

**Universal Periodic Review**  
**(16<sup>th</sup> session, spring 2013, from 22 April – 3 May 2013)**  
**Contribution of UNESCO**

(The countries to be reviewed are, in this order: Turkmenistan, Burkina Faso, Cape Verde, Colombia, Uzbekistan, Tuvalu, Germany, Djibouti, Canada, Bangladesh, Russian Federation, Azerbaijan, Cameroon, and Cuba. Each submission should refer to one country only)

**Cameroon**

**I. BACROUND AND FRAMEWORK**

**1. Human rights treaties which fall within the competence of UNESCO and international instruments adopted by UNESCO**

I.1. Table:

<i>Title</i>	<i>Date of ratification, accession or succession</i>	<i>Declarations /reservations</i>	<i>Recognition of specific competences of treaty bodies</i>	<i>Reference to the rights within UNESCO's fields of competence</i>
Convention against Discrimination in Education (1960)	Not state party to Convention	<i>Reservations to this Convention shall not be permitted</i>		Right to education
Convention on Technical and Vocational Education. (1989)	Not state party to Convention			Right to education
Convention concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage (1972)	Ratified 07/12/1982			Right to take part in cultural life
Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage (2003)	Not state party to Convention			Right to take part in cultural life
Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions (2005)	Accession 22/11/2006			Right to take part in cultural life

**II. Promotion and protection of human rights on the ground**

## 1. Right to education<sup>1</sup>

### Normative Framework:

2. Constitutional framework: The Constitution of Cameroon from 1996<sup>2</sup>, revised by law the 14th of April, 2008<sup>3</sup>, recognizes the Right to Education in its preamble stating that the state assures the Right to Education and instruction. Primary education is compulsory. Organization and control of education are obligations of the state. Moreover, according to the same preamble, the people of Cameroon affirm their attachment to the fundamental freedoms that are conveyed in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights that recognizes the Right to Education in Article 26, as well as the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights, that recognizes the Right to Education in Article 17.

3. Legislative framework: The general legal framework is established by the Law on the Orientation of Education n° 98/004 from the 14th of April 1998.<sup>4</sup> This law concerns the two educational sub-systems (Anglophone and Francophone) and it is applicable to preschool, primary and secondary, as well as technical and normal education.<sup>5</sup> Article 9 stipulates that primary education is compulsory. Furthermore, in Article 7 of the law stipulates that the states guarantee equality of chances in access to education, without discrimination based on sex, political, philosophical or religious opinion, social, cultural, linguistic, or geographic origin. Article 9 guarantees that the education is non-confessional and neutral and independent with regard to all religions.<sup>6</sup>

4. The Law n° 005 from the 16th of April, 2001<sup>7</sup> about the orientation of higher education determines the orientation, organization, financing and control of superior education, private as well as public.<sup>8</sup>

5. The Law n° 2004/022 of the 22nd July 2004<sup>9</sup>, contains the regulation on the organization and function of private education in Cameroon. The law has implied a fundamental reform of private education.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Sources:

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.la-constitution-en-afrique.org/article-13904343.html>

<sup>3</sup> [http://www.prc.cm/pdf/loi\\_n\\_2008\\_001\\_du\\_14\\_avril\\_2008.pdf](http://www.prc.cm/pdf/loi_n_2008_001_du_14_avril_2008.pdf)

<sup>4</sup> <http://portal.unesco.org/education/en/files/12704/10434093270Cameroun1.doc/Cameroun1.doc>

<sup>5</sup> International Bureau of Education (IBE), Cameroon, Profile of the Educational System, <http://www.ibe.unesco.org/fr/dans-le-monde/afrique/cameroun/profile-of-education.html>

<sup>6</sup> Cameroon's report regarding the application of the Recommendation against Discrimination in Education, the 7<sup>th</sup> Consultation (the period 2000-2005), August 2006, p. 3

<sup>7</sup> <http://portal.unesco.org/education/en/files/12705/10434095450Cameroun2.doc/Cameroun2.doc> , [http://www.minesup.gov.cm/index.php?option=com\\_content&task=view&id=108&Itemid=50](http://www.minesup.gov.cm/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=108&Itemid=50) (the 17th September 2010)

<sup>8</sup> IBE, Cameroun, Profile of the Educational System, op. cit.

<sup>9</sup> [http://www.spm.gov.cm/index\\_ac.php?param=documentation&d=354&t=dss&&lang=fr](http://www.spm.gov.cm/index_ac.php?param=documentation&d=354&t=dss&&lang=fr) (17th of September 2010)

6. Among other regulations that are related to education, the following can be cited:
- a) the Decree of 5th December 2000 about the status of teachers;
  - b) the Presidential Decree of 19th of February, 2001 about the organization of public and private school establishments and determining the responsibilities of the educational administration;
  - c) the ministerial order of 16th of February, 2001 about the organization of evaluative systems and examinations;
  - d) the Ministerial order about the reform of the *First School-leaving Certificate* and the Ministerial order about the reform of the examination for the Certificate of elementary studies<sup>11</sup>;
  - e) the Decree n° 20041340 of the 8th of December 2004 that divided the Ministry of Education into two departments; one minister for Basic Education and another for Secondary Education<sup>12</sup>;
  - f) the Decree n° 20051140 of the 25th of April, 2005 about the Department of Basic Education is the only text that makes an allusion to non-formal basic education in chapter II, article 26, paragraph 1, point 8<sup>13</sup>;
  - g) the Order n° 201/PM of the 8th November, 2007 that establishes how the program “Education for All” should be executed in Cameroon. The principal objective is to implement the program as it is defined in the Dakar Framework for Action which emerged from the World Education Forum held in 2000.<sup>14</sup>

Policy measures:

7. Non-Formal Education: The goal of non-formal education for literacy has been redefined after a better understanding of the needs of the people in remote areas, displaced people, and illiterate people. The collaboration with certain NGO’s to implement Education on a non-formal Basis (EBNF) has been helpful.<sup>15</sup> There are Centres of Education on the Basis of non-formal Education (CEBNF) as well as Preschool Community Centres (CPC) that are characterized by their flexibility so that learners in the non-formal sector have the same chances to access a quality education as children have in the formal sector.<sup>16</sup>

8. Higher Education: The objective of the launch of the Program of Support of the Technical and Professional Element in higher education is to maximize the offer of higher education in the medical and technology sector by constructing Sciences and Medicine faculties.<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>10</sup> National Rapport on the development of Education, op. cit., p. 16.

<sup>11</sup> IBE, Cameroon, Profile of the Educational System, op. cit.

<sup>12</sup> Cameroon’s National Report on the Development of Education, op. cit., p. 17.

<sup>13</sup> Ibid., p. 29.

<sup>14</sup> Ibid., p. 16.

<sup>15</sup> Ibid., p. 6.

<sup>16</sup> Cameroon’s report regarding the application of the Recommendation against Discrimination in Education, the 7<sup>th</sup> Consultation (the period 2000-2005), August 2006, p. 3

<sup>17</sup> Ibid., p. 11

9. Professional Teaching: Cameroon also aims to improve the professionalization of teaching with the creation of new courses of study and signing new conventions of partnership with the professional world in order to assure work-linked training.<sup>18</sup> The department for Employment and Professional Training carries out The Professionalizing Training of students of the Traditional Crafts and the House holding Services (SAR/SM) as well as the supervision of all the training centres in this domain in order to guarantee employment of young persons.<sup>19</sup> Moreover the Program Supporting the reform of Technical and Professional Training (PARETFOP) has been put into place.<sup>20</sup>

10. Literacy: Since 2005 an operation managed by the Program of National Literacy (PNA), whose activities are financed by the Resources to Poor Countries in Debt (PPTE), has boosted literacy of youth and adults outside of the formal educational system. In interim midterm, it is anticipated that 50% of illiteracy will be reduced. The number of illiterate people in Cameroon that should become literate by 2015, is 2 500 000. This program fights against poverty, social and cultural exclusion through the Centres of Functional Literacy in rural zones (CAF).<sup>21</sup>

#### Inclusive Education

11. Children with Disabilities: The education of children with disabilities is assured by three types of establishments:

- i) the centres for re-education in which the children receive, apart from medical care, an education adapted to their intellectual level;
- ii) specialized establishments that have a responsibility for children with visual or hearing impediments;
- iii) sections or Special Classes annexed to certain formal establishments.<sup>22</sup>

12. Education of Girls and Women: In 2004, the government established a Ministry for the Promotion of Women and the Family, which is in charge of promoting women's rights and equality between the sexes.<sup>23</sup> This Ministry affirms that forced marriages are an obstacle to the Right to Education. Furthermore, Centres of Promotion of Women and Family have been created throughout the territory in favour of women and young girls.<sup>24</sup> Finally, measures have been taken in collaboration with NGO's and other private partners to promote equality between the sexes. For example, school books have been revised to exclude stereotypes. There are also collaborations about increasing male admission to the education program that

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<sup>18</sup> Ibid., p. 10

<sup>19</sup> Ibid., p. 12

<sup>20</sup> Cameroon's National Report on the Development of Education, op. cit., p. 25

<sup>21</sup> Cameroon's National Report on the Development of Education, op. cit., p. 26

<sup>22</sup> Cameroon's National Report on the Development of Education, op. cit., p. 14

<sup>23</sup> Working Group Report on the UPR, Cameroon, 2009, p. 3,

<http://daccess-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/G09/163/97/PDF/G0916397.pdf?OpenElement>

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[http://www.prc.cm/index\\_fr.php?link=dossiers/XXIIleme%20\\_journee\\_internationale\\_de\\_la\\_femme](http://www.prc.cm/index_fr.php?link=dossiers/XXIIleme%20_journee_internationale_de_la_femme)

trains men in assisting in nursery (l'ONG PLAN CAMEROUN, FAWECAM).<sup>25</sup>

13. Languages in Education: Since 2008 education in national languages is emphasized by the Minister of Basic Education (MINESEC). A Department of Cultures and National Languages has also been created at l'Ecole Normale Supérieure in Yaoundé.<sup>26</sup> The usage of native languages is encouraged.<sup>27</sup>

### Quality

14. System of Evaluation: A reform of the evaluation system of student knowledge is planned.<sup>28</sup> To enhance the quality of education, specialists in evaluation of programs, school books and material will be trained.<sup>29</sup>

15. Environment of Education: Cameroon intends to improve the offer of education by focusing on new infrastructure.<sup>30</sup>

16. Moreover, the government plans to introduce ICT in Education to improve the quality of education and permit a system of distance learning.<sup>31</sup>

17. Work on the construction of student housing has commenced with 800 beds in the campus of Ngoa Ekele.<sup>32</sup>

18. Another initiative started by students is the production of Pedagogic material fabricated with local material. Weeks of evaluation during the school year is also planned.<sup>33</sup>

19. Cameroon puts in place a policy of school books by opening the market for competition. School books and manuals are also distributed to the students and teachers in zones of educational priority (ZEP).<sup>34</sup>

20. The Training and Status of Teachers: It is a goal to put an accent on continued formation and decentralization. Moreover, the teachers will be trained in New Pedagogic Approaches (NAP).<sup>35</sup> The government has also taken measures to improve the conditions of

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<sup>25</sup> Cameroon's report regarding the application of the Recommendation against Discrimination in Education, the 7<sup>th</sup> Consultation (the period 2000-2005), August 2006, p. 4

<sup>26</sup> Cameroon's National Report on the Development of Education, op. cit., p. 15

<sup>27</sup> Cameroon's National Report on the Development of Education, op. cit., p. 28

<sup>28</sup> Cameroon's National Report on the Development of Education, October 2008, p.15

<sup>29</sup> Ibid.

<sup>30</sup> Cameroon's National Report on the Development of Education, op. cit., p. 10

<sup>31</sup> Ibid., op. cit., p. 10

<sup>32</sup> Ibid., op. cit., p. 12

<sup>33</sup> Ibid., op. cit., p. 15

<sup>34</sup> Ibid., op. cit., p. 18

<sup>35</sup> Ibid., op. cit., p. 19

teachers through Decree 2002/040 from the 4<sup>th</sup> of February, 2002.<sup>36</sup>

21. School Programmes: The promotion of Human Rights and the fight against HIV/AIDS is an integrated part of the new curriculum.<sup>37</sup> Pedagogic material on Human Rights directed to elementary teachers has been written.<sup>38</sup>

#### Cooperation:

22. Cameroon is not party to 1960 UNESCO's Convention against Discrimination in Education and did not report to UNESCO for the Seventh Consultation on the measures taken for the implementation of the Recommendation against Discrimination in Education (covering the period 2000-2005).

23. Cameroon is not party to 1989 UNESCO's Convention on Technical and Vocational Education.

24. Cameroon did not report within the framework of the fourth consultation of Member States the measures taken for the implementation of the 1974 UNESCO's Recommendation concerning Education for International Understanding, Co-operation and Peace and Education relating to Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms (covering the period 2005-2008).

## **2. Right to take part in cultural life<sup>39</sup>**

### Achievements, challenges, best practices and constraints in the implementation of the right to cultural life

25. Normative Framework: constitutional and legislative frameworks: The implementation of the Right to take part in cultural life is guaranteed by the first Constitution of the Republic of Cameroon of 1972, and re-affirmed by the Constitution of 14 April 2008. Decree N°62/DF/108 of 31 March 1962 sets up federal linguistic and cultural centres, created for research, inventory, preservation and dissemination of Cameroon's national cultures. Federal Law No. 63-22 of 19 June 1963 provides for the protection of monuments, objects and sites of historical or artistic value. Law No. 2000/011 of 19 December 2008 on Copyright and related rights, as well as the 2001 Decree laying down detailed rules for the application of the said Act, are all standards that regulate the right to cultural life in Cameroon.

26. Institutional framework: The Ministry of Information and Culture established in 1972 (that became the Ministry of Arts and Culture in 2011) plays a privileged role in the promotion of culture and the right to cultural life. The National Council of Cultural Affairs chaired by the President of the Republic is in charge of defining guidelines for national cultural policies. The Ministry of Culture is responsible for the definition and implementation of cultural policy development, and for the promotion and dissemination of culture (protection, conservation, enhancement and promotion of cultural heritage, museums,

<sup>36</sup> Cameroon's report regarding the application of the Recommendation against Discrimination in Education, the 7<sup>th</sup> Consultation (the period 2000-2005), August 2006, p. 7

<sup>37</sup> Cameroon's National Report on the Development of Education, op. cit., p. 10

<sup>38</sup> National Report for the Human Rights Council, December 2008, p. 12, [http://lib.ohchr.org/HRBodies/UPR/Documents/Session4/CM/A\\_HRC\\_WG6\\_4\\_CMR\\_1\\_F.PDF](http://lib.ohchr.org/HRBodies/UPR/Documents/Session4/CM/A_HRC_WG6_4_CMR_1_F.PDF)

<sup>39</sup> Sources :

libraries and national archives, and movies). It ensures the expansion of bilingualism, and coordinates cooperation and contacts between the government and copyright organizations as well as specialized public cultural institutions (National Theatre, National Ballet, National Orchestra, National Archives, National Cinemathèque etc.).

27. Policy measures: The elaboration of a national cultural policy is an ongoing process that began after the independence. The Ministry of Arts and Culture has set up in March 2010 an internal Technical Committee whose mission is to adapt all the texts governing the sector of culture to current international standards. After a thorough review of all existing texts, a draft law orientating the future cultural policy has been developed and is being processed. Several other texts related to culture are undergoing the same process (sponsorship, archives, etc.).

28. Work with civil society: The Ministry of Arts and Culture ensures contact between the government and specialized associations such as the Civil Society of Copyright, Arts and Graphs, the Civil Society of audio-visual and photographic arts, the Cameroon Society of Musical Art, the Civil Society of Human Rights literature and drama. Collaboration between the government and civil society contributes to the emergence of a real emulation of the rights of citizens in cultural life. Civil society organizations also actively participate in the implementation of conventions in their respective areas. Civil society organizations also actively participate in the implementation of the 1972 World Heritage Convention. The role and contribution of civil society is not limited to the control of the implementation of the conventions' provisions, but also extends to the development of legal standards, awareness of local communities through participatory processes in relation to the challenges related to the preservation and management of cultural and natural heritage. Civil society is also actively involved in the implementation of the 2003 Convention on the Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage, which assigns a key role to individuals, groups and communities in the identification and safeguarding of their intangible cultural heritage. As such, its implementation at the local level is largely achieved through traditional rulers.

### **3. Freedom of opinion and expression<sup>40</sup>**

#### Achievements, best practices, challenges and constraints

##### Legislative framework

29. The Constitution of Cameroon<sup>41</sup> : “ *affirms its attachment to...the freedom of expression, the freedom of the press, the freedom of assembly, the freedom of association, and the freedom of trade-unions are guaranteed under the conditions fixed by the law.*”

30. Defamation remains criminalized under article 305 of the Penal Code<sup>42</sup> with high fines and imprisonment of up to six months. Furthermore, under Articles 152-154 defamation against the President of the Republic and other public figures contains punishment of imprisonment of up to five years.

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<sup>40</sup> Sources :

<sup>41</sup> <http://www.prc.cm/instit/consti.htm>

<sup>42</sup> [http://www.vertic.org/media/National%20Legislation/Cameroon/CM\\_Code\\_Penal\\_Cameroun.pdf](http://www.vertic.org/media/National%20Legislation/Cameroon/CM_Code_Penal_Cameroun.pdf)

31. No freedom of information law has been adopted in Cameroon.
32. Media self-regulation: Media self-regulation is not well-developed in Cameroon. There exists the Cameroon Media Council (CMC), which was originally established by the Cameroon Union of Journalists (CUJ) in 2005 but currently receives some funding from the Ministry of Communication, which gives rise to concerns of its independence.
33. Safety of journalists: The Director General of UNESCO condemned the killing of Editor Ngota Ngota Germain in April 2010. So far government has not provided information on the results of investigation of this crime. In addition, there continue to be reported intimidations, arrests, and imprisonments of journalists and media workers in the country<sup>43</sup>.

### **III. RECOMMENDATIONS**

#### **Right to education**

34. Cameroon should be encouraged to ratify the 1960 Convention against Discrimination in Education.
35. UNESCO has recently launched the 8th Consultation on the measures taken for the implementation of the Convention and Recommendation against Discrimination in Education (covering the period 2006-2011), the results of this Consultation will be submitted to UNESCO's governing bodies at the end of 2013. Cameroon has not yet reported to UNESCO on the Recommendation and is now strongly encouraged to submit a report.
36. Cameroon could be encouraged to adopt further measures (e.g. special laws) which aim to combat discrimination in education, protect minority groups, combat illiteracy, and promote gender equality.

#### **Right to take part in cultural life**

37. The implementation of UNESCO's conventions and compliance with them are sometimes under the scope of several departments and the coordination of the Ministry of External Relations. Greater synergy and frank collaboration between different stakeholders should fully achieve the objectives.

#### **Freedom of opinion and expression**

38. The Government is encouraged to begin the process to introduce a freedom of information law.
39. The Government is encouraged to decriminalize the defamation law and subsequently incorporate it fully into the civil code in accordance with international standards.

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<sup>43</sup> <http://www.guardian.co.uk/media/greenslade/2011/feb/24/press-freedom-cameroon>



40. UNESCO recommends strengthening capacity in the field of journalism standards and ethics to develop the media self-regulatory mechanism both for media professionals and policy-makers.

41. The Government must ensure that journalists and media workers are able to practice in a free and safe environment as part of their fundamental human rights and to therefore investigate all attacks on journalists and media workers and take appropriate steps to prevent impunity.

**The right to enjoy the benefits of scientific progress and  
its applications (REBSP)**

42. The Government of Cameroon is encouraged to report to UNESCO within the framework of the on-going consultation with Member States on the monitoring of the implementation of the 1974 Recommendation on the Status of Scientific Researchers.