Research

A survey on Efficiency and Challenge of Adult Literacy policy in Cameroon

Mounton Njoya Felix\textsuperscript{1,2}
\textsuperscript{1}College of Teacher Education
\textsuperscript{2}Faculty of Educational Sciences, Zhejiang Normal University, 688, Yingbin Avenue, Jinhua, Zhejiang Province, China 321004

\textsuperscript{*}Corresponding author
mountonnjoyafelix@gmail.com; felixinjova@yahoo.fr

Accepted: February 25, 2020; Online: April 13, 2020

DOI: https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.3750434

Abstract: Since it independence, Cameroon has experience several literacy policy reforms. It is important to notice that those reforms came all from certain difficulties encountered when trying to implement each elaborated policy. Currently, the literacy policy in Cameroon is that of Decentralization which means that the Central Government allows each local government to monitor literacy activities at their respective areas. My aim for this paper is to make the policy makers aware of certain difficulties that could prevent the current policy from having good results, and hope that solutions be thought about in order to strengthen it. For the Methodology, I conducted interviews at the Ministry of basic education in Cameroon, precisely the staff in charge of literacy education in Cameroon, and I also interviewed adults literacy educators. At the end of my survey, two things really retain my attention. The first one is that compare to efficiency of the current policy, challenges are too many. The second point is that literacy activities are not really among the main priorities of the government. By writing this paper, my main hope is that it helps the literacy policy makers in Cameroon to strengthen literacy activities.

Keywords: Cameroon, Adult Literacy Policy, Efficiency and Challenge

Introduction

Like every other counties in the world, Adults literacy policy in Cameroon is made of efficiency and challenges. They can be observed at both levels, I mean the institutional level and the local or implementation level, and they concern many
aspects, starting from the elaboration of literacy policy to its implementation. For a better efficiency of this paper, I am going to present at the first place the development of literacy policy in Cameroon and then the efficiency and challenge of the current adult literacy policy which is that of Decentralization.

I. Historical development of adult’s literacy policy in Cameroon

It is generally accepted that a country's education system, through its components, contributes effectively to the promotion of sustainable development, through raising the level of literacy and productive capacities of its population. Contemporary history offers many examples of countries that have put in place mechanisms capable of offering everyone the opportunity to access the initial and / or continuous learning process adapted to the needs and aspirations of the beneficiaries.

International guidelines are in line with the Cameroonian government's desire to secure the education sector such as to be able to face the current challenges involved. Thus, since the holding of the General Estates of Education in 1995, there has been a wide-ranging effort to provide Cameroon with an effective educational system.

Since then, many advances have been made in both schooling and adult literacy. At the legal point of view, the promulgation of Law No. 98/004 of 14 April 1998 on the Orientation of Education in Cameroon presents the missions assigned to education in Cameroon. Secondly, the elaboration of the Education Sector Strategy Document in 2006, which operates along the same lines as the Poverty Reduction Strategy Document (PRSD), with the aims of: improving access to primary school, reducing repetition in this cycle and improve the completion rate of the primary cycle.

Given the paradigm shift in the development, implementation and monitoring / evaluation of development policies in Cameroon from the fight against poverty (PRSP) to the pursuit of growth and employment (DSCE), Cameroon has updated the Education Sector Strategy in 2013. This process led to the preparation of the Education and Training Sector Strategy Document (DSSEF) based on the DSCE, which strategy was endorsed in August 2013 by the Cameroonian Government and all
its development partners. This sectoral guidance document, which integrates literacy and non-formal education as one of its components, assigns the following main tasks:

- provide quality basic education for school-age children who have never attended school or who have dropped out of school early and facilitate their integration into the formal system;

- promote vocational integration training for out-of-school young people while completing their basic education;

- ensure the functional literacy of adults in all its components.

To achieve this, Cameroon, with the help of its partners, had already begun since 2010, a reflection on the development of the framework for implementation of literacy activities and non-formal education in Cameroon. This approach led to the realization of a diagnosis of this subsector in 2012, a prerequisite for the development of the policy document.

The instrument, which was expected since the development and adoption of the DSSEF, should allow Cameroon to finally have a complete and effective educational system, based on scientific piloting tools in all its sub-sectors. It will also, by the place it intends to give to national languages in its implementation, promote them, using them as languages of instruction, training, literacy and post-literacy.

The literacy policy document in Cameroon is divided into five (05) main parts:

a) The national context for implementing literacy and non-formal education in Cameroon;

b) Analysis of the situation of the LNFE in Cameroon;

c) The main orientations of the national policy of the AENF;

d) The strategic axes;

e) The implementation, monitoring and evaluation system.

I.1 Context of the elaboration of the National Policy on Literacy, non-formal education and training in National Languages

This part reviews the context of the development of the National Policy on Literacy, Non-Formal Education and Training in National Languages as well as the
training of human resources in development strategies.

I.2 Training of Human Resources in the development strategies of Cameroon

a) Place of human resources training in the Vision of Cameroon by 2035

The policy document of the LNFE (literacy and Non Formal Education) sub-sector is part of Cameroon's 2035 vision of making Cameroon "an emerging country, democratic and united in its diversity", in other words, a country characterized by:

- a decentralized administration at the service of development;
- a residual level of poverty, illiteracy and social exclusion;
- a Cameroonian culture affirmed in its plural unit, attractive and internationally exportable;
- a well-trained youth, exalting merit and national expertise;
- a country in which discrimination of all kinds is abolished (especially in terms of access to educational services), particularly those affecting women, young people, marginal populations and all vulnerable groups.

b) Decentralization Policy and LNFE (Literacy and Non Formal Education)

Decentralization is defined as the transfer of certain powers from the central level to decentralized territorial communities. With regard to the LNFE, its three (03) components are: adult literacy, the reschooling of children who have left primary school before completion, and the basic education of out-of-school youth. In this perspective, the law n° 2004/018 of July 22nd, 2004 fixing the rules applicable to the communes and the law n° 2004/019 of July 22nd, 2004 fixing the rules applicable to the regions transfer to these CTDs a certain number of competences in LNFE.

*For regions, the transferred skills are:

In literacy:

- development and implementation of regional plans to eliminate illiteracy;
- the annual summary of the implementation of regional literacy campaign plans;
- the recruitment of literacy staff;
- training of trainers;
- the design and production of teaching materials;
- the realization of the literacy map;
- the establishment of infrastructures and educational facilities;
- monitoring and evaluation of plans to eliminate illiteracy.

**In vocational training:**
- participation in the development of the regional section of the school map relating to technical education and vocational training;
  - the development of a training plan;
  - maintenance and upkeep of schools, centers and training institutions in the region;
  - recruitment and support of the staff;
  - participation in the acquisition of teaching materials;
  - participation in the management and administration of state training centers through structures for dialogue and consultation;
  - the development of a regional plan for the professional integration of young people;
  - support for the establishment of school-business partnership agreements.

**Concerning the promotion of national languages:**
- the functional mastery of national languages and the development of the regional linguistic map;
  - participation in the publishing promotion in national languages;
  - the promotion of the spoken and written press in national languages;
  - the establishment of infrastructures and equipment.

* For the municipalities, these competences concern:
In literacy:
- the implementation of plans to eliminate illiteracy, in relation with the regional administration;
- participation in the establishment and maintenance of infrastructures and educational facilities.

In vocational training:
- the development of a local plan for training and recycling;
- participation in setting up, maintaining and administering training centers.

Concerning the promotion of national languages:
- participation in regional programs for the promotion of national languages;
- participation in the establishment and maintenance of infrastructure and equipment.

I.3 Diagnosis of LNFE in Cameroon

The analysis of the situation of LNFE is to present the inventory as it emerged from the diagnostic studies. It revolves around the following points:

- presentation of the conceptual framework;
- the specificity of LNFE activities in Cameroon;
- the demand and organization in LNFE;
- pedagogical aspects in LNFE;
- the diagnosis of the Information System for the Management of the LNFE;
- Subsector funding;
- the issues and challenges to be addressed;
- implementation difficulties;
- assets and opportunities.

a) Conceptual frame

- Literacy
In the sense of UNESCO, "Literacy is organized primarily to convey the ability to identify, understand, interpret, create, communicate and calculate using printed or written materials associated with variable contexts. Literacy involves a continuum of learning to enable individuals to achieve their goals, to develop their knowledge and potential and to participate fully in their community and society as a whole" (UNESCO, SIM-ENF Handbook 2007). It can therefore be understood as any activity in which, focus is reading, writing and

as part of a lifelong learning process, leading to creative expression and conceptual problem-solving skills.

There is a distinction between traditional (basic) literacy, functional literacy and post-literacy.

- **Non Formal Education**

UNESCO defines Non Formal Education as "any organized and sustainable education activity that does not correspond exactly to formal education". It can, therefore, take place both inside and outside educational institutions and address people of all ages. Depending on the specificities of the country concerned, it may include adult literacy programs, basic education for out-of-school children, acquisition of skills relevant to ordinary and professional life, and general culture.

- **Non-Formal Basic Education**

Non-Formal Basic Education, as defined at the 1990 World Conference on Education in Jomtien, is an education that gives the individual, in a given historical, social and linguistic context, a minimum of knowledge, skills and attitudes to understand and interact with the environment, to further education and training in society, and to participate more effectively in the economic, social and cultural development of society. The general mission of the EBNF is the training of the learner, with a view to his intellectual, physical, civic and moral development and his harmonious integration into society, taking into account the socio-cultural, economic, social and moral factors.
b) Specificities of LNFE activities in Cameroon

For the sake of clarification of the preceding concepts, the reading grid proposed below (Table 1) presents a comparative and operational analysis of the different domains of the LNFE in Cameroon.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fields</th>
<th>subcategories identified</th>
<th>GOALS</th>
<th>CONTENT</th>
<th>TYPE OF ACTORS (LNFE AGENCIES)</th>
<th>TARGET GROUPS</th>
<th>CHARACTERISTICS</th>
<th>OBSERVATIONS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Literacy | initial literacy | - Mastering basic instrumental knowledge in reading, writing and numeracy and life skills. - To enable the individual to achieve his goals and to contribute to better being in the basic notions in calculation, reading and writing. - Basics in social communication, the "know-how to do" and the "know-how to be." - Special literacy; Religious instruction, - Cultural / traditional education | State: -Government programs and projects, -Specialized institutions CSOs: -National and International NGOs -Missions / religious organizations, -Associations, -Community organizations, -Specialized establishments PTF: -Agencies of the United Nations system CTD: | -Analphabets in national or official languages -Young people out of school -Young and marginalized adults -Women and girls -Ethnic minorities -Refugees -disabled youth -detainees -Neo-literates | - The flexible nature of the training organization -Non-dedicated or makeshift training space - Lack of sustainability in the planning of activities (planning by project) -Little contribution of learners -Domination of the social -Low involvement of private operators; | Literacy is a learning process that aims to enable learners to master not only reading, writing and calculation, but also the "know-how to do" and the "how to be" skills, necessary for their socio-professional and socio-economic integration, hence the usual name of functional literacy.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Community</th>
<th>Decentralized Local Initiatives, Specialized Establishments</th>
<th>Criterion-based Identification of training needs through a process of social negotiation (participation)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

- Develop the “know-how” to drive its daily activities and participate fully in the life of the community and society.
- Improve the quality of life on the integral level.
| Post-literacy | Integrate the neo-literate into the society - Consolidate the achievements of the initial literacy phase - Put into practice the achievements of the literacy phase | - Services, artisanal and/or pastoral production (AGR, communautary development…) - Acquisition of skills necessary for everyday life, cultural/traditional education | - Neo-literate (basic level literate, advanced level literates) | - Monitoring activity of a literacy phase - Self-evaluation and evaluation by an instructor - Use of learning outcomes in a context of implementation of development activities - Accent on capacitation - Control and supervision by instructors - Involvement of private operators |
I.4 Request and actors in LNFE

a) Request in LNFE

In a dynamic comparative approach, the Report of the National Education System (MINEDUB, RESEN 2013) reveals that between 2006 and 2011, the net enrollment rate at the primary level went from 78.2 to 88%, while the completion rate was passing from 64.3% in 2006 to 73% for the same period. This means that about 23% of children leave school without acquiring the basic skills necessary for sustainable and irreversible literacy. It should also be noted that despite the significant advances, current statistics reveal that 8.4% of young Cameroonians aged 6 to 11 have never attended school and 11.3% of them leave the system early each year, without having acquired the long-term capacity to read, write and calculate in the languages of schooling, ie an annual flow of 100,000 children.

The territorial distribution of school dropout and out-of-school is as follows: the three northern regions (Far North, North and Adamaoua) and the East constitute the most marked school dropout and out-of-school areas. In other words, 82.6% of children who do not go to school live in rural areas and mostly in the Far-North Regions (53%), North (42.8%), Adamaoua (31.9%) and the East (19.7%).

According to data from the UNESCO Institute for Statistics (UIS), the illiteracy rate was 24.10% between 2008 and 2009. The problem affected adults and youth at 24.1% and 14.2% respectively. The illiterate population was 2,715,000, and 67.1% were women. In this illiterate population, there were 565,000 young people (15-24 years), 58.1% of them were girls. According to data from the LNFE Diagnostic Study (2012), the composition of the illiterate population is heterogeneous; and as follow:

- first-time illiterates, people who have never benefited from literacy or schooling; this category corresponds to 64% of all illiterates in the country;
- neo-illiterates, school dropouts and other excluded early from formal education structures. This category accounts for about half of the 12% of annual dropouts in the education system, or about 5% of the illiterate population;
- migrant illiterates, including refugees, street children, nomads, peoples with patriarchal and / or misogynistic cultural traditions, etc. This category accounts for about 24% of the illiterate population.

In sum, Cameroon’s illiterate population is geographically distributed according to the following major types of clustering:

- the three (03) northern regions (Adamaoua, North, Far-North) and the North-West:
  
  these constitute hotbeds of illiteracy because of the difficulties of school expansion, the persistence of migratory flows fed by the populations of neighboring countries, the predominance of secular traditions centered on feudal-type of authority, and finally because of a strong implantation of socio-cultural realities sometimes opposed to modern practices of education and communication;

- the two (02) forest regions of the South and the East: illiteracy is linked to the lack of education and training infrastructures, as well as the very limited nature of the road;

- Some outlying districts of major urban centers, starting with the chief towns of the Regions including Yaoundé, Douala and other medium-sized cities. These outlying districts are bastions of illiteracy because they shelter the poorest and least educated populations;

- villages isolated or distant from metropolises, island, isolated areas also host a large number of illiterates. Because of their geographical position, they are marginalized and excluded from major education and communication circuits.

b) Actors of the LNFE

AENF’s activities are characterized by their socio-economic dimension through facilities offered in terms of integration and social empowerment. The actors intervening in this field are:

- State actors at the central level (MINEDUB, MINEFOP, MINJEC, MINEPIA, MINAS, MINPROFF, MINADER);
- CSOs (SIL, CABTAL, ANACLAC, CJARC, Biblical Alliance, COOPI, ACESF-CA, Cameroon Plan, etc.);
- TFPs (CONFEJES, UNESCO, UNICEF, World Bank, UNHCR, etc.);
- Decentralized Territorial Communities;
- village communities;
- and private operators (training of trainers and beneficiaries).

c) Pedagogical aspects in LNFE

- Research and development of curricula, materials and teaching tools

Currently, the State is the main actor concerned by the research and development of curricula and teaching materials, especially in professional sectors and mostly in the livestock sector, fish farming, agriculture, handicrafts, carpentry, masonry, etc. Indeed, in the perspective of popularizing their activities, the administrations concerned create technical structures, programs and projects to disseminate technical and technological innovations. In this perspective, the training offered aims to share good practices and/or professionalization of the actors of a specific trade.

In literacy, in addition to state initiatives, some national or international NGOs are very active in promoting research and development of curricula and teaching materials in Cameroon. These are ANACLAC, CABTAL, SIL, Plan Cameroon, the Biblical Alliance of Cameroon, AAW, CJARC, etc., as well as some faith-based organizations like CDD, the Lutheran Lutheran Church in Cameroon, the Union of Baptist Churches of Cameroon and the Presbyterian Church in Cameroon.

- Training and professional development of staff

With regard to literacy, the development of research and the training of trainers are done at: the Department of African Languages and Linguistics (DLAL) of the University of Yaounde I, the Center for Research in Adult Education (CREA) of INJS, CENAJES of Kribi, CJARC, SIL, ANACLAC, CABTAL, etc.

In non-formal education (NFE), particularly with regard to training and professional development of staff, the State is the main actor and is assisted by
development partners as well as by the technical and financial cooperation of friendly countries. In recent years, this field has also been open to private operators and CSOs.

d) Organization of training, recruitment and working conditions of literacy educators

Literacy centers are usually housed in community houses, schools and sometimes in faith-based places where learners come two or three times a week to receive training.

Recruitment of literacy educators is mainly through co-optation and, to a lesser extent, through calls for applications and/or recruitment tests.

Literacy teachers or facilitators in non-formal education under government programs, civil society or communities are volunteers. They have neither salary nor fixed remuneration. They can nevertheless benefit from monthly bonuses of a small amount.

e) Programs Implementation and Management

- Organization and training methods of learners

Pedagogical orientation in literacy is based on a flexible methodological approach centered on the learner, community participation, decentralization and partnership.

A wide variety of interactive and participatory methods of teaching and learning are used during literacy classes (educational chat, practical training workshop, etc.). They may vary depending on whether the literacy educator addresses issues of awareness in the field of health, the environment or the improvement of farming techniques in agriculture, etc.

Concerning vocational training, the programs generally applied are the official programs of formal education. However, the progression is concentrated on three years representing three levels of training instead of six as in the formal system. They are also adapted to the socio-economic activities of each locality; ministerial departments promote professionalization or activities generating income according to the potential of each locality and their target population.
The implementation does not follow the rule of rigid programs, but on the contrary, the application of the programs is flexible and learner-centered.

- **Mechanism for monitoring / evaluating educational activities**

The monitoring / evaluation mechanism for pedagogical activities includes, on the one hand, program monitoring instruments and, on the other hand, the pedagogical monitoring body. The mechanism operates on two levels. Internally, it is driven by the Coordination of Programs and Projects (CPP), and externally by a mixed team, made up of the heads of the supervisory structures and those of the coordination.

The most widely used educational monitoring tools are the participation level record sheet, the instructional progression rate sheet, the control results sheet, the teaching material delivery sheet, the frequency of coordination meetings, the pedagogical activity reports and the monitoring-evaluation / supervision notebook.

The evaluation of the training does not follow a precise calendar and the evaluation method varies according to the object of the evaluation and the approach developed by each structure. The frequency of actions carried out as part of the pedagogical follow-up or assessments are imprecise. The same situation prevails in post-literacy.

- **Certification for Learners**

Certification, seen as a mechanism for transparently and regularly certifying that learners have been trained and evaluated according to the standards of competitiveness in literacy, exists neither at the regional level nor at the national level. Each literacy agency develops its training program, evaluates and sometimes issues certificates without rigorous or systematic programming.

- **Homologation, recognition, equivalence and validation of prior learning / knowledge acquired**

The end of the BNFE (Basic and Non Formal Education) cycle, that is to say that of learning basic knowledge, is not sanctioned by a diploma. However, it may happen...
that the learner at the end of level 3 presents the examination of the CEP and passes it. As for the professional trainings, they are sanctioned by a certificate of end of learning which does not have diploma value and consequently cannot be approved or recognized as such.

### 1.5 Funding of LNFE

The financing of LNFE activities in Cameroon combines the following resources: the state budget, bilateral and multilateral funds, private contributions, donations from local elected representatives, the contributions of civil society and Household etc.

#### a) Financing Sources of LNFE at the national level

The state budget devoted to literacy comes from state subsidies to certain programs of the ministerial departments concerned, especially those cited as leading literacy activities, even if they do not belong to the education sector, which makes planning and budget evaluation difficult. In the absence of an operational planning and coordination structure, it is difficult to establish coherence and rationality of the budget forecasts.

Bilateral or multilateral funds focus on HIPC (PPTE) and C2D resources. The other funding agencies are AfDB (BAD), cooperations and organizations of the United Nations system. CSOs, on the other hand, finance their own activities at about 95%. The mechanisms involved are quite complex, as these organizations work with membership fees, donations and sometimes legacies, grants and support from various partners. The household share of LNFE financing is estimated at around 3.7% (AENF Diagnostic Study, 2012).

Overall, literacy activities are essentially social, while NFE activities have an economic dimension, which explains the variation in the volume of inputs from partners according to their missions and according to the area concerned in LNFE.

#### b) Analysis of the financing mechanism of education by the State
LNFE funding in Cameroon is multi-sectoral, which makes it difficult to estimate the budget for activities in the sub-sector. In addition, the ministerial departments in charge of the implementation of these sub-sectors of education are many, and that makes it difficult to implement a coherent and effective strategic plan.

Without harmonization of sectoral policies, the projections in terms of financing and performance cannot hint at the Government's commitments without intersectoral arbitration. This arbitration is negotiated in Cameroon on the basis of the Medium Term Expenditure Frameworks (MTEFs) developed by the sub-sector ministries and consolidated by the Ministry of Finance (MINFI) and the Ministry of Economy, Development and Territorial Planning (MINEPAT).

However, this mechanism appears to be cumbersome and ineffective in the education and training sector, which concerns five ministries, and even more in the AENF sub-sector which involves several ministerial departments.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group of operators</th>
<th>Mechanism/Contribution type</th>
<th>Operational structures</th>
<th>Observations/activities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>State</td>
<td>Annual budgeting</td>
<td>Technical ministries and attached structures - Sector projects - CTD PNDP</td>
<td>Planning through the CDMT - Financing the PNDP - Program budget (from 2012)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local Collectivities</td>
<td>Annual budgeting</td>
<td>Structures of LNFE - Sector projects</td>
<td>own resources - Competency transferred</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bilateral and Multilateral Cooperation</td>
<td>Sector programming</td>
<td>Technical ministries and attached structures - Sector projects</td>
<td>C2D, HIPC (PPTE), special funds</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Technical and financial</td>
<td>Support for the achievement of</td>
<td>- Organizations of the United</td>
<td>Support for the implementation of</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>partners</td>
<td>objectives, conventions and state initiatives or initiated by themselves, - The United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------------------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Nations System - AfDB, CIDA, GIZ, AFD, MDRI, Japanese Cooperation projects and programs - Special Assignment Accounts - TFP catalytic fund managed by AFD as leader in education - Financial monitoring of C2D by AFD on behalf of the French Government</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Civil society organization</td>
<td>Projects and Programs management - NGO, - Associations -Organisations religious -support for improving life conditions</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Private</td>
<td>Profitable investment Grant, donations, bequest - LNFE Centers - Sector projects - private investment</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Patrons</td>
<td>donations - LNFE Centers - Sector projects - own resources</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Locally Elected Persons</td>
<td>donations - LNFE Centers - Sector projects - special funds for basic social and economic development - own resources</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Households                             | Contribution to the running costs - LNFE Centers - Sector projects -participation in the support of animators and the acquisition of didactic materials for literacy, - development of educational structures - tuition fees  

**Source:** LNFE Diagnostic Study in Cameroon: November 2012
c) Public funding of the LNFE

Until December 2011, due to the absence of an operational coordination structure, the traceability and financing structure of the LNFE by the different actors was not obvious.

-Funding of literacy by the State budget

It is not easy to estimate the share of the national budget specifically allocated to literacy in Cameroon. Before the institutional reforms of December 2011 (transfer of literacy missions to MINEDUB), its funding was mainly from the budget of the former MINJEUN and precisely from its operational structures which were the PNA and the former CNEPA. The table below presents its evolution from 2007 to 2011.

Table 3: Share of funding for literacy in the budget of the former MINJEUN (in thousands F CFA)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Budget of the Ministry of Youth</td>
<td>5 000 000</td>
<td>7 161 000</td>
<td>8 501 000</td>
<td>7.820.000</td>
<td>8.136.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National Literacy Program (NLP)</td>
<td>283 354</td>
<td>353 954</td>
<td>5 000</td>
<td>5200</td>
<td>8300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National Center for Popular Education and Literacy (NCPEL)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>12 000</td>
<td>2 000</td>
<td>6800</td>
<td>4300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total NLP + NCPEL</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>365 954</td>
<td>7 000</td>
<td>12000</td>
<td>12600</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Proportion (%)</td>
<td>5,11</td>
<td>0,082</td>
<td>0,153</td>
<td>0,155</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: LNFE Diagnostic Study in Cameroon: November 2012
However, it should be noted that the data presented do not take into account the salaries of staff assigned to these structures.

- **Funding of Literacy by HIPC (Heavily Indebted Poor Country) Funds**

Apart from the state budget, the literacy structures benefited from a financial contribution made up of HIPC funds between 2003 and 2008.

**Table 4:** Distribution of HIPC funds allocated to literacy structures

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Budgetary Exercise</th>
<th>National Literacy Plan Endowment</th>
<th>Subsidy of the Agricultural Sector Support Project</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2003</td>
<td>63 543 144</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>63 543 000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2004</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2005</td>
<td>637 084 530</td>
<td>64 258 470</td>
<td>701 343 000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td>724 325 000</td>
<td>86 500 000</td>
<td>810 825 000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>283 354 000</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>283 354 000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td>349 715 000</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>349 715 000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>2 058 021 674</strong></td>
<td><strong>150 758 470</strong></td>
<td><strong>2 208 780 144</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Source:** LNFE Diagnostic Study in Cameroon: November 2012

d) **Funding of literacy by civil society**

Civil society, through some national or international NGOs present on the ground, contributes to the financing of literacy activities. The efforts made to this end are directed towards the payment of wages, training costs, the production of teaching materials, transportation, etc.

As an illustration, the budget of CABTAL, which went from FCFA 51,263,000 in 2007 to FCFA 88,500,000 in 2011, underlines the growing interest in the subsector by civil society.

e) **Financing of the AENF by the Cooperation and the technical and financial partners (PTF)**

So far, Cameroon has not yet really benefited from international funding for adult literacy. Except for the support received from UNESCO which, during the great
literacy campaign still known as the "School under the Tree" (1960-1970), had borne the expenses related to the design and production didactic materials. It is with the completion point of the HIPC initiative that the Education Sector will gain renewed interest from external partners through HIPC funds.

In Cameroon, AFD is the leader of the Technical and Financial Partners of the education sector. As such, its role materializes in the preparation of Cameroon's requests for funding to multilateral fora, including the Catalytic Fund of the Education for All Initiative. It must be said that most of this support is geared towards improving the steering of educational policy and the content of teaching.

To guarantee the effectiveness of the implementation of the Education Strategy adopted in 2006, France through C2D Education contributed CFAF 59 billion. But it remains difficult to determine the part devoted to NFE and even more to literacy.

It should be emphasized here that the "Bamako Appeal" in September 2007 had asked Africans to make a massive investment in literacy and training of youth and adults at least 3% of the budget of national education.

II. Efficiency of Adult Literacy Education in Cameroon

II.1 Efficiency at the institutional level

II.1.1 In terms of definition and law regulating adult’s literacy education in Cameroon

**Question:** Has Cameroon developed definition and law regulating adult’s literacy education in Cameroon?

**Answer:**

“For the official definition of adults’ literacy policy, Cameroon has adopted a formal definition of adult literacy policy. In 2014, Cameroon developed a national literacy policy document dedicated to the sub-sector of literacy and non-formal education with technical and financial support from the UNESCO Yaoundé. In this document, literacy policy is presented as the way in which the state manages or
intends to guide interventions in the sub-sector of literacy and non-formal education as a lever aimed at building human capital, which is entrusted to the sector of education and training. So defining literacy policy according to the national literacy policy document, one could say it is all the interventions of the State to enable illiterate adults to acquire the basic knowledge, to develop their skills as well as attitudes allowing them to be good citizens. It can be summarized as all the techniques and methods developed by the State, which aim to drastically reduce the rate of illiterate adults in Cameroon and also to improve their living conditions. It is only by that way that Cameroon can hope to be an emerging country by 2035 as planned. Based on the same policy document, other definitions can be used in practice such as "adult education" or "lifelong learning", etc. It is also important to mention that this policy in general will undergo modifications in any moment from now, in view of the amendments proposed by the Prime Minister. The wholesale alphabetization revolves around three main axes: an alphabetization axis, a non-formal education axis, and the last axis which is the promotion of native languages.

About laws and regulations, it must be said that the history of literacy began in Cameroon around 1970s as part of what was called the PEMA (World Experimental Program for Literacy) which was supported by UNESCO. Today when we talk about EFA, the MDGs or OEDDs; by that time, it was within the framework of PEMA that Cameroon developed a vast program called “school under the tree”. In the 1980s, with the withdrawal of the United States from UNESCO, Cameroon did no longer received support from the vast global program, which was supported by certain donors, and when it was evaluated in the 1980s and 1983s, an expert committed by UNESCO named Peruvian Alfonso Lizarzaburu urged the Government of Cameroon to develop a national literacy policy to address the concerns of the fight against poverty and the promotion of access to education. This is why in 2005 the national literacy program was launched to bring some valuable solutions to literacy problem in Cameroon. That program ran from 2005 to 2011.

There are several laws and regulations to support literacy policy in Cameroon since independence (1960) with the official launching of the national literacy
campaign under the theme "school under the tree". Later, with the creation and setting up of a real structure for literacy, several ministerial departments got involved into literacy activities. This leads to the creation of the National Literacy Committee (NAC) in 1990. Later in 2005, the National Literacy Program was set up to deal only with issues related to literacy. But strong laws on literacy began to emerge around 2004, although Cameroon had laws before. We have for example:

- The law on the orientation of education of 98. That is law 98/004 of April 14, 1998 on the orientation of education which says in its article 5 that the mission of education is to train citizens rooted in their culture and opened to the world. Although it does not specifically refer to literacy, the citizen who must be rooted in his culture can be a child, young or an adult as well; and in 1996, in favor of the constitution, the right to education was set as one of the rights that all Cameroonian citizens can claim.

- In 2004, in particularly with the context of decentralization, a number of skills were transferred to decentralized territorial collectivities, particularly in the field of literacy. Law No. 2004/019 of 22 July 2004 laying down the rules applicable to the regions (Title II (competences to the regions), that is the 2004/018 of July 22, 2004 setting the rules applicable to councils. All these laws determine a certain number of competences which were transferred to the decentralized territorial collectivities.

- Law 2014/018 of 22 July 2004 laying down the rules applicable to municipalities (Title III (jurisdiction transferred to municipalities), Section III, Chapter III, Section I, Education, Literacy and Vocational Training Art 20)

- Law 2014/019 of 22 July 2004 laying down the rules applicable to the regions (Title II (Competences to the Regions), Chapter III (Educational Development of Literacy and Vocational Training) Section I (Education, Literacy and vocational training) Article 22.

- Law 2007/003 of 13 July 2007 establishing the National Civic Service for Participation in Development.

- Decree Number 02012/268 of 11 June 2012 organizing the Ministry of Basic Education (MINEDUB) entrusts the ministry with the mission of fighting against illiteracy; through the creation of a Directorate and Inspectorate in charge of literacy.
education, non-formal basic education and the promotion of national languages.

- Decree Number 2016/1247 / PM of May 23rd, 2016 fixing the modalities of exercise of certain competences transferred by the State to the councils in matters of literacy:

  Provision of literacy facilities in forms of kits. The provision of school infrastructures to support literacy courses.

- Order No 332 / B1 / 1464 / A / MINEDUB / CAB of 27 September 2016 setting out specifications specifying the conditions and technical modalities of implementation of competences transferred by the State to the communes in matters of literacy.

**Question:** Who develops public policies in literacy sector in Cameroon?

**Answer:**

“In Cameroon it is the State that develops public policies in various sectors of activity and entrusts this mission to different ministry. Thus, it is the State that formulates the policies, sets the conditions for implementation and monitors the evaluation. And within the framework of the organization of government work, it is the ministry of basic education that is responsible for literacy education in Cameroon, according to the texts of 2012 organizing that department.”

**II.1.2 In terms of the target for Adults literacy**

**Question:** Which groups of people are targeted by the literacy policy in Cameroon?

**Answer:**

“The groups targeted by the literacy policy in Cameroon are young people and adults aged 15 years and above, and of all categories (women, youth, indigenous peoples, linguistic or ethnic minority groups, migrants, people with disabilities, rural residents, prisoners etc.) We can see that everybody is concerned; no one can fill marginalized by the program. That means in that point, Cameroon is alongside with the recommendations of UNESCO. There is not timelines for action on adult literacy,
since their main aim is to achieve SDGs 4-4, 4-6 that is to raise the literacy rate.”

II.1.3 In terms of sensitization

**Question:** what strategies do the government adopts to sensitize the population?

**Answer:**

“The government of Cameroon is engaged in sensitizing the population about advantages of being educated. The Government through special events on the ground or on television brings adults to understand that learning throughout one’s life is beneficial for them as well as for their community and it also allows them to lead a better life. We can also talk about the promotion and organization of literacy activities among targeted populations with the delivery of kits to existing literacy centers and the construction of public literacy centers by the State; But also advocacy with donors and technical partners such as UNESCO, the World Bank ... to invest in activities in urban and rural areas.”

II.1.4 In terms of language of instruction in literacy centers

**Question:** What is the language of instruction recommended by the government for literacy activities?

**Answer:**

“In Cameroon the official languages are first English and French; and national policy advocates for the use of three languages, ie English, French and the national languages, according to the needs of learners. So, the languages of teaching are these three, ie the mother tongue of the learners, English, or French according to the needs and according to the context. We have people in communities who get together and ask for help from a coach because they want to read their language; that is to say, they consider that the exclusive use of French or English alienates them. And to have a sense of pride, an identity of their own they prefer to go to the source and learn their language. Others who for example wish to requalify or start over in a new career will learn either in English or French so as to be able to be functional.”
II.1.5 In terms of implementation of the policy

**Question:** How do you assure the implementation of the elaborated policy at the local level?

**Answer:**

“All governmental services in the context of decentralization are represented in all localities. That is to say that you have the ministry of basic education that has its substitutes in cities as villages. At villages level you find schools and the sub-divisional inspection, at the departmental level, there is the divisional delegation, at the regional level there is the regional delegation, and in Yaounde there is the ministry where the implementation is monitored daily. This organization of the administrative work enables a follow-up at every level to see what is well, what it is not working and to be able to react in time to regulate what is wrong.

An institution in reality does not exist. But currently, despite the fact that many ministries are involved in implementing the national literacy policy, so far all this has been handed over to the Ministry of Basic Education has always wished during the last consultation that there must be a structure in charge of coordinating all the activities carried out in different ministries in order to have: a more relevant policy and to implement them more effectively and in time. That way, it can be evaluated in a very concrete way because for now it is each department that decides to evaluate according to what it has implemented. Implementation mission was handed over to the Ministry of basic education only in 2012 and it started to work only when the staff was appointed in 2014, in general, they are still dealing with the administrative plan, the plan regulation, but without neglecting concrete implementation on the ground.

Managers at the central level are helped in this work by those at the local level. Those at the local level in turn report to the central government in case any problems arise.

According to the organizational chart of the Ministry of Basic Education, there are two departments that are involved in literacy. The administrative branch, which is occupied by a directorate responsible for literacy, non-formal basic education and the
promotion of national languages. The educational part is ensured by an inspection of pedagogy, as a matter of fact this is as far as the central level is concerned. Next to this inspectorate are attached 5 inspectors of pedagogy. In the deconcentrated services they have the same representatives. In regional delegations they have those two types of representatives, divisional delegations, sub-divisional inspectorates, each at its level. A very simple example, those of the ministries are called to work with those of the regions by going to the ground at least once a year for control; those in the regions must go to the ground at least once a year (to divisional delegations); and sub-divisional delegations will not only go to the inspections, but also to non-formal basic literacy centers to actually see what is going on there. At the level of the inspection, they are those that are called to work with the literacy centers. They must carry out monitoring activities, control activities and supervision activities. The control activities are done monthly while those of supervision are done 2 or 4 times per year.

At the government level, at the beginning of each year, there is what is called the annual work plan during which each department develops its operational program and this program is followed throughout the country. And at the local level, the city councils elaborate what are called the PCDs (communal development plans) which are their local policy valid by their knowledge of their environment based on the initial document from the ministry.”

II.1.6 In terms of data collection about literacy education

Question: How do you get data about literacy activities of the country?

Answer:

“They are obtained through big inquiries such as, the general census of population and housing that provides data on literacy. There is also what is known in Cameroon as the school map, ie the surveys conducted by the Ministry of Basic Education within its structures, which also makes it possible to obtain data on literacy. There are also administrative missions and educational supervision missions that are deployed throughout the year on a quarterly basis in all regions to collect data.
is also at the level of the National Institute of Statistics (NIS) or the MINEPAT what are called DHS (demographic health surveys) and so on. The collection of data can be done in households or in literacy centers. For example, the general census of the population questions individuals in their homes, in their communities. There are other surveys that are now targeting learners in the centers. The methods of data collection have not changed since, but there are instruments that are regularly revised be it in the case of the school map or in the case of large national surveys, the tools are revised to ensure that all the variables are taken into account.”

II.2 Efficiency at the local (literacy centers) level

II.2.1 Background of literacy instructors

Even though some of the instructors did not go through training schools, each of them has a background which allows him/her to do well as a literacy teacher. I even interviewed one literacy instructor who is a specialist in marketing, but also a passionate of education. Below is his answer to my question about how long he has been working as an adult literacy educator:

“What first of all, our center is a center which develops essentially techniques in educational engineering. It means that we make the diagnosis of all the difficulties inherent in basic education because basic education in a word also includes literacy. So we do mainly in education and thus we develop content, referential curricula and everything for literacy or basic education in general. The two go together because they say basic education, for those who have never been to school or have never been into literacy program, it is still a basic education. You have to go back and start from level zero; that's what it means in few words. I've have been teaching for a long time, more than 10 years; it is true that from my training I am a specialist in marketing, but I have a passion for teaching; I taught and found myself back in research in the sciences of education. So this situation has been going on for more than a decade. As you can see it's been a long time since I’m operating in this field. It has become more exalting, more exciting with the arrival of ICT in which we are still lagging behind;
and if we do not adapt an educational system that fits our socio-cultural framework, the trend will grow even bigger.”

He has even developed his literacy method called “méthode Florès Gong Nota”. That method aims to:

- To propose a facilitating method of learning-teaching of the writing which is based on a simple, scientific, structured and progressive pedagogical approach.
- Allow teachers to have the possibility and choice to use a flexible approach in the field.
- Offer learning materials with consistent content which accompany and facilitate the acquisition and mastery of writing by teachers and learners.

In his method he uses four signs with which he writes all the alphabet letters and numbers. Thanks to its method, he is constantly invited to attend international conferences in the world.

- First Sign: A Line

His first sign is simply a line
It can be used according to 4 variants, or 4 positions:

1- vertical line
2- oblique line on the left
3- oblique line on the right
4- horizontal line

- Second Sign: The Hook

Also called grandfather's cane, it can be used in 4 variants or positions, namely:

1- Hook on the top right
2- Bottom hook on the left
3- Bottom hook on the left
4- Hook on the top left

- Third Sign: The Curve

It is used in three variants, namely:

1- closed curve
2- curve open on the right
3- curve open on the left
Fourth Sign: The Point

It is an inseparable variable to the writing of the letter i and the letter j. It is also used as a punctuation mark.

How to Use those signs:

The procedure is simple, it is just to assemble the signs according to the letter you want to form and then you obtain the letter in question.

a- Short letters

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>a</th>
<th>c</th>
<th>e</th>
<th>i</th>
<th>m</th>
<th>n</th>
<th>o</th>
<th>r</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>s</td>
<td>u</td>
<td>v</td>
<td>w</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>z</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>v</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

b- Upper case letters and long letters

| b | d | f | h | k | l | t |

c- Lower case letters
Personally I found this method very effective for learning reading, writing, and even calculations. I went to his center several times just to see how he taught his method to his learners and the result was simply perfect. Above are some pictures of pre-test and post-test from level one to level five.
-Level one

-Pre-test
  - C'est une visite à l'hôpital.
  - Visite à l'hôpital.
  - Une visite à l'hôpital.

-Post-test
  - C'est une visite à l'hôpital.
  - Visite à l'hôpital.
  - Une visite à l'hôpital.

-Level two

-Pre-test
  - Elle a une maladie.
  - Elle a une maladie.
  - Elle a une maladie.

-Post-test
  - Elle a une maladie.
  - Elle a une maladie.
  - Elle a une maladie.

-Level three

-Pre-test
  - Elle a une maladie.
  - Elle a une maladie.
  - Elle a une maladie.

-Post-test
  - Elle a une maladie.
  - Elle a une maladie.
  - Elle a une maladie.

-Level four

North American Academic Research, Volume 3, Issue 04; April, 2020; 3(04) 284-332 ©TWASP, USA 310
That is for the method “méthode Florès Gong Nota”.

For adults literacy monitors who went through training schools, they were trained for at least 3 years and all of them already have years of experience. For example, to the question for how long have you been working as adult literacy teacher, below are some of their answers.

“My center has 7 years already, because it was opened in 2012. My center is one of the first centers transferred to basic education Ministry, because in principle literacy was once lodge at the Ministry of Youth and since the skills have been transferred to basic education I am one of the first centers to be created under the Ministry of basic education. So I’ve been working as a senior literacy coach for adults for almost 7 years. I would like to precise that there is not center for the training of literacy educators. But there is a program to know: The Youth Employment

North American Academic Research; Volume 3, Issue 04; April, 2020; 3(04) 284-332 © TWASP, USA 311
Participation program created by a group of persons which used train. But those now who have had the privilege of doing work within the National Literacy Program, there is an association that has been created to train instructors and sent them on the ground. It is this association that in principle is nowadays, the place where main literacy instructors of the literacy centers are trained. It is not an official structure; but a group of people who got together and took the initiative to do it. Even me, I ‘am the product of training center.”

“I started by training myself first; in other words, I started first at the school where we were trained as instructors, animators and specialized coaches. Specialized means that we also admit people with disabilities; we have the technique to follow them too. And also we are trained as business analysts, especially in the creations of civil society organizations; since the objective is not to learn to read, to write and to calculate just to learn, but to be able to use that knowledge to do something. It is for this reason that business analysis has been introduced into the training module. That is to say that a person once literate must be brought to learn a small business and in this small business we have the responsibility to monitor and follow up until it takes off. To come back to your question, I created my structure in 2017 and then I started sensitizing, doing educational talks in neighborhoods and surrounding areas. At one point I got discouraged because it was not productive. But over time people started to understand. Currently I am developing a new concept that is mobile literacy or home based literacy, because some learners are afraid of stigma, they do not want people to know that they cannot read or write and this is one of the great difficulties that we have.”

“I have been in literacy for 2 years, having done a training and came out with a diploma of literacy at the end of 2016 I decided to open the literacy center to try myself and I realized that I started liking the experience. It's a like a duty for me to get people out of illiteracy, whether it's classical or functional because seeing people who spend the whole day at home doing nothing bothers me to the point where I wonder how they're doing to cope with life; my dream has always been to help people do something. So I opened the literacy center on July 24, 2017 and it was not easy at first.
But as in all things what is necessary first of all is commitment, because when you are engaged, you know exactly what you want and how to get your aim; reason why after the opening of the center on July 24, 2017, I started prospecting, it was necessary to go to churches or other prayer places because it is easy to get many people there at the same time and sensitize them.”

“It's been almost 3 years since I opened the center.”

“I have been in this field since 2008”

“It will soon be 6 years because I started in 2012.”

From the statements, we note that literacy instructors in Cameroon, even though they may not have gone through a state training center they were trained and have experience in the domain of adults literacy education.

II.2.2 The devotion to overcome difficulties by the monitors of the literacy centers

II.2.2.1 they recruit teachers

we must point out here that several centers already host a high number of learners; which means that the principal literacy instructors are sometimes obliged to look for other teachers or other supervisors to assist them; because they cannot do all the work alone, given the large number of learners they already have. Despite the limited financial means they still find a way of understanding with the new recruits. And the selection is based on certain criteria. Below are some views:

“The criteria is quite complex and very often it is during the field work properly that we try to mold the person. But still an essential basic criterion is to have a little notion in pedagogy because it is clear that adult education and adult literacy, is a bit different, it is not the same pedagogical approach, not the same content as well. You know an adult is not like a child to whom you can easily say do this or do that. We are trying to find out different approaches to go about it, such as skills based approach. The criterion is that if you have someone who is a pedagogue who has come out of the ENI (Ecole Normale des instituteurs) or who is trained on this kind of job, we try
to give them resources and steps on how to teach or how to discuss because it's kind of a learning discussion. We discuss with them and very slowly we try to introduce a pedagogical approach to them by telling them for example, if you face this or that kind of situation, this is how you can solve it. To summarize, the basic criterion is the following one: you have to be a pedagogue, to know how to prepare your course so that the learner can acquire a certain competence.”

“I was obliged to recruit two other teachers because I already have four grades, I cannot continue alone. I am very demanding in terms of diploma and the behavior of those I recruit. I have to be sure that they can do what I recruit them for. Above all, the must be rectful as they generally have their signors among learners.”

II.2.2.2 they provide teaching materials

Despite the limited resources, the instructors of the literacy centers are often obliged to pay for their teaching materials or even to equip the centers themselves, since they receive virtually no help from the government. When it comes to equipping, it must be pointed out that even learners’ notebooks, pens and pencils are bought by them. Because learners for the most part say they have no means. They are really trying their best to overcome the difficulty of teaching material. About the question concerning teaching materials, these are some of their reactions:

“In principle I am purely private. Which means that I cannot say if the teaching material is enough or not. We have enough children; in my center for example for classical literacy we do it by level and since the state has not set up a program that we use, I'm the one who create my documents. Because when I do recruitment I try to see what is the level of each learner; there are among them those who never been to school, there are those who started without going far and so on. Which means that I do not mix them all. I take first those who have never been to school I start with them by level zero ie the level of kindergarten. I therefore produce didactic material for the primary level and the level of kindergarten. From this teaching material, although not enough, we still manage to satisfy the target we are taking; as proof, last year I presented children aged 22, 23, 24 to the Primary Study Certificate and they all
succeeded. These children arriving here did not know how to read or write and after 3 years they learned to read, they learned to write, they learned to calculate to the point of going to succeed the CEP (First school living certificate).”

“As literacy is conceived in its new version, there is no teaching material; even the State does not have teaching material. That is why, in our training and the seminars we have already had, we are told to try and cope on our own, it is what everyone is doing. In literacy it is andragogy which is different from pedagogy. And because we have to deal with multi-grade learners where the levels are different, we have to do individualize monitoring. In fact, it is to say that as far as teaching material is concern it is everyone who tries and figure something out. At my level I am working on a program based on my personal experiences.”

“Initially the government was supposed to help us in this verge through city councils. These city councils were supposed to give us kits every year January but until today we have not received anything. All you see here is from my own pockets. Our learners are at first the underprivileged; they do not even have the means to pay for their training and they cannot even pay for their equipment; we put everything at their disposal. In short, we fight to train them. Until today we have had no explanation from the city council in relation to our teaching kits; we are still trying to get closer to the Mayor. We are even creating an association to meet him, because we think that by going in a group we will be considered since we got no results by going separated.”

“For the moment I ‘am the person who provide teaching material and it has been the case since the opening of the center. Our target is rather underprivileged people, people who have been out of school for a very long time for some of them, and today, even if they want to go back to school, I had to talk a lot; I had to come to them every time, whether in churches, associations, along the road, bus stations, mechanical workshops and many others. Each time it was necessary to explain what the literacy program in Cameroon is doing. Many people had an idea of what was once called “school under the tree”. So I then explained to the target that every school under the tree was reviewed and corrected by MINEDUB. The more I argued, the more people were interested in why I still had some learners here at the center. So far we have not
yet received any help from the government, whether financial or material. It makes things really complicated because learners are willing to come to the program but do not have enough money to do it peacefully. It hurts me to get them back home sometimes knowing that they have the will to learn. But if I have to keep them, what will I use to pay the trainers? Some learners normally pay their school fees but only very few do it. For others when I call them to the office to remind them that they already have to pay, they tell me that it was I who had insisted that they come to school. And they add that if I do not want them to come to school they just go home. And since I do not want to discourage them I prefer to keep them in school.”

“The teaching material comes only from the promoter that I am. I have never received anything from the State. We were informed of the ministerial decree authorizing the city councils to provide us with the kits but until today our district has never received anything.”

“The teaching material comes from myself. We have not yet received any help from the government.”

“The material is provided by me because sometimes even the learners do not have the necessary means to get teaching material for them. As I said earlier, we are really managing with what we have. In functional literacy it is even easier because a client can place an order and you train the learners using the client's material but in classical literacy it's a bit difficult because everyone has to have their own equipment for the reading for writing as for calculations. You know, we've been waiting so long for the support of the state but so far none of that, so we have to manage ourselves. Here it is the functional literacy that makes the center turn because learners do not even have the means to provide for their own transportation.”

Also, each year they set up courses schedules and objectives, as in formal institutions. Some promoters even create report cards for their learners in order to evaluate their evolution. Some of them have very long teaching plan to be completed in just one year, and according to learners, monitors always manage to finish their programs, and according to my opinion they deserve to be congratulated. For example I went to a literacy center called “La Providence” and when I saw their teaching plan

North American Academic Research, Volume 3, Issue 04; April, 2020; 3(04) 284-332 ©TWASP, USA 316
for 12 months, I did not believe that it can be possible. But learners certified to me that last year it was also the case but they finished the program. Below are some pictures of the program.

For Classical literacy, the center offers courses on reading, writing, calculation and other elements which were not specified.
For the reading courses, the monitor starts with objectives and then follows the methodology and principles. For each point she explains how she is going to proceed to make learners understand before moving to another point.

She explains how she is going to move from letters to words and from words to sentences.
After mastering some reading notions, she teaches them some frequent words like the seven days of the week, because according to her view, most of the learners when the newly integrate the center must of thinks the know how to say in local language but when it comes to the language of instruction the have some difficulties. Except the days of the week, she also teaches the 12 months of the year, articles, adjectives, personal pronouns and how to conjugate some verbs.

As for writing, she starts by letters, syllables, words, short sentences, and finishes with long sentences.
For calculations courses, she starts by teaching learners how to count from 0 to 10, 11 to 19 and so on. After mastering how to count, begins with calculations; especially how to do addition, subtraction, multiplication and division.

It is well specified on the document that the entire program is to be completed within 12 months.
II.2.2.3 The sensitization of people about literacy program

Personally I was impressed with the way literacy educators are engaged into adult literacy matters. The fact that most of them really gain nothing in terms of finance does not stop them. On the contrary it gives them more determination to continue literacy activities. Some of them go to churches, mosque, restaurants, and many other places just to attract people attention on the importance of being literate in today's society. Even along the road they sensitize.

III. Challenge of Adult Literacy policy in Cameroon

III.1 Challenge of Adult Literacy policy at the institutional level

III.1.1 little commitment from the State

In Cameroon one gets the impression that literacy activities are not among the top priorities of the state. We know that the involvement of the state in literacy activities can help solve many problems in this sector. For example, it could facilitate the resolution of funding issues for literacy programs. At this level it is important to recall the promise made by African Countries leaders during the Bamako’s regional conference on literacy (September 2007), in relation to the effort to devote at least 3% of each State's budget to adult literacy. Today we realize that the share of the budget allocated to the literacy sector in Cameroon, not only, does not reach the 3% as defined at the Bamako conference but the worst is that it is even less than 2%. And that budget which is around 1.5% is extracted from the budget of the Ministry of Basic Education. With such budget it is almost impossible to carry out literacy activities and be expecting good results.

III.1.2 Elaboration of literacy policy without taking into account learners or instructors opinion

Referring to the diagram on the relationship between learners and the ministry in
charge of literacy; we found out that out of 656 learners, 447 claimed that they have never been contacted by anyone from the ministry seeking to know how they are doing with the literacy activities. Yet they are well aware that these policies mainly concern these learners. In general, the rulers, the decision-makers never rely on the demands of those who are concerned before making decisions. The people are not regularly consulted for the adult literacy policy. One has the impression that policy makers just imagine the problems that people are facing and then they develop the laws and policies, that finally, when implemented, do not match and are not effective, and then there is no other choice than modifying them along the way. It is a great problem to be addressed.

III.1.3 Insufficient supervisory structures

It is true that there is the ministry, the provincial and departmental delegations, the inspections and sometimes even the communes that are in charge of adult literacy activities in Cameroon. But I do not think they can get by in terms of supervision of literacy activities. I think it would be better to set up an institution whose work will only be the oversight of adult literacy practices across the country. To be honest, real supervision does not exist today.

III.1.4 The isolation of certain areas

Some localities today are lacking literacy activities for several reasons; the lack of infrastructure, the lack of financial means, and even sometimes the lack of elite that can help the locality at the level of decision-making bodies. I think that the government should ensure that all the localities can benefit from this program so that the development of Cameroon is a global development and not a partial development.

III.1.5 Non-existence of a status and career plan for literacy staff

Literacy educators in Cameroun have no status and no career plan. It is difficult to categorize them. They cannot even think of promotion possibilities. Personally, I think that it can affect their work, because when someone knows that he owns nothing...
to nobody, he has no pressure of accomplishing any task. For a good efficiency in this field, I think that the status and the career plan of those teachers should be reviewed by the Cameroonian government in order to ensure the absolute efficiency of the adult literacy program in Cameroon.

III.1.6 Weak development of the "faire-faire" (instruct somebody to do something) strategy

This is what I can call the failure of the decentralization policy in literacy in Cameroon, because this strategy consists in ordering someone to do something or to perform a specific task. But we realize that the strategy does not work because instructions from the Ministry of Basic Education are not always transmitted at the level of the literacy centers. Sometimes information remains on the way without ever reaching literacy centers; or sometimes the information does not even come out of the ministry. For this reason, it is very important for this decentralization policy to be supported by a supervisory institution for adult literacy activities.

III.1.7 Absence of training standards for both literacy educators and learners

With regard to literacy instructors, it is true that there is a training center for instructors in Yaoundé; but this center belongs to an individual. It is perhaps time for the government to think about setting up a national school dedicated to the training of literacy instructors in Cameroon, because only in this way will it be possible to have a real standard of training applied to all the national territory. At the same time, the government should think about reflecting on a standard of training for learners too, because feeling now is that, it goes in all directions.

III.1.8 Lack of coordination of actions carried out by different institutions in charge of language issues

There problem Cameroon has today concerning the use of national languages in adult literacy centers is due to the fact that there is not real coordination between
institutions like ANACLAC and SIL who are in charge of that domain. They operate separately, forgetting that the efficient result can come out if only they unite their forces.

III.1.9 high number of national languages

Several works (SADEMBOUO, 2005) agree that, one of the difficulties the government currently faces with the implementation of national languages in adult literacy programs in Cameroon is that, these languages are very numerous, today there are at least 6 national languages retained. This makes it difficult for those who are supposed to ensure the implementation of these languages.

III.1.10 No harmonization of content, training, evaluation and certification methods

All literacy centers in Cameroon operate independently. There is no harmonization, be it in terms of literacy content, literacy textbooks, literacy programs, or evaluation and certification; there is no standard for literacy centers. It is each literacy teacher who at his level manages to have something on which to base himself to teach and even to evaluate the level of his learners. For such a serious program, the government must equally take serious measures, because if Cameroon intends to become emerging by 2035, it will not happen without adult literacy, it is impossible. So the government should take necessary measures to deal with this big problem.

III.1.11 Quantitative and qualitative insufficiency of trained personnel

The staff in charge of literacy problems in Cameroon is insufficient. There is too much work to do and few people in charge. It is almost impossible to properly conduct activities throughout the Cameroonian territory. The government should therefore think of training more people to fill this gap.

III.1.12 Programs and curricula those are not adapted to the needs of the target populations
In most cases, programs in literacy centers rarely match the realities of the local population. As a result, one gets the impression that the government is not interested or is not very interested in the realities of the literate population before developing the policies that must be addressed to them.

**III.1.13 Absence of a national strategy for integrating literates into the labor market**

Adults do not join the literacy program just for fun, but because they hope to gain something in return for their empowerment. That is to say, to be able either to find a job that can allow them to affirm themselves or to improve the one they already have. But what is regrettable in our system is, we realize that, those persons involve in literacy program, sometimes after completing the program and having no financial means, they still go back and stay home, while for their training to be effective, they must be doing something. It is also a huge problem which needs to be addressed.

**II.1.14 Socio-religious considerations especially concerning women**

In Cameroon today there are still cultures that think that the woman is made for the household and to take care of the children, so that for them, woman does not need to attend literacy program. There are even parents who prefer to send their wives and children to Koranic schools than to send them to literacy centers. This is not to say that sending the child to Koranic school is bad, but it is simply to say that the two aspects must be privileged, that is to say the Koranic school and the adults literacy program.

**III.1.15 the problem of the emergence of new illiterates**

With the crises that Cameroon is experiencing today in some of its regions, there is a risk of facing the emergence of a new population of illiterates in the near future, because, whether in a part of the North, in Southwest, as well as in the North West, literacy activities almost no longer take place. This is a danger for the adult literacy rate in Cameroon.
III.2. Challenge of Adult Literacy policy at the literacy centers

III.2.1 Insufficient financial and material resources

This is the biggest problem that exists in literacy centers in Cameroon. The literacy instructors suffer to get by in the different centers; whether for the purchase of the didactic tools, whether for their own remuneration that does not even exist, whether to pay the rent for the center, because there are monitors who rent the centers where they conduct literacy activities. They are not really financially supported by the government, which makes it difficult for them to carry out literacy activities in their different centers.

III.2.2 Inadequacy between population growth and training provision

I went to centers in Cameroon which were so small that they could not contain all the learners. Monitors were obliged to divide classes. This is also a consequence of the lack of financial means and state support.

III.2.3 Insufficient program

There are literacy centers in Cameroon where the classical literacy is simply neglected for the benefit of functional literacy. In this kind of center, the teaching of reading, writing and calculations is almost superficial. The instructors do not really consider that aspect; they are rather concerned about income-generating activities.

III.2.4 Languages of instruction

There is a big problem of language of instruction in literacy centers in Cameroon. The official languages are French and English, and then some national languages that government is still trying to implement but which are not yet effective in the field. The difficulties often faced by literacy instructors is that they receive students who cannot speak English or French and sometimes they do not speak the same dialect as the monitor; that make it difficult and complicated for them to understand each other.
They are often obliged to look for another means of communication. Sometimes, there are centers, for example, where instructors only speak French and find themselves welcoming learners, for example, who speak only English; even for this case, the communication becomes complicated. This is one of the major problems of Cameroon literacy centers.

III.2.5 Qualitative and quantitative insufficiency of training manuals and teaching materials

It is important to remember here that, it is the literacy instructors who produce didactic tools and other materials for their different centers. This makes it impossible for them to produce the material for all students, since in most cases; students do not support them financially. They manage to find money and provide the material they need. Most of them are even those who provide exercise books and pens to learners.

III.2.6 Site for literacy activities

There is a decree of the Prime Minister authorizing literacy instructors to hold their activities in public primary schools. But the difficulty that arises is that these institutions are sometimes occupied by children until 16pm; which implies that, if the adult literacy activities are to take place in these premises, it must start no earlier than 17pm, because they have to wait for the children to go home before occupying school. In these conditions, they face a difficulty which is that of electricity. Not all establishments have electricity. As the program in these institutions can only be held at night, it becomes difficult for these instructors as for learners who for the most part refuse to come around 16pm, for fear of finding primary school children still at the school and that these children make fun of them by saying for example that they are old people or parents who do not know how to read or who do not know how to write.

III.2.7 Absenteeism and delays

The problem of delays and absences among learners is one of the problems that give supervisors headaches. Today a wave of learners comes and begins a lesson with
the monitor, the next day those are not there, it is a new wave that arrives and so on. It's the same for delays; they often have difficulty starting classes on time because they have to wait for some learners who are often busy doing other things first before going to school.

**Conclusion**

Based on different findings that have been developed above, it is obvious that literacy policy in Cameroon, especially that of adults, still has a long way to go. It is not denied that the current literacy policy is efficient at a certain level; but remaining challenges are too significant and are affecting its implementation over the country.
References:

Dedication
Not mentioned.
Conflicts of Interest
There are no conflicts to declare.

© 2020 by the authors. TWASP, NY, USA. Author/authors are fully responsible for the text, figure, and data in above pages. This article is an open access article distributed under the terms and conditions of the Creative Commons Attribution (CC BY) license (http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/)