Role of National Urban Policies in inclusive Urban and Rural Linkages in Cameroon

by

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INTRODUCTION

✓ **Location**: Central Africa;

✓ **Superficie**: 475 442 km²;

✓ **Population**:

- About 25 millions inhabitants in 2019, 52% in urban area, 60% concentrated in Douala (economic capital) and Yaoundé (political capital).
- Poverty rate is in slight regression at the national level (40.1% to 37.5% between 2001 and 2014), but remains high enough in rural area (90.4%) (ECAM 4, 2014).

✓ **Administrative subdivisions**: 10 regions, 58 sub-regions, 360 councils.

✓ **Few strengths**: dynamic population; principal crossroads of exchanges in central Africa; natural diversity; ethnic diversity (around 250 groups), cultural and religious diversity; linguistic plurality (French and English, local languages); full and various natural resources; dense hydrographic network; enviable energy potential.
OVERVIEW OF URBANIZATION IN CAMEROON

- Galloping Urbanization in big cities

Number of urban population multiply by 4.6 in 34 years (1976-2010); urbanisation rate in constant évolution since 1976 (average annual évolution of about 11%), estimated about 59.0% by 2020.

Graphique 1: Évolution du taux d’urbanisation (%) au Cameroun de 1976 à 2020

Source: 3ème RGPH 2005/projection personnelle
A balanced urban structure (312 cities): in 2005, The urban structure in Cameroon has:

- 9 cities with more than 100,000 inhabitants (2 with more 3 millions Yaoundé et Douala) located in 8 regions;
- 23 cities with more than 50,000 inhabitants located in all the regions;
- 78 cities with about 10,000 inhabitants
Main factors of urbanization: Rural exodus, looking for a better quality of life in the big cities

- Inbalance between cities and countryside (in terms of infrastructures services);
- Agriculture difficulties (access to land, water and finance; low yield, flow products on the market). However, agriculture occupies 75% of active population and contribute to 22% of the gross domestic product (PIB);
- Difficulties to promote the local industry;
- Dynamic population: More than one in two camerounians are of working age in the sense of the International Labor Office (15-64 years), 54.7% of women and et 51.1% of men, 60.7% in urban and 48.3% in rural area.
OVERVIEW OF URBANIZATION IN CAMEROON

✓ Consequences

▪ Heavy pressure on existing infrastructures in big cities, services and jobs opportunities;

▪ The rise of juvenile delinquency and organized crime in large urban centers;

▪ Worsening slum phenomenon, unemployment, poverty and urban insecurity.
POLITICIES AND STRATÉGIES
(Policies and strategies to reduce the urban and rural inequality)

✓ Décentralization: Diversification of the production apparatus, development of the urban network and sectoral networks of equipment;

Strategic spatial planning: 03 levels (national, regional et local)

❑ National level

- Five years development plans (1961 et 1991): diversification of the production apparatus, development of the urban network and sectoral networks of equipment;
- 2035 Vision: Puts rural development at the forefront, as well as industries and services, with greater control over technological practices, energy production and the provision of decent housing for large numbers.
- Strategic growth and employment document: Objectif = «Control the development of cities and turn them into production and consumption centers necessary for the development of the industrial sector, but also to promote the emergence of peripheral agglomerations, the development of medium or secondary cities able of structuring economic activities in the urban space and to contribute to the development of the surrounding rural areas”».

- The National territorial and Sustainable Development Scheme (SNADDT)
POLICIES AND STRATEGIES (NEXT)

- **Régional level**: Regional Development and Sustainable Development Schemes (SRADDT) for each region

- **Local level**:
  - Local development plans (budgeting programs);
  - Urban Master plans and Land use plan (spatial plans including surrounding rural areas);
IMPACT OF POLICIES AND STRATEGIES

Cameroon is proud of his balance urban structure:

- Transformation by decree of a large number of villages in chiefs of districts or districts, giving them the status of cities, with the aim of bringing administration closer to the governed and giving all the rural areas development and modernization:

- Construction, maintenance, rehabilitation and densification of road, energy and telecommunications infrastructure;

- Implementation of basic social services in cities and countryside (drinking water, electricity, schools, health structures);

- Improved governance and institutional management capacity;

- Maintains peace, security and national cohesion.

- 315 cities according to the size of the population: Major cities (Douala et Yaoundé), medium-sized towns and small towns. More than 64 cities populated between 5,000 and 10,000 inhabitants.
IMPACT OF POLICIES AND STRATEGIES (Next)

- Existing road infrastructure currently links the ten regions and number of localities of Cameroon, around 121,424 km of roads in 2015 (MINTP);

- Each region is provided with water and electricity, equipped with educational facilities (at least one university) and sanitary;

- 83% covering of TIC in 2013;

- Health map for the whole territory: 205 health district in 2015 (rural=141; urban=64).
CHALLENGIES TO STRENGTHEN THE CITY-RURAL LINK

Main challenges:

• Densify the transport network and connect all cities to the surrounding countryside;
• Densify equipment and improve the quality of basic social services in cities and countryside;
• Harness the country's demographic dividend as a real resource for development;
• Develop local industry to increase the supply of jobs in rural areas;
• Improving local governance;
  ▪ Maintain national unity in the rich diversity of the country.
ISSUES AND PERSPECTIVES

- Issues and perspectives:
  - Implementing a new national economic and growth strategy which aims to strengthen urban-rural linkages through development of rural housing and industrialization
  - Land and state reform;
  - Modernization of agricultural production;
  - Development of the secondary and tertiary sectors;
  - Seeking partnerships and seeking innovative financing
  - Implementing the new cross-sectorial urban policy
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