCESSFUL CANDIDATES			SUCCESS RATE			
	EXAMINATIONS	B	G	T	B	G	T	B	G	T	B	G	T
NORTH WEST	CEP	71	72	143	70	71	141	68	67	135	97.14	94.36	95.75
	FSLC	1,905	2,228	4,197	1,877	2,204	4,081	1,567	1,954	3,521	83.48	88.66	86.28
	CEE	1,625	1,947	3,572	1,578	1,890	3,469	1,369	1,726	3,095	86.75	91.32	89.21
TOTAL		3,601	4,247	7,912	3,525	4,165	7,691	3,004	3,747	6,751	85.22	89.96	87.78
SOUTH WEST	CEP	109	108	217	108	106	214	108	104	212	100	98.11	99.07
	FSLC	3,379	3,898	7,277	3,379	3,870	7,249	3,105	3,689	6,794	91.89	95.32	93.72
	COMMON ENTRANCE EXAMINATION	3,171	3,620	6,791	3,145	3,605	6,750	2,757	3,305	6,062	87.66	91.68	89.81
TOTAL		6,659	7,626	14,285	6,632	7,581	14,213	5,970	7,098	13,068	93.18	95.03	94.105
TOTAL	CEP	180	180	360	178	177	355	176	171	347	98.88	96.61	97.75
	FSLC	5,284	6,126	11,474	5,256	6,074	11,330	4,672	5,643	10,315	88.89	92.90	91.04
	CEE	4,796	5,567	10,363	4,723	5,495	10,219	4,126	5,031	9,157	87.36	91.56	89.61
TOTAL		10,260	11,873	22,197	10,157	11,746	21,904	8,974	10,845	19,819	88.35	92.33	90.48

Source: DECC/MINEDUB

1060- With regard to ID students identified at secondary education level as at 31 December 2019, 6,409 were in the Littoral Region, 3,003 in the Centre, 829 in the North West Region, 3,081 in the West Region, 1,072 in the South Region and 1,732 in the South West Region.

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C: HIV Response Measures

1061- The Security situation prevailing in the North West and South West Regions led to the closing down of several health facilities and an increase in the number of patients who do not collect their HIV treatment. To address this issue, strategies adapted to the crisis situation were implemented throughout the year by the National Aids Control Committee as part of the HIV/OVG sub-project. These include the Multi-month ARV dispensing of HIV treatment (3 months), the active search for persons living with HIV who do not collect their treatment, the care of patients displaced in other Regions and the active involvement in the dispensing by members of health committees and district Health Committees. Moreover, HIV awareness-raising and care activities allowed to reduce by half the number of people living with HIV on ARVs per month.

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1062- As part of the response to various humanitarian situations facing the State, several striking facts were recorded during the reference year, notably the enrolment and success rates of refugees and IDPs in official examinations, the continuation of the implementation of the EHAP, the successful completion of the voluntary repatriation process of refugees from Nigeria and the Central African Republic and the return of a number of IDPs to their homes.

1063- However, there were many challenges in protecting the rights of persons in situation of involuntary displacement in Cameroon. A greater financial support from development partners, the continuation of fund-raising for EHAP, the management of Cameroonian refugees in a neighbouring country due to the crisis in the North West and South West Regions, the strengthening of measures to promote the total return of security and peace in these Regions, as well as the continuation of the process of voluntary repatriation of refugees could be considered as solution paths.



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CONCLUSION OF PART THREE

1064-Several innovative actions were recorded in 2019 as part of guaranteeing Human Rights in general and the rights of some specific categories in particular. Therefore, the institutional fabric for Human Rights protection and the fight against torture was strengthened with the establishment of a Cameroon Human Rights Commission, which also performs the duties of the National Mechanism for the Prevention of Torture in places of detention. The implementation of the recommendations resulting from the Major National Dialogue began with the adoption of a law conferring special status to the North West and South West Regions and another on the promotion of official languages in Cameroon. In the same vein, criminal legislation on hate speech was strengthened and hundreds of persons who were prosecuted or detained benefited from discontinuance of proceedings.

1065-In addition, the legal framework for the management of public enterprises and institutions was enriched. Measures aimed at protecting the rights of socially vulnerable persons and improving the living conditions of prisoners as well as the working conditions of penitentiary staff continued. Furthermore, the process of voluntary repatriation of Central African and Nigerian refugees was successfully completed, and short and long term measures were taken to prevent further unrest in prisons.

1066-However, further efforts need to be envisaged as regards taking into account recommendations made during the Major National Dialogue and implementing measures already taken, prison overcrowding, the fight against violence against women, especially in a context of crisis, and a return to peace in crisis regions.



GENERAL CONCLUSION



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1067- In 2019, the retrospective assessment of Human Rights in Cameroon highlighted the need to preserve peace, maintain national cohesion and improve on the living conditions of the population as priority areas of Government's measures. Indeed, besides the security situation characterised by the protracted crises notably involving deadly attacks from the *Boko Haram* terrorist group, the crisis in the North West and South West Regions and incursions by armed gangs in the East and Adamawa Regions, a new threat to social cohesion characterised by the surge of hate speech and communitarian drifts added the list.

1068- The life of the Nation thus focused on the search for solutions to these various concerns. It is against this backdrop of de-escalation and reconstruction of national cohesion that the Major National Dialogue was held, from 30 September to 4 October 2019, in an inclusive and participatory manner. As a watershed moment in the life of the country, this meeting was an opportunity to discuss and adopt recommendations, the implementation of which will contribute to iron out differences. In this same context, several laws were passed including: Law No.2019/24 of 24 December 2019 to institute the General Code of Regional and Local Authorities, which provides for a special status for the North West and South West Regions, Law No.2019/19 of 24 December 2019 on the Promotion of Official Languages in Cameroon that recalls the equal use of English and French and Law No. 2019/20 of 24 December 2019 to amend and supplement some provisions of Law No.2016/7 of 12 July 2016 relating to the Penal Code, which punishes hate speech.

1069- On the whole, the institutional landscape for the implementation and follow-up of Human Rights in Cameroon was enhanced by changes in the National Human Rights Institution. These included the change of its name, clarification of its mandate and expansion of its missions under Law No. 2019/14 of 19 July 2019 relating to the establishment, organisation and functioning of the Cameroon Human Rights Commission. Therefore, the Cameroon Human Rights Commission besides its mission of promoting and protecting Human Rights is henceforth the national mechanism for the prevention of torture in places of detention.

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1070- With regard to civil and political rights, numerous security challenges explained the strengthening of measures to combat impunity, in particular through the renewal of instructions given to defence and security forces with respect to Human Rights and the application of sanctions. In addition, the right to a fair trial was guaranteed through the search for solutions to foster a quick return of Lawyers to Courts, following the strike. Likewise, the securing of the Cameroonian cyberspace continued, while the re-establishment of order in the exercise of the freedom of communication favoured the pedagogical approach over the repressive one. The consolidation of the inclusive policy of recruitment into the public service as part of participation in the management of public affairs was also noted, as was the entrenchment of the decentralisation process with the adoption of the aforementioned law.

1071- As far as economic, social and cultural rights are concerned, progress was made with the strengthening of infrastructure, equipment and incentive measures to ensure education offer. In the same vein, the increase of financial, material and human resources sustained health offer, with a focus on communicable diseases such as HIV/AIDS and Infant Diseases. Furthermore, the improvement of the living conditions of the people was reflected in the crusade against expensive life, efforts to narrow the energy deficit and the distribution of the first low cost housing in Olembe and Mbanga Bakoko. As regards the right to work, promotion of decent working conditions was sustained and self-employment fostered as a guarantee for the fight against poverty with the adoption of Law No. 2019/4 of 25 April 2019, framework law governing social economy in Cameroon. With regard to culture, decentralisation of some festivals such as the FESMUDAP can also be mentioned. Moreover, the fight against the impact of climate change continued.

1072- Regarding cross-cutting issues, it is worth mentioning that progress was made in good governance as concerns both the Financial Regime of the State and the adoption of implementation instruments of the Law to lay down the General Rules and Regulations Governing Public Corporations. The increase in the intake capacity of prisons helped to improve occupancy rate and detention conditions. The institutional framework of

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the protection of the so-called “vulnerable categories” was enhanced by Decree No.2019/145 of 20 March 2019 to organise the Cardinal Paul Emile LEGER National Centre for Rehabilitation of Persons with Disabilities. The policy for the inclusion of women in public life came to fruition with the involvement of women in various bodies of crisis resolution. Besides the successful completion of the process of voluntary repatriation, the increase of the number of internally displaced persons explained an intensification of measures to manage them.

1073- However, the realisation of Human Rights during the year under review left some issues pending. The most prominent were persisting judicial delays with their effects on prison overcrowding, the search for a right balance between the exercise of public freedoms and the preservation of public order, the ineffectiveness of Government’s assistance to the press, difficulties in maintaining the education offer in emergency situations, the challenges related to the Universal Health Coverage, the structural imbalance between energy supply and demand, the precariousness of jobs, the reduced impact of anti-corruption measures, the phenomenon of street children, violence against women and difficulties in managing displaced populations. This situation reveals how urgent it is to restore peace for the full realisation of Human Rights.



APPENDIX



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The following institutions contributed in preparing this Report: the Sub-regional Centre for Human Rights and Democracy in Central Africa, the UN-HCR, the Supreme Court, Courts of Appeal and Lower Courts, Ministries, independent administrative services, public and semi-public establishments, and civil society organizations:

Ministries / Courts

- Supreme Court;
- Ministry of Communication (MINCOM);
- Ministry of State Property Lands, Surveys and Land Tenure (MINDCAF);
- Ministry of Housing and Urban Development (MINHDU);
- Ministry of Territorial Administration and Decentralization (MINATD);
- Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development (MINADER);
- Ministry of Livestock, Fisheries and Animal Industries (MINEPIA);
- Ministry of Trade (MINCOMMERCE);
- Ministry of Water Resources and Energy (MINEE);
- Ministry of Basic Education (MINEDUB);
- Ministry of Secondary Education (MINESEC);
- Ministry of Higher Education (MINESUP);
- Ministry of Employment and Vocational Training (MINEFOP);
- Ministry of Labour and Social Security (MINTSS);
- Ministry of Public Service and Administrative Reform (MINFOPRA);
- Ministry of Forestry and Wildlife (MINFOF);
- Ministry of Arts and Culture (MINAC);
- Ministry of Tourism and Leisure (MINTOUL);
- Ministry of Environment, Nature Protection and Sustainable Development (MINEPDED);
- Ministry of Social Affairs (MINAS);
- Ministry of Public Health (MINSANTE);
- Ministry of Defence (MINDEF);
- Ministry of External Relations (MINREX);

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- Ministry of Economy, Planning and Regional Development (MINEPAT);
- Ministry of Finance (MINFI);
- Ministry of Decentralisation and Local Development (MINDDEVEL);
- Supreme State Audit Office (CONSUPE);
- Ministry of Mines, Industry and Technological Development (MINMIDT);
- Ministry of Youth and Civic Education (MINJEC);
- Ministry of Small and Medium-sized Enterprises, Social Economy and Handicrafts (MINPMEESA);
- Ministry of Posts and Telecommunications (MINPOSTEL);
- Ministry of Women's Empowerment and the Family (MINPROFF);
- Ministry of Public Works (MINTP);
- Ministry of Transport (MINTRANSPORT);
- Ministry of Public Contracts (MINMAP);
- Ministry of Sports and Physical Education (MINSEP);
- Ministry of Scientific Research and Innovation (MINRESI);
- Ministry of Justice (MINJUSTICE);
- Constitutional Council (CC)
- General Delegation for National Security (DGSN);
- National Gendarmerie;
- Special Criminal Court (SCC).
- The 10 Courts of Appeal

Independent Administrative Institutions and Public and Semi Public Establishments

- Cameroon Housing Corporation (SIC);
- Cameroon Investment Promotion Agency (CIPA);
- Cameroon Water Utilities (CAMWATER)
- Consumer Product Supply Regulatory Authority (MIRAP);

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- Elections Cameroon (*ELECAM*);
- Electricity Sector Regulatory Agency (*ARSEL*);
- National Anti-Corruption Commission (*CONAC*);
- National Commission on Human Rights and Freedoms (*NCHRF*);
- National Committee for the Fight against AIDS (*CNLS*);
- National Communication Council (*NCC*);
- National Employment Fund (*FNE*);
- National Financial Investigation Agency (*ANIF*);
- National Fund for Youth Integration (*FONIJ*);
- National Governance Programme (*PNG*);
- National Social Insurance Fund (*NSIF*);
- Rural Electrification Agency (*AER*);
- Cameroon Housing Loan Fund (*CFC*);
- National Disarmament, Demobilisation and Reintegration Committee (*NDDRC*);
- Investment Promotion Agency (*IPA*);
- National Electricity Transport (*SONATREL*);
- Small and Medium sized Enterprises Promotion Agency (*APME*);
- Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises Bank of Cameroon (*BC-PMME*);
- Standards and Quality Agency (*ANOR*);
- Urban and Rural Land Development Authority (*MAETUR*);
- National Agency for Information and Communication Technologies (*ANTIC*);
- National Employment and Vocational Training (*ONEFOP*).

International Organizations and Civil Society

- *Association Camerounaise des Femmes Juristes (ACAFEJ)* ;
- United Nations Centre for Human Rights and Democracy in Central Africa (*UNCHRD-CA*);
- *Confédération Camerounaise du Travail (CCT)*;

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- Centre pour l'Environnement et le Développement (CED) ;
- United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)-Cameroon;
- Mbororo Social and Cultural Development Association (MBOSCUDA);
- *Nouveaux Droits de l'Homme (NDH)*-Cameroon ;
- *Association Enfants Jeunes et Avenir (ASSEJA)* ;
- Platform on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (DESC-CAM Platform);
- Network of Human Rights Organizations (RECODH);
- Commission for Human Rights and Liberties of the Bar Council.







Printed by *Les Grandes Editions*
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June 2021