

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



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



**REPORT OF THE MINISTRY OF
JUSTICE ON HUMAN RIGHTS
IN CAMEROON IN 2020**

Yaounde, February 2022



REPORT OF THE MINISTRY OF JUSTICE ON HUMAN RIGHTS IN CAMEROON IN 2020

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Report of the Ministry of Justice on
Human Rights in Cameroon in 2020

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FOREWORD

“I therefore appeal for a kind of “united front” of all the vital forces of the Nation against the coronavirus pandemic. In that connection, I commend, once again, the attitude of virtually all political leaders and religious authorities who have accepted to join in this national struggle. I also encourage all efforts geared towards developing an endogenous cure for COVID-19. Let us channel all our energies towards fighting this common enemy.”

Message from the Head of State to the Nation on
the eve of the national day, 20 May 2020.

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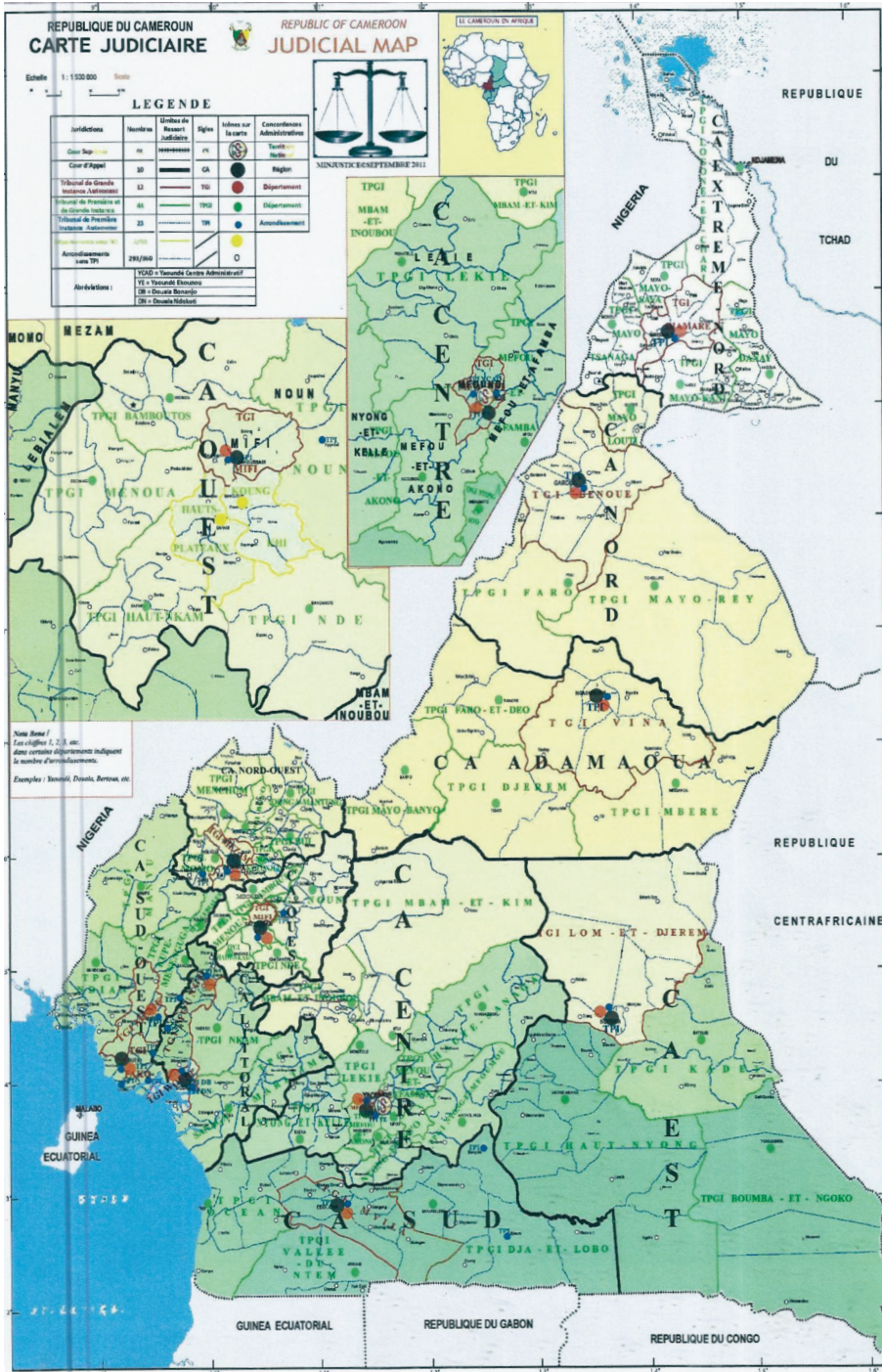
ADMINISTRATIVE MAP OF CAMEROON



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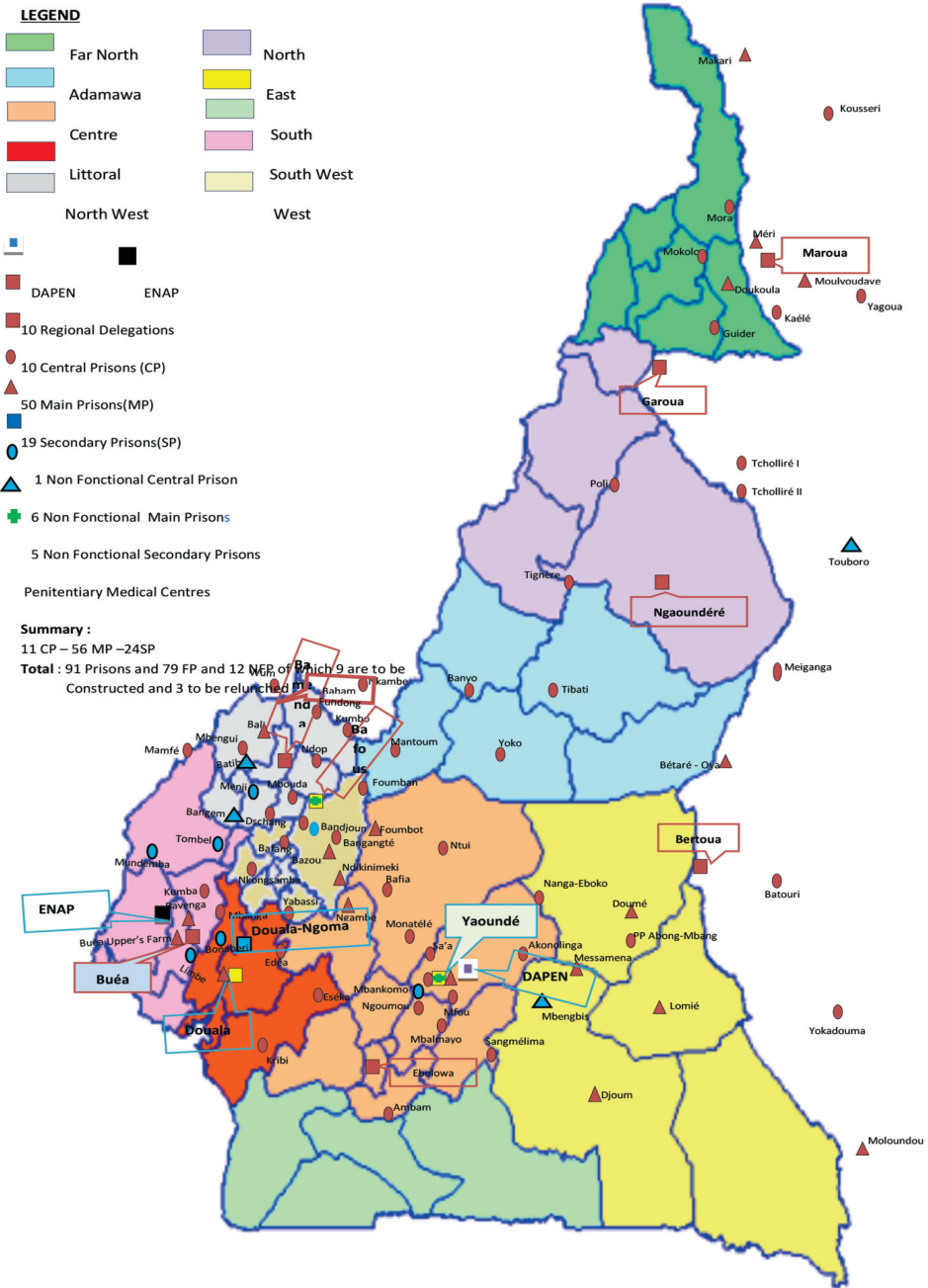
JUDICIAL MAP OF CAMEROON



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PENITENTIARY ADMINISTRATION MAP OF CAMEROON



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LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

///:	Empty box due to the nature of things
ACERWC:	African Committee of Experts on the Rights and Welfare of the Child
ACHPR:	African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights
AfCFTA:	African Continental Free Trade Area
ALDEPA :	<i>Association Locale pour un Développement Participatif et Autogéré</i>
ANOR:	Standard and Quality Agency
ANTIC:	National Agency for Information and Communication Technologies
APME:	Small and Medium sized Enterprises Promotion Agency
ARSEL:	Electricity Sector Regulatory Agency
BFDC:	Budget and Financial Disciplinary Council
BIR:	Rapid Intervention Battalion
BUNEC:	National Civil Status Office
CA:	Courts of Appeal
CAMWATER:	Cameroon Water Utilities Corporation
CBF:	Cameroon Business Forum
CCCMB:	Control of Collective Management Bodies
CCJA:	Common Court of Justice and Arbitration
CCPC:	<i>Code de procedure Civile et commerciale</i>
CDP:	Council Development Plans
CEE:	Common Entrance Examination
CENAJES:	National Youth and Sports Centres
CEP:	<i>Certificat d'Etudes Primaires</i>
CFC:	Cameroon Housing Loan Fund
CFI:	Court of First Instance
CIOP:	Information and Career Guidance Centres
CLIRA:	Children Life in Rural Area

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CLTS:	Community Led Total Sanitation
CMB:	Collective Management Bodies
CMPJ:	Multipurpose Youth Empowerment Centres
CNTI:	Internal Therapeutic Nutrition Centre
CONAFIL:	National Committee on Local Finances
CONSUPE:	Supreme State Audit
COPPE:	Physical Head Count of State Employees
CPC:	Criminal Procedure Code
CPDFP:	Permanent Disciplinary Board of the Public Service
CPDM:	Cameroon People's Democratic Movement
CPFF:	Women Empowerment Centres
CRM:	Cameroon Renaissance Movement
CRTV:	Cameroon Radio Television
CSE:	Comprehensive Sexuality Education
DAJEI:	Department of Legal Affairs and Information Exploitation
DDHCI:	Department of Human Rights and International Co-operation
DSF:	Defence and Security Forces
DUC:	Cameroon Democratic Union
ECW:	Education Cannot Wait
EDC:	Electricity Development Corporation
ELECAM:	Elections Cameroon
ENAM:	National School of Administration and Magistracy
ENEO:	Energy of Cameroon
HTTC:	Higher Teacher Training College
FAO:	Food and Agriculture Organisation
FDAL:	Project to End Open Defecation
FENAC:	National Festival of Arts and Culture
FGM:	Female Genital Mutilation
FLO:	Forces of Law and Order

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FONIJ:	National Fund for Youth Integration
FSLC:	First School Leaving Certificate
FSPE:	Education Solidarity and Promotion Funds
GABAC:	Task Force on Money Laundering in Central Africa
GBV:	Gender Based Violence
GCRLA:	General Code of Regional and Local Authorities
GDNS:	General Delegation for National Security
GICAM:	<i>Groupement Inter-Patronal du Cameroun</i>
HC:	High Court
HTTTC:	Higher Technical Teacher Training College
ICE:	<i>Institut Camerounaise de l'enfance</i>
ICLS:	Inter-Ministerial Committee on Local Services
IDP:	Internally Displaced Persons
IFAD:	International Fund for Agricultural Development
IGAs:	Income-Generating Activities
IGJS:	General Inspectorate of Judicial Services
IHC:	Integrated Health Centre
IMC:	International Medical Corps
INJS:	National Institute of Youth and Sports
IPA:	Investment Promotion Agency
IPES:	Private Higher Education Institutions
IRAD:	Institute of Agricultural Research for Development
ISSEA:	Sub-regional Institute of Statistics and Applied Economics
LIFIDEP:	Livestock and Fisheries Development Project
LLINs:	Long Lasting Insecticidal Nets
MAETUR:	Urban and Rural Land Development Authority
MBOSCUA:	Mbororo Social and Cultural Development Association
MINADER:	Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development
MINAS:	Ministry of Social Affairs
MINAT:	Ministry of Territorial Administration

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MINCAF:	Ministry of State Property, Survey and Land Tenure
MINCOM:	Ministry of Communication
MINCOMMERCE:	Ministry of Trade
MINDDEVEL:	Ministry of Decentralisation and Local Development
MINEFOP:	Ministry of Employment and Vocational Training
MINEPDED:	Minister of Environment, Nature Protection and Sustainable Development
MINESEC:	Ministry of Secondary Education
MINFOPRA:	Ministry of Public Service and Administrative Reform
MINHDU:	Ministry of Housing and Urban Development
MINJEC:	Ministry of Youth Affairs and Civic Education
MINJUSTICE:	Ministry of Justice
MINMAP:	Ministry of Public Contracts
MINMIDT:	Ministry of Mines, Industry and Technological Development
MINPMEESA:	Ministry of Small and Medium-sized Enterprises, Social Economy and Handicrafts
MINPOSTEL:	Ministry of Posts and Telecommunications
MINPROFF:	Ministry of Women’s Empowerment and the Family
MINREX:	Ministry of External Relations
MINSANTE:	Ministry of Public Health
MINUSCA:	United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic
MIRAP:	Consumer Product Supply Regulation Authority
MND:	Major National Dialogue
MOU:	Memorandum of Understanding
MPCN:	Patriotic Movement for a New Cameroon
MSF:	<i>Médecins Sans Frontières</i>
MTP:	Periodic Test Markets
MTV:	Test Retail Stores
NACC:	National Anti-Corruption Commission

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NACS:	National Anti-Corruption Strategy
NAFI:	National Financial Investigation Agency
NASLA:	National School of Local Administration
NCC:	National Communication Council
NCPBM:	National Commission for the Promotion of Bilingualism and Multiculturalism
NDB:	National Decentralisation Board
NDDRC:	National Disarmament, Demobilisation and Reintegration Committee
NDS30:	National Development Strategy 2020-2030
NEF:	National Employment Fund
NICTs:	New Information and Communication Technologies
NSIF:	National Social Insurance Fund
NTD:	Neglected Tropical Diseases
ONACC:	National Observatory on Climate Change
PAJER-U:	Rural and Urban Youth Support Programme
PASMNI:	Project for the Support to Maternal, Neonatal and Child health
PCRN:	Cameroon Party for National Reconciliation
PDER:	Rural Electrification Master Plan
PMTCT:	Prevention of Mother to Child Transmission of HIV
PNDP:	National Community-Driven Development Programme
PNEI:	National Integrity Education Programme
PPEA:	Aquaculture Entrepreneurship Promotion Project
PRODEL:	Livestock Development Project
RECAN:	National Cultural and Artistic Season
RGAE:	General Census of Agriculture and Livestock
RLAs:	Regional and Local Authorities
SDF:	Social Democratic Front
SGBV:	Sexual and Gender-Based Violence
SIC:	Cameroon Housing Corporation

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SMEs:	Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises
SONACAM:	Cameroon National Musical Art Corporation
SONATREL:	National Electricity Transport Company
SSC:	Special Criminal Court
TFPs:	Technical and Financial Partners
TYSYP:	Three-Year Special Youth Programme
UNDP:	National Union for Democracy and Progress
UNDP:	United Nations Development Programme
UNFPA:	United Nations Population Fund
UPAC:	Protestant University of Central Africa
VIA:	Virtual Information Agency
VSEs:	Very Small Enterprises
WGAD:	Working Group on Arbitrary Detention

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PREFACE

To evaluate the Human Rights situation in Cameroon, the Ministry of Justice has published its traditional report on Human Rights in Cameroon for 2020.

The year 2020 was particularly challenging for Cameroon owing to the Covid-19 pandemic, which added to various other persistent trying situations such as the security crises in the Far North, North West and South West Regions, the issue of Internally Displaced Persons, the increase in road accidents and youth unemployment.

Despite all these constraints, the State did not fail in its obligation to protect the rights of persons on its territory. Efforts deployed with the support of its partners helped to yield tangible results at the strategic, diplomatic, normative, institutional and operational levels.

Thus, the 2020-2030 National Development Strategy and the Government Response Strategy to the coronavirus pandemic were adopted. At the diplomatic level, cooperation with international and regional Human Rights promotion and protection mechanisms was consolidated. At the normative level, several international and regional legal instruments were ratified. Furthermore, various legislative and regulatory instruments were adopted such as Law No. 2011/11 of 20 July 2020 to regulate Artistic and Cultural Associations in Cameroon and Decree No. 2020/733 of 24 December 2020 to lay down conditions for discharge of the duties of Public Independent Conciliator in the North West and South West Regions.

At the institutional level, institutions such as the National School of Local Administration and the National Mining Corporation were created. At the operational level, electoral competition was guaranteed and the decentralisation process was completed.

Overall, despite the difficult circumstances, the State in its actions remained faithful to its ideals of peace, unity, democracy as well as national and international solidarity. This Report, which was drafted in an inclusive

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and participatory manner, as has always been the case, presents the Human Rights situation in Cameroon during the reference year through the lens of the Government. It especially relays actions undertaken by the State and other stakeholders as well as constraints and challenges encountered.

Far from being exhaustive, this Report is more of an invitation to a sincere collaboration and participation of all components of the Nation to the process of consolidating the Rule of law in Cameroon and a pledge to the effective respect of Human Rights.

Enjoy your reading.

Laurent ESSO

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

GENERAL

INTRODUCTION



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1- The year 2020 stands out as a remarkable year. As a matter of fact, while the year had barely begun, Cameroon, still facing its multifaceted security constraints, was hard hit, like many other countries in the world, by the Corona virus pandemic which caused havoc for the rest of the year. Every aspect of individual and collective life was stalled by the pandemic. From health, education and production, no sector was spared. The pandemic represented both a challenge and an opportunity, requiring response strategies tailored to the situation.

2- Government measures taken on 17 March 2020, which were regularly reviewed, made it possible to relatively curb the spread of the pandemic. The magnitude of the multidimensional impact of the pandemic left the Government with no choice than to reduce the State budget¹ and seek funding for the covid-19 response², which revolved around 5 pillars: strengthening the health system³, economic and financial resilience⁴, strategic supply⁵, stepping up research and innovation⁶ and social resilience⁷.

3- It is in this context of increased constraint that the policy for the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights was implemented in 2020, through the strengthening of the normative and institutional framework, as well as sector-based measures.

4- With a view to enshrining the achievements of the Major National Dialogue which was a milestone in national life in 2019, Decree No. 2020/136 of 23 March 2020 to lay down the establishment, organisation and functioning of the Committee to follow up the Implementation of the Recommendations of the Major National Dialogue, was signed.

¹ See Ordinance No. 2020/1 of 3 June 2020 to amend and supplement some provisions of Law No. 2019/23 of 24 December 2019, Finance Law of the Republic of Cameroon for the 2020 Financial Year, ratified by Law No. 2020/8 of 20 July 2020.

² Decree No. 2020/504 of 24 August 2020 to ratify Loan Agreement No. 2000200004706 of an amount of Euros 88, 000,000 that is, about CFAF 57,700,000,000 for the partial financing of the COVID-19 Crisis Response Budget Support Programme. The Loan Agreement was signed with the African Development Bank.

³ The objective of Pillar 1 is to curb the propagation of the Covid-19 pandemic, and the management of sick persons, CFAF 58,700,000,000 (About 89,618,320.61 Euros) was earmarked for the purpose.

⁴ The objective of Pillar 2 is to mitigate the economic impact of the health crisis on companies. CFAF 37,500,000,000 (About 57,251,908.40 Euros) was earmarked for the purpose.

⁵ The goal of Pillar 3 is to ensure continuity in the supply of basic necessities. CFAF 5,500,000,000 (About 8,396,946.56 Euros) was earmarked for the purpose.

⁶ Pillar 4 on its part aims to spur the local development of innovative solutions that could help in the fight against Corona virus. CFAF 9,500,000,000 (About 14,503,816.79 Euros) was earmarked for the purpose.

⁷ The purpose of pillar 5 is to alleviate the social repercussions of the pandemic on households and vulnerable persons.

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5- With regard to civil and political rights, the ratification of the Criminal Police Cooperation Agreement between Central African States, signed in Yaounde on 18 September 2015 in accordance with Decree No. 2020/797 of 29 December 2020 shall contribute to reinforce response measures to various violations, the most prominent of which concern the right to life, to physical and moral integrity. This right was threatened and violated in a particularly odious way. From Ngarbuh to Kumba, horror reached its apex, calling into question the very meaning of life. Just as in previous cases, the tragic murder of **Florence AYAFOR, Comfort TUMASANG** or the school children in Kumba, sparked uproar⁸, but Cameroon continued to count its dead, dead for nothing, too many dead. This situation put Government's struggle in the limelight throughout the year for the restoration of security, the respect of law and order, and Human Rights, in its sovereign obligation to respond, both in a preventive and repressive way to the violations observed.

6- Elections were held as planned: on 9 February 2020 for Parliamentary and Senate elections; on 9 December 2020 for regional elections, which completed the decentralisation process, for which support institutions were set up by Decree No. 2020/111 of 2 March 2020 on the establishment, organisation and functioning of the National School of Local Administration and Decree No. 2020/689 of 9 November to lay down the organisation and functioning of the Inter-Ministerial Committee on Local Services. Previously, the National Decentralisation Council was reorganised in conformity with Decree No. 2020/676 of 3 November 2020. Furthermore, conditions for discharging the duties of Public Independent Conciliator were determined in accordance with Decree No. 2020/773 of 24 December 2020.

7- Regarding the right to a fair trial specifically, a new batch of Judicial and Legal Officers was transferred to courts following a session of the Higher Judicial Council on 10 August 2020. The infrastructure construction and renovation programme continued, with the aim of curbing the recurrent problem of judicial delays, which has a significant impact on the rights of litigants and the prison population. As part of measures to respond to the pandemic, the President of the Republic signed Decree No. 2020/193 of 15 April 2020 to commute and remit sentences, in order to decongest prisons.

⁸ A national mourning was decreed for the last incident.

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8- With regard to economic, social and cultural rights, Cameroon adhered to regional integration by ratifying the revised Treaty establishing the Economic Community of Central African States signed on 18 December 2019 in Libreville through Decree No. 2020/238 of 28 April 2020. In order to secure necessary resources for the economy, the Multilateral Convention to Implement Tax Treaty Related Measures to Prevent Base Erosion and Profit Shifting adopted in Paris on 24 November 2016, was ratified pursuant to Decree No. 2020/798 of 29 December 2020. The protection of public resources justified the ratification of the African Union Convention on Preventing and Combating Corruption, adopted in Maputo (Mozambique) on 11 July 2003 by Decree 2020/166 of 1 April 2020.

9- In accordance with Decrees No. 2020/3 of 6 January 2020 and No. 2020/799 of 29 December 2020, the State also ratified the Agreement establishing the African Trade Insurance Agency, signed on 18 May 2000, as well as the Agreement between the Government of the Republic of Cameroon and the Government of the United Arab Emirates on air services between their respective territories and beyond, signed on 10 March 2020 in Dubai.

10- With regard to the remaining areas, maintaining the right balance was not easy. As regards the right to education, a better part of the academic year was saved. As the pandemic imposed readjustments in the school schedule, focus was on examination classes and special measures for the launching of the new school year.

11- Economic activities were seriously disrupted. All sectors of the economy and social life were affected, leading to a new perspective regarding time and work organisation, as well as support measures through Decree No. 2020/376 of 8 July 2020 to fix the coefficient for the upward revision of certain old-age, incapacity and death benefits, and support for the production sector, or Decree No. 2020/802 of 30 December 2020 to harmonise the retirement age of civil servants. As for cooperation with other countries, Cameroon ratified the revised Treaty of the Inter-African Conference on Social Security adopted on 14 February 2014 in Abidjan. With a view to better benefiting from the exploitation of its mining resources, the National Mining Corporation was created in accordance with Decree No. 2020/774 of 14 December 2020.

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12- The fundamental nature of the right to health was particularly impacted in 2020. In addition to commitment to traditional issues, such as the fight against drugs, which resulted in the ratification of the Protocol to Eliminate Illicit Trade in Tobacco Products, the upsurge of the corona virus pandemic required that measures to control movement of persons be added to health measures per se, while adjusting the response mechanism according to the situation by integrating various pillars depending on disease outbreaks.

13- Despite the pandemic, the cultural sector was reorganised by Law No. 2020/11 of 20 July 2020 to regulate artistic and cultural associations, as well as the Culture Support Fund, while elections were organised within Bodies charged with the collective management of copyrights.

14- The protection of the right to a healthy environment was first reflected in the normative framework. The State ratified the Nagoya-Kuala Lumpur Protocol on Liability and Redress to the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety adopted on 15 October 2010 in Nagoya in accordance with Decree No. 2020/208 of 29 December 2020, the Agreement on the Conservation of Gorillas and their Habitats adopted on 26 October 2007 in Paris (France), pursuant to Decree No. 2020/397 of 27 July 2020 as well as the International Convention for the Control and Management of Ships' Ballast Water and Sediments (BWM Convention) adopted on 13 February 2004 in London (England) in accordance with Decree No. 2020/240 of 28 April 2020.

15- Particular attention was paid to rights of specific groups. This attention was marked at the beginning of the year by the ratification of the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography by Decree No. 2020/2 of 6 January 2020. This instrument which contributes to the protection of children against violence and exploitation is in addition to other measures taken to safeguard children's well-being.

16- The policy to promote women's rights resulted, among other things, in a more or less guaranteed representation of women within elective bodies, as well as protection against violence and other ills that restrict women's capacity to express themselves. The State's commitment was also demonstrated through the ratification of the statute of the women development organisation in the member states of the Organisation of the Islamic Conference (OIC), in accordance with Decree No. 2020/396 of 27 July 2020.

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17-Although the pandemic restricted movement of persons, enhancement of the normative framework for the protection of the rights of refugees and migrants continued, notably by the ratification of the Cooperation Agreement on Migration between the Government of the Republic of Cameroon and the Swiss Federal Council, signed on 26 September 2014, in accordance with Decree No. 2020/800 of 29 December 2020. The same applied to the management of internally displaced persons from the North West and South West Regions for whom structural measures for recovery, reconstruction and social reintegration, provided for under the Presidential Reconstruction Plan for the said Regions were instituted in April 2020.

18-The year 2020 also witnessed the adoption of the National Development Strategy Document 2020-2030, which is intended to organise the country's development policies for the coming years. Four pillars will guide the State's actions: structural transformation of the economy; development of human capital and well-being; promotion of employment and economic integration,; and governance, decentralisation and strategic management of the State which focuses on strengthening the rule of law and promoting Human Rights.

19- This report takes into account the above-mentioned issues and more. As in the previous year, the Report wouldn't have been drafted without the precious input of various partners including Public Administrations, Independent Administrative Institutions, International Organisations and Civil Society Organisations, the complete list of which is provided in the appendix. They contributed by providing data and by validating the Report.

20- In addition to details on Cameroon's cooperation with International and Regional Human Rights Mechanisms which is a usual feature of the Preliminary Chapter, the latter also includes information on Covid-19 and Human Rights, a topical issue during the year under reference.

21-The usual three parts of the report were maintained, and they are as follows:

- civil and political rights ;
- economic, social and cultural rights and the right to a healthy environment; and
- cross-cutting issues on Human Rights and rights of specific groups.



PRELIMINARY CHAPTER

COOPERATION BETWEEN CAMEROON AND INTERNATIONAL AND REGIONAL MECHANISMS FOR THE PROMOTION AND PROTECTION OF HUMAN RIGHTS AND THE FIGHT AGAINST THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC



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22- The Covid-19⁹ disease, which is caused by a new strain of coronavirus, broke out at the end of 2019. Declared a “*Public Health Emergency of International Concern*” by the World Health Organization (WHO), the pandemic was a human, health, economic and social crisis.

23- In Cameroon, the pandemic considerably affected Human Rights in 2020, as it challenged the State’s ability to efficiently guarantee Human Rights, as highlighted in various chapters of this Report. The pandemic also affected cooperation between Cameroon and International and Regional Human Rights Monitoring Mechanisms. However, the Government, with the support of national and international partners, adopted some response measures to the pandemic.

SECTION 1: COOPERATION BETWEEN CAMEROON AND INTERNATIONAL AND REGIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS MECHANISMS

24- In 2020, Cameroon remained faithful to its diplomatic policy of national independence, peace, non-interference, unity and African solidarity, cooperation and development and making its voice heard on international affairs of common interest. For example, during the Global Vaccine Summit held via video-conference on 3 and 4 June 2020, Cameroon donated CFAF 600 000 000¹⁰ to the Global Alliance for Vaccines and Immunisation¹¹. This gesture was highly welcomed by other countries and testifies to the importance Cameroon places on health issues.

25- The constraints imposed by the global health crisis prompted most international institutions and bodies¹² to restructure their working and interaction procedures with other States and stakeholders on the international arena. Thus, after a relative latency period, which helped everyone to understand that the end of the pandemic was not short-lived, the timelines for some activities were extended and dialogue via video-conference was rooted accordingly.

⁹ Based on scientific and medical data available, this virus belongs to the same family with the Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS). Read UNICEF, Key Messages and Actions for Covid-19 Prevention and Control in Schools, March 2020, p. 2.

¹⁰ About USD 1,000,000 (about 916,030.53 Euros).

¹¹ Global Alliance for Vaccines and Immunization (GAVI).

¹² UN, OHCHR, WHO, UNICEF, HRC, CESC and several special procedures (such as the Special Rapporteur on the Right to Health) made available to the public, guiding principles, directives, orientations, guides and data sheets on Covid-19.

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26- Notwithstanding this challenging environment, Cameroon continued to cooperate with international and regional Human Rights mechanisms, both in contentious and non-contentious matters.

§1: Continuation of Cooperation in Non-Contentious Matters

27- Cooperation in non-contentious matters unlike in contentious matters was affected by the pandemic, since the crisis significantly limited, and even prevented the movement of delegations. Despite this constraint, Cameroon, as usual, contributed to the functioning of various Human Rights Bodies.

28- At the global level, it took part in the Ordinary Sessions of the United Nations Human Rights Council.

29- At the regional level, on 23 November 2020, Cameroon defended before the African Commission on Human and People's Rights (The African Commission) via video-conference¹³, its 4th, 5th, and 6th Periodic Reports under the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights (ACHPR), and its initial Reports under the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights relating to women's rights in Africa, and the African Union Convention for the Protection and Assistance of Internally Displaced Persons. Besides, Cameroon was the first country to submit its report as regards this last Convention. Up to the end of the year, the The African Commission observations on Cameroon's Report were still awaited.

§2: Continuation of Cooperation in Contentious Matters

30- In 2020 contentious matters continued almost normally. For instance, Cameroon received several Urgent Appeals from Human Rights bodies, particularly from Special Procedures. Essentially, most Appeals during the year under review were related to enforced disappearance¹⁴, arbitrary detention¹⁵, summary execution¹⁶, torture and other allegations of

¹³ Due to constraints imposed by the Covid-19 pandemic.

¹⁴ We can mention the Urgent Appeal from the Working Group on Enforced or Involuntary Disappearances of the Human Rights Council concerning allegations of the abduction of **NGOE Ernest** and **MOKUBE ONYORI ONYORI** in Kumba on 4 November 2020.

¹⁵ For example, the Communication of the Working Group on Arbitrary Detention concerning the person called TSI **Conrad**.

¹⁶ For example Urgent Appeals from the African Committee of Experts on the Rights and Welfare of the Child (ACERWC), regarding the murder of children at Ngarbuh (North West Region) on 14 February 2020; the judgement rendered by the Yaounde Military Tribunal against the military involved in the mur-

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Human Rights violations, (within the framework of the security crisis in the Far North, North West and South West Regions), on the one hand, and to violations of freedom of movement, freedom of opinion and expression, and freedom of peaceful assembly and demonstration, in a context of excessive use of force by Defence and Security Forces (DSF), and judicial harassment concerning the peaceful demonstrations were organised by the leaders and militants of the Cameroon Renaissance Movement (CRM) in September 2020¹⁷, on the other hand. Some special procedures also requested clarifications from the State on the situation of Human Rights Defenders¹⁸.

31- On 31 December 2020, a total of 5 communications were pending against Cameroon before the Human Rights Committee, one before the Committee against Torture, and 20 before the African Commission. The African Commission and the United Nations Working Group on Arbitrary Detention rendered some decisions in 2020 regarding some communications brought before them against the State of Cameroon.

A: The Decision of the African Commission in the case *African Petroleum Consultants vs the State of Cameroon*

32- During the 66th Ordinary Session held online from 13 July to 7 August 2020, the African Commission considered Communication 628/16 – ***African Petroleum Consultants (represented by Dr EKOLLO MOUNDI Alexandre) vs the State of Cameroon***. The facts and proceedings of the case made this African Mechanism to declare the said Communication inadmissible.

der of two women and their children at Zéléved (Far North Region) in 2015; and the killing of students in Kumba (South West Region) on 24 October 2020.

¹⁷ The joint Urgent Appeal from the Special Rapporteur on the Right to Freedom of Peaceful Assembly and of Association the Working Group on Arbitrary Detention, the Working Group on Enforced or Involuntary Disappearances, the Special Rapporteur on Extrajudicial, Summary or Arbitrary Executions, the Special Rapporteur on the Promotion and Protection of Freedom of Opinion and Expression, the Special Rapporteur on the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms while Countering Terrorism, and the Special Rapporteur on Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment) of 7 October 2020.

¹⁸ This is the case of the Urgent Appeal from the Special Rapporteur on Human Rights Defenders and Focal Point on Reprisals in Africa regarding allegations of attacks against Mr **Elvis Brown LUMA MUKUMA**, and the Urgent Appeal from the Special Rapporteur of the Republic of Cameroon and the Special Rapporteur of the African Commission on Human Rights Defenders concerning the situation of Mr **Jules Dumas NGUEBOU**.

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1) Summary of Facts and Proceedings of the Case

33- On 24 May 2016, *African Petroleum Consultants (APC Sarl)*, represented by Dr EKOLLO MOUNDI Alexandre, lodged before the ACHPR a complaint against the State of Cameroon for violation of the provisions of Article 7 of the African Charter relating to the right to fair trial. The plaintiff accused a panel of judges of the Littoral Court of Appeal of non-compliance with the principle of impartiality during the examination of the appeal against Ruling/Order No. 35 issued on 8 March 2012 by the Presiding Magistrate of the Douala-Bonanjo Court of First Instance, in the case *Société Corlay Cameroon (formerly Shell Cameroon) vs APC Sarl*. To back its case, the complainant alleged that the said judicial officers had rendered Order No. 68/CE on 3 different dates (11 July 2011; 11 July 2012; and 11 July 2013) and that the Order was drafted by its adversary. As a means of compensation, she urged the ACHPR, among others, to condemn the State of Cameroon to pronounce the invalidity of the contested Order.

34- In response to the complaint, the State of Cameroon raised 2 objections, one on the African Commission's lack of personal and subject matter jurisdiction, on the ground that APC Sarl, which claims to be a victim, is not an individual, but a trading company. And as such, it is not likely to be entitled to any right provided for in the ACHPR, and the other on the lack of exhaustion of local remedies by the plaintiff, who is instead trying to get the Commission to examine the lawfulness of a court decision that concerns the application of the Uniform Act organizing simplified recovery procedures and measures of execution, which falls under the jurisdiction of the Common Court of Justice and Arbitration (CCJA), pursuant to the provisions of articles 14 of the Treaty on the Harmonisation of Business Law in Africa, and 28 of the CCJA Procedural Rules,

2) Decision of the African Commission

35- After the parties filed their submissions, the African Commission deemed those of the State of Cameroon founded. Consequently, it upheld Cameroon's argument on lack of jurisdiction by declaring inadmissible Communication No. 628/16, for non-compliance with the provisions of article 56 paragraphs 2 and 5 of the ACHPR.

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B: Opinion 1/2020 of the Working Group on Arbitrary Detention concerning **AMADOU VAMOULKE**

36- On 29 April 2020, the Working Group on Arbitrary Detention (WGAD) adopted Opinion 1/2020 in the Communication, **Amadou Vamoulke vs the State of Cameroon**. The facts of the case will be stated before a presentation of the decision rendered by the WGAD.

1) Summary of Facts

37- Mr **AMADOU VAMOULKE (A.V.)** was the Director General of CRTV from January 2005 to June 2016. A management control for the 2004, 2005 and 2006 fiscal years carried out by a mobile audit unit from the Supreme State Audit revealed that CRTV commercial revenue and assets had been misappropriated, the audiovisual licence fee had been unjustifiably inflated and misused, and bonuses and other undue benefits had been awarded to certain staff members and third parties. Moreover, following the appointment of a new Director General of CRTV by presidential decree on 29 June 2016, he commissioned an accounting audit in order to distinguish his management from that of his predecessors. The audit report submitted by the chartered accountant revealed numerous financial irregularities, including irregular cash payments, unjustified transfers, cash shortage.

38- Following an investigation conducted by both the Criminal Investigation Department and the specialized criminal investigation corps of the Special Criminal Court, Mr. **VAMOULKE** and several of his former colleagues were brought before the Procureur General at the Special Criminal Court (SCC) who requested the opening of a criminal investigation on charges of misappropriation of public funds and acting as an accessory to misappropriation of public funds, offences provided for and punishable under Sections 74, 96 and 184 of the Law No. 2016/7 of 12 July relating to the Penal Code.

39- In the first case, Mr **A.V.** was initially not remanded in custody. During the preliminary inquiry, the Examining Magistrate, acting in full independence, issued a remand warrant against him on 29 July 2016, pursuant to Section 218 of the Criminal Procedure Code (CPC). On 27 June 2017, the Examining Magistrate issued a committal order for Mr. **VAMOULKE** to stand trial be-

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fore the Special Criminal Court on charges of misappropriation of public funds amounting to CFAF 3,908,147,385¹⁹.

40- With regard to the second case, Mr **A.V.** Was remanded in custody on 22 February 2018. At the close of the preliminary inquiry , a committal order was made on 24 January 2019 for him to stand trial before the same court to answer charges similar to those in the first case.

2) Decision of the Working Group

41-In general, some of the grievances submitted to the Working Group were dismissed, and others admitted.

a) Grievances Dismissed

42- Concerning the detention of Mr **A.V.** and considering the fact that he had no known residence, the WGAD stated that it was unable to interpret the applicability of the domestic legal provisions thereto. It also considered that the source did not provide sufficient evidence to establish a credible prima facie case of the alleged involvement of the Ministry of Justice in Mr. **VAMOULKE**'s first lawyer's decision to step down.

43- In addition, the WGAD did not have sufficient information to conclude that Mr. **VAMOULKE** was detained solely for having exercised his rights to freedom of opinion and expression pertaining to his position as journalist. On the other hand, the Government submitted detailed information justifying the charges of misappropriation of public funds against Mr. **VAMOULKE** which is actually punished by the Penal Code of Cameroon, and concluded by stating that it was unable to find a category II violation²⁰.

b) Grievances Admitted

44- The WGAD considered that the source has established a prima facie case based on the unfairness of the proceedings and the fact that the Legal Department and the Special Criminal Court did not examine the two cases against Mr. **VAMOULKE** without delay. It concluded that Mr.

¹⁹ About 5,966,637.23 Euros.

²⁰ When the deprivation of liberty results from the exercise of the rights or freedoms guaranteed by articles 7, 13, 14, 18, 19, 20 and 21 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and, insofar as States parties are concerned, by articles 12, 18, 19, 21, 22, 25, 26 and 27 of the Covenant (category II).

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VAMOULKE's right to a fair trial had been violated and decided to refer the case to the Special Rapporteur on the independence of judges and lawyers. Furthermore, in view of the seriousness of Mr. **VAMOULKE's** condition, the Working Group decided to submit the case to the Special Rapporteur on the right of everyone to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health.

45- The WGAD considered that the Government did not establish a legal basis for the pre-trial detention of Mr. **VAMOULKE** beyond 18 months, which is the maximum period prescribed by the law. In addition, the delay in Mr. **VAMOULKE's** trial, which has resulted in him spending almost four years in pre-trial detention, is unreasonably long, in violation of articles 9, 10 and 11 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and articles 9(3) and 14(3)(c) of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights.

c) Recommendations of the Working Group

46- After concluding, in fine, that the deprivation of liberty of **AMADOU VAMOULKE** is arbitrary and falls within categories I²¹ and III²², the WGAD urged the Government of Cameroon to release him immediately, to ensure that he receives appropriate medical treatment, to grant him an enforceable right to compensation and other reparations, to ensure a full and independent investigation of the circumstances surrounding his arbitrary detention, and to disseminate the present opinion through all available means and as widely as possible.

47- The WGAD was careful to specify that it recognizes that all States have an obligation to investigate, prosecute and punish those responsible for crimes (including in cases of alleged misappropriation of public funds), and that its opinion in this case is focused not on the charges that are the subject of the proceedings against Mr. **VAMOULKE**, but rather on the conditions under which those proceedings have been conducted.

²¹ When it is clearly impossible to invoke any legal basis justifying the deprivation of liberty. (P.1, para 3a).

²² When the total or partial non-observance of the international norms relating to the right to a fair trial, established in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and in the relevant international instruments accepted by the States concerned, is of such gravity as to give the deprivation of liberty an arbitrary character. (P.1, para 3c).

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48- As at 31 December 2020, the recommendations of the Working Group were been considered by the Inter-Ministerial Committee for monitoring the implementation of recommendations and/or Decisions of International and Regional Mechanisms tasked with the Promoting and Protecting of Human Rights.

49- Moreover, the intense discussions with UN and African Human Rights Bodies is evidence of the honest and cooperative dialogue Cameroon maintained with them during the reporting year on the one hand, and the paramount importance it continued to place on Human Rights-related issues. It is the same spirit of cooperation, which guided the strategy put in place by the Government and its international and regional partners to combat covid-19.

SECTION 2: THE GOVERNMENT'S RESPONSE TO THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

50- The Government, with the support of its partners, adopted various measures to combat the Covid-19 pandemic. The management of the crisis by the State was criticised by national opinion, thereby bringing to the limelight the issue of accountability in the management of funds and equipment earmarked the fight against Covid-19.

§1: Government Measures to Combat Covid-19 with the Support of its Partners

51- The Government response strategy to the pandemic was implemented with the support of its partners.

A: Government's Response Strategy to Covid-19

52- As soon as the Covid-19 virus broke out in Cameroon in early March 2020, the Prime Minister, Head of Government, set up an inter-ministerial committee to follow up the implementation of the Government's strategy to combat the pandemic, under his own coordination. Then progressively, he communicated to the public the content of the Government's response strategy to curb the health crisis on the national territory.

53- The first measures taken were subsequently tightened and later on readjusted.

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1) Starting Point: First Measures

54- The first measures were adopted on 17 March 2020. They were then supplemented the following day by modalities for their implementation.

a) Content of the First Measures Adopted by the Government

55- After a ministerial consultation held on 17 March 2020 aimed at reviewing the situation and identifying appropriate response measures, the Prime Minister communicated the 13 measures below, with effect from 18 March 2020:

- Cameroon's land, air and sea borders will be closed: consequently, all passenger flights from abroad will be suspended, with the exception of cargo flights and vessels transporting consumer products and essential goods and materials, whose stopover times will be limited and supervised²³;
- the issuance of entry visas to Cameroon at the various airports shall be suspended;
- all public and private training establishments of the various levels of education, from nursery school to higher education, including vocational training centres and professional schools, will be closed;
- gatherings of more than fifty (50) persons are prohibited throughout the national territory;
- School and university competitions, like the FENASSCO and University games are postponed;
- under the supervision of administrative authorities, bars, restaurants and entertainment spots will be systematically closed from 6 p.m.;
- a system for regulating consumer flows will be set up in markets and shopping centres;
- urban and inter-urban travel should only be undertaken in cases of extreme necessity;
- drivers of buses, taxis and motorbikes are urged to avoid overloading: DSF will ensure they comply;
- private health facilities, hotels and other lodging facilities, vehicles and specific equipment necessary for the implementation of the Covid-19 pandemic response plan in Cameroon may be requisitioned as required, by competent authorities;

²³ Cameroonians who wish to come back home should contact our diplomatic representations.

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- public administrations shall give preference to electronic communications and digital tools for meetings likely to bring together more than ten (10) people;
- missions abroad of members of Government and public and para-public sector employees are hereby suspended;
- the public is urged to strictly observe the hygiene measures recommended by the World Health Organization, including regular hand washing with soap, avoiding close contact such as shaking hands or hugging, and covering the mouth when sneezing;

b) Modalities for the Application of the First Measures

56- On 18 March 2020, the Prime Minister chaired a restricted inter-ministerial consultation, which aimed at setting the modalities for the application of measures adopted. At the end of the meeting, he communicated the following directives:

- the measures contained in the Special Statement of the Prime Minister of 17 March 2020 will be applied for a period of fifteen (15) days, renewable if necessary;
- hearings in courts are maintained, in compliance with the maximum number of fifty (50) persons authorized for each gathering;
- trade with foreign countries will continue, especially with Chad and the Central African Republic without prejudice to health checks on drivers.
- systematically take the temperature of personnel before they access their various places of work, using thermo-flashes;
- install hand sanitizers in building open to the public;
- restrict visits to public offices
- restrict staff mobility within administrations;
- respect the statutory working hours for non-essential personnel.

57- To ensure the implementation of these directives, the Prime Minister recommended the application of these modalities by the private sector. Furthermore, he instructed the Minister of Territorial Administration to organise meetings with religious authorities and representatives of political parties with a view to determining practical arrangements for the holding of religious services during the restricted period and, to define the conditions for the organisation of partial legislative elections in the North West and South West Regions. To the Minister of Transport, he asked to

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maintain and supervise activities related to the domestic transport of persons and goods. He instructed the Minister of Communication to intensify the information and awareness-raising campaign through all communication channels. Lastly, he urged the Secretary of State of the National Gendarmerie and the Delegate General for National Security to organise day and night patrols to ensure order.

2) Tightening of First Measures

58- During a meeting held on 24 March 2020, the Inter-Ministerial Committee in charge of monitoring the implementation of the Government response strategy to the pandemic carried out a first evaluation of the implementation of the above-mentioned measures and observed that some were not being respected by a large portion of the population. These measures include: the systematic closing of bars, restaurants and leisure spots from 6 p.m., the prohibition of gatherings of more than fifty (50) people, the ban on overloading in buses, taxis and motorbikes, urban and inter-urban travel restrictions, the regulation of consumer flows in markets and shopping centres, and compliance with the rules of hygiene and the social distancing.

59- Based on these observations, the Government decided that the response measures would henceforth be applied with the utmost rigour, and offenders will be punished. In addition, the Minister of Defence and the Delegate General for National Security were instructed to strengthen the security mechanism around hotels used for quarantine, as well as patrols to ensure the strict respect of the measures communicated on 17 March 2020, on the one hand, and to the Minister of Territorial Administration to work in synergy with municipal authorities to improve the management of open markets, on the other hand.

60- Through Communiqué No. 1 April 2020, the Prime Minister informed the public that all the above-mentioned measures were being maintained for a period of fifteen (15) days, renewable if need be.

3) Subsequent Adjustment of the Response Strategy

61- Developments in the health crisis and its economic impact justified an adjustment of the response strategy with the adoption of new measures.

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a) Reasons for the Adjustment

62- The alarming epidemiological situation and the economic downturn justified the adjustment by the Government of the response strategy to the pandemic in Cameroon.

63- Concerning the alarming epidemiological situation, after carrying out some evaluations on 9 and 16 April 2020, the Inter-Ministerial Committee observed that despite the strong adherence to the measures adopted on 17 March 2020 by the population, the increase in the number of cases of contaminations and deaths (especially among the elderly and people with co-morbidity) was alarming.

64- With regard to the economic downturn, a survey conducted by the Ministry of Finance after the adoption of the restrictive measures of 17 March 2020, revealed that 90% of companies considered that the measures had negatively impacted their businesses, and had led to a 94% drop in demand, domestic supply difficulties of 76%, external funding difficulties of about 72%, 82% decrease in production, 95.5% decline in the turnover, and a 52% reduction of staff.

65- Households also experienced a 65% decline in activities and 74% in income, particularly those deriving their income from a daily economic activity²⁴.

66- Overall, companies and households adopted the measures taken by the Government to fight the coronavirus. However, given the alarming situations in which they found themselves, they expressed the need to be supported, namely at the fiscal level, to strengthen their social and economic resilience.

b) Content of New Measures

67- Some of the new measures taken were general, while others were specifically economic.

68- With regard to general measures, at the end of the meeting of the Inter-Ministerial Committee in charge of monitoring the implementation of the Government's response strategy to the pandemic of 9 April 2020, the following additional measures were taken:

²⁴ They are the more numerous, due to the strong density of the informal economy in Cameroon.

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- generalised wearing of face mask in all areas open to the public²⁵;
- local production of drugs, test kits, protective masks and hydro-alcoholic gels by competent local institutions, under the responsibility of the Minister of Scientific Research and Innovation, in relation with the Minister of Public Health;
- creation of specialised centres for the treatment of Covid-19 patients in all regions' headquarters, following the model of field hospitals, to help hospital operate normally;
- intensification of the Covid-19 screening campaign with the collaboration of the Centre Pasteur through its various branches, and other appropriate health institutions²⁶;
- intensification of the outreach campaign in urban and rural areas, in both official languages and through complementary communication means to be defined by the Minister of Communication, with the support of administrative, municipal, traditional and religious authorities;
- continuation of activities that are central to the economy, in the strict respect of the directives of 17 March 2020 and measures recommended by the WHO; and
- systematic punishment of any person who refuses to comply with these restrictive measures and quarantine imposed on persons at risk.

69- On 15 April 2020, the President of the Republic issued a decree to commute and remit the sentences of some convicts²⁷.

70- By a release of 23 April 2020, the Director General of the National Social Insurance Fund (NSIF) announced the suspension of on-the-spot checks for the months of April, May and June 2020, adoption of the use of documentary checks, the cancellation of penalties for late payment upon reasoned request and the operationalisation of the NSIF online services.

71- Concerning economic measures, on 30 April 2020, in order to boost production and stimulate an economy in difficulty, some restrictive measures were relaxed and very short term stimulus measures were taken. These were:

²⁵ The Minister of Mines, Industry and Technological Development was instructed to publish standards and technical specifications for a massive and local production of the said masks;

²⁶ Emphasis being on hotbeds that have already been identified.

²⁷ Decree No. 2020/193 of 15 April 2020 to commute and remit sentences.

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- the opening of bars, restaurants and entertainment spots after 6 p.m, with the obligation for customers to respect barrier measures, namely wearing of face mask and social distancing;
- the lifting of the measure reducing the number of passengers in all public transports by bus and taxis, the compulsory wearing of mask and the ban on overloading;
- the suspension of general accounting verifications for the 2nd quarter, except in case of suspicious fiscal behaviour;
- the extension of the deadline for the submission of Statistical and Tax Declaration without penalties in case of the settlement of the corresponding balance;
- the grant of moratoriums and deferred payments to companies directly affected by the crisis and the suspension of enforced recovery measures against those companies;
- treasury support to companies through the allocation of a special envelop of CFAF 25,000,000,000²⁸ for the clearance of VAT credit stocks pending reimbursement;
- the extension to 30 September 2020 of the deadline for the payment of the property tax for 2020;
- full deductibility of donations and gifts offered by companies to combat the Covid-19 pandemic, to determine the corporate tax;
- the exemption from the tourist tax in the hotel and catering industry for the rest of 2020, with effect from March 2020;
- the exemption from the withholding tax and the parking tax for taxis and motorbikes, as well as the axle tax for the 2nd quarter of 2020;
- the exemption from the corporate and council taxes (market fees, etc.) to the benefit of small food retailers for the 2nd quarter of 2020;
- the temporary 3 months suspension of the payment of parking fees and demurrage charges in the Douala and Kribi ports for basic necessities;
- the creation of a MINFI-MINEPAT Consultation with main economic actors, to mitigate the effects of the crisis and foster a quick recovery of the activity;
- the 3 months (April, May and June 2020) suspension of on-the-spot checks by the NSIF;
- the cancellation of penalties for late payment of social contributions to the NSIF, upon reasoned request;

²⁸ About 38,167,938.93 Euros.

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- the spreading over 3 months of the payment of the social insurance contribution debts for the month of April, May and June 2020, upon reasoned request;
- the continuation in May, June and July 2020 of the payment of family allowances to company staff who could not pay their social insurance contributions or those who were laid off due to a downturn in businesses, namely in the catering, hotel and transportation sectors;
- the increase of family allowances from CFAF 2,800²⁹ to CFAF 4,500³⁰;
- the 20% increase of former pensions which did not benefit from the automatic increase which resulted from the 2016 reform.

72- In June 2020, the Government adopted, a **response and economic and social resilience strategy** based on 5 pillars, namely strengthening of the health system³¹, economic and financial resilience³², strategic supply³³, enhancement of research and innovation³⁴ and social resilience³⁵. This response strategy is consistent with other ongoing development planning documents, such as the National Development Strategy 2020–2030 and the Industrialisation Master Plan.

73- To ensure the financing of the fight against the coronavirus, the President of the Republic created on 31 March 2020, the *Special National Solidarity Fund for the Fight against Coronavirus and its Economic and Social Repercussions* with a first allocation of CFAF 1,000,000,000³⁶. By Ordinance No.2020/1 of 3 June 2020 to amend and supplement some provisions of Law No. 2019/23 of 24 December 2019 : Finance Law of the Republic of Cameroon for the 2020 financial year, this National Solidarity Fund became a Special Allocation Account for the fight against Covid-19. For more efficiency, this Ordinance provides that the provisions

²⁹ About 4.27 Euros.

³⁰ About 6.87 Euros.

³¹ Pillar 1 aims at preventing the spread of the Covid-19 pandemic and treating Covid-19 patients. Fund allocated: CFAF 58,700,000,000.

³² Pillar 2 has to do with mitigating the economic and financial impact of the health crisis on companies. Fund allocated: CFAF 37.5 billion.

³³ Pillar 3 aims at ensuring the continuity of basic necessities supply. Fund allocated: CFAF 5,500,000,000.

³⁴ Pillar 4 deals with encouraging the local development of innovative solutions which can help fighting the coronavirus. Fund allocated: CFAF 9,500,000,000.

³⁵ Pillar 5 has to do with mitigating the social impact of the pandemic on households and vulnerable people.

³⁶ About 1,526,717.56 Euros.

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of Section 47 paragraph 2 of Law N° 2018/12 of 11 July 2018 relating to fiscal regime of the State and other public entities concerning the 10% capping of payment to the general budget to the benefit of a special allocation account, does not apply to this Fund.

B: Support from Partners

74- The Government benefited from the support of its local and foreign partners.

1) Support from Local Partners

75- In a document published on 29 September 2020, the Minister of Public Health took stock of financial and material support from individuals, associations, trading companies, political parties, churches and community groups, which responded favourably to the call by Government for national solidarity in support to the fight against the coronavirus in Cameroon. As at the above-mentioned date, in addition to the initial donation of CFAF 1,000,000,000 by the Head of State, the appropriation account had received CFAF 2,246,917,287³⁷, for a total of CFAF 3,246,917,287³⁸.

2) Support from Foreign Partners

76- Several foreign partners supported the State in the fight against Covid-19. For example, the Africa Centre for Disease Control and Prevention donated test kits and protective equipment, and also sent teams of epidemiologists to Cameroon. On 29 October 2020, the WHO Office in Cameroon supported 5 health centres in the Littoral Region, through the donation of sanitary equipment, including 28,000 disposable shoe covers, 450 coverall suits, 1,440 safety goggles, 3,200 visors, 5,500 face masks, 20 polyester aprons, 23 water points, 200 refuse bags, 70 chlorine sachets, etc. HUAWEI on its part donated CFAF 100,000,000³⁹ during the same month.

77- Various other partners, such as UNDP, WHO, UNICEF and UNHCR, contributed in various ways, to the fight against Covid-19 in Cameroon, namely capacity building of the medical staff, material and kits supply.

³⁷ About 3,430,408.07 Euros.

³⁸ About 4,957,125.63 Euros.

³⁹ About 152,671.76 Euros.

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78- Generally, with regard to the mobilisation of resources to curb the Covid-19 crisis, funding received in 2020 from Technical and Financial Partners (TFPs) amounted to approximately CFAF 3 12,300,000,000⁴⁰. During the same period, some negotiations were conducted with other partners⁴¹ for greater support to the productive fabric and an effective recovery of the national economy.

§2: State Accountability on the Management of Resources and Equipment Earmarked for the Fight against the Pandemic

79- One of the axes adopted by the Government in general and the Ministry of Public Health in particular in the fight against the pandemic was governance and accountability. Thus, grievances expressed by the society regarding the management of funds and equipment allocated to the fight against the Covid-19 pandemic explained the clarifications made by the Government.

80- Civil society, some members of parliament and politicians criticised the Government for some shortcomings related to governance in the fight against Covid-19, the exclusion of some social actors and lack of transparency in the approval procedure for donation, poor communication, institutional over-centralisation, the lack of transparency in the management of funds allocated to the fight against the pandemic, the misappropriation of some equipment donations, and the non-valuation of therapeutic solutions from the traditional pharmacopoeia.

81- With regard to the clarifications made by Government the attention of national and international opinion was drawn to the fact, that the above mentioned Ordinance No. 2020/1 of 3 June 2020 clearly states that the use of resources from the above mentioned Special Fund shall be transparent, and shall comply with budgetary procedures and controls provided for by Law No. 2018/12 of 18 July 2018 relating to fiscal regime of the State and other public entities, and Law No. 2018/11 of 11 July 2018 to lay down the Cameroon Code of Transparency and Good Governance in Public Finance Management. The same Ordinance also provides for the preparation and publication of a bi-annual report on

⁴⁰ About 476,793,893.13 Euros.

⁴¹ It should be emphasised that the said partners request complete transparency in the use of resources made available to the Government through the respect of public procurement regulation, transparency in the award of public contracts and the drawing up of bi-annual reports on the management of those resources.

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expenditures related to the coronavirus, as well as of documents related to public contracts awarded under those expenditures. An independent audit of the use of the resources of the Fund is also provided for and will be carried out at the end of the year 2020 and the results published.

82- To fulfil the duty of communication, MINSANTE carried out with its radio and television partners, a daily campaign to inform on the epidemiological situation, the various measures taken by the State, and to raise awareness regarding the barrier measures taken and health care protocols adopted.

83- During several press briefings, the Minister of Public Health indicated items of expenditure for which funds had been disbursed; such as the purchase of respiratory and individual protection equipment, the strengthening of hospitals' technical capabilities, the intensification of screening, the creation of treatment centres, the purchase of drugs, and the the existence of an functional toll-free number (1510).

84- On 29 December 2020, the Minister of Public Health had a meeting with some Technical and Financial Partners (TFP)⁴² and some Administrations to evaluate the response to Covid-19 and look for the way forward. The meeting aimed at identifying the strengths and weaknesses of the response strategy adopted by the Government. Overall, it was found that the human, material and financial resources mobilised by the State and its partners in 2020 made it possible to relatively curb the pandemic through free medical care of patients⁴³, the reduction of hotbeds and the improvement of hospitals' technical capabilities⁴⁴.

85- In conclusion, 2020 will be remembered as the year in which the Covid-19 pandemic caused havoc, by challenging the most deep-rooted medical knowledge, and questioning the strongest socio-cultural beliefs and upsetting the toughest economic systems. The pandemic, coupled with other economic shocks⁴⁵, caused the economy of Cameroon to enter a severe recession. However, despite this general difficult background, the State did its best to guarantee Human Rights in 2020.

⁴² Representatives of UNHCR, UNICEF, WHO, UNDP, UN, etc.

⁴³ Out of 25,000 people affected by the virus in December 2020, more than 95% were healed.

⁴⁴ 16 laboratories were created, energy concentrators were installed in hospitals, etc.

⁴⁵ The security crisis in the Far North, North West and South West Regions, the fall of commodity prices, namely oil among others, which affected tax revenues and currency reserves.

PART ONE

CIVIL AND POLITICAL RIGHTS



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INTRODUCTION TO PART ONE

86- The promotion and protection of the right to life, physical and moral integrity, liberty, security and the right not to be subjected to torture were a daunting task for the Government, given the constant attempt to strike a balance between the State's obligation to keep persons living in Cameroon safe and the respect for Human Rights.

87- In a context characterised by Covid-19-imposed constraints, the right to fair trial was guaranteed among others by strengthening human resources, notably in the North West and the South West Courts of Appeal, respect for deontology and capacity-building of stakeholders tasked with rendering justice.

88- Freedom of expression and communication continued to evolve with the concern of providing people with quality and diversified information as well as secured access to new technologies.

89- The election of Regional Councillors and the setting-up of the National School of Local Administration (NASLA) were the main steps taken as part of guaranteeing the right to participate in the management of public affairs.

90- Part one of this Report focuses on the following issues:

- Right to Life, Physical and Moral Integrity, Right to Liberty and Security and Right not to be subjected to torture (Chapter 1);
- Right to Fair Trial (Chapter 2);
- Right to 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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91- The preservation of man's most precious attributes, namely life, physical and moral integrity, liberty and the right not to be subjected to torture constituted a challenge for the State in 2020, as infringements thereof continued. However, the State remained committed to its obligation of preventing risks related to the violation of such rights, sanctioning perpetrators and giving victims of such violations the possibility to seek redress.

SECTION 1: PERSISTENCE OF VIOLATION OF THE RIGHT LIFE, PHYSICAL INTEGRITY, LIBERTY AND THE RIGHT NOT TO BE SUBJECTED TO TORTURE

92- Violation of the right to life and physical integrity, liberty and the right not to be subjected to torture were recorded, and statistics on violent crime revealed that the infringements were persistent.

§1: Violation of the Right to Life and to Physical Integrity: Specific Cases

93- Infringements resulting from security crises, attributable both to Defence and Security Forces (DSF) and to armed gangs were observed. An upsurge of violence was also observed in schools.

A: Abuses attributed to Defence and Security Forces

94- One of such relates to the attack in the **Ngarbuh** village in **Ntumbaw** in the North West Region. On 14 February 2020, elements of the DSF, alongside members of a Bororo vigilante group, retaliated to an attack staged by separatists during a patrol in the **Ngarbuh** neighbourhood. In the heat of the operation, civilians, including three (3) women and ten (10) children, were killed in the crossfire. The investigation ordered by the President of the Republic shed light on circumstances leading to this event and established responsibilities.

95- Civilian victims were also recorded in an operation conducted by the Cameroonian army in Mautu in the South West Region on 13 August 2020.

B: Atrocities committed by Armed groups

96- One of such gruesome atrocities was the decapitation of **Florence Ayafor**, a Prison Warder. As a matter of fact, on 11 August 2020, hor-

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ror reached its apex with the release of a video attributed to separatists in the North West and South West, showing the young woman, naked, with her hands tied behind her back, her body swollen and covered with bruises, begging her would-be killers to spare her life. Insensitive to her supplication, they beheaded her and brandished her head as though it was a trophy. The investigation initiated following this event was underway. Another case is the assassination of **ACHIRI COMFORT TUMASANG** with a machete on 11 August 2020 in Muyuka on grounds that she was collaborating with the army.

97- On 26 October 2020, armed men on motorbikes attacked the *Mother Francesca School* in the Fiango neighbourhood in Kumba, in the South West Region. The attack led to the death of 6 children, aged between 9 and 12 years by gunshot and machetes, while 13 others were injured. The perpetrators of this attack were still at large, and results of the investigation were awaited. Mention can also be made of the ambush of 10 May 2020, which claimed the life of **Priestley ASHU OJONG**, the young Mayor of Mamfe.

98- Also, in the Far North Region, *Boko Haram* attacks on civilians, particularly members of vigilante groups and persons accused of cooperating with Government forces were documented. On 18 January 2020, the terrorist group killed 6 civilians in village of Nganse in the Kolofata Sub-Division. On 3 August 2020, 19 civilians were killed in an attack in the Nguetchewe village at the Cameroon-Nigeria border, while 3 people were killed in the Gabas village, a locality in the Mayo Tsanaga Division, on 24 November 2020.

C: Upsurge of Violence in Schools

99-The year started with the death of **NJOMI TCHAKOUNTE Boris Kevin**, a 26 year old part-time Mathematics Teacher at the Government High School Nkolbisson. He was stabbed to death by B.N.B, his 17 year old student in 4^e *Espagnol* (Form 3) on 14 January 2020. The incident was sparked by the student's refusal to let the teacher confiscate his phone which he was using in class. As the Teacher insisted, the student took a compass and stabbed him in the chest. The author of the crime was arrested and brought before the competent court where proceedings were ongoing.

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100- On 16 November 2020, a student of the Government High School Kiiki was stabbed to death by another student from the Government High School Mouko, in the Kiiki Sub-division, Mbam and Inoubou Division. On 7 May 2020, another student in 1^{ère} A4 (Lower Sixth) of the Government Bilingual High School Bafoussam was also stabbed to death by his classmate. Again, in January 2020, **MBAPPE Arnaud Alexandre**, a student of the Government High School Obala, was wounded on the thumb with a machete by his classmate during an altercation.

101- Acts of violence were also documented in the heat of the Anglophone crisis as schools, Teachers and students were targeted by armed groups. Apart from the *Mother Francesca School* attack, an attack was perpetrated on 3 November 2020 on the Presbyterian Primary and Secondary School in Kumbo in the North West Region, where 11 Teachers, pupils and students were kidnapped by assailants. Also, **ATINGI Gedeon**, a Teacher, was killed by unidentified gunmen during an ambush in Muyuka.

§2: Violation of the Right to Liberty and the Right not to be Subjected to Torture

102- The desire of people to resume classes, to participate in various elections in the crisis-stricken North West and South West Regions, and the craving for illicit profit, were sometimes the motives for which armed groups arbitrarily deprived persons of their liberty, and in some cases, victims died.

103- On 5 January 2020, **CHOH Issa BOUBA**, Mayor of Babessi and some Municipal Councillors were kidnapped by armed men. A few days before, the Army freed 24 students from their kidnappers in the town of Muyuka. Furthermore, on 12 March 2020, 5 people were assassinated, including **CHEFOR Oscar**, Deputy Mayor of Babessi, and **NDANGSA Kenedy AKAM**, Mayor of Mbengwi both of whom had been kidnapped by armed men 15 days earlier. On 13 July 2020, armed men on motorbikes entered the Mmouck village in the South West Region and captured nearly 60 people. A dozen of them escaped, while the others were released after negotiations with the kidnappers.

104- Furthermore, there was the abduction and release, on 5 November, of Cardinal **Christian TUMI** along with 11 people including Fon **SEHM MBINGLO** in Baba in the North West Region; the death, in cap-

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tivity, of Chief **Emmanuel IKOME NGALLE**, captured on 13 December 2020 alongside his colleagues **Simon KOMBE**, Chief of Bolifamba, and **Emmanuel EFANDE EWULE**, Chief of Lower Bokova. The said colleagues were later released.

105- Judicial Police Units recorded 744 complaints of false arrests. As concerns kidnapping of minors, 812 complaints were recorded, including 349 kidnappings with violence, and 17 cases of torture reported.

§3: Statistics on Violation of the Right to Life, Physical Integrity, Liberty and the Right not to be Subjected to Torture

106- In 2020, the Police, the Gendarmerie and Courts closely monitored crimes.

Table 1: Statistics of the Gendarmerie on Violation of the Right to Life, Physical Integrity, Liberty and the Right not to be subjected to Torture

Offences	Capital Murder	Murder	Assault occasioning death	Unintentional killing	Torture	Grievous harm	Assault occasioning grievous harm	Simple harm	Slight harm	Indecency to child under 16-21	Prostitution (including child prostitution)
Number of investigation reports drawn up	429	1355	266	1290	02	456	2052	860	1654	56	121

Source: MINJUSTICE

107- Upon completion of investigations, case files are forwarded to the Legal Department.

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Table 2: Statistics of Courts on violation of the Right to Life Physical Integrity, Liberty and the Right not to be Subjected to Torture

Offences	Number of investigation reports received	Number of proceedings initiated		Number of persons convicted	Number of persons acquitted / discharged	Number of victims				Number of victims compensated	Perpetrators of the offence	
		preliminary inquiry	Before trial courts			M ⁴⁶	W	C	Boys		Girls	Number of Law Enforcement personnel (specify the occupation of the offender: Judicial/Legal Officer, Police and Gendarme Officers, Penitentiary Administration Personnel, Auxiliary of Justice]
Capital Murder	308	274	280	158	59	274	70	14	7	28	7	7
Murder	298	289	258	164	31	307	109	141	80	53	10	10
Unintentional killing	1478	71	1540	945	97	1097	379	8	1	637	8	38
Assault occasioning death	178	174	135	104	30	137	35	28	0	33	7	2
Assault occasioning grievous harm	283	39	368	251	73	181	82	2		162	0	39
Torture	15	13	10	1	0	2	4	4	1			
Grievous harm	64	65	69	38	8	47	23	32	135	13	1	0
Simple harm	1426	683	1106	709	568	734	224	48	119	330	8	15
Slight harm	2301	75	2236	1421	289	1524	658	18	156	421	4	27
Rape	265	166	254	208	34	6	128	2	10	69	0	12
Offences	Number of investigation reports received	Number of proceedings initiated		Number of persons convicted	Number of persons acquitted / discharged	Number of victims				Number of victims compensated	Perpetrators of the offence	
		preliminary inquiry	Before trial courts			M	F	Boys	F1:		Number of Law Enforcement personnel (specify the duty of the offender: Judicial/Legal Officer, Police and Gendarme Officers, Penitentiary Administration Personnel, Auxiliary of	Number of persons with authority over the victim (family relation, subordination relationship)

⁴⁶ M: Men; W: Women; C: Children.

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Offences	Number of investigation reports received	Number of proceedings initiated		Number of persons convicted	Number of persons acquitted / discharged	Number of victims				Perpetrators of the offence		
		preliminary inquiry	Before trial courts			M	F	Boys	F1:	Number of victims compensated	Number of Law Enforcement personnel (specify the duty of the offender: Judicial/Legal Officer, Police and Gendarme Officers, Penitentiary Administration Personnel, Auxiliary of Justice)	Number of persons with authority over the victim (family relation, subordination relationship)
Trafficking in persons	12	8	8	2	2	2	0	30	80			
Kidnapping of child	245	63	215	99	41	102	47	15	37	61	7	18
Kidnapping with use of fraud or violence	102	49	84	47	25	24	27	51	71	13	0	0
Indecency to child under sixteen	677	636	536	381	36	11	84	14	16	151	6	31
Indecency to child under 16-21	213	108	249	155	38	23	118	0	4	39	6	9
Forced marriage	2	1	3	3	2	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
Prostitution	62	1	62	42	10	1	1	1	2	1	0	0
Incest	27	5	26	13	1	5	17	5	0	0	0	1
Homosexuality	15	7	15	10	1	13	0	0	0	0	1	2
Pollution	27	1	28	6	6	1	0	0	0	6	0	0
Defamation through the press	56	0	58	15	14	33	24	0	0	8	0	0
Abuse of office	104	8	103	30	16	51	17	1	0	2	3	2
Corruption	73	6	69	38	20	47	21	1	0	14	0	0
Misappropriation of public property	148	141	169	57	17	0	0	0	0	15	14	7

Source: MINJUSTICE

SECTION 2: PREVENTING RISKS OF VIOLATION OF THE RIGHT TO LIFE, PHYSICAL INTEGRITY, LIBERTY AND RIGHT NOT TO BE SUBJECTED TO TORTURE

108- Capacity-building was provided for Law Enforcement personnel and efforts were made towards preserving the life and physical integrity of road users as well as control of establishments' classified as dangerous, inconvenient and unhealthy.

§1: Capacity-building for Law Enforcement Personnel

109- Human Rights courses were taught in training schools for Judicial and Legal Officers, Police Officers, Gendarme Officers, Penitentiary Administration Personnel and Defence Forces.

110- These include the following courses taught in National Security Training Centres: Ethics and Professional Conduct", "Human Rights", "Interna-

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tional Humanitarian Law, Rights of the child, Criminal Procedure, Judicial Police, Law Enforcement and Practice, Terrorism and Protection of Women and Children in armed and unarmed conflicts or humanitarian crisis. In addition to these initial training courses, there were also in-service training sessions which enabled personnel to acquire additional knowledge on the respect for and promotion of Human Rights. In addition, workshops were organised by the Ministry of Justice in collaboration with UNICEF on Children's Rights, for Judicial and Legal Officers as well as Police and Gendarme Officers. In this regard, mention can be made of the Training Workshop for Juvenile Justice Stakeholders of the Adamawa Region, held in Ngaoundere from 5 to 7 February 2020.

§2: Preserving the Life and Physical Integrity of Road Users

111- In 2020, 7303 cases of road traffic accidents were registered by the General Delegation for National Security (GDNS) and are as follows:

Table 3: statistics of road accidents

Type of road accident	Number of accidents	Number of persons wounded	Number of deaths
Material damage	5144
Body injury	1652	3043	...
Fatal accidents	487	...	594
TOTAL	7303	3043	594

Source: General Delegation for National Security

112- The GDNS implemented Government measures to curb this phenomenon which has devastating effects. These include practical advice given to drivers by the Regional Public Roads and Traffic Units, which tend to use more of road safety methods to raise awareness among road users. In other words, the GDNS opted for preventive policing in matters of road traffic offences. Furthermore, the Delegation for National Security was firmly committed to carrying out judicial investigations against perpetrators and accomplices of road traffic offences.

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§3: Inspection of Establishments classified as Dangerous, Unhealthy and Inconvenient

113- Inspection was conducted on establishments considered dangerous i.e. those in which health, safety and sanitation-related risks were identified. As a matter of fact, on 9 April 2020, a residential building collapsed in Yaounde, in the Obili neighbourhood, between the area known as *Carrefour Scalom* and *Chapelle Obili*. Also, another building collapsed on 30 May 2020, in Douala, in the Beedi neighbourhood, opposite the Douala Referral Hospital. These disasters claimed numerous lives and caused significant material damage.

114- The disasters are caused by failure to comply with technical and administrative standards. According to experts, the main causes of these incidents include, use of inappropriate material for the construction of certain parts of buildings, wrong dosage of cement, flawed soil and foundation studies, misinterpretation of results thereof and non-compliance with technical considerations.

115- With a view to reinforcing inspection of such establishments and reducing the number of buildings collapsing, the Prime Minister signed, on 9 December 2020, Decree No. 6472/PM to amend and supplement certain provisions of Decree No. 2014/2379/PM of 20 August 2014 to lay down terms and conditions for coordinating inspections of establishments classified as dangerous, unhealthy or inconvenient. Before this decree was issued, only the Ministry of Mines, Industry and Technological Development was competent to coordinate inspections in these establishments. Powers have also been devolved by this Decree to the Ministries of Defence, Tourism and to the General Delegation for National Security.

SECTION 3: GOVERNMENT RESPONSE TO INFRINGEMENTS

116- The Government's commitment to fight impunity regarding Human Rights violations was reflected by disciplinary and judicial sanctions.

§1: Disciplinary Sanctions

117- Sanctions imposed in 2020 are presented as follows:

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Table 4: Situation of Disciplinary Sanctions in 2020

Sanctions	Policemen	Penitentiary Administration
Warning	0	1
Suspension	2	0
Reprimand	2	5
Deferment in increment	2	4
Striking off the promotion list	0	0
Reduction in incremental position	1	0
Reduction in grade	0	0
Dismissal	0	0
Admonishment and additional hours of work	2	13

Source: GDNS/DAPEN

§2: Judicial Sanctions

118- In 2020, the hearing of some matters which had been pending was completed. Among them, is the case against 2 soldiers accused notably of the capital murder of 2 women and 2 children at Zeleved in the Far North Region (see §744).

119- On 6 May 2020, the Mbam and Inoubou High Court, in determining on the merits the case concerning **IBRAHIM BELLO**, found the two accused policemen guilty of torture and grievous harm. First Grade Police Inspector **D.S.J.** was sentenced to 4 years in prison, while Police Officer **B.N.** was sentenced to a suspended 3 year imprisonment term. They were also sentenced to jointly pay the sum of CFAF 50 000 000⁴⁷ as damages to the civil party. Elements of Defence and Security Forces who violated Human Rights were also prosecuted and sanctioned. In this connection, the 4 military officers allegedly responsible for the acts perpetrated in Ngarbuh were being prosecuted before the Yaounde Military Tribunal. Proceedings were ongoing.

SECTION 4: REMEDIES AGAINST VIOLATION OF THE RIGHT TO LIBERTY

120- Litigants were able to challenge the legality of their detention and regain their liberty through the procedure of habeas corpus before the Judge.

⁴⁷ About 76 224.51 Euro.

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121- In 2020, litigation relating to pre-trial detention is presented as follows:

Table 5: Situation of Liberty-related Litigation

Courts	Number of persons remanded in custody	Number of applications for bail				Number of persons released		Number of detainees released/acquitted		Number of decisions to grant bail reviewed by appeal Courts
		At preliminary inquiry		At hearing		By the Court on its own motion	With surety	Without surety		
		Number of applications granted	Number of applications rejected	Number of applications granted	Number of applications rejected					
CFI	...	347	240	811	677	389	573	550	1836	35
HC	4834	615	229	173	127	582	211	90	701	457
CA	987	40	48	52	22	9	24	15	90	24

APPLICATIONS FOR HABEAS CORPUS

Courts	Number of Habeas Corpus applications based on various types of detentions)	Administrative detention		Military detention		Ordinary Lawdetention		Remarks
		Granted:	Rejected	Granted:	Rejected	Granted:	Rejected	
HC	361	2	69	1	16	33	132	
CA	40	0	0	0	0	181	19	

Source: MINJUSTICE

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122- Overall, in 2020, the Government made considerable efforts to guarantee the protection of human life, physical integrity, liberty and the right not to be subjected to torture, despite constraints related to persistent infringements due to security tensions, unsafe roads and insecurity in schools. This protection was ensured by providing capacity-building for Law Enforcement personnel on the respect of ethics, meting of sanctions where necessary, and through remedies for victims of Human Rights violations.

CHAPTER 2

RIGHT TO FAIR TRIAL



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123- A major pillar of Human Rights protection, the right to fair trial, was put to test during the year under review by the Covid-19 health crisis, in the face of which the Judiciary remained resilient. Just as in previous years, procedural guarantees for fair trial were affirmed while institutional guarantees were reaffirmed.

SECTION 1: RESILIENT ADMINISTRATION OF JUSTICE IN THE CONTEXT OF COVID-19-RELATED HEALTH CRISIS

124- In the context of Covid-19, the administration of justice was resilient, through conciliating the need to continue providing justice-related services and preserving the right to health, and also by confronting, once again, the digitilisation of judicial procedures.

§1: Continuity of Justice-Related Services and Preservation of the Right to Health

125- The Covid-19 health crisis had an impact on the activity of Courts. In order to conciliate continuity of justice-related services and preserve the right to health, the central services of the Ministry of Justice (MINJUSTICE) and the Courts proceeded to adopt for their respective sectors, measures prescribed by the Prime Minister, Head of Government, in his special statements made on 17 March and 30 April 2020, in an effort to prevent and control the spread of the Covid-19.

126- In terms of taking ownership of prescribed measures and in order to remain open while protecting stakeholders of the judicial system, courts implemented the following measures: provision of hand-washing facilities; generalisation of the use of hand sanitizers; physical distancing; limited movement of staff and visits; and requirement to wear face masks in offices and courtrooms. Courts also periodically disinfected their premises, organised screening campaigns, instituted body temperature checks with thermo-flashes, limited gatherings to 50 people at most, and organised shift services in offices with many workers. With regard to hearings in particular, courts sometimes opted to limit access to courtrooms to 50 people, and at other times chose to progressively allowing access to courtrooms only to persons whose cases were being heard.

127- Despite these restrictive measures, most courts operated without interruption. In this regard, the Government prescribed, through MINJUSTICE, a more diligent processing of judicial proceedings, particular-

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ly those concerning detained persons. In this respect, in order to prevent delays or compensate for same, the number of court sessions and cases on the course list were increased. The abnegation of courts allowed the number of matters enlisted to increase from approximately 200,000 in 2019 to more than 220,000 in 2020.

128- Furthermore, courts entertained Covid-19-related proceedings. This is the case with business law and proceedings concerning ailing companies as a result of the slowdown or cessation of their activities due to the pandemic. The same is true regarding labour matters, with courts being seized for several dismissal procedures for economic reasons. Courts also conducted proceedings on eviction and renting fraud against people alleging the loss or drastic reduction of their income as a result of the economic impact of Covid-19.

§2: Digitalisation of Judicial Proceedings

129- Once again, the above-mentioned restrictive measures raised the issue of the digitalisation of judicial proceedings. In the absence of a corresponding legal framework, the courts made extensive use of communication tools such as telephone and fax. In addition, to facilitate the sharing of administrative information among staff, some courts resorted to the use of applications (WhatsApp and Zoom) and messaging services (Yahoo and Gmail).

130- In addition to the implementation of the project to computerise the judiciary, it is important to note that MINJUSTICE continued to implement the JUSTICAM platform in certain courts, notably in the Douala-Bonanjo and Yaounde *Centre-Administratif* Courts of First Instance (CFI), which allows for the sharing of data within and between courts. This platform heralds the digitalisation of procedures.

131- Prospectively, the digitalisation of judicial proceedings could concern: the transmission and electronic exchange of written data such as documents initiating proceedings, judicial warrants, extrajudicial documents, court decisions, letters and reports, as well as summonses and submissions; payment of costs by electronic method or any other automated payment; conduct of proceedings by video conference; and the creation of a database accessible to parties for the follow-up of their case files.

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SECTION 2: CONSOLATION OF INSTITUTIONAL GUARANTEES

132- During the period under reference, the right to equal access to the courts established by law once again prevailed, and the consolidation of the right to a competent, independent and impartial court continued.

§1: Right to Equal Access to Courts Established by Law

133- Promoted by the Government, the right to equal access to courts, in its intellectual, economic and geographical dimension, was marked by the continued dissemination of legal content, increase in the number of legal aid beneficiaries and prospects for extending the judicial map.

A: Continued Dissemination of Legal Content

134- The dissemination of legal content is an essential channel for intellectual access to courts. Legal content continued to be disseminated by way of hard copies which is the traditional method. New forms of dissemination of legal content, through New Information and Communication Technologies (NICTs) made it possible to reach a large number of litigants. Legal document in digital format was thus designed. Moreover, some Public Administrations created websites where normative instruments governing them can be downloaded, while others updated their database which was already online.

135- Still with a view to facilitating intellectual access to legal content, the Government continued its efforts to publish all the normative instruments of the State into English and French, the two official languages.

B: Increase in the Number of Legal Aid Beneficiaries

136- Law No. 2009/4 of 14 April 2009 to organise legal aid, allows low-income litigants who wish to assert their rights before the courts to be granted full or partial waiver of related costs by the State.

137- To underscore Government's interest in legal aid, two papers relating to "free judicial services" were presented during the meeting⁴⁸ of Heads of

⁴⁸ At the end of the meeting, based on findings according to which the main obstacle to the principle of free justice is linked to certain costs, the following steps were recommended: harmonisation of the cost of judicial documents; rationalisation, by Heads of Courts of Appeal, measures for visits to the locus in quo, related costs as well as deposits paid for filing of cases in court; revision of the Criminal Procedure Code (CPC) and the Law No. 2006/15 of 29 December 2006 on Judicial Organisation regarding their provisions on the costs for the processing of records of appeal to the Court of Appeal and to the

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Courts of Appeal and Regional Delegates of Penitentiary Administration, held on 26 October 2020 in Yaounde under the chair of the Minister of State, Minister of Justice, Keeper of the Seals. It was highlighted, the normative and institutional mechanisms that contribute to ensuring the principle of free justice by allowing partial or total exemption from costs, either ex officio or at the request of parties in line with legal aid. The de jure and de facto obstacles that have an impact on the effectiveness of legal aid were deplored.

138 Further underscored were challenges relating to legal aid, which include lack of related Legal Aid Commissions in some courts and lack of adequate funding for the operation of these commissions⁴⁹.

139- In any case, legal aid commissions granted 163 applications for legal aid, compared to 126 in 2019. This is reflected in the table below.

Table 1: Attribution of legal assistance in 2020

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		
			Decision of full grant	Decision of partial grant	Number of men	Number of women	Others (Detainees, refugees, internally displaced person, indigenous populations (Pygmies, Mbororos) + persons with disabilities
CFI	48	10	16	0	15	7	0
HC	112	21	62	26	55	26	0
CA	28	10	10	5	10	6	0

Source: MINJUSTICE

Supreme Court; update the provisions of the Code de procedure Civile et commerciale (CCPC) on the payment of deposits; regulate the pronouncement of civil penalty and its assessment payment; and integrate the prison health system into the national health system.

⁴⁹ In reality, in addition to being silent on the payment of travel expenses of members of the commission the aforementioned Law No. 2009/4 only instituted commissions at the Supreme Court, in Military Tribunals, in Courts of First Instance (CFI), in High Courts (HC) and in Courts of Appeal (CA). The other challenge is the effective participation of members in the deliberations of the commissions as well as the appointment of members by the Administrations and professional organisations concerned.

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C: Prospects for Extending the Judicial Map⁵⁰

140- The extension of the judicial map is part of a programme titled “Governance and Institutional Support for the Justice Sector”, one of the activities of which is the “Improvement of Court Activities”. Section 16 of the aforementioned Law No. 2006/15 provides for the creation of one Court of First Instance per sub-division. In 2020, out of 360 subdivisions in Cameroon, there were 75 CFIs, 29 of which were autonomous and 46 were paired with High Courts. To reduce this gap, the State of Cameroon committed itself, since 2013, to put in place a plan to increase judicial infrastructure through the Ministry of Justice.

141- In 2020, a team from the Division for Research and Planning of MINJUSTICE⁵¹ conducted two missions to the Soa and Sa’a localities in the Centre Region, where sites of 5 and 6 hectares respectively were identified for the construction of courthouses.

§2: Respect for the Right to a Competent, Independent and Impartial Court

142- The requirement for quality justice compelled Judicial Authorities to observe rules of competence, as well as those relating to the independence and impartiality of courts.

A: Implementation of the Right to a Competent Court

143- The *ratione loci* and *ratione materiae* competence rules of Cameroonian courts are laid down in various instruments. In courts hearing criminal and civil matters as well as those adjudicating on administrative cases, the obligation to comply with these rules was implemented. Some courts ruled on the scope of their jurisdiction. Courts that took decisions beyond their jurisdiction had the said decisions quashed.

144- Thus, on subject matter competence, in the case of Mrs **N.F.A** vs. Mr **K.W.J**, which was the subject of Judgment No. 521/CIV of 15 June 2020, the Wouri High Court made the following statement: *Whereas the ad litem*

⁵⁰ In 2020, Cameroon had 1 Supreme Court, 1 Special Criminal Court, 10 Administrative Courts, 10 Military Tribunals, 10 Courts of Appeal, 12 High Courts, 47 High Courts and Courts of First Instance, 29 Courts of First Instance and 447 Customary Courts.

⁵¹ In 2015, follow-up of this programme was entrusted to the said Division, which conducted missions in the 10 Regions of Cameroon, during which, it identified sites on which CFIs could be constructed.

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provision is a temporary measure which is ordered by the conciliating Judge; That the parties in this case requested this provision from the trial court; That consequently, this request can only be examined by the aforementioned court in the case of its acquisition or reduction; That consequently it should declare itself incompetent to rule on this application.

145- In the same vein and on territorial jurisdiction, in the case of Mrs **K.D.K.R.L** vs. Mr **K.D**, the Moungo High Court, by Judgment No. 23/CIV rendered on 2 April 2020, made the following statement: *"Whereas it is established case law that the competent court to hear the divorce case of a detained person is that of the place he is detained in...; That the applicant stated that in 2014, her husband was sentenced to five years in prison and incarcerated in the Bafoussam Central Prison; That therefore, in the absence of proof of his release and his current address, there is every reason to deduce that he is still under detention in the said prison; That it is construed that this court is competent to rule on this application for divorce; That it is appropriate to declare itself incompetent *ratione loci* and to refer the plaintiff to the appropriate court"*.

B: Implementation of the Right to an Impartial Court

146- In 2020, no proceedings for judicial misconduct were recorded. However, Presidents of Courts of Appeal received 20 applications challenging Legal and Judicial Officers (12 of which were rejected and 8 were pending), based on the provisions of Sections 591 of the CPC and 159 of the CCPC.

C: Measures to Strengthen the Right to an Independent Court

147-With a view to consolidating the right to an independent court, the Government took diverse measures to ensure that judicial personnel respect ethical obligations, increase staff numbers; build the capacity of judicial personnel and allocate various financial resources to the justice sector.

1) Increasing Staff Numbers and Building the Capacity of Judicial Personnel

148- With regard to Judicial and Legal personnel, in addition to promotions in grade and appointments, the Higher Judicial Council held in Yaounde on 10 August 2020 allowed the absorption of 244 Pupil Magistrates into the Judiciary. In the same year, 300 Assistant Court Regis-

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trars (of whom 116 men and 184 women), 200 Secretaries (of whom 29 men and 171 women) were recruited. In addition, 90 English-speaking Court Registrars recruited through a special competitive examination for the North West and South West Courts of Appeal were deployed on 4 November 2020. The following tables show the number of judicial staff as at 31 December 2020.

Table 2: Number of Judicial and Legal Officers in 2020

Grades	Total number
Super scale group 1	53
Super scale group 2	112
4 th grade	239
3 rd grade	271
2 nd grade	588
1 st grade	563
	1, 826

Source: MINJUSTICE

Table 3: Number of non-Judicial and Legal Officers in 2020

	Total number
Civil Servants	3,306
Non- Civil Servants	1,353

Source: MINJUSTICE

149- Furthermore, with regard to capacity-building activities for judicial personnel, 77 Judicial and Legal Officers and 545 non-Judicial and Legal Officers received training in 2020. In addition to induction training provided to newly recruited Secretaries and Assistant Court Registrars, capacity-building focused on various topics, including those relating to Human Rights, OHADA law, the fight against terrorism, cybercrime and cybersecurity, and CEMAC community law.

2) Variations in Financial Allocations to the Justice Sector

150- As indicated in Law No. 2019/23 of 24 December 2019 which is the Finance Law of the Republic of Cameroon for the year 2020, *the budget of MINJUSTICE stood at CFAF 65, 825, 000, 000 out of the total budget of the state which stood at CFAF 4 409 000 000 000* ⁵².

⁵² About 100,496,183.21 Euros.

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151-The table below shows the budget allocated to MINJUSTICE over the 2012-2020 period. Compared to the 2019 Financial Year, the budget for 2020 Financial Year slightly decreased in relative value by 0.06%. The investment budget remained relatively low compared to the operating budget.

Table 4: Financial allocations to MINJUSTICE (in millions of CFAF⁵³)

Financial Years	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
MINJUSTICE Budget	20,000	33,119	46,259	47,992	44,810	59,498	63,454	66,316	65,825
Operation	18,000	30,619	42,187	42,920	41,750	56,298	58,778	60,146	60,325
Investment	2,000	2,500	4,072	5,072	3,072	3,200	4,676	6,170	5,500
Percentage share in the national budget	0.70%	1.04%	1.39%	1.38%	1.05%	1.36%	1.31%	1.38%	1.32%

Source: MINJUSTICE

152- Instead, the budget of the Supreme Court constantly increased. It increased from CFAF 2,862,000,000⁵⁴ in 2017 to CFAF 3,336,000,000⁵⁵ in 2018, then to CFAF 4,504,000,000⁵⁶ in 2019 and finally to CFAF 5,503,000,000⁵⁷ in 2020. It is the same trend as concerns the budget allocated to the Constitutional Council, which increased from CFAF 2,774,000,000⁵⁸ in 2019 to CFAF 3,244,000,000⁵⁹ in 2020.

153- The budget initially allocated to the justice sector by the *aforementioned Finance Law* was scaled down by Ordinance No. 2020/1 of 3 June 2020 the subject of which deals with budget amendment.

⁵³ CFAF1 000,000 is equivalent to 1,526.72. Euros.

⁵⁴ About 4,369,465.65 Euros.

⁵⁵ About 5,093,129.77Euros.

⁵⁶ About 6,876,335.89 Euros.

⁵⁷ About 8,401,526.72 Euros.

⁵⁸ About 4,235,114.50 Euros.

⁵⁹ About 4,952,671.76 Euros.

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3) Compliance with Ethical Obligations by Judicial Staff

154- In a bid to ensure compliance with ethical obligations⁶⁰, the General Inspectorate of Judicial Services (IGJS) of MINJUSTICE conducted document and on-site controls. Document control was conducted through the use of quarterly statistics on court activities submitted by Heads of Courts. Three on-site controls were conducted in the Courts of Mbalmayo from 7 to 10 December 2020, of Bafia from 14 to 16 December 2020, and of Monatele from 21 to 23 December 2020. The number of controls was affected both by the need to respect the restrictive Covid-19 response measures and budgetary constraints connected with the budget cut of the MINJUSTICE.

155- As regards disciplinary follow-up of judicial staff, the IGJS received and processed 185 complaints. It ordered 52 investigations, sent 1 observation letter, 1 query, 30 observation requests and referred one case to the disciplinary body.

156- Furthermore, at the end of the above-mentioned meeting of 26 October 2020, Heads of Courts of Appeal were urged to supervise their personnel more strictly with regard to the respect of rules of ethics and deontology.

157- Finally, regarding sanctions, a Judicial and Legal Officer was dismissed for abandoning his post in accordance with Decree No. 2020/398 of 27 July 2020.

SECTION 3: STRENGTHENING PROCEDURAL GUARANTEES

158- Procedural guarantees of the right to fair trial were strengthened through compliance with the requirement for procedural fairness, respect for the requirement of public hearings, preservation of the rights of the defence, and implementation of the right to appeal.

⁶⁰ These are set by Decree No. 94/199 of 7 October 1994 to lay down the General Rules and Regulations of the Public Service, Decree No. 95/48 of 8 March 1995 (as amended by Decree No. 2004/80 of 13 April 2004) to lay down the rules and regulations governing the Judicial and Legal Services, Decree No. 2011/20 of 4 February 2011 to lay down the Special Rules and Regulations of the Corps of Court Registrars, Law No. 92/7 of 14 August 1992 relating to the Labour Code, and Decree No. 78/484 of 9 November 1978 to lay down the common provisions applicable to State Employees governed by the Labour Code.

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§1: Compliance with the Requirement for Procedural Fairness

159- Procedural fairness was implemented through the obligation to respect principles of adversarial proceedings and equality of arms and for the courts to deliver reasoned decisions.

A: Principles of Adversarial Proceedings and Equality of Arms

160- Any breach of these principles were sanctioned, depending on the case, by reviewing Court decisions rendered or by rejecting documents that had not been forwarded to the opposing party. In addition to indicating the verdict in cases, Judges, in a bid to abide by these principles, ensured the implementation of various legal provisions relating in particular to summons and resummons of defendants summoning of parties and the filing of documents and submissions thereon.

161- In Judgment No. 26/CIV/TGI/20 rendered on 15 July 2020 by the Sanaga Maritime HC, in the case of Madam **A.I.B.** vs. Mr. **H.P.**, concerning the nature of his decision, the Judge declared the following: "Whereas Mr. H.P. did not appear although he was formally summoned and re-summoned; that this is not a default judgement".

B: Obligation to Give Reasoned Court Decisions

162- The obligation to give reasoned Court decisions is an essential rule in proceedings, the stakes of which are high, since it is a safeguard against any form of arbitrary action and, above all, allows the Judge to explain the Judgment rendered and to show compliance with rational and legal reasoning.

163- Judgments passed by Courts that failed to respect this obligation were reviewed. Thus, according to Decision No. 10/CIV of 23 April 2020, the North Court of Appeal, in the case of Mr. **Y.A.M.** against Mrs. **H.** quashed a judgment for violation of the obligation to give a reasoned decision. Similarly, in the case of Mr. **W. vs Mrs. D.B.**, following Order No. 03/L of 7 July 2020, the said Court quashed a judgment for contradiction between the reasoning and the verdict.

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§2: Respect for the Requirement of Public Hearings

164- The principle remained that of public hearings but exceptionally, in camera hearings were ordered.

A: Principle of Public Hearings

165- The principle according to which justice is rendered in public and decisions pronounced in public was observed by Cameroonian courts. The table below illustrates the number of proceedings held in open court.

Table 5: Public Hearings in 2020

Courts	CFI	TPD (Tribunal de premier degré)	HC	CA
Number of public hearings	89,136	46,577	16,488	65,809

Source: MINJUSTICE

B: In Camera Hearings

166- Exceptionally, courts may either on their own motion or at the request of one or more parties in a given case, issue an order for in camera hearing for all or part of the proceedings when a public hearing is likely to be detrimental to State security, public order or good morals. The table below provides information on the number of in camera hearings.

Table 6: In camera hearings in 2020

Courts	Number of proceedings In camera		
	On the court's own motion		At the request of the parties
	Minors		
	Offenders	Victims	
CFI	699	22	160
TPD	35	4	95
HC	49	36	38
CA	1	2	0

Source: MINJUSTICE

§3: Preservation of the Rights of Defendants

167- Measures were taken to guarantee the right to Counsel, the right to an Interpreter and the right to be tried within a reasonable time.

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A: Assistance by Counsel

168- The Bar Association provided for by Law No. 90/59 of 19 December 1990 to organise practice at the Bar, initiated a strike action which affected the management of certain proceedings although in general, litigants benefited from the right to be assisted by Counsel.

1) Overview of the Right to Counsel

169- Following Order No.190/DPJ/SG/MJ of 29 April 2020, the Minister of Justice published the final list of 874 Advocates in training who passed the end of training exam in 2020. On 31 December 2020, the Bar Association had 3,916 lawyers, of whom 3,000 men and 916 women. The table below provides information on the right to Counsel.

Table 7: Right to Counsel in 2020

Courts	Number of pre-trial detainee (PTD), Accused (AC), Complainants (CMP), Applicants (APL), Defendants (DF)										Number of Lawyers assigned by Courts	Counsel briefed by the parties
	Civil		Labour		Customary Law		Misdemeanour		Felonies			
	APL	DF	APL	DF	APL	DF	CMP	PTD	CMP	AC		
CFI	4455	3705	788	988	8852	1369	10002	11946	30	13	157	9734
HC	2499	1874	1038	1068	7	6	12	7	2109	2818	334	946
CA	1114	839	289	191	148	87	1125	1281	378	644	30	640

Source: MINJUSTICE

170- Moreover, litigants benefited from the assistance of Tax Consultants and representatives, including University Lecturers before Administrative Courts. Before the administrative court, pursuant to Article 20 of Law No. 2016/22 of 29 December 2006 to lay down the organisation and functioning of Administrative Courts and the any party who does not appear in person can be represented by a trustee or a Counsel. Similarly, pursuant to section 2 sub-section 2 of Law No. 2011/10 of 6 May 2011 to define the organisation and conditions for the practice of the profession of Tax Consultant in Cameroon, Tax Consultants are authorised to represent their clients before the courts. These professionals are grouped into a National Association of Tax Consultants.

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2) New Strike Action by Lawyers⁶¹

171- Meeting on 21 November 2020 in Yaounde, the Cameroon Bar Council, by Resolution No. 8/2020, decided on a strike action from 30 November to 4 December 2020 suspending any appearances before courts hearing criminal matters and electoral disputes. This Resolution was reached as a response to an incident that occurred during the hearing on 10 November 2020 in the Douala-Bonanjou Court of First Instance, in which Mr. **W.N.A.** and Mr. **M.J.A.C.**⁶², both Lawyers were remanded in custody for false pretence.

172- During the said hearing, 86 lawyers entered appearance for their colleagues who were the accused persons. They filed an application for release on bail, which the court examined and adjourned for decision on 25 November 2020. Several lawyers opposed the hearing of other cases on the cause list and the return of their colleagues to prison, demanding that the case be recalled and a decision rendered forthwith. It is under these circumstances that they invaded the courtroom, damaging facilities therein.

173- After unfruitful negotiations initiated by the State Counsel of the Douala-Bonanjou Court of First Instance, the Forces of Law and Order (FLO) intervened to disperse the Lawyers, among whom were Mr. **T.N.T.R** and Mr. **T.K.A**, both Lawyers⁶³. They were both presented at the Legal Department on 20 November 2020 and were remanded in custody pending trial before the aforementioned court, inter alia, for the offences of destruction of public property and group rebellion.

174- It should be noted that lawyers only enjoy immunity in the context of section 21 (2) of the aforementioned Law No.90/59 of 19 December

⁶¹ After the one which was the subject of the Resolution of 31 August 2019 taken by the Cameroon Bar Council.

⁶² By judgement of 25 November 2020, the Court found them guilty of false pretences and sentenced them to one year of imprisonment suspended for five years and to a fine of CFAF 1,000,000 (about 1,526.72 Euros) each, and to pay the costs which stand at CFAF 16,650 (that is 25.42 Euros). The Legal Department and the accused appealed against this decision. In accordance with Resolution No. 6/2020 of 13 November 2020, the Bar Council decided to conduct an ethics investigation against these two Advocates regarding the facts alleged against them.

⁶³ In a Judgment rendered on 23 November 2020, the Court found them guilty of destruction of public property and group rebellion. and sentenced each of them to 6 months in prison suspended for three years, a fine of CFAF 100,000 (About 1,67 Euros) and to jointly and severally pay costs amounting to CFAF 28,300 About 43.21 Euros. The Legal Department and accused appealed against this decision.

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1990 to organise practise at the Bar which stipulates that “no words spoken or documents produced by an advocate in court may give rise to any action for libel, abuse or contempt, unless such words or documents are contrary to his oath”.

B: Right to an Interpreter

175-To make up for the unavailability of official Interpreters in some courts, *ad hoc* Interpreters were used. The following table provides information on assistance by Interpreters.

Table 8: Assistance by Interpreters in 2020

Courts	Number of Interpreters assigned to the Court	Number of appeals concerning quality (identity, age, swearing-in...) and qualification (language...) of the Interpreter	
		Appeals relating to quality	Appeals relating to qualification
CFI	32	0	4
HC	27	0	4
CA	18	0	12
AC (Administrative court)	01	0	0
SCC	02	0	0
SC	05	///	///

Source: MINJUSTICE

C: Judgment within a Reasonable Time

176- The excessive length of court proceedings was one of the major complaints by litigants against Cameroon’s justice system. Long cause lists and the many cases before Human Rights Treaty Bodies involving Cameroon support this complaint.

177- In view of this, the Government, through MINJUSTICE, once again addressed the problem of judicial delays during the above-mentioned meeting of Heads of Courts of Appeal and Regional Delegates of Penitentiary Administration. On this occasion, a paper was presented on “the implementation of recommendations relating to the involvement of all stakeholders in the fight against judicial delays”.

178- In 2020, Heads of Courts continued to take measures to implement resolutions that had been taken in previous years to mitigate judicial delays⁶⁴.

⁶⁴ To wit : improving organisation of work within various departments and organising panels; building the

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179- In addition, during its document and on-site inspections, the IGJS of MINJUSTICE laid particular emphasis on the diligent processing of proceedings.

180- Furthermore, to ensure the prompt processing of proceedings, the courts rejected dilatory requests. Thus, in the case of the People of Cameroon and the State of Cameroon vs. **E.E.J.F** and **M.M.N.J.A**, which was the subject of Judgment No. 23/CRIM/TCS of 11 November 2020, seized with dilatory requests for counter-expertise and visit to the *locus in quo*, the Special Criminal Court stated that “the requests presented are clearly devoid of any relevant justification and must be rejected”.

§4: Implementation of the Right to Appeal

181- In accordance with legal provisions, litigants enjoyed the right to have their case re-examined. In addition to extraordinary means of appeal, which include appeal to the Supreme Court, third-party proceedings and application for review, ordinary appeals were used: application to set aside judgment in default and appeal as presented in the table below. However, it is regrettable that some appeals were not forwarded to relevant courts due to non-payment of costs for the processing of records of proceedings.

Table 9: Appeals in 2020

Appeals	Number of appeals received					Appellants			Number of appeals not transferred due to non-payment of costs for the processing of records of proceedings					Outcome of appeals									
														Number of inadmissible appeals					Number of decisions reviewed or annulled				
	TP D	CFI	HC	CA	S C	TP	Parties	Others	TP D	CFI	HC	CA	S C	TP D	CFI	HC	CA	S C	TP D	CFI	HC	CA	S C
Third party proceedings	248	46	38	19	2	2	46	105	17	0	0	0	0	17	5	1	6	0	17	0	1	0	0
Application to set aside judgment in default	178	1194	126	490	0	56	1305	7	0	0	0	0	0	6	39	2	45	1	3	82	4	2	0

capacities and motivation of staff with a view to preventing, controlling and correcting judicial delays; improving collaboration between services, particularly by setting up consultation forums between courts and prisons; drafting court decisions before they are handed down and eliminating excessive and dilatory referrals; better supervising staff and rating them more objectively; raising awareness among all those involved in the criminal justice system of the need to comply with legal requirements, particularly procedural deadlines; strengthening the supervision of staff; improving the speed with which information is exchanged between courts and prison registries; and stepping up checks on police custody and detentions

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Appeals	Number of appeals received					Appellants				Number of appeals not transferred due to non-payment of costs for the processing of records of proceedings					Outcome of appeals								
															Number of inadmissible appeals				Number of decisions reviewed or annulled				
	TP D	CFI	HC	CA	S C	TP	Parties	Others	TP D	CFI	HC	CA	S C	TP D	CFI	HC	CA	S C	TP D	CFI	HC	CA	S C
Appeal	311	3040	811	5477	25	551	5491	162	18	154	47	120	8	10	179	5	1594	0	0	102	0	716	80
Appeal to the Supreme Court	0	0	225	835	0	279	683	0	0	0	0	48	0	0	0	0	48	0	0	0	0	74	0
Review	0	14	6	20	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	11	7	18

Source: MINJUSTICE

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182- In all, the right to fair trial remained at the centre of the Government’s concerns. Despite challenges imposed by the Covid-19 pandemic, the new strike by Lawyers and the slight reduction in the budgetary allocation to MINJUSTICE, various institutional and procedural measures were taken to ensure the realisation of this right. The problem of digitalisation of judicial procedures remained a concern despite the resilience of the challenging atmosphere surrounding the administration of justice.

CHAPTER 3

**FREEDOM OF
EXPRESSION AND
COMMUNICATION**



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183- In 2020, despite the outbreak of the Covid-19 pandemic, the State spared no effort in continuing to guarantee the freedom of expression and communication. The objective was to provide and make available to the population, information from diversified, secure and quality sources. This was achieved by increasing access to information, securing access to information and communication technology and continuing the regulation of the exercise of this freedom.

SECTION 1: INCREASING ACCESS TO INFORMATION

184- The media sphere was characterised by the coexistence of traditional media and cyber media. This led to an increase in the number of traditional press organs, the reduction of the digital gap and financial support from the State through public assistance to private communication.

§1: Increase of Traditional Sources of Information.

185- In 2020, there were about 600 print media outlets, 250 radio stations, 35 television channels and 150 cable distribution companies. The figures increased as in 2019 there were 32 television channels and 200 radio stations.

§2: Continued Reduction of the Digital Gap.

186- Efforts to reduce the digital gap continued. Equipment destined to facilitate digital communication nationwide was acquired in view of the setting up of the Virtual Information Agency (VIA). The technical phase was therefore complete and correspondents could send files (audio/video/text) to the central desk for webcasting, although some updates were still needed to launch the operational phase. In this regard, the website of MIN-COM (www.mincom.gov.cm) was been used as an interface, pending the creation of its own site.

187- With regard to fixed tele-density, its deployment was focused on the construction of the fibre optic transport network and cable landing stations. Also, new investments were envisaged in 2020 for the implementation of *Fiber to the Home*, to boost the low rate (3.6%) of fixed tele-density; to this end, a mobile telephony concession was granted to *Cameroon Telecommunications* on 12 March 2020.

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188- Regarding mobile tele-density there were 19,334,164 subscribers representing 74.34%.

189- As regard the provision of 40,000 villages with modern telecommunications, the value was largely exceeded with the coverage of the entire target with mobile network. The coverage rate of the mobile electronic communications network, connected to 2G, 3G and 4G access technologies was around 65%.

190- The internet access capacity was 100 G/s instead of the 2Mb/s initially planned.

§3: Public Assistance to Private Communication

191- The restructuring of this assistance (financial, material and technical support) implemented by Order No. 31/MINCOM/CAB of 13 April 2020 to reorganise access conditions to public assistance to private communication enabled press enterprises to benefit from it on the basis of more specific criteria⁶⁵. Firstly, the appellation changed to State Institutional Support to Private Communication. Secondly, enjoyment of the assistance was narrowed down to written and cyber press enterprises. Audiovisual press companies (eligible for funding from the special audiovisual fund established by Law No. 2015/7 of 20 April 2015 governing audiovisual activity), printing houses and global communication agencies, unlike in the past, are excluded from the new regulation, with a significant impact on the budget to be distributed.

192- The calculation method that prevailed took into account not only the overall amount to be distributed to beneficiaries, but also applications for assistance. The national commission in charge of examining files grades them and the distribution is conducted by a committee and in absolute transparency. This commission, which sits at the central level, comprises representatives of public administrations and institutions, and representatives of professionals publishing in English and French. Reasons for recurrent rejection of applications for assistance were related to file compilation. In its new configuration, the commission held its first session in June 2020, to distribute the sum of CFAF 240,000,000⁶⁶ among beneficiaries.

⁶⁵ It is granted to companies that publish newspapers and magazines that appear at regular intervals and to online press companies.

⁶⁶ About 366,412.21 Euros.

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SECTION 2: SECURING ACCESS TO INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

193- With a view to securing the national digital environment which was marked by attacks on both individuals, corporate bodies and on infrastructure, Government proceeded to strengthen the capacity of cyberspace stakeholders, conduct security audits and monitor security.

§1: Awareness-Raising and Capacity-building of Cyberspace Stakeholders

194- The National Agency for Information and Communication Technologies (ANTIC) organised a series of activities aimed at raising awareness and strengthening capacity in the fight against cybercrime.

A: Awareness-Raising Activities

195- To fulfil its obligation to raise awareness on the importance of digital technologies, ANTIC organised the National Internet Governance Forum (IGF, CM) in Douala from 22 to 26 June 2020 and Data Source Name and the Digital Transformation Forum Cameroon was held in Yaounde from 9 to 11 December 2020.

196- Furthermore, as part of the follow-up of activities to fight against cybercrime, ANTIC raised the awareness of Focal Points of Public Administrations and that of public and private bodies on the vulnerability of their information systems and on techniques to prevent unauthorised intrusions therein.

197- The Ministry of Posts and Telecommunications (MINPOSTEL) organised in Yaounde, from 3 to 5 November 2020, the first ever national forum on cyber security and the fight against cybercrime, under the theme national cyberspace and security challenges. This forum was part of the continuum of the national campaign to promote a culture of cyber security and raise awareness on the responsible use of social networks.

B: Training Activities

198- ANTIC organised a Training Workshop for Public Administrations on Cybersecurity, in Kribi from 29 September to 3 October 2020; a Training Seminar for Registration Authorities and awareness-raising of Companies on the security of web platforms using Transport Layer Secu-

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rity Certificates issued by ANTIC in Douala from 27 to 30 October 2020; A Training Seminar for Operational Personnel of Security Forces on Digital Investigation Techniques, Cyber Warfare Strategy, Cyber Education and a National Competitive examination on Hacking in Kribi from 16 to 21 November 2020; an awareness-raising seminar for 50 Judicial and Legal Officers and Judicial Police Officers of the Adamawa and North Regions on cybersecurity and cybercrime in Ngaoundere from 2 to 4 December 2020; and a Workshop on Data Protection in Edea from 12 to 14 August 2020.

199- These seminars, which were organised in the context of the fight against Covid-19 were characterised by minimal physical participation, videoconferences being preferred in most cases.

200- ANTIC also assisted judicial authorities and various national security agencies⁶⁷ in the search for digital evidence, identification of cyber-criminals and transmitting them to competent courts.

§2: Security Audits

201- ANTIC conducted security audits of information systems in some entities, with the aim of testing their vulnerability, detecting threats and possible security gaps in their electronic communication systems and networks. These audits were followed by reports containing counter measures to the security gaps detected.

202- These operations concerned 36 Ministries, 10 public institutions and companies, 5 finance institutions, 3 mobile telephone operators and an Internet service provider. Of a total of 55 audit missions conducted, ANTIC detected 5,660 threats.

§3: Security Watch

203- As part of security watch of Cameroonian cyberspace conducted by ANTIC, 1,714 cases of identity theft concerning members of Government were noted, mainly on social media, of which 1,245 were deleted. Some 37 Facebook pages were certified by ANTIC. The agency also received and processed 6,573 requests from security services, 22 complaints from internet users who were victims of cyber blackmail, 32

⁶⁷ MINDEF, SED, DGSN, DGRE, etc.

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complaints about Facebook account hacking and 16 complaints of harassment via social media.

204- Also, more than 5,000 threats were detected while conducting scans on the websites of 85 public administrations and sensitive private companies.

SECTION 3: REGULATION OF THE EXERCISE OF FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION AND COMMUNICATION

205- The Covid-19 pandemic imposed new challenges in the communication sphere, and the State continued to strengthen the capacity of stakeholders of the media sector and to mete out sanctions.

§1: New Challenges in the Communication sphere: Coverage of the Health Crisis Management.

206- The media and institutions in charge of the communication sector had to adapt their strategies and editorial lines to the covid-19 pandemic in order to report on the development of the disease and disseminate the State's response actions as well as the progress of research for a treatment or a vaccine and finally to raise awareness among the population about risks and barrier measures. Actions were thus carried out by the Ministry of Communication (MINCOM) and the National Communication Council.

A: Actions carried out by the Ministry of Communication

207- MINCOM conducted actions which involved raising awareness of the masses and training media professionals. These actions aimed at deconstructing people's prejudices about the disease, while encouraging them to respect recommendations of the World Health Organisation and the Government.

1) Awareness-raising

208- Awareness-raising involved MINCOM's press briefings and press releases, particularly: the press briefing on media fake news about Covid-19 on 17 April 2020; the joint MINCOM/MINSANTE/MINESUP/MINEDUB conference on 29 May 2020 on the resumption of classes on 1 June 2020 at all levels of education, and mainly on all measures prescribed by the

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Government to guarantee the health security of pupils, students and teaching staff during the pandemic.

209- A community awareness campaign, consisting of a vast deployment of mobile caravans with speakers was also organised, first in cities of Yaounde and Douala, then in the Adamawa, East and Far North Regions which were considered priority areas. This 12-day campaign was launched on 29 May 2020 under the theme: “the entire Nation mobilised against a common enemy”. The Public establishments, the *Société de Presse et d’Edition du Cameroun* (SOPECAM) and Cameroon Radio Television (CRTV) served as media relays for the said activities and made it possible to reach a wider public.

2) Training

210- Capacity-building seminars organised for media professionals were also strongly influenced by the health situation. In collaboration with UNICEF, MINCOM organised a capacity-building workshop for community radio presenters in all the Regions of Cameroon on the production of radio messages for the fight against Covid-19. The recommendations of the workshop included the multiplication of capacity-building seminars and reinforcement of barrier measures.

211- In partnership with UNICEF and UN Women, MINCOM also organised a capacity-building seminar for media professionals in the Adamawa, East, Far North and North Regions. Recommendations included the need to mobilise against stigmatisation of patients and to change the community’s perception of Covid-19; encourage respect for certain Human Rights principles relating to the management of health emergencies; ensure the protection of vulnerable people; encourage media professionals to respect privacy and medical secrecy and equip them with proper methods of communication on persons who died of the disease.

212- In collaboration with UNICEF, MINCOM also organised a training workshop under the theme: “Capacity Building Workshop for Media Professionals towards understanding and Raising Awareness on the Human Rights and Socio-economic Impacts of Covid-19”. Participants recommended the production of information spots, the establishment of a network of African Journalists for Human Rights and the contracting with 180 community radio stations.

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B: Actions of the National Communication Council

213- The National Communication Council (NCC), also addressed the health crisis between May and July 2020, by conducting two studies: one on the inclusion of people with disabilities in audio-visual content relating to Covid-19 in Cameroon; and the other on social communication during the Covid-19 pandemic and regulatory measures implemented.

214- These studies made it possible to report on the stigmatisation of Covid-19 patients, especially those with disabilities, misinformation on the disease and also to evaluate the national communication and response strategy in its health and financial aspects. Consequently the NCC carried out an editorial refocusing, while requesting media professionals to disseminate scientific truth instead of fake news and manipulations of all kinds. This was aimed at bringing back public serenity in an environment which was strongly marked by prejudice and fear of the disease.

215- In addition, NCC despite the pandemic, organised and participated in a number of activities, aimed at providing participants with additional knowledge in the exercise of their profession. These included, among others, the Regional Colloquium on Building and regulating together an African gender-inclusive media environment, organised from 11 to 13 February 2020 in Saly, Senegal by the Panos Institute of Dakar and the National Council for Audiovisual Regulation of Senegal; the capacity-building workshop for media professionals from 5 regions of Cameroon on "Media, Peace and Elections", held in Yaounde on 29 and 30 August 2020; the consultation mission with cable operators on the existence of some pro-secessionist channels broadcasting seditious messages via the cable network in the Moungo Division, Littoral Region on 4 December 2020.

216- Associations of media professionals also organised capacity building activities; mention can also be made of the multi-actor consultation workshop on the role of the media in the promotion of Human Rights, held in Yaounde on 29 October 2020. It was organised by Journalists in Africa for Development in partnership with the *Association des Juristes pour les Droits Humaines*, *Caractères Sans Frontières* and the European Union. The objective of the workshop was to present the Free Press for Human Rights project and the results of the Baseline Survey on time and space allocated to Human Rights in the Media in Cameroon.

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217- The presentation of the project aimed at contributing to the promotion of rights of Journalists and vulnerable groups, strengthening the capacity of the media to enable them promote journalism based on the promotion and protection of Human Rights, and creating a synergy of action between Journalists and stakeholders involved in the promotion of Human Rights. The project has a total budget of 497,895 Euros (about CFAF326, 121,225) (473,000 Euros (about CFAF309, 815,000) from the EU and 24,895 Euros (CFAF16, 306,225) from the project's own funds), for a duration of 42 months, and consists mainly of training activities for Journalists and other stakeholders in the sector of Human Rights.

218- With regard to the results of the Baseline Survey on time and Space allocated to Human Rights in the Media in Cameroon, it emerged that a minute space is reserved for Human Rights in the media. As a matter of fact, only 0.5% in the written press, 2.96% on radio and 3.33% on television.

219- Recommendations include: the enactment of a law on access to information and on Human Rights defenders, the decriminalisation of press offences, the specialisation of Journalists in Human Rights and an increase in assistance to private communication.

§2: Sanctioning Abuses in the Media Sector

220- The content of certain information broadcasted gave rise to actions before the NCC and the Courts.

A: Regulation by the National Communication Council

221- In 2020, as part of the regulation of the content of broadcasted information, the NCC received 43 complaints, of which 15 were filed by individuals, 15 by public authorities, 7 by various associations and the NCC seised itself of 6 complaints. Five decisions were taken against press organs, 3 against written press namely: *La Météo*, *Le Soir* and *Mutations*, and 2 against the audiovisual media: *Vision 4* and *Royal FM*, for broadcasting offensive comments that undermine the honour and dignity of a community, for broadcasting unfounded and offensive statement, for professional misconduct, including failure to cross-check information brought to the attention of the public and for unfounded statements.

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222- Some 32 of these complaints led to formal notices being served on the media outlets found at fault.

B: Sanction for violations by Courts

223- Proceedings before Courts were mostly related to the violation of the rights of individuals.

224- Among pending proceedings against Journalists for violation of the rights of individuals, mention can be made of **C.B.** against Journalist **P.C.** who was been prosecuted before the Yaounde Court of First Instance- *Centre Administratif* for defamation and propagation of false news.

225- In 2020, the Yaounde Court of First Instance - *Centre Administratif* found Journalists guilty of infringing private interests through the press. These include: **NSIF** and **M.A.A. v. C.R.T.**, found guilty of defamation, propagation of false news and slander, sentenced to a 2 year suspended imprisonment term and ordered to pay the civil party a symbolic franc as compensation for moral damage suffered. The appeal by **CRT** against the decision is pending before the Centre Court of Appeal. In the case of **A.B.J.P.** against **B.G.G.**, the accused was found guilty of false report, propagation of false news, defamation and violation of the law on cybercrime, and sentenced to 2 years in prison and ordered to pay the civil party the sum of CFAF 25,000,000⁶⁸ as compensation. The case was pending before the Centre Court of Appeal.

226- The same court also rendered decisions in the following cases: **O.K.A. v. B.N.R.H, S.E.F. v. D.P.M. and N.J., T.C. v. R, F.F.F and N.B, J.P.N v. M.M, N.B** and the "Aurore Plus" weekly newspaper. The offences for which these media men were charged included defamation through the press, defamation through the Internet, insults and obscene publications, while the sentences pronounced against them were fines or suspended prison sentences, and compensation ranging from the payment of a symbolic franc to the civil party to the sum of CFAF 12,000,000⁶⁹.

227- As regards the case between **N.L.R.** and **H. A.**, it was pending before the Court of Appeal following an appeal by **H.A.**

⁶⁸ About 38,167.94 Euros.

⁶⁹ About 18,320.61 Euros.

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228- Despite contingencies linked to the Covid-19 pandemic, the State continued its policy of promoting and popularising Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs), and access to reliable, diversified and secure information. However, restructuring the media sector remains a challenge.

CHAPTER 4

RIGHT TO PARTICIPATE IN THE MANAGEMENT OF PUBLIC AFFAIRS



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229- During the year under review, the right to participate in the management of public affairs was marked by the completion of the process of decentralisation, the guarantee of electoral competition and enhancement of efficiency as well as the promotion of justice and equity in the public service.

SECTION 1: COMPLETION OF THE DECENTRALISATION PROCESS

230- The process of decentralisation reached its apex in Cameroon in 2020 with the reorganisation of some pre-existing bodies, the operationalisation of some institutions, the creation of a new institution to accompany decentralisation and increase in the General Decentralisation Grant.

§1: Reorganisation of some Decentralisation Monitoring Bodies

231- Three main decentralisation monitoring bodies that already existed were reorganised in 2020 in a bid to bring them in line with the new requirements introduced by Law No. 2019/24 of 24 December 2019 bill to institute the General Code of Regional and Local Authorities (GCRLA). These bodies include: the National Decentralisation Board, the Interministerial Committee on Local Services, and the National Committee of Local Finances.

A: National Decentralisation Board

232- On 3 November 2020, the President of the Republic issued Decree No. 2020/676 to lay down the organisation and functioning of the National Decentralisation Board (NDB). This text repealed Decree No. 2008/13 of 17 January 2008 which organised this body before the advent of the GCRLA.

233- This new Decree specifies the membership⁷⁰, duties and the terms and conditions of the NDB's functioning, as well as the missions of its Permanent Secretariat. Overall, the NDB is responsible for monitoring and evaluating the implementation of decentralisation. In accordance with Article 2 of the above-mentioned Decree, it proposes strategic guidelines regarding the decentralisation process, issues opinions and recommendations on the transfer of authority and resources to the Regional and Local Authorities (RLAs), as well as on the General Decentralisation Grant.

⁷⁰ The Prime Minister, Head of Government (President), the Minister in charge of RLAs (Vice-President), members of Government, RLAs (7 representatives for the Councils and 3 for the Regions), Members of Parliament (2 Senators and 2 Parliamentarians) and the Economic and Social Council (2 representatives).

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234- Major innovations brought by the new instrument included: clearly outlining the missions of the NDB, ensuring more autonomy for RLAs⁷¹, and including Members of Parliament in the composition of this institution.

B: Inter-Ministerial Committee on Local Services

235- On 9 November 2020, the President of the Republic issued Decree No. 2020/689 to lay down the organisation and functioning of the Inter-Ministerial Committee on Local Services (ICLS)⁷². It is an inter-ministerial consultation body, the mission of which is to ensure the preparation and monitoring of the transfer of authority and resources to RLAs. Specifically, the ICLS is responsible for drawing up programmes for the transfer of authority and resources, evaluating human and material resources necessary for the implementation of the authority transferred, evaluating the costs induced by the said transfers, monitoring the implementation by RLAs of the authority transferred, preparing an annual report on the status of decentralisation and local service, and conducting prospective studies and analysis in the field of decentralisation.

236- The ICLS is placed under the authority of the Minister in charge of RLAs⁷³. The above-mentioned Decree indicates its membership, the terms and conditions of its functioning and the missions of its Technical Secretariat. In distinction to the former instrument, the new Decree ensures more autonomy for RLAs⁷⁴, and restricts composition only to Ministries concerned with transfer of authority.

C: National Committee on Local Finances

237- On 21 December 2020, the Prime Minister signed Decree No. 2020/6635 to lay down the organisation and functioning of the National Committee on Local Finances (CONAFIL)⁷⁵. It is also a consultative body placed under the authority of the Minister in charge of RLAs, the

⁷¹ Henceforth 7 representatives Council Representatives compared to 4 previously; and 3 Regional Representatives compared to 2 previously.

⁷² Which repealed Decree No. 2008/14 of 17 January 2008 to lay down the organisation and functioning of the ICLS.

⁷³ The Ministry of Decentralisation and Local Development (MINDEVEL).

⁷⁴ 3 Regional Representatives compared to 2 previously; 3 Representatives of City Councils compared to 2 previously.

⁷⁵ This Decree repealed Decree No. 2011/1732/PM of 18 July 2011 to lay down the organisation and functioning of the National Committee on Local Finance.

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general mission of which is to boost the mobilisation of RLAs' revenue, particularly by instituting, collecting, securing and making optimal use of local taxes and duties. Specifically, CONAFIL ensures, inter alia, liaison between the various Ministries, organisations and RLAs involved in the assessment, issuance, collection and repayment of taxes and duties; ensures effective transfer of taxation and various allocations by the State to RLAs; contributes to the conduct of studies on new sources of funding for RLAs; contributes to the preparation, implementation and monitoring of appropriate strategies for the supervision of budgetary, financial and accounting activity of RLAs, etc.

238- The above-mentioned Decree sets out the membership, terms and conditions of the CONAFIL as well as the missions of its Technical Secretariat. It also creates the Regional and Divisional Local Finance Committees.

239- Although the new Decree did not bring any major innovations as compared to the former one, the fact remains that it brought CONAFIL in step with the new normative framework for decentralisation.

§2: Operationalisation of some Institutions of Decentralisation

240- Regional Councils were put in place. Also, conditions for the discharge of the duties of *Public Independent Conciliator* were specified.

A: Establishment of Regional Councils

241- The year 2020 went down in history as the year during which the first ever election of Regional Councillors was conducted. Preparatory measures made it possible to conduct the elections in generally acceptable conditions.

1) Preparatory Steps regarding the Election of Regional Councillors

242- By Decree No. 2020/547 of 7 September 2020, the President of the Republic convened the electoral colleges for the election of Regional Councillors on 6 December 2020. In a bid to ensure massive participation of members of the electoral colleges, expenses relating thereto were covered by the State, to the tune of CFAF 50,000⁷⁶ per member⁷⁷. Fur-

⁷⁶ About 76.34 Euros.

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thermore, the number of Regional Councillors per Division and per category⁷⁸ was determined by Decree No. 2020/526 of 2 September 2020.

243- The State made available the sum of CFAF 350,000,000⁷⁹ to 14 contesting political parties. A legal vacuum almost created inequality between the candidates in this election. In actual fact, the first category of candidates, consisting of delegates from divisions nominated by political parties, received funds allocated to them for the electoral campaign. The second category, made up of representatives of traditional rulers, was in a deadlock, as the law made no provision for them. They referred the matter to the President of the Republic, who arbitrated in their favour

2) Election and its Outcome

244- The election of Regional Councillors was effectively held nationwide on 6 December 2020. A total of 900 Regional Councillors had to be elected⁸⁰, corresponding to 90 per Region, that is, 70 Representatives of Divisions, and 20 Representatives of Traditional Rulers. The following results were obtained by the various political parties in the category of Representatives of Divisions:

Table 1: Number of Representatives of Divisions elected by political parties in 2020

Political parties	Number of Delegates
Cameroon People's Democratic Movement (CPDM)	601
National Union for Democracy and Progress (UNDP)	80
Cameroon Democratic Union (CDU)	17
The Cameroon National Salvation Front (FSNC)	2
Total	700

Source: ELECAM

⁷⁷ This flat-rate compensation was fixed by Decree No. 2020/527 of 2 September 2020 to lay down the terms and conditions for State payment of costs relating to the participation of members of electoral colleges in the election of Regional Councillors. This amount was paid to every member who actually participated in the election, at the behest of the head of the divisional branch Office of Elections Cameroon.

⁷⁸ Divisional delegates and representatives of traditional rulers.

⁷⁹ About 534,351.15 Euros.

⁸⁰ The Election was partially cancelled in some localities like the Menoua Division.

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245- The Executive Members⁸¹ of Regional Councils were elected during the session as of right of the Regional Councils held on 22 and 23 December 2020. In the North West and South West Regions, the members of the Regional Executive Councils⁸² were also elected.

246- Decree No. 2020/381 of 13 July 2020 to define the features of the attributes and insignia⁸³ of Regional and Municipal Councillors was issued to facilitate the exercise of their functions.

B: Determining Conditions to Discharge the Duties of Public Independent Conciliator

247- In accordance with articles 3 and 327 of the GCRLA, the North West and South West Regions enjoy a special status based on their linguistic specificity and their historical heritage. This special status is reflected in the singularities of the organisation and functioning of these Regions. It is in this context that Article 367 of the same Code instituted a public independent conciliator in the said Regions.

248- With a view to operationalising this important body, the President of the Republic issued Decree No. 2020/773 of 24 December 2020 to lay down conditions for discharge of the duties of Public Independent Conciliator in the North West and South West Regions. This is an independent authority appointed for a non-renewable six-year term, responsible for, inter alia, amicably settling disputes between users and Regional and Local Authorities, protecting the rights and freedoms of citizens in their relationship with Regional and Local Authorities; preventing and combating discrimination of which users may be victims, and proposing statutory and regulatory amendments to improve the quality of services at the regional and local levels.

249- Pursuant to article 6 of the above-mentioned Decree, persons proposed to discharge the duties of Public Independent Conciliator must be of Cameroonian nationality, native of the Region concerned, be above

⁸¹ The President, assisted by a Regional Bureau composed of a Senior Vice-President, a Vice-President, two secretaries and two Questors.

⁸² In accordance with article 352 of the General Code of the RLAs, it consists of a President, a Vice-President, a Commissioner for Economic Development, a Commissioner for Health and Social Development, a Commissioner for Educational, Sports and Cultural Development, two Secretaries and a Questor.

⁸³ These are the sashes, insignia, pin and cockade.

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35 years, have wide experience and a proven objectivity and integrity, be able to express themselves in both official languages of Cameroon and must not have been subject to a disqualification or final conviction for a felony or misdemeanour.

250- A complaint may be lodged with the Public Independent Conciliator by any natural or legal person, either by way of a written or oral complaint. He shall make his recommendations within 60 days of the referral. Where his recommendations are not implemented, he may order the Regional or Local Authorities concerned and, where necessary, prepare a special report which may be made public.

251- From the foregoing, it is clear that the Public Independent Conciliator is the main guarantor of cohesion and harmony between citizens and RLAs in the two regions concerned

§3: Setting up of a new Institution to support Decentralisation: The National School of Local Administration

252- The National School of Local Administration (NASLA) was established by Decree No. 2020/111 of 2 March 2020. It is a public administrative and professional establishment, headquartered in Buea in the South West Region, the mission of which is to provide initial training⁸⁴, further training, specific training and applied research in the field of RLAs, as well as the organisation of symposiums, seminars and conferences on all issues relating to the implementation of decentralisation and local development.

253- Specific training is intended for locally elected officials, persons exercising State supervision over the RLAs, managers of technical services of RLAs, agents in charge of civil status and personnel of associations, organisations and all other groups working for RLAs⁸⁵. This segment of the training is therefore geared towards the capacity-building of key stakeholders of decentralisation.

⁸⁴ Following Article 36 of the Decree, the initial training provided by NASLA consists of 3 cycles: cycle A for senior executives of local administration; cycle B for mid-level staff of local administration; and cycle C for specialised workers of local administration.

⁸⁵ Article 38 of the Decree.

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254- Members of the Board of Directors⁸⁶, the Director General⁸⁷ and the Deputy Director General⁸⁸ were appointed during the reference year, allowing NASLA to start its activities immediately, given that it inherited the assets of the Local Government Training Centre (CEFAM), which was dissolved.

§4: Increasing the General Decentralisation Grant

255- By Decree No. 2020/1730/PM of 14 May 2020, the Prime Minister set the General Decentralisation Grant for the 2020 Financial Year at CFAF 49,900,000,000⁸⁹ that is CFAF 13,900,000,000⁹⁰ for functioning and CFAF 36,000,000,000⁹¹ for investment. The amount increased by FCFA 100 000 000⁹² compared to 2019.

256- The general investment grant was intended for the financing of council projects featuring in the Project log book of the Ministry of Decentralisation and Local Development (MINDDEVEL)⁹³, and agreed upon by MINDDEVEL, the beneficiary Councils, the Ministry in charge of public investments and sector-based administrations. It was distributed to the tune of CFAF 10,000,000⁹⁴ per Council.

257- The uses for which the general operating grant was intended are mentioned in the following table:

⁸⁶ The Board Chair was appointed by Decree No. 2020/449 of 11 August 2020 while the Members of the Administrative Council were appointed by Decree No. 2020/452 of 12 August 2020.

⁸⁷ Decree No. 2020/141 of 25 March 2020.

⁸⁸ Decree No. 2020/142 of 25 March 2020.

⁸⁹ About 76,183,206.11 Euros.

⁹⁰ About 21,221,374.05 Euros.

⁹¹ About 54,961,832.06 Euros.

⁹² About 152,671.76 Euros.

⁹³ See extract from the project log book annexed to the finance law.

⁹⁴ About 15,267.18 Euros.

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Table 2: Distribution of the operating component of the General Decentralisation Grant

N°	Use	Amount in CFAF
1	Remuneration of Municipal Administrators	3 000 000 000 ⁹⁵
2	Provision for the remuneration of Chairpersons and Members of Bureaus of Regional Councils	2 000 000 000 ⁹⁶
3	Provision for Regional Councils to fully go operational	5 000 000 000 ⁹⁷
4	Functioning of the National Decentralisation Board	215 000 000 ⁹⁸
5	Functioning of the Inter-ministerial Committee on Local Services	250 000 000 ⁹⁹
6	Functioning of the National Committee of Local Finance	165 000 000 ¹⁰⁰
7	Functioning of the Inter-ministerial Committee for Decentralised Cooperation	40 000 000 ¹⁰¹
8	Functioning of the Committee in charge of following up procedures for the payment of basic salaries of Council Executives, Chairpersons and members of bureau of Regional Councils.	30 000 000 ¹⁰²
9	Printing and dissemination of the Local Development Index and the General Code of RLAs.	40 000 000
10	Financing the induction seminar of newly elected persons and operational stakeholders of RLAs.	300 000 000 ¹⁰³
11	Support for the National Programme for City Trades Training	60 000 000 ¹⁰⁴
12	Support to Council Unions	50 000 000 ¹⁰⁵
13	Support for the setting up of Council Employment Bureaus	50 000 000
14	Support to devolved State services which provide assistance to Councils and City Councils	600 000 000 ¹⁰⁶
15	Special or emergency operating expenditure for some Councils and City Councils.	2 100 000 000 ¹⁰⁷
	Total	13,900,000,000¹⁰⁸

Source: Prime Minister's Office website (www.spm.gov.cm)

⁹⁵ About 54,580,152.67 Euros.

⁹⁶ About 3,053,435.11 Euros.

⁹⁷ About 7,633,587.79 Euros.

⁹⁸ About 328,244.27 Euros.

⁹⁹ About 381,679.39 Euros.

¹⁰⁰ About 251,908.40 Euros.

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SECTION 2: GUARANTEE OF POLITICAL COMPETITION

258- In the year 2020, the state endeavoured to guarantee political competition by ensuring the financing of political parties as usual, consolidating the electoral system and organising two regular elections.

§1: Funding of Political Parties by the State

259- Despite the tough economic context which forced the State to downsize the budget¹⁰⁹, on the one hand, and the huge sums of money allocated to fight against the Covid-19 pandemic, on the other¹¹⁰, the State continued to finance political parties in 2020, in order to preserve their capacity to supervise and provide political insight to citizens, and above all to guarantee their participation in elections. An amount of CFAF 1,500,000,000¹¹¹ was disbursed for this purpose and distributed as follows:

Table 3: Funding of political parties by the State in 2020

	Political parties represented at the National Assembly	Political parties represented at the Senate	Political parties represented in Municipal Councils
1st instalment	CFAF 250,000,000	CFAF 250,000,000	CFAF 250,000,000
2nd instalment	CFAF 250,000,000	CFAF 250,000,000	CFAF 250,000,000
Total	CFAF 500,000,000	CFAF 500,000,000	CFAF 500,000,000

Source: MINAT

¹⁰¹ About 61,068.70 Euros.

¹⁰² About 45,801.53 Euros.

¹⁰³ 458,015.27 Euros.

¹⁰⁴ About 91,603.05 Euros.

¹⁰⁵ About 76,335.88 Euros.

¹⁰⁶ About 916,030.53 Euros.

¹⁰⁷ About 3,206,106.87 Euros.

¹⁰⁸ About 21,221,374.05 Euros.

¹⁰⁹ Following Ordinance No. 2020/1 of 3 June 2020 to amend and supplement some provisions of Law No. 2019/23 of 24 December 2019: Finance Law of the Republic of Cameroon for the 2020 Financial Year.

¹¹⁰ See Preliminary Chapter (Section 2).

¹¹¹ About 2,290,076.34 Euros.

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§2: Strengthening the Electoral System

260- Elections Cameroon (ELECAM) continued its efforts to guarantee the right to vote, the right to be a candidate, the right to information, the right to equal access of political actors to the media and the freedom of expression and freedom of assembly.

261- Prior to the elections, ELECAM worked towards consolidating the electoral register. It was thus able to raise awareness and mobilise the electorate, with a view to registering citizens of voting age on the electoral register and ensuring their effective participation in political life, both on the national territory and abroad. To this end, competent electoral commissions were deployed throughout the country in a bid to reach population segments that are farthest from ELECAM Council branches. This outreach mechanism, which specifically targeted women, young people, persons with disabilities and vulnerable minorities, who overall tend to turn away from politics, made it possible to achieve massive and inclusive registration. After being updated, the electorate convened to elect Parliamentarians at the National Assembly and Municipal Councillors on 9 February 2020 comprised 6,853,498 registered voters. Similarly, a complete census of members of electoral colleges responsible for voting Regional Councillors on 6 December 2020 indicated 24,312 voters, of which 10,267 Municipal Councillors and 14,045 Traditional rulers.

262- ELECAM equally contributed to the respect of the electoral calendar by making available all necessary equipment and logistics, ensuring the material organisation and supervising the polling operations conducted in 2020.

§3: Organisation of Elections

263- The State organised the election of Members of the National Assembly and that of Municipal Councillors. Regarding general data on these two polls, of the 6,853,498 persons registered on the electoral lists, 2,806,690 persons voted in the 26,000 polling stations set up, indicating a participation rate of 43% and an abstention rate of 57%. A total of 2,685,800 valid votes were cast while 120,890 invalid ballots were recorded.

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A: Election of Municipal Councillors

264- By Decree No. 2019/612 of 10 November 2019, the President of the Republic convened the electoral colleges for the election of Municipal Councillors on 9 February 2020. Candidates from a total of 41 political parties were registered for the election.

265- ELECAM's Electoral Board scrutinised candidates' files, ensuring, in accordance with the law, that sociological aspects and the gender approach were taken into account¹¹².

266- The State disbursed the sum of CFAF 850,000,000¹¹³ according to distribution rules in force¹¹⁴, paid to political parties in 2 instalments to enable them finance their electoral campaign. However, some political parties considered the funds insufficient and criticised its late allocation.

267- At the end of the election, the 360 municipal councils across the national territory were filled following the examination of petitions by the courts¹¹⁵ and the expiry of the timeline for appeals. During the sessions as of right that were subsequently held, the municipal executives were elected, and these elections were thereafter recorded by orders of the Minister of Decentralisation and Local Development. Councils were headed by Mayors from various political parties as seen in the table below.

Table 4: Mayors elected at the head of Councils in 2020

Political parties	Number of Mayors
Cameroon People's Democratic Movement (CPDM)	316
National Union for Democracy and Progress (UNDP)	17
Social Democratic Front (SDF)	3
Cameroon Party for National Reconciliation (PCRN)	6
Cameroon Democratic Union (CDU)	6
The Cameroon National Salvation Front (FSNC)	4
Movement for the Defence of the Republic (MDR)	3

¹¹² Taking into account these criteria allowed the voting of more than 30% of women in Municipal Councils.

¹¹³ About 1,297,709.92 Euros.

¹¹⁴ Law No. 2000/15 of 19 December 2000 relating to the public funding of political parties and election campaigns.

¹¹⁵ Petitions filed were related both to the conduct of the election and vote counting. The elections were cancelled and re-run in some localities, such as Monatélé, Elig-Mfomo, etc.

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Political parties	Number of Mayors
Union of Socialist Movements (UMS)	2
Patriotic Movement for a New Cameroon (MPCN)	2
Cameroon National Citizen Movement (CNCM)	1
Total	360

Source: ELECAM

B: Election of Members of the National Assembly

268- The electorate was convened by Decree No. 2019/612 of 10 November 2019 for the election of Members of the National Assembly. 180 seats were up for election. The election took place on 9 February 2020 and a total of 33 political parties presented candidates. The State disbursed the sum of CFAF 850 000 000 for the financing of the electoral campaign, paid in two instalments.

269- At the end of the election, 40 petitions for partial or total annulment were lodged before the Constitutional Council, namely 16 petitions by the SDF, 5 by the UNDP, 5 by the CPDM, 3 by the United Democratic Party (UDP), 2 by the Universe Party, 2 by the National Alliance for Democracy and Progress (ANDP), 1 by the Union of Socialist Movements (UMS), 1 by the PURS, 1 by the Orange Offer, 1 by the PCRN, 1 by the Bloc for the Reconstruction and Economic Independence of Cameroon (BRIC), 1 by the National Movement for Democracy and Development (RNDD) and 1 by the MPCN.

270- After examining the petitions, 18 were declared inadmissible, including 5 for foreclosure, 9 for lack of grounds and 4 for lack of locus standi; 12 petitions were declared admissible but later declared unjustified; and by Decision No. 29/SRCER/G/20 of 25 February 2020, 11 petitions declared admissible resulted in the annulment of the election of Members of the National Assembly in 11 constituencies in the North West and South West Regions, namely: Menchum-North, Menchum-South, Bui-West, Bui-Centre, Bui-South, Mezam-North, Mezam-Centre, Mezam-South, Momo-East, Momo-West, Lebialem.

271- After the proclamation of results, the Constitutional Council declared the election of 167 Members of the National Assembly, while election had to be re-run for the remaining 13, for a total of 180 Members of the National Assembly.

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272- Following Decree No. 2020/120 of 6 March 2020, the electorate was convened for the re-run of the elections in the above-mentioned constituencies on 22 March 2020, which resulted in the election of 13 Members of Parliament, who subsequently completed the National Assembly. The session as of right of the newly elected Members of Parliament which constituted the 10th legislature took place on 10 March 2020.

273- The political configuration of the National Assembly after the election was as follows:

Table 5: Results of the Election of Members of the National Assembly in 2020

Political parties	Number of seats
Cameroon People's Democratic Movement (CPDM)	152
National Union for Democracy and Progress (UNDP)	7
Social Democratic Front (SDF)	5
Cameroon Party for National Reconciliation (PCRN)	5
Cameroon Democratic Union (CDU)	4
Cameroon National Salvation Front (FSNC)	3
Movement for the Defence of the Republic (MDR)	2
Union of Socialist Movements (UMS)	2
Total	180

Source: ELECAM

274- Despite unrest and violence, particularly in the North West and South West Regions, the electoral process was conducted well overall.

SECTION 3: STRENGTHENING EFFICIENCY AND PROMOTING JUSTICE AND EQUITY IN THE PUBLIC SERVICE

275- The State initiated several actions in 2020 to step up efficiency and consolidate justice and equity in the public service, in particular to increase the number of workers, promote social inclusion, harmonise retirement age and ensure legal protection of civil servants' rights.

§1: Increasing the number of Civil Servants

276- The Government conducted various recruitments in 2020:

277- Some 3,404 new persons were recruited by the Ministry of Public Service and Administrative Reform (MINFOPRA) through the following channels:

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- some 2,784 persons through direct competitive examinations¹¹⁶ and selection tests;
- some 620 persons through competitive examinations and training as trainee civil servants in various schools, such as the National School of Administration and Magistracy (ENAM)¹¹⁷, the National Institute of Youth and Sports (INJS), the National Youth and Sports Centres (CENAJES), and the Sub-regional Institute of Statistics and Applied Economics (ISSEA).

278- Personnel recruited were distributed to various sectors of activity, including youth and animation (70), physical education and sports (90), statistics (30), financial management (150), general administration (45), labour and social welfare (30), prices, weights and measures (40), land registry (30), water and forests (50), civil engineering (72), agriculture (320), rural engineering (70), information (10), documentation (20), civil aeronautics (11), animal husbandry and maritime fisheries (70), animal industries (95), industrial techniques (104), post and telecommunications (146), mines and geology (35), meteorology (68), informatics and tele-computing (30) and public health (361).

279- Other Ministries, including the Ministry of Justice (300 Assistant Court Registrars and 200 secretaries), the Ministry of Defence and the General Delegation for National Security, conducted massive recruitment.

§2: Promotion of Social Inclusion in Recruitment into the Public Service

280- As part of the implementation of the policy of social justice and national solidarity with a view to ensuring equal chances and opportunities for vulnerable groups and minorities, MINFOPRA took steps to promote equal access to vocational training and paid employment. In this regard, by correspondence No. 800/MINFOPRA/SG/DRPCE/CP and No. 814/MINFOPRA/SG/DRPCE/CP of 7 and 12 May 2020, the Minister of Women's Empowerment and the Family and the Minister of Social Af-

¹¹⁶ 22 in total.

¹¹⁷ (75 Pupil Magistrates; 50 English-speaking Pupil Magistrates; 110 students in cycle A and 100 students in cycle B of the Administrative Division; 55 students in cycle A and 45 students in cycle B of the Financial Division; 30 student Court Registrars; 30 English-speaking student Court Registrars; 15 Registry Administrators).

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fairs were respectively requested to provide updated information on the categories of indigenous peoples to be taken into account in the process of recruitment into the civil service.

281- Of those recruited in 2020, 47% were women and 1.35% were Mbororos (corresponding to 46 in total).

§3: Harmonising Retirement Age

282- In order to put an end to disparity in the retirement age of State personnel and reduce discrimination, the President of the Republic issued two important decrees during the year under review: Decree No. 2020/369 of 3 July 2020 to raise the retirement age of civil servants of the corps Public Health ¹¹⁸ and Decree No. 2020/802 of 30 December 2020 to harmonise the retirement age of public servants¹¹⁹. In the same vein, the Prime Minister issued Decree No. 2020/7951/PM of 30 December 2020 to harmonise the retirement age of State Employees governed by the Labour Code¹²⁰.

§4: Judicial Protection of Civil Servants' Rights

283- During the year under review, administrative courts continued to play their role as guarantors of the legality of administrative instruments and to protect citizens, particularly civil servants. In this context, two cases are worth mentioning.

284- The first was between Police Inspector N.A. and the State of Cameroon. Indeed, he was dismissed from the National Security corps following a flawed disciplinary procedure. He was summoned to the disciplinary board session of 30 November 2012 by Radio-Message of 26 November of the same year, while Article 124 paragraph 1 of Decree No. 2012/539 of 19 December 2012 relating to the special rules and regulations governing the National Security Corps prescribes a period of at least 10 days between the date of the summons and that of the session. In view of this flagrant violation, the Yaounde Administrative Court, by

¹¹⁸ This Decree increased retirement age to 60 for category A and B personnel and to 55 for category C and D personnel.

¹¹⁹ This instrument increased retirement age to 60 for category A and B personnel and to 55 for category C and D personnel.

¹²⁰ This Decree harmonised retirement age to 60 for personnel ranging from category 8 to 12 and 55 for personnel ranging from category 1 to 7.

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judgment No. 239/2020/TA-YDE of 16 June 2020, declared the minutes of the disciplinary board and the dismissal Order No. 185/CAB/PR of 12 March 2013 null and void.

285- The second case concerned an individual named **Y.N.E.** who had been admitted into the Combined Services Military Academy (EMIA). Having succeeded in examinations into the third year of studies, he was appointed Cadet Officer by Decision No. 142525/DM/MINDEF/2411 of 11 November 2014. After failing the final examination, he was assigned to the 4th Joint Military Region for a probationary period of 6 months renewable once. Unexpectedly, he was dismissed from the Defence Forces by Letter No. 151286/LE/MINDEF/01 of 12 May 2015. He challenged that decision before the Yaounde Administrative Court, for violation of the law¹²¹ and procedural irregularity. The Court found his action admissible and quashed the contested Letter by Judgment No. 274/2020/TA-YDE of 14 July 2020.

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286- Overall, the right to participate in the management of public affairs was implemented in various areas in 2020. The completion of the decentralisation process, which falls within the Government's effort to enhance efficiency in public action, allowed local authorities to better take into account and address needs of the society, particularly the most basic ones. Similarly, elections were held to vote Members of the National Assembly and Municipal Councillors, despite some hitches, particularly in the North West and South West Regions. This led to a significant renewal of political actors and increased citizen participation in the management of public affairs. Lastly, several citizens joined the Public Service on the one hand, and the rights of various categories of State Employees, especially the most vulnerable, were protected through implementation of diverse initiatives, and regulatory and judicial actions on the other.

¹²¹ Indeed, pursuant to Article 8 of Instruction No. 10-6229/MINFA/SG/PR/1 of 24 February 1961 on the status of Cadet Officers, "if after 18 months of training, a cadet Officer is considered unfit for the rank of Sub-Lieutenant, the Minister in charge of the Armed Forces shall send a confidential and official notification to the person concerned. *Within 8 days, the latter must indicate his choice for one of the following solutions: either to continue to serve in the Army or the Gendarmerie in the rank of Staff Sergeant or Sergeant Major; or request the termination of his engagement or re-engagement and return to civilian life.*

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CONCLUSION OF PART ONE

287- In conclusion, the year 2020 was marked by continued protection against violations of the right to life and physical integrity. Examples of measures taken include capacity-building and sanctions against some civil servants in charge of applying the law, a Decree to strengthen the control of establishments considered dangerous, unhealthy and inconvenient and the fight against road accidents.

288- As concerns communication, the cleaning up of the media sector continued through regulation by the NCC as well as by the Courts against violation of public and private interests through sanctioning offending media organs and professionals.

289- Moreover, completion of decentralisation through the election of Regional Councillors will consolidate and improve participation of citizens in the management of public affairs.

290- Though efforts made are commendable, issues relating to the preservation of human life, securing of cyberspace and strengthening of the right to public demonstrations are to be addressed. In addition, the coverage of the judicial map should be improved.



PART TWO

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



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INTRODUCTION TO PART TWO

291- Despite the difficult context marked by health and security constraints, the Government continued to implement economic, social and cultural rights. In this vein, thanks to various normative, institutional and operational steps taken, culture and leisure were promoted, the education offer was guaranteed, illnesses were prevented and treated, the environment was protected and cleaned and access to food, water, energy and decent housing was eased. Some measures were also taken with regard to social security and employment.

292- As a result of the above-mentioned health and security constraints, there were some challenges in guaranteeing economic, social and cultural rights, especially due to the decrease of State revenue, the need to respect barrier measures to fight against Covid-19 and attacks by terrorists groups on people and property.

293- The second part of this Report, examines:

- Right to education (Chapter 1);
- Right to Health (Chapter 2);
- Right to an adequate Standard of Living (Chapter 4);
- 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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294- The right to education, which is crucial for human development of a person and for social transformation, was particularly affected in 2020 by a series of crises, which led the Government to choose an educational governance adapted to exceptional circumstances. This policy enabled the exercise of the right to education at various levels.

SECTION 1: EDUCATIONAL GOVERNANCE ADAPTED TO EXCEPTIONAL CIRCUMSTANCES

295- From March 2020, the Covid-19 pandemic threatened the right to education in Cameroon. To preserve the right, the Government took some safeguard measures, including the closure of schools and the resumption of in-person classes.

§1: Safeguarding the Right to Education amidst Covid-19

296- To save the 2020 academic year, the right to education was temporarily put on hold and alternative solutions for the continuation of educational services were adopted by the Government, which measures received support from UNESCO.

A: Temporal Hold on the Right to Education

297- To mitigate the spread of Covid-19, on 18 March 2020, the Government closed all public and private educational institutions, including vocational training centres and professional schools. The temporary suspension of educational activities directly affected the attendance of more than 7.2 million pupils and students, including 4.3 million children enrolled in primary school, 47 % of whom were girls. In addition, school and university competitions, like games organised by the National Federation of School Sports and University Games, were postponed. A response plan initiated by the Head of State including alternative solutions for the continuation of education was drawn up by the Government to ensure the right to education.

B: Alternative Solutions to Continue providing Education

298- Education continued to be provided through *e-learning* for primary, secondary and higher education.

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1) E-learning Initiative for Primary and Secondary Education

299- Classes on television were jointly organised by the Ministry of Basic Education and the Ministry of Secondary Education, through *Cameroon Radio and Television (CRTV)* as technical partner. The broadcast on CRTV started on 6 April 2020 at 8.30 am were delivered by 4 teachers (2 for English speakers and 2 others for French speakers), to students in *Cours moyen 2* and Class 6. Subjects taught were: English, French, Mathematics, Environmental Science, and Information and Communication Technologies. During classes, students had the possibility to ask questions through the toll-free number 8018.

300- To take into account the specificities of rural areas, activity booklets were drafted.

301- Classes for secondary education were broadcast in the second half of the morning and in the afternoon on CRTV.

302- Other means of communication, such as social media, particularly the *WhatsApp* application¹²² were used. Several *WhatsApp* groups for classes were created for students and their parents, per class and for various schools, to ensure the smooth continuation of the right to education at the primary and secondary levels. Some 7 *WhatsApp* groups for English classes were also created in the following Regions: North (2 schools, 58 students, 2 teachers), Centre (2 schools, 135 students on average, 3 teachers), Littoral (1 school, 17 students on average, 1 teacher), and West (2 schools, 83 students on average, 2 teachers); 7 other *WhatsApp* groups for Mathematics were created in the following Regions: North (2 schools, 270 students on average, 3 teachers) and Adamawa (3 schools, 150 students on average, 2 teachers). Most of the groups, about 90% of them, remained active till 22 July 2020 (namely for *Terminale* classes) and even after (for *Première* and *Troisième* classes).

2) E-learning for Higher Education

303- Universities also switched to distance learning for teachings and assessments. For example, through Note No. 20202/9/UN/R/SG/DAAC of 23 March 2020, the Rector of the University of Ngaoundere instructed

¹²² It is a mobile multi-platform application, owned by Facebook, which offers an instant messaging system encrypted end-to-end by both internet and social media.

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the authorities of all institutions under her university to connect to the <http://foad.univ-ndere.cm> platform for e-learning. Apart from this platform, some of the teachers of the said university made use of *WhatsApp*, *Telegram*¹²³, *Zoom*¹²⁴, *Jitsi*¹²⁵, *Google Classroom*¹²⁶ to share or deliver their lessons.

304- From 20 April to 30 May 2020, the Protestant University of Central Africa (UPAC) used “UPAC learning” (<https://upac-learning.net/>) for the 300 students of the Information and Communication Technologies Faculty, *Zoom* and *WhatsApp* for the 2 other faculties (Social Sciences and International Relations Faculty with 355 students, and Protestant Theology and Religious Sciences Faculty with about 200 students). However, less than 50 % of the students really took part in the online classes, and this impeded the initial objective which was to avoid any interruption in the provision of education.

305- Various ministries in charge of education implemented these actions thanks to budgetary adjustments from the Special National Solidarity Fund for the Fight against Covid-19 created by the Head of State.

C: Support from UNESCO to Safeguard the Right to Education

306- Under the project “*Education Cannot Wait (ECW)*”¹²⁷, UNESCO supported the Government with a first donation of \$1,000,000 for a period of 8 months (from April to December 2020), to implement the response project on the spread of the pandemic. Another financial allocation of \$11,000,000 was made to implement the emergency response project on Covid-19 in the educational sector, from the primary school to the first cycle of general secondary education, from July 2020 to December 2021.

¹²³ It is a Russian messaging application created in 2013 in which conversations are encrypted end-to-end.

¹²⁴ Zoom, which is owned by U.S.-based conferencing services company, *Zoom Video Communications*, provides remote conferencing services that combines video conferencing, online meetings, chat and mobile collaboration using proprietary applications.

¹²⁵ It is a set of open source projects that makes it possible to easily create and deploy secured video-conference solutions. *Jitsi* comprises *Jitsi Videobridge* and *Jitsi Meet* which can be used to organise conferences on the internet.

¹²⁶ It is a free service meant for educational establishments, associations and any user with a personal Google account. It eases the creation of lessons, distribution of homework, communication, and simplifies the organisation of school work.

¹²⁷ It is part of UNESCO’s Global Covid-19 Education coalition. It was established during the World Humanitarian Summit in 2016 and is the first global fund dedicated to education in emergencies and protracted crises.

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307- Direct beneficiaries of the ECW Project were primarily the Ministry of Basic Education and the Ministry of Secondary Education.

§2: Resuming In-person Classes

308- In-person classes resumed, after 2 months of interruption, on 1 June 2020, in schools, universities, as well as in professional schools and vocational training centres. The resumption particularly concerned examination classes at primary and secondary levels, and all universities.

309- School time was reorganised with a focus on the shift system, and measures prescribed by Government were implemented in all educational institutions, namely health security measures and the regulation of the number of students.

A: Measures for Health Security

310- These measures concerned the disinfection of educational establishment premises, restricted access to same and provision of health kits to them, including face masks and sanitizers. Water points for regular washing of hands with water and soap were installed at the entrance of each school and each classroom.

B: Reorganisation of the Number of Students and School Time Schedule

311- In addition to the limitation of the number of students to 50 per classroom, at all educational levels students were divided into several groups. Also, the pedagogical approach implemented was a 3-fold system, namely full time classes, shift system for schools with large numbers of students, and enhanced distance learning through e-platforms created for that purpose.

SECTION 2: RESILIENCE OF THE RIGHT TO EDUCATION

312- Despite restrictions imposed by Covid-19, the Government took measures to ensure the right to education at the level of primary, secondary and higher education.

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§1: Access to Nursery and Primary Education

313- The annual budget allocated to the Ministry of Basic Education moved from CFAF 222,331,065,000¹²⁸ in 2019 to CFAF 235,315,000,000¹²⁹ in 2020, that is an increase of CFAF 12,983,935,000¹³⁰, in addition to adjustments granted within the framework of the fight against Covid-19. Such funding made it possible to improve the education offer, increase the demand, and guarantee good examination results.

A: Improvement of the Education Offer

314- Actions carried out centred on pre-school development, achievement of universal primary education and literacy.

1) Continued Development of Nursery Education

315- The development of pre-school education continued owing to the support of Regional and Local Authorities, communities, Civil Society Organisations and Non-Governmental Organisations. The support led to an increase in infrastructure in public nursery schools through the construction and equipment, in rural areas, of 28 classrooms in nursery schools, 15 pre-school community centres, 26 nursery blocks, the construction of 14 latrine blocks, 3 fences and the rehabilitation of 7 nursery blocks.

316- Moreover, school kits were distributed to 11,360 learners enrolled in pre-school community centres (CPC), as well as to students of host communities' in about 50 schools in refugees hosting areas.

317- A subsidy of CFAF 1,354,175,000¹³¹ was granted to private nursery schools.

2) Continued Universalisation of Primary Education

318- The Government constructed new school infrastructure, namely 926 classrooms, 32 latrine blocks, 8 fences and rehabilitated 21 Government primary schools. Some 6 schools were built within the framework Cameroon – Japan cooperation. Also, the Basic Education Quality Improvement Project led to the construction of one school.

¹²⁸ About 339,436,740.46 Euros.

¹²⁹ About 359,259,541.99 Euros.

¹³⁰ About 19,822,801.53 Euro.

¹³¹ About 2,067,442.75.96 Euros.

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319- Some schools were also equipped with 6,683 desks and 2,250,000 essential textbooks were distributed to about 750,000 pupils in SIL/Class 1 and to 2 of Government primary schools.

320- Actions for educational supervision were carried out and further training in favour of Government and private primary school teachers was undertaken on mastering the new curricula in force. Salaries for some of the newly recruited teachers were processed and arrears for participation in examinations were cleared.

3) Improvement of Literacy

321- The Government targeted and sensitised illiterate persons of 15 years and above, including out-of-school and early school dropout children, as well as persons from Regions with a high illiteracy rate. Some other actions were carried out, including the improvement and diversification of infrastructure and training offers on Literacy and Non-Formal Education (AENF); functional literacy for 30,000 youths and adults; capacity building of 250 teachers of experimental schools for literacy in national languages, the preparation and drawing up of teaching programmes and tools on (Production of teaching material), the putting in place of pedagogic equipment and teaching material, the purchase of 150 literacy kits, and the setting of a common set of basic skills on non-formal basic education, to teach school dropout and out-of-school children of between 8 and 14 years.

B: Incentives

322- During the year under review, scholarships were granted to some students and allowances to teachers working in island and border areas. In addition, the Government provided Government primary schools with minimum packages amounting to CFAF 5,087,077,000¹³² and granted operating funds worth CFAF 9,300,447,000¹³³ to schools. Furthermore, a subsidy of CFAF 3,099,995,000¹³⁴ was granted to private primary schools. Performance-based funding was also experimented in 400 Government pilot primary schools, with the support of the World Bank, through the Cameroon Education Reform Support Project.

¹³² About 7,766,529.77 Euros.

¹³³ About 14,119,155.73 Euros.

¹³⁴ About 4,732,816.79 Euros.

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323- The pilot phase of inclusive education was pursued with the purchase of kits for different types of disabilities and some Government primary schools were equipped with 300 micro science kits. Furthermore, several schools were supplied with 65,000 citizenship and moral education books.

324- The multisector Plan of Action of the national gender policy was implemented in the Ministry of Basic Education and other education national stakeholders were sensitised on the education of the girl child.

C: Overview of Examinations Results

325- In 2020, the Common Entrance Examination (CEE), the First School Leaving Certificate (FSLC) and the *Certificat d'Etudes Primaires (CEP)* were held on 30 June, 21 and 22 July, respectively. The following tables provide statistics on registrations and results of examinations:

Table 1: Common Entrance Examination Results

Regions	CEE			
	Registered	Sat	Passed	Success rate
Adamawa	2,352	2,325	1,912	82.24
Centre	22,694	22,195	20,739	93.94
East	1,865	1,843	1,341	72.76
Far North	2,081	1,975	1,104	55.9
Littoral	23,731	23,383	20,108	85.99
North	1,532	1,521	1,175	76.69
North West	5,497	5,448	4,150	76.17
West	10,281	10,129	7,694	75.96
South	2,156	2,118	1,501	69.62
South West	11,610	11,263	9,161	76.16
Total	83,799	82,170	68,885	69.58

Source: MINEDUB.

Table 2: First School Leaving Certificate Results

Regions	At the FSLC:			
	Registered	Sat	Passed	Success rate
Adamawa	2,623	2,575	2,420	93.98
Centre	24,048	23,304	23,081	99.44
East	2,130	2,098	1,776	84.55
Far North	2,088	1,972	1,377	69.83
Littoral	27,291	26,928	25,482	94.63

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Regions	At the FSLC:			
	Registered	Sat	Passed	Success rate
North	1,550	1,525	1,393	89.87
North West	7,157	7,062	6,201	87.81
West	11,672	11,490	9,765	84.99
South	2,280	2,238	1,744	86.86
South West	12,619	12,458	11,531	92.56
Total	93,458	91,650	84,770	79.48

Source: MINEDUB.

Table 3: Certificat d'Etudes Primaires Results

Regions	At the CEP			
	Registered	Sat	Passed	Success rate
Adamawa	18,992	19,420	13,120	71.22
Centre	76,489	74,903	64,001	85.44
East	21,236	20,341	14,105	69.34
Far North	45,099	43,448	27,252	62.72
Littoral	50,022	49,403	43,493	88.04
North	39,334	37,696	26,227	66.68
North West	93	91	76	83.51
West	53,906	53,362	39,336	73.72
South	14,072	13,630	10,488	76.94
South West	301	298	277	92.95
Total	319,544	312,592	238,375	70.95

Source: MINEDUB.

§2: Realisation of the Right to Secondary Education

326- With an annual budget of CFAF 403,074,000,000¹³⁵, as well as a financial allocation under the Covid-19 Response Plan, the Ministry of Secondary Education (MINESEC) strengthened education offer, guaranteed demand, fought the proliferation of illegal schools, reduced unequal access to schools, strengthened and streamlined the management of human resources.

A: Strengthening Education Offer

327- In 2020, MINESEC constructed, equipped and rehabilitated some infrastructure. Special measures were taken in favour of internally displaced persons.

¹³⁵ About 615,380,152.67 Euros.

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1) Increasing Infrastructure and Equipment

328- During the reporting year, the Government started the construction of: 16 pedagogical blocks (Ground floor + 1 storey) of 8 classrooms each in some schools with a large number of students, 15 blocks of 3 classrooms each, and 20 multimedia centres.

329- It should also be highlighted that 5 school infrastructure projects were completed at the Maroua Bilingual High School, the Bonaberi Bilingual Technical High School, the Molyko-Buea Technical High School, the Ahala High School and the Mbalmayo Oyack High School. The following were thus constructed: 4 laboratories for practicals; 2 dormitories for internally displaced students, including one in Bamenda and another in Limbe; 12 classroom blocks of 2 classrooms each with offices; 3 classroom blocks of Ground floor + 1 storey (Jikejem Technical High School, Bamendankwe Bilingual High School and Bojongo Bilingual High School); and 54 blocks of two classrooms each in some schools¹³⁶.

330- The rehabilitation of several damaged school infrastructure, within the framework of the Education Solidarity and Promotion Fund (FSPE) made it possible to stabilise the intake capacity of schools.

331- A distance learning centre was also created to ensure the continuation of education. The educational resources produced at the Distance learning Centre were broadcast on CRTV. They were also available on DVD (boxed sets) for physical archiving and in digital versions (USB keys) for TV broadcasting and for online archiving, on the online distance learning platform <https://minesec-distancelearning.cm>. Moreover, school textbooks for mathematics, physics, chemistry, and technology were distributed to students in examination classes in rural areas, namely students in 3^{ème} for the French-speaking sub-system and in Form V for the English-speaking sub-system.

¹³⁶ Among others, the Government Technical, College Bakong; Government Technical College Ebamina II, Government High School Ntouleng ; Government Bilingual High School Dzeng; Government Bilingual High School Pitoa ; Government Technical College Kouoptamo ; Government Bilingual High School Gamdougoum Government College Yenga ; Government College Mendong ; deGovernment College Fiango-Kumba ; Government High School Nkozoa ; Government Bilingual High School Bafang ; Government Technical College Tchontchi-Golombé ; Government High School Batoke - Limbe II ; Teacher Training College Meiganga.

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2) Measures in Favour of Internally Displaced Students

332- The security crises rocking some parts of the country led to massive displacements of persons to secured regions, causing the Government to put in more efforts to offer optimal education to all. Instructions were given to school heads to admit displaced students in all schools in secured regions¹³⁷ without condition.

B: Demand in Secondary Education

333- Due to the health crisis, students in intermediate classes did not complete their annual curricula. Moreover, the closure of some schools due to the security crisis contributed to the drop out of many children, especially in the North West and South West Regions.

334- In the North West Region, the number of students decreased from 110,916 in 2017/2018 to 18,983 in 2019/2020.

335- For the South West Region, the number dropped from 71,065 in 2017/2018 to 59,264 in 2019/2020.

C: Human Resources Management

336- The State increased the number of teachers with new recruits who were rationally deployed in schools.

1) Increasing the Number of Teachers

337- During the year under review, 6,384 teachers were recruited and made available to MINESEC, as follows: 4,500 new graduates the Higher Teacher Training College (ENS) and the Higher Technical Teacher Training College (HTTTC); 1884 *enseignants contractualisés par le MINFOPRA* and 1884 contract teachers recruited by MINFOPRA. These new recruitments increased the staff strength to 72,614 in 2020 against 63,958 in 2019.

2) Optimal Deployment of Teaching Staff

338- In 2020, teachers were either posted or transferred based on service needs, needs expressed and available resources. The adoption of the policy of decongesting populated urban centres also led to the trans-

¹³⁷ Adamawa, Centre, East, Littoral, West and South.

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fer of new teachers to rural areas. This was the case for teachers who graduated from ENS/HTTTC, whereby about 70% of them were transferred to schools in rural areas.

D: Combating Illegal Schools

339- In 2020, MINESEC closed 90 schools operating illegally, including 81 for general education and 9 for technical education.

E: Reducing Unequal Access to Education

340- Unequal access to education was reduced for students as a result of the following actions: registration fees waiver for students with disabilities, as well as for students displaced because of insecurity; payment of salary to part-time teachers in the Bakassi Peninsula (given the socio-economic situation in this area, learners don't pay required fees, or contributions to the Parents-Teachers Association); medical support to several teachers who were victims of insecurity, thanks to the FSPE; and support to teachers and students' families who were victims of acts of violence from secessionists in the North West and South West Regions.

§3: Realisation of the Right to Higher Education

341- During the reporting year, the Government undertook institutional reforms in some universities, fostered access to universities, planned to increase the number of teachers.

A: Institutional Reforms

342- In 2020, institutional reforms were implemented in some universities and professional schools through the following texts: Decree No. 2020/272 of 11 May 2020 to transform the Faculty of Industrial Engineering of Douala into the National Advanced School of Engineering of Douala, followed by Decree No. 2020/273 of 11 May 2020 to organise the National Advanced School of Engineering of Douala; Decree No. 2020/274 of 11 May 2020 to reorganise the National Advanced School of Engineering of Maroua; Decree No. 2020/275 of 11 May 2020 to change the denomination and reorganise the National Advanced School of Engineering of Yaounde (under article 2 of this text, the National Advanced School of Engineering, (ENSP), shall now be called "National Advanced School of Engineering of Yaounde" (ENSPY).

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B: Promotion of Access to Universities

343- With an annual budget of CFAF 65,200,000,000¹³⁸, the Ministry of Higher Education continued to guarantee the right to education, through the strengthening of infrastructural offer, the granting of support for research, the diversification of training offer and alternative forms of teaching, which, added to other incentive measures fostered access to universities in 2020.

1) Continuation of Education Offer

344- At the HTTTC Bamenda, roads and other networks around university hostels were dug were developed; the HTTC of Bamenda and Yaounde were supplied with computer equipment and laboratories; a 1200-seat pedagogic block of was constructed at the Yaounde I ENSET; at the University of Ngaoundere, a 1000-seats pedagogic block, an amphitheatre of 500 seats as well as related offices were constructed; at the Faculty of Sciences of the University of Buea, an amphitheatre was equipped.

345- In addition, the premises of the project of the African Institute for Mathematical Sciences at the University of Bamenda were rehabilitated; at the University of Dschang, the experimental farm of the Faculty of Agronomy and Agricultural Sciences were also rehabilitated, while laboratories and workshops were equipped; 3 other buildings constituting the pedagogic block of the Faculty of Human Sciences of the University of Dschang were constructed; and 10 centres for digital development were made operational.

346- In private higher education, Private Higher Education Institutions (IPES) were created and others went operational, bringing the number to a total of 242 IPES authorised to operate.

347- The various investments contributed to increase the intake capacity of the institutions concerned and improve the quality of the training.

2) Granting Research Support to Research Lecturers

348- During the year under review, 5,000 researcher lecturers received the academic research grant under the earmarked account for the modernisation of research. The grant amounted to CFAF 10,500,000,000¹³⁹.

¹³⁸ About 99,541,984.73 Euros.

¹³⁹ About 16,030,534.35 Euros.

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3) Revising and Harmonising some Trainings

349- In 2020, the revision and harmonisation of curricula in the fields of fisheries and veterinary medicine, and in urban planning, geometry, topography, and architecture were initiated, as well as the professionalisation of programmes for traditional faculties and the drawing up of curricula for University Institutes of Technology and the Colleges of Technology. The curricula of the Higher National Diploma was validated and implemented.

4) Incentive Measures to Demand

350- To help Cameroonian youths access international trainings and acquire academic or vocational skills, new scholarships and arrears of scholarships were granted to some students, as well as an allocation for individual and collective grants.

351- Several gatherings were held to get students interested in academic and vocational trainings in universities, namely sittings of the Steering Committee of the National Trades Observatory of Higher Education Graduates, the universities-agro-industrial sector businesses forum, the academic and professional counselling show, the Cameroon university students' forum.

352- It should also be underlined that 90,000 students from State universities and IPES were awarded academic excellence grants.

353 - The student population estimated at 520,000 students was distributed between public and private universities. The gender representation improved with the registration of 30,997 girls in State Universities and private institutions, particularly in professional and technological fields.

C: Launching the Recruitment of Lecturers

354- During the reporting year, the Government launched the second wave of the special recruitment of Ph.D holders in State Universities. To this end, a timetable of activities was drawn up, ranging from the validation of the terms of reference, documents for the distribution of recruitment quotas by institution, selection criteria for candidates, the authorization for the opening of positions and the timetable of activities by the Central Supervisory Commission, until the publication of shortlists and the examination of petitions by the Commission in November 2021.

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355- In 2020, the education sector was affected by the security and health crisis, which led the State to take measures to adapt education to the crisis context, in order to ensure resilience of the right to education. In that respect, and based on circumstances, the Government opted for a three step approach, including full time classes, double shift system for schools with a large number of students, and strengthening *e-learning*.

356- Nevertheless, students faced challenges in accessing teachings delivered on *CRTV*, especially children in rural areas. In addition, *e-learning* which was experimented with mixed results, should be strengthened and popularised.



CHAPTER 2

THE RIGHT TO HEALTH



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357- The Government continued to guarantee the right to health through health promotion, prevention of diseases, case management and health system strengthening. However, the outbreak of the Covid-19 pandemic was a challenge in ensuring the right to health in 2020 even though Government took diverse measures to manage the scourge.

SECTION 1: HEALTH PROMOTION

358- In order to promote the health of the people, measures were taken to improve on the living environment of the population, enhance family planning, combat malnutrition as well as the consumption of illicit and harmful substances.

§1: Improving the Living Environment of the Population

359- Sanitation in rural areas remained a major preoccupation of Government. In 2020, 40% of Health Districts targeted, practiced Community Led Total Sanitation (CLTS). Water purifiers were supplied to some Health Districts that witnessed the outbreak of cholera.

§2: Family Planning

360- Under the United Nations Population Fund's (UNFPA) "Access to sexual and reproductive health services" programme, the following results were achieved: 104,695 additional persons used modern family planning methods in the intervention zones; 49 providers were trained to offer family planning services, 100 providers were trained to ensure the supply and security of contraceptive and maternal health products; 30 types of essential maternal health and contraceptive commodities were regularly supplied; 10 regional workshops to evaluate and monitor the performance of the contraceptive supply were organised; and 5 family planning campaigns were organised.

§3: Combating Malnutrition

361- Food assistance and cash based transfers were made throughout the year to those in need mainly in the Far North, North, Adamawa, East, South West and North West Regions. In the month of September for example, the World Food Programme (WFP) assisted 537,816 people both through food assistance (cereals, pulses, vegetable oil and salt) and cash-based transfers. Furthermore, in the same month of September, a total of

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62,597 children were assisted through malnutrition treatment and prevention programmes in the Adamawa, East North and Far North Regions. Some 4,138 of these children were treated for moderate acute malnutrition (MAM)

§4: Combating Illicit or Harmful Substances

362- In spite of Government efforts, the fight against hard drugs continued to be of major concern. Thus, sensitisation campaigns continued as well as the seizing of hard drugs. It is in this vein that for instance, 25 tons of hard drugs were seized from traffickers in Douala on 4 June 2020 by the Forces of Law and Order.

SECTION 2: DISEASE PREVENTION

363- The Government did not relent its efforts to prevent the occurrence of both communicable and non-communicable diseases.

§1: Communicable Diseases

364- Priority Communicable diseases and neglected tropical diseases remained a major concern.

A: Priority Communicable Diseases

365- Concerning **HIV/AIDS**, awareness raising activities and screening were continued as well as the distribution of condoms. Of the 2,984,346 people who were screened¹⁴⁰ 99 273 were positive compared to 83 243 in 2019. A total of 41,057,011 male condoms and 2,918,908 female condoms were distributed¹⁴¹. Furthermore, an operational plan to combat HIV in the Covid-19 context was adopted, the objective of which was to minimise the risk of exposure of medical staff, HIV positive patients and to maintain the continuum of care.

366- As regards **Malaria**, the National Malarial Control Programme carried out the 3rd mass campaign for the distribution of Long Lasting Insecticidal Nets (LLINs), in the Littoral and North West Regions, campaigns for

¹⁴⁰ This does not include data from private laboratories

¹⁴¹ This was done through Association Camerounaise pour le Marketing Social (ACMS), DKT International, GTC/GTR Central Technical Group, Regional Technical Group), Care International, Cameroon National Association for Family Welfare (Camnafaw) and Laborex-Cameroun.

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chimio prevention in the North West and Far North Regions and supplied health facilities and community health agents with inputs.

367- Regarding **Tuberculosis**, as part of activities of World Tuberculosis Day on 24 March 2020, awareness was raised on the disease through talk shows as well as in some colleges and high schools in Yaounde and Douala.

368- As regards **hepatitis**, some 163,313 blood bags were tested for hepatitis B in the context of blood transfusion and 9,554 blood donors tested positive, representing a positivity rate of 5.8%. Moreover, the National Strategic Plan for the fight against viral hepatitis (2020-2024) was launched on 28 August 2020. The Plan aims to reduce by at least 60% the mortality attributable to chronic hepatitis B, C and D, reduce the prevalence of hepatitis B and D respectively from 11.9 to 9% and 10.5 to 8% as well as maintain the prevalence of hepatitis C virus infection below 1% in people aged 15 to 49.

B: Neglected Tropical Diseases (NTDs).

369- With regard to **Buruli ulcer**, infections were recorded in the South West Region. Routine screening was carried out and persons tested positive were treated. In addition, some 504,558 persons were treated of **yaws** in 9 Health Districts of the East Region bordering the Congo Basin, giving 90% coverage.

§2: Non-Communicable Diseases

370- Cancer and mental health disorders were among the communicable diseases for which preventive action was taken.

371- The National Strategic Plan for Prevention and Cancer Control 2020-2024 was adopted. Its general objective is to reduce by 10%¹⁴², **cancer** related morbidity and mortality by 2024, and attenuate its socio-economic impact on the development of the country.

372- Moreover, *Centre Pasteur*, acquired new equipment¹⁴³ to help accelerate the screening for cancer which had been a concern in the past.

¹⁴² In 2018, 15,769 new cases of cancer were diagnosed (6434 in men and 9335 in women) and there were 10,533 cancer-related deaths amongst them 4505 men and 6028 women.

¹⁴³ Particularity Benchmark GX which is a semi autonomisation and minimises human error in diagnosing cancer.

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373- Mental health remained an issue and as part of activities to mark World Mental Health Day celebrated on 10 October 2020, the call centre dedicated to national psychological assistance with the toll-free number 1511 was inaugurated on 13 October 2020. The number makes it possible to provide assistance to a large number of people with mental health problems.

374- Persons were also educated on mental health, including 592 between July and September 2020 by Action Against Hunger. This education included the identification of symptoms of stress and techniques to better manage stress.

SECTION 3: CASE MANAGEMENT

375- Government continued to initiate actions to handle communicable and non-communicable diseases. Maternal, adolescent and child health was also a priority.

§1: Management of Diseases

376- Measures were taken as usual to treat communicable and non-communicable diseases.

A: Communicable Diseases

377- These include HIV/AIDS, neglected tropical diseases and epidemic prone diseases.

1) Priority Communicable Diseases: HIV/AIDS and Hepatitis

378- HIV/AIDS patients in Cameroon started receiving completely free HIV related services in public health facilities from 1 January 2020 following the Communique by the Minister of Health on 4 April 2020. Hitherto, only ARVs were free. The services offered free of charge in public health facilities are consultations, medical booklets, biological follow-up, follow up tests (CD4 count and Viral Load) antiretrovirals and medication for the prevention of opportunistic Infections. Viral load testing coverage among Persons Living with HIV (PLWHA) on ARVs was 57.9% (203,905 on 350,818) compared to 34.4% (107,506 on 312,214) in 2019.

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379- In 2020, 350,818 (98%) of the 358,000 Persons Living with HIV (PLWHA) targeted were on ARV. This number included 76,823 PLWHA who started taking ARVs in 2020. The percentage of those on ARVs increased by 12.4% between 2019 and 2020 compared to 11.1% between 2018 and 2019.

380- Concerning **hepatitis**, 63% of approved treatment centres were functional in 7 regions¹⁴⁴. For the first time, Public health facilities dispatched health workers to track patients and ensure they get their treatment and vaccines. The policy targeted new-borns, pregnant women and mothers for screening, vaccination and treatment.

2) Neglected Tropical Diseases (NTDs)

381- A total of 2,550,279 children received treatment for intestinal worms and 994,140 for Schistosomiasis giving a coverage rate of 85% for Soil-Transmitted Helminths (STHs) and 71% for schistosomiasis (SCH) in 64 Health Districts in the Adamawa, East, the Far North, North and West Regions.

382- Mectizan was distributed to 1,955,606 persons in the West Region against filarial, representing 82.4% of those eligible for treatment.

3) Epidemic Prone Diseases

383- Following the **cholera** outbreak at the start of the year, as at 16 December 2020, there were 1,952 cholera cases concentrated in the Littoral, South West, South Regions with 87 associated deaths. Treatment was provided to those affected and the situation brought under control.

B: Non Communicable Diseases

384- With regard to **cancer**, some 895 medical staff across the country under-went training in all aspects of cancer management.

385- Furthermore, awareness raising was carried out as was the case within the framework of the month of October which is dedicated to the fight against breast cancer. In this vein, on 6 and 7 October 2020, a campaign of awareness raising on and screening of the disease under the theme "breast cancer should no longer be a fatality" was organised at the Douala Gyneco-Obstetric and Pediatric Hospital.

¹⁴⁴ Only the Adamawa, Far North and South West Regions did not have an approved treatment centres.

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386- As regards the care of patients with **renal failure**, there continued to be cases of breakdown of dialysis machines in some health facilities and intermittent unavailability of dialysis kits. Some cases were the dialysis centre at the Regional Hospital in Bertoua which was not operational from May 2020 due to the unavailability of kits, the centres at the Bamenda Regional Hospital and the Yaounde Central Hospital during the months of October and December 2020. Patients thus had to be referred to other centres.

387- As concerns **mental health**, from October 2020, a hotline (1511) was set up to provide psychological support to patients. It had 4 psychologists and 2 teleconference consultants .

§2: Maternal, Adolescent Health, Neonatal and Infant Juvenile Health.

A: Maternal Health

388- Of the 943,797 pregnant women who were expected to attend ante natal clinic, 785 253 (83.2%) did and fees was waived for 315,745(40%) of them. In 2020, it is estimated that about 709,016 (90.3%) of the 785,253 pregnant women who attended ante natal clinic were tested for HIV compared to 620,171 in 2019.

389- To prevent malaria in pregnant women, LLINs were distributed to them. However, only 27% of pregnant women received LLINs during pre-natal consultation due to the fact that many of them stayed away from health facilities for fear of Covid 19 infection.

390- Considering that due to the Covid 19 pandemic, some pregnant women stayed away from standard health facilities for fear of been infected and this compounded by their lack of adequate finance, Government in collaboration with UNFPA on 13 August 2020 launched the « Baby Box » initiative in order to encourage them to consult in these facilities. The Baby Box consisting of a kit of items for the baby, mother and father, as well as protective equipment against Covid 19 was given to pregnant women as an incentive for them to consult, the aim being to contribute to the fight against maternal mortality.

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391- Furthermore, in the context of the implementation of the Project for the Support to Maternal, Neonatal and Child health (*PASMNI*) Campaigns for free surgery for women with obstetric fistula were carried out and 137 women were operated upon free of charge as well as 100 health care staff trained to provide holistic care for obstetric fistula. The campaigns included those in the Far North Region (Kousseri from 27 June to 5 July 2020) and North Region (Garoua from 16 July to 5 of August 2020). The capacity of the Guider District Hospital was enhanced on providing obstetric fistula surgery. Moreover, on 14 September an obstetric fistula centre was inaugurated at the Maroua Regional Hospital. *PASMNI* also provided 165 motorbike ambulances to communities (under community management) in health districts covered by *PASMNI* in order to ensure the transfer of pregnant women to the health facilities.

B: Adolescent Health

392- As concerns **HIV prevention** among youths, the 18th edition of the AIDS Free Holidays that targeted youths aged 14-24 had a novelty in 2020, for it incorporated Covid-19 awareness. The campaign launched on 9 September 2020 under the theme "HIV/AIDS and Covid-19: You can protect yourself, stay alive" was intended to educate over 600 peer educators to raise the awareness of some 700,000 youths on Sexually Transmissible Infections (STIs), prevention measures. The results of the campaign included the organisation of 9,017 educational talks and 263,258 face to face sensitisation sessions. A total of 185,116 girls and 258,629 boys were reached. Even though strides were made as regards prevention of HIV among youths, the percentage of adolescents on HIV treatment was low as it stood at 39.7% for those aged 10-14 and 45.1% for those aged 15-19 respectively compared to the national average of 77.4%.

393- As regards **sexual and reproductive health** of adolescents, under the patronage of the Minister of Youth Affairs and Civic Education and with the support of the UNFPA, 3 networks of youth associations set up sensitization platforms to accelerate access to sexual and reproductive health services including protection against HIV and Covid 19 in Cameroon¹⁴⁵. More than 542,971 persons were sensitised, the capacity of 23 community radio hosts was enhanced and approximately 291

¹⁴⁵ Cameroon National Youth Council, the Cameroonian branch of the African Youth and Adolescents Network on Population and Development (Afr'iYAN and the National Network of Aunties (RENAT).

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youth leaders of associations, peer educators and peer counsellors were trained in the use of social media to conduct information campaigns, leadership and the fight against gender-based violence and harmful cultural practices within their respective communities. The associations also partnered with community radio stations to produce mass education programme.

394- Furthermore, in the context of UNFPA's Education and Youth Protection programme, staff of 40 additional institutions were trained to deliver comprehensive sexuality education (CSE) bringing the number of institutions to 82 nationwide. Some 461,462 adolescents and youths were trained in CSE or life skills in school and out-of-school settings.

395- Also, girls and women from disadvantaged backgrounds were sensitised on menstrual hygiene management and dignity kits were provided to 600 girls and adolescents in the Centre, Far North, East, North and North West Regions.

C: Neonatal, Infant and Child Health

396- In spite of the Covid-19 pandemic, Government efforts to prevent diseases in children and treat them when sick continued.

1) Prevention of Diseases in children

397- Regarding Prevention of Mother to Child Transmission of HIV (PMTCT), the number of health facilities administering same was 5,303 out of a total of 6,313 health facilities in the country.

398- A total of 709,016 pregnant women were tested for HIV and 16,731 were put on ARVs. A total of 12,041 babies who were exposed received ARV prophylaxis.

399- Within the framework of the project entitled "Support to the Elimination of Mother-to-Child Transmission of HIV/AIDS in the Republic of Cameroon financed by the Islamic Development Bank, training was carried out for 180 regional trainers in 6 regions and 1,727 health care providers from integrated health centers and district hospitals in PMTCT and HIV care including treatment for children and adolescents.

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2) Treatment of sick Children

400- The number of children under 15 on antiretroviral (ARV) was 11,219, representing 3.2% of persons on ARV compared to 3.3% in 2019. Diabetic children aged 0-15 were treated free of charge in specialised diabetic clinics

SECTION 4: HEALTH SYSTEM STRENGTHENING

401- The strengthening of the health system aimed at improving the availability of health facilities and human resources as well as promoting access to low cost health care and medicines.

§1: Availability of Healthcare Facilities and Human Resources

402- The Government improved the available existing health care facilities as well as strengthened the capacity of health providers.

A: Availability of Healthcare Facilities.

403- In 2020, there were 6,313 health facilities (Centre, 1,753; East, 266; Far North, 598; Littoral, 1,317; North, 302; North West, 415; West, 829; South, 314; South West, 335) compared to 6,202 in 2019. A good number of health facilities thus went operational in 2020.

B : Human Resources

404- The graduation of health staff from medical institutions across the country during this period boosted the human resource in the medical sector. Some 62 general practitioners graduated from the Faculty of Health Sciences of the University of Buea (FHS/UB), 63 from Faculty of Health Sciences of the University of Bamenda (FHS/UBa), 131 from Faculty of Medicine and Biomedical Sciences of the University of Yaounde I (FMSB/UYI), 79 from the Faculty of Medicine and Pharmaceutical Sciences of the University of Douala (FMSP) all giving a total of 335 medical doctors. Some 26 dentists graduated from the FMSB/UYI, 8 medical specialists graduated from FHS/UB, 1 from FHS/UBa and 33 from FMSB/UYI. Some 163 pharmacists graduated with 28 from FMSB/UYI and 35 from FMSP/UD.

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405- To increase the number of health staff, 466 health staff (26 dental surgeons, 335 General practitioners, as well as specialists) were recruited from State Universities. Besides, 233 health staff were recruited¹⁴⁶ by direct competitive exam (among them anaesthetists, radiologists, pharmacists, mental health nurses, ophthalmic nurses and community nurse's aide).

§2: Access to Low Cost Healthcare

406- In 2020, the State continued to take action to have people access healthcare at affordable cost.

407- On 27 August 2020, Government and the company *Santé Universelle Cameroun (Sucam SA)* signed a public-private partnership contract in Yaounde for the implementation of universal health coverage. The company was expected to realise all related commercial and financial operations; collect social contributions from the informal sector, pool funds dedicated to the management of universal health coverage; encourage the adherence of public and private health facilities to the scheme, carry out medical control and payment of invoices of approved providers; and monitor and evaluate health care providers and services. *Sucam SA* Proceeded to create a software package for this purpose, which included at least 23 modules.

408- Key to the National Digital Health Strategic Plan (2020-2024) adopted on 16 January 2020 is the improvement of the information and technology infrastructure of the health information system and promotion of the use of data for clinical service management, the main goal being the achievement of universal health coverage in Cameroon.

409- Moreover, campaigns for free consultation continued including that between 14 and 17 December 2020 at the Lanquintie Hospital in Douala for diseases including cardiac, lung, infectious and digestive tract diseases, diabetes and viral infections.

§3: Accessibility to Medicines

410- In a Communique of the Minister of Public Health dated 27 October 2020, hepatitis C treatment cost (specifically the protocol based on Sofosbuvir+Velpastavir 400/100 mg belonging to batch 3091996) was

¹⁴⁶ Decision No. 000058 of 21/01/2020 (49 persons); Decision No. 00420 of 26/03/2020 (10 persons); Decision No. 000266 of 5/03/2020 (06 persons); Decision No. 00575 of 15/04/2020 (10 persons); and Decision No. 000923 of 1/06/2020.

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reduced to CFAF25,000¹⁴⁷ representing a 75% reduction. The prices of the other Hepatitis C treatment protocols however remained unchanged. There was a reduction of Hepatitis C treatment in 2018 from a range of CFAF30,000¹⁴⁸ to CFAF280,000¹⁴⁹ down to a range of CFAF20,000¹⁵⁰ to CFAF120,000¹⁵¹.

411- Also, ARVs and treatment of tuberculosis continued to be free of charge.

SECTION 5: THE MANAGEMENT AND IMPACT OF COVID-19 ON HEALTH CARE

412- From the detection of the first case of Covid-19 in Cameroon in March 2020, the Government took measures to manage the pandemic. This notwithstanding, the pandemic impacted health care including through logistics and infrastructure, health staff and the population.

§1: Management of Covid-19

413- The management focused on the strategy in the health sector to fight the pandemic and operational measures.

A: The Strategy in the Health Sector to Fight the Pandemic

414- Government's strategy to fight the pandemic was based on 8 main pillars, namely: multisectoral coordination of actions; active monitoring for early detection of cases; deployment of investigation and rapid response teams; enhancing the capacity of laboratories; activation of infection prevention and control measures in health facilities and in the community; management of detected cases; communication on the risks of contamination; and logistical mobilization.

B: Operational Measures

415- In order to make the above strategy effective, MINSANTE proceeded to carry out a number of actions both as regards logistics and infrastructure and the provision of care.

¹⁴⁷ About 38.17 Euros

¹⁴⁸ About 45.80 Euros.

¹⁴⁹ About 427.48 Euros.

¹⁵⁰ About 30.53 Euros.

¹⁵¹ About 183.21 Euros.

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1) Logistics and Infrastructure

416- A call centre was set up with the toll-free number 1510, a digital platform was put in place to improve the management of call flows, isolation centres, quarantine facilities for suspected cases not requiring hospitalization and field hospitals were set up and equipped in the 10 regions as well as the creation of treatment centres including the Specialized Centre for the Care of Covid 19 Patients as an Annexe to the Yaounde Central hospital. There was also an increase in the number of laboratories screening for Covid 19 (from 1 to 15) and increase in medical oxygen supply, acquisition of other material and the setting up of surveillance systems at various entry points to the national territory.

417- International and local partners supported Government in the acquisition of material to fight Covid 19. This included masks, isolation gowns, medical oxygen supply, hand sanitizers, ambulances, and medicines.

2) Provision of Care

418- Operational teams for the fight against epidemics were reconfigured, biological tests for the detection of the virus, rapid screening tests by antigen were introduced and medicines were provided to the 10 regions. For example, by Service Note No. D31-170/NMINSANTE/SG/DPM of 21 April 2020, the Minister of Public Health made available to all regions an initial allocation of between 429 to 1,886 boxes of 100mg hydroxychloroquine tablets and 100 to 470 boxes of 250mg azitromycin per Region.

419- Furthermore, regional incident management systems (IMS) and rapid intervention teams (RIT) were set up, the capacity of health staff was enhanced and a national protocol for management and care was developed.

§2: Impact of Covid-19 on the Health Sector

420- Covid-19 had a negative impact on medical staff as well as on the health of the population.

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A: Impact on Health Staff

421- At the start of the pandemic medical staff did not have enough personal protective equipment such as N95 face masks. Medical staff had to work with reinforced protective gear that they were not used to hitherto. They also had to work long hours to take care of patients.

422- While some infected medical staff recovered from the Covid 19 infection, others died.

B: Impact on the Health of the Population

423- People were reluctant to consult at health facilities for fear of contracting Covid-19. For instance, the consultation rate at the Maroua Regional Hospital went from 2500 persons monthly before the pandemic to 1800 persons in June 2020. Avoiding health facilities led to the progress over time of undiagnosed diseases in some people while some with chronic diseases failed to respect medical appointments. With the creation of specialised centres for the treatment of Covid-19 and sensitisation of the population, hospital attendance gradually improved.

424- In addition to conventional medicine, the population resorted to African traditional medicine among which was the plant based treatment of Monseigneur Samuel KLEDA, the Archbishop of Douala which was officially presented to the public on 5 June 2020. The said treatment was distributed free of charge through diasocesan health centres. Monseigneur KLEDA was received in audience by the Prime Minister on 26 May 2020 to discuss possible Government support to the said treatment.

425- By November 2020, statistics on Covid 19 stood as follows: 24,189 confirmed cases; 22,939 people cured and 437 deaths. The Cure rate was over 95%.

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426- Guaranteeing the right to health was particularly challenging in 2020 due to the outbreak of Covid-19. However, Government made progress in certain areas. The number of health facilities significantly increased and medical staff strength was improved with the recruitment of graduates from state and non-state institutions. With regard to adolescent health, staff of 40 additional institutions were trained to deliver comprehensive sexuality education. Additionally, the treatment of certain diseases continued to be free and measures relating to free HIV-related services were progressively implemented in health facilities in the country.

427- Notwithstanding this progress, there were some setbacks. The Covid-19 pandemic had an impact on the right to health as the provision of care was disrupted in certain cases. Furthermore, the universal health care system did not go operational and patients with renal failure continued to face challenges in accessing care.

CHAPTER 3

RIGHT TO AN ADEQUATE STANDARD OF LIVING



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428- The implementation of the right to an adequate standard of living was flexible notably because of the impact the Covid-19 pandemic had on the right to food, challenges in the supply of water and energy and access to decent housing.

SECTION 1: RIGHT TO FOOD

429- The Covid-19 pandemic, which came to add to the climate and security challenges Cameroon was already facing, had a significant impact on the people's right to food, especially people with low income, due to the depleting of resources owing to the slump in activities. In spite of the difficult situation, the State carried out several general and specific actions in an attempt to guarantee the availability, accessibility and acceptability of foodstuffs.

§1: General Activities Relating to the Right to Food

430- General activities carried out included drafting strategies, combating extreme poverty and strengthening financial capacities of households, fighting against food insecurity and continuing the General Census of Agriculture and Livestock.

A: Drafting of Strategies in the Agropastoral Sector

431- On 1 September 2020, the Government, through the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development (MINADER) with the support of the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO), validated its National Agricultural Seed Development Plan for 2020 - 2025.

432- On a broader scale, Cameroon equally adopted the 2020-2030 National Development Strategy (NDS30). This document hinges on four major pillars namely: structural transformation of the economy, development of human capital and well-being, promotion of employment and economic integration as well as governance. The first two pillars address the right to food with the ultimate goal being to guarantee sufficient food to all Cameroonians and persons living in Cameroon. Actions identified to achieve this goal include developing the food industry, transport infrastructure, water and sanitation infrastructure, promoting nutrition and facilitating access to potable water.

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433- In a bid to diversify crops, the Government also drafted a strategy for the development of value chains in the cashew nuts sector. This strategy was presented in Garoua in November 2020 by the coordinator of the cashew nut cultivation project. The strategy lays emphasis on the production, multiplication and distribution of plant material, the dissemination of good practices, strengthening of technical and material capacities and access to funding.

B: Combating Extreme Poverty and Strengthening the Financial Capacity of Households

434- In 2020, the **Social Nets Project** continued to fund wealth-generating activities for the most vulnerable households and those whose businesses were affected by Covid-19. For this purpose, the Project received a budget allocation of CFAF 19,000,000,000¹⁵² from the Special National Solidarity Fund set up by the President of the Republic to fight against the new corona virus pandemic and its socio-economic effects. This project also received the financial support of the World Bank (CFAF 25,000,000,000¹⁵³) and the French Development Agency (CFAF 1,000,000,000¹⁵⁴). These funds were made available to about 80,000 beneficiaries¹⁵⁵ across the 10 Regions. The Project continued to expand with the aim in 2022 being to cut across all Councils.

435- Similarly, the Sub-Programme for Poverty Reduction at the Grassroots (SPRPB) continued activities through the implementation of the Economic Resilience Support Project (PAREC)¹⁵⁶. As part of concrete results, 6 value chains

¹⁵² About 29,077,633.59 Euros.

¹⁵³ About 38,167,938.93 Euros.

¹⁵⁴ About 1,526,717.56 Euros.

¹⁵⁵ The funds were provided either by Ordinary Money Transfer (OMT), or by Emergency Cash Transfer (ECT), to avoid movements and cocentration of beneficiaries. Each beneficiary received the total sum of CFAF 180,000 (about 274.81 Euros) paid in 3 months as follows CFAF 45,000 (about 68.70 Euros) in the first two months for basic needs (water, electricity, rents) and CFAF 90,000 (about 137.40 Euros) in the last month to restart an economic activity.

¹⁵⁶ This project is based on the following four (4) axes:

- development of appropriate mechanisms that facilitate access of youths and women to socio-economic opportunities;
- support to economic inclusion and diversification by adding value to and commercialising local products;
- capacity building for local financial institutions in the offer of financial products and services tailored to the needs of youths, women and rural populations in the areas of intervention;
- capacity building for local institutions to prevent and manage economic shocks that affect demand and supply of major widely consumed products.

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were strengthened. They include Cassava cultivation and processing in Garoua Boulai, Doume and Dir, beans production in Ngan-Ha, storage and preservation of onions in Pitoa, processing and packaging of paddy rice in Touloum and Kousseri, storage and preservation of cowpeas in Moulvoudaye and groundnuts processing to produce oil in Mokolo.

436- On 30 October 2020, as part of the **Three-Year Special Youth Plan** (TYSYP) launched by the Head of State (in February 2016), 44 young project holders selected in Douala from catering, agriculture and other fields, received financial and material support¹⁵⁷, evaluated at CFAF 374,000,000¹⁵⁸. This support enabled them to commence their activities immediately. On 9 and 11 November 2020, CFAF 201,000,000¹⁵⁹ and CFAF 141,789,500¹⁶⁰ were respectively granted to 53 youths in Nyambaka town in the Adamawa Region and 50 youths in Abong-Mbang town in the East Region. At the national level, the total number of persons who received support in the agricultural sector within the context of the TYSYP in 2020 is indicated in the table below:

Table 1: Support in the Agricultural Sector within the Context of TYSYP in 2020

REGIONS	MEN	WOMEN	TOTAL
ADAMAWA	102	26	128
CENTRE	188	97	285
EAST	51	29	80
FAR NORTH	341	98	439
LITTORAL	67	40	107
NORTH	166	86	252
NORTH WEST	61	39	100
WEST	117	65	182
SOUTH	59	28	87
SOUTH WEST	61	31	92
TOTAL	1213	539	1752

Source: FONIJ

¹⁵⁷ Including refrigerators, freezers, generators, wheelbarrows, grinding machines, chafing dishes, gas bottles, computers, microwave ovens, cookers, ice-cream machines, sprayers, grinders, threshing machines, motor pumps, tractors, chicken pluckers palm oil extractor.

¹⁵⁸ About 570,992.37 Euros.

¹⁵⁹ About 306,870.23 Euros.

¹⁶⁰ About 216,472.52 Euros.

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437- On 2 and 3 November 2020, in Douala, the Small and Medium sized Enterprises Promotion Agency (APME) organised the days of networking for stakeholders of the integrated programme for the development and processing of agricultural and agri-food products. These days helped SMEs to establish networks in order to boost their competitiveness by working in collaboration and combining their efforts.

438- On its part, the National Community-Driven Development Programme (PNDP) provided support to about 3 million persons and about 6,000 micro-projects, a significant proportion of which was in the agropastoral sector through Council Development Plans (CDP). As part of its policy to protect socially vulnerable persons, the Programme provided support to pygmy populations in a bid to ease access to land ownership for the latter and enable them carry out agricultural, pastoral, fishing and handicraft activities. Moreover, through the Employment intensive Methods operation, this Programme supported over 6,000 youths in the Far North Region to carry out agropastoral activities.

C: Combating Food Insecurity

439- The National Food Watch and Security Programme (PNVSA) carried out a study of the economic situation all over the country. According to the results of the study, the situation was satisfactory in 33 Divisions and the situation in the North West and South West Regions was worrying owing to the security crisis, which caused the population to abandon plantations and production. The study especially revealed that no Division was in a state of emergency in terms of famine. Similarly, MINADER organised a 5-day Workshop on the evaluation of the food and nutrition situation of the population in a Covid-19 context in October 2020 at Mbankomo.

440- On the wake of Cameroon-World Bank cooperation on the use of Information and Communication Technologies, a collaboration framework was created with the Acceleration of the Digital Transformation of Cameroon Project to provide a mechanism to collect, process and disseminate data on food security.

441- In the struggle to combat food insecurity in the East, Far North, North and Adamawa Regions, which suffer the violent attacks of *Boko Haram* and insecurity at the border with the Central African Republic, the

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PNDP, with the technical and financial assistance of the AFD and the European Union, supported the development of the agricultural sector in the production basins of 13 Divisions of the said Regions.

442- In a bid to reduce the risk of food shortages, MINADER continued its policy of producing short cycle food crops and consolidating the achievements of cash crops. Hence, priority was given to crops with a short production life span such as maize, vegetable crops and tubers.

D: Continuation of the General Census of Agriculture and Livestock

443- The General Census of Agriculture and Livestock (RGAE), officially launched on 17 May 2019 continued in 2020. The objective of this census is to significantly improve the quality of statistical data and update structural reference data on agriculture and livestock relating to the main thrust of the 2020 World Programme for the Census of Agriculture published by FAO. Within the context of mobilising funds from technical and financial partners to carry out the RGAE, the national coordination received the support of the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) through the Programme for the Promotion of Youth Agropastoral Entrepreneurship (PEA-jeunes)¹⁶¹.

444- In terms of progress made, the technical documents were shared, the digitalised data collection application and administrative and financial documents were completed, a controller was appointed for mutual activities, an operations schedule and a manual of administrative, operational and accounting procedures for the co-management of financial resources of both were drafted and validated by the Prime Minister in the year under review.

§2: Actions to Guarantee the Availability of Foodstuffs

445- The main actions carried out by the State to guarantee the availability of foodstuffs include funding of activities, improving factors of production and monitoring animal health. These actions produced concrete results.

¹⁶¹ The Agreement relating hereto was signed in Yaounde on 22 June 2020.

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A: Funding of Activities by the State and its Partners

446- In the year 2020, the budget allocated to the Ministry of Livestock, Fisheries and Animal Industries (MINEPIA) increased to CFAF 34,887,510,000¹⁶², from CFAF 32,343,179,000¹⁶³ in 2019, thus a 7.87% increase in relative value and CFAF 2,544,331,000 in absolute value. The budget of MINADER also increased by CFAF 7,516,186,000¹⁶⁴, from CFAF 84,380,000,000¹⁶⁵ in 2019 to CFAF 91,896,186,000¹⁶⁶ in 2020.

447- In November 2020, the “Support Program for Rural Development in cotton regions of Cameroon” (ABC-PADER) and the Global Project “Sustainability and Added Value in Agricultural Supply Chains” were launched. These two projects, which shall run till 2024, are implemented by GIZ in the 3 northern regions of the country. The first received co-funding from the European Union and Germany to the tune of CFAF 12,725,000,000¹⁶⁷, and the second was funded by Germany to the tune of CFAF 1,900,000,000¹⁶⁸. The main beneficiaries are small producers, those who transform raw materials, breeders and agropastoral entrepreneurs with special emphasis on vulnerable groups, which comprise of youths and women.

448- On 25 September 2020, as part of the second phase of the Commodity Value Chain Development Support Project (PADFA II), Government signed a loan agreement with the IFAD to the tune of CFAF 28,589,000,000¹⁶⁹, aimed to significantly increase the revenue and resilience of family farms for cultivating rice and onions in the Far North, North, West and North West Regions. These funds are allocated to 90,000 farmers, 50% being women and 30% youths, through support from 111 cooperatives.

¹⁶² About 53,263,374.05 Euros.

¹⁶³ About 49,378,899.24 Euros.

¹⁶⁴ About 11,475,093.13 Euros.

¹⁶⁵ About 12,882,442.75 Euros.

¹⁶⁶ About 140,299,520.61 Euros.

¹⁶⁷ About 19,427,480.92 Euros.

¹⁶⁸ About 2,900,763.36 Euros.

¹⁶⁹ About 43,647,328.24 Euros.

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449- A special fund allocated about CFAF 2,000,000,000¹⁷⁰ was set up at the Ministry of Small and Medium-sized Enterprises, Social Economy and Handicrafts (MINPMEESA) to assist crafts people, promoters of social economy institutions and SMEs (with several works in the agropastoral and fishery sectors) whose activities were disrupted by the negative effects of Covid-19. The beneficiaries, selected from across the national territory following predefined objective criteria, received financial assistance, which helped them revamp their activities.

B: Improving Factors of Production

450- To improve factors of production of foodstuffs, the Government carried out research, trained stakeholders, prepared agricultural areas, strengthened animal and plant sectors and provided inputs to farmers.

1) Research

451- The State carried out research in the plant, pastoral and fish production sectors.

a) Plant Production Sector

452- In plant production, the Institute of Agricultural Research for Development (IRAD) carried out various tests¹⁷¹, which led to the development of adequate techniques to reduce the impact of production constraints on cereals, improve productivity, sustainability and competitiveness of some cash crops and leguminous crops in agro-ecological zones and strengthen techniques and procedures of conservation of agricultural products.

453- Moreover, studies were carried out in a bid to understand the motivations and economic efficiency of farms in some production basins with shortage of workers, to evaluate the contribution of peri-urban agriculture in food supply and to determine the farming practice of onion bulb production. The objective of these studies was to assess the impact of cultural and socio-economic environment on agricultural production.

¹⁷⁰ About 3,053,435.11 Euros.

¹⁷¹ Tests were carried out to develop inbred lines, hybrids and composites of corn, identify the mycorrhizal strains for controlling the germination of Striga, select the varieties of rice suitable for altitude areas, develop inbred and heterotic lines for sorghum, ensure genetical and morphological characterization of soya and identify appropriate formulas of fertilisation, identify the causes of withering of the cocoa and coffee trees in order to develop techniques of integrated management of diseases and pests, characterise and preserve pineapple genotypes, monitor and maintain collections of storage of wood yard of citrus and avocado trees, master the conditions of fermentation and transformation of cassava on the microbe content of garri and set in lactic starters.

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454- In the same vein, IRAD established banana-plantain nurseries and rehabilitated oil palm seed farms.

b) Pastoral and Fish Production Sectors

455- In 2020, IRAD conducted a study in Yaounde and Maroua on increasing day-old chicks production by acquiring broilers, feed production, incubation and egg sexing. IRAD also carried out in the towns of Bangangte, Bertoua and Wakwa, a study on the improvement of the system for producing traditional small ruminants by acquisition and maintenance of genetic resources and the production of hay. It further carried out a study on sustainable improvement of productivity of large ruminants in Cameroon by preparing technical forms, supporting the stakeholders of the sector, harvesting and processing of biomass and seeds. The benefit of all these studies was the improvement of day-old chick production, better collection of genetical resources of small ruminants, the setting up of forage fields and the transformation of biomass.

2) Training of Stakeholders of the Foodstuffs Production Chain

456- Several trainings that aimed to strengthen the capacity of farmers were organised in 2020.

457- From 9 to 11 September 2020, the National Agency for Information and Communication Technologies (ANTIC) organised a discussion forum in Garoua for about a hundred breeders, farmers, agro-industrial promoters and members of Common Initiative Groups and cooperatives on the advantages ICTs and digital transformation offer in the agropastoral sector.

458- Veterinarians in the East, Adamawa, North and Far North Regions took part in a one month training seminar organised in Maroua between September and October 2020 by MINEPIA in partnership with FAO and the Institute for Infectious Animal Diseases (IIAD) of the University of Texas. The goal of the training was capacity building of the said veterinarians on epizootic disease surveillance.

459- From 25 October to 5 November 2020, 21 staff members of MINEPIA and the Chamber of Agriculture, Fisheries, Livestock and Forestry (CAPEF) received a training on the fight against aquatic animal diseases from the Korea International Cooperation Agency (KOICA), as part of the cooperation between Korea and Cameroon.

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460- On 30 October 2020, MINADER and the International Institute for Tropical Agriculture (IITA) signed a rider to the agreement of 17 May 2018 relating to the implementation of the “Enable Youth Cameroon” Programme, third component of the Agricultural Value Chain Development Project (PD-CVA), on the training of 1,500 youths in agropastoral entrepreneurship within incubation centres dubbed “Youth Agri Business Incubation Centre” (Yabic).

3) Development of Agricultural Spaces

461- As part of the implementation of the Three-year Emergency Plan to accelerate economic growth (PLANUT), activities continued in 2020 in its 3 components namely: development of hydro-agricultural areas, setting up of agropoles and the construction of water reservoirs. In addition is the development of 13,000 hectares of hydro-agricultural areas in the *Logone and Chari* Division and the start of the contract signing process to develop 15,280 hectares of fodder area in the *Vina, Mbere, Fako* and *Deo* Divisions.

462- On 7 August 2020, the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development and the Director General of the Kribi deep sea port signed a Partnership Agreement for a period of three (3) years to boost agricultural production in the *Ocean* Division.

463- Moreover, in September 2020, a group of young Cameroonian entrepreneurs who receive support from the Government launched the project dubbed “Camvert” (Green Cameroon). This project aims to create an industrial palm grove of 50,000 hectares at *Campo* in the *South* Region, which will have 3 transformation units enabling it to produce 180,000 tons of palm oil and 18,000 tons of palm kernel oil per year when completed.

4) Strengthening the Animal and Fish Sectors

464- In 2020, MINEPIA granted 203 authorisations to open new production and exploitation centres for promoters in the livestock sector and issued 51 industrial fishing licences and 15 authorisations to create fish farms.

465- In the same year, an application called *SmartA*, which aims to better manage fish farms and boost the production of fish, was developed by

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Marc MBOULE EDIANGO, a young fishery engineer who also won the 2nd national Orange prize for social entrepreneurship.

5) Supply of Inputs to Farmers

466- MINADER supplied significant quantities of inputs to farmers across the country in 2020. Regarding seeds, plants, fertilisers and phytosanitary products, the following were provided: 11,410,000 cassava cuttings, 1,500,000 banana saplings, 200 tons of Irish potato seeds, 1,649 tons of composite maize, 55 tons of sorghum seeds, 498.5 tons of rice seeds, 100 tons of beans seeds, 10 tons of groundnut seeds and 2 tons of soya bean seeds.

467- Regarding agricultural material and equipment, 200 atomisers, 560 sprayers, 100 protective helmets and 100 bicycles were distributed.

468- Similarly, 6,000,000 fingerlings were given to fish farmers in the North West Region as part of the Livestock and Fisheries Development Project (LIFIDEP).

469- Overall, several other actions, which aimed to improve the resilience of the population and boost production were carried out by the State and its partners through various Programmes and Projects. Some of these include the Support Programme for the Renovation and Development of Professional Training in the Agricultural, Livestock and Fisheries Sectors (AFOP)¹⁷², the National Program for the Consolidation and Sustainability of Agro Pastoral Counseling (PCP-ACEFA)¹⁷³, the Programme for the Promotion of Youth Agropastoral Entrepreneurship (PEA-Jeunes)¹⁷⁴, the Support Project for the Production of High Quality Plant Material (Pap-mav-Q), the Livestock Markets and Infrastructures Development Project (PD-COBIE), the Aquaculture Entrepreneurship Promotion Project (PPEA)

¹⁷² This programme led to the registration of new training centres within the mechanism to include youths trained as project leaders, support to the finalisation of 120 projects in fisheries and 300 projects in agropastoral entrepreneurship, funding of 79 projects to the tune of CFAF 117,367,650 (about 179,187.25 Euros).

¹⁷³ As part of the ACEFA programme, the following actions were undertaken:
- support of 11,269 farmer organisations and 168,000 household farms including 55,000 women;
- funding of 93 projects in livestock, fishing and fish farming to the tune of CFAF 488,215,089 (about 745,366.55 Euros).

¹⁷⁴ 37 productive loans were granted to youth entrepreneurs to strengthen their enterprises.

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and the Livestock Development Project (PRODEL)¹⁷⁵. Significant quantities of quality material were purchased and distributed to local farmers within the framework of these programmes and projects.

C: Monitoring Animal Health

470- To limit the impact of diseases on animal production, MINEPIA organised a vaccination campaign against major epizootic diseases in 2020. This led to the vaccination of:

- 804,394 animals against Contagious bovine pleuropneumonia (CBPP);
- 387,478 animals against symptomatic coal;
- 236,973 animals against bacteridian coal;
- 328,536 animals against bovine pasteurellosis;
- 98,205 animals against cutaneous nodular disease; and
- 534,968 small ruminants against plague¹⁷⁶.

471- MINEPIA also carried out serological surveys on priority animal diseases. As part of epidemiological surveillance, 19,511 samples were analysed and 67 disease outbreaks confirmed.

472- In the same year, the National Veterinary Laboratory (LANAVET) produced over 6,500 doses of vaccines against several of these diseases. It also acquired reagents and consumables, and its branch offices are equipped to improve its service offer in terms of diagnosis.

D: Some Concrete Results

473- Diverse actions undertaken by the State and its different partners produced convincing results. MINEPIA was able to produce: 113,164 tons of meat from controlled slaughtering, 41,374 tons of table eggs, 90,078 tons of milk, 1,296 tons of honey, 1,174.4 tons of fish from aquaculture, 57,202.4 tons of fish from non-industrial fishing, 8,875.3 tons of fish from inland fishing and 1,038.5 tons of fish from industrial fishing.

¹⁷⁵ This project led to the acquisition of 165 dairy cattle and the reproduction of the Montbéliard breed of cattle semen to boost milk production, the preparation of 14 Pastoral Resources Management Plans (PGRP), the distribution of 3,000 small ruminants to 300 households in the municipalities of Guidiguis, Moulvoudaye and Goulfey, the provision of 6,800 loops and sanitation kits to farmers for the process of identification and healthy security of animals.

¹⁷⁶ With assistance from the ICRC in three Divisions of the Far North Region (Logone and Chari, Mayo Sava and Mayo Tsanaga).

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474- As part of the Livestock and Fisheries Development Project, 320 tons of poultry meat were produced.

475- Under the supervision of the Government, different private stakeholders produced 181,460.2 tons of compound feed for chicken and pigs.

§3: Actions to Guarantee the Availability of Foodstuffs

476- Three main actions were undertaken to guarantee accessibility to foodstuffs: facilitating supply, increasing marketing spaces and price control.

A: Facilitating Supply

477- With the help of 258 organisations of partner producers and economic operators, the Consumer Product Supply Regulation Authority (MIRAP) facilitated proximity supplies through two operational instruments, which are the Periodic Test Markets (MTP) and the Test Retail Stores (MTV).

478- Concerning MTVs, 77 commercial events were organised in diverse localities across the country and helped thousands of families from all social strata to buy supplies. The table below presents the statistical review of Periodic Test Markets.

Table 2: Review of Periodic Test Markets in 2020

REGION	CITY	Supply Value (in tons)	Transaction Value (Millions of CFA F)	Number of producer organisations	Number of Periodic Test Markets
CENTRE	Yaounde	2,375.69	582.66	59	34
LITTORAL	Douala	426.71	131.49	29	33
WEST	Dschang	181.68	56.86	24	4
SOUTH WEST	Buea	177.34	93.54	25	6
TOTAL		3,161.42	864.55	137	77

Source: MIRAP

479- The table shows that 3,161.42 tons of widely consumed products were provided to consumers in 2020, corresponding to a transaction value of CFAF 864,555,000¹⁷⁷.

¹⁷⁷ About 1,319,931.30 Euros.

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480- Regarding MTVs, MIRAP decided to open them every day¹⁷⁸ of the week due to constraints imposed by the Covid-19 pandemic, to enable a greater number of consumers have supplies. The table below summarises the performance of Test Retail Stores.

Table 3: Review of Test Retail Stores in 2020

REGION	CITY	Supply Value (in tons)	Transaction Value (Millions of CFA F)	Number of producer organisations
ADAMAWA	Ngaoundere	1,287.46	310.73	27
EAST	Bertoua	842.07	169.34	22
FAR NORTH	Maroua	1,407.43	696.98	20
NORTH	Garoua	1,394.87	532.60	32
SOUTH	Ebolowa	384.82	127.51	22
TOTAL		5,316.65	1,839.16	123

Source: MIRAP

481- In a bid to promote the consumption of local products, several events were organised by the State or with the support of the State. Examples are the commercial event organised in Yaounde from 28 September to 9 October 2020 to enable parents buy supplies at low cost and the 27th edition of the Music, Artistic, Industrial and Commercial Festival (FOMARIC) which held in Douala from 3 February to 8 March 2020.

B: Increase in Product Marketing Spaces

482- The implementation of LIFIDEP facilitated the construction of 11 sales halls and 5 cattle markets in 2020 which were handed to the councils concerned. Moreover, MINEPIA constructed a modern fish market at Youpwé in Douala. It also granted 49 authorisations for the creation of treatment, storage and commercialisation facilities for fishery products and 11 authorisations to open similar facilities.

483- Within the framework of Livestock Development Project (PRODEL), 9 platforms for managing livestock markets were set up to boost the marketing of products of pastoral systems.

484- The policy of promoting construction and developing commercial spaces for widespread dissemination continued. This policy led to the

¹⁷⁸ In 2019, MTVs only opened on Wednesdays and Saturdays.

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opening of the Carrefour Market on 16 September 2020 at the Akwa neighbourhood in Douala. In addition, on 17 December 2020, the Prime Minister inaugurated still in Douala, the Grand Mall, a newly constructed gigantic trade centre by a group of private economic operators.

C: Control of Food Prices

485- As is the yearly tradition, the Minister of Commerce signed Order No. 9/MINCOMMERCE of 16 January 2020 to determine reference prices for equipment, supplies, diverse works and services for public and semi-public administrations for the 2020 Financial Year. This Order helped stabilise prices and maintain inflation below 3%, which is the convergence criterion of CEMAC. The Ministry of Trade (MINCOMMERCE) further carried out 731 approvals of prices of goods and services not referenced in the Market Price List. This led to the creation of 122 new references.

486- On 29 September 2020, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) handed over to MINCOMMERCE an application called "Cameroon Market Information System", for the collection, processing and analysis of information on the market behaviour of some widely consumed products such as to emit alerts of shortages in real time, streamline supplies and anticipate on import rates. The goal is to disseminate data on prices and stocks available from production to storage passing through transformation, transport and trade. During the hand-over ceremony of this software, UNDP equally offered equipment¹⁷⁹ for operating same.

§4: Actions to Guarantee the Acceptability of Foodstuffs

487- To guarantee the acceptability of foodstuffs, the State controlled same, ensured standardisation and fought against fraud and contraband.

A: Quality Control of Animal and Fishery Foods

488- In the year 2020, before slaughtering across the national territory, veterinary services inspected 223,941 cattle, 44,625 pigs, 47,551 small ruminants, 719,189 poultry, 151 donkeys and 65 horses. Furthermore, 63,220.84 kg of meat and offal unfit for consumption were seized in slaughterhouses and slaughter areas.

¹⁷⁹ These include 20 laptops, 42 tablets, 25 power banks, 22 modems and 26 scales of 50 Kg capacity each.

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489- Furthermore, MINEPIA issued 91 technical notices on importation, including 63 for poultry, 3 for livestock (cattle, piglets and goats) and cattle semen and 25 for cuts of meat, various meat products, milk and milk products. In the fishery sector, MINEPIA issued 28 technical notices on importation of products.

490- In a bid to strengthen human resources in this sector, 977 trainees were admitted in the different training cycles of the National Zootechnical and Veterinary Training Centres of Maroua, Fouban and Jakiri for the 2019-2020 academic year while 782 others received their end of course certificates in the same centres. With the support of PRODEL, 10 young veterinarians were able to set up private practice.

491- To strengthen control facilities, 5 zootechnical centres, 3 veterinary clinics, 2 veterinary control posts and 5 dipping tanks were constructed in the North West Region in the context of LIFIDEP.

B: Standardisation and Certification of Food Products

492- As part of the Cameroon Pre-Shipment Evaluation of Conformity (PECAE)¹⁸⁰, the Standard and Quality Agency (ANOR) issued 5,676 certificates of compliance of imported products. As regards local products, it certified about 200 and issued 424 certificates of compliance. It also carried out 5,550 laboratory product analysis and 225 audit and inspection missions in enterprises. It adopted 250 standards of the African Organization for Standardization (ARSO). A significant proportion of its activities concerned agro-food products¹⁸¹ and cellulose based products.

493- To support enterprises of the oilseed sector in the process approach, ANOR organised an awareness-raising workshop in Douala on 24 September 2020 on drafting standards and obtaining certificates of compliance for promoters and staff of the said enterprises.

494- Similarly, in its quest for a healthy market where only quality and competitive products are found, ANOR organised a capacity-building seminar for about 40 special jurisdiction Judicial Police Officers on market supervision from 2 to 5 November 2020 in Yaounde. They received training on the functions of special jurisdiction JPO, techniques for the con-

¹⁸⁰ Ce programme vise à prévenir l'importation au Cameroun des produits dangereux.

¹⁸¹ 206 certificates of compliance of local products.

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trol and fight against fraud, drafting of procedural documents relating to quality control, ethics and deontology of the controller.

C: Fight against Fraud and Contraband

495- As part of the Operation Stop Illicit Trade III (HALCOMI III), Customs succeeded to seize 90 cartoons of frozen chicken of questionable origin on 17 September 2020 at the Biyi Affack control post in the South Region. Some 200 vials of pharmaceutical products, whiskies, brewing products, psychotropic substances and diverse contraband products were also seized in other parts of the country.

496- The MINCOMMERCE National Fraud Control and Prevention Brigade teams carried out ordinary and/or unannounced field visits in stores, warehouses, restaurants and supermarket in a bid to combat fraud relating to legal metrology, competition, standards and after sales service. Following statistics, by 20 October 2020, 18,878 commercial facilities were controlled, 256 of which were sealed and 2,991 promoters were summoned. These controls led to the seizure of stocks of counterfeit products such as alcoholic and non-alcoholic drinks, sausages, mineral water and vegetable oils thus contributing to clean the national economic space. Concretely, 56,675 products were seized including 40,725 food products under different conditions. These products, unfit for consumption, were destroyed to prevent their reintroduction on the market.

497- Most of these results were achieved thanks to the action of associations for the defence of the rights of consumers, which report illicit activities of shady traders through the MINCOMMERCE call centre with number 1502.

498- Administrative authorities and the Forces of Law and Order also worked in similar manner. For example, on 9 October 2020, under the aegis of the Senior Divisional Officer of the Wouri Division, members of the forces of law and order destroyed an illegal sachet-whisky production unit and another unit producing adulterated wine at a place called Sodiko in Douala and arrested the promoter and employees. In the same month, a Coca-Cola clandestine production plant was destroyed at Bonaberi.

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SECTION 2: RIGHT TO WATER AND ENERGY

499- The NDS30 makes it a priority to provide to all Cameroonians quality water and electricity in sufficient quantity. To achieve this objective, a number of actions were planned in 2020 to improve access to water and sanitation as well as, guarantee access to electricity despite the coronavirus pandemic.

§1: Guaranteeing Access to Potable Water

500- The population's ever-growing need for water led the Government to continue the execution of projects in this sector both in rural and urban areas despite the coronavirus pandemic in 2020.

A: Execution of Projects in Rural Areas

501- Actions were carried out relating to the supply of water and liquid waste management.

1) Water Supply

502- The Government engaged in a vast rehabilitation programme of 350 Scan Water Stations across the country with the first phase launched at Ndjore in the Centre Region on 26 February 2020. The station which shall supply water to more than 1,800 persons hitherto exposed to water borne diseases such as cholera and typhoid is estimated to cost CFAF 100,000,000¹⁸². It comprises a borehole with an immersed pump for harnessing, a treatment plant, a 25m³ reservoir and 5 public taps.

503- The major innovation is that all the rehabilitated stations shall benefit from a photovoltaic solar energy supply system thus granting it independent power supply.

504- Moreover, emphasis was laid on Drinking Water Supply over Human-powered Pumps (HP) the functioning and maintenance of which is cheaper. Thus, the number of rehabilitated infrastructure was 14 PMH and 2 AEP for the cost of CFAF 90,000,000¹⁸³ in the Centre, South and West Regions.

¹⁸² About 152,671.76 Euros.

¹⁸³ About 137,404.58 Euros.

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2) Access to Adequate Sanitation

505- In 2020, the rate of open defecation was about 7% varying from one Region to another. Within this context, Government, with the support of technical and financial partners, drafted a CLTS brochure. The Project to End Open Defecation (FDAL) was implemented in 2 pilot councils (Mbang in the East and Blangoua in the Far North). The implementation of FDAL in 297 villages led to the construction of 10,673 latrines for 10,313 households. Moreover, CLTS was further implemented in 8 councils of the North Region (Garoua 1, 2, 3, Bibemi, Lagdo, Gashiga, in the Benoue and Bardanke Divisions, Guider in Mayo-Louti).

B: Execution of Projects in Urban and Peri-Urban Areas

506- In 2020, Cameroon Water Utilities Corporation (CAMWATER) made new connections and extensions increasing the number of its subscribers from 426,591 in 2019 to 476,115. Indeed, the total number of connections including subsidised connections was 12,097. Also, subsidised connections were 45 while new connections were 1,814. The number of paid connections (collected) including those subsidised are 15,577.

507- These connections made available an installed production capacity of **823,848 m³/d** with an operational installed production capacity of 663 557 m³/d. The uncounted production capacity was 331,246 m³/d and available storage capacity was 268,532 m³/d.

508- This production capacity in turn led to the production of 211,276,663 m³ of captured raw water, 198,250,472 m³ of water produced from the plant and/or boreholes for 93.83% of production yield.

509- Moreover, the Potable Water Supply Project in Yaounde from the River Sanaga (PAEPYS), registered the following progress rates: 47,3 % for works, 97,5% for studies and 91,8 % for equipment supply. This project is expected to put an end to the water supply deficit in the city of Yaounde by providing an additional 300,000 m³ per day extensible to 400,000 m³ in its initial phase.

510- Moreover, the Transitional Emergency Measures Project in Douala and Yaounde (PMTU-DY) managed by CAMWATER was still in progress.

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This Project, funded by CAMWATER funds, of about CFAF 10,000,891,000¹⁸⁴, aims to reduce the potable water deficit in the cities of Douala and Yaounde, while waiting for the execution of major projects which will bring about definite solutions for these major cities. The additional production capacity expected is 35,000 m³/d in Yaounde with the Akomnyada plant and 30,000 m³/d for Douala with 11 boreholes constructed.

511- The same goes for the Potable Water Supply and Waste Management Project in semi urban areas in 18 centres. The outcomes include the following:

512- Lot 1 covering Bangante, Bafang, Bana, Bansa, Fouban with a 100% execution rate for rehabilitation and drinking water supply extension works and 84.26% for the construction of latrines and sumps in health facilities. **Lot 2** relating to Akono, Ngoumou, Ebolowa, Bafia, Sangmelima, Kousseri at an 87% global execution rate. **Lot 3** relating to Nkongsamba, Loum, Manjo, Mbanga, Kumba, Mamfe at a 100% rate of rehabilitation and extension of drinking water supply and 75% for the construction of gender-specified toilet complexes, disposal grounds, controlled garbage dumps and the supply of incinerators in hospitals.

513- In relation to the Project for the Rehabilitation, reinforcement and Extension of Drinking Water Supply systems in 52 centres, it has been completed in its 1, 2, 3 and 4th phases (cities of Mbouda, Yaounde, Kaele, Nanga-Eboko, Mfou, Foubot, Buea and Belabo). The 5th phase was ongoing (Akonolinga, Ambam, Batouri, Monatele, Saa, Zoetele, Evoudoula, Okola, Yokadouma).

514- In addition, the Project to Improve Potable Water Supply in Yaounde and 3 secondary cities was completed with respect to the first city and the rate of physical execution of works was 42% for Bertoua, 45% for Edea and 50% for Ngaoundere.

515- Concerning the Project to extend and rehabilitate potable water production stations in 9 cities in Cameroon, significant progress was made. Indeed, works were completed in some cities such as Bafoussam, Bamenda, Kribi and Sangmélina while works were ongoing in Garoua-

¹⁸⁴ About 15,268,535.89 Euros.

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Boulai, Dschang, Yabassi, Maroua and Garoua. The execution of this project provided additional daily production of 10,000 m³ for the first cities mentioned and 7,000 m³ for the second cities

C: Impact of the Coronavirus Pandemic in the Water Sector

516- Considering the reduction of the national budget due to the coronavirus, 16 projects were negatively affected. They are: the project for feasibility studies, Project Preliminary Report and drafting of the programme for the requalification of boreholes in the Adamawa, North and Far North Regions, execution studies for 120 drinking water supplies, studies of the Rural drinking water supply and sanitation Project (phase 2), studies for the construction of three rural distribution points for oil products and domestic gas in the localities of Ngoro (Centre), Ndelele (East) and Tignere (Adamawa), studies for the construction of bio-digesters in the Garoua and Maroua Central Prisons and the Kousseri Main Prison. All the studies-related projects were postponed and the budget was reduced from CFAF 13,999,000,000¹⁸⁵ to CFAF 5,954,000,000¹⁸⁶. Consequently, the effective implementation of these projects was carried forward to the 2021 financial year.

§2: Guaranteeing Access to Electrical Energy

517- In terms of securing and supplying energy, actions focused on completion and effective commissioning of production infrastructure projects, construction, strengthening and rehabilitation of electricity transmission and distribution infrastructure and renewable energies in compliance with related standards and institutions within a difficult context linked to the Coronavirus pandemic.

A: Strengthening the Institutional, Strategic and Financial Framework

518- Under the institutional framework, the Electricity Development Corporation (EDC) Company was revamped through restructuring by Decree No. 2020/244 of 4 May 2020 on the reorganisation and functioning of EDC. The EDC Company assigned to manage the hydroelectric facility of Memve'ele became a producer of electricity whereas its previous rules and regulations limited its activities to water storage.

¹⁸⁵ About 21,372,519.08 Euros.

¹⁸⁶ About 7,563,358.79 Euros.

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Through this Decree, the State transferred to EDC, ownership and enjoyment and according to its legal status on property, of assets and shares of all the hydroelectric facilities in its capacity as an asset management company. The company thus became one of the main producers of electricity in Cameroon.

519- Regarding strategic framework, the activities for the diagnostic phase of the Master Plan for Electricity Generation, Transmission and Distribution in the Littoral Region were launched on 29 December 2020. This Plan presents Government's strategies to respond to the energy demand and lays emphasis on the participatory approach involving councils, traditional chiefdoms, enterprises, users and administrations.

520- Moreover, the Rural Electrification Master Plan (PDER) was updated. Drafted following a participatory approach based on strategic guidelines of the State, PDER aims among others to grant almost all Cameroonians access to the electrical grid. In addition, this Master Plan aims to give value to renewable energy resources for the electrification of zones far from the electrical grid and even to boost the development of productive sectors. Structured around 4 phases, each for a duration of 5 years, PDER targets the electrification of by 2035 of 10,000 localities that do not yet have access to electricity. In this vein, there are plans for 50,000 connections in rural areas per year over a period of 20 years, making a total of one million connections, for a global cost estimated at CFAF 805,000,000,000¹⁸⁷.

521- Relating to financial framework, Decree No. 2020/497 of 19 August 2020 created the Electricity Sector Development Fund (FDSE) and for its first year 2021, it shall operate with a budget of CFAF 7,000,000,000¹⁸⁸.

B: Continuing the Construction of Hydroelectric Power Plants

522- The global achievement rate of construction works on the foot plant of the Lom Pangar reservoir dam was 45%.

523- Concerning the Memve'ele hydroelectric dam, construction works on the power transmission line and associated substations of Nyabizan and Djop were completed since January 2018. Works left included the

¹⁸⁷ About 1,229,007,633.59 Euros.

¹⁸⁸ About 10,687,022.90 Euros.

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installation of 7km of line up to the Nkolkoumou substation. Construction works for the associated substations of Ahala and Nkolkoumou were executed at 95%. The partial commissioning of the afore-mentioned dam at the 90/30 Substation of Mbalmayo led to the decommissioning of the thermal power plants of Ahala, Oyomabang, Mbalmayo and Ebolowa hence saving some CFAF 350,000,000¹⁸⁹ per week required for the acquisition of fuel for the said power plants.

524- Regarding the Mekin hydroelectric power station, works were completed with the correction of the manufacturing defect in the design of unit No.2 by the project manager, which defect caused the breakdown that delayed the effective commissioning of the station. The technical commissioning tests were carried out. The commercial and legal aspects were being finalised with Energy of Cameroon (ENEO), the Electricity Sector Regulatory Agency (ARSEL) and the National Electricity Transport Company (SONATREL) and finally, the delay in setting up of certain amenities as regards the social and management plan were been handled.

525- Work continued for the Nachtigal Amont hydroelectric facility project whose objective is the construction of a 420MW hydroelectric facility in the Nachtigal Amont site on River Sanaga associated with a 400KV double circuit transmission line between Nachtigal and Yaounde and the construction of a 400/225/90/30 kV substation at NYOM 2 in the outskirts of Yaounde. The commencement of general earthworks, civil engineering and construction works of the Bastchenga - Nyom 2 high voltage line were ongoing and reached an execution rate of 40%. The execution of the said project is expected to create 1,500 direct employment.

526- Finally, as concerns the Colomines and Ndokayo hydroelectric facilities on River Kadey (12MW) and River Mali (4.5MW) respectively, all the studies were completed and funding mobilised from the Bank of China in collaboration with MINEPAT.

C: Development of Electricity Transmission and Distribution Infrastructure

527- As regards electricity transmission and distribution, the Government made great efforts in providing access to quality electricity.

¹⁸⁹ About 534,351.15 Euros.

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1) Electricity Transmission

528- Actions undertaken included continuous execution of some works and the implementation of various construction projects for electricity transmission lines in different interconnected grids.

529- The completion rate of the 90KV Lom Pangar-Bertoua high voltage line construction project increased from 13% in 2019 to 40% in 2020. It was to be commissioned in December 2021.

530- Activities of the project to upgrade the electricity transmission network and reform the sector continued with an execution rate estimated at about 70% for the component *"support to make SONATREL operational"* with the signing and application of Orders relating to the electricity market code and the connection code.

531- In addition, the construction project of 225kV electrical energy transmission line between Nkongsamba-Bafoussam and a new station at Bafoussam continued. The objective is to strengthen and stabilise electrical energy supply of the West and North West Regions and Yaounde-Abong-Mbang, which aims to connect the South Interconnected Network (RIS) to the East Interconnected Network (RIE) without forgetting the construction of the 225/90/30 KV Abong Mbang station. The overall progress rate of both projects was 68%.

532- The project to strengthen and stabilise the electrical grid of Yaounde continued. It consists in the construction of the 400KV line between Mangombe and Yaounde. It seeks to guarantee security in case of malfunction of the current line due to the construction of a new line for Yaounde. The overall execution rate was 25%.

533- Furthermore, the Project for Strengthening and Extension of Transmission and Distribution Power Grids (PRERETD) which, in the mid-term will help electrify 495 localities in 8 regions of Cameroon and the project to upgrade the electricity transmission network and reform the sector was ongoing. Activities carried out under this project were visible through the effective construction of the 90KV Mbalmayo - Ebolowa line, the actual electrification works of 112 localities in the North and Far North Regions, the launching of invitations to tender for the design and commissioning of medium and low voltage grids in the Centre Region for

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37 localities in the Haut Sanaga, Lekie, Nyong et Kelle and Mbam et Ioumbou Divisions and in the South in 172 localities in the Mvila, Vallée du Ntem and Ocean Divisions.

534- Finally, urban, semi urban and rural electrification became a reality through the implementation of several electrification projects executed by the State and its institutions, but also by the increase in the number of ENEO subscribers, which went from 1,100,000 in 2019 to 1,320,000 in 2020 for a transmission grid transit capacity of 1,400 MW on an installed capacity of 1,520 MW.

2) Electricity Distribution

535- The amount of non-taxable power consumption share of households moved from 110 kilowatt to 220 kilowatt, thus many consumers were exempt from the Value Added Tax (VAT) of 19.29% by ENEO. The State's actions in the electricity sector yielded the following results: rate of national electricity coverage: 30%, rate of access to electricity by the population: 70%, rate of access to electricity by the rural population: 25 %.

536- Regarding the control of service quality and the continuous provision of electricity by the State, a permanent oversight mechanism was set up to provide information in real time in order to ensure a more rapid response from ENEO technical teams.

537- Public authorities, in their actions aimed at improving electricity transmission and distribution, faced a number of difficulties. These included overload on transformer substations and power lines, poor quality of equipment, lack of investment by distributors, vandalism in the Far North, North West and South West Regions and bush fires in rural areas despite awareness raising campaigns and field visits by ARSEL as part of its missions for the regulation, control and monitoring of activities of users and operators of the electricity sector.

D: Developments in the Field of Renewable Energy

538- For the project relating to the electrification of 1 000 localities using photovoltaic solar systems executed by Huawei, phase I (166 localities

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for 10,038 connections) was completed in 2018 and phase II (184 localities), for which construction works were completed and campaigns for connection were ongoing leading to the connection of 6 720 households.

E: Impact of Covid-19 in the Electricity Sector

539- Owing to the Covid-19 pandemic, the global budget allocation for 17 projects was reduced from CFAF 58,895,000,000¹⁹⁰ to CFAF 8,975,000,000¹⁹¹. Indeed, about 49 projects had their budgets reduced or rescheduled within the 2021 Financial Year.

SECTION 3: RIGHT TO DECENT HOUSING

540- To guarantee the right to decent housing, Government continued the construction and management of houses and rehabilitated same. Similarly, Government offered access to housing facilities and took measures aimed to secure land and handle violations of land rights.

§1: Construction and Management of Houses

541- The share of the budget of the Ministry of Housing and Urban Development (MINHDU) dedicated to low cost housing during the reference year stood at CFAF 1,850,000,000¹⁹².

542- The Cameroon Housing Corporation (SIC) went on to mobilise resources expected from Head 93 of the SIC/State plan contract of CFAF 1,100,000,000¹⁹³ for the construction of houses which were not constructed in 2019. By resorting to its own funds, SIC was able to complete the construction of the building dubbed "ABIERGUE" at Cité Verte. In addition, it was executing the management task assigned by MINHDU of an asset of 2,320 houses from the Sino-Cameroon cooperation. Ad-hoc committees allocated these houses, found in the 10 Regions, to different social groups in simple lease or lease purchase. Moreover, 100 low cost houses and new infrastructure were constructed in Bertoua. Regarding the Government programme to construct 10,000 low cost houses and

¹⁹⁰ About 89,916,030.53 Euros.

¹⁹¹ About 13,702,990.08 Euros.

¹⁹² About 2,824,427.48 Euros.

¹⁹³ About 1,679,389.31 Euros.

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develop 50,000 plots fit for building which began since 2010, the execution rate was 75% for the 10,000 houses and 100% for the plots fit for building. In 2020, studies for certain projects were completed in view of commencing construction. This concerns the social project to construct 200 houses at Pitoa, the Ebolowa municipal city Project of 146 houses and the Mfoundi average standing residence project of 150 houses in Yaounde.

§2: Securing Land and Redressing Land Rights Violations

543- Government continued securing land and handling violations of land rights.

A: Securing Land

544- Government was concerned with securing large and medium surface areas and demarcation of plots and buildings.

545- Securing of large surface areas (institutionalization) was necessary for carrying out major housing projects. To achieve desired objectives, Urban and Rural Land Development Authority(MAETUR) relied on the support of Ministry of State Property, Survey and Land Tenue (MINCAF) to secure certain projects such as at Massoumbou 3,990 ha, Mbankomo 1,000 ha and Lobo 2,000 ha. The impact was the reduction of costs of developing plots, satisfaction of many and consideration for underprivileged social groups.

546- Smaller surface areas were secured including 80 ha at Nkondom Mfou I, II and III and 23ha 1a 96 ca at Oloa. Land regularisation of 61ha 36a 1ca at Nkondom IV was completed. Special Agreements were signed with customary authorities for the acquisition of the Bwang-Bakoko site (80 ha).

547- Finally, as regards the demarcation of plots and buildings, the law on co-ownership was implemented through the demarcation of plots and buildings in the Mbang Bakoko (75%) and in Olembé (95%),

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Table 1: Statistics on land titles issued by 30 December 2020

Regions	Status of the Applicant		Direct registration	Subdivision	Transformation of a deed (Acte de vente notariée?) CHECK to a Land Certificate	Complete transfers	Total
Adamawa	Natural persons	Men	245	125	0	0	370
		Women	101	29	0	0	130
	Legal persons	Communities	27	0	0	0	27
Centre	Natural persons	Men	473	2,601	85	340	3,499
		Women	125	580	18	65	788
	Legal persons	Communities	450	250	52	80	832
East	Natural persons	Men	148	43	0	10	201
		Women	19	17	0	2	38
	Legal persons	Communities	12	10	0	3	25
Far North	Natural persons	Men	449	127	0	8	584
		Women	111	36	0	0	147
	Legal persons	Communities	4	0	0	0	4
Littoral	Natural persons	Men	351	1,789	0	218	2,358
		Women	59	545	0	96	700
	Legal persons	Communities	54	203	0	113	370
North	Natural persons	Men	262	82	0	12	356
		Women	60	0	0	0	60
	Legal persons	Communities	0	4	0	0	4
North West	Natural persons	Men	151	152	0	30	333
		Women	66	67	0	13	146
	Legal persons	Communities	4	0	0	0	4
West	Natural persons	Men	584	250	7	109	950
		Women	102	42	0	35	179
	Legal persons	Communities	145	65	0	45	255
South	Physical persons	Men	389	447	4	10	850
		Women	93	187	1	2	283
	Legal persons	Communities	380	31	2	1	414
South West	Physical persons	Men	278	250	2	0	530
		Women	74	49	2	0	125
	Legal persons	Communities	49	8	1	0	58
Adamawa	Physical persons	Men	3,330	5,866	98	737	10,031
		Women	810	1,552	21	213	2,596
	Legal persons	Communities	1,125	571	55	242	1,993
TOTAL			5,265	7,989	174	1,192	14,620

SOURCE: MINDCAF

B: Redressing Infringements of Land Rights

548- In 2020, 37 Decrees on expropriation and compensation were signed as opposed to 11 in 2019.

549- For example, Decree No. 2020/22/PM of 14 January 2020 on the expropriation for public use, inclusion into State property of lands required for the construction of the arrival point of the Nachtigal Amont hydroelectric project at "NYOM 2", in Yaounde 1 Subdivision, Mfoundi Division, Centre Region and compensate persons who lost their land rights/whose goods were destroyed in the execution of such works, thus allocating a compensation of CFAF 774,987,253¹⁹⁴ for 11 beneficiaries. Decree No. 2020/2945/PM of 30 June 2020 on the compensation of persons who lost their land rights or property within the frame work of the execution of construction works for the "Nyom 2-Ngousso" 90 Kv double line, in Mefou et Afamba Division which allocated to 26 persons¹⁹⁵

¹⁹⁴ About 1,183,186.65 Euros.

¹⁹⁵ 9 at Nkolfoulou for compensation evaluated at CFAF 32,956,457 (about 50,315.20 Euros), 12 in Nkozoa town to the tune of CFAF 42,289,905 (about 64,564.74 Euros) for damages and 5 at NSAN village who were expelled and compensated to the tune of CFAF 52,420,375 (about 80,031.11 Euros).

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compensation of CFAF 127,646,737¹⁹⁶. Decree No. 2020/7353/PM of 29 December 2020 on the incorporation as State property, allocation to the Ministry of Employment and Vocational Training, of an outbuilding of State Property, of a surface area of 3 ha required for the construction of the Training Centre for Industrial Maintenance, at "Kouekong", Bafoussam 1 Subdivision in the West Region as well as compensation for persons whose goods were destroyed in the execution of the said works and which allocates CFAF 2,965,925¹⁹⁷ for 9 victims.

550- Moreover, on Monday 21 December 2020, Government put in place a Plan of Action to relocate persons affected by development works on some major roads in councils in Batouri and Bertoua.

§3: Execution of Rehabilitation Works

551- To make houses fit for living and viable, works were carried out on new sites to provide water and electricity supply, fight against floods and construct green spaces and access ways.

A: Supplying Houses with Water and Electricity

552- MINHDU through the Delegated Project Owner, MAETUR, completed works to install solar street lights at Mbanga Bakoko and Olembe which began since 2018. MAETUR also carried out 80% of works to supply electricity to Ngoulmekong, in Mefou et Akono. The Nylon Nkolmintag works to supply potable water were achieved at 88.5% as shown in the table below.

Table 2: Evolution of Water and Energy Supply Projects as of 31 December, 2020

	Projects	Planned tasks	% as at 31/12/20	
MAETUR Projects:	Ngoulmekong	Electricity supply works	80%	
	Nylon Nkolmintag,	Works to open waterways and supply potable water	88.50%	
MINHDU Projects:	Olembe	Supply and installation of street lights	100%	Final acceptance
	Mbanga Bakoko	Supply and installation of solar and self-sustaining street lights	95%	Pending final acceptance

SOURCE: MINHDU

¹⁹⁶ About 194,880.51 Euros.

¹⁹⁷ About 4,528.13 Euros.

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B: Sanitation, drainage, development of green spaces and roads

553- In Nkolandom II, geo-technical studies for earth works and drainage of rain water were achieved at 50% and cleaning of the site at 80%.

554- Sanitation works for the Olembe residential area, which began in 2017 were accepted and the grid commissioned. However, reinforcement and additional long term works for the construction of waste water treatment facilities relating hereto continued (90%).

555- MAETUR road and drainage works at Nkondom II-Mfou were carried out up to 87%. Drainage, road and pavement works were finally received at Ngoulmekong.

556- In the Oloa area (Nkolnguet Community Lands), urban studies were completed and technical studies carried out up to 70% for the execution of road, drainage and sanitation works.

§4: Easing Access to Loans for Individuals

557- Between 1 January and 31 December 2020, 391 loans were granted to individuals at preferential rates by the Cameroon Housing Loan Fund (CFC) to the tune of CFAF 13,031,713,932¹⁹⁸ (about 19,895,746.46 Euros), for the construction of 1,152 houses. Moreover, CFC created a land Exchange on 3 July 2020 to guarantee access to secured real estate for its clients on the bases of land and real estate offers. CFC plays the role of a mediator between landowners and land buyers and collects available financial and real estate offers for advertisement on its website. Constant follow-up and expertise by CFC Staff, from understanding the feasibility of the project to purchasing land for the construction of a house and ensuring project execution are some of the measures taken before disbursement of loans in instalments, which contrary to public opinion is for the safety of the client. Moreover, MINDUH granted loans for legal and natural persons to the tune of CFAF 1,702,385,212¹⁹⁹ for the construction of houses.

¹⁹⁸ To achieve its objectives, CFC intends to use the expertise of the Administration of State Property and Land Matters to ascertain the truth of information found in the financial offer, that is, the authenticity of the LT, the availability of the land, the ownership certificate, etc.

¹⁹⁹ About 2,599,061.39 Euros.

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558- The well-being of its population remained a major concern for the State in 2020. Despite the health and security crises, the Government took strong action to consolidate the right to food, the right to water and energy and the right to adequate housing. These efforts include the adoption of the NDS30, which is a real guide to fighting food insecurity, the rehabilitation of several infrastructures by Camwater and the Electricity Development Cooperation, and the facilitation of loans to individuals at preferential rates by the Cameroon Housing Loan Fund.

559- Despite these advances, there continued to be challenges in improving living conditions, given the ever increasing needs of the population.

CHAPTER 4

RIGHT TO WORK AND SOCIAL SECURITY



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560- The Covid-19 pandemic had a significant impact on economic activities and led to some adjustment measures at various levels. The employment sector was not spared by the pandemic. Indeed, by affecting both work demand and supply, all labour market supply chains were impacted.

561- Nevertheless, in 2020, the right to work and social security was guaranteed through measures taken to sustain employment, improve working conditions, support actions in favour of entrepreneurship, and consolidate the right to social security.

SECTION 1: MEASURES TO ENSURE EMPLOYMENT

562- In 2020, the Government continued to promote vocational training and contribute to its development.

§1: Continued Promotion of Vocational Training

563- The Government continued to promote self-employment and paid employment.

564- Concerning the promotion of self-employment, the Integrated Support Project for Informal-Sector Actors (PIAASI) made it possible to continue the training of stakeholders of the informal sector and financed 87 income generating youth group micro-projects. These micro-projects in turn created 348 employments.

565- Moreover, support to self-employment for 27 Cameroonian migrants returning from the Mediterranean coast led to the creation of 108 income-generating employments, of which 27 direct and 81 indirect.

566- In addition, the National Employment Fund (NEF) strengthened its activities related to intermediation, personnel placement and self-employment.

§2: Development of Vocational Training

567- This action was concretised through the quantitative improvement of vocational training offer, the improvement of vocational training quality and the strengthening of the information and career guidance system.

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A: Increasing Vocational Training Offer

568- During the year under review, 255 youths received national scholarships for vocational training. In addition, 50 foreign scholarships were granted, that is, 20 Algerian scholarships and 30 Moroccan scholarships. Besides, 35,400 learners were trained in 1,215 public and private vocational training institutions.

569- With the support of the *Organisation Internationale de la Francophonie*, the platform for follow-up of graduates of the vocational training system, was made operational.

570- To increase youths' access to vocational training, the National Institute for the Training of Trainers and Programme Development was opened.

B: Improving Accessibility to Vocational Training

571- In 2020, the Information and Career Guidance Centres (CIOP) of Ngaoundere, Bamenda and Maroua were constructed and the construction of the Bandjoun, Ebebda, Maroua, Ndop and Nanga-Eboko vocational Training Centres continued.

572- Regarding support to young people, 2 Multipurpose Youth Empowerment Centres (CMPJ) and a house for youths were constructed, and one CMPJ rehabilitated.

573- Feasibility studies for the creation of 6 trade training centres were validated, with the support of the General and Professional Teaching College (CEGEP) of Canada. The same was done for vocational training centres in Douala and Edea with C2D financing.

574- An assessment of various training and certification programmes indicated an increase of 3% in the number of candidates for the Vocational Qualification Certificate in the 253 approved specialties. The number of students increased from 45,906 during the 2018-2019 academic year to 52,792 during the 2019-2020 academic year. Moreover, the process of certification and classification per category and profession of the Vocational Qualification Certificate per field or professional branch, was improved.

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575- Furthermore, training manuals were purchased, teaching material for vocational training was produced and distributed in several Government vocational training institutions. In addition, the Validation of Acquired Experience (VAE) in the eye wear sector was organised by the Ministry of Employment and Vocational Training (MINEFOP), with the support of the Cameroon National Association of Opticians (ONOC).

C: Strengthening the Information and Vocational Counselling System

576- The implementation of the vocational guidance strategy continued through the reception and counselling of youths and job seekers in the Yaounde and Douala School, University and Vocational Guidance Counselling Centres (COSUP), which became CIOP.

SECTION 2: ACTIONS TO ENSURE ENTREPRENEURSHIP

577- The promotion of entrepreneurship and the socio-economic reintegration of youths continued despite the difficult health context.

§1: Promotion of Entrepreneurship

578- Emphasis was laid on inciting entrepreneurial freedom and the right to associate to create small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs).

579- Concerning the promotion of entrepreneurial freedom, and in order to supervise wealth creators and project leaders, the Government set up: the National Pilot Enterprise Nursery of Edea (PNPE); implemented the Entrepreneurship Capacity Building Program for Young Local Entrepreneurs (ENPRETEC); set up an electronic address (www.mybusiness.cm) for the online creation of enterprises within 72 hours in Yaounde, Douala and Garoua Centres for Business Creation Formality (CFCE); opened a One-stop Desk at the SMEs Promotion Agency (SMEPA); created handicraft villages; virtual galleries; and a one-stop desk for the export of non-industrial products.

580- Particular attention was paid to persons living with disabilities. It is on this basis that a partnership Agreement was signed between the Ministry of Small and Medium-sized Enterprises, Social Economy and Handicrafts (MINPMEESA) and the Cardinal Paul Emile Leger National Centre for the Rehabilitation of persons with disabilities, for the socio-economic

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reintegration of this social category, particularly as far as SMEs and handicraft are concerned.

581- Regarding the creation of shares in economically viable organisations, MINPMEESA helped SMEs, artisans, handicraft enterprises and social economy organisations to organise and better structure themselves. In addition, council registers were distributed to ease the registration of craftsmen, consolidate and protect their status.

§2: Specific Initiatives for the Professional Integration of Youths

582- In order to contribute to the social and economic reintegration of youths in 2020, the Government sensitised and trained them, then supported the implementation of their projects.

A: Outreach Actions and Training of Youths

583- Some of the outreach actions were: enhancing moral skills of 500 youths by the Rural and Urban Youth Support Programme (PAJER-U); enhancing moral, civic and entrepreneurial skills of 8,474 other youths throughout the territory; training on personal development and financial education of 132 youths in Kousseri, Yagoua and Mora, and of 132 others in the Littoral, Centre, East and West Regions; sensitisation of 1,499 youths on opportunities offered by the Programme for the Return and Integration of Youths from the Diaspora (PARI-JEDI).

584- Training activities concerned: the training of 32 youths, including 3 with disabilities, entrepreneurship and project management; the training of 600 youths on sensitising the public on respecting barrier measures decided by the Government in the fight against Covid-19; the training of 182 youths within the framework of the Programme for the Support of and Settlement in Self-Employment called "Master Class"; entrepreneurial capacity building of 450 youths of the Far North and Centre Regions; the capacity building of 150 agro-entrepreneurs youths in commercial profitability in Kousseri, Yagoua and Mora; the training of 50 internally displaced persons under the "Manicarway"²⁰⁰ Programme, in partnership with the PUENE foundation.

585- Another programme led by the Ministry of Youth Affairs and Civic Education (MINJEC) supported by MINPMESSA led to the training of

²⁰⁰ The said programme was put in place to support and foster the settlement of some vulnerable categories, including internally displaced persons.

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1 000 youths, including 500 on administrative formalities for the creation of enterprises and tax procedures in force in Cameroon.

586- The *Youth Connekt Cameroon* Initiative also invested in training youths, including 125 youths on customisation. The training aimed at promoting the label “made in Cameroon”. Besides, during a day dubbed *made in Cameroon*, organised in collaboration with the REJE, the entrepreneurial know-how of 500 youths was exhibited before Members of Parliament.

587- Under the Three-year Special Youth Plan, 7,193 youths were registered on the platform of the National Youth Observatory (ONJ) in 2020, taking to more than 800,000 the number of youths registered in this entity. In the same vein, 1,349 youths were referred to appropriate desks for their aspirations, and 1,098 services were offered to youths holding the biometric youth card.²⁰¹

B: Actions Towards Professional Integration

588- In 2020, MINJEC supported the integration of 150 youths in difficulty from rural and urban areas and from prison; trained 3,576 youths and supported their integration through the Socio-Economic Resilience Support Project for Vulnerable Youths of the North, Adamawa and the Far North (PARSE) in partnership with the German Cooperation Agency (GIZ); trained 2,180 youths and supported their integration through the Economic Resilience Support Project in partnership with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP); financed 2,150 youth projects through the National Fund for Youth Integration (FONIJ).

589- MINJEC also supported returning migrants in drafting 400 business plans in view of their economic integration and helped 38 youths to set up junior enterprises under the *CMPJ Incubator Programme*.

590- The “*Youth Entrepreneurship Innovation Challenge*” and “*Weconnekt*” initiatives, in partnership with the UNDP, helped in building youths’ entrepreneurial and self-employment capacities and obtaining 110 stable jobs. Through KUMLAB’s support to “*les Laboratoires Therry*” project, 5 decent jobs were created in the micro medical industry sector.

²⁰¹ It is a document used to identify youths and facilitate their access to various multi-faceted service offers at preferential costs.

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591- Under the “Manicarway” programme in partnership with the PUENE foundation, 11 internally displaced girls received funding from a micro-finance institution.

592- In addition, 50 young project leaders received technical and financial support from the SMEs Promotion Agency (SMEPA).

593- The support programme for young graduates called “School preneur”, in collaboration with KUM’LAB, made it possible for 30 youth projects to be incubated.

594- During the launching of the *Youth Connekt* Project, in partnership with the UNDP, a “Business Challenge” was organised and at the end, 5 youths received funding. The 5 best projects of the “JCI entrepreneurship academy” were financed and incubated.

595- Moreover, 659 youths received support to set up their businesses.

596- MINJEC also funded the setting up in clusters of 1,339 youths’ projects in the 10 Regions. The same was done for 1,612 projects of junior enterprises and start-ups in 66 pioneer villages, and 83 economic clusters in the 4 economic areas of the Three-Year Special Youth Programme (TYSYP).

597- The follow-up of TYSYP beneficiaries was done by the heads of CMPJ.

598- The Government, through Employment Intensive Methods (EIM)²⁰², helped more than 6,000 youths in the Far North Region implement agropastoral projects.

§3: Entrepreneurship in the midst of the Health Crisis

599- The spread of Covid-19 did not only have health and human consequences. It also had a significant impact on economic activities, namely on SMEs, the social economy and handicraft.

²⁰² These methods imply developing a conducive political, and institutional environment, improving knowledge to foster the creation of decent jobs and promoting the use of that knowledge for public investments.

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A: Negative Impact of Covid-19 on the Social Economy

600- Barrier measures taken by the Government to fight the spread of Covid-19 limited social economy activities²⁰³ and prevented stakeholders of that sector to hold their meetings. Also, there were some dysfunctions such as delays in granting assistance. Though the list of those to benefit from the assistance had long been published, the grants were paid late. Moreover, resources meant for the financing of 150 micro-projects led by Cameroonian women scheduled for 2020 were insufficient. Money allocated to beneficiaries for local development initiatives within Regional and Local Authorities was therefore reduced. Before the outbreak of Covid-19 in Cameroon, allocations could reach CFAF 25,000,000²⁰⁴. At the end of the year 2020, they did not exceed CFAF 5,000,000²⁰⁵.

B: Difficulties faced by SME during the Covid-19 period

601- Covid-19 negatively impacted companies in sectors such as lodging and catering, industry and insurance. The computer and telecommunication fields, transport activities, the building and public works sector, and agribusinesses were also affected. Several SMEs' revenues dropped due to a decrease of customer flow, which led to staff reduction, partial or total dismissal of some staff and in some cases the reduction of salaries.

602- Covid-19 caused some speculations and compelled some SMEs to reduce their production. This situation considerably affected the living standards and conditions of the population.

C: The Impact of Covid-19 on the Handicraft Sector

603- In the handicraft sector, the customised support to some artisans and handicraft business promoters was suspended. In fact, various handicraft stakeholders no longer received support from the Government, which often contributed to the improvement of the quality of their products, their commercialisation and the migration of their informal production units into the formal sector. It should also be noted that some of their promotional events aimed at enhancing the value of handicraft works were

²⁰³ Social economy concerns the sector relating to the social and economic activities of groups, such as Associations, Cooperatives, Mutuels, Foundations, micro-finances, GIC, GIE, with the end-purpose of defending the group's interests with emphasis on equity.

²⁰⁴ About 38,167.94 Euros.

²⁰⁵ About 7,633.58 Euros.

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either postponed or cancelled. That was the case for the Cameroon International Handicraft Exhibition (SIARC), scheduled for April 2020, which was postponed to April and May 2021. Covid-19 prevented more than 12,000 artisans and several handicraft businesses from showcasing their products.

604- The registration rate of artisans into council registers dropped by 35 %.

605- Besides, virtual galleries were inoperative in handicraft villages and training sessions for artisans from vulnerable strata of the society were either limited or suspended.

SECTION 3: MEASURES TO IMPROVE WORKING CONDITIONS

606- To improve working conditions, retirement age was extended and workers entitlements were upgraded. Moreover, measures were taken to settle labour disputes

§1: Settlement of Labour Disputes

607- During the year under review, a great number of labour matters were filed before courts as shown in the tables below:

Table 1: Cases of Dismissals registered in some Courts in 2020

Courts	Cases filed by employers	Cases filed by employees	Cases tried:	
			Decisions in favour of the employee	Decisions in favour of the employer
CFI	94	2,560	637	367
HC	46	1,132	270	135
CA	845	649	212	368

SOURCE: MINJUSTICE

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Table 2: Cases of social security registered in some courts

Courts	Cases filed by employers	Cases filed by employees	Cases tried:	
			Decisions in favour of the employee	Decisions in favour of the employer
HC	13	9	2	5
CA	12	17	1	3

SOURCE: MINJUSTICE

§2: Formal Extension of State Employees' Period in Service and Increase of Workers' Salary

608- In 2020, the working age of State Employees was extended and family allowances were increased.

A: Formal Extension of State Employees' Period in Service

609- By virtue of Decree No. 2020/802 of 30 December 2020 to harmonise the retirement age of civil servants, the retirement age of civil servants was harmonised at 60 years for civil servants of categories "A" and "B" and at 55 years for civil servants of categories "C" and "D" which led to the extension of the period of service of some employees.

610- Following Decree No. 2020/7951/PM of 30 December 2020 to harmonise the retirement age of State employees governed by the Labour Code, the retirement age of State employees governed by the Labour Code was harmonised at 60 (sixty) years for categories "8" to "12" personnel and 55 (fifty-five) years for categories "1" to "7" personnel. This also led to extension of the period of work of some workers.

B: Increase in Family Allowances

611- Regulatory measures were taken to increase some benefits of State employees, as seen in Decree No. 2020/376 of 8 July 2020 to fix the coefficient for the upward revision of certain old-age and incapacity pensions, as well as death benefit granted by the National Social Insurance Fund (NSIF). The NSIF increased some family allowances by 60.7%, from CFAF 2800²⁰⁶ to CFAF 4500²⁰⁷ per month and per child. Pursuant

²⁰⁶ About 4.27 Euros.

²⁰⁷ About 6.87 Euros.

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to the same Decree, pensioners who did not benefit from the automatic increase of the 2016 reform, had their family allowances increased by 20%. Overall, 83423 pensioners benefited from the said increase from August to December 2020, amounting to the tune of CFAF 4, 016, 598, 699²⁰⁸.

SECTION 4: CONSOLIDATION OF THE RIGHT TO SOCIAL SECURITY

612- In 2020, the Government facilitated access to social benefits and managed them with flexibility.

§1: Facilitating Access to Social Benefits

613- The NSIF simplified the procedure, as well as the number of documents required to receive social benefits.

614- Moreover, access to social benefits was facilitated with the creation in each Social Insurance Centre of a platform www.requete.cnps for the online submission of application files for social benefits. The said services which concerned persons under social insurance scheme, persons with voluntary insurance and employers, include the following: remote declaration of salaries; remote registration of employers; payment of social security contributions for employees and voluntarily insured persons; remote registration of workers; online monitoring of files; online tracking of files; online consultation of the payment history of family allowances.

§2: Flexibility in the Management of Social Benefits

615- To guarantee the right to social security, the NSIF enhanced transparency and optimised the fight against fraud in recovering social contributions and benefits. These actions made it possible to preserve the company's cash flow enabling it to fulfil its mission.

616- Moreover, from May to July 2020, the NSIF maintained the payment of family allowances to the staff of companies which could not pay their social contributions or which had laid off staff due to economic downturn, namely in the catering, hotel and transport sectors.

²⁰⁸ About 6,132 211.75 Euros.

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617- The NSIF took some easing measures, by cancelling surcharges and penalties for late payment of social contributions to the NSIF, extending the deadline for payment to June 2020 and allowing instalmental payments over a period of 3 months (April, May and June 2020), upon reasoned applications. To this effect, 55 out of the 69 applications registered were granted. These measures for the settlement in instalments of social contributions arrears made it possible to avoid the slackening of employers' activities during the lock down period.

618- In 2020, social benefits were paid to the tune of CFAF 110,850,000,000²⁰⁹, as against CFAF 97,000,000,000²¹⁰ in 2019, that is an increase of 11.9%. The said social benefits were paid by the NSIF to 120,819 pensioners as against 118,604 in the previous year; 76,006 beneficiaries for 234,287 children as against 81,283 beneficiaries for 226,711 children in 2019, and 5,197 annuitants as against 5,453 in 2019.

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619- The year 2020 was seriously affected by health constraints which considerably upset the employment sector and caused the Government to choose flexible public governance. In this respect, the State continued its efforts towards the realisation of the right to work by taking some measures to ensure employment and improve working conditions. Moreover, it is crucial to strengthen vocational training, enhance professional integration and stabilise existing decent jobs regularly threatened by various crises.

²⁰⁹ About 169,236,641.22 Euros.

²¹⁰ About 148,091,603.05 Euros.



CHAPTER 5

**RIGHT TO CULTURE
AND LEISURE**



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620- Even though the right to culture was seriously impacted by the Covid 19 pandemic in 2020, especially as cultural spaces remained closed for most of the year, measures were taken towards the enhancement of cultural heritage, access to cultural heritage and the protection of the moral and material interests of artists. Meanwhile, enhancement of offer and cleaning up of the tourism and leisure sector as well as access to tourism and leisure activities continued to be promoted notwithstanding the negative impact of Covid 19.

SECTION 1: ENHANCEMENT OF CULTURAL HERITAGE

621- With regard to the preservation and Enhancement of Cultural Heritage, efforts were made to improve on cultural infrastructure including the construction of heritage infrastructure of the cultural centre of the Upper Sanaga and the rehabilitation of the roof and stage of the National Museum.

622- Moreover, Decree N°2020/4601/PM of 21 September 2020 to lay down the modalities for the application of certain provisions of Law N°2013/003 of 18 April 2013 governing cultural heritage in Cameroon was signed. This is one of the 3 implementing Decrees of the said law.

623- The inventory of cultural heritage started in 2016 continued in the Littoral and South West Regions.

SECTION 2: ACCESS TO AND ENJOYMENT OF CULTURAL HERITAGE

624- Access to and enjoyment of cultural heritage was seriously impacted by the covid 19 pandemic. Both public and private spaces for the diffusion and promotion of artistic and cultural activities remained close most of the time. Consequently, while some events held timidly, others were cancelled.

§1: Timid Holding of Cultural and Artistic Events

625- Eventhough public spaces (including the National Museum, National Gallery of Contemporary Arts, Cameroon Cultural Centre, Sita Bella Hall and the Reunification Monument) as well as private ones (in-

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cluding cinema and concert Halls) remained closed almost throughout the year 2020, some events for the dissemination of Cameroonian arts and culture were organised by the State, notably the celebration of the World Storytelling day on 20 March 2020, World Poetry day on 21 March 2020 and World Theatre day on 27 March 2020, all at the esplanade of the National Museum as well as the Music Festival on 21 June 2020 at the Cameroon Cultural Centre and the International Jazz day on 30 April 2020²¹¹.

626- The World Archives Day was celebrated in a sober manner through awareness-raising communiques, without any archival exhibitions or open doors of the National Archives to the general public as in previous years.

627- Due to covid 19, photo shoots and film shoots declined. Applications for filming permits stood at 30 in 2020 compare to 38 in 2019 while applications for exhibitions was 42 in 2020 as against 70 in 2019.

§2: Cancellation of Activities due to the Covid 19 Pandemic

628- Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, some artistic and cultural activities planned for 2020 were cancelled. This included the National Cultural and Artistic Season (RECAN), the National Festival of Arts and Culture (FENAC), the Yaounde International Book Fair (SILYA) and the Young Writers Literary Competition.

629- The film industry was also impacted as planned film festivals did not take place.

SECTION 3: THE PROTECTION OF THE MORAL AND MATERIAL INTERESTS OF ARTISTIC AND CULTURAL ACTORS

630- Efforts continued to be made towards the protection of the moral and material interests of artistic and the cultural actors including the promulgation of a Law to regulate artistic and cultural associations. The new Law led to the renewal of the management of some copyrights and neighbouring rights associations, including the Cameroon National Musical Art Corporation (SONACAM) on 12 December 2020. Furthermore, improving on the collection and distribution of royalties was a priority. Also, in recognition of their

²¹¹ Attendance at these events was limited due to the barrier measures to fight covid 19 put in place by the Government

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works, artists received awards. However, the usual subsidies to Artistic and Cultural Actors were not granted due to the impact of covid 19.

§1: Enhanced Legal Framework for Protection through Associations

631- Law No. 2020/011 of 20 July 2020 to regulate artistic and cultural associations in Cameroon aims to regulate the creation and functioning of artistic and cultural associations.²¹² It allows artistic and cultural actors to create artistic and cultural associations throughout the country for the promotion of the spirit of creativity, the dissemination of culture and the preservation of national and universal cultural heritage by organizing artistic and cultural activities.

A: New Stratification of the Arts and Culture Sector

632- The above cited Law contains a new stratification of the arts and culture sector, encouraging professionals to group by discipline in order to boost the quality and quantity of national artistic and cultural production.

633- Thus, under Article 9 (2) Artistic and cultural associations may be organized into:

- Companies in Sub Divisions;
- Unions in Divisions;
- Guilds in the regions; and
- Federations at the national level

B: Clear Separation of Functions

634- To avoid conflict of interest which could impact negatively on associations, there is a clear separation of functions between the management, administrative and control duties of groups of artistic and cultural associations on the one hand and on the other hand the Board of collective copyright and neighbouring rights management bodies, member of the management board of a body attached to the Ministry in charge of culture or a person ranking at least as Director in the Ministry in charge of culture, thus holding an office in the former category concurrently with an office in the latter category is incompatible²¹³.

²¹² Formerly, artistic and cultural associations were regulated by Law No 90/53 of 19 December 1990 on freedom of association

²¹³ Article 36

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§2: The Collection and Distribution of Royalties

635- Not only was the regulatory framework for the collection and distribution of royalties strengthened, the said royalties were actually collected and distributed to beneficiaries. However, there were challenges in the granting of subsidies.

A: Strengthening of the Regulatory Framework

636- On 12 June 2020, the Minister of Arts and Culture signed 8 Decisions relating to the collection and distribution of royalties due as copyrights and neighbouring rights²¹⁴.

637- The above-mentioned decisions were entirely drafted by artists and managers of the 5 Collective Management Bodies (CMB) approved in Cameroon. After signing a consensual report at the end of their deliberations, they forwarded the said documents to the Minister of Arts and Culture for homologation.

B: Actual Collection and Distribution of Royalties

638- Through the support of the Government and the Commission for the Control of Collective Management Bodies (CCCMB), the sum of CFAF464,998,399²¹⁵ was collected and deposited in the Special Deposit Account between 1 January and 14 July 2020.

²¹⁴ Decision **No.48/MINAC/CCOGC of 12 June 2020** to approve an internal sharing scale of royalties collected in respect of neighbouring rights to copyright from users other than radio and television stations;

- Decision **No.49/MINAC/CCOGC of 12 June 2020** to fix the amount of royalty due for cable broadcasting;

- Decision **No.50/MINAC/CCOGC of 12 June 2020** to approve a scale of intersocial sharing of royalties collected for cable broadcasting;

- Decision **No.52/MINAC/CCOGC of 12 June 2020** on the presentation and securing of financial documents for the collection of royalties due under copyright or neighbouring rights;

- Decision **No.53/MINAC/CCOGC of 12 June 2020** to establish rules of determination and collection of royalties collected under copyright or neighbouring rights from 2018 to 2021 and of collection of arrears prior to 2018, by the collective management organisations;

- Decision **No.54/MINAC/CCOGC of 12 June 2020** to lay down the modalities for sharing royalties due in respect of copyrights or neighbouring rights by the Cameroon Radio Television (CRTV);

- Decision **No.56/MINAC/CCOGC of 12 June 2020** to approve a scale of intersocial sharing of royalties collected in respect of copyrights or neighbouring rights from some users;

- Decision **No. 57/MINAC/CCOGC of 12 June 2020** to lay down the modalities of calculation of the annual royalty due in respect of copyrights or neighbouring rights by bars, take-away sales and beverage outlets.

²¹⁵ About 709,921.22 Euros.

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639- The money collected was distributed among Collective Management Bodies and Artists as per the table that follows.

Table 1: Amount shared to various Management Bodies.

Collective Management Body	Total Amount received in CFAF	35% Management charges of the CMB	65% for distribution to Artists
SOCILADRA	72,561,659	25,396,581	47,165,079
SONACAM	155,794,104	54,527,937	101,266,168
SCAAP	23,094,785	8,083,175	15,011,611
SOCADAP	41,358,990	14,475,647	26,883,344
SCDV	134,896,988	47,213,946	87,683,043

SOURCE: MINAC

640- Following the above operation, each CMB initiated the distribution of royalties to its beneficiary members.

§3: Awards to Artistic and Cultural Actors

641- A total of 63 awards were granted, broken down as follows:

- Commander of the Order of Valour: 1 person;
- Officer of the Order of Valour: 8 persons;
- Knight of the Order of Valour: 26 persons;
- Grand Cordon of the Order of Merit: 1 person;
- Commander of the Order of Merit: 1 person;
- Officer of the Order of Merit: 2 persons; and
- Knight of the Order of Merit: 24 persons.

642- Among the recipients, were 14 women.

A: Challenges with the Granting of Subsidies to Artistic and Cultural Actors

643- Spaces for the diffusion and promotion of artistic and cultural activities are the main sources of revenue for the State to fund the Appropriation Account to Support Cultural Policies (CASSPC) Since these spaces remained closed for most of 2020, the CASSPC was not replenished and as a result, the *Commission on Arts and Lettres* (CAL) did not sit in 2020. Consequently no subsidies were granted to artistic and cultural actors through the aforementioned Account, due to a lack of funds.

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SECTION 4: PROMOTION AND DEVELOPMENT OF TOURISM AND LEISURE

644- The development of offer as concerns tourism and leisure was a major thrust of Government action in 2020, while the people continued to have access to tourism and leisure activities. However, Covid 19 had a negative impact on the tourism and leisure sector.

§1: Development of Offer in the Tourism and Leisure Sector

645- Government efforts led to an increase in tourism and leisure establishments while measures were also taken to improve service delivery.

A: Strengthening of Tourism and Leisure Establishments

646- The State continue to construct tourism and leisure infrastructure including among others the Petté tourist camp, Koza camp, Kaele tourist centre (Far North), construction of a gazebo at the Maga nautical resort and a theme park in Limbe.

647- Furthermore, the number of State hotels was increased as the Bengo Hotel in Ebolowa and the Ribadou Hotel in Garoua went operational.

648- The regular holding of sessions of the National Technical Commission of Tourism Establishments and Agencies led to an increase in the number of tourist and leisure facilities, tourist guides, leisure instructors and animators, as a good number of authorisations were granted.

649- As regards the construction and operation of hotels, 86 authorisations were granted. Concerning restaurants, 8 authorisations were granted. A total of 23 leisure establishments and 14 tourist agencies and 9 tourist guides were granted licences

B: Enhancement of Service Delivery

650- Measures were taken to improve the quality of offer mainly through strengthening the capacity of relevant stakeholders and promoting the country as a tourist destination. Hence, trainings were organised to enhance the capacity of stakeholders notably: hoteliers, restaurant owners, tourist guides and travel agencies on safety, reception, hygiene and quality of services.

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651- On 28 and 29 October 2020 in Bertoua, stakeholders of the tourism sector in the East Region participated in a seminar on reception, hygiene, service techniques and safety of tourists organized by the Ministry of Tourism and Leisure during which their knowledge was enhanced on good practices in terms of quality of service delivery.

§2: Access to Tourism and Leisure Activities

652- People continued to have access to tourism and leisure activities with the organization of events. In this vein, holiday camps were organised including in Bertoua in the East Region from 1 to 10 August 2020 and another in Baham in the West Region from 18 to 27 August 2020.

653- Prior to these holiday camps, instructors and Leisure Animators involved in the supervision and conduct of leisure activities participated in a capacity building workshop in Yaounde from 8 to 10 July 2020 aimed at empowering them with tools on the organization of leisure activities in the context of Covid 19.

§3: Impact of Covid 19 on the Tourism and Leisure Sector

654- Certain measures taken to fight against Covid 19 including the closure of Cameroon's borders and the limitation of gatherings to a maximum of 50 persons had a negative impact on the tourism and leisure sector. In the face of this, Government took measures to lessen the impact.

655- Due to the closure of borders for a number of months, tourists were not able to get into the country. Also, the limitation of gatherings to a maximum of 50 persons amidst other Covid related reasons led to the cancellation of major events including conferences, seminars, trade fairs and cultural events that pull crowds who require hotel and restaurant services.

656- It is consequent to these challenges that an extraordinary session of the National Tourism Council was held on 30 September 2020 under the theme: measures to better accompany the recovery of the tourism and travel sector, with the lifting of certain restrictions due to the Covid-19 pandemic. It was aimed at discussing the best strategy to deploy in order to relaunch the tourism and travel sector seriously impacted by the Covid 19 pandemic.

657- Moreover, as part of measures to support businesses, on 30 April 2020, the President of the Republic had decided to exempt hotels from the tourist tax due for the last three quarters of the 2020 fiscal year.

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658- Significant action was made to protect the interests of artistic and cultural actors through the promulgations of Law No. 2020/011 of 20 July 2020 to regulate artistic and cultural associations in Cameroon and series of Decisions of Minister of Arts and Culture to enhance the collection and distribution of royalties. However, the covid 19 pandemic had a serious impact on the culture sector which included cancellation of planned activities and the non-payment of subsidies to artistic and cultural actors.

659- As regards tourism and leisure, the number of establishments continued to increase notwithstanding the negative impact of Covid 19 on the sector.

CHAPTER

6

**THE RIGHT TO
A HEALTHY
ENVIRONMENT**



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660- In 2020, Government activity in the area of the environment in a context acutely marked by the Covid-19 pandemic was slow-paced. Nevertheless Government's actions to ensure a healthy environment focused on the sustainable management of biodiversity and the fight against climate change on the one hand and pollution control on the other.

SECTION 1: Sustainable Management of Biodiversity and the Fight against Climate Change

661- This component of activities focused on the preservation of biodiversity in its entirety, through the restoration of degraded receiving environments, and the fight against abnormal rise in temperature caused by human activity.

§1: Sustainable Management of Biodiversity

662- The sustainable management of biodiversity centred on its conservation and the distribution of proceeds generated by its exploitation.

A: Sustainable Conservation of Biodiversity

663- As a prelude to the celebration of the 48th edition of World Environment Day on 5 June 2020, the Government raised the awareness of the general public on the importance of protecting fauna and flora during a press conference of the Minister of Environment, Nature Protection and Sustainable Development (MINEPDED) held in Yaounde on 2 June 2020, in the presence of some Government representatives, the civil society and journalists. The Day was celebrated in Cameroon under the theme Biodiversity, a source of both existing and urgent concerns.

664- In the same vein, a project dubbed "Green campus" to plant trees in some primary and secondary schools as well as universities was initiated. The aim of this project was to make young people aware of the importance of trees and to involve them in reforestation initiatives.

665- Furthermore, on 11 December 2020, an Agreement was signed between the Minister of Environment, Nature Protection and Sustainable Development and the Global Environment Facility (GEF) for The Restoration Initiative (TRI). The Initiative funded to the tune of USD 1,445,500 aimed at restoring by 2030, 12,000,000 hectares of degraded land and landscape through sustainable use of local species, in particular non-

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timber forest products and bamboo, for the conservation of biodiversity and sustainable livelihoods. The project started with the production of a nursery of 60,000 non-timber forest products and bamboo plants for the population of targeted areas in the Centre (Mbalmayo), Littoral (Douala and Edea) and Far North (Waza) Regions.

666- Moreover, under the impetus of the Government, CAMRAIL planted 150 Teak and Eucalyptus trees in all its sites in Douala. These two plant species are known for their great capacity to absorb CO₂ which is widely known to have a negative impact on the ozone layer.

B: Equitable sharing of Benefits generated from Exploitation of Genetic Resources derived from Biodiversity

667- At the regulatory level, in order to comply with provisions of the Nagoya Protocol on Access to Genetic Resources and the Fair and Equitable Sharing of Benefits Arising from their Utilisation, the Government issued Decision No.150/MINEPDED of 25 November 2020 to lay down the terms and conditions for access to resources, their derivatives, associated traditional knowledge and the fair and equitable sharing of benefits arising from their utilisation.

668- At the institutional level, Decision No.94/D/CAB of 24 August 2020 on the organisation and functioning of the National Committee on Access to Genetic Resources was issued. Its mission includes, inter alia, the issuance of Access to Genetic Resources and Benefit Sharing permits.

§2: Fight against Climate Change

669- In 2020, some improvement was observed in the fight against climate change, for it was integrated in the National Development Strategy as part of actions carried out, under the supervision of the National Observatory on Climate Change (ONACC).

A: Taking Climate Change into account in the National Development Strategy

670- The National Development Strategy 2020-2030 (NDS30) integrated climate change concerns into its programme. Indeed, it provides in point 3.6.2 (Adaptation to climate change) of Chapter 3 (structural transformation of the economy) Part 2 (pillars of the strategy) it provides that: "In this area, the Government intends to: (i) further integrate climate

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change concerns into sectoral strategies and policies; (ii) strengthen the capacities of institutions in charge of climate monitoring; (iii) operationalise the mechanism for monitoring, preventing and responding to the effects of climate change. Furthermore, given the propensity of certain industries to pollute the environment, it will be necessary to strengthen control of waste management by industrial companies and to promote corporate social responsibility. The Government also intends to intensify actions towards combating desertification, land degradation and pollution, especially in the cities of Douala and Yaounde where certain activities (transport, industrial activities, etc.) engender a noticeable degradation of the environment, especially the quality of ambient air. Furthermore, in a bid to address the perceptible consequences of climate change, particularly floods and landslides which adversely affect some cities and rural areas, the Government is committed to strengthen protection measures across the country, especially in ecologically fragile areas.

B: Actions conducted as part of the fight against Climate Change

671- With regard to the fight against climate change, the following actions were implemented: Initially, with a view to implementing its Technological Action Plans for adaptation and mitigation of climate change, Cameroon conducted, with the technical support of the Climate Technology Centre and Network (CTCN-UNIDO) and funding from the Green Climate Fund, its Technological Needs Assessment (TNA). Also, 20 persons were trained on approaches to assess and combat climate vulnerability with the support of the University of Yaounde I. In addition, 10 women took part in a training course offered by the *Institut de la Francophonie pour le Développement Durable (IFDD)* on the preparation and conduct of international negotiations on climate change, in order to better mainstream gender issues in the implementation of activities.

672- In January 2020, a training course on the integration of climate issues and risks in urban planning was conducted for academics, professionals and Government Officials with the support of the Research Institute for Development (IRD) and the World Bank (WB). In addition, 8 studies were conducted for deforestation-free agricultural production, reclamation of degraded land, soil improvement through the use of biochar and decomposition of organic waste by fly larvae.

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673- In addition, in order to make the most of financing opportunities available, a Coordination Committee for projects related to Climate Finance was set up to facilitate the process of accreditation of the Ministry of Finance to the Green Climate Fund.

C: Prevention of Climate Change-related Risks

674- With regard to the climate information system for the prevention or reduction of climate-related risks, losses and damages, the ONACC produced 6 seasonal climate assessments and 35 decadal bulletins presenting forecasts of climatic parameters as well as potential risks and impact on the socio-economic development sectors in Cameroon.

SECTION 2: FIGHT AGAINST POLLUTION, NUISANCE AND HARMFUL AND/OR DANGEROUS CHEMICAL SUBSTANCES

675- The fight against pollution, nuisance and harmful and/or dangerous chemical substances hinged on two actions, namely: waste management and administrative and/or judicial sanctions.

§1: Waste Management

676- Waste Management was marked by the creation of a platform in an era where new types of waste emerge.

A: Emergence of New Types of Waste

677- With Covid-19, new types of hazardous waste emerged, including face masks, gloves, overalls and disposable tissues. Face masks and care gloves, just to mention a few, became part of people's clothing habits as they were no longer reserved exclusively for health professionals. Notwithstanding the fact that these tools are dangerous as they carry deadly microbes, they became a protective gear for everyone.

B: Setting up the Waste Management Platform

678- In 2020, the waste management platform was set up. It includes a digital exchange platform for the sale and purchase of used objects, the address of which is: [https:// bourse-des -dechets.minepded.gov.cm](https://bourse-des-dechets.minepded.gov.cm). This platform is a real revolution in sub-Saharan Africa in terms of environmental sanitation and the circular economy.

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§2: Proceedings and Sanctions for Environmental Offences

679- These include judicial proceedings and administrative sanctions.

A: Judicial Proceedings

680- It is worthy of note that the number of proceedings pending in various courts nationwide against poachers in 2020 slightly decreased. Indeed, there were 20 proceedings compared to 23 in 2019.

B: Administrative Sanctions

681- Some 104 defaulting logging companies paid fines into State coffers, compared to 46 in 2019.

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682- Cameroon's Government spared no effort to guarantee the right to a healthy environment, and actions towards achieving this were evident in 2020. The NDS30, a paramount guide for development, augurs significant hope in the fight against desertification and climate change. Furthermore, the establishment of a waste management platform, which is indeed innovative in sub-Saharan Africa, allows for the consolidation of achievements linked to the guarantee of access to a healthy environment in the corona virus pandemic era, which itself has triggered the generation of new types of waste.

683- However, it is necessary to continue campaigns to raise the awareness of people and organisations whose activities are likely to undermine the right to a healthy environment.



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CONCLUSION OF PART TWO

684- In a nutshell, in 2020, public authorities put in efforts to promote and protect economic, social and cultural rights. The actions taken triggered progress in terms of improving social security and working conditions, guaranteeing the right to health in spite of the covid 19 pandemic, boosting the culture and leisure sector, protecting the environment and facilitating access to food, water, energy and decent housing.

685- However, the progress made does not overshadow the challenges faced, particularly access to distant learning, the non -operationalisation of the universal health coverage, issues relating to inadequate material and human resources. Governance also needs to be improved upon.



PART THREE

CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES AND SPECIFIC RIGHTS



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INTRODUCTION TO PART THREE

686- The preservation of the rights of specific groups in 2020, amid an unusual health context was focused on efforts made towards curbing infringements of the right to peace and security of persons and property, including, among others tribal hatred protecting the rights of detainees and improving detention conditions, as well as promoting gender equality and the advancement of women in the family as well as their political and social status. The Government continued to improve the business climate and to fight corruption as well as protect the rights of children, people with disabilities, indigenous peoples and older persons.

687- Furthermore, the welfare and access to basic social services by refugees, asylum-seekers and internally displaced persons remained a priority for the authorities, who continued to ease the repatriation of Cameroonians facing difficulties abroad and refugees wishing to return to their countries.

688- These issues are discussed in the following chapters:

- right to peace, security and respect for Human Rights (Chapter 1)
- promotion of Good governance and fight against corruption (Chapter 2)
- detention conditions (Chapter 3);
- promotion and protection of socially vulnerable persons (Chapter 4);
- promotion and protection of women's rights (Chapter 5);
- protection of rights of forcibly displaced persons (Chapter 6).



CHAPTER 1

RIGHT TO PEACE, SECURITY AND RESPECT FOR HUMAN RIGHTS



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689- The year 2020 was marked by the persistence of situations that threaten peace and security of persons. Indeed, across the country, offenders acting individually or in group, multiplied atrocities against the population²¹⁶. Among these atrocities, what shocked the nation the most was undoubtedly the *Mother Francesca International Bilingual Academy* attack perpetrated by separatists in Kumba (South West Region) on 24 October 2020, which left 7 dead and 13 injured, all of them students. By targeting this vulnerable group, secessionist escalated in cruelty and inhumanity.

690- Against a backdrop of hostility, to ensure the right of the population to peace and security, measures were taken to preserve unity and indivisibility of the country, protect republican institutions, ensure citizen security and promote living together and social cohesion.

SECTION 1: PRESERVING THE UNITY AND INDIVISIBILITY OF CAMEROON

691- In a bid to preserve the unity and indivisibility of the country, Government continued to implement the recommendations of the Major National Dialogue (MND), launched the Special Reconstruction Programme for the Far North Region and the crusade against insurgent activities.

§1: Further Implementation of the Recommendations of the Major National Dialogue

692- Within the framework of implementation of recommendations made at the end of deliberations of the MND, the Presidential Plan for the Reconstruction and Development of the North West and South West Regions was set up and many other actions were carried out.

²¹⁶ The East Region was relatively plagued by insecurity in the Central African Republic, worsened by the electoral context in this country. In the Northern part of Cameroon, while the situation is increasingly under control, there were some strikes perpetrated by *Boko Haram terrorist group* (for instance on 1 August 2020, a suicide attack resulted in 21 victims in the Internally Displaced Persons site of Nguetchewe in the Mayo-Tsanaga Division.). In the North West and South West Regions, armed separatist groups attacked Gendarmerie Brigades, Police Stations and Prisons, burned down schools and vehicles belonging to the State. In addition, these groups wounded and murdered several members of the Defence and Security Forces, abducted and slaughtered civilians (for example: on 5 November 2020 in Baba, in the Ngokentunjia Division, **Cardinal Christian TUMI**, the Fon of Nso, His majesty **MBINGLO** and some members of their delegation were abducted; on 6 November 2020 his Majesty **MOLINGA Francis NANGOH**, 3rd class traditional ruler of Liwu la-Malale (Buea subdivision) was murdered.

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A: Presidential Plan for the Reconstruction and Development of the North West and South West Regions

693- The Presidential Plan for the Reconstruction and Development of the North West and South West Regions (PPRD/NW-SW) was developed with the support of international partners of Cameroon including the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). The organisational framework for this Plan was laid down by Order No. 031/CAB/PM of 3 April 2020 by the Prime Minister. The PPRD- NW/SW which is under the supervision of the Prime Minister, Head of Government, aims at implementing projects in the North West and South West Regions, focusing on three priorities: Strengthening national unity and social cohesion; rehabilitating basic infrastructure, revamping local economy and improving the living conditions of the people of these Regions. To effectively implement this Plan, a National Coordination²¹⁷, a Steering Committee and Regional Follow-up Committees were set up by the aforementioned Order, with UNDP as Implementing Partner and Executive Agency. A provisional budget of CFAF 89,682,938,100²¹⁸ was drawn up for 2 years. The Steering Committee earmarked CFAF 36,321,000,000²¹⁹ for the implementation of the Plan in 2020. This amount was to be used for the construction and/or rehabilitation of 60 schools and 25 health centres in the North West Region, 45 schools and 20 health centres in the South West Region, 155 water points equipped with solar systems and rehabilitation of 1,000 hectares of plantation in the North West Region and 700 hectares in the South West Region.

694- On 15 September 2020, during its 2nd session, the Steering Committee of the Presidential Plan validated the handbook of procedures to meet the demands of grassroots populations who wished the Plan to be implemented with maximum transparency, so that no victim would be left behind and no development component side lined.

B: Other Actions

695- Law No. 2019/24 of 24 December 2019 to institute the general code of regional and local authorities provided the framework for the

²¹⁷ Mr **Paul TASONG**, Minister Delegate at the Ministry of the Economy, Planning and Regional Development was appointed National Coordinator of the PPRD/NW - SW.

²¹⁸ About 136,920,516.18 Euros.

²¹⁹ About 55,451,908.40 Euros.

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elections of Council Executives and the very first City Mayors on 9 February and 3 March 2020. The highlight of the process of setting up institutions in the decentralised unitary State as provided for by the Constitution, which is also to be credited to the MND, was reached with the election of Regional Councillors on 6 December 2020, followed by the Election of Presidents of Regional Councils and other members of regional bureaux on 22 December of the same year.

696- The National School of Local Administration (NASLA) was set up in Buea²²⁰ to train the personnel of the local public service in charge of Regional and Local Authorities (RLA).

697- On 2 October 2020, the Prime Minister chaired a consultation meeting in his Office to find ways of reconstituting official documents (birth certificates, passports, certificates, etc.) for ex-fighters and internally displaced persons due to security crises in the North West, South West and Far North Regions to ease their reintegration into active life.

§2: Launching of the Special Programme for the Reconstruction of the Far North Region

698- On 27 August 2020, to repair damage caused by *Boko Haram* and floods in the Far North Region, the President of the Republic instructed the urgent setting up of a Special Programme for the Reconstruction of this Region. In September 2020, a delegation of 6 Ministers led by the Minister of Territorial Administration went to the field to assess the extent of the damage. In order to give substance to this Programme, the Minister of Economy Planning and Regional Development drafted a roadmap based on 4 components: redressing direct damage caused by *Boko Haram* and by floods²²¹ ; revamping the economy and reducing social vulnerability²²² ; strengthening the resilience of the population to climate change²²³;ensuring governance and management of the programme.

²²⁰ By Decree No. 2020/111 of 2 March 2020 on the establishment, organisation and functioning of the National School of Local Administration.

²²¹ Through the reconstruction and rehabilitation of infrastructure destroyed (bridges, dikes, etc.).

²²² Which is contingent upon the development of socio-economic activities and training, especially for youth and women.

²²³ By taking advantage of heavy rainfall that causes floods.

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699- Alongside other classic State investments in this Region, the Special Programme whose effective implementation was scheduled for the first quarter of 2021, was set to benefit from around CFAF 150,000,000,000²²⁴, that is CFAF 5,000,000,000²²⁵ from the Public Investment Budget and CFAF 145,000,000,000²²⁶ expected from external funding.

§3: Combating Insurrectional Activities

700- On 22 September 2020, leaders of some political parties called for the boycott of Regional elections²²⁷, uprising of the people and overthrowing of institutions of the Republic through what they referred to as "Peaceful demonstrations". Despite the ban by administrative authorities through Orders and Communiqués, warning of the Government in press releases on 15 and 21 September 2020 and the disapproval of the overwhelming majority of the population, some citizens responded favourably to this call for demonstrations. They took to the streets of some localities, like Douala, Yaounde and Bandjoun. Forces of Law and Order arrested 294 persons: 46 in the Centre Region, 63 in the West Region and 185 in the Littoral Region. Upon investigations, leaders, organisers and active participants were referred for prosecution while those less involved or not involved were released.

701- The Decision to prosecute organisers and leaders of these insurrectional demonstrations before competent courts pursuant to regulations in force reflects the commitment of Cameroon to the rule of law, legal bedrock of peace and security.

SECTION 2: PROTECTING GOVERNMENT INSTITUTIONS AND ENSURING SECURITY

702- With a view to protecting Government institutions and ensuring the security of persons, the State continued to fight against terrorism, protected persons and their property on a daily basis, protected people in emergency situations and contributed in stabilising the Central Africa Sub-Region.

²²⁴ About 229,007,633.59 Euros.

²²⁵ About 7,633,587.79 Euros.

²²⁶ About 221,374,045.80 Euros.

²²⁷ Based on what they considered as non-existent prerequisites for the holding of credible elections, namely reforming the electoral code and addressing insecurity in the North West and South West Regions.

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§1: Pursuing the Fight against Terrorism

703- Besides the ongoing review of the law on terrorism, the strategy for the fight against terrorism was strengthened. Thus, with a delegation led by the Prime Minister, Head of Government, Cameroon participated in the international colloquium dedicated to the 60 years of independence of French-speaking African countries on 27 October 2020 in Brazzaville, Congo. On this occasion, Heads of State and Government spoke with one voice to call for greater mobilisation and increased solidarity against terrorism through combined efforts and resources.

704- As regards infrastructure, the border check point of the Mokosta Rapid Intervention Battalion (BIR) in the Mayo Tsanaga Division, Far North Region was inaugurated on 7 September 2020. This new military camp with a capacity of 120 elements was erected as a result of unexpected incursions of *Boko Haram* in this locality.

705- At the operational level, on 11 September 2020, 14 Officers of Military Engineering Corps received their diplomas following a training course at the *Centre Spécialisé d'Instruction, d'Application et de Perfectionnement du Génie* in Douala on demining techniques of improvised explosive devices. In the same vein, vigilante groups in areas affected by crises were revitalised and provided with intervention equipment.

706- At the tactical level, the Multinational Joint Task Force and the National Forces engaged in the field strengthened collaboration to step up their effectiveness and eradicate *Boko Haram*.

707- Regarding capacity-building, Defence and Security Forces and Officials from the Prime Minister's Office, the Ministry of Justice and the Ministry of External Relations (MINREX) took part in a seminar organised at the MINREX from 15 to 17 October 2020 on peacekeeping operations and the United Nations Charter.

§2: Daily Protection of Citizens and their Properties

708- During the reference year, the Forces of Law and Order stepped up actions to protect citizens and their properties. The fight against proliferation of firearms also continued,

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A: Actions Carried Out by the Forces of Law and Order

709- Throughout the year 2020, several criminal gangs were dismantled and many perpetrators and accomplices of various offences arrested and brought before the courts²²⁸. Many properties stolen by these offenders were also seized and returned to their owners.

710- Equally, the Forces of Law and Order (FLO) released several persons abducted across the country. For instance, on 18 October 2020, the General Manager of Icrafton-Cfao abducted by a gang of bandits in Kribi was released the same day by the Forces of Law and Order. Similarly, about 20 people held hostage by the separatists, who were released on 13 and 16 October 2020 in the Lebialem Division.

711- In Douala, the FLO fought a new class of criminals called “microbes”²²⁹ who entrenched a climate of insecurity and fear among the population.

712- Following a series of explosions of homemade bombs in Yaounde, the Governor of the Centre Region issued on 10 November 2020, an Order intensifying searches and prohibiting access to supermarkets, restaurants, pubs and hotels, to people carrying suspicious bags and suspicious packages. At the operational level, the Forces of Law and Order were responsible for ensuring the application of this Order.

B: Pursuing the Crusade against the Proliferation of Firearms

713- Within the framework of the inter-ministerial platform in charge of developing the national system for international arms transfer, a workshop was organised in Douala from 10 to 12 March 2020 under the theme “*implementation of border controls*” in which representatives of several Administrations participated.

714- On 3 November 2020, the FLO sealed an illicit workshop of artisanal firearms in Bonabéri, Douala, after arresting the owner and his ac-

²²⁸ See the Chapter on the Right to life

²²⁹ These are gangs of young children aged between 10 to 22, armed with weapons (knives, machetes, clubs, and razor blades) who take to the streets, travel agencies, markets, restaurants and shops, in group (usually more than 50), exert uncontrolled violence on people and rob them of their property (jewellery, cell phones, hand bags, money, commodities and other valuable goods) before dispersing into the neighbourhoods upon the arrival of the Forces of Law and Order.

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complice. A similar operation was carried out in Nkongsamba on 13 October of the same year.

715- Weapons and ammunition surrendered by ex-fighters were made available to the Forces of Law and Order for safekeeping, pending their destruction.

§3: Protecting the Population in Emergency Situations

716- Within the framework of the protection of the population in emergency situations, the Government improved the civil protection mechanism and supported victims of disasters and insecurity.

A: Improving the Civil Protection Mechanism

717- Within the framework of the coordination of the civil protection mechanism, the Ministry of Territorial Administration (MINAT) managed the data on risks and disasters. This was done through monitoring of the activities of the National Risk Observatory (NRO) and functionality tests of the Cameroon Risk Information System (CRISYS²³⁰), whose operationalisation was initiated in 2019.

718- In addition, MINAT embarked on disaster risk reduction. Thus, alongside the celebration of World Civil Protection Day (WCPD), under the theme “civil protection for a rescuer in every home”, the Ministry organised an awareness-raising campaign and a first-aid training.

719- Furthermore, on 29 and 30 July 2020, the Emergency Organisation Plan of the Noun Division was validated bringing to 18 the number of Divisions with Disaster Risk Management Tool at the local level.

720- In this regard, the Multi-Country Roadmap Assessment and Validation Workshop was held in Mombassa, Kenya, from 30 January to 1 February 2020 to increase the accessibility and use of disaster risk information for early warning systems, coupled with a high level session on transboundary risk management. The ECCAS sub-regional workshop on gender mainstreaming in Disaster Risk Reduction Strategies and Policies took place from 5 to 7 February 2020.

²³⁰ Cameroon Risk Information System.

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B: Support to Victims of Disasters and Insecurity

721- Following various disasters such as floods and landslides recorded in August and September 2020 in the Far North, Littoral and West Regions, MINAT organised humanitarian aid distribution operations for 2,000 disaster-stricken persons in Maroua; 600 families in Douala and 200 in Santchou. In the same vein, supporting partner, *International Rescue Committee* distributed 707 non-food kits to 5,514 flood victims in Logone et Chari and IDPs in Kousseri. Moreover, 1,000 persons in the councils of Zina Logone-Birni, Makari, Hilé-Halifa and Fotokol in the Logone and Chari Division benefited from Cash Food assistance from the Norwegian Refugee Council, *Solidarités International* and *Première Urgence Internationale*.

722- In a bid to implement the Humanitarian Assistance Plan for victims of the security crisis in the North West and South West Regions, food and materials distribution campaigns were organised in Akwaya, South West Region, in Bamenda, North West Region and in Ebedba, Centre Region.

723- The International Organization for Migration (IOM) launched the project titled stabilisation and recovery of communities affected by the security crisis in the Far North of Cameroon. The project, which should be implemented by IOM, FAO and the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), for the IDPs victims of Boko Haram terrorist attacks and host communities, especially those of the Kousseri, Makary, Mokolo, Koza and Mora Councils. This project received a financial support of about CFAF 1, 230, 000, 000 obtained by the State of Cameroon as part of the Peace Building Fund.

§4: Contribution to the Stability of the Central African Sub-Region

724- Considering the level of integration of Central Africa, effects of a security crisis in one country necessarily has spill over effects in all other countries. Therefore, by participating in bilateral and/or multilateral actions aimed at ensuring stability in the Sub-Region, Cameroon indirectly ensures peace and security of its own territory. Several actions were carried out in this light during the year under review.

725- After the tensions recorded at the border between Cameroon and Equatorial Guinea, the two States signed a cooperation agreement on co-

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ordination methods of cross-border defence and security actions on 21 July 2020.

726- On 15 September 2020, Cameroon deployed its 7th contingent of 1,150 persons (750 soldiers, 280 gendarmes, police officers and observers) to the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic (MINUSCA).

SECTION 3: PROMOTING LIVING TOGETHER AND SOCIAL COHESION

727- In order to promote living together and social cohesion, conditions sine qua non for genuine peace and security of the population, the State endeavoured to promote bilingualism and multiculturalism, reintegrate ex-fighters, consolidate social cohesion and punish Human Rights violations perpetrated by DSF.

§1: Promoting Bilingualism and Multiculturalism

728- The members of the National Commission for the Promotion of Bilingualism and Multiculturalism (NCPBM) conducted a listening and awareness-raising mission in the North West and South West Regions from 2 to 7 November 2020. The goal of this mission was to ensure that the populations of these Regions take ownership of the “living together” concept and understand that the linguistic diversity of Cameroon is an asset and not a burden for the country. On this occasion, members of the Commission brought to the attention of the general public that French and English are 2 official languages of equal value in Cameroon and therefore priority cannot be given to any of them. They also made presentations on the fight against hate speech, and gathered peoples’ opinions and suggestions.

729- Alongside actions carried out by the NCPBM, in 2020, Pilot Linguistic Centres located at the Headquarters of the 10 Regions and bilingual schools spread across the country continued to teach the two official languages.

730- During the year under review, the Government’s option of posting officials and other civil servants from the other eight Regions to the North West and South West Regions and vice versa continued.

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§2: Reintegrating Ex-Fighters.

731- In 2020, the National Disarmament, Demobilisation and Reintegration Committee (NDDRC) pursued its activities, by welcoming in the Bamenda, Buea and Mora centres, new returnee ex-fighters. At the end of the year, the total number of ex-fighters registered in the centres was 584, broken down as follows:

Table 1: Number of ex- fighters welcomed in the NDDRC centres

Centres	Men	Women	Children	Total
Bamenda	143	26	20	189
Buea	164	4	0	168
Mora	96	46	88	227
Total	400	76	108	584

Source: NDDRC

732- In addition, 140 foreign ex-fighters were repatriated to their country of origin and 70 Cameroonians were reintegrated into active life.

733- Supervisors of the above-mentioned centres ensure that men, women and children live separately. A support mechanism for couples was also envisaged.

734- Overall, upon their admission into the reception Centre, ex-fighters are systematically provided adequate medical follow-up that includes detoxification and psychological care. Besides basic education as well as moral and citizenship education, these multidisciplinary centres offer a wide range of training to residents, including ICT, auto mechanics, sewing, masonry, carpentry, agro pastoral trades, etc.

735- In a bid to better take care of ex-Boko Haram fighters, they were transferred from the Multinational Joint Task Force base in Mora to the Meri Transit Centre.

736- The construction of the Bamenda Reintegration Centre, with a capacity of 1,000 beds, was completed in 2020. The building of the Buea Centre in the South West Region and the Meme Centre in the Far North Region was launched, given that the necessary funds were already raised²³¹.

²³¹ A 13.21 hectares site was made available to the NDDRC and the sum of CFAF 1,000,000,000 was allocated by the government for the construction of the reintegration centre in Meme.

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737- With a view to having a greater impact, the NDDRC implemented an aggressive communication policy in English, French and local languages, both on traditional and social media, the goal being to convince fighters of the merits of integrating the Centres.

§3: Strengthening Social Cohesion

738- Actions aimed at consolidating social cohesion were taken and included the fight against tribal hatred and social actions carried out by DSF.

A: Combating Tribal Hatred

739- The Ministry of Communication multiplied press briefings and communiqués to castigate the increasing hate speech observed in the press and on social media, which are likely to give rise to identitarian closure and increased regional and ethnic divisions.

740- By the same token, on 18 September 2020, as part of festivities marking the celebration of the 39th edition of the International Day of Peace under the theme “shaping peace together”, the Ministry of Youth Affairs and Civic Education (MINJEC) organised at the Cameroon Institute of International Relations (IRIC), a tripartite conference which aimed to highlight the benefits of harmony, solidarity, tolerance and social cohesion.

741- Throughout the year 2020, Cameroon Radio Television (CRTV), the state-owned daily newspaper *Cameroon Tribune* and some private media organs highlighted many clichés that are practical examples of living together. The numerous inter-ethnic marriages, the recurrent sale of land to non-natives, restaurants, leisure clubs and other spaces of fellowship were thus presented as areas par excellence of diversity and socialisation of Cameroonians, regardless of their ethnicity, origin, profession and social class.

B: Social Actions Carried out by Defence and Security Forces

742- For several years, DSF have distinguished themselves with social actions in favour of the population, especially the most vulnerable strata. These actions which were pursued in 2020, contributed to strengthen relations between the Army and the Nation thus, maintaining social cohesion.

743- For example, on 29 October 2020, the Rapid Intervention Battalion (BIR) offered teaching material and foodstuffs to students, parents and

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teachers of Toube and Kangué Government schools on the Manoka Island. Likewise, in the Far North Region, the BIR rehabilitated about 50 classrooms in the Primary schools of Gouzoudou, Gancé, Ashigashia, Tourou, Mozogo, Fotokol, Bodo, Biamo, Hile-Alifa and Bargaram, which were burned down in 2014 by terrorists or destroyed by bad weather. During the hand-over ceremony of these classrooms, school supplies and teaching materials were offered to students and teachers.

§4: Punishing Human Rights Violations Committed by Defence and Security Forces

744- In 2020, Government remained committed to its policy of punishing all Human Rights abuses committed by the DSF. Thus, on 21 September 2020, the Yaounde Military Tribunal tried the case against Lieutenant F.E., Sergeant B. C. H. and 1st Class Soldiers D. G. B., T. C. J.-B. and N.F.G.L. who were involved in the murder of 2 women and 2 children in Zeleved in the Mayo Moskota Sub-Division, Far North Region of Cameroon, in 2015. The first 4 persons were each sentenced to 10 years in prison for violating instructions, murder and complicity, while the last was sentenced to 2 years in prison for violating instructions. The court decision was appealed against by the Legal department on 30 September 2020.

745- In addition, of the four soldiers²³² involved in the murder of some civilians (including some children) in February 2020 in Ngarbuh -Ntumbaw, a village located in the Donga Mantung division, North West Region, the Senior Officer was subject to disciplinary proceedings and the three other servicemen were subject to judicial proceedings. They were brought before the State Prosecutor at the Yaounde Military Tribunal, who requested the opening of a preliminary inquiry against them. The Examining Magistrate issued remand warrants against them. On 20 October 2020, after amending the charges, he closed the preliminary inquiry and committed them before the Yaounde Military Tribunal to be tried for murder, arson and destruction, violence against a pregnant woman and violation of instructions. As of 31 December 2020, the case was still pending before the said court.

²³² One Senior Officer, one Non-Commissioned Officer and two Senior Military Officers.

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746- In 2020, the population was exposed to a killing spree of terrorists and separatists, to adverse effects of floods and landslides, to insurrectionary plans and to tribal rift, which jeopardised the right to peace and security. Notwithstanding, the State strived to protect this right through multifaceted actions, with the ultimate goal of preserving unity and indivisibility of the country, integrity of republican institutions, social cohesion and harmony.



CHAPTER 2

GOOD GOVERNANCE AND COMBATING CORRUPTION



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747- In 2020, combating corruption and promoting good governance were key levers of Government's policy. In a bid to improve the quality of governance, combat corruption and misappropriation of public property, several actions were taken.

SECTION 1: CONSOLIDATING THE QUALITY OF GOVERNANCE

748- The quality of governance was consolidated through reassertion of the participatory approach to improve the business climate, continuous update of the State Payroll Database and the drive for transparency in the management of public contracts.

§ 1: Reasserting Participatory Approach to Improve the Business Climate

749- In addition to continuing the Investment Incentive Policy, the organisation of the 11th edition of the Cameroon Business Forum is indicative of actions undertaken by Government to guarantee the participatory approach to improve the business climate.

A: Organisation of the 11th Edition of the Cameroon Business Forum

750- Chaired by the Prime Minister, the 11th edition of the Cameroon Business Forum (CBF) took place on 22 October 2020 in Yaounde under the theme *Business faced with the covid- 19 challenge*.

751- In attendance was the President of the "Groupement Inter-Patronal du Cameroun" (GICAM), who indicated that following a study carried out in 2020 by GICAM, over 90% of companies were negatively affected by the corona virus, causing up to CFAF 3,139,000,000²³³ deficit in turnover compared to 2019 and a drop in tax revenue to the tune of CFAF 521,000,000,000²³⁴. According to this same study, about 54,000 permanent workers were temporarily laid off, that is, 13.6% of all permanent workers in modern enterprises and 13,834 others simply dismissed due to the crisis. Considering this situation, GICAM made proposals towards revamping the private sector²³⁵.

²³³ About 4,792,366.41, Euros.

²³⁴ About 795,419,847.33. 4 Euros.

²³⁵ Measures proposed fall under 3 categories. First, relief measures including the payment of State debt

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752- In their presentations, the Minister of Finance and the Minister of Economy, Planning and Regional Development, explained Government's accompanying measures as concerns tax, finance and resilience as well as prospects for Cameroon's economy in view of the Covid-19 pandemic.

753- With such presentation of the state of affairs, the fifty or so participants²³⁶ were able to prepare and adopt a road map with reforms aimed to curb the effects of the health crises and create an institutional framework to enable a revamp of the country's economy post Covid-19. The reforms to be implemented were based on 7 thrusts which include the creation of companies, granting of building permits, access to electricity, transfer of ownership, cross-border trade, execution of contracts and payment of taxes.

B: Continuation of the Investment Incentive Policy

754- The Government continued to promote, facilitate and support investments.

1) Investment Promotion

755- Investment promotion focused on actions to assist small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) and Very small enterprises (VSEs) as well as monitoring transparency in mining activities.

756- With regard to transparency in mining activities, the most outstanding initiative was the signing on 14 December 2020 of Decree No. 2020/749 to set up the National Mining Corporation (SONAMINES) and Decree No. 2020/750 to approve the articles of association of the national mining corporation. This new corporation replaced the Artisan Mining Support and Promotion Framework (CAPAM). Taking up part of the missions initially assigned to Ministry of Mines, Industry and Technological Development (MINMIDT), SONAMINES came to complete the action of the National Hydrocarbons Corporation (SNH) in managing the interests of the State in the oil and gas sectors and the action of Councils

to companies (estimated at CFAF 2,000,000,000,000), a reform of debt clearance certificates and the suspension of general audits (by Custom, Tax and NSIF services) for the year 2021. Next, the adoption of financial, fiscal and bank measures such as the improvement of COBAC provisions (the objective being to enable companies obtain extensions of payment deadlines from banks), the creation of a support fund for companies (including loans guaranteed by the State) putting an end to tax on turnover. Finally, the adoption of economic and structural measures such as the promotion of local products.

²³⁶ Due to the pandemic, the CBF registered about 50 participants in 2020 as opposed to 500 in 2019.

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in charge of the exploitation of non-concessible mineral substances. In addition to achieving transparency in the mining sector, SONAMINES has several other missions laid down in the decree establishing it.

757- Concerning actions to assist SMEs and VSEs, Government, in a bid to supervise wealth creators and project owners, set up the following: the National Pilot Enterprise Nursery of Edea (PNPE), the Entrepreneurship Capacity Building Programme (EMPRETEC), an email for the online creation of companies within 72 hours in the Enterprise Creation Procedures Centres (CFCE) in Yaounde, Douala and Garoua, the SME Promotion Agency (APME) accreditation desk, handicraft villages, virtual galleries and a one-stop shop for the export of handicraft products.

758- In addition, within the framework of the Special National Solidarity Fund for the fight against the coronavirus and its economic and social effects, the Government provided SMEs and VSEs with an amount of CFAF 2,000,000,000²³⁷ that is, CFAF 1,500,000,000²³⁸ direct support to high potential SMEs affected and CFAF 500,000,000²³⁹ support to craftspeople and stakeholders of cooperatives producing locally made masks and hydro-alcoholic gels. Following pre-defined objective criteria, 800 SMEs and VSEs benefited from this assistance.

759- Moreover, the Investment Promotion Agency²⁴⁰ (IPA) organised the 3rd edition of the Investment Market (MI 20) by video conference on 9 and 10 December 2020, with about 100 participants from 13 countries. The theme of the IM 20 was *Support from banks, funding agencies and micro-finance institutions to investment project promoters/holders in order to boost import-substitution in Cameroon* Out of 150 investment projects posted by the promoters, 17 mature projects were selected and presented to partners for a total amount of CFAF 7,722,127,465²⁴¹ corresponding to a funding need of CFAF 4,987,652,230²⁴².

²³⁷ About 3,053,435.11 Euros.

²³⁸ About 2,290,076.34 Euros.

²³⁹ About 763,358.78 Euros.

²⁴⁰ It aims to contribute to the preparation and implementation of Government's policy in terms of investment promotion in Cameroon (Decree No. 2019/74 of 18 February 2019 relating to the reorganisation and functioning of IPA)

²⁴¹ About 11,789,507.58 Euros.

²⁴² About 7,614,736.23 Euros.

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2) Investment Facilitation and Support Initiatives

760- Pursuant to Law No. 2013/4 of 18 April 2013 to lay down private investment incentives, 31 enterprises through IPA signed agreements with the Government amounting to an investment of CFAF 366,589,545,696²⁴³ and a total of 8,352 direct jobs in the chemical industry, agro-food, pharmaceutical and building material sectors.

761- Furthermore, under the aegis of IPA, with the participation of several public administrations, a joint mission carried out the monitoring-evaluation of agreements signed between the Government and private sector enterprises within the framework of Law No. 2013/4 cited above. This evaluation focused on the analysis of a sample of 100 enterprises including 54.5% new and 44.6% existing enterprises who obtained compliance certificates and achieved a satisfactory level of implementation of their projects. The objective of the evaluation was to highlight the impact of agreements on investment, employment and growth for the period 2014-2019.

762- The results of this monitoring-evaluation revealed that CFAF 832,000,000²⁴⁴ worth of investments was realised, 12,000 direct and indirect employments were created, tax expenditure was maintained at CFAF 143,000,000²⁴⁵, 75 % of enterprises evaluated admitted that this law influenced their decision to invest and finally there was transfer of technology.

§2: Transparency in Managing Public Contracts

763- The prominent aspects of transparency in managing public contracts included sanctions against fraudulent practices, increasing the control of public contracts and services and managing disputes relating to the award of public contracts.

A: Managing Disputes relating to the Award of Public Contracts

764- In comparison to 2019, the number of files received and processed by the Ministry of Public Contracts (MINMAP) increased in 2020 as shown in the table below.

²⁴³ About 559,678,695.72 Euros.

²⁴⁴ About 1,270,229.01 Euros.

²⁴⁵ About 218,320.61 Euros.

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Table 1: Comparative Summary of Dispute Management in 2019 and 2020.

Heading	2019	2020
Files received by MINMAP	321	328
Requests processed	278	278
- Bidders' requests	114	265
- Requests for arbitration	5	13
- Other requests	31	50
Justified requests	24	30
Percentage of justified requests compared to requests received	6.63%	9%
Contracts scheduled for 2020	6,896	7201

Source: MINMAP

B: Increasing the Control of Public Contracts and Services

765- The anticipated scheduling of contracts for the financial year 2020 across the national territory from 14 to 18 December 2019 was effective. At the end of conferences on the said scheduling, 7,201 contracts were recorded to the tune of CFAF 1,132,485,128,542²⁴⁶. Some 352 contracts were awarded to the Central Contracts Control Board worth a total of CFAF 785,165,842,776²⁴⁷.

766- MINMAP controlled 1,226 contracts amounting to CFAF 4,259,609,585,479²⁴⁸, that is 87% of infrastructure contracts and 12,8% of previously awarded contracts for general supplies and services. Concerning the control of execution based on documents, MINMAP processed 360 final statements and last invoices representing a total amount of CFAF 10,957,807,007²⁴⁹. Several other control missions of some major projects were carried out, notably highway projects, projects of the Three-Year Emergency Plan for Economic Growth (PLANUT), projects related to the Africa Cup of Nations (ACN) and other major infrastructure projects.

C: Sanctions against Fraudulent Practices

767- Both internal and external stakeholders of the public contracts system are liable to sanctions. During the year under review, no exclusion decision was taken against an internal stakeholder.

²⁴⁶ About 1,728,984,929.07 Euros.

²⁴⁷ About 1,198,726,476.76 Euros.

²⁴⁸ About 6,503,220,741.19 Euros.

²⁴⁹ About 16,729,476.35 Euros.

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768- With regard to external stakeholders, a Mayor was stripped of his powers as contracting authority and 376 companies were debarred from public procurement for not providing the services so required during the financial years 2016, 2017, 2018 and 2019. Moreover, 59 service providers were suspended for fraudulent practices during the contract award procedure.

769- Concerning the examination of requests for waiver resulting from the termination of contracts of 376 companies, out of over 100 requests registered since 2019, 80 received a positive response, including about 30 during the reference period while the others were rejected for lack of adequate supporting documents.

770- Overall, out of the 376 companies initially listed, 296 service providers remained among those excluded as indicated in the table below:

Table 2: Summary of Sanctions against Fraudulent Practices

Heading	Number	Remarks
Companies debarred from public procurement	376	Reasons advanced for the request for lifting of suspension: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Contracts executed and received; - Insecurity in conflict areas in the North West and South West; - Shared responsibility between the Project Owner and the service provider; - Contracts already terminated; - Remobilisation on the field.
Requests for lifting of suspension received	80	
Justified requests	30	
Rejected requests	39	
Companies still under suspension	296	

Source: MINMAP

771- The fight against fraud and corruption was also carried out by maintaining 4 toll free numbers²⁵⁰, so as to encourage denunciation of all cases of corruption and bad practices observed in the award and execution of public contracts.

§3: Continued Update of the State Payroll Database

772- Launched in 2018, the Physical Head Count of State Employees (COPPE) facilitated the identification of unauthorised absences of 12,546 public servants including civil, military and national security personnel in

²⁵⁰ CAMTEL: 288 20 06 06; MTN: 673 20 57 25; NEXTEL: 663 49 28 21; ORANGE: 699 37 07 48.

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2020. At MINFOPRA, 8,766 Government employees including 3,721 governed by the Labour Code and 5,045 civil servants appeared before the Permanent Disciplinary Board of the Public Service (CPDFP). The Government then launched the operational phase of the processing of litigation files from COPPE by organising a capacity-building workshop for over 80 employees (from MINFI and MINFOPRA) involved in this phase who had to support CPDFP.

773- COPPE led to the identification and removal of about 10,000 fake government employees from the State Payroll enabling savings of about CFAF 35,000,000²⁵¹ on the annual budget as at 31 July 2020.

SECTION 2: COMBATING CORRUPTION AND MISAPPROPRIATION OF PUBLIC PROPERTY

774- The Government undertook to combat acts of corruption and misappropriation of public property through levers such as repression, detection, prevention and control, assistance and counselling.

§1: Intensifying Preventive Initiatives

775- Awareness raising, information and communication as well as capacity building were some of the actions taken to intensify initiatives for preventing acts of corruption and misappropriation of public property.

A: Capacity Building Actions

776- NACC²⁵² organised a training seminar for members of integrity clubs of Higher Education Institutions on 15 October 2020. During this seminar, 100 students registered in 8 State Universities and 42 Private Institutes of Higher Education (IPES) were trained on the principles and values of integrity. Moreover, NACC organised a training workshop on 28 and 29 May 2020 in Yaounde for officials of the Inspectorate General and Anti-Corruption committee of MINPROFF. Participants at the workshop were educated on the anti-corruption mechanism in Cameroon.

777- On its part, the Supreme State Audit (CONSUPE) carried out some actions: completed the Comprehension Manual for the programme on

²⁵¹ About 53,435.11 Euros.

²⁵² The independent public institution in charge of combating corruption (Decree No. 2006/88 of 11 March 2006 relating to the setting up, organisation and functioning of the National Anti-Corruption Commission).

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Prevention of Misappropriation of Public Property, organised inter-regional workshops on community participation in budget governance in Ebolowa, Douala, Bafoussam and Ngaoundere in November and December 2020, and organised the second edition of the Citizen Dialogue Day held in December 2020 in Yaounde under the theme *What public finance system for an emerging Cameroon in 2035: a general concern within the context of the Covid-19 pandemic*.

B: Awareness raising, Information and Communication Activities

778- As part of the implementation of the National Anti-Corruption Strategy (NACS) and the National Integrity Education Program (PNEI), NACC organised awareness raising campaigns on the following topics: Corruption-Free Back to School, Corruption-Free Cocoa Farming, Corruption-Free Forestry and Corruption-Free Elections.

779- Furthermore, NACC put up 516 anti-corruption boards bearing its toll free number (1517) on the frontage of buildings of public and para public administrations in 8 Regions. It also prepared and disseminated awareness-raising documents comprising 20,000 leaflets, 5,000 codes of ethics, 14,000 stickers and 50,000 flyers.

780- In addition to the production and distribution of its annual report on the fight against corruption in Cameroon in 2019, NACC produced, the 12th edition of the "NACC newsletter" in English and French, 16 editions of the "Espace CONAC" *Radio Magazine*, 6 editions of "Espace CONAC" *Television Programme*, 25 editions of *Espace CONAC Radio Alerts* and 7 editions of *NACC Television Alert Programme*.

§2: Intensifying Control, Assistance and Counselling Activities

781- Activities relating to control, assistance and counselling intensified with the National Financial Investigation Agency (NAFI), NACC, Supreme State Audit and the Audit Bench of the Supreme Court.

A: Activities of NAFI

782- In 2020, NAFI received 785 suspicious reports (compared to 615 in 2019, that is an increase of 70 reports) and 98 files (as opposed to 65 in 2019, representing an increase in 33 files) were forwarded to the judicial authorities for offences relating to money laundering, misappro-

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priation of public property, corruption, tax fraud, customs fraud among others. In addition, NAFL forwarded 21 files relating to terrorism to military tribunals (against 38 in 2019 thus a decrease in 17 files).

783- Furthermore, NAFL monitored information exchange with approved financial intelligence units, public administrations, CONSUPE and Directorates General of Customs and Taxation as well as of NACC.

B: Activities of NACC

784- In the reporting year, NACC received 16,067 reports compared to 21,222 in 2019 (12,675 from calls on the toll free number as compared to 17,350 in 2019). NACC also received 3,392 petitions via electronic or administrative mails as opposed to 3,872 in 2019. Some investigations opened were uncompleted due to the complex nature of the files and requirements of the respect of the presumption of innocence and adversarial principles.

785- In summary, 9 investigations opened were completed as against 2 in 2019 and 19 rapid intervention missions were carried out as opposed to 15 in 2019. Concerning reports which proved to be true, the suspects were handed over to the Judicial Police.

786- Furthermore, pursuant to Article 22 of Decree No. 2006/88 cited above, NACC instituted 25 proceedings before courts for offences relating to corruption and related offences (compared to 8 in 2019, hence an increase of 17 proceedings).

787- During the awareness raising campaigns mentioned above, 123 reports were received and 18 Integrity Clubs were set up in over 20 private and public universities in the Littoral, West, Adamawa, East, Far North and North Regions. Moreover, NACC teams accompanied by specialised services visited 18 localities and controlled 54 stores. Given the offences identified, fines to the tune of CFAF 3,890,000²⁵³ were imposed and CFAF 3,130,000²⁵⁴ recovered. Similarly, 147 wood logs exploited without authorisation were seized and fines to the tune of CFAF 83,808,280²⁵⁵ were imposed on offenders. Finally, NACC teams were

²⁵³ About 5,938.93 Euros.

²⁵⁴ About 4,778.65 Euros.

²⁵⁵ About 127,951.57 Euros.

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on the field during legislative, municipal and regional elections to fight corruption.

C: Activities of CONSUPE

788- In 2020, CONSUPE examined reports and carried out controls.

1) Examination of Reports

789- The Department of Legal Affairs and Information Exploitation (DAJEI) and the Inspection and Control Divisions examined reports.

a) Reports Examined by DAJEI

790- The number of reports received by DAJEI continued to increase from 2018. From 111 in 2018, this Department received 212 reports in 2019 and 301 in 2020. The table below shows the reports received and examined in 2020.

Table 3: Reports Received and Examined in 2020

Origin of reports	Number of reports	Public Establishment Concerned	Reports which resulted in special missions	Reports which resulted in missions to cross check	Pending files
Individuals	41	Public Administrations	2 authorisation requests	6	26
Private companies	4	Public administrative establishments			
NGO	2	Public enterprises			
Associations	4	Semi-public enterprises			
Trade Unions	8	Regional and Local Authorities			

Source: CONSUPE

b) Reports Examined by the Inspection and Control Divisions

791- As attested by the table below, the Inspection and Control Divisions of CONSUPE examined a few more reports than in 2019.

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Table 4: Comparative summary of Reports Received and Examined in 2019 and 2020

Operational Units	Number of reports received		Number of reports examined		Reports which resulted in special missions		Reports which resulted in missions to cross check		Pending files	
	2019	2020	2019	2020	2019	2020	2019	2020	2019	2020
DIESP	13	20	13	11	1	1	1	0	1	5
DICTD	71	92	71	92	0	1	4	4	0	0
DIAP	113	15	113	15	2	6	0	0	0	0
DIEPOS	15	12	15	12	0	1	0	1	1	0
Total	212	139	212	130	3	9	5	5	2	5

Source: CONSUPE

Key

DIAP: Inspection and Control Divisions for Public Administrations

DICTD: Inspection and Control Divisions for Regional and Local Authorities

DIEPOS: Inspection and Control Divisions for Public Establishments and Specific Institutions

791- Inspection and Control Divisions for Public and Semi-public Enterprises.

2) Control Initiatives

792- As can be seen in the table below, the different Inspection and Control Divisions of CONSUPE carried out more controls than in 2019.

Table 5: Comparative table of Control Missions carried out by the Inspection and Control Divisions in 2019 and 2020

Operational Units	Missions initiated		Missions completed		Pending missions		Number of reports forwarded to the Presidency of the Republic	
	2019	2020	2019	2020	2019	2020	2019	2020
DIESP	3	3	3	0	0	2	9	4
DICTD	6	1	0	0	2	1	0	1
DIAP	8	10	2	5	6	5	6	3
DIEPOS	4	8	3	4	1	3	1	1
Total	21	22	8	9	9	11	16	9

Source: CONSUPE

D: Activities of the Audit Bench of the Supreme Court

793- The missions of the Audit Bench of the Supreme Court relate to judicial and administrative controls as well as to counselling and assistance.

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794- With regard to **judicial control**, the Audit Bench scheduled the control of 206 management accounts of public accountants in 2020, including 19 accounts of senior treasury accountants, 104 accounts of accountants of public establishments and 83 accounts of council revenue collectors of Regional and Local Authorities. The Audit Bench rendered interim and final judgments regarding the management accounts of various categories of public accountants as presented in the table below:

Table 6: Summary table of Interim and Final Judgments

	Interim judgments	Final judgments
Senior treasury accountants	3	0
Accountants	44	18
Council revenue collectors	72	64

Source: Audit Bench of the Supreme Court

795- With regard to **administrative control**, the Audit Bench scheduled controls of the management of 23 public bodies including 4 Ministries, 4 City councils, 4 public establishments and 11 public enterprises for the year 2020. By Order No. 2020/11/CAB/PCDC/CSC of 6 October 2020, the President of the said Bench modified the initial programme to include the examination of the management of the Special National Solidarity Fund for the fight against the coronavirus and its economic and social repercussions as well as the Competitiveness and Economic Growth Support Programme funded by the African Development Bank.

796- Of the 23 bodies programmed, only the control of the management of 2 public enterprises which began in 2020 led to the drafting of the interim observations report and final observations report.

797- With regard to **assistance and counselling**, the Audit Bench in its programming for 2020, produced several reports and opinions. These include the Report on the implementation of the 2019 Finance Law and the Opinion on the Settlement Bill, Report on the certification of the 2019 General Account of the State, Report on the certification of mining-sector revenue collection forms and its 2019 Activities Report.

§3: Detection Actions

798- Detection actions focused mainly on capacity building for staff in charge of detection. Thus, the Task Force on Money Laundering in Central Africa

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(GABAC) organised several seminars. These include a seminar to disseminate Regulation No.1/CEMAC/UMAC/CM of 11 April 2016 on the prevention and suppression of money laundering and the financing of terrorism and proliferation in Central Africa from 4 to 6 November 2020 in Yaounde, a sub-regional seminar to raise awareness among Senior Judicial and Legal Officers in Central Africa and the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) from 24 to 27 November 2020 in Douala, a sub-regional awareness raising seminar for sworn administrations in the fight against money laundering and the financing of terrorism from 17 to 20 November 2020 in Douala and a sub-regional seminar of financial intelligence units within the jurisdiction of GABAC from 10 to 13 November 2020.

799- NAFI staff took part in these seminars organised by GABAC both as participants and trainers. Moreover, NAFI staff participated in a capacity-building workshop on multi agency anti-terrorist investigations based on information and guided by evidence from 21 to 24 January 2020 and 24 to 25 November 2020.

800- Futhermore, NACC staff took part in a Virtual Regional Commonwealth Conference for anti-corruption agencies in Africa under the theme: *"Evaluation of efforts to combat corruption and recover assets in Africa"* organised from 7 to 9 September 2020.

801- In addition to the organisation and follow-up of 2 international workshops for 5 of its staff members, CONSUPE carried out internal training for 225 technical and administrative staff. CONSUPE also trained 226 authorising officers and credit managers from MINFOPRA, NASLA, FEICOM, CAMWATER, CAMTEL and SIC. Some 96 internal auditors, including those of FEICOM, were also trained.

§4: Continuation of Punishment

802- Punishment of perpetrators of acts of corruption and misappropriation of public property continued through administrative and judicial sanctions.

A: Administrative Sanctions

803- The Budget and Financial Disciplinary Council (BFDC) examined several files and rendered decisions, some of which were appealed against.

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1) Files Received and Examined by BFDC

804- The two tables below provide information on the increase in BFDC activities in 2020 concerning files received and examined as well as sanctions imposed.

Table 7: Comparative table of Files Received and Examined in 2019 and 2020

Cases	2019	2020
Number of Files received	5	5
Number of referral files	48	248
Number of sessions organised	20	27
Number of cases examined	32	42
Number of decisions rendered and published	14	26 ²⁵⁶

Source: CONSUPE

Table 8: Comparative Table of Sanctions Imposed on Dishonest Managers by BFDC in 2019 and 2020

Sanctions passed Amount of deficits and special fines	2019		2020	
	Deficits CFAF	Special fines CFAF	Deficits CFAF	Special fines CFAF
	2,733,911,861 ²⁵⁷	18,400,000 ²⁵⁸	147,666,435 ²⁵⁹	7,900,000 ²⁶⁰
Persons with deficits	8	11	6	7

Source: CONSUPE

2) Appeals lodged against BFDC Decisions

805- Pursuant to Article 14 of Decree No. 2008/28 of 17 January 2008 on the organisation and functioning of BFDC, judgments rendered by this institution are liable to be appealed against for annulment before the administrative judge. In 2020, the Administrative Bench of the Supreme Court and the Administrative Courts of Yaounde, Buea and Douala received 15 petitions for annulment of BFDC decisions as opposed to 9 in 2019.

²⁵⁶ Hence, 11 sanctions, 14 acquittals and 1 lack of competence.

²⁵⁷ About 4,173,911.24 Euros.

²⁵⁸ About 28,091.60 Euros.

²⁵⁹ About 225,444.94 Euros.

²⁶⁰ About 12,061.07 Euros.

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B: Judicial Sanctions

806- Sanctions were imposed by the Special Criminal Court (SCC) and by ordinary law courts.

1) Litigation before the SCC

807- The table below presents the state of litigation before the SCC. The number of cases enlisted for hearing increased from 45 in 2017 to 65 in 2020.

Table 9: Comparative table of decisions rendered by the SCC from 2017 to 2020.

Year \ Number	Number of matters enlisted	Number of judgements delivered	Number of convictions	Number of discharges or acquittals	Number of proceedings discontinued
2017	45	18	27	2	4
2018	52	18	43	15	1
2019	66	19	48	18	6
2020	65	20	43	64	19

Source: SCC

808- The number of preliminary inquiries moved from 56 in 2017 to 34 in 2020 while the number of persons who benefited from no-case rulings went from 31 in 2017 to 6 in 2020.

Table 10: Summary of Rulings rendered by Examining Magistrates of the SCC from 2017 to 2020

Year \ No.	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	104	7
2020	34	18	90	6

Source: SCC

809- Lastly, the sum of CFAF 683,404,735²⁶¹ was recovered in 2020 compared to CFAF 230,561,918²⁶² in 2019.

²⁶¹ About 1, 1,043,336.01 Euros.

²⁶² About 352,002.93 Euros.

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2) Litigation before other Courts

810- As shown in the tables below, the number of cases increased before the ordinary law courts hearing criminal matters (CFI, HC, CA and SC).

811- As concerns acts of corruption, the number of files recorded increased from 20 in 2019 to 73 in 2020. As regards preliminary inquiries, the number increased from 2 in 2019 to 6 in 2020. Then for files at the trial phase, the number increased from 14 in 2019 to 69 in 2020.

Table 11: Comparative table of judgements delivered by ordinary law courts on acts of corruption in 2019 and 2020

No. Year	Number of investigations opened	Number of files at the level of preliminary inquiry	Number of cases at trial phase	Number of sentences	Number of discharges or acquittals
2019	20	2	14	8	1
2020	73	6	69	38	20
Variations	+53	+4	+55	+30	+19

Source: MINJUSTICE

812- Concerning the misappropriation of public property, the number of files recorded increased from 135 in 2019 to 148 in 2020. Regarding preliminary inquiries, the number of files increased from 130 in 2019 to 141 in 2020. Then for files at the trial phase, the number increased from 94 in 2019 to 169 in 2020.

Table 12: Comparative table of judgements delivered by ordinary law courts on misappropriation of public property in 2019 and 2020

Nbr Year	Number of investigations opened	Number of files at the level of preliminary inquiry	Number of cases at the trial phase	Number of sentences	Number of discharges or acquittals
2019	135	130	94	52	24
2020	148	141	169	57	17
Variations	+7	+11	+75	+5	-7

Source: MINJUSTICE

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813- By maintaining the participatory approach to improve the business climate and continuing the investment incentive policy, the Government made strides towards the promotion of good governance. On combating corruption, the Government intensified initiatives of prevention as well as of control, assistance, counselling or detection.



CHAPTER

3

DETENTION CONDITIONS



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814- The health crisis caused by the Corona virus pandemic was a major challenge to the entire penitentiary system. It had an impact on detainees. Mapping of the prison population is necessary to address challenges related to detention conditions. The Government took measures to improve their living conditions, by enhancing the management of penitentiary personnel and proceeding with the rehabilitation and construction of some detention facilities. Also, to ensure better preservation of detainees' rights, certain recreational and leisure activities were maintained and judicial controls and visits conducted.

SECTION 1: GOVERNMENT MEASURES AS REGARDS COVID-19 AND THEIR IMPACT ON DETAINEES

815- To address the Covid-19 pandemic, the Government took a set of security and health measures which specifically concerned prisons and some detainees' rights were restricted due to measures prescribed by the Government.

§1: Strengthening Health and Security Measures in Prisons

816- These measures were those prescribed in the Circular Letter of the Minister of Justice implemented in prisons in a bid to curb the spread of the pandemic.

A: Measures prescribed by the Circular Letter of the Minister of Justice

817- Through Circular Letter No. 1/LC/MINJUSTICE/CAB/SEAP of 18 March 2020 by the Minister of State, Minister of Justice, Keeper of the Seals to strengthen health and security measures in prisons, Regional Delegates of Penitentiary Administration were instructed to implement these measures. They included suspending all external chores for detainees until further notice and implementing specific steps in order to avoid physical contact between detainees and their visitors. However, visits deemed indispensable between certain detainees and their visitors were strictly controlled, while ensuring accompanying measures, particularly the wearing of face masks and washing of hands with water and soap. Communica-

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tion between detainees and their Counsel was equally controlled, by ensuring observation of hygiene measures prescribed for all visitors. Furthermore, all socio-cultural and educational activities, including those of social partners were suspended till further notice. Transfer of patients to external hospitals, except those deemed indispensable, was controlled both at the exit and return of detainees to the prison. Lastly, personnel were also instructed to comply with prescribed hygiene and sanitation rules.

B: Practical Measures to Curb the Spread of Covid-19 and Manage Positive Cases

818- The advent of Covid-19 led to the implementation of practical and appropriate measures to curb the spread of the disease in prisons and manage the few positive cases diagnosed among detainees and personnel. Hence, all prisons received preventive equipment viz thermo flashes, hydro alcoholic gels, face masks, personal protective equipment and soap. Hygiene and sanitation measures were thus strengthened in prisons. Mass screening campaigns were also conducted and detainees who tested positive were placed under treatment and quarantined out of the prison premises.

§2: Impact of Government Measures

819- Measures taken by the Government to contain the spread of the pandemic had an impact on certain rights of detainees and on the reduction of a category of the prison population.

A: Impact on Detainees' Rights

820- The Government's actions in response to Covid-19 had an impact on the substantive and procedural rights of detainees.

821- Negative impact on substantive rights involved reduction of certain socio-cultural and educational activities including worship, certain sporting activities that require more than one person, board games and arts.

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822- The effect on procedural rights concerned the right to fair trial. The Government measure which limited gatherings to a maximum of 50 people affected the right to access justice, particularly in criminal matters, as sometimes not all detainees could be brought to court and access to scheduled hearings was limited. Additionally, sometimes, prisoners could not be transported to court due to quarantines in some prisons. To mitigate the effect of this measure, hearings were held in sessions.

823- Furthermore, the restriction of the right of detainees to be visited by their Counsel had an impact on the right to fair trial.

B: Reduction of a Category of the Prison Population

824- Following Decree No. 2020/193 of 15 April 2020 to commute and remit sentences, some convicts were released.

825- Out of 27,500 persons then in detention, 10,181 benefited from the said measure. Of these, 6,942 were released immediately, representing 25.24% of the prison population.

SECTION 2: PRISON POPULATION

826- As at 30 December 2020, the prison population was 26,800 compared to 31,815 in 2018 and 30,606 in 2019. It was made up of pre-trial detainees and convicts, including other sub-categories.

§1: Pre-trial detainees and Convicts

827- The number of pre-trial detainees was higher than that of convicts.

A: Pre-trial detainees

828- Among those in detention, the number of pre-trial detainees was estimated at 16,622, of whom 15,396 were men, 498 women, 704 boys and 24 girls. The Centre (4,522) and Littoral (3,068) Regions had the highest numbers, while the North West (336) and South (690) had the lowest.

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Table 1: Statistics on pre-trial detentions per Region as at 31 December 2020

PRISONS	CATEGORY								TOTAL
	MEN		WOMEN		MINORS				
					BOYS		GIRLS		
	N	F	N	F	N	F	N	F	
ADAMAWA	887	65	18	01	57	02		0	1,030
CENTRE	4,112	58	160	05	176	03	08	0	4,522
EAST	760	91	38	03	68	05	02	0	967
FAR NORTH	1,691	265	65	09	74	02	08	0	2,114
LITTORAL	2,841	42	78	01	104	01	01	0	3,068
NORTH	1,354	120	16	04	61	01	0	0	1,556
NORTH WEST	309	02	11	0	14	0	0	0	336
WEST	1,222	02	30	0	49	0	01	0	1,304
SOUTH	589	37	21	03	40	0	0	0	690
SOUTH WEST	892	57	34	01	47	0	03	01	1,035
GRAND TOTAL	14657	739	471	27	690	14	23	01	16,622

Key:

N: Nationals F: Foreigners

Source: MINJUSTICE

B: Convicts

829- The commutation and remission of sentences ordered by the Head of State by in Decree No. 2020/193 of 15 April 2020 concerned only persons whose sentences were final. Thus, as 31 December 2020, the number of convicts was estimated at 10 178 compared to 13,888 in 2019, representing a decrease of 3,710 convicts.

Table 2: Statistics of Convicts per Region as at 31 December 2020

PRISONS	CATEGORIES								TOTAL
	MEN		WOMEN		MINORS				
					BOYS		GIRLS		
	N	F	N	F	N	F	N	F	
ADAMAWA	572	48	8	1	09	0	0	0	638
CENTRE	2215	28	60	02	09	0	01	0	2,315
EAST	697	95	15	02	04	07	0	0	820
FAR NORTH	780	69	13	02	06	01	0	0	871
LITTORAL	1,980	30	37	0	03	0	0	0	2,050
NORTH	817	140	12	02	08	01	0	0	980
NORTH WEST	366	02	07	0	16	0	01	0	392
WEST	976	01	18	0	20	0	0	0	1,015
SOUTH	500	06	08	0	05	0	0	0	519
SOUTH WEST	521	46	05	01	05	0	0	0	578
GRAND TOTAL	9,424	465	183	10	85	09	02	0	10,178

Source: MINJUSTICE

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§2: Specific Categories of Detainees

830- Specific categories of detainees in prisons included women, minors and foreigners.

A: Female Prison Population

831- As at 31 December 2020, there were 717 women and girls in prison, of whom 522 were in pre-trial detention and 195 were convicted.

832- The table below presents prison statistics of female detainees.

Table 3: Statistics of Women in prison as 31 December 2020

PRISONS	PRE-TRIAL DETAINEES				CONVICTS				TOTAL
	WOMEN		GIRLS		WOMEN		GIRLS		
	N	F	N	F	N	F	N	F	
ADAMAWA	18	1	0	0	8	1	0	0	28
CENTRE	160	5	8	0	60	2	1	0	236
EAST	38	3	2	0	15	2	0	0	60
FAR NORTH	65	9	8	0	13	2	0	0	97
LITTORAL	78	1	1	0	37	0	0	0	117
NORTH	16	4	0	0	12	2	0	0	34
NORTH WEST	11	0	0	0	7	0	1	0	19
WEST	30	0	1	0	18	0	0	0	49
SOUTH	21	3	0	0	8	0	0	0	32
SOUTH WEST	34	1	3	1	5	1	0	0	45
GRAND TOTAL	471	27	23	1	129	10	2	0	717

Source: MINJUSTICE

B: Imprisoned Minors

833- The number of minors in prison as at 31 December 2020 was 824, of whom 728 were on pre-trial detention and 96 were convicts. The Centre Region had the highest number of minors in prison, precisely 198, that is 187 on pre-trial detention and 11 convicts.

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Table 4: Summary of Minors in Detention as at 31 December 2020

CATEGORIES PRISONS	DEFENDANTS				CONVICTS				TOTAL
	BOYS		GIRLS		BOYS		GIRLS		
	N	F	N	F	N	F	N	F	
ADAMAWA	57	2	0	0	9	0	0	0	68
CENTRE	176	3	8	0	9	0	1	0	197
EAST	68	5	2	0	4	7	0	0	86
FAR NORTH	74	2	8	0	6	1	0	0	91
LITTORAL	104	1	1	0	3	0	0	0	109
NORTH	61	1	0	0	8	1	0	0	71
NORTH WEST	14	0	0	0	16	0	1	0	31
WEST	49	0	0	0	20	0	0	0	70
SOUTH	40	0	0	0	5	0	0	0	45
SOUTH WEST	47	0	3	1	5	0	0	0	56
GRAND TOTAL	690	14	23	1	85	9	2	0	824

Source: MINJUSTICE

C: Foreigners

834- Foreigners made up a significant proportion of detainees in some prisons.

835- They were registered in all Regions, with a total of 1,285 of which 781 in pre-trial detention and 504 convicts. The highest number of foreign detainees was recorded in the North (140) and the East (95) Regions.

SECTION 3: IMPROVING THE LIVING CONDITIONS OF DETAINEES

836- Improving living conditions of detainees involves, inter alia, good feeding, better water and energy supply, availability of transportation means for detainees and good health coverage.

§1: Feeding of Detainees

837- The budget earmarked for the feeding of detainees was increased in all prisons. It increased from CFAF 4, 470, 000, 000²⁶³ in 2019 to CFAF 5, 015, 891, 000²⁶⁴ in 2020, corresponding to a ratio of CFAF 421²⁶⁵ per prisoner per day. The number of meals for minors increased from one to two per day.

²⁶³ About 6,824,427.48 Euros.

²⁶⁴ About 7,657,848.85 Euros.

²⁶⁵ About 0.64 Euros.

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§2: Provision of Water, Energy and Transport for Detainees

838- In terms of water and electricity supply, most of the prisons were equipped with several water points. The Bafoussam, Bertoua, Maroua, Ngaoundere and Edea prisons had boreholes to supplement CAMWATER's installations. In other prisons, particularly some Main Prisons, boreholes were either non-existent, as was the case in Bafang Main Prison where there was a well simply out of use as was the case in Edea Main Prison where the prison received its water supply from the borehole of the divisional hospital of the said town. Water shortage always experienced in some prisons remained a source of danger for prisoners who were exposed to various water-borne diseases such as diarrhoea and skin diseases.

839- Regarding electricity supply, prisons were connected to hydroelectric power sources, but numerous power outages were an impediment. Although some prisons were equipped with generators, there were challenges linked to budgetary allocation for fuel to power the generators. The Bertoua, Ebolowa and Nkongsamba prisons did not have alternatives when there were power outages.

§3: Health Coverage of Detainees

840- The budget allocated for the health coverage of detainees did not change. The 2020 allocation was CFAF 1,015,000,000²⁶⁶, corresponding to a ratio of CFAF 32,227²⁶⁷ for each prisoner per year.

841- Each prison had an infirmary, a pharmacy and a laboratory to ensure better health care for prisoners. Some cases of serious illness were referred to neighbouring hospitals. Some 180 outpatient admissions and 1,617 outpatient consultations were registered.

842- Regarding mental illness, 46 new cases were registered, bringing the total to 425 cases. Drug addiction was also a problem as various substances, ranging from tobacco to heroin were used. Approximately 10,748 people were affected.

²⁶⁶ About 1,549,618.32 Euros.

²⁶⁷ About 49.20 Euros.

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843- As concerns HIV/AIDS, during the year under review, there were 4,587 HIV-positive persons. Some 8,927 prisoners were sensitised on HIV/AIDS. There were 98 deaths due to HIV/AIDS, malaria, skin diseases and respiratory diseases.

SECTION 4: PRISON STAFF MANAGEMENT AND INFRASTRUCTURE CONSTRUCTION

844- Efforts were made to improve personnel management while rehabilitation and construction of certain detention facilities continued.

§1: Management of Prison Personnel

845- To better safeguard the rights of detainees, the efficient management and treatment of personnel's careers as well as the existence of sanctions in case of non-compliance with professional rules is required.

A: Personnel and Career Management

846- As part of career management, some staff were promoted in grade: 3 Administrators General of Prison, 9 Senior Administrators of Prison, 10 Super Superintendents of Prisons, 1 Senior Superintendent of Prisons, 8 Superintendents of Prisons, 64 Senior Prison Warders, 59 Major Prison Chief Warders, 160 Prison Chief Warders, 683 Senior Prison Warders, 273 Major Prison Warders.

847- The number of prison staff remained relatively stable for 2018, 2019 and 2020, that is, 4,674, 4,536 and 4,385 respectively, with 26,800 inmates as at 31 December 2020, the staff member inmate ratio was 1:6.11, whereas international standards prescribe a ratio of one staff member for every 3 inmates. Meanwhile Cameroon's penitentiary system stipulates a ratio of 1 staff member for every 5 inmates.

848- The table below represents the statistics of Penitentiary Administration personnel during the year under review.

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Table 5: Statistics of Penitentiary Administration Personnel as at 31 December 2020

Grade	M	F	Number of staff members	(%) M	(%) F	(%)
AP	169	35	204	0.81	0.79	04.6
SP	300	90	390	0.683	02.05	08.89
PCW	613	237	850	1.397	05.40	19.38
PW	1785	1139	2924	4.071	25.97	66.68
Civilians	17	0	17	0.38	0	0.38

Source: MINJUSTICE

KEY

AP: Prison Administrators

SP: Superintendent of Prisons

PCW: Prison Chief Warder

PW: Prison Warder

Table 6: Statistics of Penitentiary Administration Personnel by Speciality

N°	SPECIALITY	NUMBER OF PERSONNEL
1	Medical Doctors	23
2	State Registered Nurses	63
3	Nursing Aides	123
4	Psychopathologists	1
5	Veterinary Doctors	2
6	Computer Scientists	4
7	Agricultural Engineers	2
8	Civil Engineers	2
9	Medico-Sanitary Technicians	33
10	Sports and Physical Education Staff	13
11	Social Welfare Assistants recruited by the Minjustice	5
12	Staff of the Ministry of Social Affairs	15
13	Agriculture Technicians	10
14	Animal Husbandry Technicians	10
15	Drivers	7
TOTAL		313

Source: MINJUSTICE

B: Prosecution of Prison Personnel

849- No cases of disciplinary or judicial proceedings against prison personnel for apart from torture, cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment were reported, a complaint against a Superintendent in charge of a Main Prison for ill-treatment resulting in disability. The case was in progress.

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850- Regarding personnel who faced disciplinary and or judicial proceedings for other reasons, of the 82 cases identified, most were related to unauthorised absence from duty or negligence resulting in escape of a prisoner.

§2: Construction and Maintenance of Infrastructure

851- As at 31 December 2020, Cameroon had 79 prisons, of which 67 were functional and 12 non-functional, with a capacity of about 18,000 places.

852- The government continued the construction, rehabilitation and equipment of prisons.

853- As concerns construction, construction of the buildings at the Douala-Ngoma Prison were completed, the construction of the walls of the said prison was in progress, a watchtower at the Monatélé Main Prison and an infirmary at the Banganté Main Prison were constructed, and a human-powered borehole and a block of latrines at the Ambam Main Prison was constructed. With regard to rehabilitation, the roof of the women's section of the Monatélé Main Prison was repaired, the development of the Djoum Main Prison with the extension of its fence, and the repair of the fence of the Tchollire II Main Prison. Finally, as regards equipment, the Bengbis Secondary Prison was provided with new equipment.

SECTION 5: SOCIO-CULTURAL AND EDUCATIONAL ACTIVITIES

854- The restrictions placed on socio-cultural activities following the Circular letter of the Minister of Justice of 18 March 2020 were later softened.

855- These improvements enabled prison staff and inmates to carry out socio-cultural activities (sports, theater, music, dance, etc.), religious activities, educational talks, and agro-pastoral activities.

856- Regarding education, most prisons lacked school infrastructure. Nevertheless, informal schooling was organised, allowing candidates to sit for official exams. Thus, of the 45 candidates who sat for official exams 23 succeeded.

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SECTION 6: PRISON CONTROLS AND VISITS

857- Legal Departments conducted judicial controls, while officials of the Department of Human Rights and International Cooperation (DDHCI) of the Ministry of Justice (MINJUSTICE) conducted visits to places of detention.

§1: Judicial Controls

858- Judicial controls were conducted by the Legal Department of Courts in prisons under their territorial jurisdiction. These controls aimed to verify whether detention conditions were in compliance with the relevant standards.

§2: Visits conducted by the Department of Human Rights and International Cooperation

859- As part of its mission to monitor and evaluate the state of Human Rights in the country, officials of the DDHCI of the MINJUSTICE visited certain detention facilities (police stations, gendarmerie brigades and prisons²⁶⁸) to assess detention conditions.

860- At the end of the visits, preoccupying situations were reported to hierarchy and suggestions made for the improvement of detention conditions. Suggestions included the following: continue to rehabilitate, modernise and construct prisons as well as enhance material means, including rolling stock; improve ventilation and lighting systems in prisons; and step up hygiene measures.

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861- True to its commitment to safeguard Human Rights, the Government, spared no effort, particularly in the area of prisons. Despite constraints linked to the health crisis, it managed to preserve the rights of prisoners, who constitute a vulnerable segment of the population. This was possible by, inter alia, adopting a series of measures geared towards curbing the spread of the pandemic, decongesting prisons, continuing to rehabilitate and construct some detention facilities, as well as improving living conditions.

²⁶⁸ All central prisons and some secondary prisons were visited except those in the North West and South West Regions.



CHAPTER 4

PROMOTION AND PROTECTION OF SOCIALY VULNERABLE PERSONS



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862- Promotion and Protection of the rights of the socially vulnerable continued to be enhanced through the legal and institutional framework. Government also took measures for children, persons with disabilities, older persons and indigenous peoples to enjoy their civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights despite the fact that the Covid-19 pandemic had an impact on certain activities on promotion and protection of this vulnerable group.

SECTION 1: PROMOTION AND PROTECTION OF CHILDREN'S RIGHTS

863- The promotion and protection of children's rights was carried out in 2020 through civil rights protection against exploitation and crimes and by special protection measures.

§1: Civil Rights

864- Measures taken to enhance the civil rights of children in 2020 were the right to citizenship and alternative care.

A: Right to Citizenship

865- Birth registration continued to be a priority to enable children acquire citizenship. In order to mutualize the actions of all stakeholders, the National Civil Status Office (BUNEC) signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Ministry of Public Health on 18 February 2020 with a view of improving on the Civil Status system. The MOU acts as a platform for resource pooling towards increasing demand and supply of services for the declaration and registration of births among others. The MOU covers birth registrations, capacity building as regards the registration of births and awareness raising on the importance of registering births.

866- Statistics from BUNEC indicated that there were about 1.6 million children nationwide without birth certificates. The Far North Region alone had about 402, 000, among whom were 38, 000 pupils in examination classes. It is within the backdrop, of activities of the *Cameroon Civil Status System Improvement Project for Active Citizenship (PASECA)* that BUNEC organized a Workshop on 21 December 2020 to develop the capacity of civil status registrars and secretaries of civil status registries of the Diamare Division on the matter. In the same vein, BUNEC organized

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discussions and awareness raising workshops for stakeholders in the health sector in the Littoral, South West, West, and North West Regions from 17 to 25 November 2020. BUNEC, also took civil status registration especially birth registration to the streets of major towns nationwide, with flyers raising awareness of the population.

867- In addition, MINPROFF supported the establishment of 1000 birth certificates for children in Nkam and Mefou and Afamba Divisions in the Littoral and Centre Regions respectively.

B: Participation

868- The Covid -19 pandemic had an impact on activities of stakeholders involved in the promotion and protection of children's rights so much that most activities were not carried out, for exemple, the Children's Parliament which is usually an occasion for children to question Government officials. However, the 30th Edition of the Day of the African Child was celebrated on 16 June 2020 under the theme "Access to Social Justice System adapted to Children in Africa". Activities to mark the Day were launched on 10 June 2020 during which MINAS raised the awareness of the population on national and international legal instruments on the protection of children in contact with the justice system and presented the strategies and actions of the Government and its partners to ensure better protection of children in the justice system.

C: Alternative Care

869- Courts took into account the best interest of the child in applications relating to adoption, delegation of parental authority, Guardianship and custody of the child.

870- The High Court of Benoue (judgment No.39/CIV of 4 June 2020) in handing down judgment on adoption of a child, stated that article 344 of the Civil Code was not complied with but could be waved because of the evolution of contemporary society and culture. Moreover, the parents and the child consented to the adoption and the lady has long been taking care of the child as a godmother thus article 3 of the UN Convention on the Right of the Child relating to the best interest²⁶⁹ of the child could be applied.

²⁶⁹ See also judgment No.35/CIV of 7 May 2020 and judgment No.12/CIV of 20 February 2020 of the High Court of Benoue, Garoua.

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871- With regard to delegation of parental authority, the Court of First Instance Mbanga in judgment N0.393/TPD/MBA of 13 November 2020 granted the application on grounds that the interest of the child was guaranteed. The mother of the child (12 years, born in Paris, France) seized the court to grant delegation of parental authority to a lady based in France. The court granted her request as per Article 389 of the Civil Code and granted same with regard to Guardianship of the child.

872- Concerning custody of the child, in judgment No.025/CIV of 10 January 2020, the High Court of Wouri, granted the application of a father based in France for the custody of his daughter born in Douala and living with the mother for better education and with the consent of his wife.

873- Besides, the courts nationwide granted about 81 applications to nationals for adoption and 21 applications to foreigners. Also, the courts granted 89 applications for custody of the child to nationals and 5 to foreigners. Applications for the adoption for some wards of the nation²⁷⁰ whose parents died in conflict zones were also granted by the courts.

874- In addition, at the end of the first quarter of 2020, there were 50 wards of the nation in the country, 29 (9 boys and 20 girls) in the West Region, 9 (5 boys and 4 girls) in the Centre Region, 6 (2 boys and 4 girls) in the South West Region, 3 (2 boys and 1 girl) in the Littoral Region, 1 (boy) Far North Region, 1 (boy) in the North Region, 1 (boy) in the South Region and Adamawa and East and North West Regions had zero. During the same period, 144 wards of the state were recorded with 108 (52 boys and 56 girls) in the East Region, 10 (4 boys and 6 girls) in the Centre Region, 9 (5 boys and 4 girls) in the Far North Region, 8 (2 boys and 6 girls), 6 (2 boys and 4 girls) in the South West Region, 2 (1 boy and 1 girl) in the Littoral Region, 1 (boy) in the South Region and Adamawa, North and North West Regions had zero.

875- Moreover, as at 31 March 2020, MINAS identified and took care of 351 abandoned children nationwide. These children were from the Centre Region with 85 (50 boys and 35 girls), West Region with 74 (34 boys and 40 girls), East Region with 66 (28 boys and 38 girls), Littoral Region with 37 (8 boys and 29 girls), Far North Region with 36 (17 boys and 19 girls), Adamawa Region with 18 (10 boys and 8 girls), North

²⁷⁰ See judgment No.05/CC of 11 August 2020, High Court Mounjoand Judgment No.107/CC of 22 December 2020 of the same Court.

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West with 16 (8 boys and 8 girls), South West with 14 (10 boys and 4 girls), South Region had 3 boys and North Region had 2 boys.

§2: Protection of Children against Exploitation and Crimes

876- Children were protected against exploitation and crimes²⁷¹ through combating child labour, and prosecution and punishment of offenders.

A: Combating Child Labour

877- Combating the phenomenon of child labour was also a priority for the Government. It is within this backdrop that a strategic workshop was organized on 22 December 2020 to identify priority actions in the fight against child labour, forced labour, human trafficking and modern slavery in Cameroon within the framework of Alliance 8.7. During the Workshop stakeholders called for the eradication of the worst forms of child exploitation, work in slavery-like conditions, dangerous and exhausting work, and other extreme forms of exploitation.

878- In addition, 528 children (200 girls and 328 boys) were victims of economic exploitation²⁷² in the first quarter of 2020 as per statistics from MINAS. Among these children were 17 boys in Adamawa Region, 91 (59 boys and 32 girls) in the Centre Region, 133 (92 boys and 41 girls) in the East Region, 68 (30 boys and 38 girls) in the Far North Region, 16 (5 boys and 11 girls) in the Littoral Region, 8 (4 boys and 4 girls) in the North Region, 84 (50 boys and 34 girls) in the West Region, 72 (40 boys and 32 girls) in the South Region and 39 (31 boys and 8 girls) in the South West Region.

B: Prosecution and Punishment of Violence against Children

879- Children were victims of violent crimes against children such as capital murder, murder, rape, kidnapping, trafficking, assault occasioning death, unintentional killing, grievous harm and indecency to child under 16 in 2020.

880- Perpetrators of such crimes against children were prosecuted and those found guilty were punished.

²⁷¹ Law No2019/017 of 24 December 2019 to authorize the President of the Republic to ratify the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child, on the Sale of Children, Child Prostitution and Child Pornography.

²⁷² With the exception of the North West Region.

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881- Statistics from the courts indicated that about 1,457 (327 boys and 1,130 girls) were victims of the above violent crimes and about 2,336 offenders were convicted.

882- Concerning kidnapping, Judgments included that of the High Court of Vina. In judgment No.178/CRIM of 24 November 2020. It sentenced the accused to 5 years in prison for kidnapping a 4 year old child. The accused seduced the child with biscuits and carried her on a motorbike to his house away from the home of the parents and produced the child only when he was arrested 2 days after. The same Court²⁷³ in a similar case sentenced the accused to 18 months in prison for kidnapping a 4 year child.

883- With regard to trafficking, Judgments included that of the High Court of Mayo-Kani. In judgment No.27/CRIM/SOP of 10 October 2016, it found the accused guilty and sentenced him to a 4 year suspended sentence and a fine of CFAF100,000 for trafficking 9 children between the ages of 12 and 17 to work in his farm. The Legal Department appealed against the decision and the Far North Court of Appeal in Judgment No.08/CRIM of 27 February 2020 quashed the decision of the lower court and sentenced the accused to 5 years in prison. The Legal Department of the High Court of Mayo-Kani had appealed on grounds that the judge had violated section 6 of Law No.2005/15 of 29 December 2011 relating to trafficking and slavery in persons read in conjunction with section 30 of the Penal Code, and section 6 of the Palermo Protocol²⁷⁴ to which Cameroon is a party.

884- Some girls were victims of female genital mutilation (FGM) in the Centre Region. During the first quarter of 2020, about 66 girls underwent FGM, 36 below 7 years old and 30 between 7 to 17 years old.

885- Moreover, MINPROFF launched the process of setting up a hot line to assist children victims of violent crimes.

²⁷³ Judgment No.45/CRIM of 24 March 2020

²⁷⁴ Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons Especially Women and Children, supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime, Adopted and opened for signature, ratification and accession by General Assembly resolution 55/25 of 15 November 2000

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§3: Special Protection Measures

886- In 2020, Government took some special measures at the level of institutions to enhance child protection. This concerned curbing the phenomenon of street children, capacity development, monitoring juvenile offenders and popularisation of international and regional instruments on the protection of children.

A: Institutional Measures

887- In order to better protect the rights of children in Cameroon, the process to amend the text organizing the Commission for the Protection of Delinquents, Abandoned or children in Moral Danger, created in 1990 was initiated during its 2nd Session of 2020 held on 11 November 2020. Reasons for the proposed amendment are related to the fact that Cameroon has ratified a good number of international and regional instruments on the rights of the child which should be taken on board, and more so the environment of 1990 is not that of 2020, especially with new issues including internally displaced children.

B: Curbing the Phenomenon of Street Children

888- As in previous years, curbing the Phenomenon of Street Children was at the centre of Government actions. Statistics from MINAS during the first quarter of 2020 indicate that 562 (321 boys and 241 girls) street children were identified. The highest number was identified in the Centre Region with 293 (70 boys and 223 girls), Far North Region with 104 (101 boys and 3 girls), West Region 39 (33 boys and 6 girls), North Region with 38 (boys), East Region 35 (33 boys and 2 girls), Adamawa Region with 29 (25 boys and 4 girls), Littoral 8 (6 boys and 2 girls) and North West Regions 8 (boys) each, South Region 6 (5 boys and 1 girl) and the South West Region with 2 boys being the lowest. Among these children, 78 were returned to their families²⁷⁵ and 37 placed in specialized institutions. In addition, some 324 former street children received assistance for income generating activities in the first quarter of 2020 from the Government.

²⁷⁵ Adamawa 19 (17 boys and 2 girls), Far North 19 (14 boys and 5 girls), West 12 (10 boys and 2 girls), South 8 (7 boys and 1 girl) East 7 (4 boys and 3 girls), Centre 5 (4 boys and 1 girl), Littoral and South West 4 (boys) each.

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889- Furthermore, MINAS launched on 1 April 2020, a 3 month operation dubbed, *pilot monitoring and observation operation* with the view of withdrawing 130 street children from the shopping centre in Yaounde. At the end of the operation, 162 children were withdrawn from the streets, among whom 78 were returned to their families and 40 placed in the *Institut Camerounaise de l'enfance de Betamba (ICE)*. Also, within the framework of the Strategic Plan for the Modernization of ICE Betamba (a centre that caters for children in conflict with the law or delinquent children). Rotary Club donated the sum of CFAF7,874,000²⁷⁶ and an ambulance worth CFAF27,000,000²⁷⁷

C: Protecting Children from Covid-19 through Capacity Development

890- Government took special protection measures against Covid-19 as regards children in detention. To this end, the Ministry of Justice and UNICEF organized 2 capacity development workshops for stakeholders of the juvenile justice system. One held on 12 and 13 November 2020 in Mbalmayo on statistics regarding children in detention and Covid-19, and the other in Ngaoundere from 8 to 10 December 2020 on the impact of Covid-19 on minors in detention and alternatives to detention.

891- Also, MINAS with the support of UNICEF organized 3 training sessions for private social workers supervising vulnerable children in the Central, Littoral and West Regions. The capacity of about 100 persons was developed on Covid-19, education for behavioural change, psychological first aid and psychosocial support.

D: Monitoring of Juvenile Offenders

892- Special measures to monitor juvenile offenders in 2020 included monitoring by probation officers, placing some in specialized institutions and alternatives to detention.

893- Statistics published by MINAS at the end of first quarter of 2020 indicated that 118 juvenile²⁷⁸ offenders (109 boys and 9 girls) were mon-

²⁷⁶ About 12,021.4 Euros.

²⁷⁷ About 41,221.4 Euros.

²⁷⁸ Adamawa Region 4 (3 boys and 1 girl), Centre Region 5 (4 boys and 1 girl), East Region 31 (28 boys and 3 girls), Far North Region 9 boys, Littoral Region 9 (7 boys and 2 girls), North Region 5 (4 boys and 1 girl), North West Region 0, West Region 42 (41 boys and 1 girl), South Region 9 boys, and South West Region 4 boys.

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itored by probation officers. During the same period 313 of them were under preliminary inquiry while 443 were standing trial before the courts. Some 211 of these juvenile offenders benefited from alternative measures rather than detention. In addition, 63 of these juvenile offenders were placed in specialized institutions, that is, 61 administrative placements (58 boys and 3 girls) and 2 judicial placements (boys).

E: Vulgarization of International and Regional Instruments on the Protection of Children

894- MINPROFF in 2020 raised the awareness of about 396,520 persons on international and regional Human Rights instruments on the protection of children's rights nationwide.

F: Protection of Children Victims of or Associated with Armed Groups

895- During the first semester of 2020, about 187 children were associated with armed groups. These children were mostly found in the Far North Region with 74 (45 boys and 29 girls), North West Region 49 (30 boys and 19 girls, South West Region 59 (56 boys and 3 girls), East Region 4 (3 boys and 1 girl) and South Region 1 (boy)

SECTION 2: PROMOTION AND PROTECTION OF THE RIGHTS OF PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

896- The legal framework of centres that take care of persons with disabilities was strengthened while the promotion of socio-economic and cultural rights as well as the inclusive education and practice of disability inclusion continued to be enhanced in 2020.

§1: Legal Framework

897- The legal framework of the Maroua Centre for Rehabilitation of Persons with Disabilities that caters for persons with disabilities was strengthened through Decree No.2020/632 of 19 October 2020 to lay down the establishment, organization and functioning of the Maroua Centre for the Rehabilitation of Persons with Disabilities. The Decree gives more visibility to management, recruitment of staff, finances, management control and monitoring among others.

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898- Also, the MINAS and General Delegation for National Security signed an Agreement on 18 November 2020 for the latter to establish and issue computerised National Invalidation Cards to persons with disabilities, thus enhancing social inclusion.

§2: Socio-economic Reintegration of Persons with Disabilities

899- With regard to **socio-economic** reintegration of persons with disabilities, the National Committee for the Readaptation and Socio-economic Rehabilitation of Persons with Disabilities (CONRHA) met in its 2nd Session on 26 August 2020 to evaluate the level of implementation of Law No.2010/2 of 13 April 2010 on the promotion and protection of persons with disabilities and its enabling instrument (Decree No.2018/6233/PM of 26 July 2018). It was noted that at the level of competitive entrance examinations, registration forms require information on the type of disability of candidates, and persons with disabilities and associations of persons with disabilities were granted support. Awareness-raising campaigns on the above Law continued to be carried out.

900- Besides, about 266 persons with disabilities received support from Government to carry out income generating activities during the first quarter of 2020.

901- Furthermore, the 29th edition of the International Day of Persons with Disabilities was celebrated in Cameroon on 3 December 2020. In prelude to the celebration, MINAS on 24 November 2020, mobilised the national community on the problems persons with disabilities face, including socio-economic reintegration, especially those with invisible disabilities²⁷⁹, during the launching of activities of the Day.

§3: Right to Education

902- As regards the right to education, Government through MINPOSTEL on 2 December 2020 inaugurated a multimedia centre for persons with disabilities located at the *Club des Jeunes Aveugles Réhabilités du Cameroun (CJ)*. The Centre offers inclusive multimedia services to persons with disabilities which makes them more autonomous especially the visually impaired. Services offer by the Centre include specialised train-

²⁷⁹ Invisible disability include mental illness, vision or hearing problems, brain damage, neurological disorder or cognitive dysfunction.

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ing on information and communication technology and braille editing and transcription service.

903- Furthermore, about 2,867 children with disabilities were in school or undergoing professional training during the first quarter of 2020 with 1,432 boys and 1,435 girls. The Far North Region registered the highest number (770) of children with disabilities in school, followed by the Centre Region²⁸⁰ with 694.

904- In addition, about 703 (400 boys and 303 girls) children with disabilities or born of parents with disabilities were registered in schools during the first quarter of 2020 while 541 (152 males and 389 females) persons received other forms of educational assistance in addition to enrolment in schools during the same period.

§4: Enhancing the Health of Persons with Disabilities

905- The health of persons with disabilities was taken into consideration in Government action.

906- In March 2020, with the announcement of the first case of covid in Cameroon, Government took measures to develop the capacity of Social Workers on covid. Thus 50 social workers in Yaounde and its environs and 30 in Douala benefitted from these capacity development trainings.

907- In addition, with the support of WHO, about 275 stakeholders in the chain of protection of persons with disabilities (social workers, health personnel, persons with disabilities and managers of organizations of persons with disabilities) benefitted from capacity development through the organization of 8 training sessions on covid, (3 in Douala, 3 in Yaounde and 2 in Bafoussam).

908- In order to protect children with disabilities against Covid-19, MINAS in collaboration with Sightsavers carried out capacity development for staff of organizations taking care of young girls with disabilities on community-based awareness-raising and distribution of nutritional kits and techniques.

²⁸⁰ Adamawa Region 164 (62 boys and 102 girls), Centre Region 694 (318 boys and 376 girls), East Region 249 (126 boys and 123 girls), Far North Region 770 (346 boys and 424 girls), Littoral Region 134 (90 boys and 44 girls), North Region 82 (54 boys and 28 girls), North West Region 11 (8 boys and 3 girls), West Region 371 (224 boys and 147 girls), South Region 133 (78 boys and 55 girls) and South West Region 259 (126 boys and 133 girls).

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909- Moreover, the Cameroon Clubfoot Care Project which was launched on 14 February 2020 by CBC Health Services is aimed at reducing the incidence of mobility impairment caused by clubfoot or foot deformity²⁸¹.

SECTION 3: PROMOTION AND PROTECTION OF THE RIGHTS OF OLDER PERSONS

910- The legal framework on protecting the rights of older persons was improved in 2020, especially through the upward revision of old age pension and through actions related to the right to health and the right to work.

§1: Improved Legal Framework

911- In order to improve the living conditions of retirees, Decree No.2020/376 of 8 July to fix the coefficient for the upward revision of certain old-age and incapacity pensions as well as death benefits granted by the National Social Insurance Fund was issued. According to the Decree, the old-age and incapacity pensions as well as death benefits in force since 31 March 2016 were revised upward by a 20% with effect from 1 August 2020.

§2: Right to Health

912- The 30th Edition of the International Day of Older Persons was celebrated under the theme: *“Pandemics: Do they Change how we Address Age and Aging?”* In prelude to the celebration, MINAS launched activities on 25 September 2020 focusing on older persons and the Covid-19 pandemic. It was an occasion for the Government to reflect on the situation of older persons and to assess actions taken in terms of care of this vulnerable group.

913- The 30th Edition focused on raising the awareness of the population on the special health needs of older persons and their contribution to their own health matters as well as the functioning of the communities in which they live. It was also an occasion to present proposals for reducing health disparities between older persons in developed countries and those in de-

²⁸¹ It is worth mentioning that it is thanks to the experience of the CBC Health Services in using the Ponseti method in treating this foot deformity that the Secretary of State at the Ministry of Public Health instructed heads of hospitals to apply the said method in treating club foot through circular No.D3670/LC/MIN-SANTE/SG/DLMEP of 18 December 2019.

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veloping countries in order not to leave anyone behind as provided for in the development policy of the country. Also, it sought to improve the understanding of the impact of Covid-19 on older persons and its impact on health care policy, planning and health care attitudes.

914- In addition, MINAS supported 541 new families to take care of older persons during the first quarter of 2020. These new families were from the Adamawa (66), Centre (151), East (79), Far North (55), Littoral (7), North (7), North West (6), South (59), South West (3) and West (108) Regions. Also 289 awareness raising campaigns for 2,659 older persons on healthy and active aging were carried out while 182 community health relay workers were trained to carry psychosocial support to older persons during the same period.

§3: Right to Work

915- The *Association Care4*, organized the 2nd Edition of the International Fair for Employment, Entrepreneurship and Well-being of Seniors. It was aimed at enabling persons close to retirement or already on retirement to start an activity. Hence, they were provided with skills on the creation of companies by senior executives before or after retirement.

SECTION 4: PROMOTION AND PROTECTION OF THE RIGHTS OF INDIGENOUS PEOPLES

916- Institutions were strengthened, particularly by adopting a plan of action for the development of indigenous peoples, access to education and participation in the management of public affairs pursued, and cultural diversity encouraged as a means for the promotion and protection of the rights of this group.

§1: Development Plan

917- As a follow up to one of the recommendations of the National Colloquium on the Development of Indigenous Peoples in Cameroon in 2019, a draft National Plan of Action for the Development of Indigenous Peoples (Baka, Bakola, Bagyeli, Bedzan and Mbororo) was validated during a 2 day seminar in Yaounde on 9 August 2020. Government, Civil Society Organizations and indigenous peoples associations and development partners brainstormed on means of developing this vulnerable group in terms of health and education.

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§2: Access to Education

918- The Government of Japan provided support for improved learning conditions for indigenous children living in the *foyer du Ngongyan* in the Ocean Division of the South Region. The support worth CFAF42,000,000²⁸² included the building of a library, a fence and a store, producing 60 chairs, 20 beds and 5 library cupboards. The *foyer du Ngongyan* serves as a school and a home for 120 pupils.

§3: Participation in the Management of Public Affairs

919- Following the legislative and municipal elections of 9 February 2020 in Cameroon, indigenous peoples were elected, namely 45 Mbororos in the North West Region and 12 indigenous forest peoples as councilors and 1 Alternate Parliamentarian in the East Region.

920- With regard to trainings and awareness raising, the Mbororo Social and Cultural Development Association (MBOSCUDA) trained 166 Mbororo community leaders, Mbororo Councillors, Youth and Women Leaders on effective representation in decision making.

921- Also, the first ever indigenous Baka Chief, Mr. **ABILA Martin** was designated following the customs of the Baka on 30 December 2020 as a 3rd Class Chief of Assok village, Mintom Subdivision of Dja-and Lobo Division, South Region²⁸³.

§5: Cultural Rights

922- In order to improve cultural diversity, tolerance and peaceful cohabitation, MBOSCUDA introduced a cultural component in 47 Dialogue Platforms in the North West Region set up to solve farmer/grazer conflicts amicably. 70% of 20 Non-Mbororo Youth Groups and 75 % of 20 Non-Mbororo Women Groups had Mbororos as their members, thus improving the cultural diversity of the different groups. It also organized trainings for media practitioners on Cultural Diversity and Cultural Rights and the promotion of Cultural Journalism.

²⁸² About 64,122.14 Euros.

²⁸³ Approved by a Prefectoral Order No. 009/AP/L01/SAAJP of 6 January 2021. The Chief was installed on 26 February 2021.

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923- Moreover, OKANI, an indigenous association organised a cultural awareness Workshop in Ntam, East Region during the month of September 2020 with the aim of inspiring a new generation of Baka leaders by enabling them embrace the Baka identity to help build self-confidence. The theme of the workshop was “Developing Self-Esteem”. The said Workshop was held for 5 days in 2 sessions with each session comprising 10 participants (5 men and 5 women).

924- Covid-19 had an impact on indigenous peoples. The pandemic made it impossible for these communities to organise their traditional festival for fear not only to be infected by the virus but also to infringe Government recommendations. Practice of traditional medicine was also affected as movement to the forest was limited, their income was affected as non-forest products could no longer be sold in the market and the education of children affected too as online classes, radio and television were not accessible to indigenous pupils because there was no electricity in their villages or internet services and equipment such as Televisions, computers, smart phones and tablets were not affordable.

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925- Despite the impact of Covid-19 on the promotion and protection of the rights of socially vulnerable persons, a Memorandum of Understanding was signed by BUNEC with the Ministry of Public Health in view of improving on the Civil Status system. MINAS carried out a special campaign to retrieve street children in Yaounde, MINPROFF raised the awareness of about 396,520 persons on international and regional Human Rights instruments for the protection of children’s rights and the legal framework of some establishments caring for persons with disabilities was strengthened. Government through MINPOSTEL on 2 December 2020 inaugurated a multimedia centre for persons with disabilities located at the *Club des Jeunes Aveugles Réhabilités du Cameroun*.

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926- Some of these successes notwithstanding, there were about 1.6 million children nationwide without birth certificates. Also, children continued to be victims of violence including FGM and the right of children in indigenous communities to education was impacted as they had challenges accessing online classes organised as a result of the covid pandemic.



CHAPTER 5

PROMOTION AND PROTECTION OF WOMEN'S RIGHTS



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927- At the international level, 2020 was marked by the evaluation of policy and guideline documents or campaigns for the promotion of women²⁸⁴. At the national level, the evaluation of the Multisector Plan of Action for the National Gender Policy was initiated. More so, the promotion of gender equality was reaffirmed in the National Development Strategy (NDS30) presented in November 2020. Despite the health context marked by the global Coronavirus pandemic, the State continued to provide an environment conducive to the respect of women's rights. These efforts led to several improvements regarding the promotion of gender equality, women's empowerment, protection of women against violence, women's gradual involvement in the quest for peace, as well as their consideration in the family.

SECTION 1: CONTINUED PROMOTION OF GENDER EQUALITY

928- To reduce the discriminatory gap between men and women, the state mainstreamed gender in the NDS30 and in other public policies as well as involved women in the management of public affairs.

§1: Gender Mainstreaming in the NDS30 and other Public Policies

929- To fight existing disparities, the State continued to promote gender mainstreaming by integrating it into the NDS30 and in other increasingly important public sector policies.

A: Gender Institutionalisation

930- The National Gender Policy which was based on the SDGs was taken into consideration in the NDS30 for the 2020 to 2030 period. Among the priorities defined in the NDS30, the issue of gender equality and women's empowerment plays an important role in the process of achieving emergence. In Section 4.5.4 on Promotion of Gender and Equity, it is stated that for the period 2020-2030, the Government will: **1)** continue its policy of equitable access for girls and boys, men and women to education, training and information; **2)** strengthen programmes designed to encourage women and youth entrepreneurship; **3)** intensify consultations with the banking system to open up credit to this segment of the population; **4)** step up

²⁸⁴ Beijing Platform for Action United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 (), Sustainable Development Goals, the African Women's Decade or Generation equality of UN Women.

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measures to combat gender-based violence (GBV); **5)** enact principles to ensure greater representation of women and youth in public and political life and **6)** continue strengthening the institutional framework for the promotion and protection of women's rights.

931- All this demonstrates continued political will to improve women's situation in our country. Apart from the NDS30, commitments in favour of gender equality were taken into consideration in major policies and reforms in Cameroon.

B: Gradual Integration of Gender Mainstreaming in other Public Policies

932- In addition to the above mentioned institutionalisation, Cameroon in its permanent quest for parity took steps to implement some gender-based policies. Namely, following up the integration of gender mainstreaming in ministerial policies, programmes, projects and budgets through the Ministry of Women's Empowerment and the Family (MIN-PROFF) during budget conferences, drawing up a Guide for gender mainstreaming in national, regional and local development plans, building the capacity of the Planning, Programme, Budgeting, Monitoring chain members, ensuring gender-responsive budgeting through MIN-PROFF and starting the evaluation of the National Gender Policy Document and its Plan of Action, a process which should lead to the revision of these two strategic documents.

§2: Enhancing Women's Representation in Public Life

933- At different levels of responsibility, the rate of female representation remained ostensibly below international standards; notably 30% according to Beijing Declaration, and 50% according to the African Union and the United Nations. In some cases, there was no female representation at all. This situation applied to both elective offices and in the Public Service.

A: Women's Representation in Elective Offices

934- Concerning elective offices, the table below gives an overview of women's participation compared to men.

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Table 1: Summary of Representation in Politics

Elective Office	Women	Men
Mayors	39 (10.83 %)	321 (89.17%)
Members of the National Assembly	61 (33.33%)	119 (66.67%)
Members of the Senate	26 (26.00%)	74 (74.00%)
Regional Councillors	11(16.93%)	54 (83.07%)

Source: MINJUSTICE

935- The above table shows increase in the proportion of Female Mayors, which is 10.83% compared to the 2007 (6.7%) and 2013 (6.9%) elections. However no woman was elected City Mayor in the 14 City Councils of the country.

936- There is also an increase in the number of women in operational and management positions. However, the number reduces when it comes to strategic positions and/or positions of power where female leaders occupy subordinate positions, such as Vice-Chairperson of the National Assembly or the Senate.

B: Women's Representation in Some Public Administrations

937- The following general statistics show the consideration of women in recruitments into the public service in 2020: 1561 men (53 %) and 1383 women (47%).

938- With regard to the judiciary, the Higher Judicial Council was held in 2020. Women were advanced in grade and promoted to positions of responsibility. The tables below shows the distribution of magistrates following the session.

Table 2: Distribution of Men and Women holding strategic positions in the Magistracy.

Position	Number of Women	Number of Men	Total
Lower Courts			
Supreme Court	13	42	55
Special Criminal Court (Procureur General and President)	2	0	2
President, Court of Appeal	3	7	10
Procureur General Court, Appeal	0	10	10
President, Administrative Court	3	7	10
President, High Court	3	9	12

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Position	Number of Women	Number of Men	Total
President, Court of First Instance and High Court	6	39	45
President, Court of First Instance	12	13	25
State Counsel, High Court	0	3	3
State Counsel Court of First Instance/High Court	5	49	54
State Counsel Court of First Instance	1	13	14
Ministry of Justice			
Secretary General	1	0	1
Inspector General	1	0	1
Directors and those ranking as such	3	13	16

Source: MINJUSTICE

Table 3: Number of Judicial and Legal Officers according to Grade in 2020

Grade	Number of Women	Number of Men	Total
Super Scale Group 1	14	39	53
Super Scale Group 2	25	88	113
4 th Grade	60	183	243
3 rd Grade	85	187	272
2 nd Grade	205	383	588
1 st Grade	213	351	564
Total	602	1231	1,833

Source: MINJUSTICE

939- Concerning territorial administration, women were taken into consideration through Decrees No. 2020/304 of 10 June 2020 to appoint Subdivisional Officers, and No. 2020/758 of 18 December 2020 to appoint Senior Divisional Officers, as shown in the table below:

Table 4: Statistics on the Staff of the Ministry of Territorial Administration

Positions of responsibility	Total number of positions	Number of positions held	Men	Women
CENTRAL SERVICES				
Secretary General	1	1	1	0
Inspector General	3	3	2	1
Directors and those ranking as such	20	20	15	5
Sub-Directors and those ranking as such	29	29	17	12
Service Heads and those ranking as such	76	76	36	40

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Positions of responsibility	Total number of positions	Number of positions held	Men	Women
DECENTRALISED SERVICES				
Governor	10	10	10	0
Secretary General	10	10	10	0
Inspector General	10	10	10	0
Inspector	20	20	15	5
Chief of Cabinet	10	10	10	00
Head of Division	40	37	34	11
Senior Divisional Officer	58	58	56	2
Assistant Senior Divisional Officer	A1	58	54	09
	A2	58	54	08
	A3	30	30	25
Divisional Officer	360	359	338	21
Assistant Divisional Officer	360	207	147	60

Source: MINAT

940- The above tables show that despite efforts made in 2020, women's representation both in politics and in the Judiciary, was almost one third of the workforce compared to men.

SECTION 2: SUPPORTING THE ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT OF WOMEN

941- Support was evaluated through the development of income-generating activities (IGAs), the enhancement of the work of Women Empowerment Centres (CPFF), as well as the taking into consideration of gender mainstreaming in the fight against Covid-19.

§1: Development of Income Generating Activities

942- Despite the negative impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on economies, both at national and global levels, the State continued to empower women, in order to reduce indigence. Government trained 11,000 girls and women on setting up and managing IGAs; granted agro-pastoral equipment to 350 women's groups, as well as financial support to 147 women of 10 women's groups for the setting up of their IGAs.

943- Furthermore, within the framework of the *Second Chance Education and Vocational Learning* project in the East and Far North Regions, start-up kits for sewing and small business, agricultural equipment, inputs, and livestock kits were granted to 1,267 refugee girls, internally displaced persons and host communities in Bertoua, Mokolo, Mora, Minawao and Ngam. By so doing, the State enabled them to generate revenue themselves for their daily needs.

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944- The follow up of 4 women farming organisations, beneficiaries of grants awarded within the framework of the implementation of the Gender, Climate Change and Agriculture Support Programme, and the creation of its platform, further contributed to improve women's economic empowerment.

§2: Strengthening the Work of Women Empowerment Centres

945- The State enhanced the entrepreneurial capacity of Women Empowerment Centres (CPFFs) by supporting the drawing up and validation of 30 training programmes and 30 guides on a skills-based approach in targeted areas. Progress was made by mapping of CPFFs and following up their functioning thanks to the modernisation of the centres for a better management of women, especially in economic terms. Some 2 CPFFs were constructed, 7 were rehabilitated, 3 were secured and 18 were equipped. In 2020, the total number of operational CPFFs stood at 108.

§3: Mainstreaming Women in the Fight against Covid-19

946- To deal with covid-19, the Government included women in the strategy drawn up to fight the pandemic. In this respect, a budget of CFAF 1,500,000,000²⁸⁵ was allocated to MINPROFF, which enabled it to carry out a certain number of actions concerning prevention, capacity-building and infrastructure.

947- With regard to prevention, the State sensitised women by organising 56 awareness raising sessions on good practices in the fight against Covid-19 and compliance with barrier measures in various regions of the country and reached 68,474 people. It also drafted and disseminated specific messages in easy English and French for more than 11 million people and families, and launched the project to train peer educators, Bayam Sellam (petty traders) in markets in Yaounde and Douala, at the rate of 25 per market on the prevention of Covid-19, and gender-based violence (GBV) in crisis context, with the objective to reach 1,500 women. The distribution of Covid-19 prevention kits to all MINPROFF staff in daily contact with targets, also contributed to the prevention of Covid-19 in the entire ministry. Moreover, some 9000 kits were granted by MINPROFF to youth and women entrepreneurs to set up businesses as part of measures to mitigate the socio-economic impact of Covid-19 on SMEs.

²⁸⁵ About 2,290,076.34 Euros.

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948- In 2020, training sessions were organised in the localities of Pouma, Edea, Kribi, Bafang, Mbouda and Akono for pools of rural women trainers, that is a total of about 750 beneficiaries on homemade production of liquid soap to strengthen their socio-economic resilience within the context of the Covid-19.

949- Furthermore 702 female tailors were trained on sewing face masks and production of artisanal soap.

950- Some 498 peer educators from different religious denominations, and some women associations were equally trained to relay awareness on the fight against Covid-19 to communities in Yaounde, Ebolowa, Douala, Bafoussam, Bertoua and Ngaoundéré.

951- Moreover, the State implemented the joined Project "Support for women's socio economic activities around the value chains induced by Covid-19 in the North West and South West Regions"; granted some equipment to 300 youth and women entrepreneurs within the framework of the project on capacity building and settlement of youth and women entrepreneurs or project leaders in the agro-industrial sector (RBA UNDP initiative). Thus, more than 174,000 face masks were fabricated and distributed to persons at risk and women and family associations.

SECTION 3: PROTECTION OF WOMEN FROM VIOLENCE

952- The State continued to fight violence against women through prevention, continued repression and the care for survivors.

§1: Prevention from Gender Based Violence

953- MINPROFF recorded 9,292 cases of violence. These include physical violence (2,443), psychological and emotional violence (3,426), economic abuse (denial of resources, services and opportunities) (2,009), sexual violence (rape) (856), widowhood rites (100), early marriages (257), female genital mutilations (101), political or institutional violence (100).

954- Actions carried out by the State to combat GBV included: advocacy and communication for change of behaviour which helped mitigate the risk of GBV and enhance resilience of women and young girls, as well as fostering an enabling socio-cultural environment for all by organising campaigns to report atrocities perpetrated on women in crisis areas in the 10 Regions.

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955- The State further undertook the popularisation of operational frameworks for the promotion and protection of women's rights as far as the protection of victims is concerned, and of the multi-sector plan of action for the abandonment of child marriage in Cameroon budgeted for the 2020-2024 period.

956- In addition, Cameroon actively participated in the African Union campaign to end child marriage through the planning of interventions within the framework of "Sahel Women's Empowerment and Demographic Dividend" project.

957- On the occasion of the celebration of the International Women's Day and the 16 days of activism against violence against women campaign, MINPROFF in collaboration with FAIRMED, DAFI students and *Girls Leadership Group*, organised awareness raising campaigns and reached 625 people, namely 448 women and 177 men, including 246 children (128 girls and 118 boys).

§2: Continued Repression of Violence against Women

958- During the reporting year, the prosecution of acts of violence against women continued. One of the most significant cases was the prosecution following the event at Ngabuh on 14 February 2020. Among the victims were women.

959- In the case of the murder of **Florence AYAFOR**, a warder, criminal proceedings were initiated against suspected separatist fighters.

960- In addition, an investigation was opened following the beheading on 11 August 2020 of **ACHIRI TUMASANG Comfort** by separatists in the locality of Muyuka in the South West Region.

§3: Protection of Survivors

961- The State organised awareness raising sessions, educational talks and legal counselling in the 10 Regions in general and in the North West, South West, East and the Far North Regions in particular. Through these sessions, support was given to victims of atrocities committed in times of crisis

962- Moreover, the popularisation of operational frameworks for the promotion and protection of women's rights made it possible to sensitise women and girls victims of violence. Identified cases received psychosocial,

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economic, legal, medical and judicial assistance. Platforms for case management circuits with case referral were created by MINPROFF with other institutional actors and the Civil Society.

SECTION 4: PARTICIPATION OF WOMEN IN THE QUEST FOR PEACE

963- The State as well as CSOs took actions to enable women participate in peace processes.

§1: State Actions Promoting Women's Participation in the Quest for Peace

964- To encourage women get more involved in the quest for peace, the State worked toward the development of policies and programmes related to peace-keeping by women, by putting particular emphasis on training. In this vein the Government organised 5 sessions of *national training seminars for recruitment in peacekeeping missions*. Some 94 women were among the trainees who acquired skills not only on applying for United Nations and the African Union jobs, but also on the important role played by Cameroon in UN peace keeping operations. In 2020, some 15 women commissioned officers and 200 non-commissioned officers were enrolled in the contingents of the United Nations Mission in the Democratic Republic of Congo, the UN Multidimensional Integrated Stabilisation Mission in Mali and the Multinational Joint Task Force.

965- The State equally organised inter-regional training workshops for 200 peer educators on the culture of peace, fight against intolerance, and living together, carried out the evaluation of the national plan of action of Resolution 1325 and related resolutions of the United Nations Security Council, and drafted the National Disarmament Demobilisation and Reintegration Committee gender strategy.

966- Furthermore, the State trained 70 leaders from women's organisations on the involvement of women in peace processes and violence during conflicts and organised workshops to sensitise women leaders on mediation.

967- In the same way, 175 members of Defence and Security Forces attended a capacity building programme for the psychosocial support of girls and women in humanitarian context.

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968- In addition, within the framework of the implementation of the Resolution 1325 Plan of Action drafted in 2017, MINPROFF carried out several activities, including: the drawing up of a training manual for women as mediators for peace and social cohesion, communication brochures on living together, peace, security and peaceful elections, a training manual for Defence and Security Forces on peaceful elections in line with Resolution 1325 and related resolutions, and a document on the contribution of MINPROFF and its partners in the fight against violent extremism. Some 300 women were trained as mediators, 117 young girls as ambassadors for peace, 300 Imams and Muslim dignitaries were trained, ecumenical services organised and 200 peer educators trained on peace and living together.

§2: Actions of Women's CSOs in the Quest for Peace

969- Women's CSOs and the Government worked closely together in the implementation of the peace and security agenda. These CSOs include Women for a Change, Cameroon (WFAC), Reach Out, *Association de Lutte Contre les Violences faites aux Femmes (ALVF)*, *Association Camerounaise des Femmes Juristes (ACAFEJ)*, Women's International League for Peace and Freedom (WILPF) and Women in Alternative Action (WAA Cameroon) which contributed in the implementation of the National Action Plan of United Nations Security Council Resolution on Women, Peace and Security and related resolutions.

970- In order to find solutions to the security crisis in the North West and South West Regions, some of these associations centred their activities on peace building and worked in partnership with the State to build the capacity of youth and women activists on peace, psychosocial support, and advocacy for peace and to carry out campaigns against hate speech.

971- Coalitions for peace were created, such as the Women's Working Group for the Northwest and Southwest. In 2020, structures such as Hope for the Needy Association, WFAC, Reach Out, and many others worked mainly on GBV intimates of conflict.

SECTION 5: PROTECTION OF WOMEN'S MATRIMONIAL RIGHTS

972- In its efforts to ensure women's development, the Government continued to protect their rights regarding the termination of marriage and inheritance rights.

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§1: Protection of Women's Rights as regards Termination of Marriage.

973- In 2020, several court decisions were delivered to ensure women's protection in the family. According to statistics at national level²⁸⁶, 910 decisions were rendered against male spouses and 765 against female spouses. In addition, 221 decisions granted maintenance to women against 17 to men.

974- Several judgments ordered the payment of damages to women. In Judgement No. 29/CIV of 6 February 2020 of the Mefou Afamba HC for example, the Judge ruling on divorce, recognised that the plaintiff had suffered a real prejudice from her husband's actions, M. T. and ordered the latter to pay her damages. The decision thereto states: ... *Pronounces divorce between spouses T., entirely at the instance of the husband; grants custody of the children to their mother; Orders M. T. to pay to the said mother a total monthly maintenance allowance of CFAF 150,000²⁸⁷; Equally sentences M. T to pay to the plaintiff the sum of CFAF 5,000,000²⁸⁸ as damages...*

975- Through Judgement No. 266/L of 3 March 2020 of the Court of First Instance Douala-Bonanjo, the Judge delivering a decision on divorce stated: ...*Pronounces the dissolution by divorce of the marriage of spouses K., at the instance of both spouses; Grants the custody of the couple's 3 children to lady E. J. G. with a right to maintain personal relations and direct contact with the children for M. K. who will visit the children every Saturday and Sunday; Sentences M. K to pay a monthly maintenance allowance of CFAF 225,000²⁸⁹ at a rate of CFAF 75,000²⁹⁰ per child; Equally sentences him to pay to E.J. G. the sum of CFAF 2,000,000²⁹¹ for her to settle down...*

§2: Enhancing Widows' Inheritance Rights

976- Concerning inheritance rights, 2,595 judgements recognised that women and girls have the right to inherit, while 2,195 judgments recognised the right of usufruct to widows.

²⁸⁶ These statistics do not include the North West and South West Regions.

²⁸⁷ About 229.1 Euros.

²⁸⁸ About 7,633.59 Euros.

²⁸⁹ About 343.51 Euros.

²⁹⁰ About 114.5 Euros.

²⁹¹ About 3,053.44 Euros.

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977- Through Judgement No. 18/PD of 27 January 2020 of the *Tribunal de Premier Degré*, Ambam for example, the Judge declared the widow of the deceased beneficial owner of property, coheir with her daughter and administrator of property. It was stated in the judgment as follows: *Approves the Minutes of the family meeting designating the children of the deceased coheirs of their father by appointing the widow administrator of property; Grants the right of usufruct to the said widow...*

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978- The involvement of a significant number women in the quest for peace in 2020, significantly improved. Furthermore, women actively participated in the fight against Covid-19 in Cameroon. However, the general assessment of women's mainstreaming in the society is still unsatisfactory, especially at the political level where no woman was elected President of a Regional Council.

CHAPTER 6

PROTECTION OF THE RIGHTS OF FORCIBLY DISPLACED PERSONS



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979- In 2020, the partial lockdown and the closure of borders in response to the Covid-19 pandemic led to restricted movements in and out of the national territory. Despite the significant impact of this health crisis in several sectors of national life, Public Authorities continued to protect the rights of refugees, asylum seekers and Internally Displaced Persons. The easing of restrictive measures following the drop of the contamination rate was conducive for pursuing the repatriation process of Cameroonians in distress abroad.

SECTION 1: MANAGEMENT OF REFUGEES AND ASYLUM SEEKERS

980- Before and after the lockdown, Cameroon welcomed people seeking refuge and continued to ensure the care of refugees and asylum seekers living on its territory.

§1: Maintaining Hospitality towards Refugees and Asylum Seekers

981- Newcomers from neighbouring countries were received and settled while the voluntary return of refugees to their countries of origin was eased.

A: Receiving and Settling Refugees and Asylum Seekers

982- There was a slight increase in the number of refugees at the end of the year under review. The number was 436,397 compared to 406, 277 in 2019. There were 316,128 refugees from the Central African Republic compared to 292,787 in 2019 and 117,422 from Nigeria as against 108,714 in 2019. There were 2,847 refugees from other countries.

983- These refugees were settled in developed sites and in communities. Refugees from the Central African Republic lived in communities in the East (132,637), North (32,994), Adamawa (48 480), Centre (9,220) and Littoral (13,556) Regions as well in developed sites²⁹² in the same Region, namely, Borgop (12,237), Gado Badzere (26,340), Lolo (12,395), Mbile (13,301), Ngam (6,444), Ngarisingo (1,344) and in Timangolo (7,180).

984- Refugees from Nigeria were settled in the Far North Region in the lone site of Minawao²⁹³ (69,200) and in communities in the Logone and

²⁹² Surface areas of these sites were: 5,5 hectares (Ngarisingo), 44 hectares (Lolo), 48 hectares (Mbile), 28 hectares (Timangolo), 36 hectares (Borgop), 55 hectares (Gado) and 34 hectares (Ngam).

²⁹³ In 2020 around 4,172 refugees arrived in the Minawao camp.

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Chari (33,887), Mayo Sava (8,122), Mayo Tsanaga (4,259) and Banyo (1,259) Divisions and in the localities of Akwaya (618) and Diaware (41). Others lived in urban areas in Douala (20) and Yaounde (16).

985- The number of asylum seekers exclusively settled in urban areas dropped from 9,948 in 2019 to 6, 819²⁹⁴ in 2020.

986- To sum up, there were 72% of refugees from the Central African Republic, 26% from Nigeria and 2% from other countries. Women and girls accounted for 52% and children for 55%.

987- Moreover, as at 31 December 2020, around 40,000 Cameroonians fleeing the socio-political crisis of the North West and South West Regions had found refuge in Nigeria.

B: Pursuing the Voluntary Repatriation Process

988- The repatriation process of refugees²⁹⁵ willing to return home that begun in 2019 was slowed down in 2020 due to the closure of borders imposed by Covid-19. Thus, the expected target of 4,000 voluntary returns was not met. However, 200 Central African Republic Refugees departed from the site of Gado Badzere in the East Region in December 2020. Furthermore, 30 refugees from the cities of Yaounde and Douala returned to Central African Republic.

989- Regarding Cameroonian refugees in Nigeria, following the crisis in the North West and South West Regions, 12,279 persons returned to the country in 2020.

§2: Implementing the Multi-Year and Multi-Partner Strategy for the Care of Refugees and Asylum Seekers

990- As part of completing the Multi-Year and Multi-partner Strategy (2018-2020) and in accordance with the Emergency Response Plan (2017-2020), actions for refugee protection, their access to basic social services and their empowerment continued.

²⁹⁴ 1,444 asylum seekers would live in Yaounde and 5,375 in Douala.

²⁹⁵ Pursuant to the tripartite agreements signed between Cameroon, Nigeria and the UNHCR of 2 March 2017 and that of the tripartite agreement of 29 June 2019.

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A: Refugee Protection

991- Refugee protection mainly revolved around awareness raising and training, protection against violence and documentation.

1) Awareness Raising and Training

992- The Catholic University of Central Africa in partnership with UNHCR, in accordance with the National Action Plan to End Statelessness (2014-2024)²⁹⁶, organised the 2nd edition of videoconferencing training on statelessness and the right to nationality. This training, which brought together 60 participants²⁹⁷ from 30 African and European countries was intended to prompt urgent measures to substantially reduce the number of stateless persons who have no legal status and cannot therefore enjoy certain rights. In the same vein, a faculty devoted to law and political sciences offering a Master in Humanitarian Action and Refugee Protection was created at the Catholic University of Central Africa and the UNHCR provided support by granting 2 annual PhD Scholarships. In addition, the UNHCR organised capacity building for 45 humanitarian workers and partners including Divisional Officers, Mayors of some localities²⁹⁸ and Civil Status Officers on statelessness related issues in the Far North Region.

993- With regard to child protection, 88 youths (53 girls and 35 boys) benefited from a capacity building activity on some aspects of protection and safeguarding of children and youths in Yaounde (31) and Douala (57). Furthermore, 2 community outreach sessions were organised in Yaounde and 2 others in Douala, during which 363 persons (190 women and 173 men) learned about protection risks to which children are exposed. Furthermore, community awareness-raising were organised in Yaounde by Girls Leadership Group under the coordination of Plan International Cameroon on risks to which children are exposed, especially in a context of lockdown imposed by the fight against Covid-19. On this occasion, 1,029 persons (603 women and 426 men) were reached.

²⁹⁶ Actions 2, 7 and 8 stress on the need to fight against statelessness from birth through birth registration and by providing all necessary identification documents. It is worth noting that on 8 October 2020, a National Action Plan against statelessness in Cameroon was validated. This Plan broken down into objectives, activities, deadlines and indicators, revolved around 7 actions which should be carried out from 2020-2024 by Parliament, Administrations and public institutions with the support of United Nations Agencies and Civil Society Organisations.

²⁹⁷ This involved civil status specialists, lawyers, Legal and Judicial Officers, Diplomats, university lecturers, and PhD students.

²⁹⁸ Waza, Makari, Fotokol, Logone-Birni and Kousseri.

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2) Protection against Violence

994- In 2020, 76 cases (65 females and 11 males) among whom 22 children (21 girls and one boy) of sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV)²⁹⁹ against refugees were identified in Yaounde and Douala. Survivors received psychosocial support according to their individual needs and some were sent to Government's partners for adequate care and capacity building for the adoption of individual protection strategies against SGBV incidents. Among these survivors, 6 received financial support to facilitate their access to adequate care and the establishment of a medico-legal certificate, an essential document in the event of legal proceedings.

995- In addition, to reduce SGBV risks, 10 awareness raising campaigns on SGBV prevention and response mechanisms were organised in Douala (6) and Yaounde (4) in 2020 in strict compliance with Covid-19 related protective measures. Similarly, 2 training sessions on SGBV were organised for community relays in Douala (15) and Yaounde (30) to enhance their knowledge on prevention and referral of cases for care and a better quality of community-based interventions.

996- In the Mayo-Sava, Mayo-Tsanaga and the Logone and Chari Divisions in the Far North Region, the *Association Locale pour un Développement Participatif et Autogéré* (ALDEPA) organised community dialogue on peaceful coexistence and prevention of child marriage. Some 4,576 people participated in the dialogue among whom 719 girls, 1,049 boys, 1,455 women and 1,353 men. Furthermore, this Association organised a capacity building workshop intended for leaders and other stakeholders on SGBV prevention and response which was attended by 400 people including 224 women in Mayo Sava, Mayo Tsanaga and Logone and Chari. International Medical Corps (IMC) organised 22 awareness raising sessions on bodily harm in the Minawao refugee camp for 387 women in secure centres for women and girls. During activities carried out in the said divisions as well as in Minawao, these partners distributed 1,734 dignity kits and organised 4 mobile legal clinics to provide legal assistance to victims of Human Rights violations.

²⁹⁹ The most reported cases of violence concerned: bodily harm (24), rape (20), psychological violence (19), denial of resources, services or opportunities (5), sexual assault (4) and forced marriage (4).

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3) Access to Documentation

997- During the year under review, the International Rescue Committee (IRC) indentified over 500 children in need of birth certificates in the Mayo Sava and Mayo Tsanaga Divisions . In a bid to facilitate birth registration, the Regional Delegation of Social Affairs of the Far North Region and the National Civil Status Registration Office supported 35 newly created civil registration centres in the health centres of the six Divisions of the Region by offering a set of computer and logistic equipment to each health facility. In this regard, INTERSOS received 735 birth certificate applications in the Mayo Sava and Logone and Chari Divisions requiring the issuance of declaratory judgments. It facilitated the establishment of 1,100 birth certificates for some children and adults of Mayo Sava Division. A total of 131,354 refugees from the East, Adamawa and North Regions aged 18 and over including newcomers in the Minawao camp, received conventional refugee cards and certificates of family composition.

B: Access to Basic Social Services

998- Actions geared towards promoting the right to health and education continued despite the impact of Covid-19.

1) Guaranteeing the Right to Health

999- The promotion of the right to health revolved around awareness raising, access to care and the fight against Tuberculosis and HIV.

a) Awareness Raising

1000- With a view to combatting Covid-19, the Government raised the awareness of refugees on protective measures and provided them with soap and face masks. In Mada, Makari, Goulfey, Kousseri in the Logone and Chari Division health districts and in the Minawao refugee camp, African Humanitarian Action and IMC raised the awareness of 5,442 persons on compliance with protective measures.

1001- Moreover, 4,113 education sessions on best infant and child feeding practices in the context of Covid-19 and nutrition demonstrations were organised with 35,682 child caregivers including 28,967 women and 6,715 men.

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1002- As concerns reproductive health, IMC educated 274 persons on the importance of uterus revision in the Minawao camp where around 174 deliveries were registered.

b) Health Care

1003- Regarding reproductive health, IMC and *Médecins Sans Frontières* (MSF) received about 1,156 women in antenatal and post-natal consultations and family planning in the Amchide Sub-Divisional Hospital, the Kourgui Integrated Health Centre (IHC) and the Minawao camp in 2020.

1004- With regard to malnutrition, the Regional Delegation of Public Health of the Far North Region screened³⁰⁰ around 110,730 children aged between 6 to 59 months, in 10 out of the 14 health districts in which the Infant and Young Child Feeding and Home Food Fortification Project was implemented. Some 3,028 of them were suffering from moderate acute malnutrition and 632 from severe acute malnutrition, that is a prevalence of 2.7 % and 0.6 % respectively. With the support of the *Alliance for International Medical Action* (ALIMA) and MSF, health centres of the Region received around 9,079 outpatients in the Sub-Divisional Hospital of Amchide village and in the IHC of some villages³⁰¹. In Minawao, IMC received 11,809 persons for curative consultations of whom 993 were referred to the health centres of Kourgui and Amchide.

1005- The Regional Delegation of Public Health of the Far North Region, with the support of partners³⁰², took care of nearly 45,495 (24,567 girls and 20,928 boys) children under 5 years of age with severe acute malnutrition, among whom 2,274 refugees. These children were included in the integrated management programme of severe acute malnutrition in the Outpatient Nutrition Centre for Severely Malnourished People (CNAS) and the Internal Therapeutic Nutrition Centre (CNTI) of the Region. Moreover, a Vitamin A Supplementation (VAS) and deworming campaign was conducted for 9,161 children under 5, with a coverage rate of 90% for VAS and 91% for deworming. A total of 42,152 children between 6 to 23 months (22,76 girls and 20,76 boys) received micronutrient powder

³⁰⁰ The screening was done with the support of ALIMA partners, International Emergency Development Agency (IEDA), Relief and Hellen Keller International.

³⁰¹ These included Kourgui villages in the Mayo-Sava and the integrated health centre (CSI) of Mandaka, Gouloua, Zamai, Mokolo 1, Mokolo 2, Idamang, Goudour, Gadala villages in the Mayo-Tsanaga.

³⁰² UNICEF, ACF, ALIMA, French Red Cross and IMC.

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packs and MSF distributed 761 admission kits to the Paediatric Internal Therapeutic Nutrition Centre of the Kolofata Council.

1006- As part of the fight against Covid-19, the Government strengthened health facilities in host communities and set up isolation centres with medical equipment in refugee camps. In the Far North Region, the UNHCR provided support through the setting up of a quarantine site for suspected cases in the Minawao camp and a Covid-19 case management site with a capacity of 40 beds for refugees and host communities in the Moko hospital. The UNHCR also offered various inputs and equipment³⁰³. Health assistance was provided to refugees from the Central African Republic in the East, North and Adamawa Regions by 32 health facilities, at the Gado site. These facilities reached about 70 % of the beneficiaries from operational zones.

1007- Besides, application of the Convention signed between the UNHCR and MINSANTE for medical treatment of refugees in public health facilities was effective³⁰⁴.

1008- In order to support People with Special Needs (PSN)³⁰⁵ in the cities of Yaounde and Douala, MINPROFF and MINAS in conjunction with the UNHCR, *Plan International* and FAIRMED organised 8 social panels at a rate of 4 per city. Owing to these activities, 283 PSN received a monthly financial support of CFAF 25,000³⁰⁶, to meet some of their most basic needs. Furthermore, since a socio-economic survey on the impact of Covid-19 on urban refugees increased vulnerability due to the pandemic, a one-off financial assistance of CFAF 75,000³⁰⁷ was provided to 7,869 households to facilitate their access to health and equipment and basic commodities.

³⁰³ Around 100,000 gloves, 100 items of personal protective equipment, 80,000 face masks, 2,000 face masks for prisoners, 70,000 bars of soap, 616 hand washing devices in and outside the camp were distributed to refugees.

³⁰⁴ This agreement provides that the UNHCR shall bear 70% of the cost of curative care received by refugees in partner health facilities and the Government 30%.

³⁰⁵ These include elderly refugees at risk, the chronically ill, children and women at risk...

³⁰⁶ About 38.17 Euros.

³⁰⁷ About 114.50 Euros.

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1009- Measures to prevent HIV were taken in favour of refugees in camps. Thus, 953 refugees were screened, 11 of whom were tested HIV positive, that is, a seropositivity rate of 1.2%. Moreover, condoms and lubricants were distributed to these people living with HIV during educational, one-on-one and promotional talks.

2) Preserving the Right to Education

1010- Thought, the closing down of schools led to a drop in school performance of refugees³⁰⁸ efforts made by authorities and partners to ease and protect children's access to education yielded encouraging results.

a) Incentives for Education

1011- At the strategic level, a Government³⁰⁹ response plan to support students from refugee and host communities was drafted for the 2020-2025 period, to operationalise activities of the Cameroon Education Reform Support Project (PAREC)³¹⁰.

1012- Regarding awareness-raising, on the occasion of the celebration of International Women's Day and the 16 Days of Activism against gender Based Violence campaign, IRC, Plan International, ALDEPA, the *Association de Lutte Contre les Violences Faites aux Femmes* and INTERSOS raised the awareness of 4,011 people through educational talks on girls' education, the role of parents and gender equality in the Mayo Sava, Mayo Tsanaga as well as Logone and Chari Divisions. In the schools of these areas, ALDEPA and Children Life in Rural Area (CLIRA) raised the awareness of 3,541 pupils including 1,502 girls and 2,040 boys on the importance of education and school attendance. Moreover, CLIRA, educated 45 Koranic teachers including a woman on the importance of formal schooling alongside Koranic education, the right to education and their role in maintaining children in the formal school system. On the same note, the awareness of 3,633 persons including 1,530 women and 2,103 men was also raised on inclusive education and the importance of education.

³⁰⁸ See more details in the chapter on the right to education.

³⁰⁹ This document is one of the four components of IDA-18 sub-window for assistance to refugees and host communities, as well as IDPs, developed in close collaboration between the Government and the UNHCR.

³¹⁰ PAREC, developed by MINEDUB with the financial and technical support of the World Bank, aims at improving equity and quality of education, with special attention to areas hosting refugees.

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1013- Support included the distribution of 1,143 radios and USB flash drives to enhance learning among students in examination classes, free school kits to refugee and host community students in about 50 primary schools in refugee hosting areas, scholarships to students and allowances to teachers working in border and island areas. Refugee children in Government primary and secondary schools in Yaounde and Douala were also provided assistance in the payment of school fees and the distribution of school kits to 2,500 primary school children and 590 secondary school children and youth from the poorest families.

1014- Besides, the UNHCR provided to schools which admitted refugees, assistance such as the construction and rehabilitation of classrooms and toilets, school supplies and teaching material, training and financial support to teachers as well as the payment of school fees for some refugees. The UNHCR provided financial assistance to 21 children with disabilities in Yaounde and 10 in Douala to meet their special education needs and 24 unaccompanied and separated children (15 boys and 9 girls) received regular cash assistance in Yaounde. In higher education, the UNHCR supported academic training of 127 refugee students through the DAFI scholarship programme³¹¹.

b) Increasing Demand for Education

1015- As at 31 January 2020 and before the Covid-19 outbreak in Cameroon, 60,801 refugee pupils and students were enrolled³¹² in Government primary and secondary schools as well as State universities. Concerning general and technical education, refugees were fewer, with 4,501 students³¹³ enrolled. In the East Region, 43,615 were enrolled in primary schools and 1,294 in secondary schools.

1016- In the Far North Region, over 16,000 refugee children from Nigeria were enrolled in 12 schools of the Minawao camp and 23,931 refugee children living out of the camp who were enrolled in July 2020 were attending existing schools in the Logone and Chari, Mayo Sava and Mayo Tsanaga Divisions.

³¹¹ German scholarship.

³¹² That is 26,664 girls and 34,137 boys.

³¹³ That is 2,173 girls and 2,328 boys.

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1017- In the specific case of pupils in Yaounde and Douala, at the end of the 2019/2020 school year, 3, 141 refugee children³¹⁴ (1,605 girls and 1,536 boys) were enrolled, which represented a registration rate of 72.10% and an increase of 8,55% compared to the 2018/2019 school year. In the same period, out of the 3,394 children identified as being of secondary school age, 953 refugee children and youth³¹⁵ (473 girls and 480 boys) were enrolled in school, that is an enrolment rate of 28.7% and an increase of 2.12% compared to the previous school year. Thanks to the partial payment of their school fees, 21 pupils with special needs (12 girls and 9 boys) were enrolled and the collaboration among UNHCR, MINESEC and MINAS led to the admission of 85 refugee pupils (35 girls and 50 boys) to secondary schools at affordable cost, one of whom benefited from a complete exemption from school fees.

1018- Concerning the 2019/2020 school year, examination results of the Minawao refugee site are contained in the table below.

Table 1: Examination Results of the Minawao Refugee Site for GCE O/L and GCE A/L in 2020

	GBHS	Number of pupils enrolled for GCE O/L and A/L			Number of candidates whose files were submitted			Number of candidates who wrote the exam			Refugees Participation rate Compared to regular rate		
		B	G	T	B	G	T	B	G	T	B	G	T
GCE OL	Form 5	8	6	14	2	7	9	2	5	7	100%	71.42%	85.7%
GCE AL	Upper sixth	1	0	1	1	0	1	1	0	1	100%		100%
	TOTAL	9	6	15	5	5	10	3	5	8	100%	71.42	92.8

Source: UNHCR

Key

GCE O/L *General Certificate of Education, Ordinary Level*

GCE A/L *General Certificate of Education, Advanced Level*

G: Boys

F : Girls

T: Total

³¹⁴ There were 4,356 children of primary school age.

³¹⁵ There were 3,394 children of secondary school age.

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C: Empowerment of Refugees

1019- The *Japan 6* Project financed by the Government of Japan and implemented by the UNDP and the UNHCR, which was intended to contribute to an early recovery through the *NEXUS Humanitarian-Development-Peace* approach, launched its activities in 2020. In its enrolment and inclusion phases, 160 youths were identified in Logone and Chari Division³¹⁶ as well as in the Mayo Sava Division³¹⁷ to carry out work such as sanitation of villages and manufacture of bricks for the rehabilitation of some classrooms and community infrastructure, against payment³¹⁸. Within the framework of the joint project with UNFPA, *JAPSSO Association* placed 196 youths in various sectors to guarantee their socio-professional integration and the *Education for All* found jobs for 50 youths in the Mayo Sava, Mayo Tsanaga and in the Diamare after a 6-month training in motorbike mechanics.

1020- With a view to the economic empowerment of urban refugees,³¹⁹ the Young Men's Christian Association (YMCA) organised trainings in professional development and income-generating activities, among others, as part of the Project to Support the Integration of Young Urban Refugees and Displaced Persons in Cameroon. The Project provided 40 persons with educational, vocational trainings and opportunities for internships and training³²⁰.

SECTION 2: PRESERVING THE RIGHTS OF INTERNALLY DISPLACED PERSONS

1021- Actions taken were geared towards supporting internally displaced persons fleeing the crises in the Far North Region as well as in the North West and South West Regions.

³¹⁶ In the localities of Tilde Logone, Tilde Makari, Afade and Fotokol.

³¹⁷ In the localities of de Kossa, Djabiré, Madjina et Yeme.

³¹⁸ This project will be implemented in three phases each of which will last three months.

³¹⁹ This project reached 10 refugees and 10 urban IDPs.

³²⁰ Since the launching of this Project in 2018, the YMCA reached 158 people (91 boys-67 girls) for educational trainings, 42 people (26 boys-16 girls) for vocational trainings (in screen printing, dyeing and men's hairdressing) and facilitated the connection of 23 people (16 boys-7 girls) to internship and training opportunities.

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§1: Managing Internally Displaced Persons in the Far North Region

1022- Government actions focused on providing persons forced to flee for their safety with temporary accommodation, access to school, health and food, as well as work in view of their return to their usual places of residence.

A: Settlement of IDPs

1023- *Boko Haram* attacks resulted in the displacement of several families from their villages to mountains in makeshift shelters or in host families. To assist them, a camp was being set up in December 2020 in Bourdalah in the Mayo-Sava Division. Furthermore, in the Mayo-Sava, Mayo-Tsanaga and Logone and Chari Divisions, the UNHCR, INTERSOS and Norwegian refugee Council (NRC) distributed non-food and shelter kits to nearly 4,805 most vulnerable IDPs of host communities.

1024- The number of IDPs of the Far North Region increased from 270,870 persons in 2019 to 321,886³²¹ as of 31 August 2020.

B: IDP Education, Health and Nutrition

1025- As concerns primary schools, 116,849 displaced children were enrolled³²² as at 31 January 2020 in the Far North, Littoral, West, South West, North West and Centre Regions, while for general and technical secondary education, around 45,522 students were enrolled.³²³ They received various supports from Government and its partners such as textbooks to encourage them to continue their studies.

1026- As regards health, IDPs were taken into account in the fight against Covid-19. For example, in the Logone and Chari Division, IDPs and host communities received more than 45 tons of soap. Furthermore, IRC and INTERSOS raised the awareness of 15,286 people in the councils of Makari, Goulfey, Blangoua, Zina and Fotokol in Logone and Chari and distributed hand washing kits to 16,666 people.

³²¹ These people were from the Logone and Chari (133,399 people), Mayo Tsanaga (59,273 people), Mayo Sava (101,484 people), Mayo Kani (614 people) and Diamare (6,244 people) Divisions.

³²² That is 54,692 girls and 62,157 boys.

³²³ That is 21,022 girls and 24,500 boys.

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1027- Moreover, Plan International distributed food and non-food products in Koza to 108 internally displaced households in the Mayo Sava, Mayo Sanaga and Logone and Chari Divisions. Some 14,433 IDPs and 28,485 persons living in host communities benefited from cash-for-food and strengthening of livelihoods assistance through the Asset Creation Project of the WFP in partnership with Lutheran World Federation and INTERSOS. In the Mayo Tsanaga and Mayo Sava Divisions, NRC, *Première Urgence Internationale (PUI)*³²⁴ and *Solidarités Internationales (SI)* provided 3 324 persons with cash-for-food assistance. Similarly, IRC supported 540 persons with cash in the Mayo Sava Division, while NRC provided 1,785 with multi-purpose cash in the Mayo Tsanaga Division.

1028- With regard to water and sanitation, IRC, UNICEF and *DEMTOU Humanitaire* provided 11,923 persons in the Logone and Chari Division³²⁵ with water, sanitation and hygiene kits (WASH kits) together with messages for best hygiene practices as part of the flood response. PUI built 20 blocks of double-cabin latrines, each equipped with a hand-washing device and a latrine maintenance kit in Kousseri, and sensitised 1,952 people, including 1,094 women on hygiene. In the Mayo Sava Division, IRC distributed WASH kits to 2,271 persons, revamped 8 water point management committees and finalised the extension of the mini water supply network at the Kolofata village IDPs site which increased access to water for 750 people. In the Logone and Chari Division, Plan International distributed WASH kits to 768 beneficiaries³²⁶ including 581 women.

C: Maintaining the Voluntary Return Option

1029- Efforts made by authorities to restore relative peace in some areas resulted in the return of about 123,489 IDPs to their places of residence as at 31 December 2020 including 43,402 from the Logone and Chari Division, 30,882 from the Mayo Tsanaga Division, 35,420 from the Mayo Sava Division and 466 from the Diamaré Division.

³²⁴ In February 2020, PUI launched a project titled: Pro-resilience Action to tackle food and nutrition insecurity by addressing the roots causes of vulnerability in the East and Adamawa Regions.

³²⁵ In the villages of Madagascar and Mainani in the Kousseri Council and the villages of Blangoua 1, Ardebe, Sero Abou, Dondo, Tchitchina and Guelem in the Blangoua Council .

³²⁶ 257 IDPs and 24 refugees were recipients.

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§2: Managing IDPs of the North West and South West Regions

1030- A campaign to distribute a large donation of protective materials and equipment (masks, buckets with taps, rapid tests, soap, ventilators, etc.) was carried out across the 360 Sub-Divisions of the country in April 2020, and humanitarian assistance was granted to 100 IDP families from the North West and South West Regions living in Yaounde.

1031- Some 177 awareness raising campaigns on prevention and response to SGBV, organised with the support of the UNHCR reached 20,726 IDPs in these Regions and 4 SGBV advocacy interventions were conducted. Besides, 529 employee partners and community workers were trained on the prevention and response to SGBV while 310 awareness campaigns on SGBV (rape, forced marriages and survival sex were the main topics on the agenda) and Covid-19 were organised in small groups to respect protective measures.

1032- In 2020, IDPs in the North West Region were estimated at 232,238 and in the South West Region at 176,935. IDPs from the South West estimated at 143,240 and those from the North West estimated at 217,307 were able to return home.

SECTION 3: PURSUING THE REPATRIATION PROCESS OF CAMEROONIAN MIGRANTS

1033- The voluntary repatriation process of fellow Cameroonian in distress abroad which started in 2017, continued with the return of 124 migrants from Niger on July 2020 and 52 expelled from Algeria on 30 November of the same year. This operation was conducted by the Government in partnership with the International Organization for Migration (IOM) and the European Union under the *Trust Fund for the protection and reintegration of returnees to Cameroon* project. Upon arrival, former migrants underwent tests for Covid-19 and other diseases and were taken care of pending family reunions. They were hosted for 2 days and given transport fare to reunite with their families.

1034- At the end of the reference year, 4,439 migrants were welcomed. Women accounted for 17% and unaccompanied minors 8%. Among these returnees, 2,294 received funding for income generating activities, 1,372 were submitted to psychotherapy sessions, 310 received individu-

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al medical support and 73 received schooling assistance. Furthermore, 145 home visits were organised and 48 family tracing operations of unaccompanied minors carried out, 61 delivery kits distributed to pregnant women, 33 most disadvantaged people received livelihood support and over 45,000 persons were informed on the dangers of irregular migration.

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1035- In 2020, insufficient financial resources, the Covid-19 pandemic and crises affecting the Far North, South West and North West Regions were some challenges for the protection of the rights of refugees and IDPs. Nevertheless, with the support of partners, actions undertaken by public authorities made it possible to maintain access to basic social services as much as possible and to pursue the process of voluntary return of refugees to their countries of origin and the return home of Cameroonian migrants. To remarkably improve the living standards of these people, more lasting solutions have to be put in place for the return to peace in crisis areas and the pandemic has to decline significantly.



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CONCLUSION OF PART THREE

1036- The will of the Government to restore peace and social cohesion led to the implementation of the recommendations of the Major National Dialogue through the enactment of legal instruments and the adoption of strategies related to the reconstruction and development of crisis-stricken Regions. Likewise, Decree No.2020/193 of 15 April 2020 to commute and remit sentences made it possible to reduce prison overcrowding and to curb the spread of the coronavirus. The increase of the budget allocated to detainees' care contributed to improve the living conditions of inmates. The participatory approach and incentives to investment strengthened good governance, while the operation to update the State Payroll Database, controls, as well as administrative and judicial sanction of corruption and misappropriation of public property continued.

1037- The institutionalisation of gender in the NDS30 and the inclusion of women in conflict resolution reflects Government's will to protect their rights. In the same vein, the inauguration of the Multimedia Centre for persons with disabilities, the validation of the Plan of Action for the development of indigenous peoples and the enactment of a Decree to fix the coefficient for the upward revision of old-age and disability pensions as well as death benefits shows the State's concern for the rights of socially vulnerable persons. The rights of forcibly displaced persons were also guaranteed through multiple actions.

1038- Nevertheless, there are still challenges in guaranteeing the rights of the above-mentioned groups. These challenges include issuing birth certificates to children, the high number of street children, access to education for indigenous peoples, the low involvement of women in the management of public affairs which is reflected by the fact that there is no woman at the head of Regional Councils. Another challenge is the restoration of social stability.



GENERAL CONCLUSION



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1039- A general picture of Human Rights in Cameroon in 2020 reflects situation which includes issues of concern and satisfactory results.

1040- Regarding issues of concern, in addition to the security situation which remained precarious in the North West and South West Regions, the Covid-19 pandemic affected almost all spheres of the national life. It caused hundreds of human deaths and significantly modified the habits of people, who were henceforth compelled to systematically observe barrier measures. Healthwise, the pandemic put the health system and technical facilities of hospitals to the test. As regards the economy, it triggered a considerable drop in activity, particularly in the catering, hotel, leisure, transport and service sectors, thereby engendering a drop in public revenue and an increase in unemployment.

1041- In addition to these major points of concern, the issues of internally displaced persons, corruption and road accidents lingered despite efforts made by the Government to resolve them.

1042- With regard to satisfactory results, the Government adopted the National Development Strategy 2020-2030. This new instrument, which replaced the Growth and Employment Strategy Paper, is intended to structure the country's development policies.

1043- As a response to the health situation, the Government put in place a multisectoral strategy to fight coronavirus and allocated considerable funding to it. It produced convincing results till the end of the year, despite social discontent regarding management of the funds. This strategy, which was regularly evaluated and readjusted, was based on flexibility, progressiveness, realism and efficiency, with the Government's primary concern being to find the right balance between the life and health of the population on the one hand and the survival of the economy on the other. The various measures taken made it possible to limit the number of deaths, curb contagion, enhance the technical facilities of hospitals, save the school year by readjusting the school schedule, and gradually improve the national economy.

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1044- Above all, the Government continued to implement recommendations of the Major National Dialogue held in 2019, with a view to restore peace throughout the national territory, for the unity of the country. Thus, a Committee to follow-up the implementation of the said recommendations was set up, the Presidential Plan for the Reconstruction and Development of the North West and South West Regions was established and operationalised, and the Special Programme for the Reconstruction of the Far North Region was launched.

1045- Moreover, diplomatic activities continued despite disruptions. The State was thus able, among other things, to defend before the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights, on 23 November 2020, by video conference, its 4th, 5th and 6th periodic reports under the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights and its initial reports under the Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa and the African Union Convention for the Protection and Assistance of Internally Displaced Persons in Africa.

1046- Normative activities were not left aside. Indeed, Cameroon ratified several international and regional legal instruments, including the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography; the Statute of the Organisation for Women Development in the OIC Member States; the African Union Convention on Preventing and Combating Corruption; and the African Continental Free Trade Area (ACFTA) Agreement. At the national level, important instruments were adopted, including Law No. 2020/11 of 20 July 2020 to regulate artistic and cultural associations.

1047- Furthermore, the process of decentralisation was completed by the reorganisation of some pre-existing Bodies (such as the National Decentralisation Board and the Inter-ministerial Committee on Local Services), the operationalisation of some institutions that had remained dormant until then (Regional Councils and Public Independent Conciliators), the creation of a new institution to support decentralisation (the National School of Local Administration), all of which was completed by an increase in the General Decentralisation Budget. In the same vein, political competition was guaranteed with the organisation of elections of Members of the National Assembly and municipal councillors.

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1048- In addition, the Government was concerned about the situation of vulnerable persons. Thus, by Decree No. 2020/193 of 15 April 2020 to commute and remit sentences, the President of the Republic granted collective pardon to several detainees, which contributed to massively decongest prisons and facilitate implementation of barrier measures.

1049- Overall, as usual, all Government structures were mobilised to ensure the implementation of Human Rights in their respective sectors of activity.

1050- In fact, the State of Cameroon did not neglect any aspect of Human Rights. It ensured, within available means and with the support of its partners, the enjoyment and exercise of civil and political rights, economic, social and cultural rights, and the rights of vulnerable categories. On the whole, despite obvious constraints, the State was resilient in the promotion and protection of Human Rights on its territory in 2020.



APPENDIX



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The following institutions contributed in preparing this Report: the UNHCR, 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 State Audit Office (CONSUPE);
- Ministry of Arts and Culture (MINAC);
- Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development (MINADER);
- Ministry of Social Affairs (MINAS);
- Ministry of Territorial Administration (MINAT);
- Ministry of Communication (MINCOM);
- Ministry of Trade (MINCOMMERCE);
- Ministry of State Property, Survey and Land Tenure (MINCAF);
- Ministry of Defence (MINDEF);
- Ministry of Basic Education (MINEDUB);
- Ministry of Water Resources and Energy (MINEE);
- Ministry of Employment and Vocational Training (MINEFOP);
- Ministry of Economy, Planning and Regional Development (MINEPAT);
- Minister of Environment, Nature Protection and Sustainable Development (MINEPDED);
- Ministry of Livestock, Fisheries and Animal Industries (MINEPIA);
- Ministry of Secondary Education (MINESEC);
- Ministry of Higher Education (MINESUP);
- Ministry of Finance (MINFI);
- Ministry of Public Service and Administrative Reform (MINFOPRA);
- Ministry of Housing and Urban Development (MINHDU);
- Ministry of Youth Affairs and Civic Education (MINJEC);
- Ministry of Justice (MINJUSTICE);
- Ministry of Public Contracts (MINMAP);
- Ministry of Mines, Industry and Technological Development (MINMIDT);
- Ministry of Small and Medium-sized Enterprises, Social Economy and Handicrafts (MINPMEESA);
- Ministry of External Relations (MINREX);
- Ministry of Public Health (MINSANTE);

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- Ministry of Tourism and Leisure (MINTOUL);
- Ministry of Labour and Social Security (MINTSS);
- Ministry of Posts and Telecommunications (MINPOSTEL);
- Ministry of Women's Empowerment and the Family (MINPROFF);
- Ministry of Scientific Research and Innovation (MINRESI);
- Ministry of Decentralization and Local Development (MINDDEVEL);
- General Delegation for National Security (DGSN);
- General Delegation for External Research (DGRE);
- Secretariat of State In Charge of the National Gendarmerie (SED);
- Supreme Court;
- Special Criminal Court
- The 10 Courts of Appeal;
- Administrative Courts.

Independent Administrative Institutions and Public and Semi Public Establishments

- National Financial Investigation (ANIF);
- Standards and Quality Agency (ANOR);
- National Agency for Information and Communication Technologies (ANTIC)
- Investment Promotion Agency (IPA);
- Cameroon Water Utilities (CAMWATER);
- National Committee for the Fight against AIDS (CNLS);
- National Social Insurance Fund (NSIF);
- National Anti-Corruption Commission (CONAC);
- Cameroon Human Rights Commission (CHRC);
- National Communication Council (NCC);
- Elections Cameroon (ELECAM);
- National Fund for Youth Integration (FONIJ);
- Urban and Rural Land Development Authority (MAETUR);
- Consumer Product Supply Regulatory Authority (MIRAP);
- National Community-Driven Development Programme (PNDP);
- Institute of Agricultural Research for Development (IRAD);
- National Civil Status Registration Office (BUNEC);
- National Commission for the Promotion of Bilingualism and Multiculturalism (NCPBM);

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- National Disarmament, Demobilization and Rehabilitation Committee (NDDRC);
- Cameroon Housing Corporation (SIC);
- Cameroon Housing Loan Fund (CFC);

International Organizations and Civil Society

- United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR-Cameroon);
- Mbororo Social and Cultural Development Association (MBOSCUDA);
- Young Men's Christian Association.
- *Nouveaux Droits de l'Homme (NDH)-Cameroun*
- United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN Women);

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