

THE VIOLATION OF THE RIGHT TO EDUCATION DURING ARMED CONFLICT: THE CAMEROON-ANGLOPHONE CRISIS EXPERIENCE

Summary

The right to education is a fundamental human right that should be exercised in all circumstances irrespective of race, gender, nationality, ethnic or social origin or any other status. Defined as an inalienable human right under UDHR (1948) and UNCRC (1989), education becomes all the more crucial in the context of armed conflict and humanitarian emergencies. This right is very instrumental to the enjoyment of other human rights be it social, political, economic or cultural rights. Education in Anglophone Cameroon like in other parts of the world is a tool to mitigate gendered disparities and combat multiple deprivations, it is indispensable when advocating against intergenerational poverty, inequitable access to healthcare, forced-child marriages and early pregnancies. The outbreak of the 'Anglophone crisis' in 2016, which later transformed into an armed conflict, has had a tremendous negative impact on the educational sector (and on education agents) in the North-West and South-West regions of Cameroon (Anglophone-Cameroon). Despite guarantees provided in several Legal and Human Rights Instruments of the need to observe the right to education, this position has yielded very little fruits in the ongoing Anglophone crises, with many schools being transformed into military bases and others burnt-down. Aside from the educational sector, the armed conflict has witnessed hurdles not limited to attack on humanitarian aid agents, attack on hospitals and churches, rampant kidnappings and killings, recruitment of child-combatants and economic hardship. Most of these consequences have been made worse because of hindered access to education. This paper, while advocating for an end to the ongoing-armed conflict in Anglophone Cameroon, it stresses on the need to observe and promote the right to education, pending a peaceful resolution of the armed conflict.

Developed by: Vani Bhardwaj (Intern at CCID)

Edited by: Numfor William Che (Program Manager for Policy and Advocacy-CCID)

Etumboh Nguh Cyril (Co-Executive Director-CCID)

I. CONTEXTUAL BACKGROUND

The North-West and South-West regions of Cameroon have been embroiled in violence since 2016 even as popular dissent has descended into armed conflict and deeper fissures across societal cleavages. Disproportionate relationality between the Anglophone minority and Francophone majority is founded on the French colonial practice of assimilation trying to consolidate the ubiquity of French culture across Cameroon. As confirmed by the Secretary General's 2021 Annual Report on Children and Armed Conflict (S/2021/437), Cameroon's armed forces have involved schools for military use, with 19 such incidents reported in 2020¹. The report further adds that owing to suicide attacks, gunshots and explosive remnants of war; 66 girls, 87 boys and 12 children of unidentified sex have been maimed or killed in the South-West, North-West and the Far North. 10 incidents of disrupting humanitarian access, 6 attacks on schools and 20 attacks on schools in North-West, South-West and the Far North. Most of the perpetrators remain unidentified. In January 2021, below 30% of schools were operating in the South-West and North-West regions of Cameroon². Owing to lockdown days called 'ghost town', a totality of approximately four (4) months or 72 days of schooling was lost³ in the North-West and South-West regions, causing restriction of movement, impeding the delivery of aid and monitoring operations. With a highly centralized system of governance in place, rather than the admirable federal structure which was adopted at reunification of the Anglophone and Francophone regions in 1961, has resulted in economic, political and social marginalization of the North-West and South-West areas⁴.

The immediate spark of the Anglophone Crisis flared when in 2016, lawyers in the North-West and South-West regions went on strike to protest the shortfall in implementing the English Common Law system, the absence of seamless translation of legal documentation to English, continuous appointments of French-speaking magistrates in these two Anglophone regions. Subsequently, the teachers went on strike to protest the paucity of English-speaking teachers. In 2017, the crisis gained secessionist colours⁵. Since 2017 due to the boycott of government education by Non-State Armed Groups (NSAGs), every 2 out of 3 schools are non-operational⁶. The following are a few consequences of the armed conflict in the quest for mainstreaming of the Anglo-Saxon educational system among other demands:

¹<https://documents-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/N21/113/09/PDF/N2111309.pdf?OpenElement>

²Cameroon: The education crisis in the Northwest and Southwest. Thematic Report ACAPS 19 February 2021

³<https://www.unicef.org/media/114981/file/Cameroon-Humanitarian-SitRep-December-2021.pdf>

⁴<https://www.crisisgroup.org/africa/central-africa/cameroon/272-crise-anglophone-au-cameroun-comment-arriver-aux-pourparlers>

⁵<https://www.crisisgroup.org/africa/central-africa/cameroon/250-camerouns-anglophone-crisis-crossroads>

⁶<https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/Cameroon%20-2022%20Humanitarian%20response%20plan%20-HRP.pdf>

- ◆ Blocking humanitarian access
- ◆ Attacks on hospitals and schools
- ◆ Maiming and killing
- ◆ Recruitment of child soldiers
- ◆ Increase in the number of the physically disabled young population⁷ thus, policies for persons with disabilities must also get equal share of spotlight besides class and gender-related intersectionalities.

This paper seeks to delineate how starting from its origins of being a linguistic, socio-economic crisis, the Anglophone crisis has snowballed into an education crisis. By exploring the Constitution of Cameroon, regional and international legal regimes, secondary data including reports and policy briefs; the paper supplements its arguments with policy recommendations. The paper reiterates how education is a basic right that becomes incrementally more vital in cases of armed conflicts and crises rather than an issue of indirect neglect.

II. LEGAL FRAMEWORK ON THE RIGHT TO EDUCATION

United Nations Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) 2601 adopted in October 2021 is cognizant of the civilian character of schools and condemns attacks on teachers, students and schools, urging all conflict stakeholders to cease violation of right to education due to armed conflict. Domestic, Regional and International legal regimes should be synchronized for effective implementation of policies. These frameworks are interdependent and for a nuanced comprehension of situations of armed conflict, a concurrent reading of the trifecta of legal regimes is crucial.

⁷'They are Destroying Our Future: Armed Separatist Attacks on Students, Teachers and Schools in Cameroon's Anglophone Regions', Human Rights Watch, December 2021

International Legal Frameworks

◆ *Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) 1948*

At the international level, the right to education is being enshrined in human rights instruments such as the UDHR. In this regard, Article 26 (1) of this Declaration states that “Everyone has the right to education. Elementary education shall be compulsory. Technical and professional education shall be made generally available and higher education shall be equally accessible to all on the basis of merit.” Article 26 (3) further states that “Parents shall have a prior right to choose the kind of education that shall be given to their children.” Based on the above authority and given that the Cameroonian Constitution in its preamble affirms its attachment to the fundamental freedoms enshrined in UDHR, it becomes incumbent on the government of Cameroon to guarantee the observance of the right to education in all circumstances.

◆ *UNESCO Convention against Discrimination in Education (CDE) 1960*

Like the UDHR, Article 4 of UNESCO *Convention against Discrimination in Education (CDE)* advocates for primary education to be disseminated freely and compulsorily.

◆ *International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights 1966*

Article 10 of The *International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESR)* constitutes it as a duty of the State to protect the family unit – as children are dependent on their families for access and affordability of education.

◆ *The Plan of Action for the United Nations Decade for Human Rights Education*

simultaneously covers human rights through education and human rights in education, propagating human rights education for holistic development of personality and a universalistic cultural system embedded in human rights.

◆ *International Humanitarian Right Law (IHRL) and International Humanitarian Law (IHL)*

Through one or the other human rights treaty, every nation-state is party to International Human Rights Law (IHRL). IHRL encompasses internally displaced peoples, refugees, those inhabiting territory and beyond – applying to all situational contexts at all time. All such individuals are entitled.

International Humanitarian Law (IHL) is applicable to all stakeholders in an armed conflict. Containing provisions for civilians, educational staff, children and educational facilities; it does not specify the right to education explicitly. The interpretative stance of the ICRC (International Committee of the Red Cross) as of 2009 reads ‘direct’ participation in hostilities as dependent on the threshold of harm, belligerent nexus, direct causation. Certainly, such an interpretation is exclusive of ‘indirect’ repercussions impacting learning at all stages in all modes.

Labelling CRC as a hybrid document⁸ due to the amalgam of IHRL and IHL – Article 77(2) of AP I remain ambiguous whether it prohibits indirect participation of children below the age of 15 or not⁹. Gender differentiated impacts of armed conflict on boys and girls as the majority of children recruited are boys¹⁰. Sexual Violence, abduction and maiming are mostly done to girl children.

International Humanitarian Law (IHL) sans an explicit ‘right to education’ introduces particular prohibitory conducts in order for continuity of education, students, educational staff and facilities in armed conflict.

- ◆ Article 10 of CEDAW is dedicated to the education rights of women equivalent to men. Article 10 (e) states that “same opportunities for access to programmes of continuing education, including adult and functional literacy programmes, particularly those aimed at reducing, at the earliest possible time, any gap in education existing between men and women.

⁸Kearen Bell and David Abrahams, ‘The Use of Child Soldiers in Armed Conflict’ (2008) 29 *Obiter* 171

⁹<https://pdfs.semanticscholar.org/6712/9b91f7116c08756cdce23cb99b8bdf4f0e68.pdf?ga=2.131024399.1842841605.1650103401-410716413.1650103401>

¹⁰https://childrenandarmedconflict.un.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/Children-Armed-Conflict_Report-Summary-2020.pdf

The simultaneous reading of the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (CERD), and the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) and the UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) will be sensitive to intersectionality of the youth that is being adversely impacted by the Anglophone crisis - adolescent women, orphaned children, physically disabled educators and students.

Regional Frameworks

◆ *African Charter on Human and People's Rights (ACHPR) 1986*

Rejects the dualistic framework of IHRL that creates a demarcation between civil and political rights juxtaposed to social and economic rights. The ACHPR highlights the concurrence of all rights as they are enmeshed together. The right to education is provided in Article 17 of ACHPR. Also, *Pretoria Declaration on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights in Africa* extrapolates that, children with disabilities must be given specialized facilities and special care must be taken of orphaned and vulnerable children. This becomes pertinent when both youth and education are in crises due to armed conflict.

◆ *African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child (ACRWC) 1990*

Emphasizes recreation, cultural activities and leisure under Article 12, Article 13(2) has a particular focus on children with disabilities. In times of armed conflict not only is recreation, leisure and cultural activities suspended - education for disabled children becomes more difficult to access and afford. As school infrastructure descends into further ruin, school premises become more inaccessible for physically disabled teachers and students. Physically disabled students are rarely enrolled in education at the camps for the internally displaced population¹¹. UNSCR 2475 (2019) reiterates the multiplier and disproportionate impact of armed conflict on physically disabled population.

¹¹<https://www.hrw.org/news/2022/02/02/un-high-risk-conflicts-children-disabilities>

Article 10 of ACRWC ensures the protection of privacy of children with attacks on honour and education of the child prohibited and subject to legal protection. Article 11 of ACRWC addresses education as a right for every child. Article 11 (2)(d) states “the preparation of the child for responsible life in a free society, in the spirit of understanding tolerance, dialogue, mutual respect and friendship among all peoples ethnic, tribal and religious groups”.

◆ *The protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples’ Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa (The Maputo Protocol) 2003*

The *Maputo Protocol* prohibits all types of abuse including sexual harassment in schools and other educational institutions. However, it misses out on covering any kind of abuse that occurs en route to school. Cognizant of quality education in all modes whether formal, long-distance or informal learning, Article 15 of the African Youth Charter contains provisions on sustainable livelihood and youth employment. Building on the Maputo Protocol, Article 23 of The African Youth Charter brings focus on the elimination of discrimination against women.

National Frameworks

◆ *The Constitution of Cameroon*

⇒ To begin with, at the domestic level, the Preamble of the Cameroonian Constitution, having legal enforcement, states:

“The State shall guarantee the child’s right to education. Primary education shall be compulsory. The organization and supervision of education at all levels shall be the bounded duty of the State”

⇒ Article 55(2) of the Cameroonian constitution warrants that Regional Councils and Local authorities (who maybe Council Mayors and Village chiefs) among other obligations should promote educational development. This provision of the Constitution simply reinforces/emphasizes the right to education for children as stated in the Preamble of the Cameroonian constitution.

⇒ Nonetheless, contradictions persist - Article 60 of the Constitution stipulates that “the Bureau of the Regional Council may be suspended in consultation with the Constitutional Council”, thus indicating centralization of the education system in Cameroon.

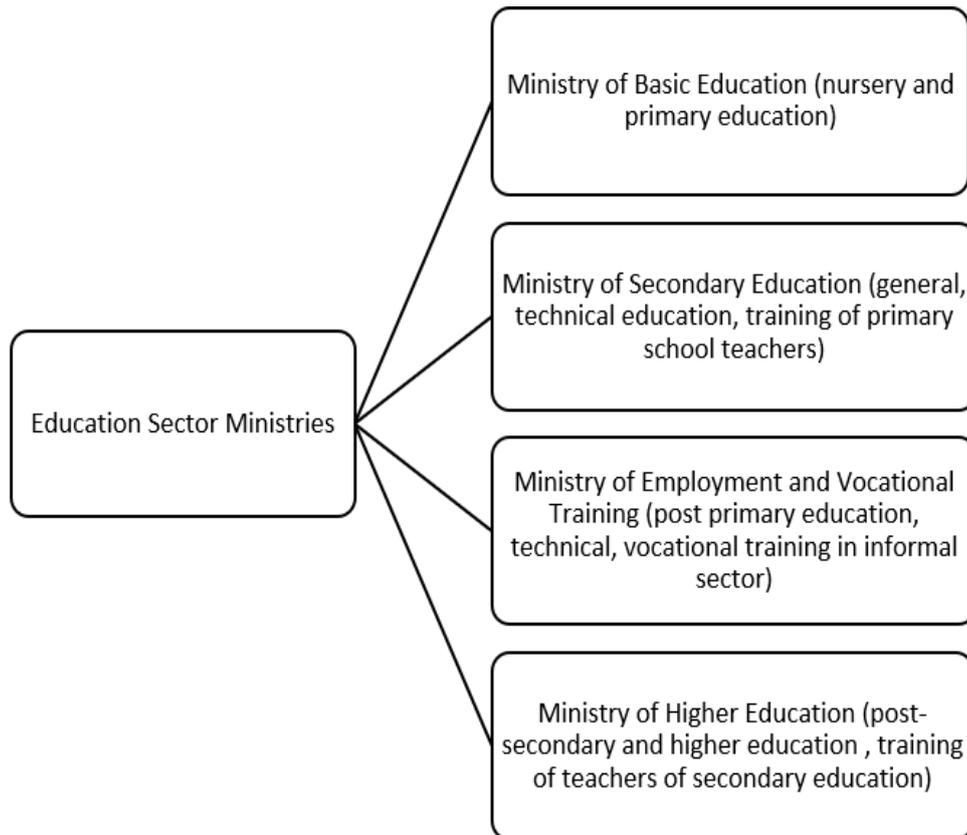


Fig 1: Ministries forming policies for the education system in Cameroon¹²

¹²Mekolle, P., Ngwa E., (2020), ‘Public Policy on Education in Contemporary Cameroon: Perspectives, Issues and Future Directions’ in *European Journal of Education Studies*, Volume 7, Issue 8, ISSN: 2501 – 1111 (adapted from)

Table 1: List of other Conventions, Resolutions and Mechanisms Related to Armed Conflict, Youth and Education

Geneva Conventions and Additional Protocols	
Article 24 Fourth Geneva Convention	The obligation of parties to an international armed conflict is to ensure the education of children under 15 who have been orphaned or separated from their families as a result of armed conflict
Article 94 Fourth Geneva Convention	Detaining power is under a special obligation to ensure the continuation of education of children and young people in internment
Article 77 (2) Additional Protocol I	Parties to the conflict will refrain from recruiting persons below 15 years of age
Article 4(3)(a) of Additional Protocol II	Applicable in non-international armed conflict, demands that children receive the care and aid they require, including education.
International Conventions	
Article 11, Convention on Rights of Persons with Disabilities	Ensure the protection and safety of persons with disabilities that specifically apply during armed conflict
Article 32, Child Rights Convention (CRC)	Provides protection from economic exploitation and from performing any work that is likely to be hazardous or to interfere with the child's education, or to be harmful to the child's health or physical, mental, spiritual, moral or social development
Article 38 (2), CRC	Measures must be taken by state parties to ensure that persons who have not hitherto attained 15 years do not have a direct part in hostilities.
International Covenant on Economic Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR)	Article 13 which also provides for a right to education for everyone not just children – and all levels of education. Ratified ICESCR has been ratified by 160 states.

UNSC Resolutions (UNSCR)

2250	Advancing the youth in peacebuilding and security processes
2475	The disproportionate impact of armed conflict on physically disabled people
2601	Urging all conflict parties to cease armed conflict harming the right to education, attacks on school and establishing linkages between education, security and peace.

National Mechanisms by the Government of Cameroon

Inter-Ministerial Committee on Trafficking in Persons	Members across eight ministries, civil society organisations and law personnel. Supervises regional task forces in Northwest, Southwest and
National Committee to Combat Child Labour	Implements National Action Plan to Combat Child Labour and Trafficking in Children, involving coordination across 11 ministries and ILO.
National Development Strategy 2020-2030 under Cameroon Vision 2035	Bridging disparities regarding staffing and school infrastructure across regions and enhancing fluency in both English and French. Under the 'Train My Generation' Program, to enhance enrolment in technical and vocational training for all secondary students
Law No. 98/004, 14 April 1998	Orientation of basic, secondary and teacher education in Cameroon: Section 3: include bilingualism across all levels of education Section 4: train children for civic, moral, physical, intellectual development Section 5: keep children intact with cultural, family values and values of democratic human rights
Law No. 2004/022, 2 nd July 2004	Functioning of private education in Cameroon
National Commission for the Promotion of Bilingualism and Multiculturalism. Presidential Decree No: 2017/013 of 23rd January 2017	A consultative body with financial autonomy to promote bilingualism as constitutionally ordained in Article 1(3)
Safe Schools Declaration	Education should be respectful of cultural mores, religion and identity – Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement – emphasize free primary education even for displaced children. In 2018, the Government of Cameroon endorsed the Safe Schools Declaration, pledging to protect education during armed conflict.

III. INTERTWINING THE EDUCATION SYSTEM IN CAMEROON WITH OTHER FUNDAMENTAL RIGHTS

Education is empowering enablement evolving the personality of an individual, providing freedom of choices. It is a key to self-construction¹³. Defined as an inalienable human right under UDHR (1948) and UNCRC (1989), education becomes all the more crucial in the context of armed conflict and humanitarian emergencies. Yet, education is among the first kept at the backburner when it comes to all the pertinent issues embroiled in armed conflicts. The convention on the Rights of the Child is cognizant of the right of each child to free primary education, encouraging accessibility to available secondary education. Education is a tool to combat multiple deprivations, intergenerational poverty, inequitable access to healthcare and other governmental programmes, mitigating gendered disparities such as forced child marriages and pregnancies compounded by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Education and intergenerational poverty: Limited accessibility to job opportunities due to lack of education will compound poverty and inequalities¹⁴. The Boko Haram style of operation by the separatists -young men and women being kidnapped for ransom - is reflective of the youth facing uncertain futures, increasing agitation with dwindling employment opportunities and a nearly non-functional education system as impacting the basic cognition in formative years of schooling that a student acquires.

Education and child labor: Children in Cameroon are expected to mandatorily attend six years of primary school. Child Labour has been eliminated in its worst forms as all persons under 18 years of age are prohibited from slavery, drug trafficking and prostitution as per ILO Convention 182. Mandatory completion of primary education gets over by twelve years of age, thereafter 13 and 14-year-olds are highly vulnerable as they are not compulsorily required to study nor have legal permission to work¹⁵. With schools non-operational, many children are supplementing their families' daily income and deployed in work for food programmes. The few children who do go to schools that are still running have to resort to working on the streets to pay their fees in full.

The IHRL provision against forced labour and slavery according to Article 8, International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) further creates a conducive environment for the liberty of educational staff and students. The liberty of educational staff and students is connected to their freedom of movement and residence.

¹³<https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S1877042811002692>

¹⁴https://www.un.org/development/desa/dspd/wp-content/uploads/sites/22/2020/08/sg_policy_brief_covid-19_and_education_august_2020.pdf

¹⁵2020 Findings on the Worst Forms of Child Labour, Bureau of International Labor Affairs, U.S. Department of Labor https://www.dol.gov/sites/dolgov/files/ILAB/child_labor_reports/tda2020/Cameroon.pdf

The lack of a defined understanding of torture in ICCPR, has been elaborated by Human Rights Council that torture entails physical suffering and mental trauma as well. The Robben Island Guidelines for the Prohibition and Prevention of Torture in Africa¹⁶, direct member states that torture is an offence falling within the domain of national legal system and that the ‘victim’ implies torture of any one member of the community or any ill-treatment imposed thereupon.

Education and access to healthcare: Skyrocketing indirect costs involve child soldiers getting recruited and poor comprehension of sexual and reproductive health rights among the youth. Arbitrary risks regarding sexual and physical violence are prominent particularly, when accessing education, healthcare and sanitation¹⁷. With respect to right to health, IHRL ensures the protection of mental and physical well-being of educational staff and students. Right to education and right to health are co-dependent. Elementary health education is a prerequisite for continued and safe education – regarding sanitation and hygiene and reproductive rights. Thus, SRHR (Sexual and Reproductive Health Rights) and Conflict-Related Sexual Violence (CRSV) get sidelined as girls’ education gets de-prioritized. The age of legal marriage in Cameroon as per the 1981 Civil Status Registration Ordinance in article 52 is above 15 years for female and above 18 years for male¹⁸ thus reflecting gender discrimination. The provision of Article 52 the Ordinance is specifically stated in the following wordings: *“No marriage may be celebrated: (1) if the girl is a minor of 15 years old or the boy of 18 years old, unless for serious reasons a waiver has been granted by the President of the Republic¹⁹”* This discriminatory position places girls in a disadvantageous position to be forced into early marriages. Forced marriages and unwanted pregnancies of adolescent girls may get accelerated due to discontinued education²⁰.

Education and the right to work: Education sector stakeholders must retain the right to work even during armed conflict. ILO’s right to work also involves a secure and healthy environment of work. Right to freedom of expression and freedom of assembly by default become impeded during armed conflict, while they are rights provided by the ILO. Thus, unionization by educational staff is a substantive exercise of right to work which is not freely enjoyed during armed conflicts.

¹⁶https://achpr.org/public/Document/file/Any/rig_practical_use_book.pdf

¹⁷<https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/Cameroon%20-2022%20Humanitarian%20response%20plan%20-HRP.pdf>

¹⁸<https://data.unicef.org/crsvs/cameroon/>

¹⁹<https://dignitylawchambers.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/04/Republic-of-Cameroon-Civil-Status-Registration.pdf> Ordinance No. 81 – 02 of 29 June 1981 on Civil Status Registration (Civil Status Registration Ordinance)

²⁰<https://www.nrc.no/news/2021/november/violence-impacts-700000-children-in-cameroon/>

Education and child soldiers: United Nation Secretary General’s 2021 Annual Report on Children and Armed Conflict (S/2021/437) takes stock of how girls are used as carriers of explosive devices, calling upon the Government of Cameroon to undertake gender-specific and child-sensitive disarmament, demobilization and reintegration (DDR) programmes. A constant atmosphere of fear of getting recruited makes girls feel insecure and adolescent girls experience sexual abuse not only at the hands of Non-State Armed Groups but also men and boys of the community²¹.

Armed Non-State Actors (ANSAs) are bound by Article 4(3) of 1977 Additional Protocol II, which demands that “*children shall be provided with care and aid they require and in particular..... they should receive education*”. As per Global Coalition to Protect Education from Attacks (GCPEA), ANSAs have militarised education facilities and hospitals for militarized purposes – as has been seen in Afghanistan, Democratic Republic of Congo, Central African Republic, Syria and Iraq, similar to the Anglophone crisis in Cameroon where schools are being used for hosting and training grounds for recruiting children as soldiers. Colluding with ANSAs to enhance the continuation of education and the safety of educative staff remains elusive and challenging. Nonetheless, if the splintered nature of these ANSAs is anything to go by, more efforts are required to incorporate the ANSAs into peace construction processes.

IV. THE IMPACT OF THE ANGLOPHONE CRISIS ON AGENTS OF EDUCATION

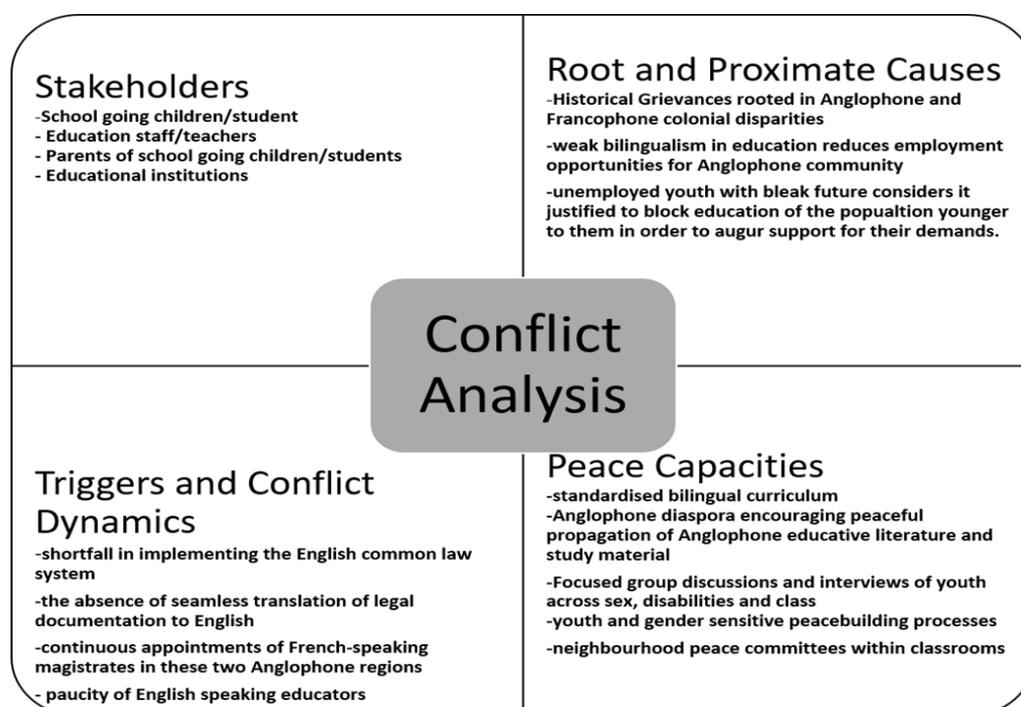


Figure 2: Conflict Analysis Matrix of the Anglophone Crisis

²¹https://plan-international.org/uploads/2021/12/listen_to_us_-_adolescent_girls_in_north_west_south_west_cameroon_on_conflict_and_covid-19.pdf

The education sector in Anglophone Cameroon has become a war zone with long-term repercussions for the future of Cameroonians especially those in the English speaking regions. Commonly labeled as the ‘anglophone crisis’, it is not merely a linguistic and identity issue²² but has gathered socio-economic tensions within its embrace. The resource geopolitics of oil and cocoa plantations add to the complexity of the competing interests²³. Finding teachers equipped with second language fluency, especially in remote areas is difficult. In fact, dual-medium schools get poor enrolment rates²⁴. In the midst of the armed conflict, as a strategy to ‘enjoy’ the right to education, students in Anglophone Cameroon have taken to short-term coping mechanisms of using shopping bags to carry study material, wearing casual clothes instead of uniforms enroute to school, often leaving their books at the school itself.

The most severely impacted is the youth of these regions. The separatists believe that if they are not building their capacities via education, their peers or those younger are being selfish while accessing their schooling. The template of shaming, villainising and guilt-tripping young minds by non-state armed groups is demonizing the ethic of education itself. The crisis has both short-medium and long-term impacts. Desiccation of education infrastructure, uprooting of lives of internally displaced families and discontinued education has a heavy toll on students, teachers and guardians. Ghost town strikes on Mondays, boycotting of education, holding civilians to ransom has been an ineffective and self-destructive strategy²⁵. Burning of schools, abducting of teachers, sexual violence against school-going boys and girls has resulted in fragile coping mechanisms for civilians in Southwest Cameroon.

Not only do children’s rights to education get impeded but so do sustainable developmental capacities. International guidelines for all stakeholders involved in the education sector have been formulated but they must be localized as per contexts.

²²Tande, Dibussi. *Scribbles from the Den: Essays on Politics and Collective Memory in Cameroon*, Langaa RPCIG, 2009.

²³<https://www.crisisgroup.org/africa/central-africa/cameroon/250-camerouns-anglophone-crisis-crossroads>

²⁴<https://www.crisisgroup.org/africa/central-africa/cameroon/272-crise-anglophone-au-cameroun-comment-arriver-aux-pourparlers>

²⁵<https://www.hrw.org/report/2021/12/16/they-are-destroying-our-future/armed-separatist-attacks-students-teachers-and>

Impact Analyses of the Anglophone Armed Conflict

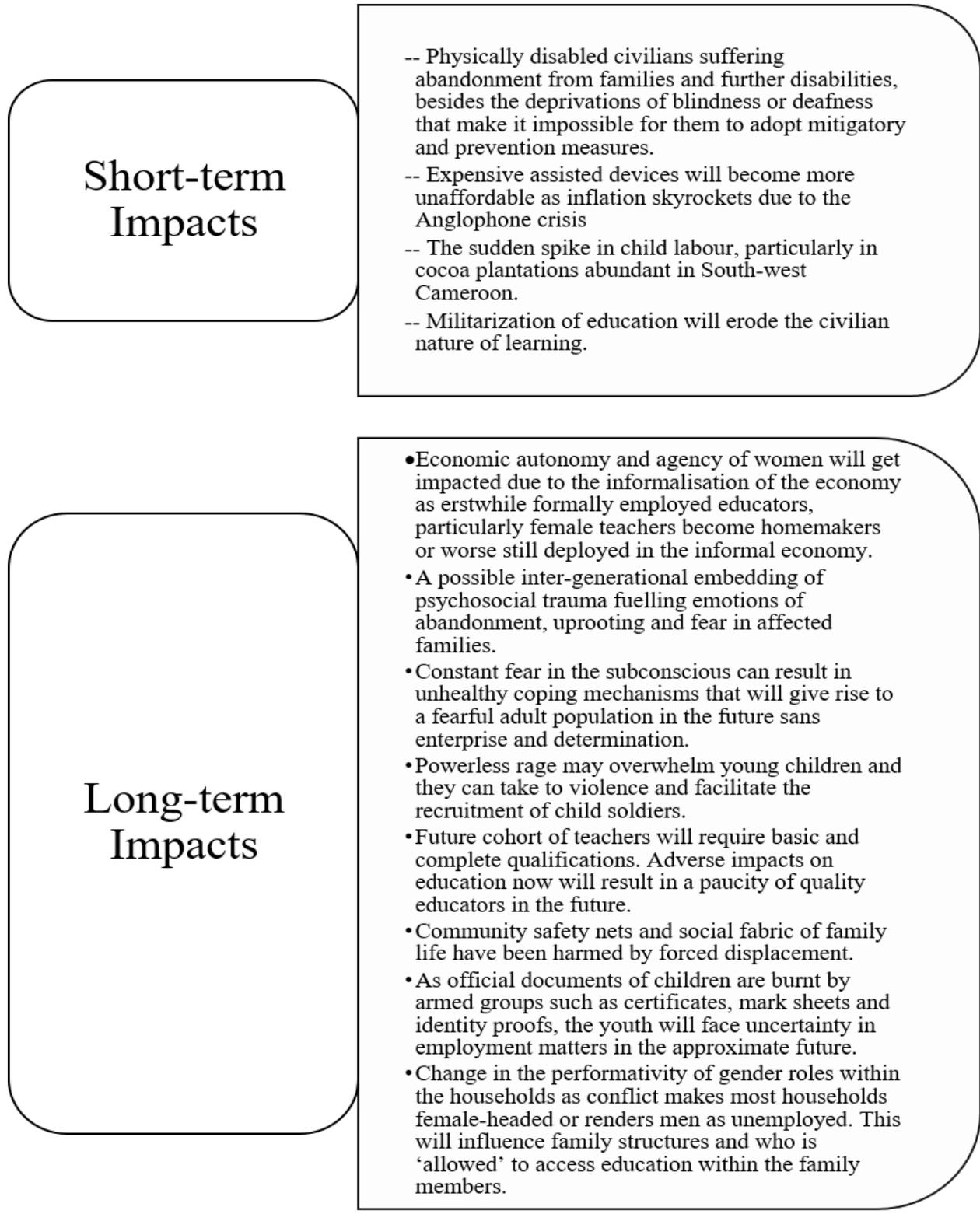


Figure 3: Short-term and Long-term multi-sectoral impact analysis

V. POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

An online bilingual platform has been created, principals and teachers across schools have been trained – however, Global Partnership for Education²⁶ claims to have introduced measures in the context of COVID-19 recovery of education. Reconciling contentious flashpoints will require a stall to macro and micro-aggressions. Securitising Anglophone regions by military deployments will only delay a much-needed consensus. Certain stakeholders are of the belief that an international third-party mediator will enable successful talks²⁷. However, to go beyond mere consultations and dialogue insider mediation is of prioritized and crucial significance. We therefore recommend the following for corresponding stakeholders:

A. For Community/Civil Society Organisations

- Faith-based mediators should negotiate with violent segments in society to prevent attacks on schools and en-route.
- neighbourhood peace committees within classrooms
- productive unemployment by inculcating ethic of voluntarism and community programmes
- Anglophone Cameroonian writing and literature must be encouraged and funded by Anglophone diaspora rather than funding militancy and violent means.
- Laptops, mobile phones collected for reuse or recycling can be provided to the youth, particularly young women, with inequitable access to technology. This can ease their access to education and early warning alert systems in case of probable attacks. Such a step is also environmentally friendly as the reuse of e-waste gets enhanced.

B. For Education Sector Stakeholders – Students, Teachers, Non-teaching Staff, Affected Families

- Peace and conflict-sensitive education: Social-Emotional Learning modules to be included in basic education. According to UNICEF, peace education is constitutive of constructing a conducive and enabling environment for peace, conflict resolution and most crucially, conflict prevention.

²⁶<https://www.globalpartnership.org/blog/cameroon-building-resilience-education-system-cope-crises>

²⁷<https://www.crisisgroup.org/africa/central-africa/cameroon/272-crise-anglophone-au-cameroun-comment-arriver-aux-pourparlers>

- Teacher-Student-Parents Defense Units to pre-warn about future attacks²⁸
- Consolidating sex disaggregated data regarding attacks on education-sector stakeholders, for more accurate gendered analysis
- School management committees must be formed comprising caregivers, educators, educating staff and students as well.
- Delivery of distance learning modules by drones
- Creating clusters of informally trained educators
- Strengthening of unionism such as workers' union of educational staff, teacher unions
- First generation learners are at a greater disadvantage, they must be dealt with on a priority basis as their foundational skills are more gullible to becoming weak.
- Psycho-social support to educators and adolescent students who have been left behind by their displaced families due to impediments in mobility while fleeing.
- Enabling access to study materials for physically disabled students.
- Parental training and vocational training that equips women to begin and sustain businesses in spite of the non-accessibility to formal schooling.
- Pedagogy of the oppressed requires eclectic and collaborative methods of teaching that enhance preventive socio-emotional learning, peacebuilding and conflict transformative curriculum.
- Rebuilding school infrastructure by massive fundraising across multiple sectors and constructing physically disabled-friendly school premises.

C. For the Government of Cameroon

- Creating employment opportunities for repentant separatist fighters
- Strengthening decentralisation by legislative reforms
- Creating qualitative datasets on root causes and grievances of attackers that drive them to attack schools.
- Consultations with young students who can come up with innovative and healthy coping mechanisms

²⁸What Schools Can Do to Protect Education from Attack and Military Use', Global Coalition to Protect Education from Attack, p-16

- Demobilisation and reintegration strategy vocational training for productive employment and troubleshooting underemployment/ Survivors of sexual violence, child abuse, trafficking and child labour require comprehensive reintegration age-sensitive modules.
- Changing proclivities towards educating children as many households become all female-driven.
- Camps for internally displaced people, particularly physically disabled should have extra precautions regarding healthcare access and informal learning methods.
- Child-sensitive multi-hazard risk analysis with child-centered risk mapping.

D. For Multi-sectoral International Agencies and the Aid Sector

- Those who are ex-ante physically disabled and those who become physically disabled during a conflict must be segregated for humanitarian aid as they have a distinct degree and intensity of requirements.
- Adolescents should be provided with comprehensive SRHR modules in order to inculcate a sense of healthy boundaries
- OCHA will pursue multisectoral coordination for reinstating education such that the education sector works in synergy with the health and WASH sectors.
- In agreement with UN OCHA's recommendation of consolidating alternative education via radio programmes, emergency-based non-formal education modules and digital/paper-based distance learning.
- Nutrition and vaccination programmes must be sustained to allow for the proper cognitive development of young children. These tend to get disrupted due to armed conflicts and displacement.
- UNSCR 2250 adopted in 2015 regarding Youth, Peace and Security (YPS) encourages greater participation of youth in decision making and peacebuilding processes at all levels of policymaking.

About Us

Constituted on 6th April 2016 as a non - profit organisation and recently being awarded an ECOSOC status by the United Nations, we work with communities to bring diverse groups together and leverage their abilities, interests, and resources to engender shared values and benefits. We ensure local ownership of initiatives by working with communities to drive program design and implementation. We highly value developing a comprehensive understanding of the social, cultural, political, and economic dynamics in the communities where we implement our programs and interventions. At CCID, we aim to empower individuals and communities to uplift women, young people—especially girls—and the wider community to be leaders for positive change. We are an organisation made up of community development experts who recognise that to create a sustainable world, we must harness communities' potential. We strongly believe that women and young people in Cameroonian communities are central assets whose full potential remains untapped. We are also cognizant that the majority of indigenous people in communities across Cameroon live under the poverty line and work with community - based organisations to meet their needs. CCID has been working in several areas to advance women's rights and gender equality set by BPFA +25, namely sexual harassment, community development, SRHR advocacy and policy management. We have held campaigns called "Safe Schools for All" to promote an academic and community culture that effectively and strategically addresses and prevents sexual harassment in learning environments. We have fellowship programs to educate and train young leaders regarding gender issues, development and capacity building at the grass - root level so that there can be a bottom to top change, and last but not least, we devote time and energy toward developing policy and advocacy documents that provide readers with an understanding of key issues regarding human rights and community development in Cameroon especially in the context of women and girls. We also use these briefs to urge community leaders, local policymakers, government officials, and other authorities to reform policies, traditions, and norms that interfere with Cameroonians' basic rights.

Contact Us

Community Centre for Integrated Development

Auberge Entrance, Bunduma – Buea South West Region Cameroon

P.O.Box 1505 Molyko – Buea South West Region Cameroon

Tel : +237 233 324 360 /+237 666 952 306 / +237 670 222 514

Whatsapp: +237 6 85 99 80 65

Mail: info@comuceid.org Website: www.comuccid.org

Facebook: www.facebook.com/comuceid

Twitter: [CCID_Official](https://twitter.com/CCID_Official)