

# Know Your Civic Rights and Obligations as a Youth

"Promoting Youth Advocacy on Civil Rights  
Enhancing Youth Participation in Elections"

## Implementing Organization:

Movement for Democracy, Development and Transparency (MDDT-Cameroon)



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# ABBREVIATIONS

ACHPRAfrican Charter on Human and People's Rights  
AU African Union  
AUDA-NEPAD AfricanUnion Development Agency-  
New Partnership for Africa's Development  
CBO Community Based Organization  
CSO Civil Society Organization  
CSW Commission on the Status of Women  
ELECAM Elections Cameroon  
ICCPR International Covenant on Civil and Political  
Rights MDAMinistries Departments and Agencies  
MDDTMovement for Democracy Development and  
Transparency NCHRF National Commission on  
Human Rights and Freedoms  
NGO Non-Governmental Organization  
OHCHR Office of the United Nations High Commission  
for Human Rights SDGSustainable Development  
Goals  
UN United Nations  
UNDP United Nations Development Programme

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# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Across West and Central Africa, democratic resilience continues to face mounting pressures from governance limitations, institutional fragility, and declining civic engagement. Cameroon reflects these regional dynamics. Since the 1990s, the country has contended with entrenched voter apathy, weakened institutional performance, and eroding public confidence in governance systems, conditions, further exacerbated by persistent socio-economic constraints and the protracted Anglophone Crisis. These combined pressures have markedly curtailed civic participation, especially among youth who constitute over 70% of the population yet remain structurally underrepresented in electoral and decision-making processes.

In response, the Movement for Democracy, Development and Transparency (MDDT), in partnership with the National Endowment for Democracy, has launched the national initiative “Promoting Youth Advocacy on Civil Rights and Enhancing Youth Participation in Elections in Cameroon.” The initiative seeks to equip more than three million young people with the knowledge, competencies, and motivation required to exercise their civic rights, fulfil their civic obligations, and engage constructively in democratic governance.

A central output of this initiative is the handbook “Know Your Civic Rights and Obligations as a Youth,” which offers practical, accessible guidance on civil rights, civic duties, electoral procedures, institutional frameworks, voter registration, and youth-led advocacy. It underscores that the mutual reinforcement of rights and responsibilities is foundational to sustaining peace, justice, accountability, and democratic consolidation.

To strengthen democratic culture and expand youth participation, the initiative advances key recommendations: enhancing civil rights protections and accountability mechanisms; accelerating judicial and institutional reforms; widening socio-economic support for conflict-affected youth; promoting inclusive political dialogue; and reinforcing multi-stakeholder monitoring involving civil society, communities, INGOs, diplomatic missions and regional actors. These measures are critical to restoring public trust, safeguarding electoral integrity, and enabling meaningful, safe, and sustained youth engagement.

Anchored in the UN Sustainable Development Goals (Agenda 2030) and the African Union Agenda 2063, the initiative positions youth as pivotal agents of national transformation. As Cameroon seeks to attain more credibility and improvement in its electoral and democratic systems, this project calls on young people to reclaim their civic agency, champion advocacy for transparent and accountable governance, and contribute to building a more peaceful, just, and democratic nation aligned with the Cameroon we envision and the Africa We Want.

# GENERAL INTRODUCTION

In recent years, the democratic fabric across Africa particularly in West and Central Africa has been tested. Countries such as Niger, Mali and Burkina Faso have experienced unconstitutional transfers of power, while nations like Chad, Gabon and the Democratic Republic of the Congo have been beset by deepening instability and governance crises. Against this continent-wide backdrop, Cameroon too finds itself at a critical juncture. Since the introduction of multiparty elections in the early 1990s, the Republic of Cameroon has, over the past two decades, faced mounting challenges: civic engagement has slipped, voter apathy and antipathy have grown, the rule of law has frayed, electoral violence and boycotts have become part of the reality, and a pervasive sense of mistrust in governance and electoral systems has taken root.

Young Cameroonians are especially affected by these deficits. Although they make up a majority of the population, many youth remain largely disengaged from civic and electoral life. The 2018 presidential election, for example, recorded a turnout of only 53.85 % of registered voters, a sharp decline from earlier cycles. Participation in the English-speaking North West and South West regions was exceptionally low, less than 10% in some areas amid separatist threats and security restrictions. At the same time, economic pressures from high youth unemployment to sluggish growth and rising inflation have made it harder for young people to see the value of civic engagement or believe that their participation matters. The crisis in the Anglophone regions has compounded this reality. The conflict in the North West and South West regions has displaced hundreds of thousands, destroyed infrastructure and educational systems, and undermined civic trust and stability. According to UN data, more than 437,500 people were internally displaced in those two regions, with some 1.3 million people in need of humanitarian assistance. Arbitrary arrests, loss of property, destruction of public services and disrupted schooling have created an environment of fear and exclusion that further discourages youth and broader civilian participation in democratic processes. It is in this context of democratic erosion, civic fatigue and youth disillusionment that the Movement for Democracy, Development and Transparency (MDDT) Cameroon has launched its major initiative: "Promoting Youth Advocacy on Civil Rights and Enhancing Youth Participation in Elections in Cameroon." This project is designed to mobilise and sensitise more than three million young Cameroonians to their civic rights and obligations, and to illuminate the real opportunities they have for democratic and electoral participation. With MDDT's two-decade commitment to democracy, human rights and peace-building as its foundation, the project responds directly to the exclusion, mistrust and disengagement that so many youths in Cameroon feel. The timing could not be more crucial as the country approaches a pivotal electoral cycle, including the presidential election which just took place on 12th October, 2025. This effort presents both a challenge and a golden opportunity for youth-led renewal of civic trust and participation.

This handbook, titled “Know Your Civic Rights and Obligations as a Youth”, is one of the key instruments of the initiative. Designed under the “Not Too Young to Vote” project as an accessible and practical guide, it is tailored especially for young people who are ready to step forward, reclaim their civic voice, engage meaningfully in elections and contribute to more accountable and transparent governance. Across its chapters, the manual explores fundamental themes civil rights and responsibilities, civic duties and obligations, elections and democratic participation, legal and institutional frameworks, voter registration and meaningful participation, youth advocacy and civic engagement, and sustaining civic action. Each section is crafted to blend conceptual clarity with actionable steps, equipping today’s youth to become a generation of informed, responsible and proactive citizens.

Beyond the manual itself, MDDT continues to drive civic education through policy advocacy, strategic partnerships with institutions such as Elections Cameroon (ELECAM) and local civil society organizations, media and community outreach, and youth centred programmes across the country. This broader effort strives to cultivate empowered young Cameroonian who will not only participate in governance but shape it, contributing to national cohesion, transparent oversight and democratic renewal. In doing so, they help advance the vision of the African Union’s Agenda 2063 “The Africa We Want.”

In this moment of both challenge and possibility, this handbook and the associated project invite every young Cameroonian to step out of the shadows of passivity, to understand the power and weight of their civic rights and obligations, and to chart a more engaged, responsible and hopeful path for themselves and their country.

## PART I

# Chapter 1 Understanding Civil Rights

## Definition of Civil Rights

Civil rights refer to the basic rights and legal protections that guarantee every person equal treatment, personal security, and fair participation in the political and social life of their country. Martin Luther King Jr. gives a more practical definition, describing civil rights as the basic rights and freedoms that allow every person to participate fully and equally in society, free from discrimination and injustice. He emphasized that civil rights guarantee dignity, equality before the law, voting rights, fair treatment, and freedom from segregation and oppression.

The evolution of civil rights globally reflects a gradual but profound transformation in how states and societies understand human dignity, equality, and lawful protection. From the abolition of slavery and the dismantling of colonial systems to the worldwide expansion of voting rights and recognition of gender equality in the 19th and 20th centuries, civil rights have progressively become an essential pillar of democratic governance. The adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in 1948 marked a decisive moment, establishing international norms that guided later milestones such as the U.S. Civil Rights Movement, anti-apartheid efforts in South Africa, and pro-democracy reforms across Africa, Asia, and Latin America. Today, civil rights continue to deepen through global commitments to non-discrimination, inclusive participation, and emerging protections in areas such as digital freedoms and minority rights, underscoring the international community's ongoing responsibility to safeguard justice and human dignity for all.

Building on the global evolution of civil rights, which has progressively expanded human dignity, equality, and participatory governance, Cameroon has developed its own legal and institutional framework to safeguard these rights within the national context. Civil rights in Cameroon derive their legitimacy from the Constitution of the Republic of Cameroon (Law n° 96/06 of 18 January 1996 as amended), which serves as the supreme law of the land. The Preamble explicitly guarantees fundamental human rights and freedoms in alignment with international and regional instruments ratified by Cameroon, including the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948), the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (1966), the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (1966), and the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights (1981). These instruments are an integral part of Cameroonian law, obliging the state and citizens to respect, protect, and promote civil rights.

Cameroonian civil rights encompass the right to life, liberty, equality, personal security, freedom of expression, freedom of association, freedom of the press, fair trial, education, religion, and participation in public affairs. These rights are operationalized through constitutional and statutory instruments such as the Penal Code, the Electoral Code (Law n° 2012/001 of 19 April 2012, amended by Law n° 2019/005 of 25 April 2019), the Law on Freedom of Association (Law n° 90/053 of 19 December 1990), the Law on Freedom of Mass Communication (Law n° 90/052 of 19 December 1990), the Law on Education (Law n° 98/004 of 14 April 1998), and Law n° 99/014 of 22 December 1999 regulating non-governmental organizations (NGOs). Together, these frameworks ensure that civil rights are not merely theoretical but enforceable in courts, embedded within Cameroon's legal system, and aligned with international human rights norms, reflecting the country's ongoing commitment to democratic governance, inclusion, and accountability.

However, the effective enjoyment of civil rights in Cameroon has faced challenges such as political repression, corruption, limited access to justice, and social inequality. Instances of censorship, prolonged pre-trial detention, and discrimination against linguistic or ethnic minorities have occasionally undermined these freedoms. Similarly, in conflict-affected areas, such as the North West and South West Regions, violations of the right to life, education, and movement have been widely reported. Such situations highlight the need for civic education, accountability, and the strengthening of democratic institutions to ensure that civil rights are respected in both principle and practice.

Cameroon has made progress in promoting civil rights, yet significant challenges persist. Limitations on civil and political liberties, infringements on the right to association, corruption, restricted access to justice, and social inequality continue to constrain freedoms. Censorship, prolonged pre-trial detention, discrimination against minorities, limited youth and women's political participation, and low public trust in institutions highlight governance gaps. In conflict-affected regions, violations of life, education, and movement rights remain a serious concern. These realities underscore the urgent need for civic education, inclusive engagement, and strengthened democratic institutions to uphold civil rights in both principle and practice.

Considering that civil rights are not privileges granted by the government but inherent entitlements of every Cameroonian, forming the foundation of human dignity and the essence of democracy, this Manual is developed as a key component of the MDDT NotTooYoungToVote Project builds upon this foundation, educating the youth on their civil and civic rights and responsibilities. Recognizing that meaningful youth participation and inclusion in democratic processes are critical for the health and sustainability of democracy, the Manual provides practical guidance to empower young people to engage constructively, defend their rights responsibly, and contribute to the peace, justice, and development of Cameroon.

## **Key Civil Rights and Their Implementation in Cameroon**

This section highlights the core civil rights of Cameroonian citizens, emphasizing both their legal protections and the ways they are exercised in practice. Civil rights are universal, inalienable entitlements that form the foundation of human dignity, social justice, and democratic governance. Their full realization depends on effective legal frameworks, responsible citizenship, and accountable institutions. Cameroon has reinforced these rights not only through its Constitution and national laws but also by ratifying key regional and international instruments, including the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights (ACHPR, 1989), the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR, 1984), the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR, 1984), and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW, 1994). The foregoing outlines each right, the relevant legal protections, common challenges to their implementation, and the responsibilities of both the state and citizens in ensuring these rights are respected.

### **1. Right to Life and Personal Security**

The right to life and personal security is protected under the Preamble and Articles 1, 14 –15 of the Constitution of Cameroon, reinforced by the Penal Code (Sections 275–277), and upheld by the ACHPR (Articles 4–5) and the ICCPR (Article 6). This right exists where citizens are protected from violence and the state ensures lawful conduct by security forces. Indicators of its respect include prosecution of officers involved in unlawful killings and functioning human rights oversight bodies. Violations occur through extrajudicial killings, torture, or failure to investigate deaths caused by security agents. Citizens may also abuse this right through mob justice, vigilante killings, and domestic violence.

### **2. Right to Equality and Non-Discrimination**

Equality and non-discrimination are guaranteed by the Constitution of Cameroon (Articles 2 and 19), the Labor Code, and the Penal Code (Section 242). These rights are reinforced by CEDAW, ACHPR (Articles 2 and 3), and ICCPR (Articles 2 and 26). They exist when public institutions, workplaces, and schools treat all citizens equally, as seen in bilingual education and merit-based employment. Violations occur when linguistic or ethnic groups, face marginalization or limited access to public services. Citizens may also perpetuate inequality through tribalism, gender bias, or favoritism in public service or community relations.

### **3. Right to Freedom of Expression**

The Constitution and Law No. 90/052 of 19 December 1990 on Freedom of Mass Communication guarantee the right to express opinions. These rights are reinforced by ICCPR (Article 19)

and ACHPR (Article 9). They exist when independent media operate freely, journalists report without fear, and citizens can discuss public affairs openly. Violations occur when the state intimidates and censors media, arrests journalists, or shuts down the internet unjustifiably. Citizens may abuse this right by spreading hate speech, false information, or defamatory statements that incite violence or ethnic hatred.

#### **4. Right to Freedom of Association**

The Constitution and Law No. 90/053 of 19 December 1990 uphold the right to freely form and join associations, unions, or political parties. Reinforced by ICCPR (Article 22) and ACHPR (Article 10), this right exists where citizens can organize peacefully and participate in public life. Violations occur when authorities deny registration, dissolve associations unlawfully, or disperse peaceful gatherings. Citizens may also abuse this right when associations promote violence, extremism, or hatred.

#### **5. Right to Participate in Public Affairs**

The right to participate in public affairs is enshrined in Articles 2 and 3 of the Constitution and detailed in the Electoral Code (Law No. 2012/001 of 19 April 2012), supported by ICCPR (Article 25) and ACHPR (Article 13). This right allows every adult Cameroonian to vote and stand for election. Violations occur through electoral fraud, vote-buying, or suppression of opposition candidates. Citizens may abuse this right by selling votes, engaging in election violence, or participating in rigging.

#### **6. Right to Fair Trial and Access to Justice**

The Preamble of the Constitution and the Criminal Procedure Code (Law No. 2005/007 of 27 July 2005) guarantee the right to a fair trial, presumption of innocence, and access to justice in one's language. This is reinforced by ICCPR (Articles 14–15) and ACHPR (Article 7). Violations occur through prolonged detention, biased trials, or denial of interpretation services. Citizens may abuse this right by bribing judges, giving false testimony, or obstructing justice.

#### **7. Right to Education and Freedom of Religion**

The right to education and freedom of religion are protected under the Constitution, Law No. 98/004 of 14 April 1998 on Education, and Law No. 90/056 of 19 December 1990 on Religious Freedom, and reinforced by ICESCR (Article 13) and ACHPR (Article 17). These rights exist when citizens have access to schools and can practice any religion freely. Violations occur when children are denied education, schools discriminate, or the state unjustly restricts religious institutions. Citizens may abuse these rights by spreading religious intolerance or rejecting formal education for discriminatory or extremist reasons.

## **The Relevance of Civil Rights in Democracy and Good Governance in Cameroon.**

Civil rights are not abstract legal concepts; they are practical instruments that sustain democracy, social justice, and accountable governance in Cameroon. Their relevance extends beyond the constitution into the everyday functioning of political, social, and economic life. Without them, democracy becomes superficial, citizens disengage, and public institutions fail to meet their responsibilities.

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**Without the pragmatic application of civil rights, democracy becomes hollow, and citizens lose their voice in public affairs.**

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Understanding how civil rights operate in practice and how they shape citizen engagement, institutional accountability, and inclusive governance is therefore essential to appreciating their central role in building a resilient and functional democracy.

### **1. Enabling Meaningful Citizen Participation**

Civil rights are the gateway to active engagement in civic participation and governance. Freedoms of expression, assembly, and association empower Cameroonians to participate in political discourse, form associations, and engage in elections without fear. For youth and marginalized groups, these rights ensure that their perspectives shape public policies, bridging the gap between formal governance structures and citizens' everyday realities. By exercising civil rights, citizens become co-creators of the democratic process rather than passive observers.

### **2. Strengthening Accountability and Transparency**

Civil rights act as tools for oversight and responsible governance. Freedoms of speech, press, and assembly allow civil society, media, and citizens to scrutinize government actions, expose corruption, and demand redress. In Cameroon, where public trust in institutions can be fragile, these rights are essential for ensuring decisions reflect public interest. Regional and international frameworks, including the ICCPR, African Charter, and oversight by UN and African human rights bodies, reinforce this accountability by providing mechanisms to monitor violations and promote good governance.

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Civil rights are not merely abstractions, but living tools for building a fair, accountable, and democratic society.

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### **3. Promoting Social Equity and Inclusion**

Civil rights are foundational for fairness, equality, and inclusion. Protections against discrimination, guarantees of equality before the law, and safeguards for women, children, and minority communities prevent marginalization and strengthen social cohesion. In Cameroon, where historical and linguistic tensions persist, civil rights create spaces for all citizens to access public services, participate in decision-making, and exercise freedoms on equal terms, reinforcing social stability and unity.

### **4. Fostering Peaceful Conflict Resolution and Stability**

Civil rights provide structured pathways for dialogue and conflict management. Rights to peaceful assembly, association, and political participation allow communities to engage in mediation, local reconciliation initiatives, and constructive debate. In conflict-affected regions of Cameroon, these rights help transform potential flashpoints into opportunities for engagement, fostering resilience and reducing the risk of escalation into violence.

### **5. Driving Sustainable Development and Civic Empowerment**

Civil rights are directly linked to inclusive social and economic progress. Informed citizens who can claim their rights are better positioned to demand education, healthcare, employment, and other public goods. Socio-economic programs targeting youth, women, and conflict-affected communities complement civil rights by equipping citizens with the tools and resources to engage fully in democratic processes. Civil rights, therefore, underpin not only political participation but also sustainable national development.

### **6. Anchoring Democracy in Everyday Life**

Civil rights are the connective tissue of governance, security, and societal resilience in Cameroon. They enable citizen participation, strengthen accountability, foster inclusion, prevent conflict, and support sustainable development. Protecting and operationalizing these rights transforms them from constitutional guarantees into actionable instruments that make democracy tangible. In the Cameroonian context, civil rights are indispensable for converting short-term stability into lasting democratic governance.

# Chapter 2

## Civic Duties and Obligations of Citizens

Civic responsibilities are the moral, social, and legal obligations that citizens owe to the state and to one another to promote peace, justice, social cohesion, and sustainable development. They complement civil rights by ensuring that individuals not only enjoy their freedoms but also participate actively, responsibly, and constructively in governance, community development, and the protection of public goods. As Putnam (2000) emphasizes, civic engagement strengthens social capital and democratic institutions, while Barber (1984) highlights that active citizenship fosters solidarity, discipline, and commitment to the common good. Civic responsibilities thus encompass patriotism, respect for the law, conscientious participation in civic life, and a commitment to the welfare of others, all of which are essential for maintaining order, advancing democratic governance, and sustaining national development.

In Cameroon, civic responsibilities are rooted in the Constitution of the Republic of Cameroon (Law No. 96/06 of 18 January 1996), which establishes the country as a democratic, decentralized, and law-abiding state. The Preamble explicitly calls on all citizens to work toward the preservation of national unity, to respect the law, and to contribute to the defense of the fatherland. National laws further define and enforce specific civic duties, including the Penal Code (prohibiting destruction of public property and acts of violence), the General Tax Code (mandating tax compliance), the Electoral Code (Law No. 2012/001 of 19 April 2012, regulating citizen participation in elections), and the Framework Law on Environmental Management (Law No. 96/12 of 5 August 1996, mandating environmental protection). These frameworks ensure that civic responsibilities are both moral expectations and legally enforceable obligations.

At the international and regional levels, civic responsibilities are reinforced through instruments such as the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR, 1966), which emphasizes the duties of citizens to respect the rights of others and promote the rule of law; the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights (1981), which links citizen obligations to collective social welfare; and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW, 1979), which underscores citizens' responsibilities to advance equality and inclusion. These instruments recognize that civil liberties are inseparable from the duties that sustain democratic governance, social cohesion, and human development.

Civic responsibilities in practice require citizens to respect national symbols, obey the law, pay taxes, participate in elections, promote unity, protect public property, engage in community service, and safeguard the environment. Neglecting these responsibilities

through lawlessness, voter apathy, corruption, tax evasion, or destruction of public property undermines national progress, weakens democratic institutions, and increases the risk of social unrest.

Thus, civic responsibilities in Cameroon are both a legal duty and a moral commitment, reflecting national ideals of peace, justice, and sustainable development while aligning with international and regional norms that support accountable and inclusive governance.

## **1. The Duty of Obedience to the Law**

Every Cameroonian has a duty to obey the laws and legitimate authorities of the state. This duty is grounded in the Constitution of the Republic of Cameroon (Preamble) which upholds the rule of law as the foundation of the state. Respecting the law ensures peace, security, and social order. When citizens comply with legal provisions such as traffic regulations, criminal codes, and administrative laws they help maintain justice and protect others' rights. However, when citizens engage in corruption, bribery, or take the law into their own hands through mob justice, they undermine national order and the authority of state institutions. Such disregard can lead to lawlessness, insecurity, and a breakdown of public trust in governance.

## **2. Payment of Taxes and Public Dues**

The duty to pay taxes is established under the General Tax Code of Cameroon and supported by the Finance Law. Taxes are vital for funding education, healthcare, infrastructure, and other public services. By paying taxes faithfully, citizens contribute to national development and demonstrate solidarity with the state. Unfortunately, some individuals evade taxes or bribe officials to reduce their payments. This neglect deprives the government of resources needed for public projects, fuels corruption, and increases inequality. The consequence is poor service delivery and slowed economic growth, which eventually harms all citizens.

## **3. Participation in Elections**

The Electoral Code (Law No. 2012/001 of 19 April 2012) grants and regulates the right and duty of citizens to vote and be voted for. Participation in elections is a civic responsibility that allows citizens to influence governance and hold leaders accountable. Respecting this responsibility reinforces democratic legitimacy and peaceful political transitions. Yet, many citizens especially youth, neglect this duty by refusing to register or vote due to apathy or mistrust. Election boycotts and voter indifference weaken democracy, allowing unrepresentative leadership and political instability to persist.

#### **4. National Service and Defense of the Nation**

The Constitution provides that every citizen shall contribute to the defense and security of the nation. This includes military service, participation in national development initiatives, and promoting unity and peace. Citizens respect this duty by supporting the armed forces, engaging in community defense programs, or volunteering in civic initiatives. When citizens refuse to serve or act in ways that endanger national unity such as joining armed groups or spreading hate speech, they violate this responsibility. The consequences include insecurity, disunity, and the erosion of patriotism essential for national stability.

#### **5. Respect for the Rights and Freedoms of Others**

The Constitution guarantees equality and fundamental freedoms for all. Respecting others' rights such as their property, opinions, and beliefs upholds the principles of justice and social harmony. Citizens show this respect by avoiding discrimination, violence, or defamation. However, when individuals engage in hate speech, gender-based violence, or ethnic discrimination, they abuse the freedoms they enjoy. This neglect fuels division, conflict, and resentment, threatening peaceful coexistence and national cohesion.

#### **6. Promotion of National Unity and Integration**

Cameroon's Constitution emphasizes unity in diversity. Citizens are responsible for promoting peace and cooperation among linguistic, cultural, and religious groups. Acts such as celebrating national holidays, speaking both official languages, and respecting cultural diversity strengthen this unity. When citizens promote tribalism, regionalism, or language-based hatred, they endanger the spirit of national integration. Such neglect deepens social divides and weakens collective identity, making the nation vulnerable to conflict.

#### **7. Protection of Public Property**

Public property such as roads, schools, offices, and utilities belong to the people and is managed by the state. The Penal Code criminalizes the destruction or misuse of public property. Citizens fulfil this duty by using such property responsibly and reporting acts of vandalism or corruption. When citizens steal, misuse, or destroy public facilities, they violate the law and hinder development. The consequence is wasted public funds and deterioration of social services that affect all citizens, especially the poor.

#### **8. Participation in Community Development**

Citizens have a civic duty to participate in community projects that improve living standards, such as clean-up campaigns, road maintenance, and local education initiatives. This duty

aligns with national decentralization laws that encourage local governance and grassroots development. Respecting it fosters solidarity and shared responsibility for progress. When citizens show apathy or rely solely on the government for all solutions, communities stagnate, poverty deepens, and the sense of belonging diminishes.

## **9. Respect for National Symbols**

The Law No. 96/06 of 18 January 1996 (Constitution) and related decrees establish national symbols such as the flag, anthem, and motto as emblems of sovereignty and unity. Citizens must honour these symbols by standing for the anthem, hoisting the flag properly, and treating them with dignity. Disrespecting national symbols through mockery, vandalism, or negligence, shows disregard for the country's identity and values. Such acts weaken patriotism and national pride, especially among younger generations.

## **10. Environmental Protection**

The Framework Law on Environmental Management (Law No. 96/12 of 5 August 1996) obliges every citizen to protect nature and use resources sustainably. This responsibility is fulfilled when citizens avoid pollution, participate in reforestation, and properly manage waste. However, many neglect this duty by littering, engaging in illegal logging, or burning waste. Such behaviour causes pollution, health hazards, and climate-related disasters. The consequences include reduced agricultural productivity and loss of biodiversity, threatening livelihoods and national sustainability.

## **11. Promotion of Peace and Social Justice**

Citizens must promote peace, tolerance, and justice in line with the Constitution and Penal Code. This includes resolving disputes peacefully, respecting others' opinions, and denouncing injustice. Upholding this duty strengthens harmony and equality in society. When citizens incite violence, spread hate messages, or seek revenge instead of justice, they destroy social order and fuel cycles of conflict. The result is instability and fear, making development and coexistence impossible.

## **12. Civic Education and Awareness**

Every citizen has a responsibility to be informed about civic rights and duties and to educate others about democratic participation. The Constitution and National Civic Education Policy promote civic education as essential to nation-building. Respecting this duty involves participating in community sensitization, reading about civic issues, and engaging in awareness programs. When citizens remain ignorant or indifferent, they become vulnerable to manipulation, misinformation, and disengagement. The result is weakened democracy and continued poor governance.

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Youth have a special responsibility to promote civic values and to the best of their abilities, within the confines ascribed by the law, discourage violence, corruption, and discrimination in their communities.

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### **The Interconnection Between Civil Rights and Civic Responsibilities in Cameroon**

Civil rights and civic responsibilities are two sides of the same coin in Cameroon's democratic framework. Civil rights guarantee the freedoms and protections that every individual enjoys under the law, while civic responsibilities represent the duties each citizen must uphold to ensure those rights are preserved for everyone. Put simply, civil rights empower citizens to participate in national life, and civic responsibilities guide how that participation occurs in a lawful, constructive, and socially responsible manner.

The Cameroonian Constitution provides the foundation for this balance. The Preamble affirms that every person has the right to life, liberty, equality, and justice, but also calls upon citizens to respect the rights of others, obey the law, and defend the fatherland. This ensures that individual freedoms do not become a source of disorder or conflict. For example, the right to freedom of expression carries the responsibility to avoid spreading hate speech or misinformation that could threaten peace and national unity. Similarly, the right to vote is coupled with the duty to participate honestly and peacefully in elections.

Civic responsibilities serve as the guardrails for civil rights, protecting freedoms from abuse and sustaining democratic order. When citizens meet their obligations such as paying taxes, respecting the law, protecting public property, and promoting peace they strengthen the state's ability to deliver services and protect everyone's rights. Conversely, neglecting these responsibilities undermines civil liberties: insecurity rises, corruption spreads, and public trust in institutions erodes.

The interdependence of rights and responsibilities is also embedded in Cameroonian law. The Penal Code enforces respect for others' rights through sanctions for theft, violence, discrimination, and defamation. The Electoral Code safeguards the right to vote while requiring citizens to respect electoral processes. The Environmental Management Law protects the right to a healthy environment while imposing duties on citizens to conserve natural resources. Through these legal frameworks, the state ensures that freedoms are exercised responsibly within the context of shared social obligations.

Ultimately, the harmony between civil rights and civic responsibilities sustains democracy and national cohesion in Cameroon. Rights give citizens a voice; responsibilities ensure that this voice contributes to building, rather than fracturing, the nation. When citizens understand and uphold both, they become active agents of positive change, fostering justice, unity, and sustainable development.

## **The Importance of Civic Duties in Promoting National and Global Development**

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**A civic duty is not a burden, but rather lays the foundation of progress in a nation.**

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Civic duties are the cornerstone of a functional democracy and sustainable national development. They transform abstract rights into practical responsibilities that empower citizens to shape the political, social, and economic trajectory of their country. In Cameroon, the fulfillment of civic duties ranging from obeying laws and paying taxes to participating in elections and protecting the environment, directly contributes to national stability, social cohesion, and collective progress. Far from being burdens, these obligations are instruments for building trust in public institutions, promoting justice, and ensuring that democratic freedoms are meaningful and sustainable.

Understanding these roles in practice reveals the multiple ways civic duties drive national and global development, from strengthening democracy and social cohesion to advancing sustainable development goals and continental aspirations.

### **1. Strengthening Democracy Through Responsible Citizenship**

Civil rights provide citizens with freedoms; civic duties ensure those freedoms are exercised responsibly. In Cameroon, voting in free and fair elections, respecting laws, and participating in public debates are not just legal obligations—they are active expressions of citizenship. By engaging constructively in governance processes, citizens hold leaders accountable, reduce opportunities for corruption, and reinforce the legitimacy of democratic institutions. This dynamic creates a virtuous cycle in which rights and responsibilities reinforce each other, making democracy resilient and participatory.

## **2. Building Social Cohesion and National Unity**

Civic duties extend beyond political participation to fostering solidarity, respect, and ethical behavior in society. Paying taxes, respecting public property, and observing social norms cultivate trust among citizens and between citizens and the state. Environmental stewardship, community service, and civic education promote shared responsibility and awareness of collective well-being. By fulfilling these duties, citizens help to mitigate social tensions, reduce inequalities, and strengthen national unity—a critical factor in Cameroon's diverse linguistic, ethnic, and cultural landscape.

## **3. Aligning with Regional and International Standards**

The relevance of civic duties extends beyond national borders. Cameroon's commitments under international and regional instruments such as the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights (1981), the UN Charter, Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development, and Agenda 2063 of the African Union underscore that responsible citizenship is essential for achieving peace, justice, and sustainable development.

- **Agenda 2030** emphasizes civic engagement through SDGs such as Quality Education (Goal 4), Reduced Inequalities (Goal 10), and Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions (Goal 16).
- **Agenda 2063** highlights participatory democracy, ethical leadership, and youth and women's inclusion as essential for Africa's socio-economic transformation.

Through civic participation, Cameroonians actively contribute to these continental and global objectives, demonstrating that local responsibilities are integral to broader development agendas.

## **4. Civic Duties as Instruments for Sustainable Development**

Practical civic engagement such as environmental protection, community service, and promoting inclusive governance ensures long-term sustainability. By respecting laws and social norms, citizens create conditions that allow economic development, educational advancement, and public health systems to flourish. These actions reinforce the social contract, where citizens uphold their duties in exchange for rights and protections from the state, creating a stable environment for development.

## **5. Youth as Catalysts of Change**

For Cameroon's youth, understanding and fulfilling civic duties is particularly crucial. It fosters responsible leadership, encourages ethical participation, and equips young people to challenge injustice constructively. By actively engaging in civic life, youth become agents of change who can influence governance, support community development, and advance both national and continental development agendas. Their participation transforms civic responsibilities from abstract concepts into tangible actions that shape the present and future of the nation.

## **Conclusion**

Civic duties are not mere obligations; they are practical tools for sustaining democracy, promoting social cohesion, and achieving sustainable development. In Cameroon, fulfilling these responsibilities strengthens institutions, safeguards civil rights, and empowers citizens to contribute to national and continental progress. By embracing their civic duties, citizens—especially the youth—can transform rights into action, ensuring that Cameroon realizes its democratic, social, and developmental potential while contributing meaningfully to global and African development goals.

# Chapter 3

## Elections and Democratic Participation in Cameroon Introduction

Through free, fair, and peaceful elections, citizens exercise one of their most powerful civil rights: the right to vote and to be voted for. In Cameroon, elections are guided by both the Constitution and the Electoral Code (Law No. 2012/001 of 19 April 2012), which establish the legal framework for voter registration, eligibility, electoral conduct, and dispute resolution. Elections are supervised by Elections Cameroon (ELECAM), an independent body responsible for organizing elections, managing voter rolls, and ensuring credible results. Understanding how elections function helps citizens, especially youth, participate responsibly and contribute to strengthening democratic governance in the country.

### **Types of Elections Conducted in Cameroon**

Cameroon conducts several types of elections to fill positions at national, regional, and local levels. Each plays a critical role in shaping the country's democratic and administrative systems.

#### **a) Presidential Elections**

Held every seven years, the presidential election allows citizens to elect the Head of State, who is also the Head of Government. The President represents national unity and ensures the implementation of state policy. Eligibility is outlined in Section 22 of the Electoral Code: a candidate must be a Cameroonian by birth, at least 35 years old, fully enjoy civic and political rights, and have resided in Cameroon for at least 12 months before the election.

#### **b) Legislative Elections**

Legislative elections determine the members of the National Assembly, the lower house of Parliament, which has 180 members serving five-year terms. Members are elected to represent constituencies, enact legislation, and oversee government action. Section 156 of the Electoral Code specifies that candidates must be at least 23 years old, Cameroonian, registered voters, and literate in English or French.

#### **c) Senatorial Elections**

The Senate is the upper house of Parliament, with 100 members: 70 elected by municipal

councilors and 30 appointed by the President. Senators must be at least 40 years old and Cameroonian citizens by origin. The Senate reviews legislation and represents regional interests.

#### **d) Regional Elections**

Regional Councils were created to promote decentralization and local development. Members are elected to manage regional affairs, ensuring citizen participation in governance at the regional level. Each of Cameroon's 10 regions has a Regional Council.

#### **e) Municipal Elections**

Municipal elections allow citizens to elect mayors and municipal councilors who manage local councils and oversee community development. With 360 municipal councils nationwide, these elections form the foundation of grassroots governance. Together, these elections ensure citizen representation from local communities to the national parliament, reinforcing inclusive and participatory democracy.

### **Structure of the Legislature and Local Government**

#### **The Legislature**

Cameroon's bicameral legislature consists of the National Assembly (Lower House) and the Senate (Upper House).

- National Assembly: 180 members elected by citizens for five-year terms. They make laws, oversee government policies, and represent citizen interests.
- Senate: 100 members (70 elected, 30 appointed by the President). The Senate reviews and approves legislation and represents regional interests.

#### **Local Government**

Decentralized local governance is organized through regional and municipal councils to enhance citizen participation. Regional Councils coordinate development initiatives, while municipal councils manage local infrastructure, sanitation, and education. Traditional authorities also play advisory roles, preserving culture and assisting community mobilization.

#### **Ensuring Credible and Inclusive Elections**

By clearly defining voter and candidate eligibility, Cameroon's Electoral Code ensures that elections are inclusive, transparent, and credible. These regulations protect the democratic

process from abuse, safeguard citizens' rights, and create a framework within which all participants, voters, candidates, and electoral bodies can act responsibly. For young citizens, understanding these rules is essential for meaningful participation, while for the broader electorate, they reinforce the legitimacy and fairness of Cameroon's democratic institutions.

### **Relevance to Democratic Participation**

The Electoral Code and constitutional provisions make elections meaningful instruments for civic engagement. They clarify who can vote and stand for office, define fair procedures, and protect citizens' rights. By understanding these frameworks, young Cameroonians can participate responsibly, hold leaders accountable, and contribute to building trust in public institutions. When voters fulfill their duties, respect electoral rules, and exercise their civil rights, democracy in Cameroon is strengthened, and governance becomes more transparent, representative, and inclusive.

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**Decentralization or the breakdown of power promotes accountability and citizen participation by bringing governance closer to the people especially youths who are key to innovation, peacebuilding, and community transformation.**

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### **Legal and Institutional Framework for Elections in Cameroon**

Cameroon's electoral framework, rooted in the 1996 Constitution (as amended), provides the legal and institutional mechanisms that uphold the principles of transparency, participation, and accountability.

Understanding the legal and institutional framework of elections is essential for all stakeholders: voters, political parties, civil society, the media, and election administrators. This framework defines who manages elections, how they are organized, which laws apply, and how disputes are resolved.

This toolkit section presents a clear overview of the laws, institutions, and mechanisms that support electoral democracy in Cameroon. It bridges legal principles with practical realities, illustrating how these structures function in actual electoral contexts

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By deepening our understanding of this framework, we strengthen our collective ability to safeguard free, fair, and credible elections; the true foundation of a vibrant democracy.

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## **Legal Frameworks**

The Constitution of the Republic of Cameroon serves as the supreme law guiding electoral governance. It guarantees the people's right to vote and outlines the powers and responsibilities of key electoral institutions.

### **Key Legal Instruments:**

- The Constitution (1996, as amended): Establishes the legal basis for sovereignty, electoral institutions, and the separation of powers.
- Electoral Code (Law No. 2012/001 of 19 April 2012): Provides a unified framework for managing all elections and referenda – covering voter registration, candidature, campaign regulation, polling, counting, and result publication.
- Law No. 2006/011 of 29 December 2006 (as amended by Law No. 2012/002): Creates and defines the mandate of Elections Cameroon (ELECAM) as an independent electoral management body.
- Law No. 2004/004 of 21 April 2004: Regulates the formation and functioning of political parties, promoting internal democracy and national unity.
- Law No. 2011/013 of 13 July 2011: Operationalizes the Constitutional Council, detailing its jurisdiction, structure, and powers in electoral dispute resolution.
- Supplementary Decrees and Regulations: Provide practical implementation details, including election schedules, campaign periods, and constituency boundaries.

### **Institutional Frameworks**

#### **a. Elections Cameroon (ELECAM)**

- Legal Basis: Law No. 2006/011 (as amended)
- Nature: Independent administrative authority with legal personality and financial autonomy
- Core Mandate:
  - Organize and supervise all elections and referenda
  - Manage the national electoral register

- o Publish provisional results and conduct voter education
- o Ensure transparency, impartiality, and fairness

### **b. The Constitutional Council**

- Legal Basis: Articles 46–54 of the Constitution; Law No. 2011/013
- Role: Ensures the regularity of elections, adjudicates disputes, interprets the Constitution, and proclaims official results.
- Composition: 11 members appointed by the President for renewable six-year terms.

### **c. The Judiciary (Administrative Courts)**

- Handles pre-election disputes, including challenges to voter registration and candidacies, ensuring the protection of electoral rights and due process.

### **d. The Ministry of Territorial Administration (MINAT)**

- Provides logistical, security, and administrative support during elections.
- Oversees political party registration and monitors campaign activities.

### **e. Political Parties and Civil Society**

- Political Parties: Mobilize voters, nominate candidates, and shape public discourse.
- Civil Society Organizations: Conduct voter education, election observation, and advocacy for inclusive participation, particularly for women, youth, and persons with disabilities. Despite notable progress, challenges remain. These include low voter turnout (especially among youth), delays in publishing results, gender disparities in political representation, and limited diaspora participation. Addressing these issues through legal reform, civic education, and technological innovation is essential for strengthening electoral integrity and public confidence.

Ultimately, the credibility of Cameroon's elections depends not only on robust laws and institutions but also on the active engagement of its citizens. A democratic culture built on transparency, participation, and accountability remains vital to consolidating the nation's democratic journey.

## **PART II**

### **Chapter 4**

# **Voter Registration and Electoral Participation in Cameroon (Including Procedures for Obtaining a Voter's Card and the Eligibility Criteria)**

Participation in elections is one of the key means through which citizens influence the direction and governance of their nation. For young people, it represents not only a civic responsibility but also a strategic means to shape leadership, policy priorities, and socio-economic outcomes that will impact their future. In Cameroon, voter registration and active engagement in the electoral process are essential components of democratic governance, ensuring transparency, accountability, and inclusivity. By exercising their right to vote, youths contribute meaningfully to the decision-making process, reinforcing the legitimacy of institutions and asserting their role in shaping the nation's trajectory.

### **Understanding the Importance of Voter Registration**

Voter registration is the key to exercising your right to vote. It is the official process that records eligible citizens in the national voter's register, allowing them to participate in local, legislative, regional, and presidential elections.

For young people, registering to vote is a conscious act of civic engagement. It gives you a voice on issues that directly affect your life, such as roads, education, and healthcare, and lets you choose your leaders and political representatives. Your vote is your voice, and having a voter's card is essential to ensure that your voice is heard. By registering, youths move from spectators to active changemakers, holding leaders accountable and contributing to justice, equity, and national progress.

### **Eligibility for Voter Criteria in Cameroon**

To register as a voter in Cameroon, an individual must meet the following requirements:

- **Cameroonian Citizenship:** Only Cameroonian nationals are eligible.
- **Age:** Must be at least 20 years old at the time of registration.
- **Residency:** Must have lived in their municipality for at least six months before registration. Military personnel are exempt and may register at the location of their home unit.
- **Civil Rights:** Must be in good legal standing, with no criminal record that deprives them of civil or political rights.

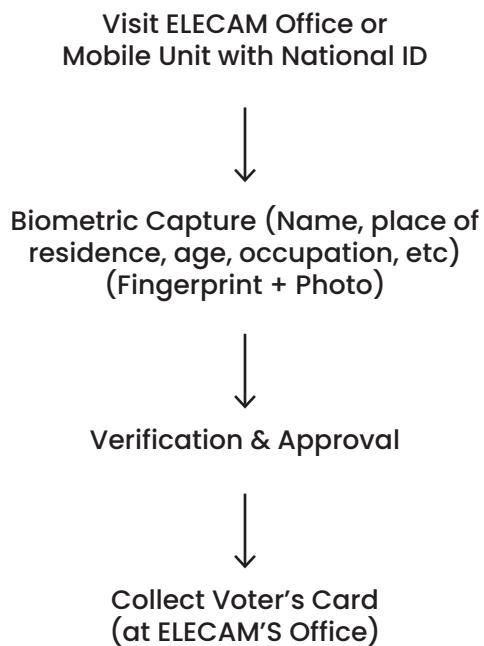
These criteria ensure that voters are properly qualified to participate responsibly in the democratic process.

### **Procedure for Obtaining a Voter's card in Cameroon**

Obtaining a voter's card is an essential step for participating in Cameroon's democratic process. ELECAM ensures the process is simple, secure, and transparent, giving every eligible citizen the (chance to participate in shaping the nation's future) opportunity to be properly registered, verified, and equipped to exercise their right to vote transparently and securely.

#### **Step-by-Step- Process:**

- **Registration:** Citizens can register at any local ELECAM office or via mobile registration units deployed across the country. A valid national identity card is required for identification.
- **Biometric Capture:** During registration, voters' fingerprints and photographs are collected to ensure each registration is unique and to prevent electoral fraud.
- **Issuance of Voter's Card:** After successful registration, voters receive a voter's card, which is required to cast a vote. The card can usually be collected at local ELECAM offices ahead of the election.



**Diagram 1: Step by step guide to voter's participation**

## **Validity and Renewal of your Voter's Card**

A voter's card is permanent; however, it may be renewed if it is lost or damaged. In cases where a voter's card is missing, the individual's name remains on the electoral register, and they may vote using their national identity card.

A new voter's card is issued only when a registered voter changes their place of residence. Whenever a voter relocates or is transferred to a different location, they must inform ELECAM and update their registration. The process requires the surrender of the old card and completion of a registration form. Following this, the voter is assigned to the polling station nearest to their new residence. This procedure safeguards the voter's rights while ensuring that electoral processes remain organized and transparent.

In summary, the electoral code provides for the issuance of a new voter's card in two circumstances: when a voter changes polling stations or relocates to a different town. It is important to note that each voter's card indicates the assigned polling station. When voter cards are renewed or new entries are made to the electoral register, they are distributed at least 40 days before polling day.

## **Navigating the 2025 Voting Journey**

On election morning in Cameroon, polling officials gather before dawn to prepare the station, checking every document and material before opening the empty ballot and sealing it in full view. As voters begin to arrive, each is guided to the verification desk, where their identity is confirmed against the official register. Once cleared and shown to be free of indelible ink, the voter signs the register and receives an envelope along with all candidate ballots. In the privacy of the booth, the voter selects one ballot and discards the others, then places the chosen ballot into the envelope and returns to cast it into the sealed box. A final mark of blue and red indelible ink on the voter's finger completes the voting process, ensuring that each individual votes only once. Through these quiet, deliberate steps, the polling station maintains order, transparency and the integrity of the vote.

## **Encouraging Youth Participation in Elections**

Although they make up a large portion of the population, many youths in Cameroon remain underrepresented in electoral processes due to voter apathy, misinformation and limited civic awareness. Changing the narrative requires that youths recognize electoral participation as both a right and a responsibility. Meaningful engagement in elections empowers young citizens to shape leadership and influence policies that directly affect their future.

The following practical steps outline how young people can participate effectively in the electoral process and strengthen democratic governance.

- **Get informed:** Familiarize yourself with the electoral calendar, political parties, candidates and their proposed policies.
- **Mobilize Peers:** Inspire your friends and networks to register, collect your voter's cards and participate actively in elections.
- **Engage Peacefully:** Join civic education initiatives, youth debates and election observation programs in a lawful, respectful and non-partisan manner.
- **Demand Accountability:** Stay involved after elections by monitoring governance, advocating for transparency and holding leaders accountable to their promises

By participating actively, youths strengthen democracy and ensure that key priorities such as education, employment, technology, and climate action are reflected in the national development agendas.

### **The Role of ELECAM and Civil Society in Promoting Youth Participation**

ELECAM and civil society organizations (CSOs) are instrumental in empowering young people to understand and exercise their voting rights. ELECAM leads nationwide voter education campaigns, while CSOs organize awareness programs, workshops, and advocacy initiatives to ensure youth inclusion in governance.

Through these collaborative efforts, they foster a culture of political engagement where every young voice is heard and every vote truly counts.

### **The Importance of Electoral Participation**

Registering to vote is only the first step; true civic responsibility is expressed through active participation. When citizens, particularly young people, abstain from voting, they forfeit their voice and allow decisions about their future to be made by others.

Electoral participation is not merely about selecting leaders; it is about shaping the direction of national development, demanding accountability, and ensuring governance reflects the collective aspirations of the people.

Young people, who constitute the majority of Cameroon's population, represent a powerful demographic capable of influencing the country's political trajectory. Active engagement by the youth can redefine leadership standards, promote integrity, and foster inclusive governance.

As highlighted in Article 11 of the African Union Youth Charter, every young person has both the right and duty to participate in all spheres of society, including political processes. Engaged youth create vibrant democracies, hold leaders accountable, and sustain peace through legitimate participation.

## **Challenges**

Despite existing legal frameworks, significant obstacles continue to hinder voter registration and electoral participation among young people in Cameroon. Limited civic education, logistical barriers, voter apathy, and mistrust in electoral institutions often prevent full engagement.

Addressing these challenges requires continuous civic education, youth-led advocacy, and active community engagement. Institutions such as ELECAM, civil society organizations, and youth networks must collaborate to sensitize, train, and empower young people, reinforcing the idea that voting is both a right and a responsibility.

Voter registration and electoral participation lie at the core of democratic citizenship, embodying the principles of equality, representation, and accountability. For Cameroonian youths, understanding and exercising these rights is more than a procedural act; it is a patriotic duty and a pathway to shaping governance.

By registering, obtaining voter cards, and fulfilling one's civic duty, young people affirm their role as key stakeholders in the nation's future. Their active participation ensures that democracy in Cameroon is not only sustained but strengthened by informed, engaged, and visionary citizens.

# **Chapter 5**

## **Youth Advocacy and Civic Engagement (Including Advocacy Tools, Methods and Skills)**

### **Introduction**

Youth advocacy and civic engagement are the lifeblood of any thriving democracy. They reflect the determination of young people to participate meaningfully in public life, influence decisions, and contribute to inclusive and accountable governance. In Cameroon and across Africa, youth participation in civic and political processes is both a challenge and a promise a challenge due to persistent exclusion and disillusionment, and a promise because of the enormous potential young people hold to reshape political culture and governance.

### **Youth Advocacy and Civic Engagement in Cameroon**

Advocacy is a deliberate and strategic effort to influence policies, social norms, and decision-making in pursuit of positive change. For youth, advocacy goes beyond protests or slogans; it involves informed, structured, and evidence-based actions that advance democratic values, social justice, and sustainable development. It is both a right and a responsibility, empowering young people to hold institutions accountable while offering innovative solutions to societal challenges.

Many young Cameroonians, however, express disillusionment with politics, citing exclusion, corruption, and opaque governance as major barriers to participation. Limited civic education and underutilized digital mobilization tools often leave youth passive and disengaged. Yet, when provided with inclusive, transparent, and participatory platforms, youth demonstrate remarkable potential to transform frustration into action. Social media forums, inter-community dialogues, and civic education programs have been shown to foster informed, confident, and proactive citizens capable of contributing meaningfully to national development.

Civic engagement encompasses the multiple ways individuals contribute to public life from volunteering and advocacy to participating in elections and policy dialogues. It promotes accountability, strengthens social cohesion, and reinforces the legitimacy of democratic institutions. Youth, with their energy, creativity, and connectivity, are particularly positioned to safeguard democratic integrity. Experiences from other countries, such as youth-

led peace campaigns in Senegal and Colombia, illustrate that structured, non-violent, and civic-conscious initiatives can effectively promote social harmony and democratic participation.

## **How to Guide for Youth Advocacy**

To translate insights into action, young citizens can adopt the following strategies:

**1. Educate Yourself:** Gain a clear understanding of civic rights, responsibilities, and relevant policies. Knowledge is the foundation of effective advocacy.

**2. Leverage Digital Platforms:** Use social media, blogs, and online forums to engage peers, raise awareness, and organize campaigns.

**3. Engage in Dialogue:** Participate in community forums, local councils, or youth parliaments to influence decision-making.

**4. Collaborate and Network:** Partner with civil society organizations, schools, and other youth groups to amplify your impact.

**5. Promote Peaceful Participation:** Ensure all advocacy efforts are non-violent, inclusive, and respectful of diverse perspectives.

**6. Show Innovation:** Develop creative solutions or pilot projects addressing community challenges to demonstrate practical impact.

By combining knowledge, creativity, and strategic engagement, youth can turn disillusionment into empowerment, becoming active agents of change. When young people are recognized, included, and supported, they can transform Cameroon's democratic landscape ensuring that civic rights are upheld, duties are respected, and participation becomes a tangible force for national progress.

## **Advocacy Tools and Methods**

Effective youth advocacy requires strategy and the right tools.

### **Key Advocacy Tools:**

- Policy Briefs and Position Papers:** Evidence-based documents influencing policy decisions.
- Digital and Social Media Platforms:** For mobilization, awareness, and youth storytelling.
- Campaigns and Petitions:** Amplifying collective voices on key issues.
- Forums and Dialogue Platforms:** Promoting interaction with policymakers and civic actors.
- Partnerships and Networks:** Collaborative efforts expanding influence and resource sharing.

## **Core Advocacy Methods:**

- **Public Education and Awareness-Raising:** Informing and empowering citizens through media, schools, and community programs.
- **Lobbying and Policy Dialogue:** Constructive engagement with decision-makers to shape policies.
- **Community Mobilization:** Organizing grassroots movements representing collective interests.
- **Research and Documentation:** Gathering credible evidence to support advocacy.
- **Peace and Conflict Mediation:** facilitating understanding among conflicting parties, especially during elections.

## **Effective Advocacy Skills for Youths**

Effective advocacy combines analytical, communicative, and ethical competencies:

- **Critical Thinking:** Objectively assessing issues and proposing solutions.
- **Effective Communication:** Articulating ideas clearly across audiences.
- **Negotiation and Diplomacy:** Building consensus through dialogue and compromise.
- **Leadership and Teamwork:** Inspiring collective action and maintaining shared purpose.
- **Digital Literacy:** Using technology responsibly for civic engagement.
- **Ethical Integrity:** Upholding accountability, inclusivity, and respect for diversity. Insights from anonymized young civic leaders highlight a powerful truth: “young people in Cameroon are not passive observers of democracy they are active stakeholders capable of shaping the nation’s destiny.” Civil society and international observers consistently emphasize that youth advocacy and civic engagement are essential instruments for social accountability and sustainable development.

When provided with the right tools, methods, and skills, young people can transform disillusionment into proactive participation, moving from frustration and passivity to advocacy and constructive civic action. Testimonies from these anonymized participants illustrate how engagement in civic education, digital activism, and ethical leadership programs has empowered them to challenge injustices, promote transparency, and foster inclusive decision-making in their communities.

Building youth capacity in these areas strengthens governance, enhances democratic processes, and fosters social cohesion. Empowered youth are not just a symbol of hope they are the cornerstone of sustainable democracy, catalysts for social transformation, and the foundation of a just and participatory society. As Cameroon seeks to rebuild civic trust and sustain civic action, investing in youth empowerment is both a strategic imperative and a moral responsibility.

# **PART III**

## **Chapter 6**

### **Call To Action By Stakeholders**

The post-2025 electoral landscape in Cameroon has brought renewed attention to the imperative of strengthening civil rights, advancing meaningful civic participation, and consolidating national stability. The electoral cycle, characterized by operational shortcomings, contested results, and episodes of public tension, unfolded within an already fragile context shaped by the protracted crisis in the North West and South West regions and the continuing insecurity linked to Boko Haram in the Far North. These intersecting dynamics have strained public confidence in state institutions and exacerbated socio-economic vulnerabilities, particularly among youth, women, and internally displaced persons (IDPs). In this environment, sustaining civic action has emerged not merely as a normative aspiration but as a strategic requirement for social cohesion and long-term national resilience.

Civic action in Cameroon encompasses a broad ecosystem of activities, including electoral oversight, rights-based advocacy, local mediation and peacebuilding, humanitarian response, environmental stewardship, and volunteerism. However, these efforts continue to be challenged by a progressively constrained civic space, episodes of political pressure, and structural conditions such as unemployment, poverty, and localized insecurity. Civil society organizations, human rights defenders, journalists, and community leaders report operational difficulties ranging from administrative bottlenecks and public-order restrictions to targeted intimidation. Although the Government has initiated reforms to enhance governance and security, stakeholders note that the impact of these measures is uneven and insufficient to fully rebuild public trust.

Strengthening and sustaining civic action therefore requires a deliberate investment in cultivating responsible citizenship grounded in the principles of rights and duties, peaceful coexistence, inclusiveness, and tolerance. These values enshrined in Cameroon Constitution, the UDHR, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights, and the African Charter on Democracy, Elections and Governance (ACDEG), serve as both legal obligations and pragmatic tools for promoting stability and restoring institutional legitimacy. Rebuilding civic trust necessitates transparent governance practices, consistent respect for fundamental freedoms, accessible accountability mechanisms, and the meaningful participation of citizens in public decision-making.

Addressing the socio-economic drivers of civic disengagement is equally essential. Youth, who make up the majority of the population continue to face high unemployment, limited representation in formal governance processes, and heightened exposure to manipulation or radicalization in insecure settings. Women, particularly those in conflict-affected areas, encounter systemic barriers to participation and disproportionate risks of violence and displacement. Evidence from community initiatives, including those led by MDDT and other civil society partners, demonstrates that targeted empowerment programs such as civic leadership academies, mentorship platforms, livelihood support, and community volunteer networks can transform marginalized groups into active agents of peace, accountability, and development.

In this context, the engagement of all stakeholders CSOs, youth, state institutions, political actors, diplomatic missions, and international NGOs is vital. Their coordinated action is critical for safeguarding civil rights, enhancing institutional credibility, preventing electoral violence, countering harmful narratives, and building inclusive civic participation frameworks. This chapter outlines the principal challenges encountered by each stakeholder group and proposes actionable, context-appropriate measures designed to reinforce civil rights, strengthen civic engagement, and contribute to a more peaceful and resilient Cameroon.

## **Recommendations on Strengthening Civil Rights, Civic Participation, and Electoral Stability in Cameroon**

These recommendations are aimed at protecting civil rights, promoting responsible civic participation, and preventing post-electoral conflict. Each actor's responsibilities are articulated with practical strategies and potential impacts.

### **I. Civil Society Organizations (CSOs)**

CSOs in Cameroon operate in a constrained civic space, facing political surveillance, restricted freedoms of assembly, and limited access to funding. Conflict-affected regions and marginalized communities often remain underrepresented, while gaps in institutional accountability hinder advocacy efforts and the promotion of citizen rights.

#### **Recommendations:**

##### **a) Strengthen Civic Education and Rights Awareness**

CSOs should implement structured, multi-platform civic education programs targeting urban and rural communities, focusing on voter registration, civic duties, human rights, and accountability mechanisms.

**Impact:** Increased voter registration, higher youth participation, improved understanding of rights and responsibilities, and reduced misinformation about electoral processes.

### **b) Monitor Governance and Electoral Processes**

CSOs should establish independent monitoring teams to observe electoral preparations, campaigns, voting, and post-election activities, with evidence-based reporting and advocacy for remedial action.

**Impact:** Enhanced transparency, early detection of malpractice, and increased public trust in institutions.

### **c) Facilitate Multi-Stakeholder Dialogue**

Convene forums involving political parties, youth organizations, local leaders, and state institutions to mediate disputes, promote consensus, and develop conflict-prevention strategies.

**Impact:** Reduced political polarization, minimized post-electoral tensions, and stronger local conflict resolution mechanisms.

### **d) Enhance Grassroots Participation**

Promote community-driven initiatives such as town halls, participatory budgeting, and citizen scorecards, targeting marginalized groups.

**Impact:** Greater inclusion of women, youth, and vulnerable populations in decision-making, leading to policies reflecting community priorities.

## **II. The Cameroonian Youth**

The Youth in Cameroon face high unemployment, limited civic leadership opportunities, and political marginalization. Post-electoral disillusionment, conflict, and displacement increase vulnerability to manipulation, radicalization, or disengagement from civic life.

### **Recommendations:**

#### **a) Active Civic Participation and Leadership**

Participate in voter registration drives, election monitoring, and advocacy campaigns; engage in leadership programs to develop skills in policy, conflict mediation, and civic projects.

**Impact:** Empowered youth capable of influencing policy, promoting accountability, and contributing to peaceful elections.

#### **b) Uphold Civic Responsibilities and Peaceful Conduct**

Exercise rights responsibly through peer-led campaigns, digital education, and school programs encouraging lawful and respectful civic engagement.

**Impact:** Reduced post-electoral violence and a stronger culture of peace.

### **c) Advocacy and Inclusion**

Form coalitions and forums to communicate youth priorities and engage with CSOs, media, and government.

**Impact:** Youth concerns institutionalized in policymaking, improving accountability and socio-economic outcomes.

### **d) Volunteering for Civic and Community Development**

Engage in structured volunteer initiatives, such as voter education campaigns, community service, and civic outreach programs.

**Impact:** Strengthened social cohesion, practical civic engagement, and reduced susceptibility to manipulation or radicalization.

### **e) Prevent Post-Electoral Violence**

Establish peer-led monitoring systems, rapid reporting mechanisms, and mediation committees to defuse tensions.

**Impact:** Fewer incidents of electoral violence, increased community resilience, and stronger trust in institutions.

## **III. State Agencies (MINJEC, MINAT, ELECAM, MINJUS, CHRC)**

State institutions face weak enforcement of civil rights, inconsistent application of laws, limited independence and institutional capacity. Citizens' distrust is exacerbated by selective rule of law, limited transparency, and insufficient protection of Citizenry and HRDs.

### **Recommendations:**

#### **a) Safeguard Civil and Political Rights**

Implement legal and policy frameworks protecting freedoms of expression, assembly, and association, with operational whistleblower protections and complaint mechanisms.

**Impact:** Citizens feel secure to express opinions and engage in civic processes.

#### **b) Promote Responsible Media and Freedom of Expression**

Support pluralistic media landscapes, ethical journalism, media literacy, and anti-disinformation campaigns.

**Impact:** Citizens access accurate information, reducing inflammatory narratives.

### **c) Institutional and Judicial Reforms**

Strengthen electoral commissions, courts, and oversight bodies for transparent and timely dispute resolution.

**Impact:** Increased public trust in institutions and reduced risk of post-electoral violence.

### **d) Socio-Economic Support for Conflict-Affected Youth**

Provide education, vocational training, psychosocial support, and employment opportunities.

**Impact:** Youth empowerment, reduced vulnerability to manipulation, and enhanced civic and economic participation.

## **IV. Political Actors**

Political actors operate in a polarized environment, with limited adherence to democratic norms. Post-election disputes, violence, and exclusion of marginalized groups weaken public trust and undermine peaceful civic engagement.

### **Recommendations:**

#### **a) Respect Rule of Law and Civil Rights Norms**

Adhere to electoral laws, constitutional mandates, and human rights obligations, enforcing internal accountability.

**Impact:** Reduced political impunity and strengthened citizen confidence.

#### **b) Prevent Electoral Violence**

Publicly condemn violence, support mediation efforts, and cooperate with law enforcement.

**Impact:** Safer electoral processes and reinforcement of the rule of law.

#### **c) Promote Inclusive Decision-Making**

Ensure equitable participation of youth, women, and marginalized communities in party leadership, candidate selection, and policymaking.

**Impact:** Policies reflect diverse societal interests, promoting legitimacy and public trust.

## **V. Diplomatic Missions**

Diplomatic missions must navigate political sensitivities while supporting civil rights and electoral integrity. Risks include perception of interference, limited coordination with local actors, and monitoring external manipulation, radicalization, or foreign influence.

## **Recommendations:**

### **a) Support Civil Rights and Electoral Integrity**

Provide technical assistance, observation support, and funding for electoral bodies, civil rights institutions, and civic education programs.

**Impact:** Strengthened institutions, improved transparency, and enhanced citizen rights.

### **b) Mediate Dialogue and Prevent External Manipulation**

Facilitate political dialogue, support conflict-prevention measures, and monitor foreign interference or radicalization attempts.

**Impact:** Reduced post-electoral violence and strengthened national cohesion.

### **c) Promote Responsible Media and Civic Freedoms**

Advocate for freedom of expression, ethical journalism, and civic literacy programs.

**Impact:** Enhanced public debate, reduced misinformation, and accountable governance.

### **d) Encourage Transparency, Accountability, and Inclusion**

Promote anti-corruption initiatives, citizen monitoring, and inclusive policy consultations.

**Impact:** Improved governance and public trust.

## **VI. International Non-Governmental Organizations (INGOs)**

INGOs must operate in politically sensitive and sometimes insecure environments. Coordination with local actors, rejection in conflict areas, limited resources, and ensuring impartiality in peacebuilding and electoral support are ongoing challenges.

## **Recommendations:**

### **a) Capacity Building and Technical Support**

Train state agencies, CSOs, and youth groups in electoral monitoring, civic engagement, and human rights advocacy.

**Impact:** Strengthened institutional capacity and empowered civil society.

### **b) Promote Inclusive Civic Engagement**

Target marginalized populations for civic participation programs.

**Impact:** Broader representation, equitable participation, and enhanced social cohesion.

### **c) Peacebuilding and Post-Electoral Stability**

Support mediation, conflict resolution, and early-warning systems for post-election periods.

**Impact:** Reduced electoral violence, strengthened cohesion, and sustained stability.

### **d) Multi-Stakeholder Oversight**

Coordinate monitoring with CSOs, state agencies, and diplomatic missions.

**Impact:** Enhanced transparency, accountability, and public trust.

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## ANNEX 1: Civil Rights, Legal Protection and Common Violations

### 1. Right to Life and Personal Security

Legal Framework	Indicators of Respect	Common Violations
Constitution of Cameroon (Preamble, Articles 1, 14–15)	Lawful conduct by security forces; functioning human rights oversight bodies; prosecution of unlawful killings	Extrajudicial killings, torture, failure to investigate deaths; mob justice, vigilante killings, domestic violence
Penal Code (Sections 275–277)	Protection against assaults and killings	Same as above
ICCPR (Article 6); ACHPR (Articles 4–5)	International oversight and adherence to human rights norms	State or citizen violations undermining life and security

### 2. Right to Equality and Non-Discrimination

Legal Framework	Indicators of Respect	Common Violations
Constitution (Articles 2, 19)	Equal access to public services, bilingual education, merit-based employment	Marginalization of linguistic/ethnic groups, gender bias, favoritism
Labor Code; Penal Code (Section 242)	Non-discriminatory workplaces and schools	Workplace or educational discrimination
ICCPR (Articles 2, 26); CEDAW; ACHPR (Articles 2, 3)	Equal treatment under international law	Tribalism, gender bias, favoritism

### 3. Right to Freedom of Expression

Legal Framework	Indicators of Respect	Common Violations
Constitution; Law No. 90/052 on Freedom of Mass Communication	Independent media, open public discourse, protection of journalists	Censorship, journalist arrests, internet shutdowns
ICCPR (Article 19); ACHPR (Article 9)	Free discussion of public affairs	Hate speech, misinformation, defamation, incitement to violence

## 4. Right to Freedom of Association

Legal Framework	Indicators of Respect	Common Violations
Constitution; Law No. 90/053	Ability to form associations, unions, political parties	Denial of registration, unlawful dissolution, dispersal of gatherings
ICCPR (Article 22); ACHPR (Article 10)	Peaceful organization and public participation	Promotion of violence, extremism, or hatred through associations

## 5. Right to Freedom of Assembly

Legal Framework	Indicators of Respect	Common Violations
Constitution (Articles 19–20); Law No. 90/053	Ability to gather peacefully in public spaces, hold demonstrations	Denial of permits, dispersal of peaceful gatherings, excessive use of force
ICCPR (Article 21); ACHPR (Article 11)	Citizens can participate in peaceful public meetings and protests	Violence during protests, intimidation, unlawful arrests

## 6. Right to Participate in Public Affairs

Legal Framework	Indicators of Respect	Common Violations
Constitution (Articles 2, 3); Electoral Code (Law No. 2012/001)	Free, fair, transparent elections; campaign without intimidation	Electoral fraud, vote-buying, opposition suppression
ICCPR (Article 25); ACHPR (Article 13)	Citizen participation in governance	Selling votes, election violence, and rigging

## 7. Right to Fair Trial and Access to Justice

Legal Framework	Indicators of Respect	Common Violations
Constitution (Preamble); Criminal Procedure Code (Law No. 2005/007)	Impartial courts, legal aid, bilingual proceedings	Prolonged detention, biased trials, denial of interpretation services

ICCPR (Articles 14–15); ACHPR (Article 7)	Presumption of innocence, access to justice	Bribery, false testimony, obstruction of justice
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## 8. Right to Education and Freedom of Religion

Legal Framework	Indicators of Respect	Common Violations
Constitution; Law No. 98/004 on Education; Law No. 90/056 on Religious Freedom	Access to schools, freedom of religious practice	Denial of education, religious discrimination, unjust restriction of religious institutions
ICESCR (Article 13); ACHPR (Article 17)	International recognition of education and religious freedom	Religious intolerance, forced conversion, rejection of formal education for discriminatory reasons

## ANNEX 2: Key Civic Duties in Cameroon

Civic Duty	Legal Framework	Practical Indicators	Consequences of Neglect
Obeying the Law	Constitution (Preamble, Arts. 2, 13); Penal Code	Law-abiding behavior; compliance with national regulations; respect for courts and authorities	Crime, social disorder, weakened rule of law, loss of trust in institutions
Voting and Political Participation	Electoral Code (Law No. 2012/001); Constitution (Arts. 2, 3); ICCPR (Art. 25); ACHPR (Art. 13)	Registration on electoral roll; active, peaceful participation in elections; engagement in civic dialogue	Voter apathy, electoral fraud, political instability, weakened democracy
Paying Taxes	General Tax Code; Constitution (Art. 31)	Timely and accurate tax payments; participation in national development programs	Reduced public revenue, poor social services, infrastructure deficits
Protecting the Environment	Framework Law on Environmental Management (Law No. 96/12); ICESCR (Art. 12); ACHPR (Art. 24)	Participation in environmental conservation; sustainable resource use; community clean-ups	Environmental degradation, health risks, loss of biodiversity, reduced quality of life

Defending National Unity	Constitution (Preamble, Arts. 1, 2); National Security Laws	Peaceful promotion of national cohesion; participation in national service or civic initiatives	Civil unrest, threats to national security, social fragmentation
Respecting Public Property	Penal Code (Sections 201–207); Constitution (Art. 14)	Care for shared infrastructure; avoidance of vandalism; community maintenance projects	Damage to public facilities, financial loss, reduced service delivery
Promoting Social Justice and Solidarity	Constitution (Arts. 1, 2, 19); CEDAW; ACHPR (Art. 2)	Supporting community programs; opposing discrimination; fostering inclusion	Social inequality, marginalization of vulnerable groups, societal tension
Engaging in Community Development	Local Government Laws; Constitution (Art. 52–55)	Participation in local governance, volunteerism, civic education campaigns	Stagnant local development, weak civic engagement, reduced accountability
Upholding Civic Ethics	Constitution; Penal Code; ICCPR; ACHPR	Responsible use of rights; honesty in public dealings; rejection of corruption	Corruption, erosion of public trust, institutional inefficiency

### ANNEX 3: State Agencies

Region	Regional Delegate	Practical Indicators	Consequences of Neglect
Adamawa	Abdoullahi Boboe	Residential Quarter, between regional hospital and CRTV, former residence of the mayor.	+237 222 21 25 51/ +237 222 21 25 39
Centre	Essi Michele Arlette	Yaoundé, 200 metres from the new provincial building (Nlongkak)	+237 669 800 716/ +237 675 466 152
East	Beika Nazaire	Opposite the Bertoua Central Prison	222 241 433/222 421 433
Far North	Joseph Manaoda	Cercle Municipal, Maroua City Council	222 292 658/ 222 292 658
Littoral	Kwa Dicka Emmanuel Jean Blaise	Rond Point Deido, Douala	669 801 087/ 223 407 424
North	Hamadou Sadjo	Marouare	242 037 139/ 242 271 585
North-West	Mbowoh Elvis	New Road GRA 200m after Admiralty Hotel	669 800 719/ 673 510 864
South	Otya'a Serge Bourdon	Administrative Quarter, behind Hotel du Commerce and the High Court Ebolowa	222 284 810/ 222 284 906

South-West	Zofoa Njoya Sake	Police Roundabout, Opposite BICEC, Buea	233 322 681/ 233 323 428
West	Penne Tiencheu Francis	Quartier Tamdja, on the Wanko Monument Slope, beside Hotel Zingana	699 800 717/243 443 376

2. MINJEC (Ministry of Youth Affairs and Civic Education)

<https://www.minjec.gov.cm>

3. MINAT (Ministry of Territorial Administration)

<https://www.minat.gov.cm>

4. MINSEC (Ministry of Secondary Education)

<https://www.minsec.gov.cm>

5. CONAC (National Commission for the fight Against Corruption)

<https://www.conac.cm>

6. CHRC (Cameroon Human Rights Commission)

<https://www.cdhc.cm>

#### **Annex 4: Civil Society Organizations**

Organization	Key activities	Address
Local Youth Corner Cameroon (LOYOC)	Youth-focused NGO working on youth empowerment, peacebuilding, civic engagement of young people, reintegration and education initiatives (especially in conflict-affected areas), promoting social cohesion and community development.	Biyem-Assi -Acacia, Behind MTN Office, Yaoundé. <a href="https://www.loyocameroun.org">https://www.loyocameroun.org</a>
Nouveaux Droits de l'Homme Cameroun (NDH-Cameroun)	Works broadly on human rights: civil and political rights, civic participation and elections, gender-based violence, legal aid and advocacy.	1.914, Rue Bounoungou Mbongo, Nkol Eton Yaoundé, Cameroun <a href="https://www.ndhcameroun.org">https://www.ndhcameroun.org</a>

Réseau camerounais des organisations de droits de l'homme (RECODH)	A network of CSOs working to protect human rights and fundamental freedoms, through advocacy, capacity-building, and lobbying for human-rights laws and enforcement. Works on civic rights, governance, land and community rights, legal aid.	A network of CSOs working to protect human rights and fundamental freedoms, through advocacy, capacity-building, and lobbying for human-rights laws and enforcement. Works on civic rights, governance, land and community rights, legal aid.
ADISI-Cameroun	Works on digital rights, freedom of expression/press, access to information / open data, data journalism and civic awareness, especially around information transparency, media, and citizen access to public information.	Feu rouge Bessengue au 5ème étage de la microfinance AZICCUL. <a href="http://www.adisiscameroun.org">www.adisiscameroun.org</a>
Centre for Education, Training and Support for Development Initiatives (CEFAID)	Works on resource governance, social services and basic civic rights often with a focus on disadvantaged or vulnerable groups.	167, Rue 1.115 Etoa Meki, BP. 3430 Yaoundé, Cameroun <a href="https://cedcameroun.org">https://cedcameroun.org</a>
Centre for Human Rights and Democracy in Africa (CHRDA)	A non-governmental, non-profit human rights organization promoting democracy, human rights protection and documenting abuses, especially active regarding civic rights and democratic freedoms in Cameroon.	P.O. Box 524 Buea, behind Auberge, Fako Division-Cameroun <a href="http://www.chrdaofficial.org">www.chrdaofficial.org</a>
Civic Watch	Youth-led NGO combating hateful rhetoric (online and offline), promoting social cohesion, creating civic debate spaces for participation and promoting tolerance / peacebuilding.	Biyem-Assi,. Next to Small football stadium,. Yaounde, Cameroun. <a href="http://www.civicwatch.cm">www.civicwatch.cm</a>
Réseau des Défenseurs des Droits Humains en Afrique Centrale (REDHAC)	Pan-Central Africa network (headquartered in Douala, Cameroon) that supports human rights defenders, documents violations, works on freedom of expression, assembly, and defends civic space.	Siège Social: Cameroun, Région du Littoral, Ville de Douala, Ancienne Rue Makumba, Immeuble Lux Optique 2e Etage- Face Auto Ecole Jojo <a href="http://www.redhac.org">http://www.redhac.org</a>

## Annex 5: Government Ministries of Cameroon

No	Ministry
1	Presidency of the Republic
2	Prime Minister's Office)
3	Justice (Keeper of the Seal)
4	Territorial Administration
5	External Relations
6	Finance
7	Economy, Planning and Regional Development
8	Defence
9	Secondary Education
10	Higher Education
11	Youth Affairs and Civic Education
12	Women's Empowerment and the Family
13	Public Health
14	Public Service and Administrative Reforms
15	Mines, Industry and Technological Development
16	Agriculture and Rural Development
17	Livestock, Fisheries and Animal Industries
18	Public Works
19	Housing and Urban Development
20	Transport
21	Forests and Wildlife
22	Environment, Protection of Nature
23	Water and Energy
24	Arts and Culture
25	Communication
26	Small and Medium-sized Enterprises
27	Employment and Vocational Training
28	Lands, Land Affairs and Surveys
29	Social Affairs
30	Tourism
31	Posts and Telecommunications

## Annex 6: Regional Administrative Profile of Cameroon

Region	Capital	Governor	No of Councils
Adamawa	Ngaoundere	Kildadi Taguieke Boukar	22
Centre	Yaoundé	Paul Naseri Bea	71
East	Bertoua	Grégoire Mvongo	33
Far North	Maroua	Midjiyawa Bakary	48
Littoral	Douala	Samuel Ivaha Diboua	34
North	Garoua	Abate Edi'i Jean	22
North-West	Bamenda	Adolphe Lele Lafrique	35
South	Ebolowa	Felix Nguele Nguele	21
South-West	Buea	Bernard Okalia Bilai	33
West	Bafoussam	Augustine Awa Fonka	41

## ANNEX 7:

### National Anthem CAMEROON NATIONAL ANTHEM ENGLISH VERSION

#### VERSE 1

O Cameroon, thou cradle of our fathers,  
 Holy shrine where in our midst they now repose, Their tears and blood and sweat thy soil did  
 water On thy hills and valleys once their tillage rose Dear Fatherland, thy worth no tongue  
 can tell!  
 How can we ever pay thy due?  
 Thy welfare we will win in toil and love and peace, Will be to thy name ever true!

#### CHORUS:

Land of Promise, land of Glory! Thou, of life and joy, our only store! Thine be honour, thine  
 devotion, And deep endearment, forevermore.

#### VERSE 2

From Shari, from where the Mungo meanders From along the banks of lowly Boumba  
 Stream, Muster thy sons in union close around thee, Mighty as the Buea Mountain be their  
 team; Instill in them the love of gentle ways,  
 Regret for errors of the past;  
 Foster, for the Mother Africa, a loyalty That true shall remain to the last.

## **CHORUS:**

Land of Promise, land of Glory! Thou, of life and joy, our only store! Thine be honour, thine devotion, And deep endearment, forevermore.

## **L'HYMNE NATIONALE DU CAMEROUN**

### **VERSION FRANÇAISE**

#### **Couplet 1**

Ô Cameroun berceau de nos ancêtres Va debout et jaloux de ta liberté  
Comme un soleil ton drapeau fier doit être  
Un symbole ardent de foi et d'unité  
Que tous tes enfants du nord au sud  
De l'est à l'ouest soient tout amour Te servir que ce soit leur seul but Pour remplir leur devoir toujours

#### **Refrain**

Chère patrie, terre chérie  
Tu es notre seul et vrai bonheur Notre joie et notre vie  
À toi l'amour et le grand honneur

#### **Couplet 2**

Tu es la tombe ou dorment nos pères Le jardin que nos aïeux ont cultivé  
Nous travaillons pour te rendre prospère Un beau jour enfin nous serons arrivés De l'Afrique sois fidèle enfant  
Et progresse toujours en paix Espérant que tes jeunes enfants T'aimeront sans bornes a jamais

#### **Refrain**

Chère patrie, terre chérie  
Tu es notre seul et vrai bonheur Notre joie et notre vie  
À toi l'amour et le grand honneur

MDDT Cameroon, Top Floor – Express Exchange Building,  
Molyko, P.O Box 540 Buea, South West Region, Cameroon  
Email: info@mddtcameroon.org, Facebook: MDDT Cameroon Twitter: @mddtcameroon  
Website: www.mddtcameroon.org

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## Abstract

This handbook, Know Your Civic Rights and Obligations as a Youth, provides clear, practical guidance to help young Cameroonian understand their civic rights, fulfil their responsibilities, and participate more actively in democratic processes. Developed under the national initiative to enhance youth civic engagement, it explains key concepts: civil rights, civic duties, electoral procedures, and youth advocacy and offers actionable steps for meaningful participation. The manual equips readers with the knowledge and motivation to support accountable governance and contribute to a more inclusive and democratic Cameroon.

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#NOTOELECTORALVIOLENCE