

REPUBLIC OF CAMEROON
MINISTRY OF ECONOMY, PLANNING
AND REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT



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THE AFRICAN CAPACITY BUILDING FOUNDATION | FONDATION POUR LE RENFORCEMENT DES CAPACITES EN AFRIQUE

WHICH SCHOOL FOR CAMEROON'S EMERGENCE?

A reflection based on a choice streamlining approach

The urgent need to break away

Review Series #13



January 2023

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BRIEF NOTE ON ECONOMIC POLICY

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*A REFLECTION BASED ON A CHOICE
STREAMLINING APPROACH*

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ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

ACBF	African Capacity Building Foundation
AfDB	African Development Bank
ART	Telecommunication Regulatory Board
AU	African Union
BEPC	Brevet d'Etudes du Premier Cycle
BUCREP	Central Bureau of the Census and Population Studies
CAMERCAP-PARC	Cameroon Policy and Research Center
CAPIEMP	Pre-primary and Primary Teachers Grade I Certificate
CAPIET	Technical Teachers Grade I Certificate
CEI	Cours Élémentaire Première Année
CEII	Cours Élémentaire Deuxième Année
CEMAC	Economic and Monetary Community of Central Africa
CEP	Certificat d'Etudes Primaires
CESA	Continental Education Strategy for Africa
CMI I	Cours Moyen Première Année
CMI II	Cours Moyen Deuxième Année
COVID-19	Coronavirus Disease 2019
CP	Cours Préparatoire
CPS	Cours Préparatoire Spécial
CTD	Decentralized Territorial Authorities
DGB	Directorate General for Budget
DIPCO	Guidance Counselor Diploma
DIPES I	Secondary School Teachers Grade I Diploma
DIPES II	Secondary School Teachers Grade II Diploma
EESI	Survey on Employment and the Informal Sector
ELAN-Afrique	School and national languages in Africa
ENIEG	General Education Teachers Training School
ENIET	Technical Education Teachers Training School
ENS	Higher Teachers Training College
FSLC	First School Leaving Certificate
GCE AL	General Certificate of Education Advanced Level

GCE OL	General Certificate of Education Ordinary Level
GESP	Growth and Employment Strategy Paper
HIMO	High Labor Intensive
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
IDRC	International Development Research Centre
INC	National Institute of Cartography
MCQ	Multiple Choice Questions
MDG	Millennium Development Goals
MINEDUB	Ministry of Basic Education
MINEFOP	Ministry of Employment and Vocational Training
MINEPAT	Ministry of Economy, Planning and Regional Development
MINESEC	Ministry of Secondary Education
MINESUP	Ministry of Higher Education
MINFI	Ministry of Finance
MINJEC	Ministry of Youth and Civic Education
NDS30	National Development Strategy 2030
NIS	National Institute of Statistics
NIS	National Innovation System
NOSO	North-West, South-West
OECD	Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development
OTA	“On a Trop Attendu”
OTS	“On a Trop Supporté”
PANEJ	National Action Plan for Youth Employment
RGPH	General Census of Population and Housing
SDG	Sustainable Development Goals
SES	Economic and Social Sciences
SIL	Section for Linguistic Initiation
SSET	Sector Strategy on Education and Training
STEM	Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics
STI	Sciences and Technology Innovation
TFP	Technical and Financial Partners
UNESCO	United Nations Organization for Education, Science and Culture
UN	United Nations

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COULD OUR SCHOOL THINK THAT WAY?

■ PREFACE

LET US NOT VINDICATE AFRO-PESSIMISTS!

Many intellectuals and personalities portrayed as afro-pessimists have placed Africa on a banner and predicted that mankind's redemption would stem from the cradle of humanity. However, others rightly or wrongly deem the African continent poorly equipped to achieve its development goals. They are called afro-pessimists.

Contrary to what people may think, afro-pessimists are also found among African nationals. One of them is Axelle Kabou, a female Cameroonian born franco-senegalese journalist, author and specialist in development issues, whose book "***Et si l'Afrique refusait le développement***" stimulated much attention. During an interview granted in France, she was asked: "*In 2050, Africa will have a quarter of the world active population. Don't you think it is a tremendous lever to create wealth?*" She said: "*No, because Africa does not have the required bedrock. The dimension of knowledge, science and education is very weak. For a knowledge exploitation process to be put in place, a few decades will not be enough.*"

Others, before her, expressed strong pessimism about Africa's development. In his book entitled "***L'Afrique noire est mal partie***" published in 1962, René Dumont methodically identifies the shortcomings of the African continent, corruption, the consequences of decolonization, and his diagnostic has most often been relevant. It is also worth mentioning the book entitled "***Afin de détruire un peuple, il faut d'abord détruire ses racines***"¹, written by Alexandre Soljenitsyne. The list cannot be exhaustive.

A Bantu wisdom says "*Too much advice eventually made the lizard deaf*". In other words, too many ingredients make the food unpalatable and hence "hard to eat". By adopting a mathematical approach and by replicating this premise in the education sector, we can dare make the following inference in the interrogative form: what if the inefficiency of our education system was due to the overabundance of teaching subjects? African education systems? This inefficiency seems to be the reason for the difficult take-off of Africa.

1 - Publication entitled "L'Archipel du Goulag" literary investigation essay; 1973

This is the main premise of this study that combines both normative and exploratory approaches.

And yet, since independence, the education and training sector has always been presented as one of the country's priorities. With nearly 15% of the national budget and the largest number of personnel in the Cameroonian public service, the political will of the Government is no longer to be expected. **But what is preventing the real take-off of the education/training sector in Cameroon?** The question has remained pending and topical for decades.

With a predominantly young population², increasingly educated and opened to the world through ICT³, is the fire not simmering under the ashes? Overtime, is Cameroon not forming a volcano under the water? With one of the highest school enrolment rates in Africa⁴, and with thousands of graduates from the education system every year, but who cannot find decent jobs, Cameroon has an extremely high under employment rate of university graduates, or 73.1% for youths aged 14 to 34 years according to the National Institute of Statistics (NIS), following the Employment and Informal Sector Survey (EESI 3).

The team of the Cameroon Policy Analysis and Research Center (CAMERCAP-PARC) has raised the question differently: ***What if the problem lies on the quality, the quantity and the combination of school curricula existing in our country since independence? Was the model inherited from colonization aimed at liberating African peoples and putting them on the track of inclusive and sustainable development? However, can this model still be warranted in 2022/2023?***

2 - Based on projections by BUCREP and from the data of the 3rd General Population and Housing Census in 2005, youths aged less than 15 years account for 43% of the entire population. The proportion of the young population aged between 15 to 35 years is 36.28%.

3 - According to the NIS, the penetration rate of ICT in Cameroon is 83% in 2016 whereas according to ART, the penetration rate rose from 0.24% in 2011 to 35.64% in 2017;

4 - According to UNESCO, the literacy rate of persons aged 15 years and above is 77.1% in 2018/2019

Irrespective of how this issue will be discussed, the conclusion is obvious : **there is an urgency to break away**. This is what this study is striving to suggest.

While leaving it to specialists in education sciences and educational technologies, as well as to teachers to go to the bottom of teaching curricula, this study has a specific interest: posing the problem and sounding the alarm bell, in a language that is accessible to all, and especially to beneficiaries of school, namely students, parents and users of the products of the Sector

Strategy for Education and Training in Cameroon. All of this is to ensure the advent of “the right time”, that of the real take-off towards emergence. /-

Barnabé OKOUDA,
Executive Director

■ INTRODUCTION

In 2009, Cameroon launched a large and ambitious development program dubbed : **VISION 2035** with the following main objectives: (i) Reduce poverty to a socially acceptable level; (ii) Reach the status of middle-income country; (iii) Become a New Industrialized Country; and (iv) Foster the democratic process and reinforce national unity. Spread out over three phases, the first, set out in the Growth and Employment Strategy Paper (GESP) (2010-2019), had the overall objective of modernizing the economy and accelerating growth. However, the results were mixed. This is why the National Development Strategy, NDS30 (2020-2030), second phase of the VISION, aims not only to make up for the delays recorded during the implementation of the GESP, but also and above all to consolidate the essential and necessary foundations for achieving the third phase, during which the expected emergence should take place.

To do this, the NDS30 is hinged on 04 main pillars: (i) The major transformation of the economy; (ii) The development of human capital and well-being; (iii) The promotion of employment and economic insertion; and (iv) Governance, decentralization and the strategic management of the State.

To this end, the second pillar of this development strategy requires an adequate availability of human resources. And this is where the Sector Strategy for Education and Training (SSET) serves as the mould of these required capacities and skills.

In fact, despite the recent reforms focused on skills, the Cameroonian education system is still struggling to send out graduates that can meet current challenges. It is mostly centered on delivering diplomas and appears today as being on the fringe and out of step with current needs, unable to effectively and appropriately contribute to the achievement of development programs. This situation therefore compromises the respect of commitments made at the regional level (Agenda 2063 of the African Union) and the global Agenda 2030 of the United Nations for Sustainable Development Goals (SDG). In plain language, it is regarded as being archaic and inadequate.

Beside this internal crisis that is affecting the education system due to its obsolescence, it is worth noting that it is also facing many other crises that can be described as external, including in particular: (i) the security crisis (since January 2015) in the north due to exactions committed by the Boko Haram sect; (ii) the socio-political crisis (since October 2016) in the English-speaking regions (North-West and South-West); the COVID-19 health crisis (started in March 2020)⁵; (iii) the Russian-Ukrainian crisis (February 2022) and its impact on the economy; not leaving out frequent natural disasters (floods, landslide, drought, etc.) that affect the populations of the northern part of the country and elsewhere.

In view of this series of crises that directly or indirectly affect the Cameroonian education system, the Government adopted and implemented, in 2021 with the support of Technical Financial Partners, the Presidential Plan for the Reconstruction of the North-West, the South-West and the Far-North. The same year, the Government also launched the *National Crisis Management Harmonized Plan for the Development and Resilience of the Cameroonian Education System*.

There is no doubt that these actions contribute to making the Cameroonian education system resilient. However the issue of the inadequacy of the education system to the country's development needs must be addressed at the core.

It is for this reason that CAMERCAP-PARC has initiated this study as a contribution to the analysis and formulation of public policies in the education/training sector. This study aims at making a diagnosis of the envisioned Cameroonian education system in the face of (local and national) development needs; and tries to map out ways in which the breakaway should take place to achieve the emergence of Cameroon in the expected timeframe.

Our purpose is not to revisit the Sector Strategy on Education and Training that is the purview of competent authorities.

⁵ - Despite the resurgence of cholera in the northern regions of the country, we are witnessing an improvement of the epidemiologic situation.

But our role as strategic watchdog prompts us to delve into the efficiency aimed by the education system from the foundation represented by school curricula.

This sector policy note is thus hinged on four (04) main axis that address the following points: (i) Purpose of school in a developing country like Cameroon; (ii) Development agenda and products of schools; (iii) Needs in skills for emergence; (iv) and possible solutions by way of suggestions to the Government and to other public authorities.

The role and the mission of a Think Tank like CAMERCAP-PARC is to create connections to authorities, from elaborated knowledge. It is now up to the Government, its branches and its partners, to take action.

Chapter 1:

THE PURPOSE OF SCHOOL IN A DEVELOPING COUNTRY⁶

The Chinese wise man, Lao Tseu, once said: "Give a man a fish, and he will eat for a day; teach him how to catch a fish, and he will eat for a lifetime." This is what the school should be about. While it is "an institution in which collective, general or specialized education is offered (...)"⁷ ; it is worth underlining that it is also "an establishment where collective general education is offered »

Referring to these two definitions, we can say that the school is an establishment in charge of providing general or specialized teaching, coupled with education to children of school age without any form of discrimination. It aims at bringing up a citizen who enjoys intellectual autonomy, by training him through teachings.

Moreover, education (as distinguished from teaching⁸) is the process by which an individual acquires learning (knowledge), know-how (expertise) and soft skills (values) in order to empower the individual by preparing him to tame the nature and transform his environment, with the aim of improving his living conditions without compromising the future generations. We henceforth talk about sustainable development (SDG in Agenda 2030).

Thus, education, as a reference and modelling framework of standards in terms of constituted knowledge and shared values, makes life in a group or in the society possible. As an instrument for training and a tool for transmission, it is the means by which man achieves his social integration and promotion for his personal development.

By adopting the capacity building approach in its four (04) dimensions⁹, education appears as the main

venue and foundation of all these dimensions. For, it is education that equips individuals with the essential and fundamental aptitude to develop awareness and creativity; the ability to understand and transform their environment.

This knowledge is mainly acquired in school, but also in the family and/or in religious and socio-cultural institutions. We cannot speak of sustainable development, therefore of social progress, without human progress, and consequently without educated people.

Education contributes to develop man and the society in which he lives. It is therefore the key to the progress of Nations because it helps transform man by initiating him to values such as work, love, justice, peace, etc. It is therefore the backbone of the society because it strives to perfect man. The development agenda of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) thus views education as the driver that guides any development action, or even the essential condition that allows the other goals to be achieved.

1.1. Overview of the missions of the education system in Cameroon

Law No.98/004 OF 4 APRIL 1998 to lay down guidelines for education in Cameroon, stipulates: "Education is a major national priority of the State. It is provided by the State and private partners who contribute to the provision of education. And bilingualism is enshrined at all levels of education as a factor of unity and national integration." As such, education in Cameroon according to the said law has the following main missions :

6 - Drawn from the study published in 2018 by CAMERCAP-PARC on the evaluation of capacity building needs in view of the structural transformation of the Cameroonian economy

7 - Le Robert 2003

8 - Knowledge acquisition process

9 - Institutional - Organizational - Human Capital - Socio-cultural entrenchment

- | | |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) Train citizens ingrained in their culture, but open to the world and respectful of general interest and common good; (ii) Teach great universal ethical values namely dignity and honor, honesty and integrity as well as the sense of discipline; (iii) Provide education to family life; (iv) Promote national languages ; (v) Intitiate to culture and to the practice of democracy, to the respect for human rights and liberties, justice and tolerance ; to the fight against all forms of discrimination, to the love of peace and dialogue, to civic responsibility and the promotion of regional and sub-regional integration; | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (vi) Promote the culture of effort and work well done, the quest for excellence and the spirit of partnership; (vii) Develop creativity, the sense of initiative and the spirit of entrepreneurship ; physical, sport, artistic, and cultural training of the child, and; (viii) Promote hygiene and education to health. |
|---|---|

The State ensures the right to education of its citizens. In this regard, school is obligatory and free in the primary level. However, this free education, which was proclaimed two decades ago, is not yet a reality in view of the costs (which are sometimes exorbitant) charged to parents.

Textbox 1 : Bilingualism in the education system: between ambitions and illusions

According to the constitution, Cameroon is a unitary State in which French and English have an equal value. The law to lay down guidelines for education perfectly reflects this feature and the recommendations of the National Major Dialogue do not deviate from it. However, in actual fact the reality is something else entirely. In fact, there are “bilingual schools” but this bilingualism is just a window dressing. It is rather just a coexistence in the same compound (school complex, primary school, college or high school) of two subsystems: the anglophone section, the francophone section and more recently in the secondary francophone education of a class called “bilingual” (BIL). Mindful of the characteristics of each subsystem, it is worth underlining that in this configuration, the State is training three types of citizens: (i) the anglophone; (ii) the francophone; (ii) and the other one called bilingual midway between the first two. Upon graduation from the system, these three types of citizens do not have the same skills. As illustration, when a student of the English subsystem is asked about the date of Cameroon’s independence, he says “October 1, 1961”, while the student of the French subsystem says “January 1, 1960”. All of this is ambiguous!

Source : CAMERCAP-PARC

1.2. The financing of education and training in Cameroon

Financing therefore plays an important role in the implementation of the Sector Strategy for Education and Training (SSET) which has been a priority since the PRSP, then the GESP and now the NDS30. Although the State shares the responsibility for the education of its citizens, which is a fundamental and essential right for the achievement of SDG (more

specifically SDG4 with respect to education) with stakeholders of the private sector, it is judicious to examine the role that this sector plays in the country’s budgetary policy, through the following ministerial departments: MINEDUB, MINESEC, MINESUP, and MINEFOP. It should be noted that although MINJEC provides training to youths, it is not included insofar as its mission is more related to accompanying young people.

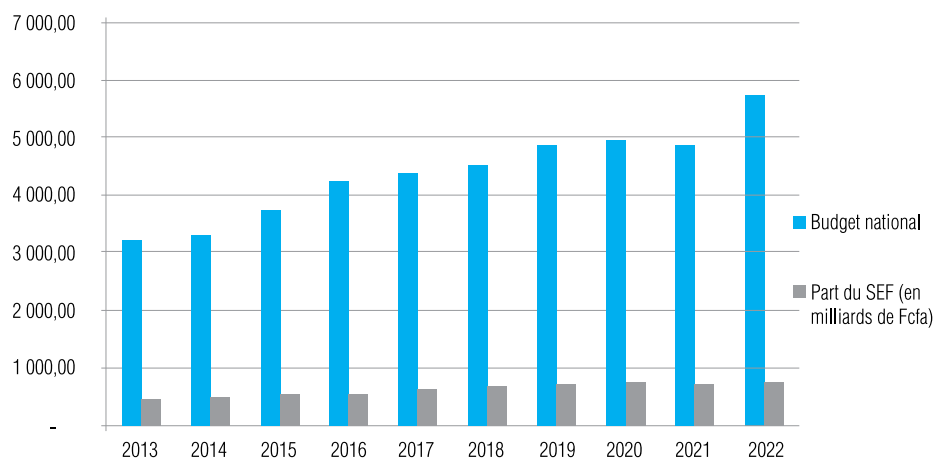
Table 1 : Evolution of the financing of education in Cameroon over the last 10 years (in billions of CFA francs)

Years	National budget	MINEDUB budget	MINESEC budget	MINESUP budget	MINEFOP budget	Ratio of the Education/ Training sector (in %)
2013	3 236.0	171,118	220,161	48,201	13,236	13.98
2014	3 312.0	174, 580	232, 628	49,252	16,477	14.27
2015	3 746.6	188, 583	251, 478	51, 944	19,185	13.64
2016	4 237.7	206, 160	246 ,068	47, 644	18,724	12.23
2017	4 373.8	222,123	318,997	67,654	17,776	14.32
2018	4 513.5	210,553	365,212	61,401	20,723	14.57
2019	4 850.5	226,056	393,079	55,952	20,587	14.34
2020	4 951.7	235,315	404,935	65,228	19,319	14.63
2021	4 865.2	232,742	386,954	57,545	19,013	14.31
2022	5 752.4	244,034	400,267	63,934	21,446	12.68
AVERAGE						13.89

Source : MINFI-DGB/CAMERCAP-PARC

The above table shows that the budgetary ratio of the Education and Training Sector over the last 10 years fluctuates between 12% and 15% of the national budget. This means an average of about 14% over the period under review, which is still quite far from the 20% recommended by UNESCO ¹⁰.

This ratio, which is uneven, could be justified by the various security and socio-political crises rocking the country, including the currency crisis (2016) in the CEMAC sub-region and the belated effects of the COVID-19 crisis, as well as the budgetary collective following the Russian-Ukrainian crisis in 2022.

Chart 1 : Share of the education and training sector in the national budget (in billions of CFA francs)

Source : MINFI-DGB/CAMERCAP-PARC

¹⁰ - According to the Jomtien declaration

The demand for education is growing, given the structure of its predominantly young population, and the budget allocated is clearly insufficient to provide adequate education. Thus, despite the private sector's contribution, the State is still struggling to meet the demand for the education of its citizens. This is illustrated by the lack of infrastructures to accommodate students, the absence of teaching material, the non-recruitment of graduates from **ENIEG and ENIET**, or by the delays in paying arrears owed to teachers¹², It is a curious paradox that a country lacks teachers¹³ at work, while trained teachers are unemployed!

12 - EcoMation newspaper No 570 of 31 October 2022 reveals that in the North Region, over 400 pupils are attending classes in the same classroom at the Ngoumi Government School.

13 - Protest actions by OTS and OTA started in 2022, and recurrent calls for strike are the expression of scarcity of financing in the education sector

CHAPTER 2:

DEVELOPMENT AGENDAS AND THE PRODUCTS OF SCHOOLS IN CAMEROON

Education plays an essential role in the progress of societies through the achievement of development agendas to which the country has subscribed :

- **At the international level:** UN Agenda 2030 of the Sustainable Development Goals;
- **At the continental level :** Agenda 2063 of the African Union “*the Africa we want*”; and
- **At the national level:** Cameroon Vision 2035, through its second phase which is the NDS30.

2.1. At the international level : Agenda 2030 of the Sustainable Development Goals¹⁴

In September 2015, the United Nations General Assembly adopted a new development program following the MDG. It sets a new agenda called Sustainable Development Goals: over the period 2016-2030, based on the slogan “**No one Behind**”. In other words, the ideal of living in a world that is socially equitable, economically viable and without compromising future generations.

In this context, SDG4 aims **to ensure equal access to quality education for all and to promote lifetime learning possibilities**; it is supported by four targets and three implementation modalities.

Agenda 2030 therefore sees education/training as an excellent means for acquiring knowledge. However, it goes further, no longer limiting itself to education or training in the classical sense, but moving on to a more important stage: **skill**. The latter combines knowledge, know-how and life skills. For the United Nations, it is necessary to give privilege and better advance toward skills, in order to achieve set goals.

14 - United Nations

2.2. At the regional level : Agenda 2063¹⁵ : of the African Union

At the regional level, the African Union has adopted its Agenda 2030 (the first decade of which, 2014-2024, is reflected in the **Continental Education Strategy for Africa-CESA 16-25**). In this medium term plan, the pan-African organization reaffirms the role of education and training in raising the employability rate of African youths. The goals below have been formulated as follows :

- **Priority to youth and employment :** reinforce technical and vocational education and training in line with the labor market in order to improve the skills and capacities profile, youth employability and entrepreneurship and bridge the skills gap across the continent; and
- **Youths as drivers of Africa’s renaissance:** countries are adopting strategies to fight youth unemployment and under-employment [...] harmonize curricula, standards, programs and qualification and raise the level of higher education in order to promote the mobility of youths and talents across the continent by 2025.

The AU Agenda 2063 underlines the importance of STI (Science, Technology, and Innovation). The commitment was expressed by the adoption of the 10-year strategy for the STISA-2024 during the 23rd Ordinary session of the Summit of AU Heads of States and Government in June 2014.

To this end, for the AU: (i) Sciences, Technology and Innovation (STI) are known today as the key factor of economic development and social progress; and (ii) innovation, going beyond research, is essential to transform scientific or empirical knowledge and technological know-how into everyday products, services, and jobs consumed by people.

15 - African Union, “The Africa we want” 2013

The African Union, through its Agenda dubbed “**The Africa we want**”, therefore wishes to make development and integration in Africa a reality, and this necessarily involves, as we have seen, through some of these goals, the promotion of classical skills, but also and above all new skills.

2.3. At the national level: the National Development Strategy 2020-2030

At the national level, Cameroon has adopted a large development program outlined in the Vision 2035 whose aspiration is “**Cameroon: an emergent, democratic country united in its diversity**”. During the first decade implemented within the framework of the Growth and Employment Strategy Paper, the country planned to reduce unemployment by creating new jobs deriving from the effects of economic growth. Unfortunately, the results were mixed including in the education/training sector.

Thus, in order to address the tardiness incurred at the end of the GESP, the country adopted a new economic compass in 2021 that aims to put the country back on the track of emergence: the National Development Strategy 2030.

a. *The pillars of the NDS30*

The NDS30 is hinged on four pillars: (i) **the structural transformation of the economy**; (ii) **the development of human capital and well-being for the availability of quality human resources endowed with required essential competence**; (iii) **The promotion of employment and socio-economic integration which is the active mechanism by which wealth is redistributed**; and (iv) **the governance, decentralization and strategic management of the State**.

To these pillars, it is worth adding sector priorities.

b. *The sector priorities of the 2nd phase of Vision 2035*

The sector priorities of the second phase revolve around skills acquisition. They include: (i) mastery and popularization of low-tech industry; (ii) implementing a support program

for national champions in specific sectors like agro-industry, timber, textile, mines; (iii) creating special economic zones; (iv) setting up a National Innovation System (NIS); and setting up an export promotion bank.

The above sector priorities, already shape the sectors and skills expected for the structural transformation of the economy. This requires a good specialized education.

c. *Sector priorities with respect to education and vocational training*

In the area of education, authorities wish to direct their actions towards achieving the following objectives: (i) Establish basic education on an 8-year cycle: this will involve overhauling curricula, as well as creating bridges between the various orders and teaching levels; (ii) Continue to adapt trainings to the socio-economic environment, develop the skills-based approach, and define appropriate strategies to bring schools closer to the populations; (iii) gradually modify the structure of educational offer in favor of technical education and vocational training; (iv) finalize the studies for the operationalization of the capacity building plan for actors in the informal sector (Train my generation plan) and the Science-Technology-Engineering-Mathematic (STEM) plan; and (v) strengthen scientific research in the areas of building, agriculture and health.

Looking at these specific objectives in the targeted area, it is obvious that government authorities aimed at making the education and training sector a real driver of growth and paradigm change. Emphasis has been placed on adapting education to the socio-economic environment, developing skills and giving priority to STEM. It has remained a wishful thinking!

d. *Priorities in the social development and employment sector*

Social development and employment are not left out of the government’s priority to reverse

the trend. The objectives in these sectors show the willingness of decision-makers to break with the past and go further. (i) Intensify incentives to encourage the migration of actors of the informal sector to the formal sector in order to improve their working conditions; (ii) Reinforce measures to empower socially vulnerable persons (women in distress, disabled persons, refugees and displaced persons) in order to increase their contribution to the creation of national wealth; (iii) Reinforce non-contributive social security measures, in particular by intensifying social safety nets, which will gradually shift toward diversifying and extending direct transfers (monetary/in-kind) and indirect (targeted subsidies to the poor or vulnerable); Reinforce the approach of intensively using labor for public investment projects in keeping with Decree No. 2014/0611/PM/ of 24 March 2014 setting conditions for the use and application of high labor intensive (HIMO) approaches; (v) Ensure the strict enforcement of the regulatory provisions in force regarding sub-contracting for the better involvement of small and medium-sized enterprises in the implementation of large-scale projects; (vi) Support councils for the establishment of municipal employment offices and continue actions to strengthen the regulation of the labor market.

e. Priorities in the area of political and administrative governance

Lastly, in the area of political and administrative governance, several objectives were formulated. All of them are related to education/training, but especially to skills. These measures include: (i) intensifying actions aimed at promoting bilingualism, multiculturalism, the re-appropriation of citizenship and patriotism, the equitable participation of all social classes in national life; (ii) Finalizing the implementing texts of the CTD code promulgated in December 2019 and put in place the local public service; (iii) Modernizing the management of the administration by reinforcing the legitimacy of public action and discipline in the public service so that public agents

are models of patriotism, integrity and probity; (iv) Ensuring greater decentralization in management and strengthen the application of legislation relating to misappropriation of public properties and funds; (v) Improving the evaluation and budgeting of recurrent costs in order to better anticipate the taking over and maintenance of public works and guarantee their functionality and usefulness; (vi) Implementing measures to improve business climate in particular by rationalizing the number of taxes and simplifying procedures for setting up businesses and obtaining building permits; and (vii) Controlling public debt by putting in place an effective mechanism for clearing domestic debt owed to businesses while improving the viability and sustainability of external debt.

In the end, from SDG to NDS30 through Agenda 2063, school products are called upon to trigger the change that we want. All these agendas place an emphasis on school, that is to say education/training with focus on skills. They are the foundation to bring about the desired change. However, this is possible through the mastery of know-how and life skills and not only knowledge or books. This legitimately leads to questions about incipency, which is the subject matter of the next chapter.

Image 1 : A school of agriculture



Source : Official page of the Yabassi Technical and Vocational High School of Agriculture

CHAPTER 3: NEEDS IN SKILLS FOR EMERGENCE

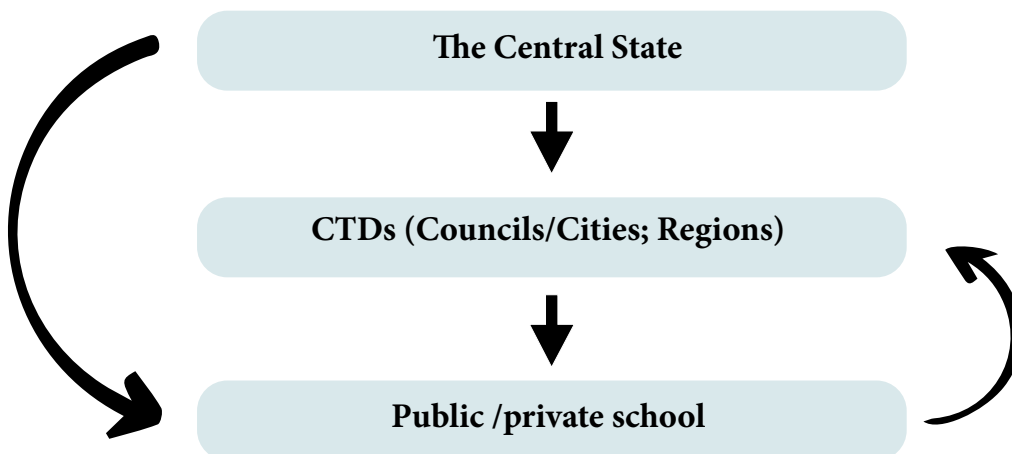
3.1 The conceptual model in the decentralization context and the role of various stakeholders

The decentralization process underway in our country aims to put in place an efficient territorial organization, closer to the populations; it establishes Decentralized Territorial Authorities (CTDs) councils, Cities and Regions as the various levels of the new distribution of responsibilities. In this process, the State transfers to CTDs the responsibility to implement a number of basic public service actions including education. CTDs exercise their role in the implementation of the education policy at all levels (nursery, primary, secondary, higher and vocational training). In addition to the competences transferred by the 2004 laws, which are now reflected in the general code on decentralization of December 2019, eleven (11) new competences have been transferred to CTDs, seven (7) for district councils and four (4) for Regions.

In the area of education, the councils have been given responsibility for the recruitment and taking over of teaching and support staff in nursery and primary schools, as well as in pre-school establishments. However, the decentralization process initiated in Cameroon still has some gaps. In the light of the reality on the ground, the State still exercises power within CTDs through its direct representatives (Governors, Senior Divisional Officers, Divisional Officers, etc.) All of this still requires that the respective areas of responsibility and jurisdictions on both sides are clarified.

The model presented below is the one that has been defined in the 2004 law, also reflected in the general code of decentralized territorial authorities

Figure 1 : Conceptual model of decentralization in the education sector in Cameroon



Source : General code on decentralization, 2019

3.2. The role of stakeholders of the Education/Training sector in the context of decentralization

3.2.1 The Central State

In Cameroon, according to the laws in force, the State defines and regulates the education policy, decides on official curricula and text books, authorizes the opening and operation of establishments and private institutions.

3.2.2. Decentralized territorial authorities

The roles are shared between the Region and the council/city .

a) *Region*¹⁶

In the implementation of the national education strategy, the role of the Region is to: take part in designing and implementing the regional tranche of the national school map; create and equip high schools and colleges of the Region and ensure the upkeep and maintenance of these schools. The role of the Region is also to: recruit and manage the teaching and support staff of the said schools; purchase school equipment and supplies; allocate scholarships and school aid; participate in the management of high schools and colleges through dialogue and consultation structure; in addition, the Region also has the role of supporting the action of councils concerning nursery and primary education.

b) *The Council*¹⁷

In the education sector, the competences transferred to councils are: recruitment and taking over of teaching and support staff in nursery and primary schools, as well as in pre-school establishments; creation, equipment, upkeep and management of nursery and primary schools and pre-schools establishments in the council; purchasing of school material and

supplies; and also participation in the management and administration of high schools and colleges in the Region through dialogue and consultation structures.

NB: Cities, on their part, support the councils in their coverage area in the achievement of their mission concerning education.

3.2.3. Private and public schools

The role of schools (primary, nursery, secondary, post-primary schools; General and Technical Education Teachers Training Schools, municipal schools) is to: train children and teenagers for their physical, intellectual, civic and moral development; build their intellectual capacities; develop their personality and prepare them to assume their citizenship; and facilitate their integration into social and professional life.

3.2.4 The assets and constraints of Decentralized Territorial Authorities : the need for an objective evaluation

The need to carry out an objective evaluation of the assets and constraints falls in line with the setting up and promotion of municipal and regional monographs¹⁸.

This essential activity entails that each CTD produces a kind of documented atlas, describing for the whole territory of the CTD, after exhaustive census, the assets and the existing potential, as well as the constraints and limiting factors to achieve the development objectives at the local level.

Given the competences that are transferred to them, CTDs have the obligation to promote local development. In the area of education/training, CTDs should therefore participate in designing curricula that allows students to address the development issues of their immediate environment, while remaining open to the universal. The school for local development, and local development in accordance with the national strategy and vision, themselves aligned with international development agendas: this should be the guiding principle.

Decentralization thus has a sustainable and inclusive development approach from the base.

¹⁶ - General code on Territorial Decentralized Authorities, Livre 4e ; Titre II ; Chap 3 ; Section 1, article 271(a).

¹⁷ - General code on Territorial Decentralized Authorities, Livre 3e ; Titre II, Chap 3, Section 1 ; article 161(a)

¹⁸ - In the present case, it is the fruit of partnerships concluded between stakeholders of a council or region, in the context of the emergence of a local identity

3.3. School and the productive system

Since ages, economic theories on human capital development have confirmed the close relation between school (education) and economic growth through the productive education system¹⁹. Two African figures of the 20th Century, namely Nelson Mandela and Kwame Nkrumah, even believed that education is the absolute precondition for Africa's development.

3.3.1 Creating the capacities and skills for the production of goods and services

“No country can truly develop until its citizens are educated”, said Mandela. School is therefore the cornerstone of Nations' progress. With globalization, the international economy is becoming more and more dependent on knowledge, and the education of the population more than ever guarantees the success of a country. It is no longer the number of people that makes a country strong but its level of education. The school thus makes it possible to provide individuals with the knowledge, the know-how, and the skills necessary to be able to transform their vital environment. If Cameroon is still dependent on the export of raw material, which makes it vulnerable to the fluctuation of demands and world prices, this is partly due to the low level of transformation capacities that require a certain assimilation of STE (Sciences, Technology and Engineering). Such a situation fatally hampers the country and deprives it of significant resources for its development.

Furthermore, school allows the development of skills in prospective analysis and programming, which are indispensable tools in all development processes. In the agricultural sector for instance, a study carried out by Lockheed, Jamieson and Lau²⁰ from thirty seven (37) surveys conducted in various developing countries, revealed that farmers who have attended primary school for four years have a 7.4% higher production compared with their colleagues who did not attend primary school. This positive effect of education

²⁰ - For reference, see the works of Jeffrey Sachs at the basis of the 2015 MDG Agenda, so-called the Millennium agenda, of which he was the Project Director and special adviser to the UN Secretary General, Kofi Annan ;

on farmers is more or less important depending whether or not the general economic environment is undergoing modernization (evolving technology, expanding market, new crops being introduced). The advantage, in terms of production, of educated farmers is thus 9.5% in an environment undergoing modernization and only 1.3% in a more conventional environment.

3.3.2. The development and implementation of research progress and technical and technological innovations

The other lever for verifying the input of school in the production sector is the development and implementation of the results of research and new technologies. Empirically, education facilitates the development of learning and knowledge. In turn, when the latter are well utilized and in a favorable environment, they allow for innovative solutions to problems faced by individuals.

The implementation of these new technologies rests on the existence of skilled persons who invent them and can pass them on to others who are able to understand for concrete application, until reaching a critical mass for take-off.

Beyond the issues of estimating the effects of education on growth, recent macro-economic developments have made it possible to revive ideas and to better specify the role of school, and the mechanisms through which it could have a productive value. Thus, some models based on endogenous theories of growth no longer consider education as a factor of production but as a factor of innovation. Other models note that education increase productivity less than the capacity of individuals to adapt to changes in the economic environment. Education would thus promote the effectiveness of learning behaviors in an unstable world. This approach revives a more “dynamic” vision of the role of education in the economic growth, which had been developed in an embryonic way. The latter, taking the example of the spread of innovations in the agricultural field, had demonstrated that it is the most educated farmers who first adopt new products and processes.

Thus, we can conclude that education level affects long- term growth through its effects on the speed of adapting to technological changes.

3.3.3. Attractiveness for Foreign Direct Investments (FDI)

Countries that have an abundant and skilled labor are those that attract the most FDI beyond other criteria of attractiveness in terms of business climate. The school is therefore a catalyst to attract investors. According to the UNCTAD 2021 report, developed economies had by far the highest growth in FDI, reaching some \$777 billion in 2021.

At the micro-economic level, education may be seen as an investment. It is an expenditure that is expected to produce additional wealth and well-being in the future. The education level of an individual should enable him to increase the productivity of his work and receive a better salary/revenue. Whereas at the macro-economic level, education enables the increase in the productivity of national economy and a better attractiveness for investments by its ability to create capacities and essential skills for the production of goods and services for which there is an expressed or potential demand.

According to Kwame Nkrumah, school, a good one, is obviously one of the most powerful instruments to fight poverty and inequality, as well as to lay the foundations for a solid and lasting economic growth.

3.4. Conditions for achievement and for success (the school of values)

To achieve its emergence program in general, and in the education sector in particular, Cameroon must consider several challenges. The challenge of the school is therefore to provide children with an education based on values such as discipline and commitment, honesty and humility, equality, integration, respect, collaboration and togetherness, which are all indispensable for the development of capacities etc. The capacity to find solutions, the capacity to communicate, the capacity to be autonomous and the capacity to adapt socially.

These values are norms and behaviors that guide children at the school level. These factors enable the pupil to have an appropriate behavior in his social

environment. The values of school should guide the behavior of human beings from their tender age, leading to a social integration and self-achievement as a person. This requires: (i) considering school as a national public property; (ii) the school as a driver of values of civism and patriotism and public moral integrity.

In this respect, Kwame Nkrumah once said: *“Africa needs a new type of citizen: a dedicated, modest, honest and informed man. A man who submerges self in service to the nation and mankind. A man who abhors greed and detest vanity. A new type of man whose humility is his strength and whose integrity is his greatness”*²¹ and this type of man is shaped by education. Cameroon is therefore in danger !

21 - Original version “Africa needs a new type of citizen, a dedicated, modest, honest and informed man. A man submerges self in service to the nation and mankind. A man who abhors greed and detests vanity. A new type of man whose humility is his strength and whose integrity is his greatness”.

CHAPTER 4 :

WHICH SEEDS FOR WHICH FRUITS ?

Given its history, the Cameroonian education system is related to its colonial heritage (franco-british) and governed by law No98/04 of 14 April 1998. Bilingual in nature, it combines both the English and the French subsystems. Each subsystem takes into account the various types (general, technical and...), orders (public, private, denominational, lay private) and teaching)²² levels (primary, secondary)²³ .

4.1. The primary level

Cameroonian law reaffirms the national option of the country's biculturalism through the two subsystems (French and English). In the primary education, the required age is 6 years. The primary school is made up of three levels depending on whether one is in the French or the English subsystem.

In the French subsystem, level I comprises SIL and CP; level II comprises CEI and CEII; while level 3 comprises CMI and CMII. In some schools there is also a "Special" CP (CPS) for pupils from the pre-school (nursery education) and who do not pass through SIL.

As for the English subsystem, it also comprises 3 levels: Level I made up of CLASS I and CLASS II; Level II of CLASS III and CLASS IV; and Level III of CLASS V and CLASS VI.

Table 2 : Primary level in Cameroon

LEVEL	Duration (in number of years)	
	Sous-système anglophone	Sous-système francophone
LEVEL I (Initiation)	02	02
LEVEL II (Observation)	02	02
LEVEL III (Further learning)	02	02
TOTAL	06	06

Source : MINEDUB

Irrespective of the subsystem, the primary cycle lasts 6 years in principle or 2 years per level. However, there is a practice called "**bypassing of class**". In fact, some "brilliant" pupils or according to the will of the parents do not follow the normal 6-year course but sometimes 5 or even 4 years.^{24 5}

According to texts, primary education is fundamental and obligatory for the development of the individual. He must "learn how to read, write, make simple calculations and explore his environment..." After six (6) years of study, the **Certificat d'Etudes Primaire (CEP)** or the **First School Leaving Certificate (FSLC)**, prepares the pupil either for a vocational training or to enroll into college.

The same curriculum is therefore obligatory in all the orders of public and private education.

a. Subjects

Primary education in both subsystems has ten (10) obligatory subjects as indicated belows.

22 - Given the available resources, information collected as part of this study are from secondary sources and essentially take into account the two subsystems and especially the general education, from primary to secondary²¹ (from SIL/CLASS ONE to Terminale/UPPER SIXTH). We have therefore not included the data of technical education.

23 - Higher education is unique.

24 - Some pupils write the CEP examination in the CMI.

Table 3 : Subjects in the French and English subsystems in the primary cycle

	French subsystem	Anglophone subsystem	
No	Subjects	Subjects areas	No
01	French language and literature	English language and Literature	01
02	English language	Français	02
03	Mathematics	Mathematics	03
04	Science and Technology	Science and Technology	04
05	Social studies	Social studies	05
06	Vocational studies	Vocational Studies	06
07	Physical Education and Sports	Physical Education and Sports	07
08	Arts	Arts	08
09	National Languages and Cultures	National Languages and Cultures	09
10	Information and Communication Technology	Information and Communication Technology	10

Source : CAMERCAP-PARC

In each subsystem, the constitution and the law to lay down the guidelines on education in Cameroon are respected through the learning of the two official languages (French and English). Furthermore, it is worth noting the learning of national languages and cultures. This reflects the socio-cultural entrenchment of school in Cameroon in the principle, even if its effectiveness is yet to be proven.

Right from the primary level, the Cameroonian education system is seen as being open to the world, but also and increasingly²⁵¹⁶entrenched into the country's socio-cultural realities.

b. Hourly teaching volumes

Hourly teaching volume is the statutory time earmarked not only for leaning and resting period (break), but equally for integration, evaluation, and remediation activities. Thus, according to OECD, “the teaching volume is the dedicated number of hours to teach a group or a class of pupils in accordance with the country’s policy on education.”

In Cameroon, Article 22 of the law that defines the general legal framework of education, sets the **duration of a school year at 36 weeks of effective classes**. In addition, each year, a joint decree signed by authorities in charge of primary and secondary education sets the school year calendar. Regardless of the subsystem, another Cameroonian peculiarity is that classes are taught according to two operating modes: full-time and part-time.

i. The part-time mode

In this mode, irrespective of the teaching subsystem, the day is divided into two periods. The “morning” period from 0730 to 1240 and the “evening” period from 1300 to 1730. In this mode, the week runs from Monday to Saturday (from 0730 to 1230) for “evening classes” students.

This approach has had the merit in Cameroon, especially in major cities, of resolving the issue of overcrowding by creating many schools on the same site. A school is no longer systematically identified by buildings but by teachers and their pupils. Therefore, in the same premises, like the Nkolndongo primary school, Group A and Group B rotate in the use of classrooms according to the morning or evening schedule.

25 - Since the implementation of the program dubbed ELAN-Afrique by MINEDUB in 2013, pupils better grasp the realities of their environment through national languages. Therefore, they better absorb the other courses.

Table 4 : Hourly quotas per learning disciplines in the part-time mode in the 3 levels of francophone primary education (in hours)

	LEARNING DISCIPLINES	FRENCH SUBSYSTEM			
		Annual volume (hour)	Weekly volume (hours)	%	Daily
1	French language and literature	92	4	16	ND
2	English	46	2	8	
3	Mathematics	92	4	16	
4	Science and Technology	92	4	16	
5	Social studies	69	3	12	
6	Vocational studies	46	2	8	
7	Physical education and sports	46	2	8	
8	Arts	23	1	4	ND
9	National languages and culture	46	2	8	
10	Information and Communication Technology	46	2	8	
	Hourly volume of exclusive teaching²⁶	575	25	100%	4h40 min
	Breaks	53h20 min	1h40 min	/	30 min
	Hourly volume of teaching + breaks	628h20 min	26h40 min	/	5h10 min

Source : MINEDUB (2018), Cameroon primary school curriculum French subsystem-level 3

Table 5 : Hourly quotas per learning disciplines in the part-time system in level 3 of the anglophone primary education (in hours)

	SUBJECT AREAS Annual learning	ENGLISH SUBSYSTEM			
		Weekly learning	%	Daily	
1	English language and Literature	138	6	20	ND
2	Français	69	3	10	
3	Mathematics	103,5	4,5	15	
4	Science and Technology	103,5	4,5	15	
5	Social studies	34,5	1,5	5	
6	Vocational Studies	69	3	10	
7	Physical Education and Sports	34,5	1,5	5	
8	Arts	34,5	1,5	5	
9	National Languages and Cultures	34,5	1,5	5	
10	Information and Communication Technology	69	3	10	
	Total du volume horaire d'enseignement	690	30	100%	4h40min
	Pauses	11,5	3	/	30 min
	Volume horaire d'enseignement + Pauses	701,5	33	/	5h10 min

Source: MINEDUB (2018), Cameroon primary school curriculum English subsystem-Level 3

26 - Integration and evaluation activities are not taken into account in this analysis. They account for 225h per year, or 25 per week

The above tables show that the time spent in class is 0510 min or 0430 min as concern part-time mode. However, it is worth noting a few disparities. The first concerns the hourly volume (including integration and evaluation activities). In fact, while the annual hourly volume is 575 hours in the French subsystem, it is 690 hours per year in the English subsystem, **or a difference of 115 hours per year !**

Students of the English subsystem²⁷ in the part-time mode therefore have more time to learn than their French-speaking peers²⁸.

ii. The full time mode

Contrary to the part-time mode, the full-time mode is characterized by all-day classes. It is practiced in the two education subsystems.

Table 6 : Hourly quotas per learning disciplines in the full-time mode at level 3 of francophone primary education (in hours)

LEARNING DISCIPLINES		FRENCH SUBSYSTEM			
		Annual volume (hours)	%	Daily	
1	French language and literature	115	5	16,66	
2	English language	69	3	10	
3	Mathematics	115	5	16,66	
4	Science and Technology	92	4	13,33	
5	Social studies	69	3	10	
6	Vocational studies	69	3	10	
7	Physical education and sports	46	2	6,66	
8	Arts	23	1	3,33	
9	National languages and culture	46	2	6,66	
10	Information and Communication Technology	46	2	6,66	
Hourly volume of exclusive learning		690	30	100%	6
Break		53h20 min	1h40 min	/	1
Hourly volume of learning + Breaks		853h20 min	26h40 min	/	8

Source : MINEDUB (2018), Cameroon primary school curriculum French subsystem - Level 3

27 - Particularly those of Level 3

28 - Level 3

Table 7 : Hourly quotas per learning discipline in the part-time mode at level 3 of the primary anglophone education (in hours)

SUBJECTS		ENGLISH SUBSYSTEM			
		Annual learning	Weekly learning	%	Daily
1	<i>English language and Literature</i>	138	6	20	ND
2	<i>Français</i>	69	3	10	
3	<i>Mathematics</i>	103,5	4,5	15	
4	<i>Science and Technology</i>	103,5	4,5	15	
5	<i>Social studies</i>	34,5	1,5	5	
6	<i>Vocational Studies</i>	69	3	10	
7	<i>Physical Education and Sports</i>	34,5	1,5	5	
8	<i>Arts</i>	34,5	1,5	5	
9	<i>National Languages and Cultures</i>	34,5	1,5	5	
10	<i>Information and Communication Technology</i>	69	3	10	
Total hourly volume of learning		690	30	100%	6h30min
Breaks		167,9	2h30min		1h30min
Hourly volume of learning + Breaks		857,9	32h30min	/	7

Source: MINEDUB (2018), Cameroon primary school curriculum English subsystem–Level 3

The above tables show that in the two subsystems, the time devoted to teaching is the same in the full-time mode. **That is 690 hours/year**, which corresponds to 30 hours per week.

As we observe, the length of the day is not the same. While it lasts 07 hours (07h30min to 14h30min) in the francophone subsystem, it is spread over 08 hours (07h30min to 15h30min) in the French subsystem. As a result, the lessons cover 6h30min in the English subsystem and 6 hours in the French subsystem and the time devoted to daily breaks is 1h30min versus 1 hour respectively.

In the end, it turns out that the part-time mode reduces the volume of teaching in the French subsystem by 5 hours compared to the full-time mode. In the English subsystem, the volume of teaching time remains the same regardless of the operating mode. Only the time devoted to breaks changes, that is 1 hour more in the full-time mode.

4.2. Comparative analysis at the primary school level: What obtains elsewhere?

For this purpose, we used the benchmarking approach by exploring other educational systems around the world. To this end, the choices made on the cases explored are based on the efficiency of the said systems and their capacity to sell the products resulting from their moulds in the economy. Among these countries, we targeted four: Morocco (Africa); South Korea (Asia); France (vestiges of the colonial system); and finally Finland, a country recognized by the OECD and the world for the very high performance of its education system.²⁹

29 - According to the recent evaluation of the OECD International Program for the Follow-up of Learning Achievements, 2018, published in 2019, Finland respectively occupies the 7th position on reading, as well as on sciences and the 16th position on Mathematics.

a. The example of Morocco

As in Cameroon the primary level in Morocco, lasts six years. It is open to children from preschool and, on a transitional basis, to children who have not benefited from it, aged six years or older, as well as to pupils from traditional schools, in the level for which they are qualified. It is divided into two cycles.

The main objective of the first cycle of the primary level, which lasts two years, is to consolidate and extend pre-school learning, so that all Moroccan children who reach the age of eight acquire a common and harmonious base of education and socialization, preparing them to pursue, with maximum equality of opportunity, their learning at subsequent levels of education.

In addition to the deepening of the educational and socialization processes started in pre-school, this cycle aims particularly at (i) acquiring basic knowledge and skills in understanding and expressing the Arabic language in writing and orally; (ii) initiating to the use of a first foreign language; (iii) acquiring basic notions of health prevention and environmental protection; (iv) developing iconic, graphic and playful abilities; (v) initiating to the notions of order, classification and sequencing, notably through the manipulation of concrete objects; (vi) appropriating the rules of life in society and the values of reciprocity, cooperation and solidarity.

The second cycle of primary school, lasting four years, is open to children from the first cycle. The main objectives of this cycle are to develop children's abilities and to allow them to develop their capacities at an early age, in particular by (i) deepening and extending the learning acquired in the previous cycles, especially in the religious, civic and ethical fields; (ii) developing comprehension and expression skills, in Arabic, necessary for all disciplinary learning; (iii) learning to read, write and speak the first foreign language; (iv) developing the operational structures of practical intelligence, in particular through the application of concrete operations of sequencing, classification, numbering, calculation and space-time orientation, as well as work methods (v) discovering basic notions, concepts, systems, and techniques applied to the student's immediate natural, social, and cultural environment, including local and regional affairs; (vi) having an initial introduction to modern information, communication, and interactive creation technologies; (vii) introduction to the functional use of a second foreign language, focusing initially on oral and phonetic familiarization.

Table 8 : Table of subjects taught according to the weekly volume (in hours) in the primary education in Morocco

No	Subjects	1st year 2nd year	3rd year 4th year	5th year 6th year
01	<i>Islamic education</i>	04	03	03
02	Arabic language	11	06	06
03	French language	-	08	08
04	<i>Artistic education/ Technical education</i>	4h30	2h30	-
05	<i>History-Geography and civic education</i>	-	-	1h30
06	Mathematics	05	05	05
07	<i>Physical education</i>	02	02	02
08	Scientific activities	1h30	1h30	1h30
	Recreation	02	02	02
Total		30	30	29

Source : www.ecoliers-berberes.info

The number of days of weekly teaching is 4.5 days in Morocco. Wednesday is a half day in Morocco³⁰ .

Morocco has 08 subjects per week in primary education while Cameroon has 10 (ten). At the end of primary education in both countries, the pupils obtain the Primary Education Certificate (CEP).

b. The example of South Korea

Primary school is compulsory from the age of 6 and lasts six years. It is broken down into "grades" or levels and each year the student reaches a higher level. The first two years are devoted to reading and writing. English classes begin in the third year. Students are taught with discipline and in a strict manner. The school year lasts 220 days a year, with a 5.5 day school week.

South Korean students usually start school at 9:00 am and finish at 2:00 or 3:00 pm. But the day is extended with extra activities and private lessons before or after school.

In comparison to primary education in Cameroon, the weekly time volume is 25 hours in South Korea against 30 hours in Cameroon (5 hours more than in

30 - The practice of revision and remedial classes that tend to gain ground in Cameroon inevitably extends teaching hours.

South Korea), on the other hand, South Korea has 5.5 days of classes per week from Monday to Saturday (Korean students attend classes until 12:00).

In addition, Korean schoolchildren do not have to take a final exam at the end of their primary education, they only need to obtain the required average to pass to the first year of secondary education.

The basic subjects of education are : Korean language (1), mathematics (2), sports (3), drawing (4), science (5) and the study of the Juche ideas (6), Kim Il Sung³¹ , thoughts are strongly promoted.

c. The example of France

Since the beginning of the 2018 school year, France has made adjustments to the French, mathematics and moral and civic education curricula in order to take into account the results obtained by France in major international educational surveys and to reinforce the mastery of fundamental knowledge: reading, writing, counting, respecting others.

31 - Education begins at the nursery school, with classes on the history of Kim Il Sung and Kim Jong Il. From elementary school to college classes focus on childhood and the revolutionary activities of Kim-Il Sung, Kim Jong-II and his biological mother, Kim Jon-Suk.

The primary school is subdivided into two cycles: the cycle of fundamental learning or cycle II (CP, CE1, CE2) and the further learning cycle or cycle III (CM1, CM2). The school week consists of 24 hours of teaching spread over nine (09) half-days. Students attend classes on Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday (morning), Thursday and Friday, that is a week of 4.5 days.

d. The example of Finland

Finland is known worldwide for its highly successful education system, which is a product of Finnish culture. **It is based on creative freedom and the development of children's autonomy from an early age.**

From the time they enter the first year of primary school (equivalent to CP), children have a very short timetable and are not dependent on their parents for childcare or transportation. The primary cycle lasts six years (class 1, class 2, class 3, class 4, class 5, class 6). Primary school classes are held in the morning from **8:00 am to 12:00 pm with 20 hours of classes per week**. Pupils attend classes every day from Monday to Friday.

Compulsory subjects are set by the Ministry of Education, while schools are free to determine the availability of optional classes. The following is a list of compulsory subjects during basic education :

- (i) **Mother tongue and literature:** this can be Finnish; or Swedish, the second official language; or Saami (the language spoken by the indigenous population of Finland); or Romaani (the language spoken by the Roma population of Finland); or another language (depending on the student's mother tongue) ;
- (ii) **National language :** students who have not chosen Finnish as their mother tongue choose Swedish (second official language) ;
- (iii) **Foreign languages :** Foreign language A and foreign language B ;
- (iv) **Science :** Mathematics; Environmental Knowledge; Biology and Geography; Physics and Chemistry; Health Education (new in recent years) ;

- (v) **Religion or ethics** (chosed as required) ;
- (vi) **Arts :** History and Social Sciences; Music and Visual Arts; Physical Education; Housekeeping activities ;
- (vii) Student educational orientation.

Note that orientation is taught in a separate group class by a guidance counselor.

Table 9 : Overview of the Cameroonian, Moroccan, South Korean, French and Finnish education systems

Comparison criteria	Cameroon (1)	Morocco (2)	South Korea (3)	France ³² (4)	Finland (5)
Breakdown per level	- Level I / Level I (SIL/Class I, CP/Class II) - Level II (CE1/Class III, CE2/Class IV) - Level III (CM1/Class V, CM2/VI)	- Cycle 1 : 1st and 2nd year - Cycle 2 : 3rd, 4th, 5th and 6th year	Grade1, Grade2, Grade3, Grade4, Grade5, Grade6	Cycle 2 : CP, CE1, CE2 Cycle 3 : CM1, CM2.	Class 1, Class 2, Class 3, Class 4, Class 5, Class6.
Number of classes	6	6	6	5	6
Weekly volume of teaching hours	30 hours and more	28 hours	25 hours	24 hours	20 hours
Number of teaching days per week	5 days and more	4,5 days	5,5 days	4,5 days	5 days (only in the morning)
Number of subjects	10	08	07	Cycle 2 : 09 Cycle 3 : 10	11 subjects with an optional one (religion)
Final exam of the primary cycle	CEP	CEP	No final exam at the end of the primary cycle	CEP	Promotion is conditional upon having an average

Source : CAMERCAP-PARC

In our sample, (rational), **Cycle 2: 3rd, 4th, 5th and 6th** year Cameroon has the highest weekly learning volume in the primary cycle! What if that was the origin of the problem? Quantity of quality?

4.3. The Secondary level

Regardless of the subsystem, secondary education level in Cameroon lasts seven (07) years and is divided in 02 cycles: the first and the second cycle.

Table 10 : The secondary level in Cameroon

Cycles	Duration (in years)	
	English subsystem	French Subsystem
First cycle	05	04
Second cycle	02	03
TOTAL	07	07

Source : MINESEC

³² - In France, unlike other countries, the primary level is made up of 05 classes against 06 in Cameroon, Morocco, South Korea, or Finland. In fact, the primary level begins right from the CP. This approach is observed in the major cities of Cameroon where nursery schools have 03 sections (Nursery One, Nursery Two, and Nursery Three). This enable some pupils to start the primary section straight away in Cours Préparatoire, called "Special"

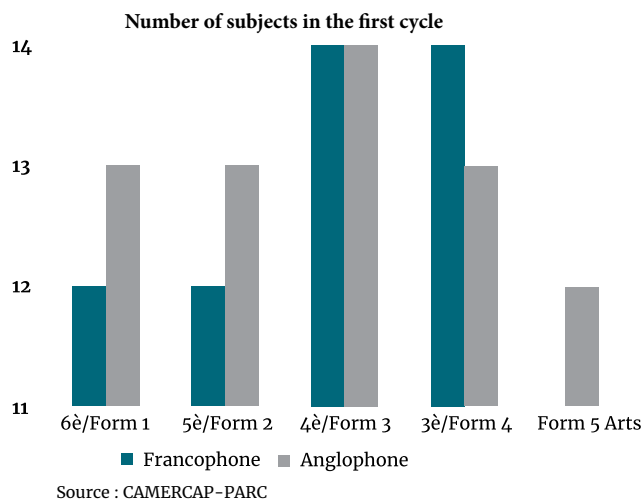
a. The first cycle of secondary education

In the French subsystem, the first cycle is made up of 6^{ème}, 5^{ème}, 4^{ème} and 3^{ème}. It therefore lasts four (04) years and ends with obtaining the Brevet d'Études du Premier Cycle (BEPC).

In the English subsystem, it comprises FORM 1, FORM 2, FORM 3, FORM 4 and FORM 5. It lasts five (05) years and ends with obtaining the General Certificate of Education Ordinary Level (GCE OL).

i. The number of subjects

Chart 2 : Number of subjects in the first cycle of the English and French subsystems



Publicly available official data show a contrasting number of subjects in the two subsystems. In fact, in the English subsystem, there are 13 subjects at the beginning of the cycle. However, this number is reduced at the end. That is 12 subjects in FORM V, despite the 14 subjects in FORM III. This is different from the French subsystem where there is a significant increase of subjects as the learner progresses. This reflects an early specialization of learners in the English subsystem (from FORM IV) whereas it occurs only in 2^{nde} (first year of the second cycle) in the French subsystem.

ii. The volume of hours

Chart 3 : Weekly volume of hours in the first cycle (in hours)

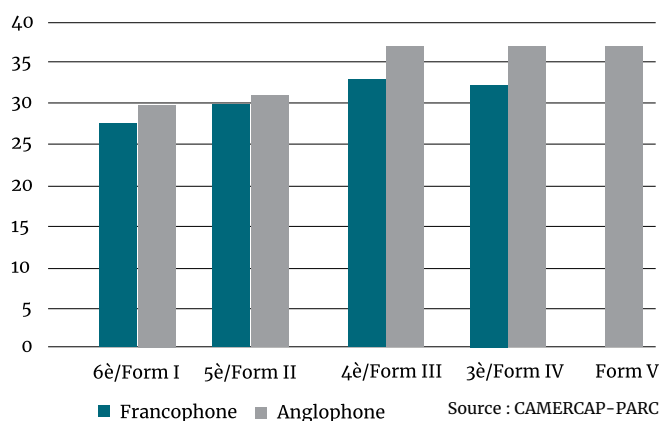


Table 11 : Weekly volume of hours in the first cycle of the English and French subsystems

N°	Classes	French	English
01	6 ^e /From I	28	30
02	5 ^e /From II	30	31
03	4 ^e /From III	33	37
04	3 ^e /From IV	32	37
05	From V	-	37

Source : CAMERCAP-PARC

Generally speaking, the English subsystem has a higher volume of hours per class at the same level. And with fewer subjects, the density of teachings per subject can be determined. With more time, we can go further in the lessons to better develop specific skills.

b. The second cycle of secondary education

In the French subsystem, at the end of the first two years, the pupil writes the Probatoire³³ examination, and the Baccalaureat in the third year. Meanwhile in the English subsystem, access to Upper Sixth is done

simply by writing a promotion examination³⁴ This revives the issue of Probatoire that was legally abolished by the 1998 law, but which is still in force in 2022/2023, pending enforcement texts, we are told !

Encadré 2 : The “BIR” Far too many subjects and overloaded learners

The Cameroonian education system is inundated by too many subjects/disciplines whose relevance in some classes is questionable. The recurrent image is the “**bent back**” of pupils who carry school backs similar to the backpacks of elements of BIR (**Rapid Intervention Battalion**) of the Cameroonian defense forces on a commando mission. Thus, throughout the year, pupils get mired down in an ocean of notions that will only be useful to enable them pass to the next class.

As illustration, let us take the example of the History classes taught in Premiere C and D entitled “Industrialization of Europe”. The industrialization methods presented in this course date back to the 18th Century during which the black coal constituted 90% of the energy used in the industry. However, modern industry uses electric power and is progressively migrating toward renewable energies. If the purpose of this lesson is to motivate the pupil to develop a career in the industrial field, then it is casually/not achieved. For, the latter is stuck in the too obsolete technological levels. **How do we dream big?**

In the Premiere A class, there is History, courses on the 1st World War, European imperialism in India and in Indochina, the foundations of imperialism, the industrialization of Europe and the accession of Asian countries to independence: the case of India and Indochina. In Terminal C class, in Geography, there is a class entitled “country with difficult economic take-off: some countries of the Arabian Gulf”

In the Premiere SES class, there are 17 subjects, including the PCT that will no longer be taught in Terminale SES.

Spot the error! Similar cases abound.



Photo : BIR young servicement under training, carrying backpacks

Textbox3 : The law on the guidelines for education in Cameroon and the issue of Probatoire

Law No 98/004 of 14 April 1998 on the guideline for education sets the major guidelines of education in Cameroon. It applies to all subsystems, orders, types, and levels of education. As concern certification, it is worth underlining that Probatoire is an exam exclusiveley written by students of the French subsystem. In fact, contrary to the English subsystem, the Probatoire is the prerequisite for admission into Terminale, hence of qualifying to write the Baccalaureat and therefore accessing higher education. Many students who fail this exam are sometimes forced to leave school or abandon their academic career. Beyond an approval certificate, can we still agree on the usefulness of this exam in Cameroon when even France, on which our education system is based, has abandoned it ever since? How can we justify the fact that enforcement texts of the law is still being awaited 25 years after (1998)?

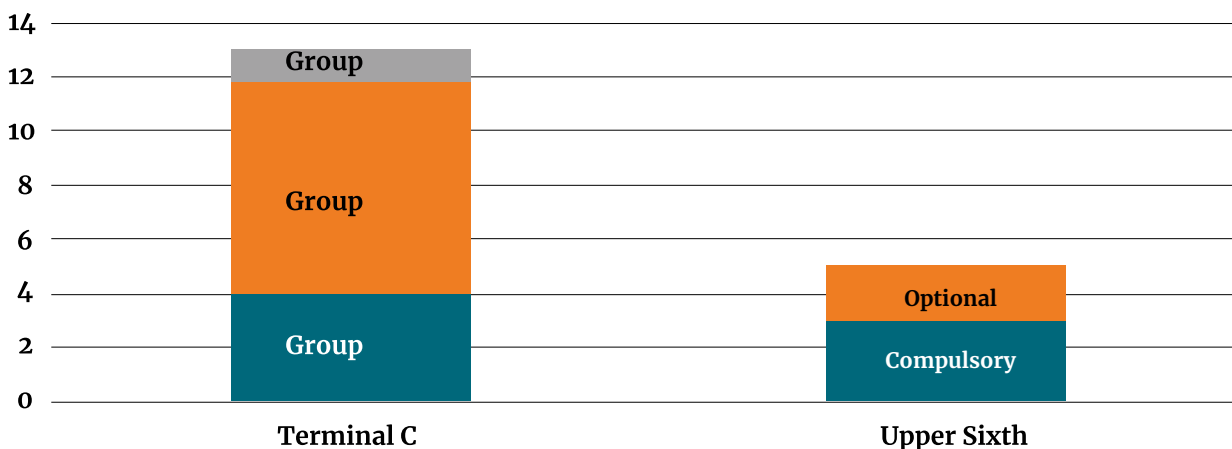
In these circumstances, how can we prevent some analysis from concluding that it is a sieve, some sort of filter that reduces the flow of students into higher education.

Source : CAMERCAP-PARC

i. On the number of subjects: where is the good seed?

Upper Sixth class offers direct access to the acquisition of skills through specialization; while the student of Terminale C continues to be a jack of all trade, which does not facilitate optimal acquisition of fundamental knowledge in the said subjects.

Chart 4 : Number of subjects in Upper Sixth and Terminale C



Source : CAMERCAP-PARC

33 - Condition to access terminal class

34 - No probatoire

Textbox 4 : Upper Sixth Science 1 (Mathematics) is equivalent to Terminale C: Dissipation?

The Upper Sixth Science 1 is one of the specialization classes in Science in the English subsystem. The learner must write three compulsory subjects (Mathematics, Physics and Chemistry) and two optional subjects. Lessons take the form of modules. As example, Mathematics is divided into: **Pure mathematics**; **Mathematics mechanics**; **Mathematics Statistics**; and **Further mathematics**.

However, in Terminale C (which is viewed as the equivalent in the French subsystem) there are 13 subjects divided in 03 groups:

- **Group 1 : core subjects (04) :** Mathematics, Physics, Chemistry and computer system;
- **Group 2 : additional subjects (08) :** Geography, French language, Literature, SVTEEH, Philosophy, English, ECM and PE;
- **Group 3 : Subsidiary subjects (01) :** ESF/TM

While in the English subsystem, we are right in the heart of specialization with a reduced number of subjects and more time allocated, Terminale C students have more additional and subsidiary subjects. The latter even make the work more arduous for the learner and is a waste of energy.

Given that too many non-core subjects are less useful after the Baccalaureat, it is for instance recommended to focus on core subjects and include two or three additional subjects.

Apart from that, the Terminale student is not actually specialized given that he embraces almost everything. Even core subjects are not studied more deeply in view of the time allocated.

The French subsystem therefore places the learner in insecurity. Why not tend toward the Anglo-Saxon mode that is less compelling, more specialized and best suited to the country's development needs.

Source : CAMERCAP-PARC

Chart 5 : Number of subjects in the secondary second cycle : Premiere and terminale classes

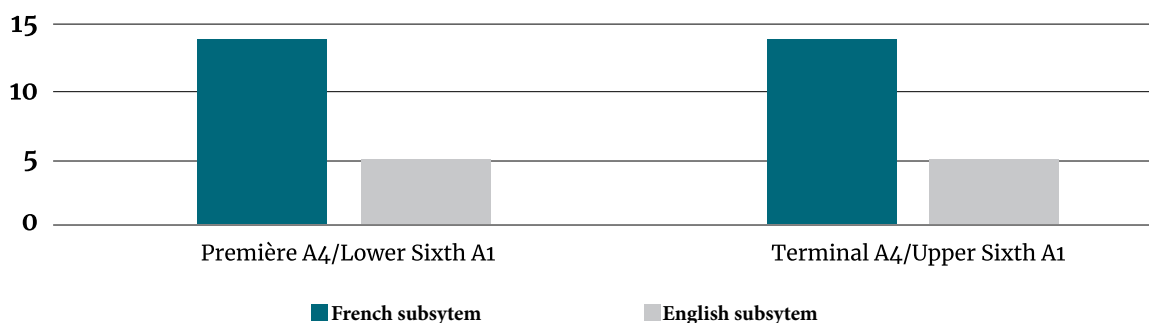


Chart 5 above presents the second cycle arts in the two subsystems. The most striking detail that emerges is the number of subjects. While the second cycle arts of the French subsystem has an average of 12 subjects among which 5 are core (Group 1)³⁵, 7 complementary (Group 2)³⁶; and 3 optional (Group 3)³⁷, the second cycle arts of the English subsystem is characterized by a strong specialization, that is 3 compulsory subjects and one or two optional subjects.

35 - Literature, French Language, Philosophy, English and Modern Language II

36 - Geography, History, ECM, Computer Sciences, Mathematics, Sciences (SVTEEH) and Physical Education

37 - National Languages and Cultures, Artistic Education, and Manual Labor

In view of all these facts, it is obvious that the **English subsystem is the ideal model for specialization.**

This problem is acute in the technical secondary education (although excluded in the data collection sample) where, beyond professional subjects, learners in this type of education are compelled again to take lessons in subjects of general secondary education, as illustrated in the table below.

Table 12 : Distribution of the number of subjects and hourly volume per week in Terminale F3/Electricity

Subjects	No	Subjects	Hourly volume/ week (in hours)
Vocational subjects	01	Power electronics	5
	02	Electric system	6
	03	Applied mechanic	2
	04	Machine control	5
Total			18
General education subjects	01	Philosophy	2
	02	Mathematics	5
	03	French	3
	04	Physics-chemistry	4
	05	English	2
	06	History/geography	2
	07	ECM	1
	08	Computer studies	2
	09	SPE	2
Total			23
Overall total	13		41

The above table shows the distribution and weekly volumes of hours in **Terminale F3/Electricity**. That is 41 hours of classes per week for 13 subjects. It is therefore noted that out of the 13 subjects taught in this class, those of the general education occupies the biggest hourly volume per week i.e 23 hours against 18 for technical education subjects. **The big question that is worth asking is what the intended purpose is.** The NDS30 recommends that we move faster toward the STI/STEM. Let us look for consistency!

Hence the need to break away if we want to reach emergence, and the time remaining until 2035 is not in our favor.

i. On the number of hours

The analysis of the hourly volume by class and by group in the second cycle of secondary education, reveals facts that generate real questions on the capacity of learners to absorb the teachings?.

Source : MINESEC, Decree defining the nature, duration and coefficients of subjects in the specialties and classes of Secondary Technical Education

Table 13 : Number of hours per week in the English subsystem

Classes	Total
LOWER SIXTH Arts	38
LOWER SIXTH SCIENCE	38
UPPER SIXTH Arts	38
UPPER SIXTH SCIENCE	38

Source : CAMERCAP-PARC

The analysis of the below table shows uniformity in the distribution of teaching time over the entire cycle, that is 38 hours irrespective of the class or series.

Table 14 : Number of hours per week by group in the French subsystem (in hours)

Classes	Number of subjects	Group 1	Group 2	Group 3	Total G1+G2+G3	Min/Max
Seconde A4	16	14	16	4	34	31/34
Seconde ABI A4 BILINGUE	16	15	15	1	31	
Seconde C	13	17	12	2	31	
Seconde SES	18	13	20	1	34	
Première A4	16	14	16	1	31	31/35
Première ABI A4 BILINGUE	16	15	15	1	31	
Première C	13	14	17	1	32	
Première D	13	14	18	1	33	
Première E	11	21	11	1	33	
Première SES	18	16	18	1	35	
Première TI	15	15	17	1	33	
Terminale A4	16	14	16	1	31	31/35
Terminale ABI A4 BILINGUE	16	15	15	1	31	
Terminale C	13	17	17	1	35	
Terminale D	13	14	18	1	33	
Terminale E	11	21	11	1	33	
Terminale SES	17	16	18	1	35	
Terminale TI	14	16	16	1	33	

Source : MINESEC, Decision No. 92/22/MINESEC of 07 March defining the nature, the duration and the coefficients of subjects in the series and classes of the General Secondary Education.

As an illustration, we can see that for the classes of Première and Terminale D, while the subjects of Group 1 are spread out over a weekly volume of 14 hours, Group 2, called complementary, represents 18 hours. That is **54%** of the class time.

4.4. Comparative analysis at the secondary level: What obtains elsewhere?

a. The example of Morocco

The secondary level in Morocco is divided into two independent cycles: college education (compulsory) and qualifying secondary education (non-compulsory).

• College education :

It lasts for three years and is open to students who have completed primary school and obtained the CEP. The mission of this cycle is, among others, *to sharpen their formal intelligence and introduce them to the concepts of mathematics, science and the environment; to learn technical, professional and artistic skills; and to introduce them to the knowledge of their country, the world and their fundamental rights and duties.*

At the end of the college education the student obtains a college education certificate (BEC). This allows the student to continue his or her studies in vocational secondary education.

• Vocational secondary education

This education aims to diversify the areas of learning, in order to offer new ways of success and integration into professional and social life. It is made up of the following cycles: **the vocational qualification cycle**³⁸ ; the common core cycle and the baccalaureate cycle.

• The common core cycle

This cycle welcomes students with a BEC and consists of a set of learning modules required of all, with the general objectives of developing or upgrading communication, expression, and methodical research skills in learners; developing the ability to adapt to the demands and changes of active life and the cultural, scientific, technological and professional environment.

The duration of studies in this cycle is one year with common modules.

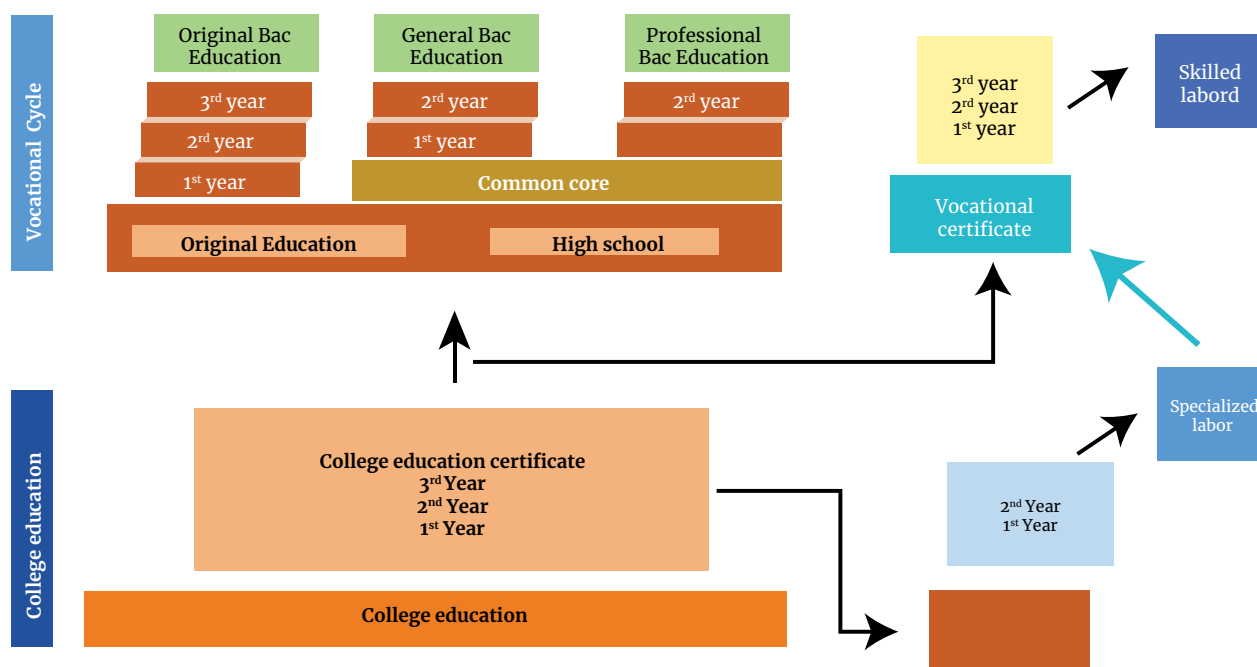
³⁸ - This cycle enables the learner to enter the professional world. However, it is not taken into account in this analysis

- **The Bacalaureat cycle**

With a duration of 02 years, this cycle is open to students from the common core and is made up of 02 main branches, namely: a branch of technological and professional education and a branch of general education.

In fact, the **general education branch** aims to give learners a scientific, literary, economic or social education. It prepares them for higher studies. The duration of the studies is 02 years, leading to the Bacalaureate of General Education (BEG) allowing the access to the higher education.

Figure 2 : Structure of the Moroccan secondary education system



Source : Snapshot of the Moroccan education system (2004)

It should be noted that the progress made since the implementation of the reform began in 2000 has produced very encouraging results in Morocco. Decentralized educational structures, in particular the **Regional Academies of Education and Training (AREF)**, have been set up and are operational. There are 16 AREFs, one per region of the Kingdom.

- **Number of teaching hours at the secondary level**

As far as secondary education is concerned, it is composed of the following subjects: Arabic language, Islamic education, social studies⁴⁰, mathematics, natural sciences, physical sciences, plastic education, women's culture or initiation to technology and musical education.

Table 15 : Number of weekly teaching hours per subject and by level

N°	Subject/Levels	7 th year	8 th year	9 th year
01	Arabic language	6h	6h	6h
02	Islamic education	2h	2h	2h
03	Social studies	3h	3h	3h
04	French	6h	6h	6h
05	Mathematics	6h	6h	6h
06	Natural sciences	2h+	2h+	2h+
07	Physical sciences	2h+	2h+	2h+
08	Physical education	3h	3h	3h
09	Plastic education	1h+	1h+	1h+
10	Women's Culture or Technology	2h+	2h+	2h+
11	Musical education	2h	-	-
Total		35h	33h	33h

Source : www.men.gov.ma

- **The purpose of general secondary education** is to provide students with a general theoretical, literary or scientific education to develop their intellectual potential. It prepares them for higher studies. It is divided into three sections, namely modern literature, experimental sciences and mathematical sciences. The hourly distribution of the subjects taught depends on the subjects and varies from 27 to 36 hours of classes per week.

b. The example of South Korea

In the Land of the *Morning Calm*⁴⁰ after six years of primary school, students begin their secondary education. It is divided into two parts (College and High School). College consists of 03 years (grades 7 to 9). High school is also divided into three years (grades 10 to 12). In high school, students can choose between general high schools, specialized high schools and technical high schools.

In this country, students are expected to study twice. Thus, they enroll in *Hagwon*⁴¹ to study after regular school hours until sometimes late at night.

At the end of secondary education, students take the **Suneung** (Baccalauréat) exam, which is the entrance exam to the university. This is probably the most important exam for the South Korean Government and the students. This national exam lasts 09 hours and covers various subjects, including **mathematics, science and English**. It is conducted in the form of MCQs. Learners are expected to get the best marks in order to be admitted to one of the three best universities in the country, namely *Seoul National University, Korea University and Yonsei University*.

This important exam is the focus of attention throughout the country. Measures taken for the smooth conduct of the exam include the suspension of flights in the national airspace and the massive mobilization of law enforcement and security forces.

Education in South Korea: work and more work, with an average of 50 hours of study per week, students are the most diligent in the OECD.

c. The example of France

Here also, secondary education takes place at the College and High School. Secondary education

lasts 4 years (6ème, 5ème, 4ème, 3ème). The national diploma of the Brevet is given, after examination, to the pupils having acquired the general knowledge of the college. Education is compulsory until the age of 16, but this age does not correspond to the end of the cycle, as education generally continues at the High School. In a general High School, education lasts three years

(seconde, première, terminale). This course of study leads to the general Baccalaureate.

- **With regard to the amount of time spent in college**, all students have a compulsory 26 hours of teaching per week, to which may be added an optional course.

Table 16 : Number of weekly teaching hours for compulsory courses in the college in France

N°	SUBJECTS	CLASSE			
		6ème	5ème	4ème	3ème
01	French	4h30	4h30	4h30	04h
02	Mathematics	4h30	3h30	3h30	3h30
03	History-geography-moral and civic education	03h	03h	03h	3h30
04	Modern language 1	04h	03h	03h	03h
05	Modern language 2	-	2h30	2h30	2h30
06	Life and earth sciences	04h	1h30h	1h30	1h30
07	Physical sciences		1h30h	1h30	1h30
08	Technology		1h30h	1h30	1h30
09	Physical and sports education	04h	03h	03h	03h
10	Plastic arts	01h	01h	01h	01h
11	Musical education	01h	01h	01h	01h
Total		26h	26h	26h	26h

Source : www.education.gouv.fr

Thus, from the 6eme to 3eme, the amount of time is regular (26 hours). This gives sufficient time for the development of extra and extracurricular activities.

d. The example of Finland/Federal Republic of Germany

One of the fundamental principles of the Finnish education system is that every child should have access to quality education and training. Thus, just like primary education, Finnish secondary education aims at maximizing the potential of each student. In fact, secondary education is made up of general education and vocational education (which is not taken into account in this analysis).

Admission to the general high school is mainly based on the grades obtained in the Basic Education Certificate. Completion of the second level of general education gives the right to admission to higher education.

- **Organization of general second level education (high school)** : At the high school, organization is flexible. The program is designed to last three years, but students can complete their studies in two or four years. At the end of the first cycle (first level studies), the student obtains a certificate of general secondary education. This certificate gives the student access to second level studies.

- The second level of education takes place over three years and culminates in the Baccalauréat examination. This national examination consists of four compulsory papers: *mother tongue, and three papers chosen among the following: second national language, foreign language, mathematics or general studies.*
- In Finland, the year is divided into five seven-week periods; where one six-week period is devoted to study, one week to evaluate all that has been learned during the past period.

e) The example of the Federal Republic of Germany

Education in Germany is a domain that falls under the jurisdiction of the "Länder". In the Cameroonian context it is equivalent to the CTDs (Regions and Councils). While the government defines the policy in education, it is up to each "Länder" to determine the modalities of its implementation taking into account its local peculiarities. **There is no Ministry in charge of education.**

As a result, the German education system is based on the concept of "**Bildung**", meaning: combining the acquisition of knowledge with self-development.

1. The Primary level

Called **Grundchule**, the primary level in Germany lasts 04 years. It goes from CP to CM1. At the end of class 4 (CM1), there is no diploma and 04 courses are offered to learners. However, it should be noted that the child, his parents and teachers decide together on the appropriate educational option.

With regard to the weekly and daily rhythm, classes take place from Monday to Friday (very rarely on Saturday). They last 45 minutes, start between 7:30 and 8:00 a.m. depending on the "Länder", and end between 1:00 and 1:30 p.m. or between 3:00 and 3:30 p.m. (depending on the day and the subjects chosen). **There are never more than two afternoons of classes in a week.** The rest of the day is mainly devoted to sports, extracurricular activities (clubs, art, etc.).

2. The secondary level

At the end of the primary level, 03 courses (or branches) are offered to learners at the secondary level :

- a) The « **Hauptschule** » or general secondary school

It lasts 5 years (grades 5 to 9/10) and is directed at students who do not intend to pursue higher education (but often a rather manual profession). At the end of their schooling, they obtain a certificate that allows them to continue their education or to start working. For highly motivated students with above-average results, it is possible to study up to the "*Mittlere Reife*" or even up to the "Baccalaureate", a course of study that is mainly possible at a "*Gesamtschule*". Diploma: "*Berufsbildungsreife*".

- b) The "**Realschule**" or secondary school

It lasts 6 years (classes 5 to 10). After passing the "*Mittlere Reife*" exam, students can take various paths: first, it is possible to do an apprenticeship for 3 years. However, if they wish to continue studies, they can attend the "*Fachoberschule*" to obtain a professional Baccalaureate or the "*gymnasiale Oberstufe*" (at the "*Gymnasium*") to obtain a general Baccalaureate, both of which allow them to access higher education.

Diploma: "*Mittlere Reife*"

- c) The "**Gymnasium**" or College/High School

It lasts 8 or 9 years (grades 5 to 12/13) and prepares students for higher education. It ends with the "Allgemeine Hochschulreife" (= General baccalaureate known as **Abitur**). The total duration (8 or 9 years) that students spend at the "**Gymnasium**" depends on the legislation of federal states.

Diploma: "*Allgemeine Hochschulreife*"

In some Länder, these three branches of study are grouped together in a single school: Gesamtschule or comprehensive school (grades 5 to 12/13), and there are in all cases bridges from one branch of study to the other.

Table 17 : Overview of the secondary education system

Comparison Criteria	Cameroon ⁴²	Marocco	South Korea	France	Finland	République Fédérale d'Allemagne
Distribution according to levels of study	1 st Cycle 2 nd Cycle	College education Vocational secondary education	Grade 7 to 9 (College) Grade 10 to 12 (High school)	1er cycle Collège Lycée/2 ^e cycle	1st degree studies 2nd degree studies	03 parcours (1) 05 ans (2) 06 ans (3) 09 ans
End of cycle diploma	BEPC/GCE OL Baccalauréat / GCE AL	BEC Baccalauréat ESG	Baccalauréat (Suneung)	Brevet Baccalauréat	Certificat d'études Baccalauréat	
Number of classes (years)	07	06	06	07	06	Maximum 09
Number of students per class	60	27	26	26	20	
Number of teaching days per week	05 days and above	06 jours	06 days	4,5 days	05 days	
Number of hours per week	34h and above	[33h-35h]	50h	26h	30h	

Source : CAMERCAP-PARC

Beyond some similarities with the countries taken as examples, particularly in terms of the distribution by level of study and the diplomas obtained at the end of the cycle, Cameroon has an educational model that is very different from these four countries at the secondary level.

- **On the number of students** : the norm in Cameroon is 60 students per class, while in other countries, the number of students is generally set at less than 30 per class. However, this number in Cameroon, which seems to us to be already excessive, is practically and generally exceeded; a good number of public and private establishments accept more than 60 students per class, sometimes up to 100 or more!

- **On the number of hours and the number of subjects** : France adopts a weekly volume of 26 hours for seven (07) core subjects and some optional subjects (02). While secondary schools in Cameroon offer more than 15 subjects (including core, complementary and optional), for more than 30 hours of classes per week to students. The practice of having classes on Saturdays, sometimes right into the afternoon ⁴³, is increasingly deplored.

Curiously, Cameroon, which inherited the French educational model, continues to bear the heavy burden of colonization. And yet, France itself has already dropped this model to join the Anglo-Saxon model. Cameroon, on the other hand, seems to **privilege the accumulation of knowledge to the detriment of skills**, which does not prepare students to a better socio-professional integration once they leave school.

⁴² - Taking into account the two subsystems of education in Cameroon (English and French)

⁴⁴ - Day dedicated to evaluations in the Catholic Colleges of Yaoundé

Textbox 5 : The crisis of school and academic orientation: the role of the Guidance Counselor

Among the teaching personnel in the Colleges and High Schools of Cameroon, there is a Guidance Counselor. His main mission is to ensure the academic orientation of the learner, not forgetting the latter's psychological assistance. However, in the field, their work is hardly visible, not only with regard to the behavior of students, but also and especially in light of the crisis of school and academic orientation. When choices are not guided by prejudices or followership, they are dictated by the aspirations of parents (who would like to see their children mirror their wishes or their "missed" life. All this without taking into account the aspirations, potentials and shortcomings of the child. It is often deplorable when you ask a graduate about his or her future studies. The most common answers are: "I don't know", "I'm still waiting for what mom and/or dad will decide", etc.

43 - En tenant compte des deux sous-systèmes d'enseignement au Cameroun (anglophone et francophone)

44 - Journée consacrée aux évaluations dans les Collèges catholiques de Yaoundé

CHAPTER 5 : WHAT IS THE WAY OUT ?

A BREAKAWAY APPROACH : BREAKING TO UNLOCK AND NOT TO DESTROY

An ancient popular wisdom teaches that you cannot eat your cake and have it. In other words, for gold to be purified and acquire more value, it must go through fire, the smelter at very high temperatures.

Our proposal of breaking away does not aim at breaking to destroy, but to open new and "promising" horizons for Cameroon. For that, we are drawing inspiration from a prospective approach used by those who succeed and who for the moment are the model as regards economic and social development: the United States of America, first world power in 2022 and 2023.

"At each American presidential election, the National Intelligence Council (NIC), the forward-looking brain of the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA), submits a report to the newly elected US President on the world of the future. This synthesis is based on the analyses of best experts. The 2022 report, which envisages the world of 2040, announces upheavals, in one generation, such as no other has experienced before, in the fields of climate, connectivity, biotechnology and artificial intelligence. It also draws more fragmented societies, under tension, confronted with threats and unlimited challenges. [...] . Will technology be able to mitigate the effects of climate change? Which countries will determine the course of the coming decades? [...]"

We had the opportunity to go through the report published in early 2022, whose cover page is presented here.

The report as a whole ignores Africa in its analyses. No perspective is given to it in a singular and particular way. The black continent does not seem to count for the American strategists of the American National Intelligence Council, except Nigeria because of its projected demographic weight, which will make it an

indisputable "world giant" [...].

To better understand how these conditions might evolve differently over the next 20 years, the authors developed scenarios describing a range of possible futures on a global scale. Three key questions helped shape these scenarios.

What is the severity of the global challenges lying ahead ?

1. **How do non-state actors engage in the world, with what focus and type of engagement?**
2. **Lastly, what are the priorities of States for the future?**

From these questions, five plausible scenarios were identified that illustrate the future. Each reflects the key themes of *shared global challenges, fragmentation, disease, adaptation, and increased contestation*.

- Three scenarios describe the future in which international challenges progressively worsen and interactions are largely defined by U.S.-China rivalry: (a) the United States is leading a resurgence of democracies, (b) China is leading but does not dominate the world, and (c) the United States and China are prosperous and competing for leadership in an unstable world.
- Two other scenarios describe more radical changes. Both arise from particularly severe international disorders and challenge assumptions about the world system. The U.S.-China rivalry is less central to these scenarios, as both states are forced to confront greater and more severe global challenges and realise that current structures are not adequate to meet these challenges.

The real question according to us, in view of these analyses, is to know what will be the place of Cameroon in the projected world competition in 2030, 2035, and 2040. How does the country prepare itself, or better still how does it prepare its children to compete with their Asian and Western counterparts? How to avoid being spectators and "passive followers" in the fight for survival which is expected to be tough in the era of artificial intelligence (AI), of augmented reality, of additive manufacturing, and of other issues and realities of the world to come that is already taking place before our eyes?

Could the current education system prepare them for that ?

The overall objective of the pillar on the transformation of the conceptual model of the education/training sector, proposed in the strategy of breaking up with the past⁴⁵ is to offer education and training that aims at and results in solving the development problems of Cameroon and the sub-region. To do this, the option of STE (Science, Technology, Engineering / Innovation) is essential. This was, moreover, one of the main resolutions of the high-level forum organized during the 27th annual session of the ACBF Board of Governors in 2014⁴⁶ and included in Cameroon's NDS30⁴⁷.

So the fundamental questions here are: *Where do we stand now? And where do we want to be by 2030 and 2035? Double deadlines of the NDS30 and the Vision.*

By 2030 and 2035, Cameroon should have a school that satisfies social demand. Social demand can be defined as a set of human needs necessary for survival and development. It can be expressed (health, nutrition, education, housing, communication, roads, etc.) or not expressed (not identified, not well known or not defined). In fact, by adopting a demand-based approach, the redesign of the educational

45 - See study on «l'évaluation des besoins en renforcement des capacités en vue de la transformation économique du Cameroun», Cameracap-Parc, série: Études #8, décembre 2018.

46 - The theme of the forum was: Youths employment in Africa: Reinforcing essential skills. 27th annual session of the Board of Governors of the ACBF, 19-20 July 2018, Yaoundé-Cameroon.

47 - VFor reference, see Aspiration 6 of the African Union 2063 Agenda, «The Africa that we want »..

model is based on the principle that the training offer should lead to a set of job references based on socio-cultural entrenchment. It would therefore be necessary to give priority to the support of the CTDs, which are in contact with the populations every day and could be the ideal partner for the model of the education system to be promoted.

Ultimately, it is for Cameroon to have **human resources with the necessary skills to lead Cameroon to the stage of an emerging country.**

This macro outcome is expected to be achieved through the following specific objectives, among others :

- i. *Restructure and harmonize Cameroon's two educational subsystems and revise the evaluation systems;*
- ii. *Establish a regionalization of the academic poles according to the division into agro-ecological zones;*
- iii. *Professionalize teaching from the primary level;*
- iv. *Give priority to scientific and technological training (STEM/STI);*
- v. *Prioritize training in citizenship and ethics at all levels of the school curriculum, starting with basic education.*

However, the achievement of these objectives requires the identification of the essential capacity deficits required. Thus, the capacity deficits identified to achieve this breakthrough can be broken down into the 04 dimensions of capacity building, as follows :

- a) **At the institutional level** : A juxtaposition of two centrally managed educational subsystems in the same geographical space consecrated by a unitary and decentralized State, whose aims no longer meet the development needs of the population ;
- b) **At the organizational level** : An organizational model of teaching and training contents not adapted to local needs and requirements of development and world evolution. Leaving our country behind and in a state of structural poverty ;

- c) **At the human level** : Insufficient human resources in terms of quantity and skills to ensure this transition of the educational model; and
- d) **At the socio-cultural level** : This breakthrough approach will require turning our backs on the current colonial/neo-colonial training model to embrace a new model that corresponds to an endogenous approach to development.

Therefore, in order to have a school that responds to the constraints of emergence by 2035, CAMERCAP-PARC has set out 03 vectors of methodological considerations, namely :

- 5) An approach based on capacity building;
- 6) The division of agro-ecological zones;
- 7) Modeling the construction of training/learning contents

5.1. An approach based on capacity building, according to the African Capacity Building Foundation (ACBF)

One of the conditions for success, if not the first, will be to depart from inertia strongly decried by the highest authorities of the country. It is necessary to start now and to have the flexibility to rectify the situation along the way, once deviations from the trajectory have been noted.

a. On institutional capacities

Beyond the revamping and updating of the school orientation law, it is more than timely that bilingualism be henceforth integral and integrated, while ensuring the specificities of the teaching types of the two subsystems (English and French).

b. On organizational capacities: the functioning of the system and operational mechanisms

The core of the reform, which will mark the break away, is the division of the country into academic regions corresponding to agro-ecological zones. This

is a functional organization that does not upset the administrative organization of the territory in terms of institutions and decentralization. Morocco and Germany, the two cases studies, are experimenting it at different levels.

The training and teaching modules will be determined according to the needs identified by the CTDs, the potentials, assets and development constraints of each agro-ecological zone previously defined. The modes and models of financing, the necessary logistics and operating mechanisms will be described in strategic plans integrated into the agricultural zones and academic regions.

c. On human resources: optimizing skills beyond knowledge

This is the beginning and the end of the reform through rupture. As an entry point, the new educational model will require the development of the skill-based approach.

Beforehand, an estimate of the skills (human resources) needed to achieve the sustainable development objectives of each region must be made. The regional academy will be responsible for the initial and continuous training in relation to the resources available in time. At the end, the regional academy will have to provide the national community (but primarily local) with quality human resources, equipped with essential skills to solve local and national development problem.

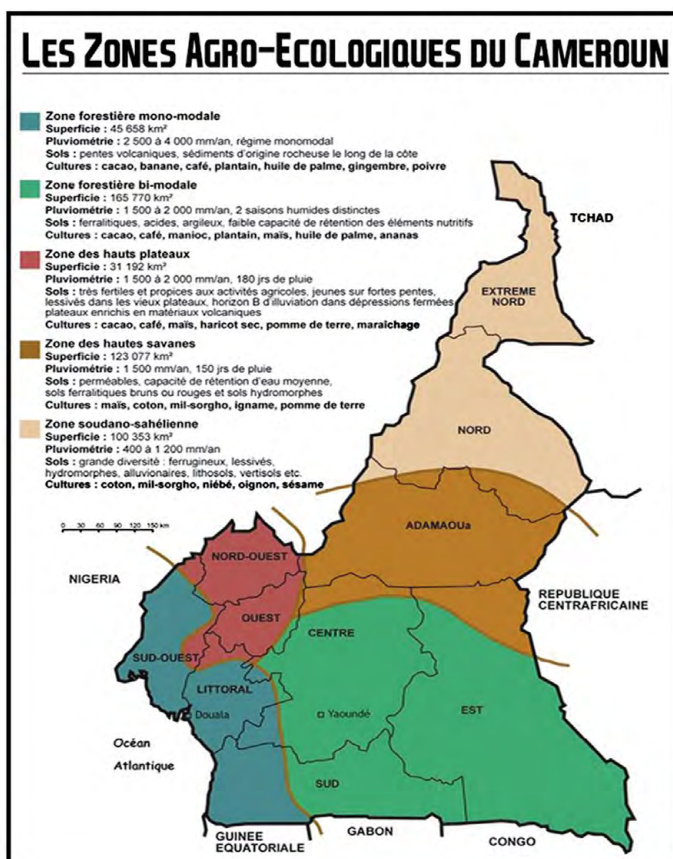
d. Socio-cultural entrenchment: an initial data that reflects the social demand related to agro-ecological zones

It is the ultimate expression of "self-reflective" local development, as aimed by the philosophy of the decentralization process. The development objectives are defined by the local populations, the education system produces the competent human resources to transform the assets and modify the constraints into goods and services (to achieve the objectives) through an adequate productive system using adapted technologies. The economic governance system ensures a fair and equitable redistribution, for a sustainable and inclusive development.

5.2. The breakdown of agro-ecological zones and regional academies

It is about dividing the territory into zones according to the criteria of agro-ecological proximity, anthropological and cultural similarities. For the sake of efficiency, we could therefore have 04 to 05 agro-ecological zones. (See figure below).

Figure 3 : Breakdown of Cameroon into agro-ecological zones



5.3. Mapping the training/learning contents

The idea is to carry out a diagnosis that will highlight the assets and development constraints specific to each area, and then translate them directly or indirectly into development results.

a) Streamlining/standardizing the 02 education subsystems in Cameroon :

- Through the practice of **integral bilingualism** at all levels of education by making all learners fully bilingual. The two official languages thus become the languages of teaching-learning and the languages of education for each learner in accordance with the Constitution which stipulates that the two languages are of equal value; and
- Through the **harmonization of theories, techniques (practices) and teaching-learning strategies of both subsystems.**

The expected result of this rupture will be a fully bilingual Cameroonian educational system (Cf. Constitution of the Republic), focused on the development of skills that provide solutions to the development concerns of the country and open to the world.

a) Strengthening health, life, well-being and citizenship education

By making learners have respect for the public good, the importance of living together and discipline, we would end up with a Cameroonian school that produces morally sound and balanced citizens, respectful of the public good, with a sense of the common good, concerned about the importance of living together and discipline.

CONCLUSION

Which school for Cameroon's emergence? Answering this question is very challenging as we are more than 150 months away from the implementation of Cameroon's emergence program and as the expected results are still pending. Cameroon's education system is dysfunctional and the analysis made in the primary and general secondary cycle in this document speaks volumes about it. In order for the Cameroonian school to play a driving role towards emergence, it is important to adapt it to the new challenges that arise.

In the end, what steps do we take to emerge out of the tunnel?

The preceding analyses and comments invite us to break with the past and present of our educational system, particularly in the primary and secondary cycles, which will lead to inevitable changes in higher education.

Too much teaching is given to learners, and its effectiveness is uncertain and questionable. The greatness of a man, a community or a nation lies in the capacity to question itself and to rise from the ashes. **The Comeback that the Indomitable Lions soccer team** have always displayed is the best proof. Resilience is no longer enough and cannot be equated with the objective of taking off towards emergence.

If popular wisdom teaches that you don't change a winning team, the mathematical opposite should also be admitted: a team that does not win must be changed!

Let's copy and adapt to the local context and our own development agendas, light, targeted, relevant and therefore effective school programs.

While following the directions of Vision 2035, NDS30 and SSET to prioritize STEM, one of the innovations/proposals to dare could be to limit ourselves to Group 1 subjects per class as determined by the specialists, to which we would add 02 or 03 other subjects from Group 2.

The ball is now in the court of specialists of educational technologies.

Our pro-action and our mission is to trigger the debate.

Evaluate - Dare - Innovate -/-

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