



# **EDUCATION REFORMS IN CAMEROON: ISSUES AND CHALLENGES**

**Stephen MFORTEH**  
([stephenmforteh@gmail.com](mailto:stephenmforteh@gmail.com))

**Gaston BESSALA**  
([gastonbessala@gmail.com](mailto:gastonbessala@gmail.com))

# INTRODUCTION

- Directeur Général de l'Enseignement Supérieur, Ministère de l'Enseignement Supérieur et de la Recherche Scientifique, pour le Conseil Consultatif de l'Enseignement Supérieur et de la Recherche Scientifique

# AFRICA



# INTRODUCTION CONT.



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- With a population of nearly 28.37 million inhabitants according to World Bank data, 70% of the population speaks French while 30% speaks English. There's middle group of bilinguals
- There are 3 levels of the education chain/headed by ministers:
  - ✓ basic education,
  - ✓ secondary education,
  - ✓ higher education.

## NUMBER OF STUDENTS PER LEVEL (SIGE 2020-2022. FIGURES IN “00”)

Niveau d'étude	2019/2020		2020/2021		2021/2022	
Sans niveau d'étude	636	1,2%	385	0,7%	505	0,8%
Education primaire	9 482	18,0%	10 799	19,2%	16 329	27,4%
Premier cycle de l'enseignement secondaire général	13 332	25,3%	15 734	27,9%	13 210	22,2%
Premier cycle de l'enseignement secondaire technique	3 937	7,5%	2 736	4,9%	7 663	12,9%
Second cycle de l'enseignement secondaire général	14 324	27,1%	16 089	28,6%	10 366	17,4%
Second cycle de l'enseignement secondaire technique	3 502	6,6%	2 752	4,9%	2 701	4,5%
Enseignement supérieur	7 580	14,4%	7 841	13,9%	8 783	14,7%
<b>Total general</b>	<b>52 792</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>56 335</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>59 557</b>	<b>100%</b>

Source : SIGE

# NUMBER OF SCHOOLS IN CAMEROON

Niveau d'enseignement	Enseignement public	Enseignement Privé	Total
Primaire	14 000	8000	22000
Secondaire	3000	1500	4500
Supérieur	11 universités d'Etat	430 IPES	441
Centre de formation professionnelle	400	800	1200

# EVOLUTION OF EDUCATION IN CAMEROON

- Following the bi-cultural nature of the country, the educational system is subdivided into Anglophone and Francophone sub-systems, which confer a bicultural option as mentioned by the education orientation law of April 14, 1998. These sub-systems each have their own pedagogical methods of evaluation and certification.
- According to Cameroon's National Development Strategy 2030 (SND30), the issues of education are crucial for the socio-economic development of the country.
- The SND30 emphasizes that education is an essential lever for improving competitiveness, productivity, and socio-professional integration of young Cameroonians.



# EVOLUTION OF EDUCATION IN CAMEROON (CONT.)

- The Cameroonian educational system developed within the logic of this dual cultural heritage and the Educational programs and policies have often been designed to respect this reality.
- According to the INS (2022), the "development of the Cameroonian educational system is dependent on the context in which it evolves.
- Crucial considerations for the implementation of reforms in education include: demographic, social, security data, macroeconomic, financial, and legal factors.

# DEMOGRAPHIC FACTOR

- According to the INS (2022), the Cameroonian population has a broad base, indicating continuous growth pyramid.  
Learners under 15 years (43%);
- the population of learners between (4-23 years) represents 53% of the population seeking quality education and training." (INS 2022: 21).

# SOCIAL AND SECURITY FACTORS

- The Human Capital Index (HCI) dropped from 0.410 in 2012 to 0.398 in 2022, reflecting a decline in the quality of education.
- Given that access to decent employment decreases with the level of education, there is a "deep mismatch between training and the labor market demand, which currently relies mainly on unskilled labour." (INS, 2022).
- Security crises in the Northwest, Southwest (secessionists), and in the northern regions (the Boko Haram sect) disrupt the Cameroonian educational system.

# MACRO ECONOMIC FACTOR

- The INS report notes "an irregular evolution of the GDP growth rate from 4% in 2018, a 0.3% drop in 2020, followed by a negligible rise to 4.2% in 2022.
- The general price level increased from 1.1% in 2018, to 2.3% in 2020, 2.5 % in 2021 and 6.3% in 2022.
- The inflation rate of 2022 was the highest since 1995 thus affecting households' ability to send their children to school as household expenses tightened. (INS 2022: 22).

# FUNDING FACTOR

- "During the period 2019-2022, the national budget for education (excluding debt) increased to 19.43% in 2021 but fell to (18.27%) in 2022

**N.B.** This was below the 20% recommended by International partners in the education sector.

- Consequence: family funding of primary education stood at 31% and 21% at the secondary education
- Conclusion: since then, school is not free in Cameroon. Families provide textbooks, school supplies, pay for complementary courses, uniforms, examination fees, and PTA levies

This state of affairs leads us to the issues and challenges in reforming education in Cameroon.

# THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK USED

We'll base our discussion on the systemic approach projected by De Rosnay (1975) and its subsequent enrichment by other researchers.

- The systemic approach is perceived as the sum of the factors to be activated for the reforms initiated to yield satisfactory results.
- Furthermore, the Systems theory acts as the sum of the efforts that the education stakeholders mobilize for the reform of the educational system in Cameroon in order "to promote an educational system in which every young graduate is socially integrated, bilingual, competent in a crucial area for the country's development, and aware of what they must do to contribute to the development." (SND30, p.10)

# CHALLENGES

## **Access**

- Reducing regional and socio-economic disparities, notably between urban and rural areas, and promoting an inclusive educational policy.
- Maintaining free primary education announced/ projected since school year 2000-2001 school year
- Reducing to the minimum, household participation in financing schooling.

# CHALLENGES: ACCESS CONT

- In rural areas, inequalities are more pronounced, particularly regarding access to education for girls and boys as a result of poverty.
- Disparities in the distribution of infrastructure and human resources between regions are significant)
- Inclusive education is a big challenge in Cameroon. Assistance from international organization and NGOs is available @ 50% )



# CHALLENGES: ACCESS CONT

- Developing tools and pedagogical resources (materials in Braille, accessible digital tools, and individualized learning programs) remain a major challenge
- Regular evaluation and continuous adaptation of educational programs and policies and the professionalization of curricula.
- Identification of areas for improvement and the implementation of targeted strategies to enhance the educational system.

# CHALLENGES RELATED TO GOVERNANCE

Better management of personnel, particularly by instituting incentives and

Better distribution of educational infrastructure across the national territory,

Complete transfer/decentralization resources,

The promotion of private investment in the education sector.

# EDUCATIONAL POLICIES

The challenge of enhancing the global vision in the short, medium, and long term in accordance with the prescription given by international bodies in order to produce educational goods in the formal and informal sectors.

# EDUCATIONAL POLICIES

- Policy makers' laxity in the coordination of different actors and institutions involved in the educational system. No coherence in the prescription and execution of set rules
- Insufficient evaluation and monitoring mechanisms

# MANAGEMENT OF HUMAN RESOURCES

- Inadequate distribution of teaching staff across the national territory.
- The challenge to transform curricula and school programs to reduce the gap between training and the labor market.

# CHALLENGES RELATED TO FUNDING

- As in most African countries, funding for education is insufficient. Less than 20% of the national budget is put for education as recommended by the AU (AU, 2024, p.2).
- Challenge to mobilize new funding sources (civil society and private sector partners, NGOs) .
- Challenge to enhance collaboration among African countries (South - South collaboration).

# OTHER CHALLENGES

- The mismatch between educational policies and socio-cultural and economic realities. Copy and paste of models
- The geometric progression of training demands/needs.
- Security crises and union demands, such as the OTS movement, which hinder the proper conduct of teaching.
- The decline in student performance.

# SOME SOLUTIONS

- The creation, by decree No. 134/PM of December 10, 2018, of the Education Reform Support Program (Programme d'Appui à la Réforme de l'Éducation au Cameroun): with objectives that include "improving the allocation of teachers recruited by the government in public primary schools; strengthening teachers' capacities to effectively and efficiently use new curricula; increasing the availability of essential textbooks in public primary schools; developing preschool education in rural areas; systematizing the evaluation of academic achievements in primary and lower secondary education; improving the environment and quality of education in primary schools in refugee and internally displaced persons' host areas; improving school performance through Performance-Based Funding." (PAREC, June 22, 2020).



# **SOLUTIONS CONT**

- The establishment of the SIGE (Educational Management Information System) platform which provides all available statistical data in the education sector in Cameroon.
- The National strategy document for the education and training sector in line with SND30, which defines essential points for better management of the educational system in Cameroon.

# SOLUTIONS END

To support the country's industrialization, the government plans to structure its development policy around human capital focusing on education, training, and employability (SND30, 2020, p.82).

# **THANKS VOTE OF**

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