

Cameroon Unites Against COVID-19 Project Proposal

Despite the current socio-political and other challenges facing Cameroon, we want to emphasize the spirit of unity through our project. We believe that everyone in Cameroon, no matter what cause they are fighting for, should unite against COVID-19. As stated by the UN Secretary-General, we are facing a mutual enemy.



PROJECT SUMMARY

Project title	Cameroon Unites Against COVID-19 Project
Project director	Edward Christopher Yo
Type of work	Non-profit
Project description	<p>Cameroon is currently suffering from both socio-political tension induced by the Anglophone Crisis, as well as the COVID-19 health pandemic. This double burden has led to food insecurity, violation of human rights, and uncontrollable spread of the virus. Since 16 April 2020, there have been 848 confirmed COVID-19 cases, 228 recovered cases, and 17 deaths in the country.</p> <p>Cameroon Association of Active Youths (CAMAAY) is working together with a team of United Nations Online Volunteers to develop a COVID-19 relief project based in Cameroon. The pilot project, known as "Cameroon Unites Against COVID-19", will be conducted in Bamenda, the capital city of Northwest Cameroon. We are targeting 1000 people across the city, to focus on the prevention and education</p>

	<p>of COVID-19 efforts to delay the virus spread. The project's scope of work includes dissemination of reliable information on COVID-19, a social media campaign, mass education, provision of non-medical masks for the public, and provision of soap for good hygiene.</p>
Time period	4-6 weeks
Place	Bamenda, Northwest Cameroon
Target population	1000 people from different communities in Bamenda
Objective(s)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To help delay the virus transmission and disease peak in Cameroon, giving the government sufficient time to come up with more effective solutions for COVID-19 management - To raise awareness of COVID-19 prevention through the spread of reliable information - To allow the population to protect themselves and others from the virus through implementation of good personal hygiene practices as well as wearing appropriate protection
Budget	USD 2,423.5 (1,449,250 XFA in Cameroon currency)
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II. Organizational history, mission, vision and structure

The Cameroon Association of Active Youths (CAMAAY) is a non-political, non-religious, non-profit association based in Cameroon. Our vision is that “the future belongs to them (youth) and they have a clear vision of the world we need to build together: peace, the preservation of our beautiful planet, the opportunity to make a better life.” Hence, we endeavour to achieve our goals through activities that promote sustainable community development in Cameroon. These activities involve strong participation from local community members with the guidance and valuable assistance of CAMAAY and its volunteers. The organization provides educational, advocacy, charity and development activities to at-risk and vulnerable individuals, especially youths, in the community. CAMAAY is managed by democratically elected officials, as well as youth, with the support of elders and other stakeholders. Its organizational structure consists of one general assembly, several executive board members, a board of advisors and several individual members.

We pledge to work closely with other associations, foreign representatives/institutions, the United Nations, NGOs and the Cameroon Government in promoting the principles and practices of quality agriculture, education, healthcare, sports, social well-being and environmental protection. Over the years, CAMAAY has received grants and funding from Global Giving, Almbre Food Service, Rhodes Scholars Fund, OCDA, and ELAK Council. The organization’s successful projects between 2016-2018 include The Rural Women Empowerment Project, Orphans and Vulnerable Children Project, Water for All Partnership Project, Sports for Development Partnership Project, Children and Youth Sustainable Forest Management Project, and the School Organic Vegetable Garden Project.

III. Background and analysis of the problem to be addressed

a. Background of the general population in Cameroon

Demography, language and financial status

Cameroon, officially the Republic of Cameroon, is a country in Central Africa. Cameroon is classified as a lower middle-income country, with a population of 27.8M and a per capita GDP of \$2,960.[1] The official languages of the country are French and English. Recently, politicians in the English-speaking regions have advocated for greater centralization and even complete separation or independence from Cameroon. In 2017, tensions regarding the creation of an Ambazonian state in the English-speaking territories escalated into open warfare. This socio-political conflict has thrown the country into distress, leading to violation of human rights, lack of trust in the government, and food insecurity for the people. In addition to this conflict, Cameroon is also suffering from the health pandemic COVID-19 – a highly infectious disease caused by the respiratory virus SARS-CoV-2.[2] As of 16 April 2020, there have been 848 confirmed COVID-19 cases, 228 recovered cases, and 17 deaths in Cameroon.[3] Experts predict this number to continue to rise, since the containment measures issued by the government are not obeyed by the people.

Daily life in Cameroon

Most villages and small towns in rural areas have a marketplace in a central location that may house a weekly, biweekly, or daily market, depending on their size. Cameroon is a group-oriented society in which family and friendship ties are strong and obligations run deep. [4,5]

Health status

In 2014, health spending totalled \$122 per capita, utilizing only 4.1% of GDP. Healthcare costs remain a huge financial burden on households.[6] Within Cameroon the highest rates of mortality are attributed to communicable, maternal, neonatal, and nutritional diseases.[7] In addition, there is poor access to health facilities and poor hygiene, which makes the population highly vulnerable to the spread of the COVID-19 virus infection. Malnutrition remains a huge risk factor for disease in the country.[8] (cf. section C. of the present document). The negative impacts of COVID-19 on the country's economy will likely exacerbate issues of food security, and thus the cases and intensity of malnutrition.

Digital penetration and technology use

Cameroon is committed to improving telecommunications services and digital penetration; Save for rural areas this resulted in some of the best operations in central Africa, The following table shows an overview of digital penetration in Cameroon.

Table 1: Numbers and Penetration rates for digital technologies in Cameroon (2020) [9]

Mobile users	23.63	M	90%	of the population
Internet users	7.87	M	30%	Penetration rate
Average speed of mobile internet connection	16.85	MBPS		
Average speed of fixed internet connection	9.24	MBPS		
Share of internet use on mobile phones	59.40%	%		of the population
Share of internet use on laptops and desktops	39.40%	%		of the population
Share of internet use on tablets	1.30%	%		of the population
Internet affordability	3.40 ^[10]	\$		for 1GB*
*An additional levy of 0,34\$ on software and app download				
Active social media users	3.70	M	16%	Penetration rate
Share of social media users accessing via mobile	97.00%	%		
people that can be reached via adverts on Facebook	3.50	M	15%	of the population
people that can be reached out with adverts on Instagram	390,000	pers.	2.4%	of the population
people that can be reached out with adverts on Twitter	110,000	pers.	0.7%	of the population
people that can be reached out on LinkedIn	640,000	pers.	4.8%	of the population
TV penetration	33.10%			Penetration rate

Today, mobile users represent 90% of the population in Cameroon, confirming large scale ease of access to online solutions. Facebook and YouTube are the most used social media platforms in urban and suburban areas ideal for education and awareness campaigns.

b. Background of the specific population in Bamenda, Northwest Cameroon

Bamenda Demography and language

Bamenda, the fourth largest city in Cameroon, is the capital of the Northwest Region. The city (including its suburban area) [11] has a population of about 2 million people and is located 366 kilometres northwest of the Cameroonian capital, Yaoundé. Many of the city's inhabitants are English-speaking, and Cameroonian Pidgin English is the main language spoken in the shops and on the streets of Bamenda. The city consists of three villages; Mankon, Nkwen and Bamendakwe. However, it is surrounded by other suburban areas and villages like Bambui, Akum, Bafut, Bali, Chombah and Mbatu. These sub-urban areas and villages are fast growing and sometimes considered a part of Bamenda.[12]



Figure 1: Bamenda Map, 2017[13]

Current situation

Bamenda has suffered in the face of both the ongoing socio-political crisis, as well as the security crisis that is rocking the North West region. Inhabitants are in pain after losing opportunities, loved ones and property; these injustices are blamed on the violence that is preventing a return to a relatively normal life. It is well known that Bamenda is in a state of poor hygiene. According to the World Health Organization, Bamenda is the most polluted city in Africa in terms of PM2.5 particulate matter. On March 9th 2020, Bamenda's Mayor led a garbage clean-up action in the Abangoh neighborhood in an effort to clean up the city and prevent the spread of diseases such as COVID-19.[14]

Since the Cameroon Association of Active Youths (CAMAAY) organization is based in Bamenda, we will be conducting a pilot project in several communities across the city.

c. Challenges facing our target population and the implications

During this Covid-19 pandemic, the major challenges that the target population in Bamenda face include: a) a fragmented healthcare system; b) suboptimal water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH); and c) food insecurity and high rates of malnutrition.

With an estimated 1.1 physicians and 7.8 nurses and midwives per 10,000 people [7], Cameroon has a fragmented healthcare system. The distribution of healthcare workers is inequitable: citizens in rural areas and the North, Adamaoua, and south regions have fewer than average working health professionals.[7] This presents a major challenge for citizens to access the healthcare needed, especially during the COVID-19 crisis where prompt access to care and resources is crucial. Given this, public awareness on COVID-19 is even more crucial to prevent and delay the spread of the virus so that already-limited health facilities and resources are not overwhelmed.

While handwashing is a major factor in the prevention of transmission of COVID-19,[15,16] WASH remains a challenge for our target population. Data indicate that 72.9% of households in Cameroon have access to an improved water source, however, this number drops to only 54% of the population in the Far North Region.[17] In 2017, it was found that only 9% of the total population of Cameroon had access to basic hand washing facilities at home -- this figure rose to 15% in urban population but dropped to 3% in rural ones.[18] These alarmingly low figures are in part due to poor investment in water and infrastructural sectors. This is an important area that, if addressed, can bring about major benefits for the entire population during this uncertain period of time.

Malnutrition, in part due to food insecurity, remains a huge risk factor for disease in the country. In 2017, 9.9% of Cameroon's population was reported to be undernourished.[19] The burden of malnutrition is heavy among its population aged under-five. The national prevalence of under-five stunting is 31.7%, which is greater than the developing country average of 25%.[19] This is particularly an issue in rural areas as well as the Far North, East, and Adamaoua regions. Understanding of Cameroon's sociopolitical context is vital: in 2005, Cameroon hosted over 300,000 refugees in the Far North, East, and Adamaoua regions and many internally displaced people fleeing insecurity.[20] As a result, many markets and their commercial trade as well as essential institutions such as hospitals and schools were unable to operate normally. This as well as growing violence in the Far North region in turn resulted in major food insecurity; 2015 data showed that an estimated 35% of households faced food insecurity.[20] This challenge will only continue to grow in the face of this pandemic, which threatens to worsen the already fragile food security in Cameroon.

d. Specific issues that will be addressed by the project

The current research indicates Cameroon is not well-equipped to handle a major outbreak of COVID-19. There are significant challenges in Cameroon with (i) poor hygiene (ii) circulation of misinformation (iii) lack of public trust in the current government, especially in areas with an Anglophone majority, (iv) neglect of social distancing practices and (v) low availability of personal protective equipment (PPE).

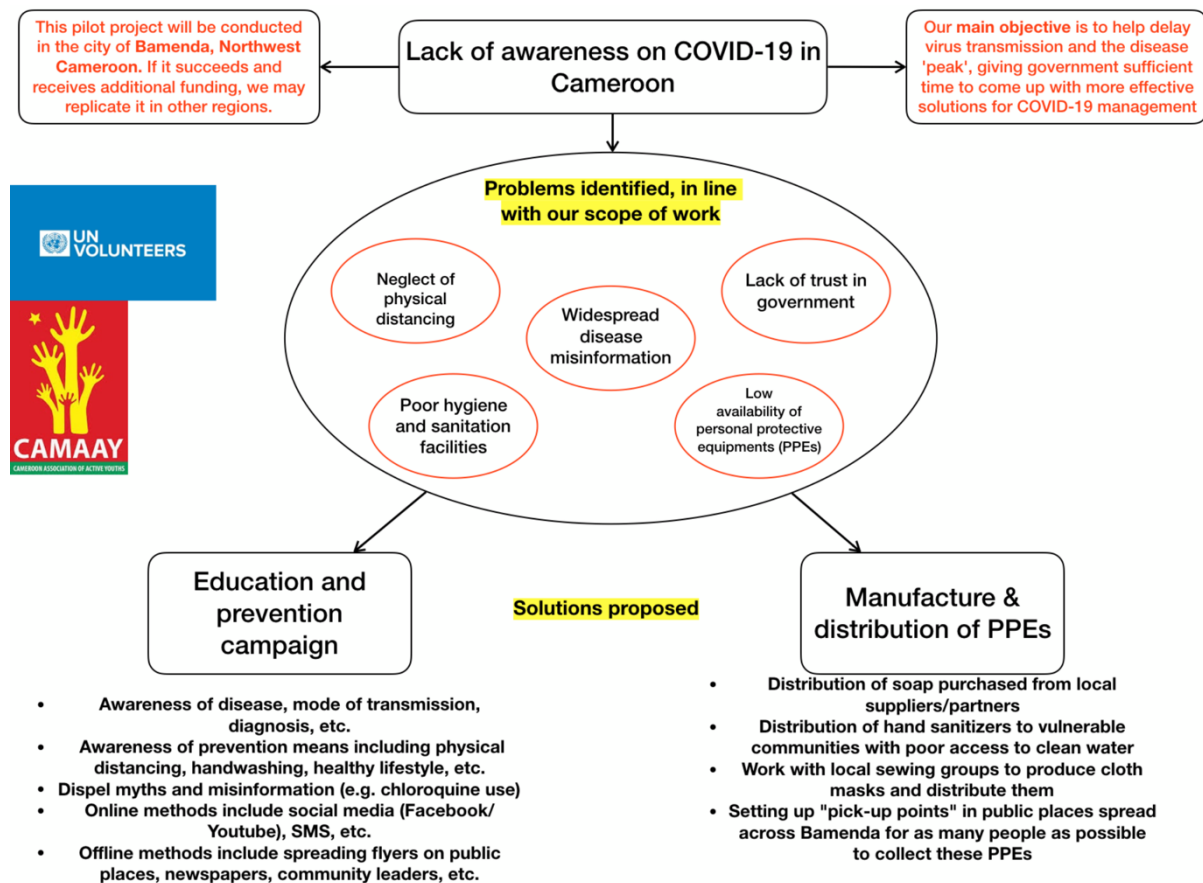
One way to prevent citizens from getting infected is to build public awareness on COVID-19. We have therefore chosen to focus on an education campaign that will disseminate accurate information, grounded in facts on COVID-19, and provide guidelines on how citizens can help themselves and others to stay healthy during the crisis.

Another problem that will be addressed is poor personal hygiene among the different communities. Good personal hygiene practices are a critical factor in preventing the spread of COVID-19, as washing hands frequently with soap and water is one of the key public health practices that can significantly slow the rate of the pandemic and limit the number of infections.[21] As per the government mandate, wearing face masks in public spaces also helps to curb transmission of the virus. The use of non-medical face masks (e.g. cloth masks) in public places where social distancing can be difficult will reduce transmission of COVID-19 without replenishing the low stock of medical-grade face masks that the World Health Organisation have stated should be reserved for healthcare providers.[21]

We believe through the use of education campaigns that speak on efficient hand washing techniques, social distancing, and correct mask wearing, we can slow the rate of transmission of COVID-19 and make a difference to the people of Bamenda.

IV. Proposed goal, objectives, target population and implementation plan

a. Project overview



b. Objectives of the project

The main objective of our proposal is the following: to help the Cameroonians delay virus transmission and disease peak, thereby giving the government sufficient time to come up with more effective solutions for COVID-19 management. We chose this focus as it is the most appropriate given time, resource and experience constraints and the urgency of responding to the COVID-19 crisis.

In the first instance, the education and prevention campaign will focus on the dissemination of reliable information on COVID-19.

Secondly, the project aims to enable the population to protect themselves and others from the virus by providing soap/hand sanitizers and cloth masks to encourage behavioural changes concerning personal hygiene.

These objectives also aim to support local sewing groups and suppliers to ensure business continuity and local support.

Last but not least, the supplementary objective of the project is to ensure replication of the proposed solutions. The proposal is relatively easy to initiate, implement and replicate when taking into account financial-, human-, and material resources and the urgency of action required.

c. Activities included in the project

The project's scope of work includes two major aspects: a) run an education and prevention campaign and (b) provide personal protective equipment and prevention measures.

Education campaigns will be conducted with both online and offline methods. The messages have to be catchy, short, simple and precise, coming from credible sources (i.e. WHO). Prioritizing pictures and videos rather than a long text is preferable so as to avoid any possible errors in the translations from English into the local dialects.

- 1) Disperse messages regarding COVID-19 prevention (that have to be monitored, updated, approved from the government and possibly accompanied by a link to expositive videos) through:
 - SMS community groups, WhatsApp
 - Contacting MTN, Creolink, Equacomm, Orange, Camtel
 - Social Media (especially Facebook; then Youtube, Tiktok, Snapchat...)
 - Using already existing groups of influencers, as well as religious associations, community leaders
- 2) Print and display informative flyers in public places where people usually gather; if possible, distribute them to every house; newspapers inserts; t-shirts with printed education messages; mass announcements in public places done by volunteers with loudspeakers; radio ads.

The material must:

- 1) Contain a clear list of the symptoms and the right behaviour to adopt if they appear
- 2) Give instructions to be followed throughout the crisis for maintaining good hygiene and avoiding the spread of the disease (sneeze in the elbow, wear a mask, how to correctly use it, properly and regularly wash hands for at least 20 seconds, keep your distance from neighbours, avoid crowded places, etc.)
- 3) Emphasize the importance of physical distancing policy
- 4) Debunk myths regarding COVID-19

The second strategy is meant to flatten the curve as much as possible by implementing anti-contagion measures. In order to make all the civilians wear a mask, the plan is to provide the community with fabric and recruit local groups capable of sewing to produce simple and washable masks from cloth, giving them tutorials online or through paper pamphlets. Moreover, public places (banks, markets, shops...) should be encouraged in providing basic protective equipment for free to the public, e.g. requiring people to sanitize their hands before entering businesses.

A further important point is providing soap to the population by contacting local markets or companies, alternatively partnering up with NGOs. As an alternative, hand sanitizers may also be distributed to vulnerable communities with poor access to clean water.

d. Benefits of the project

The issues associated with COVID-19 are well-known, and it is important that we learn from the countries that have experienced or are currently experiencing their peak. Cameroon's lack of resources from their government combined with their deprived communities put them at higher risks for not only contracting SARS-CoV-2 but also having exceptionally high mortality rates when they do. This project works to start flattening the curve in Cameroon, by urging social distancing and encouraging good personal hygiene in order to help mitigate the rate of COVID-19 transmission. The educational initiatives are meant to create a well-informed population who is able to make informed decisions. To mobilize local businesses to manufacture cloth masks will allow them to generate an income, increase the number of cloth masks available to conserve medical PPE, and encourage the use of cloth masks for daily business. As COVID-19 continues to spread globally, these initiatives create a more prepared Cameroon, which can then allow the government and partnering NGOs to start focusing on how to supplement medical efforts in Cameroon enough time before they reach their own peak.

e. Stages of implementation

The project is aimed at both educational purposes with printed t-shirts and online/offline campaigns as providing protective equipment by providing soap/hand sanitizers and cloth masks to at least 1000 individuals in Bamenda, Cameroon to assist in the containment of the COVID-19 spread.

Stage I: Order supplies

- 1) CAMAAY will use its current network of contacts to recruit at least 10 volunteers to assist with the project and arrange an information session to educate volunteers.
- 2) Orders will be placed for:
 - Flyers, banners, and T-shirts from a local company identified in Bamenda. T-shirts will be selectively distributed to volunteers, community leaders/influencers, and several people only.
 - Cloth masks from local tailors/sewing groups
 - Soap from a local soap manufacturer
 - Several bottles of hand sanitizers where necessary
 - Bags
- 3) Record message to be broadcasted via mobile broadcast and loudspeakers in public places
- 4) Payment and collection of orders

Stage II: Preparation

- 1) Launch social media campaigns on WhatsApp and Facebook
- 2) Contact local network providers to support project
- 3) Contact influencer groups (soccer team and religious groups) to support messages on their social media sites and/or act as goodwill ambassadors.
- 4) Prepare bags with T-shirts, soap/hand sanitizer, masks and flyers inside.
- 5) Affix banners and posters at identified sites.

Stage III: Implementation

- 1) Distribute bags: 5 booths situated at strategic points across the city each manned by two volunteers and 200 filled bags.
- 2) Mobile broadcasts of educational messages; volunteers going around city playing recording using loudspeakers.
- 3) Continue media campaigns via WhatsApp, Facebook etc.
- 4) Partner with network providers and influencers.

V. Project budget

Project Budget	Current market value (XFA)	Value in Cameroon (XFA - \$1 = 598)	Value in USD \$
1. Public Awareness Education			
Printing of designed Flyers	1,000 leaflets × 50	50,000	83.61
Printing of designed Stickers	200 leaflets × 80	16,000	26.76
Purchase of T-shirt	200 pieces × 1,495	299,000	500
Customization of T-shirt	200 pieces × 100	20,000	33.44
Campaign Banner	3 banners × 75,000	225,000	376.25
Rechargeable Loudspeaker	215inches size@150,000 × 2	300,000	501.67
Component Total*1		910,000	1,521.74
2. Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)			
Local Hand Sanitizer	100packets × 500	50,000	83.61
Production Cost of Bar Soap	15 Cartons of 200grams × 15,000	225,000	376.25
Production Cost of Cloth Mask	1000 × 175	175,000	292.64
Material Cost of Cloth Mask	20 yards × 1,500	30,000	50.17
Packaging Materials fee ^(A+B+C)	5,000	5,000	8.36
Component Total*2			

		485,000	811.04
3. Delivery and Distributive Cost			
Volunteer Stipend	10 × 3,000	30,000	50.17
Logistic 0.05 % of PPE		24,250	40.55
		54,250	90.72
Overall Total Cost		1,449,250	2,423.5

Additional notes:

- The above budget is for a target population of 1000 people in Bamenda, Northwest Cameroon
- The proposed budget may be adjusted in accordance with the amount of funding obtained and local market values

VI. Acknowledgement

Under the supervision of CAMAAY, our team wishes to bring good to our brothers and sisters in Cameroon. All the findings and ideas above have been made possible by the contribution of all team members of Cameroon Unites Against COVID-19 Project. Any question or suggestion can be forwarded to the members below:

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VIII. Attachments

COVID-19 LET'S FIGHT IT TOGETHER

IDENTIFY THE SYMPTOMS

-  **FEVER**
-  **COUGH**
-  **SHORTNESS OF BREATH**

STAY SAFE FROM COVID-19

-  **WASH YOUR HANDS FREQUENTLY**
-  **COVER COUGH/SNEEZE WITH SLEEVE OR TISSUE**
-  **AVOID CONTACT AND CROWDED PLACES**

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WASH YOUR HANDS

-  **1 WET**
Use running water
-  **2 SOAP**
Rub soap between both hands
-  **3 WASH**
Wash front, back, inbetween fingers, thumbs and under nails
-  **4 20 SECONDS**
Wash for at least 20 seconds

CAMEROON UNITE

STAY HOME TO SAVE LIVES

 **NO HANDSHAKES**

 **2 METRES**

 **NO HUGS**

Information Leaflets Prototypes Things to Do:

- Campaign Logo
- Coronavirus Poster
 - Handwashing
 - Social distancing
 - Mask wearing
- How to Handwashing Infographic
 - Wash hands
 - Soap and water
 - At least 20 seconds – front and back, inbetween fingers and thumbs
 - Rinse and Dry
- When to wash hands infographic
 - after coughing/sneezing,
 - after caring for someone unwell,
 - before food preparation,
 - before eating,
 - after toilet use,
 - when hands are visibility dirty
 - after handling animals and animal waste.
- Mask Infographic
 - Mask wearing protects others from disease. DOES NOT protect you from Covid-19
 - Wash hand prior to placing mask
 - Ensure mask covers mouth and nose and chin
 - Replace mask with a new one as soon as mask is damp
 - Remove mask via ear pieces DO NOT touch front of mask
 - Wash hands after removing mask
 - Avoid touching mask whilst on face
- Social Distancing Poster
 - Stay home whenever possible
 - In public keep distance at least 2 metres
 - No handshakes
 - No hugs