Curriculum Reform in Cameroon:
An Analysis of the New Primary School Curriculum

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ABSTRACT

This paper examines the reformed Cameroon primary school curriculum that was released for implementation in the 2018/2019 school year. The curriculum is guided by a contructivist educational philosophy and underpinned by developmental theory. It is not organized traditionally around objectives, learning experiences, organization of learning experience and evaluation but is rather organized around seven national skills and four broad based competences. The curriculum is designed to be implemented through pathway subjects and eight integrated learning themes. While using the vertical and horizontal considerations in organizing the curriculum elements, the data sources are heavily biased toward meeting market demands thereby compromising relevance. The curriculum which is designed to meet the needs of programme harmonization in Cameroon primary schools, will enable all Cameroon children for the first time since independence, to study the same curriculum contrary to past practices whereby Anglophone and Francophone children studied different school curricula. The curriculum is driven by a pedagogy of integration.

KEYWORDS: Competences, Competence based, Curriculum, Domains, Integrated learning themes, integrated themes

1. INTRODUCTION:

Education was carried out in East (Francophone) Cameroon by France, and in West (Anglophone) Cameroon by Britain between 1922 and 1961 (when Cameroon was administered as a trust territory of the League of Nations and subsequently as a mandated territory of the United Nations Organisation). For nearly forty years, France and Britain each subjected its sphere to a separate civilization which left behind two contrasting and often conflicting sets of values bequeathing one life style to one part of the country and another to the other part (Shu 1995). Upon attaining independence and reunification in 1961, the question of how to deal with the inherited educational systems of the British and French became a major preoccupation of the Federal government.

In the face of this dilemma, the United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) made some proposals from which the government after examination came up with a policy to harmonize the structure and contents of the curricula to give birth to a national curriculum in both Basic and Secondary education in Cameroon. Consequently, Loi No. 1. 63/COR-5, du juillet 1963; portant organization de l'enseignement Premaire elementaire from East Cameroon, and the West Cameroon Education Policy: Investment in Education (July 1963) came into being.

The intention of these policy instruments was to bring the (eight-year) primary school system in Anglophone Cameroon into harmony with the six-year system in Francophone Cameroon. Following this, a common curriculum was to be adopted so that the same content is taught in the entire country in English in the Anglophone section and in French in the Francophone section by 1965.

However, the reform remained unrealized leaving the situation of primary education especially in the Francophone Cameroon to continue to deteriorate. In an attempt to salvage the situation, the president created the "Institute de Pedagogic Appliqué a Vocation Rurale - IPAR" (Institute of Applied Research in Primary education) in 1967, to research and prepare educational materials adapted to the needs of the country. By another presidential order No.1.277/CAB/PR of 10 october1974, a sister institute (IPAR – Buea) was created to carryout research and prepare a reform of primary education in Anglophone Cameroon. The syllabuses created by these institutions were unfortunately never implemented.

1.1. Search for a suitable pedagogy

In the meantime, the Ministry of Basic Education (MINEDUB) in its bid to improve the quality of teaching and learning in primary schools experimented with a number of initiatives beginning in 1990 with a pedagogy by objectives approach. The weaknesses of this approach to teaching and learning led to the launch of another pedagogic innovation referred to as the "New Pedagogic Approach" in 1995, a learner-centred pedagogy aimed at improving the teaching and learning in

primary education. The situation of outdated and ill adapted school syllabuses worsened and led to a national outcry for the reform of the national school system. (MINEDUB inspectorate general of education 2016, p.9)

In response to the national call for reforms the government convened a National Forum on Education in 1995 to propose new orientations to national education in Cameroon. The forum was attended by all stake holders in education - parents, teachers, politicians, government officials, business women and men, examination bodies etc. The proposals of the forum were used to prepare a national education policy for Cameroon Primary and Secondary Education and enacted in the "Law No.98/004 of 14 April 1998 to Lay Down Guidelines for Education in Cameroon". (Tambo 2003, pp, 121 – 128)

Between 1998 and 2000 the focus of reform was on new syllabuses that reflected the orientations proposed at the national forum on education in 1995 and enacted in the national education policy law of 1998. Based on the new orientations proposed at the national forum in 1995, a new primary school curriculum for the Anglophone sub system was developed and launched in 2000/2001 academic year. This curriculum brought the duration of studies 6 (six) years into harmony with the Francophone sub system. This ensured structural harmonization in primary education in Cameroon (New Syllabuses for English Speaking primary schools 2000)

However, the publication of the Education Sector Country Status Report by the government in 2003, intensified the search for viable national pedagogy and led officials of (MINEDUB) to participate a regional education seminar organized in Yaoundé by the Organisation Internationale de la Francophonie (OIF). The result of Cameroon's official participation in this seminar was a decision to implement a new pedagogic approach called the Competence Based Approach (CBA), in all primary schools nationwide.

1.2. The Need for Curriculum Reform
To successfully carry out the implementation of the above decision, a new national curriculum, needed to be developed based on the following general and specific objectives of the national education policy in sections 4 and 5:

"The general purpose of education is to train children for their intellectual, physical, civic and moral development and their smooth integration into society bearing in mind prevailing economic, socio-cultural, political and moral factors".

... and that the objectives of education shall be to:
➢ Train citizens who are firmly rooted in their culture, but open to the world and
➢ respectful of the general interest and the common weal;
➢ Inculcate the major universal ethical values which are dignity and honour, honesty and integrity as well as a sense of discipline in pupils and students;
➢ Promote family life;
➢ Promote national languages;
➢ Provide an introduction to the democratic culture and practice, respect for human rights and freedoms, justice and tolerance, the fight against all forms of
➢ discrimination, the love of peace and dialogue, civic responsibility and the

➢ promotion of regional and sub-regional integration;
➢ Cultivate the love of effort and work well done, the quest for excellence and team spirit;
➢ Develop creativity, a sense of initiative and the spirit of enterprise;
➢ Provide physical, sports, artistic and cultural training for the child;
➢ Promote hygiene and health education" (Law No. 98/004, 1998 pp.21 - 22),

Following this decision the ministry selected 75 primary schools nationwide were an experimental pilot study was carried out from the beginning of 2004 to the end of the 2005 academic year. The results of the evaluation of the pilot phase took place at the end of 2005 and proved to be satisfactory.

Consequently, Cameroon participated in a comparative study of modalities for implementing curriculum reforms alongside Gabon, Tunisia, Mali and Senegal from 2008 to 2009. This led in 2010 to a study on the reform of the Cameroon primary school curriculum with the support of the French Development Agency (AFD) through the C2D-E Program (Ministry of Basic Education 2016, p 9).

2. Context of the reform
Following the Education For All Conference (1990) organised in Jomtien, Thailand, by UNESCO, several countries worldwide engaged in a vast array of reforms to render their educational systems more responsive and productive internally and externally. During the Dakar meeting of 2000 in Senegal, participating countries reaffirmed their determination to achieve the Millennium Development Goals (MDG) and the EFA goals by 2015. To improve on the quality and usability of education, many countries in the world have adopted the competency-based approach in their education and training systems and some (France, Ghana, Brazil and India) have also resorted to the elaboration of national core competences (Cameroon Ministries of Education, 2013).

In 1995 the national forum on education proposed new orientations to national education which were encapsulated in the 1998 law to lay down guidelines for education. The general and specific objectives of this law are outlined above. To respond to these major strategic orientations, Cameroon engaged in the elaboration of an Education Sector Strategy (ESS) between 2006 and 2011, based on the Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP, 2003). In adopting the Growth and Employment Strategy Paper (GESP, 2009) the government took an option to promote growth as a source of wealth and employment. It is within this framework that the vision 2035 (to make Cameroon an emergent, democratic and united society) finds expression. The education sector vision consists on the one hand to provide the youth with quality education, requisite competences and professional attitudes, and on the other to facilitate their insertion into the professional world.

3. National Core Skills and Competences
It was in this connection that the Prime Minister of Cameroon, appointed a committee from the five ministries in charge of education (ministries of Basic, Secondary and Higher education, ministries of Employment and Vocational Training and of Labour and Social Insurance) to develop

national core competences that will suffuse national curricula and meet the needs of the labour market.

The core national skills and competences show clearly the skills and competences to be developed by learners by the end of the school programme. They constitute the knowledge, skills and attitudes related to Cameroon reality and selected to enable all participants involved in pedagogy to successfully accomplish their teaching effectively. The seven National Core Skills and four broad-based competencies to be acquired by the end of the primary school programme are:

1. Communicate in the two official languages (English and French) and using at least one national language

2. Use basic notions in mathematics, science and technology

3. Practise social and citizenship values (Morality, good governance and budgetary transparency)

4. Demonstrate a spirit of autonomy, a sense of initiative, creativity, and

5. Entrepreneurship

6. Use basic information and communication technology concepts and tools

7. Lifelong learning

8. Practise physical, sport and artistic activities

Broad-based competences

1. Intellectual competences

2. Methodological competence

3. Personal and interpersonal competences

4. Communication competences" (Socle National de competence, pp.9 – 10)

4. Methodology
This study is carried out using documentary evidence. In this light data will be collected mainly from documentary sources. Data will be gleaned from the following primary source documents: The published primary school curriculum for Cameroon (2018), Socle Nationale des Competence (2013), the Growth and Employment Strategy Paper (2009), the National Education Policy law (1998), and The Curriculum Framework for Cameroon Nursery and Primary schools (2016).

An examination of the curriculum will enable the researcher identify and describe the philosophical and theoretical paradigms guiding the construction of the curriculum, and how the component elements are organized. An analysis of the Sokle National des Competence will provide the rationale behind the government's decision to develop and use national core skills and competences in the development of the curriculum. The Growth and Employment strategy paper will throw light on the economic needs of the society influencing the development of core skills and the curriculum design. The National Education Policy law will indicate the goals and objectives of Cameroon primary education. All these are deliberate sources which in the view of (Elton 1967; 101 and Lehmann and Mehrens, 1971; 24) as cited in Bell (1993) are documents deliberately being preserved as evidence for the future to serve for purposes of self-justification or reputation enhancement.

5. Literature review
5.1. Philosophical and Theoretical framework
The organization of the curriculum suggests that a power-coercive model of curriculum reform, a constructivist philosophical perspective and developmental learning theories underpin the curriculum.

Constructivism is an educational philosophy within the rationalist philosophical tradition. It is grounded on the belief that reason is the primary source of knowledge and that reality (knowledge is not transmitted) is constructed. This philosophical position is sub divide into those who prone individual constructivism and those who propose social constructivism. In addition many constructivists include context – a contemporary world view.

The pursuit of individual constructivism is based on the assumptions that knowledge is constructed from experience; learning results from a personal interpretation of knowledge, and that learning is an active process in which meaning is developed on the basis of experience (Jean Piaget, 1896-1980). However, there is significant variation concerning the interpretations regarding the nature of the knowledge construction process.

Social constructivism, in contrast to the individual constructivists, is based on the assumption that learning is collaborative with meaning negotiated from a multiplicity of perspectives. Vygotsky (1980) felt social learning precedes development. As with individual constructivism, there is no general agreement on how this knowledge is in practice negotiated.

Contextualism is buttressed by the assumptions that learning should occur in real life settings, and testing should be integrated into the learning tasks. Educator generally refers to learning related to a context as "situated cognition" (Brown, Collins, and Duguid, 1989; Henning, 2004). Proponents of contextualism recommend that learning problems be presented to learners in situations akin to real life and common to everyday application. This type of learning is described as "authentic learning" and the instruction related to the learning situation as "anchord" in real life situations (Cognition and Technology Group, 1990; Streibel, 1995).

Curriculum related theories are used to develop models of change to provide explanations regarding the degree of success of some initiatives over others. Lessons from these theories can be usd by curriculum implementers to guide teachers implement the curriculum as intended (Fullan, 2001). The power coercive model allows change to be accomplished through the enforcement of compliance by those holding greater on those with less power. The centre-Periphery model is a good representation of this approach as it represents a top-down movement of innovation, and as argued by Whitehead (1980) involves a passive diffusion of a centrally prepared innovation deemed necessary to the recipient. Cameroon seems to follow this model in reforming the primacy school curriculum.

Piaget's (1969) development theory is one of the most influential in the area of learning. It proposes four stages through which all humans are supposed to proceed in a fixed order as each stage brings with it the emergence of new

cognitive capabilities which lead to the learner's reorganization of her or his cognitive abilities. He proposed as cited in Smith, P. and Ragan, T (2005) that (a) the sequence of stages is invariant and nonreversible; (b) learners cannot be taught key cognitive tasks until they reach a particular stage of development, (c) stages represent qualitative changes in cognition; (d) children exhibit the characteristics of each stage; and (e) global restructuring characterizes the shift from stage to stage, cutting across all domains of learning. However, research (cited in Berk, 1994; Driscoll, 1994; and Slavin, 1994) runs counter to Piaget's propositions.

Notwithstanding, Piaget's most valuable contribution may lie in his description of the processes that lead to shifts from one cognitive stage to another. The major processes suggested by him are that of Assimilation –which allows new knowledge to be integrated into existing cognitive structures – and Accommodation – processes that modifies existing structures to enable the acceptance of new knowledge that could not fit into the existing cognitive structures.

In direct contrast to Piaget (1969), Vygotsky (1978) argued that learning precedes development and used the term 'zone of proximal development' to characterize the type of problem- solving situations that are beyond the cognitive ability of the individual learner but which can be surmounted with 'scaffolding' (the assistance of a teacher or knowledgeable peer). He proposed that learner's interaction with their sociocultural context assists them to develop cognitive capabilities that help them adapt to their environment.

5.2. Designing Competency Based Curriculum
The curriculum field is currently going through an interesting development in the way curricula are recently being organised. The field is witnessing a shift in curriculum design away from the traditional subject driven; learner centred and society based models to one increasingly based on the principles of competency-based education (CBE). While the roots of the competency based movement can be traced in the education reform movement in the United States of America in from the 1960s to1970s, the trend today is toward the worldwide adoption of the European Key-competence and the 21st Century Skills model which fine justification in the actual educational context (McClelland (1973), Gilbert (1989), Grant (1979 as cited in Soare, 2015). Grant et all. (1979, p. 6) define competency-based education as a form of education that derives the curriculum from an analysis of a prospective or actual role in contemporary society and that attempts to certify student progress on the basis of demonstrated performance in some or all aspects of that role. In the same light Jones (2002, p. 9 as cited in Saore 2015) proposes three methodological landmarks that should characterize a competence-based curriculum (CBC): a) a description of the competence; b) a means of assessing the competence; c) a standard by which the student is judged to be competent. Therefore, in order to design a CBC, there must be adopted a common vision on the competences that will be acquired by students, and that is because it will determine a shared point of view on the learning that must take place and of the organizing of the context in this respect. The design of the instructional strategies will be linked with the type and structure of the competence and will depend on

the way the learning context is shaped, and that must reflect both the work market requests and the lifelong learning principles (Saore 2015).

Focusing the curriculum on competencies demands a new way of perceiving the structural components of the curriculum and how they interact with one another. In this light Mulder (2001) define competence as the capability of a person, or an organization, to reach specific achievements. Personal competencies comprise integrated performance-oriented capabilities, which consist of clusters of knowledge structures and also cognitive, interactive, affective and where necessary psychomotor capabilities, and attitudes and values, which are required for carrying out tasks, solving problems and more generally, effectively functioning in a certain profession, organization, position or role. This suggest that a working definition has to be developed before proceeding with the design of the curriculum. In the context of the curricula reform in Basic Education in Cameroon, competence refers to all the *knowledge*, *skills* and *attitudes* required of nursery primary school children. And Broad-based competencies refers to knowledge, skills and attitudes that are taught across different learning domains (Ministry of Basic Education 2016, p. 20). In this connection, competence is a central concept which operates at all curriculum levels, all curricular domain and disciplines, and in every disciplinary module that belongs to a discipline structure, becoming, this way, the organizer of the entire curricular architecture, a curricular constant for all the levels, profiles and school programs (Potolea,2012, p. 35).

5.3. Competence and Integration
most authors today tend to agree on the definition of competence as the spontaneous mobilization of a set of resources in order to apprehend a situation and respond to it in a more or less relevant way (Crahay, 1997; De Ketele, 2000, 2001; Dolz & Ollagnier, 2002; Fourez, 1999; Jonnaert, 2002; Le Boterf, 1994; Legendre, 2001; Rey, 1996; Perrenoud, 1997; Roegiers, 1996, 2001, 2003; Tilman, 2000).

(Alexia, et al, 2006) posit that this definition indicates that a competence can only exist in the presence of a specific situation, through the integration of different skills, themselves made up of knowledge and know-how and that three elements are essential to develop a competence.

According to Roegiers, (2001), an education which has as its focus the learning of competences is a prerequisite for the implementation of a pedagogy of integration which aims to enable the learner to master those situations, he/she will have to deal with in his/her professional and/or private life. In this connection the pedagogy of integration has four objectives, that of process, relevance, application and association.

Two major schools of thought – the Anglo-Saxon and French-Speaking - can be perceived in the arena of a pedagogy of integration separated by the accent placed on the vertical and horizontal transfer of achievement. First proposed and developed by Gagné in 1962, vertical transfer proposes that a student is able to learn higher-order skills only if s/he has previous mastery of their elements (Gagné, 1962; White & Gagné, 1974), while horizontal transfer, proposes that by

solving several similar-level complex situations, provided they are presented in different contexts, the students learn to transfer.

The CBC for Basic Education in Cameroon appears to be underpinned by the French-speaking pedagogical view, which places the development of competences on teaching the student to learn through a complexity of ongoing "active" methods. The transfer effort here is achieved in a global way and needs little structuring (Fourez, 1999; Jonnaert, 2002; Jonnaert & Masciotra, 2004; Legendre, 2004; Meirieu, 2005; Meirieu & Develay, 1992). The focus is on the learning process and applying the know-how, i.e., search for information, analyze information, and explain information.

5.4. Organisation of Curriculum components

Table 1: Structure of the Curriculum

Core Skills and Competences	Pathway Subject	Domain/Weighting
• Communicate in the two official languages (English and French) and use at least one national language • Lifelong learning • The core competences*	English Language, Francais	Basic Knowledge/ (60%)
• Use basic notions in Mathematics, Science and Technology • Practise social and citizenship values (morality, good governance and budgetary transparency) • Lifelong learning • The core competences	Mathematics	
• Use basic notions in Mathematics, Science and Technology • Demonstrate a spirit of autonomy, a sense of initiative, creativity, and innovation • Lifelong learning • The core competences	Science and Technology (Health Education, Environmental Science and Technology.)	
• Practise social and citizenship values (morality, good governance and budgetary transparency) • Lifelong learning • The core competences	Social Studies (Citizenship, History, and Geography)	Domain 2: Communal Life and National Integration (5%)
• Demonstrate the spirit of autonomy, sense of initiative, creativity and entrepreneurship • Lifelong learning • The core competences	Vocational Studies (Agro pastoral farming, Arts, Crafts and Home Economics)	Domain 3: Vocational and Life Skills (20%)
• Practise physical, sports and artistic activities • Demonstrate a spirit of autonomy, a sense of initiative, creativity and entrepreneurship • Lifelong learning • The core competences	Arts (Visual arts, literary arts and performing arts)	
• Practise physical, sports and artistic activities • Lifelong learning • The core competences	Physical Education and Sports	
• Communicate in the two official languages (English and French) and using at least one national language • Lifelong learning • The core competences • Practise social and citizenship values (morality, good governance and budgetary transparency)	National Languages and Cultures	Domain 4: Cultural Identity (5%)
• Use basic information and communication technology concepts and tools • Lifelong learning • The core competences	Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs)	Domain 5: Digital Literacy (10%)

*Core competences: Intellectual, Methodological, Personal and interpersonal and Communication.

5.4.1. Scope

Table 2: Scope and Sequence Chart

Subject	Class					
	1	2	3	4	5	6
English Language	X	x	x	x	x	x
Mathematics	X	x	x	x	x	x
Science and Technology (Health Education, Environmental Science and Technology.)	X	x	x	x	x	x
Français	X	x	x	x	x	x
Social Studies (Citizenship)	X	x	x	x		
(History and Geography)					x	x
Vocational Studies (Agro pastoral farming, Arts and Crafts)	X	x	x	x		
(Home Economics)					x	x
Arts (Visual arts, literary arts and performing arts)	x	x	x	x	x	x
Physical Education and Sports	x	x	x	x	x	x
National Languages and Cultures	x	x	x	x	x	x
Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs)	x	x	x	x	x	x

Inspired by the core skills and competences subjects have been selected and grouped into five learning domains (Basic knowledge, communal life and national integration, vocational and life skills, cultural identity and digital literacy) that will facilitate the acquisition of the skills and competences by learners. There are altogether nine subjects consisting of five individual subjects and four broad fields. The subjects brought together under a broad field are not treated as an interrelated field, but rather are composed of several self-contained units. The contents of the subjects are further divided into unit of study.

5.4.2 Sequence

Sequencing of the content is based on learning hierarchies especially the principle of simple to complex (Gagné, 1972 and Briggs, 1979), who argue that sequencing should be in consonance with our knowledge about theories of learning. The sequencing of the content as can be observed from the except below taken from the English Language content of the syllabuses, enables learners to gradually build constructs and principles from data and concepts and to build wholes from a systematic and analytic presentation of parts. It indicates that the development of the curriculum has been correlated to the cognitive and moral stage of development of the learners.

Table 3: English Language

CLASS 1	CLASS 2	CLASS 3	CLASS 4	CLASS 5	CLASS 6
Listening and Speaking					
Units/Contents	Units/Contents	Units/Contents	Units/Contents	Units/Contents	Units/Contents
Phonemic awareness - Letter sounds - Sounds of diagraphs - Letter names	**Phonemic awareness** - Sounds of the alphabet - Sounds of diagraphs - Letter names	**Sound recognition** - Diphthongs - Triphthongs	**Sound recognition** - Consonant clusters - Contracted forms	**Sounds** - Homophones - Minimal pairs etc	**Sound recognition** - Tongue twisters; - Homophones; - Minimal pairs etc

5.4.3 Vertical and Horizontal Articulation

The core competences provide interrelationships between and among the different subjects of the curriculum therefore, providing a balanced articulation of the curriculum. This is reinforced by eight learning themes that have been developed and which cut across all the subjects. Though the subject lines remain distinct, they are less so in the broad fields. Because subjects are not assigned to departments in Primary schools in Cameroon, it may facilitate the promotion of curriculum synthesis if teachers are creative enough and motivated to do so since each teacher assigned to a class teaches most of the subjects in any grade level.

6. Pedagogy

The curriculum has adopted a pedagogy of integration with teaching and learning anchored on Project Based Learning (PBL), Cooperative Learning (CL) and Integrated Theme Learning (ITL). It is expected that this approach will facilitate a holistic development of competences in the learners since it is a learner centred pedagogy in which teachers are expected to give attention to the promotion of gender equity, inclusiveness and multiple intelligences.

Table 4: Integrated Learning Themes

Level I	Level II	Level III
The home	The home	Nature
The village/town/ the school	The village/town/ the school	The village/town/ the school
Occupations	Occupations	Occupations
travelling	travelling	travelling
Health	Health	Health
Games	Games	Sports and leisure
communication	communication	The universe and space

6.1. Teaching Materials

Recommended teaching materials are drawn from the following categories; Visuals, real things, audio, audio-visuals, print instructional games and models. The specific materials for teaching each subject such as to enable hands on use by learners. The use of teaching materials is of primary importance in the implementation process. For each lesson learning tasks are expected to performed by pupils and for each task the appropriate materials need to be located and made available for use by learners. Therefore, teachers are expected to devise especially locally suitable materials to accompany each lesson. These are also imperative if the teacher is to successfully use the predominantly recommended problem based and cooperative learning methods of teaching specified in the curriculum document.

6.2. Assessment

The curriculum recommends the use of authentic assessments; Performance, comprehensive and self-assessments to gather data on pupil's learning in order to assist all those concerned in the process of decision making. Diagnostic assessment is recommended for use by teachers before the start of each lesson to help determine the level of knowledge, skill and attitudes which pupil have about the new material to be learned. This will serve as a guide to the types of strategies the teacher will use to select the activities and methods that can best be able to ensure that the learning needs of each pupil are taken care of and ensure that the set learning outcomes will be achieved.

Formative assessment is prescribed to be used as an integral part of the teaching and learning process and should keep learners in permanent interaction with both the learning activities and their peers, and give the teacher the opportunity to provide feedback on a sustained manner. This is expected to lead to the achievement of the goals of the curriculum.

Summative assessment is used to measure the extent to which pupils have attained the set learning outcomes of the curriculum and is recommended to be used periodically by teachers to achieve this goal.

7. Sample Curriculum Domains of Level 1 (primary 1 & 2)
Table 5: The 5 domains of level 1 (primary 1 & 2), their pathway subjects, the terminal outcomes and the suggested assessment criteria

DOMAIN	SUBJECT	TERMINAL LEARNING OUTCOMES	EVALUATION CRITERIA
Domain 1: Basic Knowledge		-	-
	ENGLISH LANGUAGE	- listen attentively for information in a given context - interpret information and react appropriate - communicate to express feelings, ideas and thoughts - read texts fluently in a given context - write texts legibly and coherently to express feelings, ideas and thoughts - show great interest in communicating in English	- Fluency in speaking - Audibility in speech - Sustenance of attention - Willingness to take turns in speaking, - use of appropriate tones in speech - Fluency and audibility in reading, - Respect of voice pitch - Correctness of answers to comprehension questions - Presentation of materials - Respect of instructions - Legibility, meaning, coherence, the right posture, right direction, - presentation of materials, respect of - instructions
	MATHEMATICS	- Solve problems involving sets and logic - Solve problems involving number operations - Solve problems involving measurement units - Construct different geometric shapes - Categorize statistics on graphs - Use mathematical skills in daily life - Show interest in mathematics	- Group, match and classify objects and numbers in sets using different attributes - Correct representation of sets, symbols and figures - Correct use of symbols, signs and diagrams - Ordering and consistency - Appropriate use of operations and formulae - Associating quantities to figures and symbols - Proper use of mathematics tools - Solve meaningful daily life problems

	SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY	- Demonstrate knowledge of the human body, - its functioning as well as care and hygiene - Describe the environment including plants and animals - Use scientific instruments and technological tools - Respect scientific procedures and norms - Construct miniatures and models - Reject superstitious beliefs and myths	- Respect of procedures in experiments; - Exactitude of experiment results; - Improvisation of materials in experiments; - Positive observable change in behaviour - Dexterity (careful handling and manipulation of objects) - Correct interpretation of phenomena/results.
	FRANÇAIS	- Écouter attentivement et s'exprimer de façon compréhensible avec le gestuel approprié. - Lire de courts textes simples en respectant la rononciation et l'intonation puis relever des informations. - Ecrire des petits textes d'une (01) à trois (03) phrases en rapport avec des - situations de la vie uotidienne	- correcte et cohérente - Adéquation de la production à la situation - Respect des règles grammaticales - Déchiffrage/décodage des sons, mots et phrases, informations pertinentes - Respect de la prononciation et de l'intonation - Adéquation du texte à la situation - Correction des énoncés - Cohérence de la production
Domain 2 : Communal life and national integration			
	SOCIAL STUDIES	- identify the effects of human activities - relate human activities to development - display a spirit of objectivity, tolerance, and patriotism - practise values of harmonious living - show love for nation and for the outside world - respect differences in choices and personality - practise behaviour which will lead to the protection and security of people and national property	- Display a spirit of objectivity, tolerance, and patriotism - Respect of national emblems - Practise of social values - Involvement in awareness campaigns - Logical explanations of events - Positive change of attitude
Domain 3: Vocational and Life Skills			
	Vocational studies	- At the end of this level, learners will be able to: - use equipment to produce objects following a spelt-out procedure - acquire knowledge, skills and attitudes for productive work at home and effective - home management - acquire knowledge, skills and attitudes to manipulate local materials through given - processes and procedures to produce objects	- Quality of material used - Respect of instructions - Quality of final product - Consistency in the explanatory note - Time used to carry out the task - Involvement in team work

		- produce arts objects using local materials - demonstrate a spirit of collaboration - manifest high self-esteem, interest, initiative, creativity, resourcefulness and good - value judgment	
	ARTS		
		- Create artistic objects - Draw imaginative and creative literary - works expressing feelings and emotions - Use voice, body and/or inanimate objects conveying feelings and emotions - Show interest in morality and appropriate life styles	- Compliance with guidelines and techniques (correct - use of geometric shapes and colours - Ability to write imaginatively, creatively expressing original thoughts - Ability to create and sing a song - Synchronization between voice variations and percussion. - Ability to convey feelings and thoughts through music - Mastery of the stage and respect for the text - Ability to act a role freely - Ability to recognize and use appropriate costumes, make-up and hairstyles - Ability to create and execute dance techniques - Descent looks, behaviour, respect, punctuality, - Cheerful nature, respond positively to corrections etc.
	PHYSICAL EDUCATION AND SPORTS		
		- Discover his/her body - Practise social and interpersonal communication skills - Stimulate their physical, affective, intellectual and emotional growth - Maintain a healthy body	- Alertness, vigilance, posture - Accuracy, respect of rules, fanfare, collaboration - Respect of signals, endurance Identify parts of the body and their roles - Ability to carry out routine activities effectively
Domain 4: Cultural Identity			
	NATIONAL LANGUAGES AND CULTURES	- Communicate appropriately using at least five sentences in any given context - Sing traditional songs fluently - Perform cultural activities/scenes - Listen attentively without interrupting the speaker - Read at least five sentences and bring out the meaning in a related theme. - Write a correct and coherent sentence to pass across information in any given context	- Respect of rules related to the spoken - languages - Audibility, fluency, articulation, intonation in speech - Sustanance of dialogue and animation. - Correctness of responses /correctness of gestures/actions - Correctness of form, coherence and neatness in writing. - Respect of rhythm and dance steps. - Observance interactions with others and Participation in projects.

Domain 5: Digital Literacy			
	INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATIN TECHNOLOGY	Use computer equipment and ICT tools Perform basic word processing Produce basic Spreadsheet Apply basic health and safety measures when using computers and other ICT devices Practise basic computational thinking Use ICTs responsibly	Ability to identify ICT tools and their parts Correct use of ICT tools Ability to use the key board Identify applications and launch them Respect of health, hygiene and safety rules While manipulating ICT tools. Ability to explain computational concepts using real life situations

8. Subject weighting and teaching time allocation

The weight assigned to each subject in the curriculum and the teaching time allocated for its accomplishment are indicated in the table that follows. The allocation is both for schools which run either a one or two shift system.

Table 6: Time table

Subjects	Two Shifts		One Shift	
	Annual hours	Weekly hours	Annual hours	Weekly hours
Mathematics	92hrs	4hrs	115 hrs.	5hrs
Science and Technology	92hrs	4hrs	92 hrs.	4hrs
Social Studies	69hrs	3hrs	69 hrs.	3hrs
English language	92hrs	4hrs	115 hrs.	5hrs
Français	46hrs	2hrs	69 hrs.	3hrs
National Languages and Culture	46hrs	2hrs	46 hrs.	2hrs
Arts	23hrs	1hrs	23 hrs.	1hrs
Vocational Studies	46hrs	2hrs	69 hrs.	3hrs
Physical Education and Sports	46hrs	2hrs	46 hrs.	2hrs
ICTs	46hrs	2hrs	46 hrs.	2hrs
Total Hours	598 hrs.	26 hrs.	690 hrs.	30 hrs.
Breaks	53h 20 mins	1h40 mins	144 hrs.	4 h 30 mins
Integration and Evaluation Activities	225 hrs.	25hrs per week	270 hrs.	30hrs per week
Total instruction period	853 h 20 mins	26 h 40 minutes	1104 hrs.	34 h 30 mins

Source: New Primary Curriculum, p.26

9. Relevance

An examination of the new primary school curriculum suggests that salient issues relevant and fundamentally important to the Cameroonian society have not been addressed. These include multicultural, peace, gender equality, moral, and sustainability education.

Cameroon prides itself as Africa in miniature because it is highly diversified in term of it tribal configuration, local languages, cultural value systems, belief systems, her natural endowment in terms of resources and its history. In this connection the country is presently plagued by crises originating from the poor management of some of these endowments'. It is therefore surprising to find that multicultural education which should address tribal and cultural differences within a framework of unity in diversity has not been included in the curriculum which is key to developing knowledge skills and values of building a unified healthy and competitive Cameroon nation.

Since independence Cameroon has projected herself as a peaceful and peace loving society. In this light she has provided and continuous to provide advice and shelter to neighboring populations flee from social conflicts. However,

the recent outburst and increasing social crises affecting all areas of social life is a clear indication that the fabric of nation life is yet to be weaved with threads of the values of peace. In the circumstance, peace education as a curriculum content area become imperative in the design and implementation of curricular beginning from the nursery through secondary to tertiary education in Cameroon. The absence of such content area especially at this critical time in the life of the nation when events have propelled and highlighted its need is a pointer to the inability of the curriculum to address relevance.

Gender equality has become universally accepted as a fundamental principle that needs to be understood and practiced by all human beings in order to enable the human family achieve its intents in every aspect of life. Despite the challenges facing our nation along this path owing to the traditional cultural outlook on life and the place it had prejudicially reserved for the female gender, there is no content area in the new primary school curriculum aimed at moulding the young minds to address the gender gap.

Given the degree to which morals have degenerated in the Cameroon society, and the fruitless search by public

authorities for ways of rebuilding a morally sound society, one would have expected the new curriculum to address this arena by including a content area for the teaching and cultivation in the young minds, religious moral values (synthesized from the Holy books of all revealed religions) which are the relevant sources of true moral values which had been removed from the curriculum some decades ago as a means of reinforcing the secular nature of the state.

We live in a world environment in which all aspects of life are threatened by uninformed human actions and consequently, human existence is by the same token suffering from various ills that now threaten its existence. Faced with this situation, leaders of all nations proposed and consented to the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals in 2017 as a way of solving the global environmental crises. Education was assigned the responsibility of leading humanity to achieve this goal. However, there is no curriculum content area in the new Cameroon primary school curriculum dedicated to the education and training of the children to develop the awareness and to treat the environment as it deserves to bequeath to posterity a healthy and secure environment.

10. Findings
The findings indicate that the curriculum is driven by seven predetermined national skills and four broad competences. The selection of curriculum content in relation to the subjects is guided by the need for pupils to develop the national skills and competences by the end of the primary school programme.

The curriculum is based on a constructivist philosophical paradigm which is based on the belief that knowledge is constructed. Individually, knowledge is constructed from experience while learning results from individual interpretation of knowledge. Social, learning is collaboration with meaning negotiated from a multitude of perspectives.

The curriculum was necessitated by the national desire to provide pupils quality and holistic education to enable them participate in national development and function smoothly in the new global society.

The new curriculum enables Cameroon to meet the needs of the various international agreements she engaged in the area of education as well as ensure her development to an emergent economy by 2035.

The curriculum content is organized into five domains instead of broad fields, beginning with Basic knowledge weighted (60%) through Vocational and Life skills (20%), Digital Literacy (10%), Cultural identity (5%) and Communal Life and national integration (5%).

The curriculum is an accomplishment of the long search for a suitable national curriculum that began at independence in 1961.

The conduct of teaching and learning in the curriculum is based on a pedagogy of integration which will assist pupils develop the require skills and competences through the use of integrated learning themes and active learner centred teaching methods.

11. Conclusion
The new Cameroon primary school curriculum is the fruit of a long search that started at independence. It was driven by

the need to accomplish international education covenants that Cameroon had adhered to and to meet the nation goal of becoming an emergient economy by 2035. Bbased on a constructivist worldview and organized around seven core skills and four broad competences, the subject are organized into five domains each allocated a certain weight. The elements of the vertical and horizontal articulation are fairly balanced, however, in terms of curriculum data sources, they have been biased towards meeting market needs thereby sacrificing other salient areas of curriculum content knowledge needed for a holistic development. The curriculum is design following the framework of the current competency curriculum movement.

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