

The University of Yaounde I: A Catalyst of Unity in Diversity in Cameroon, 1962-2018

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Abstract

Review Article

This paper focuses on the conglomeration of people in the city of Yaoundé from different geographical backgrounds due to the presence of the University of Yaoundé I. Since time immemorial, human beings across the globe have incessantly demonstrated the quest for better living conditions. This has made the city to witness an influx of people for diverse purposes. The paper establishes that the University of Yaoundé I was the cynosure of this situation, especially for those seeking knowledge and other scholarly activities. It, also, argues that the settlement of these incomers resulted in unity in diversity. The paper begins by outlining the determinants of incomers' infiltration and implantation in the city, areas of unity in diversity, ramifications, and recommendations. The paper relied on data from primary and secondary sources including interviews. For primary data, we drew evidences after critically treating oral information. With regards to secondary sources, we made extensive use of literature that offered some general and specific information concerning our topic of investigation. To ensure a logical presentation of the data, chronological-cum thematic approaches were used in analyzing information gathered by the use of qualitative and quantitative approaches. Results of our investigations revealed four main issues: Firstly, that the presence of the University changed the organization and outlook of the city; secondly, that the University nursed and promoted cohabitation; thirdly, that the University eliminated some negative boundaries; and fourthly, that national unity became the order of the day thanks to the University.

Keywords: University of Yaoundé I, Catalyst, Unity in Diversity and Cameroon.

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INTRODUCTION

After the independence of French Cameroon on January 1st, 1960[1], some Cameroonians understood that the relevance of independence was insignificant if it did not precipitate greater material, and cultural progress to a brighter future, prosperity, and economic progress. To eliminate the problems of underdevelopment, investment was mainly in education. It was recognized as the main tool to speed up development and was, therefore, incumbent on Cameroonians to use this instrument and provide solutions to the country's pressing problems and build a solid and stable nation. Higher Education was believed to be the greatest panacea to equip Cameroonians with the ingredients that were badly needed for national development. This goal could

only be achieved by employing strategies to create higher educational facilities in Cameroon.

The government of the Republic of Cameroon (French Cameroon) had in 1958 taken a decision to create a university preparatory class, a law school, and a national professional school as the first step towards establishing a Cameroon University [2]. This decision yielded fruits in 1961. In June 13th, 1961, the Government signed an agreement with the United Nations Special Funds for the establishment of the Advanced Teachers College [3] and responsibility was nailed on UNESCO to execute the project. In this connection, a Presidential Decree No 61/186 was signed on September 30th, 1961, creating the Cameroon Advanced Teacher Training College (*Ecole Normale*

¹ V. G. Fanso, *Cameroon History for Secondary Schools and Colleges*, Revised and Updated Combined Edition, Bamkika'ay-Kumbo, Team Work, 2017, p323.

² UNESCO, *EDUCAFRICA: Case Studies on Higher Education in Africa*, Bilingual Issue, Dakar, UNESCO, P.71.

³ *Ibid.*

Supérieure du Cameroun), located in Yaoundé [4]. It is this training college that evolved to become the Federal University of Cameroon, then the University of Yaoundé, and finally the University of Yaoundé I which has consciously and or unconsciously nursed and groomed unity in diversity in Cameroon. This paper shall be organized based on the following procedural order: contextual setting, bases, manifestations, and ramifications of unity in diversity in Cameroon.

Historical Context

The history of the University of Yaoundé I concomitantly takes us to the decade of 1960s. Following the achievement of independence by French Cameroon in 1960, with Amadou Ahidjo as the first president of the country, efforts were devoted to have a Cameroon University [5]. During the fourth congress of the ruling political party at the time, *Union Camerounaise*, Ahidjo revealed Government's intention of creating a Cameroon University of International Standard. The standard was to correspond with the main goals of the country's five-year plan for economic and social development [6]. This idea was born out from the inability of higher learning

institutes of foreign countries to meet up with the expectations [7].

In order not to straggle behind the philosophy of these foreign universities, the Federal University of Cameroon was created on July 26, 1962 by a Presidential Decree No 62/DF/372 of October 8, 1962[8]. This was an amalgamation of the Higher Teacher Training College (HTTC) and the newly created faculty of law and political science. Given the results of the tripartite conference of August 1961 that continued discussing the decisions of the Fommban Conference of July 1961, this newly created University was named the Federal University of Cameroon [9]. The substitution of the federal system of government with the unitary system in 1972 paved the way for the modification of the name to the University of Yaoundé in 1973[10]. It is however important to note that other state universities such as Buea, Dschang, Douala and Ngoundere were also created in 1993.

It is important to highlight that the Federal University had a student population of 3334 in 1972. The number continued to grow though with stagnant infrastructures. See the table below

Admission from 1962-1992 at the University of Yaoundé

Year	No. of Students	Percentage Growth
1961/1962	213	
1971/1972	3334	29
1981/1982	15,800	89
1991/1992	51,000	12

Source: P. N. Nkwi, "Anthropology at the University of Yaoundé I: A Historical Overview, 1962-2008", *The African Anthropologist*, Vol. 14, Nos 1 and 2, 2007, p. 69.

The expeditious growth of this University in the 1970s and 1980s later encountered some challenges such as insufficient qualified facilities, overcrowding, underfunding among others. This situation triggered the government of Cameroon to seek solutions and ameliorate the situation. The outcome of the brainstorming connected to this was the implementation of a university reform in 1993. The result of this was the fragmentation of the University of Yaoundé into two independent institutions: The University of Yaoundé I and The University of Yaoundé II, Soa by a Presidential Decree of N0 93/026 of 19 January 1993[11].

Bases of Unity in Diversity: Employment and Commerce

Many people from different ethnic backgrounds moved to Yaoundé for employment reasons. André-Marie Tala [12] captured this phenomenon in his lyrics and accentuated how employment opportunities compelled many job seekers all over the territory, especially the Bamileke to migrate to the city of Yaoundé

⁴ *Ibid.*, p.72.

⁵ Fanso, *Cameroon History for Secondary Schools and Colleges*, p.324.

⁶ UNESCO, *EDUCAFRICA: Case Studies on Higher Education in Africa*, p. 71.

⁷ *Ibid.*

⁸ L. N. Tih, "Peaceful Co-Existence and Nation Building in the City of Yaoundé, 1972-2018", Master of Arts Dissertation, Department of History, University of Yaoundé I, 2022, p. 88.

⁹ S. T. Bessong, *An Illustrated History of Cameroon Since 1800*, Yaoundé, The Book House, p.227.

¹⁰ minesup. gov.cm: Decret N0 93/026 Of 19 January, Creation of Universities

¹¹ Nkwi, "Anthropology at the University of Yaoundé I, p. 65.

¹² André-Marie Tala is a renowned Cameroonian musician, singer and composer. He was born on October 29, 1950 in Bandjou-Cameroon. He is known for his unique blend of traditional Cameroonian music with modern styles, particularly Afro-jazz, funk and pop. In 1975, he released a song "Je vais a Yaoundé, Yaoundé la capitale" where he explains the essence of job opportunities attracting people to Yaoundé.

in their great numbers [13]. Job opportunities were relatively better in Yaoundé given the presence of the University that pulled a crowd. In the late 1990s, the volume of in-migrants in Yaoundé further increased. This stemmed from the fact that the University of Yaoundé I influenced the establishment of many socio-economic and political infrastructures in the city [14].

In-migrants in Yaoundé also increased significantly after the reunification of British Southern Cameroons and the Republic of Cameroon. Longin, an Ewondo patriarch testifies that the incomers in Yaoundé increased significantly prior to the presence of the University of Yaoundé I [15]. While others were recruited as lecturers like Martin Zachary Njeuma, Victor Bong Amazee, Verkijika Godfred Fanso, Beban Sammy Chumbow among others, some established businesses in the vicinities of the University and/or on its campus [16]. This included owning photo shops, documentary centers, restaurants and selling items like papers and pens in strategic positions [17].

Trade was another attractive factor that took people to Yaoundé. This was engineered by the University which pulled a reasonable crowd. Owono Antoinette educates us that most people from the Bameleke land and other areas were dragged to Yaoundé by commercial activities and the flexible nature of land acquisition for settlement [18]. Students of the University of Yaoundé I had a good purchasing power of the goods. Ntuh Jude Kpa is also known to have made his riches thanks to the store and bar (La Menchum) that he opened around the premises of the University [19]. In connection to this, Aboki has this to say:

Business equally brought people to the city of Yaoundé. People had the notion that there is a lot of money in Yaoundé given the presence of the University of Yaoundé I. They believed that money was found everywhere in Yaoundé. People believed that their presence in Yaoundé will offer them a green light to make it in life. [20].

From this narration, we can see that social cohesion and nation building moves were rekindled thanks to the creation of the University of Yaoundé I.

Language and Education

The bilingual nature of the University encouraged a good number of people to infiltrate the city. Pidgin English spoken in Yaoundé was another added advantage. English speakers from the North West and South West regions communicated very well with the use of Pidgin English with the Bamileke, Dualas, and other business people in some cases. This opportunity partly resulted from the existence of the University of Yaoundé I, which united people of different geographical backgrounds. Students and others relocated in Yaoundé. West Cameroon had seven per cent (7%) of the students in the University of Yaoundé I [21]. The reason greatly attached to most youths' displacement from the English-speaking regions and reestablishment in Yaoundé was education. Aboki recounts it in this manner:

The person who brought me to Yaoundé was my in-law who was an army and was transferred to Yaoundé where he spent his entire life. Education, especially University education, brought me and many others in the city since the University of Yaoundé was the lone university in Cameroon after reunification [22].

The digestion of the above narrative exposes all that social cohesion and nation building moves were rekindled due to the creation of the University of Yaoundé I. The University invited many incomers in the city unconsciously by offering them the opportunity to continue climbing the academic ladder while doing something on their own and sponsoring themselves. This made the city distinctive in the country. It is no news that some students in the aforementioned institution taught in many secondary institutions in the city. This was one of their sources of income that helped them sustained a living. Examples here include, Sabum Humphrey, Maximus Chintful and Aloysious Shu who are all doctorate students [23].

Health

The city of Yaoundé was full of public and private hospitals, pharmacies, medical centers and health centers. Many people from all parts of the country relocated there for better medical treatment [24]. Hospitals included the General Hospital and the *Gyneco-Obstetrique* Hospital at Ngousso, the Central Hospital

¹³ C. J. F. Aurrelle, "Urbanisation et Dynamique Culturelle Chez les Ewondo de Yaounde: Etude Anthropologique", Masters of Art Dissertation, Department of Anthropology, University of Yaounde I, 2014, pp. 27-29.

¹⁴ Tih, "Peaceful Co-Existence and Nation Building", p. 66.

¹⁵ Interview with Zanga Onana Longin, 76 Years, Teacher, Yaounde., 27 March 2024.

¹⁶ Interview with Tabe John Enow, 54 Years, Doctor of History, Yaounde, 27th March 2024.

¹⁷ *Idem*.

¹⁸ Interview with Owono Antoinette, 63 Years, Retired Forest Guard, Yaounde, 28/03/2024.

¹⁹ Interview with Che Joseph Mtembi, 74 Years, Inspector of basic Education, Yaounde, 30/03/2024.

²⁰ Interview with Francis Aboki, 53 Years, Teacher, Yaoundé, 30/03/2024.

²¹ Fanso, *Cameroon History for Secondary Schools and Colleges*, p. 352.

²² Interview with Francis Aboki.

²³ Tih, "Peaceful Co-Existence and Nation Building", p. 79.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, p.83.

and the Chantal Biya foundation at Messa, Military Hospital, the Marie Wyss Hospital located at Nsimeyong, the teaching hospital of the University of Yaoundé I (CHU), located at Melen and the *Hôpital Jamot* at Mballa II [25]. Most of those who managed these institutions were products of the University of Yaoundé I. These medical infrastructures, especially CHU pulled people from all over the country to the city of Yaoundé for better health conditions. This brought about the proliferation of diverse cultures in the city.

Administration and Politics

The University of Yaoundé I indirectly made the city of Yaoundé to become the seat of national institutions (government, army, parliament among others), diplomatic representations (embassies and consulates), national and international organizations, academic and professional institutions, and many political parties. This orchestrated the establishment of administrative institutions and in-migration of civil servants to the city [26]. Many people from different ethnic backgrounds migrated to Yaoundé to follow up their files in the various ministries. This brought in many people in the capital city with diverse cultures. The city, equally, served as the headquarter for most political parties in the country such as CPDM, MRC and UPC. These parties, in general, consisted of members from different cultural backgrounds in Cameroon who all converged in Yaoundé for deliberations. This pulled people from various parts of the country.

Exhibition of Unity in Diversity: Education, Language and Gastronomy

The University of Yaoundé I harbours thousands of students from all the ten regions of the country. Students and lecturers including auxiliary staff are admitted/recruited in the institution from different cultural backgrounds [27]. Lessons are done in English and French. This bilingual nature has influenced the establishment of many private secondary schools in the city. While some practice the Anglo-Saxon sub-system of education, others practice the French sub-system. However, many parents of French speaking backgrounds send their children to study in the English sub-system [28]. Upon completion from the secondary school and admission into the University of Yaoundé I, the system is unique for everybody regardless of the person's origin.

Another area of unity in diversity nursed by the University of Yaoundé I was seen in the field of

academics. Students are grouped in any manner (regardless of their area of origin) to study. The means of evaluation also remains unique to everybody [29]. The University recognizes the importance of language proficiency in both English and French, permitting students from different geographical backgrounds to express themselves freely in the language they master most, whether in writing, discussing in the lecture hall, group projects, or casual conversations on campus [30]. This flexibility fostered a sense of community and promoted cross-cultural understanding among students from diverse backgrounds. In the lecture halls, students follow lectures in the preferred language of the lecturer but interact with their lecturers; seeking clarification or discussing ideas in the language they are most comfortable with. This built their confidence in communicating in a multilingual setting. With regards to evaluations, students have the option to write their exams or submit assignments in either of the two official languages. This permitted them to demonstrate their knowledge and skills without being hindered by language limitations [31].

Again, residing on campus was another place of social cohesion. Students share a room if they are of the same sex and choose to reside in the school hostels. Again, the conglomeration of people from different ethnic backgrounds in Yaounde as a result of the presence of the University inadvertently resulted in the introduction of different traditional meals in the city. Social gatherings of students and facilitators of the institution didn't have a specific meal to be consumed. Participants of most events in the city were usually pleased consuming food from different cultural origins [32]. The different dishes included: *Eru*, *Achu*, *Kpem*, *Okok*, *Sanga*, *Kati-kati*, and *Mbiang*.

Marriages and Dressing Code

The University of Yaoundé I Kept unions of people from different ethnic and cultural backgrounds to be on a steady increase in the city of Yaoundé. It is worth noting that from 2008-2018, most marriages signed in the civil status registration centres in the city of Yaoundé were couples from different ethnic and cultural backgrounds [33]. Inter-marriages were visible between the following ethnic groups: Fang-Beti and grass fielders, Duala-Bassa, Bakweri-Bayangi, Bakweri-Ewondo, Ewondo-Duala, Isu-Nso among others. A glaring example is that of Prof Dong Mugnoul from the centre region, a lecturer in the Department of History,

²⁵ *Ibid*.

²⁶ Fotso, "Urbanisation et Dynamique Culturelle Chez les Ewondo", pp. 27-29.

²⁷ Interview with Enow John Tabe, 43 Years, Historian, Yaoundé, 30/03/2024.

²⁸ Tih, "Peaceful Co-Existence and Nation Building", p. 97.

²⁹ Interview with Ngwa Bismarck, 26 Years, Masters Student of University of Yaoundé I, Yaoundé, 30/03/2024.

³⁰ Interview with Enow John Tabe.

³¹ Interview with Ngwa Bismarck.

³² Interview with Enow John Tabe.

³³ Tih, "Peaceful Co-Existence and Nation Building", p. 97.

University of Yaoundé I married to a lady from Bali-Nyonga in the North-West³⁴. Inter-marriages minimized cultural frontiers in Yaoundé thanks to the University of Yaoundé I. Some Muslims in the city got married to Christians. This was a rare situation hitherto the creation of Yaoundé I.

According to Ngwoh, any pluralistic community like Yaoundé, which is partly nursed by the University under examination, dressing customs reflect the various cultural backgrounds of the inhabitants: Gandourra and Boubou of the Sudano-Sahelian, Toghu of the Grassfields, the Sanja and Kabba of the Sawa and Fang-Beti among others that cut across tribal limits [35]. Dressing in the city of Yaoundé is no longer an affair of a particular tribe, it cuts across ethnic boundaries. Achia Moses from the North West-Region residing in Yaoundé most often is dressed in Muslims traditional regalia [36]. Sport is another important factor of social cohesion. For instance, during university games in Yaoundé I, participants of different activities assemble people of diverse ethnic backgrounds.

Ramification: Elitism and Partisanship

As earlier mentioned, the University of Yaoundé I united people from different historical and cultural backgrounds in Yaoundé. Minority groups like the pygmy, Mbororo, Anglophones among others believed that equal opportunities were not given them in the city. The Fang-Beti, the aborigines of the city unconsciously placed themselves at the top of most activities. This nursed mixed feelings in the minds of incomers, a situation that fanned the flames of blazing discord and hindered social cohesion in Yaoundé [37].

The aborigines regarded the Bamileke in the city as invaders which fanned ethnic discord and disintegration in the city. [38] The belief in one religion or particular party has been a disintegrating factor. The city is fragmented into different religious bodies. Contradictory opinions have grown wild in this field given the quality knowledge the inhabitants acquired from the University of Yaoundé I. Islamism differed with Christianity in their biblical or Koranic interpretations [39]. This partly accounts for the segmentation of the Islamic community in the Briquetérie neighborhood [40].

Though much effort is made to promote national awareness, fundamentalism proved stronger. Ethnic consciousness impaired national consciousness in the city given that those representing larger ethnic groups show interest only to their community. Some political barons (some of whom studied in Yaoundé I) equally exploited the gullibility of their local people to achieve support and strengthen their authority which epitomized the city of Yaoundé. Ngwoh and Awasom affirm that:

National integration is jeopardized by ethno-regional jingoism, fanned and sustained by the state. People are overtly encouraged to demonstrate stronger loyalties to their ethno-regional or sub-national groups than to the Cameroon nation. Priority is given to belonging to a group first and the nation second, and this state of affairs engenders the crisis of citizenship as full acceptability in one's fatherland suffers from a delimitation of a geo-ethnic order. [41]

The declaration educates people on how ethno chauvinism, "tribalism" and regionalism are impediments to social cohesion and peaceful co-existence.

Administration

An impediment or disheartening factor to social cohesion in political affairs in Yaoundé is ethnocentricity. The Beti-Fang-Bulu indigenes are believed to be given preferential treatment in the University of Yaoundé I and city at large. According to Ngwoh, after the 1997 Presidential election in Cameroon, the composition of government was domination by the Fang-Beti. This made many intellectuals from other zones who studied in Yaoundé I to feel relegated to the back stage. Ngwoh posits that:

The government set-up after the 1997 presidential election was a clear example of this hegemony. At the Presidency, the Secretaries General and the Director of Civil Cabinet were generally from the President's Beti-Fang ethnic group. In the government of 1997, 14 out of 32 ministers with portfolios were Beti, while the three Northern provinces had 7 ministers, the Bassas 3, the Bamouns 1, the Francophone SAWAS 2, and the two Anglophone Provinces with over 4 million people only 2 ministers. In the field of administration and Higher Education, 15 out of 25 Generals in the army; 24

³⁴ *Ibid.*

³⁵ V. K. Ngwoh, Venantius, K. N., "Realities of National Integration in Cameroon", *International Journal of Humanities & social studies*, Vol. 7, 2019, pp. 288-293.

³⁶ Interview with Ngwa Bismarck.

³⁷ J. G. Bobouin, "Cameroon's National Integration Strategy", MINJEC, CAB, 2015; L. W. Chang, B. Azizan, et al. "National Unity at the University Level: Importance of Civilizational, Dialogue and Way Forward", University of Malaysia, 2013, pp. 213-215.

³⁸ W. Dze-ngwa,, "National Unity and National Integration in Cameroon 1961-2000: Dreams and Realities" Ph. D Thesis, Department of History, University of Yaoundé I, 2006, p.123.

³⁹ Tih "Peaceful Co-Existence and Nation Building", p.126.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*

⁴¹ Ngwoh, "Realities of National Integration", pp. 288-293.

out of 58 Senior Divisional Officers (SDOs) and 3 of the 6 rectors in state universities were Beti. [42]

Nyamnjoh and Takougang insinuate that most ministers heading some ministerial departments in the city were mostly people of the Beti tribe. They put it this way:

Other factors fuelled frustration with the francophone-dominated state in the late 1980s, notably the increasing monopolization of key posts by members of the President's ethnic group who appeared to be much bolder in staking out claims on the state's resources than had Ahidjo's barons. As of August 1991, according to Joseph Takougang, 37 of the 47 senior *préfets* were Beti, as were three-quarters of the directors and general managers of the parastatals, and 22 of the 38 high-ranking bureaucrats who had been appointed in the newly created office of the Prime Minister. [43]

Thanks to the knowledge acquired from the University of Yaoundé I, scholars are able to digest and accentuate the information.

Congestion, Theft and Deaths

The University of Yaoundé I vectored many people in the city of Yaoundé through its numerous advantages such as Job opportunities, high standard of living among others, a situation that brought about overcrowding and its negative effects. Movement from one place to another was not smooth as before. The effect of this was the late arrival of people and goods in their destination point [44]. It is told that some people lost their family members or love ones in the city due to their late arrival with the patient in the hospital, caused by congestion of cars in the roads [45]. The crowd pulled by the University also resulted in high rents, crime waves, prostitution among others. Some vital areas in the city remained no go zones to some people given the insecurity that characterized the places [46].

Following the high cost of living or decreasing standard of living due to inflation and poverty in Yaoundé, some youths have resorted to address the problem by embracing scamming and theft. This has a negative effect on social cohesion and nation building. It is no news to hear people crying on the streets that their phones and other valuable articles have been snatched from them by these criminals [47]. In cases where one tried to resist the criminal, he/she was seriously wounded. It is argued that if the University of Yaoundé I did not unconsciously bring such people, it would have

been a non-existent issue. This has made people to see others as suspects of ungodly acts.

However, as a result of social cohesion fostered by Yaoundé I, diverse neighborhoods with people from various ethnic backgrounds have sprung up in the city. Bonamousadi in Yaoundé is a glaring example where people from all parts of the country have settled and created their commercial activities, and a thriving community that showcases the benefits of cultural exchange, innovation and economic growth [48].

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This paper has examined some areas of social cohesion in the city of Yaoundé emanating from the presence of The University of Yaoundé I. The land hitherto the birth of the aforementioned University was highly inhabited by its aborigines. The customs and traditions of the place were unpolluted and development was not fast growing. The creation of the University directly and indirectly brought in people from all parts of the country and the world at large. The co-existence of these people from different cultural backgrounds significantly brought positive changes in the city. For instance, there was a change in the politics and administration of the country. In the economic domain, there was the introduction of new jobs, transport infrastructure among others. The positive effects of this conglomeration of ethnicities in Yaoundé were, however, minimal. It is for this reason that the paper gives recommendations.

There should not be regionalism and regressive ethnic thoughts among the inhabitants of the city. The aborigines should not claim superiority, avoid provocative language or slangs against new incomers. Equality should, therefore, be the doctrine preached among both groups. Incomers who have settled permanently should be recognized as non-strangers and as indigenes that came in late. In this connection, the late settlers should respect the aborigines for discovering the area. This respect should not be limited to elders or national authorities; local indigenes should be respected too. The government should promote inclusive governance by ensuring representation and participation of all regions and communities in decision-making processes. This will build trust and confidence in the society, thereby promoting unity in diversity.

Constructive dialogue should be frequent. As concerns judicial affairs and governance, everyone should be equal before the law. The lawmakers should take into account the people's interest before adopting

⁴² *Ibid.*

⁴³ F. B. Nyamnjoh, "The Anglophone Problem in Cameroon", *Journal of Modern African Studies*, University of Cape Town, 1997, pp. 207-208.

⁴⁴ Interview with Ngwa Bismarck Ngem.

⁴⁵ Interview with Enow John Tabe.

⁴⁶ Bobouin, "Cameroon's National Integration Strategy", pp. 48-51

⁴⁷ Interview with Enow John Tabe.

⁴⁸ *Idem.*

bills into laws in the parliament. The executive arm of government should continue acting within the ambit of its constitutional prerogatives and should avoid attempting to dominate the other arms of government. Social cohesion should be among the top policy priorities of the government and other stakeholders in the society.

Given the ethnic pluralism in the city, inhabitants should promote mutual recognition and respect for cultural values; promote common national languages in schools. Social interaction should be encouraged and practices likely to undermine social cohesion should be discouraged. Social inclusion and eradication of vices that may impair living together should be the order of the day. Cultural events, festivals, and programs that showcase and celebrate the diversity of Cameroon's cultures should be organized. This would enable citizens to appreciate and understand each other's customs, traditions, and values, thereby building bridges between different communities, fostering a sense of shared identity and national pride. Cultural exchange would also promote tourism and economic development, benefiting local communities and the national economy.

The government should also implement policies that promote economic growth and development in all regions, reducing disparities and inequalities that often lead to hatred, by investing in key sectors and improving support for small and medium-sized enterprises. When all regions feel invested in and benefit from economic development, citizens are more likely to feel a sense of shared ownership and national unity.

The University of Yaounde I, and other bilingual institutions in the country should improve its bilingual status by striking a balance between the two official languages in all its activities. It should also integrate diversity education into its curricula so that students can learn about the country's diverse cultures, histories, and perspectives. This will build bridges between communities, promote critical thinking, and thus empower citizens to make informed decisions, and contribute to national development. This will also go in line with the commission formed in 2018 (our termination date). Holding seminars and workshops stressing the importance of social cohesion and national unity should be a preached doctrine.

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