Gender Conflict Analysis in Cameroon

Executive summary

Cameroon

The Women’s International League for Peace and Freedom (WILPF)
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Cameroonian are facing multiple complex crises, the Boko Haram attacks in the Far North region, an insurgency in the South West and North West regions, and the spill over of the conflict in the Central African Republic. There remain significant barriers to the integration of a gendered perspective in the understanding of conflict, post-conflict, and peace processes’ dynamics, wherein power dynamics, root causes analysis and the perspectives of women and girls are largely left outside of the picture.

This 2020 Report “Gender Conflict Analysis in Cameroon” (referred to GCA or the Report) examines these aspects in the context of Cameroon through the incorporation of a gender perspective in conflict analysis, illustrates key findings and makes recommendations to ensure sustainable solutions for peace. An LGBTIQ+ comprehensive and feminist process of research led by WILPF Cameroon was undertaken to fact finding and inquiry so as to provide, not just a diagnosis of the problems, but an analysis of what can be done to bring change; to support, or indeed, help create, a process towards peace which can be inclusive and sustainable. The process of research and consultations took place in 2019 and early 2020. These were mostly before the global pandemic and responses in Cameroon. The gendered realities of women’s lives in conflict affected communities have been further affected by the Covid-19 pandemic in 2020.

This “Gender Conflict Analysis in Cameroon” Report specifically reveals the lived experiences and grievances of community actors from different parts of Cameroonian society on their own terms and seeks to create space to support women’s efforts to prevent, mediate and participate in resolving conflicts, despite the large obstacles remaining for women’s effective participation in peace and security processes in Cameroon.

The “Gender Conflict Analysis in Cameroon” Report shows how women across regions are organising and supporting each other. It further documents the barriers to their participation and the risks which they and their families face. It also highlights civil society engagement in conflict response. Gender roles during crises are closely associated with constructed norms of masculinity and femininity, where men are regarded and raised as the stronger gender while women play domestic roles within communities. The Report also documents how gender roles are altered by conflict as some women and girls take on different roles from head of households to combatants or leading armed groups. Across all regions of Cameroon, the prevalence of gender-based violence emerged. Normative ideas of masculinity that manhood equals to fighting and providing for the family have also been significant factors in the recruitment of boys and men. Various forms of abuse of power by decision makers were documented and concerns were also raised about the very significant deficit of trust at multiple levels. The impacts of the ongoing armed conflict in the South West and North West raise specific challenges, which must be addressed with gender responsiveness. Trauma, in various forms, and the prevention of re-traumatization and access to psychosocial support including for IDPs remains a significant challenge, which requires resourcing and commitment. There was a sense of urgency and demand from Cameroonian of all regions for more accountability of the Government and an end of human rights abuses by all actors.

1. GCA and rationale

While over the past two decades there has been an increasing recognition to understand the nature of conflict and design effective peacebuilding responses, it is necessary to think about relations of power, including gender relations, yet too often neglected from conflict analysis and conflict assessment frameworks.

Therefore, the Gender Conflict Analysis (GCA) draws on a comprehensive gender perspective, setting out the dearth of available gender-differentiated data in conflict analysis, deepening as such our understanding of the root causes, the strategies and approaches to conflict prevention
in the current conflicts in Cameroon. Gender analysis refers here to recognise that conflicts are
gendered, to explore to what extent gender roles and experiences are impacted by conflicts, as
well as how roles of women and men affect the ways conflicts play out. Driven by the rationale of
paying attention to structures and voices that are left unseen and unheard during and after periods
of conflict, this report examines the actual impact of cross-cutting conflict and gender issues
across numerous historical, political and economic junctures.

This analysis specifically reveals the lived experiences and grievances of women and girls from
different component of the Cameroonian society on their own terms and seeks to create space to
support women’s effort to prevent, mediate and participate in resolving conflicts, despite the large
obstacles remaining for women’s effective participation in peace and security processes. The GCA
serves in fine as a baseline on gendered power dynamics - including gender-sensitive data- both
in time and in the aftermath of conflicts in Cameroon for developing appropriate evidence-based
responses and policies from national and international actors.

2. Context and overview of conflict

In recent decades, Cameroon has witnessed growing political and social instability, fuelled by
multiple crises: the secessionist crisis shaking the two English-speaking regions of Cameroon, the
Boko Haram insurgency, the influx of refugee from Central African Republic, electoral violence
and post-election dispute following the 2018 presidential election, the rise of hatred among political
party supporters, the radicalisation of young people, the growing spirit of rebellion and the growing
resistance to state violence¹. Recent figures on the exposure of civilians to these crises remain
very alarming. For instance, in January 2020, approximately 969 723 Internally Displaced Persons
(IDPs) in Cameroon, 354 320 returnees². According to UNICEF, only 100 schools of 6,000 remain
open, the other 5,900 have been closed down³.

¹ See Decree N°2019/3179/PM 2.09.2019 on the status of economic disaster areas to the Far-North, North-West and
South-West regions.
³ UNHCR. Over 80 percent of schools in anglophone Cameroon shut down, as conflict worsens.
The government of Cameroon has taken several measures since the start of the crises in a bid to keep order and security. Some of these include amongst others the creation of a National Commission for Bilingualism and Multiculturalism; the organisation of a Major National Dialogue to resolve the crisis in the English-speaking regions; the implementation of the provision of humanitarian aid for victims and IDPs and the creation of the Demilitarisation, Demobilisation, and the Reintegration (DDR) processes. Yet, the quest for solutions does not appear to be inclusive, nor to take sufficient account of the issues of gender relations, and more specifically women and girls who remain the most vulnerable in armed conflicts.

Recalling and stressing the need to include women’s voices in accordance with relevant national and international standards, the legal and security protection of women and children during conflicts has been framed by several legal and statutory instruments, at the national, regional and international levels. While the UNSC Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace, and Security has been adopted in 2000, when the conflicts erupted in Cameroon, the government adopted a National Action Plan of the resolution whose priorities include women’s participation in peace processes and crisis responses on the national level. Additionally, the National Gender Policy has been endorsed by the Ministry of Women’s Empowerment and the Family and reforms have been made in various legal codes and policies for the protection of girls’ and children’s rights. However, these instruments remain insufficient as they do not provide a concrete response to the current crises in the country.

3. Analysis methodology
WILPF Cameroon has undertaken a comprehensive approach to fact-finding and inquiry so as to provide both a diagnosis of the problems and an analysis of what can be done to bring change; to support, or indeed, help create, a process towards peace which can be inclusive and sustainable. The inquiry was led by a team of three gender experts who conducted the participatory research based on interviews, data collecting, and analysis of testimonies from victims of conflict and actors on the ground, from the most marginalised social and ethnic groups to the political and economic elites working in the field, in a participatory and gender-based approach. It is a holistic anthropological gender lens that proactively seeks to capture continuity and change at an ethnographic level at conflict sites detailing the lived and everyday experience.

The study was investigated by 30 data collectors (including 20 women and 10 men), researcher and the project team. The GCA makes use of qualitative and quantitative methodologies and builds primarily on testimonies from first-hand interviews, semi-structured interview guide, focus group questionnaire, conducted in the 10 regions from a total of 1186 individuals, including 819 women and 367 men.

The study gathered both primary and secondary data from the following sources and respondents as per category:
- 68 civil society organisations’ actors;
• 26 Focus Group discussions/community meetings with a total of 558 participants including 402 women;
• 274 interviews including 207 with women conflict/GBV survivors and witnesses;
• 11 assessment workshops with a total of 233 participants (95 men and 138 women);
• meetings with 53 administrative authorities, traditional and religious leaders;
• meeting and interviews with 12 UN agencies representatives;
• a desk review of existing reports regarding ongoing conflicts and gender-based violence (GBV) issues in Cameroon;
• interviews with 8 Solidarity mission delegates;
• a call centre for the data collection on electoral violence.

The particularity of the study is attributed to the story segment which reveals testimonies from conflict and GBV survivors. Due to the sensitive nature of collecting information about GBV survivors and IDPs’ experiences, the field team ensured that ethical guidelines were followed to protect the safety of the survivors and professionals, including the respect of confidentiality, anonymity and safe and secure environment.

4. Key findings

4.1. Regional specificities
The findings from regional consultations with women are summarised into regional clusters outcome analyses: Far North and North regions (Section 2), Adamawa and East regions (Section 3), North-West and South-West regions (Section 4), Centre, Littoral and West regions (Section 5), and South region (Section 6). Common and emerging trends are illustrated in Section 7. Section 8 formulates recommendations to ensure gender-responsive measures to address conflict and to achieve peace.

Cluster 1: Far North and North regions. Since 2014, the principal form of conflict in the North and the Far North of Cameroon is the Boko Haram (BH) conflict. The root causes for BH resurgence are extreme poverty amongst youths and women in trans-border villages, the lack of education, and the limited devolution of state powers to deliver basic social amenities. This conflict has engendered other forms of conflicts such as those related to the stigmatisation and mutual mistrust of different IDPs and the host population; the feeling of hatred and revenge between families; the prejudices and rejections of men in uniform appearing as soldiers by the populations as a result of the warfare acts and treatments that civilians undergo by armed people; permanent suspicion between ethnic communities members suspected favouring BH militants. Additionally, other forms of minor conflicts exist including agro-pastoral, inter-ethnic, land grabbing, and conflicts driven by statelessness - lack of birth certificates.

Concerning gender roles in the conflict in the region, both men and women fuel the BH conflict. For instance, women are enrolled as suicide bombers, undertake intelligence gathering, act as informants and equally contribute to feeding their children, who are mostly BH fighters. Men tend to undertake also the role of intelligence gathering, informants, food soldiers, fighters and trading.
Both women and men who are BH hostages cultivate farms to feed Boko Haram soldiers and prisoners of war.

**Cluster 2: Adamawa and East regions.** The conflict affecting communities in the Adamawa and East regions are mainly related to the regular influx of refugees and sporadic intrusion of armed groups from the CAR that has engendered significant forced displacement of trans-border villages between Cameroon and CAR. Other conflicts outlined by interviewed persons include gender-based persecution due to the misallocation of local and state resources, poor governance, lack of equity and equality between men and women, unemployment and underemployment, and access to land and the devastation of fields by animals. The principal actors are business owners, traditional, community, political and religious leaders, autochthones, halogens, refugees and most recently IDPs.

**Cluster 3: North-West and South-West regions.** The principal ongoing conflict in the North-West and South-West regions - the “Anglophone Crisis” - started in 2016. The root causes include the marginalisation and discrimination of Anglophones and the inadequate implementation of constitutional provisions. The main actors of conflict are non-state armed groups (Amba boys), state-armed groups (military), the state, members of the Cameroonian diaspora, farmers, grazers, traditional chiefs, political leaders and the local communities. The “Anglophone Crisis” has led to an escalation and intensification of other minor conflicts that existed within families, communities and ethnic groups, such as the farmer-grazer conflicts between the Mbororo cattle herders and farmers.

In terms of gender roles in conflict, both women and men are actively involved in the conflict as actors, perpetrators, and victims. Men play the role of fighters/combatants, spies, and informants. Women on the other hand act as spies, informants, provide food and care for fighters. Women and girls are also leaders of some armed groups and are commonly referred to as “Queen mothers”, while men are known as “Generals”. However, women like men are often victims of kidnaps and torture. Furthermore, while young men are often targeted by the non-state armed group to be recruited into their ranks, they are also targeted by the state-armed group as suspects. Young girls, on the other hand, are victims of sexual violence perpetrated by both camps.

**Cluster 4: Centre, Littoral and West regions.** These regions serve primarily as host communities for IDPs and refugees from the affected regions who have escaped from the war to seek refuge. The main conflicts existing in these regions are directly linked to the influx of IDPs and refugees from these conflict regions. This has led to tensions between host communities and IDPs. Some of these conflicts include high crime wave, stigmatisation and poor treatment of IDPs and refugees, exploitation of IDPs and refugees by employers, sexual harassment and exploitation of young girls, and maltreatment and exploitation of IDPs and refugees by host families. These conflicts are favoured by the general ignorance of laws, extremes of wealth and poverty, the
degradation of the family with terrible consequences as divorce, street children, children prostitution, and the proliferation of Sexually Transmitted Diseases (STD) and HIV/AIDS.

Cluster 5: South region. The South region is not in open armed conflict, but its apparent stability does not guarantee long-term tranquility either, as the regions in crisis to date were once also so peaceful. The region witnesses mainly trans-border conflicts, tribal and ethnic conflicts, conflicts resulting from crises in other regions, land conflicts associated with misappropriation by elites, political conflicts. The South region being the region of origin of the Head of State, administrative, traditional, political leaders, and elite promote the idea according to which people of this land are wholly supporting the president. These conflicts are caused by precarious living conditions, poverty of the majority, difficult coexistence which causes displacement, and growing insecurity.

1. 4.2. COMMON AND EMERGING TRENDS ACROSS REGIONS

This section analyses key issues and trends which are common in most of the regional clusters and how they play out amidst conflict. Issues discussed here include women as peace agents, gender roles, GBV, recruitment, and IDPs.

Some of the common trends emerging between regions are the following:

- **Women as Agents of Change:** In each region, Cameroonian women are working to prevent, mediate and participate in resolving conflicts, despite the large obstacles remaining for women’s effective participation in peace and security processes. Women shared the barrier to participate equally and meaningfully. In addition, the risks women and their families face for civil society action was documented. Civil society engagement in conflict response was a common trend.

- **Patriarchal Norms and Structures:** Gender roles during crises are closely associated with constructed norms of masculinity and femininity, where men are regarded and raised as the stronger gender while women play domestic roles within communities. In several regions, the patriarchal rule at home is compounded by community and traditional norms. Women in communities are not generally involved in decision-making; this is largely due to the weight of tradition, which holds them back. However, in administrative structures such as the Ministry of Social affairs (MINAS), social action services located in courts, police stations, prisons, women are actors in the search for solutions to the conflicts raised. In the Far North, these gender expectations have led to exclusion, stigmatisation, and structural inequalities against women, which have been particularly exacerbated during the outbreak of violence.

- **Changing Gender Roles:** Gender roles are altered by conflict as some women and girls take on different roles from head of households to combatants or leading armed groups. As men and young boys are susceptible to being recruited by non-state armed groups or to being arrested by the military, most families have sent out their sons and husbands to other towns for safety. Therefore, women are now left in the villages to look after ancestral property or become heads of households. The “Queen mother” (the appellation used for women who are leading some of the armed groups in the region) role in the North and South West Regions also illustrates the changing roles of some women.

- **Gender-Based Violence:** Another common trend across regions is the increased rates of gender-based violence, which manifests itself in different forms, but mainly through sexual violence. The case study on the impact of the crisis on the Mbororo indigenous community in the North West region highlights how Mbororo women and girls are often marginalized and discriminated against, due to cultural and traditional practices.
which prevent them from pursuing education. The situation has been aggravated by the ongoing socio-political crisis as girls have abandoned school and ran far into the bushes to escape from violence, some have migrated to other towns while some others were forced to get married. Often women and girls with very conservative and traditional backgrounds, who have had less chances to access education and be self-reliant, face more challenges in Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) settings without the protection of close family structures. In such situations they are at higher risk of exploitation and abuse.

- **Militarised Masculinities:** With regards to the recruitment of combatants, a common trend is the recruitment of child soldiers between the ages of 15-18 years and young men between the ages of 19-25 years. This holds true for the recruitment into the “Amba Boys” armed group in the North West and South West regions as well as for Boko Haram in the North. The Ambazonia Defence Forces commonly called the "Amba Boys" is a non-state armed group fighting for secession and independence of the two English speaking regions of Cameroon, to establish a country that would be called "Ambazonia". Poverty, youth unemployment and economic hardship, which greatly affect men and boys are common reasons why they are targeted for recruitment into armed and terrorist groups. Former Boko Haram members interviewed have been paid around 400,000 XAF (approximately 661 US dollars, which is almost two times the base rate salary for the highest paid civil servant in Cameroon) for each person recruited into the ranks of Boko Haram. This represents a significant source of income and creates massive economic dependence for unemployed youth to be part of the Boko Haram insurgency. Normative ideas of masculinity that manhood equals to fighting and providing for the family have also been significant factors in the recruitment of boys and men, especially in a context where properties have been destroyed and unemployment is at its peak.

- **Fragmented and Gender- Gaps in Humanitarian and IDP Responses:** Across the regions, GCA includes information received on the work of various actors and activities. Basic needs from food, potable water, and sanitation, hygiene (WASH), shelter, electricity services are still lacking in conflict affected communities. Fragmentation highlights that better coordination is required to serve the populations. In addition, across the regions, the specific challenges facing IDPs emerged. For example, there is a lack of identification documents of IDPs which affects their ability to be fully reintegrated into society. Some young women shared how losing their documents and academic certificates as a result of their homes being burnt down during the war, find it very difficult to secure employment in any formal structure.

- **Abuse of Power and Demands for Accountability:** Cameroonian of all regions demand more accountability of the Government and an end of human rights abuses by all actors. Specifically, in the North West and South West, the military constitutes a threat to the communities. It was certified that the military burnt down houses and harassed civilians: ‘’We could no longer go to our farms because the military shot at anybody they see on the streets...many women have lost their lives as a result of these shootings” (IDP women from North West). The GCA account the experience of two women from Bamenda who stated "We feel so traumatized each time we see the military parading our neighborhood with guns in their frightful attire... they are everywhere, in the markets, on our way to our farms around our homes...sometimes we cannot go out and our crops end up rotting in the farms...’’ (Two women from Bamenda- North West). The lockdown of schools by the non-state armed forces must be urgently addressed to reduce the risks of exploitation, sexual exploitation and radicalization of young people. There must also be measures put in place to ensure that school infrastructures, which had been destroyed, be rebuilt and a safe environment for students and teachers. Land-related and agro-pastoral conflicts, usually due to abuse of power by decision makers, who are most often men, at different levels affect disproportionately women and vulnerable groups such as people with disabilities. These marginalised groups are often unable to seek justice for example because of the lack of a property title due to discriminatory inheritance legislation and practices. Women's right to inheritance was, for instance, raised by women during a focus group discussion in Ebolowa. Women recommended that men
should establish marriage certificates and legalize wills to enable women’s access to land and to avoid more conflicts: "Land conflicts in particular are a time bomb that if nothing is done for their regulation, the South Region will experience a land war."

- **Trust Deficit:** Concerns were also raised about the very significant deficit of trust at multiple levels; within and between families, villages, communities and regions; within and between hierarchies of governance from local community based leadership to national government; and finally with external actors including Cameroonians living in the diaspora, neighbouring and negotiating countries like Nigeria and with former colonizers like Britain and France.

- **Trauma:** The impacts of the ongoing armed conflict in the South West and North West raise specific challenges, which must be addressed with gender responsiveness. Trauma, in various forms, and the prevention of re-traumatization and access to psychosocial support including for IDPs remains a significant challenge, which requires resourcing and commitment.

### 5. Recommendations

In addition to the women’s demands, WILPF Cameroon and the Cameroon Women’s Platform for Peaceful Elections and Peace Education have identified a set of recommendations on how local, national and international actors may support, promote, and protect gender in decision-making in Cameroon during and after times of conflict, and that, in the follow-up of the GCA, will be included in a monitoring and evaluation analysis.

**A. BASIC NEEDS**

**To the government**

1. Commit urgently to ensuring basic needs by designating a governmental authority at the local level in the conflict-affected regions to be responsible for the procurement, provision, and maintenance of food, potable water, and sanitation, hygiene (WASH), shelter, electricity services;

2. Direct existing governmental agencies responsible for labor and social security related issues to take specific measures and action to ensure immediate economic opportunities and high employment rate, for populations at risk in particular, to regain their livelihoods and new economic activities, especially in the border areas (e.g. Adamawa, North, and Far-North regions). To this end:
   a. Ensure access to work programs, access to necessary economic input, credit and support, skills transfers, and vocational training;
   b. Build on consultations with young people and IDPs on their employment and other livelihood needs;
   c. Ensure income-generating activities are accessible to persons affected by the conflicts without birth certificates and similar registration documents;
   d. Guarantee immediately the effectiveness of youth employment policies on socio-professional integration to build social cohesion between youths and their local administration.

**To CSOs, humanitarian actors, international organisations, religious leaders**

3. Deliver gender-sensitive humanitarian transformative agenda and protection to IDPs, refugees, and other populations affected by conflicts by implementing gender needs assessment and producing gender-disaggregated data.
4. Address the needs of underrepresented communities in the designing of humanitarian intervention by taking into account the specific needs of children, IDPs, host communities, refugees, local population and the gender dimension.

To donors

5. Allocate resources for income-generating activities and livelihoods support to enhance socio-economic reintegration of survivors of conflicts.

B. INTERNALLY DISPLACED PERSONS

To the government, parliament and the judiciary

6. Ensure urgently the human rights of IDPs are protected as foreseen in international, regional and national legal standards and secure inclusion of all IDPs with basic needs in the state social programs. To this aim:

a. Expedite the process of domesticating the African Union Convention for the Protection and Assistance of Internally Displaced Persons in Africa (Kampala Convention), to which Cameroon formally acceded in May 2017, and incorporate its provisions into national law and policies. Linking such law and policies to national development strategies and targets, and monitoring their implementation, can help identify solutions for IDPs.4

b. Establish a governmental authority with the responsibility to protect and enforce the rights of IDPs and adopt and implement an effective National Action Plan on the human rights of IDPs;

c. Ensure the safe and gender-responsive reintegration of all IDPs in access to education, income-generating activities, civil registration, WASH, and health (e.g. psycho-social support, sexual and reproductive health) with the support of local CSOs, international organisations, and governmental agencies;

d. Hold any individual and institution accountable for human rights violations and abuses, especially with respect to the rights and protection of IDPs.

To the government

7. Ensure that protection and assistance programs for all IDPs, especially women and girls, led by international organisations and CSOs be incorporated into national development plans. To this end:

a. Ensure close and effective cooperation with the IDP communities, local CSOs, international organisations, and governmental agencies in designing, coordinating, and implementing a National Action Plan on IDPs;

b. Set up formal mechanisms of information sharing between the government, international organisations, and CSOs;

c. Ensure protection and assistance programs to be carried out in remote and isolated areas by setting up adequate clusters-based coordination between the IDP communities, local CSOs, international organisations, and governmental agencies;

d. Ensure the allocation of resources by donors and government to protection and assistance initiatives, which provide sustainable assistance and protection to all IDPs.

8. Recognise the right to basic shelter for IDPs and refugees, and ensure that all conflict-affected populations benefit without discrimination from durable housing solutions. To this end:

a. Designate as a matter of priority a governmental agency to be responsible for addressing shelter and housing needs of displaced persons and ensuring to have their opportunity to be relocated;
b. Ensure all IDPs safe and voluntary returns to their home communities after forced displacement by setting up immediate and effective units within governmental agencies for the provision of shelter for IDPs living in host communities;
c. Develop and implement procedures by the government with consultation and support of international organisations and local CSOs to identify and prioritise beneficiaries of basic shelter on the basis of need and vulnerability, the construction of transitional shelters, and the rebuilding of houses in return or relocation areas.

C. GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE

To the government, parliament and judiciary

9. Take action to end impunity during and after armed conflicts and hold any individual and institution, especially security actors, accountable for harmful practices including gender-based violence. To this end:

a. Designate a government agency specifically on gender based violence, responsible for elaborating monitoring systems of abuses and violations related to gender-based violence in consultation with CSOs and other relevant bodies and in taking into account reports from CSOs and local communities exposed to risks;
b. Assess systematically the effectiveness of national legislation related to the prevention and response to gender-based violence and put in place the provision of gender-based violence and human rights responsive mechanisms;
c. Adopt and implement a specific law that ensures the prevention and fight against all forms of violence against women including marital rape, followed by education and public awareness programs on domestic violence;
d. Ensure a nation-wide awareness raising campaign and capacity building on gender-based violence with the participation of all gender in different communities by interrogating the effects of gender inequality, discriminatory practices and gender-based violence during and after armed conflicts, with the involvement of the groups at risks, the government, CSOs, and international organisations in its design and implementation;
e. Ensure the capacity building of the state lawyers and judges to provide adequate and necessary legal representation and counselling for the former, and to prosecute those responsible for crimes perpetrated against the survivors of gender-based violence for the latter;
f. Strengthen the capacity building of local community authorities (e.g. the councils, religious leaders) under the leadership of MINAS and MINPROFF on gender-based violence response to ensure the implementation of integrated programs and services for grassroot communities;
g. Ensure survivors of gender-based violence and of other human rights abuses and violations the full and free access to national justice institutions;
h. Strengthen the protection of the rights of women and children by addressing legislative gaps and urgently reviewing the provision of the Civil Code regarding the girls’ legal age of marriage at 15 years (article 52 of Ordinance No. 81-02 of 29 June 1981) and raising it to 18 years, in order to bring it in conformity with the provision on penalties for forced marriage in the Penal Code (Article 356);
i. Ensure that statutory law prevails over customary law when it is discriminatory, especially against women.

To the government, CSOs, and health centers
10. Ensure the provision of sexual and reproductive health education and services for young people between the ages of 12 and 18 in order to prevent early pregnancies, child and forced marriage.

To the government, CSOs, and international organisations

11. Challenge immediately gendered power in times of war and violence with active engagement for transforming negative masculinities by specifically engaging men and boys in ending gender inequality, gender-based violence, and rigid ideas and socialisation practices of masculinity as key factors in the production of violence and recruitment into organised armed groups.

D. MONITORING AND EVALUATION

To donors and CSOs

12. Adopt immediate stringent monitoring and evaluation strategies and mechanisms to ensure the impact of funded projects on beneficiaries, ensure the accountability of funds disbursed for humanitarian projects, and prevent misappropriation and corruption of funds.

E. HEALTH CARE

To the government

13. Ensure the provisions of essential and adequate preventive health care services, including sexual and reproductive health, and access to health infrastructure for communities in conflict-affected regions. To this end:

a. Designate a governmental agency to be responsible for providing essential and adequate preventive health care services, including sexual and reproductive health, and access to health infrastructure for communities in conflict-affected regions;

b. Ensure immediately the rebuilding, rehabilitation, and equipment of health care infrastructures in all different urban and isolated areas in the conflict-affected regions;

c. Establish clear identification procedures and mechanisms to map out beneficiaries to access health care services;

d. Provide free access to such health care services in the conflict-affected regions on the basis of need and vulnerability;

e. Establish urgently psychosocial support units with trained staff and experts within strategic actors (MINAS, MINPROFF, MINSANTE, CSOs, MINESEC, MINEBASE) for the provision of psychosocial care to meet the growing mental health needs of survivors of the crisis in affected regions

To the CSOs and international organisations

14. Create social cohesion spaces for women survivors of conflict-related violence to encourage each other and provide psychosocial support
15. **Build up a protection of protector’s framework** for humanitarian actors and human rights defenders working in fragile contexts by creating a protection cluster and providing protection grants to humanitarian actors and human rights defenders at the local level;

**F. EDUCATION**

To the government

16. Ensure the **rebuilding, rehabilitation and equipment of educational institutions** (e.g. schools, colleges, universities) in remote and conflict-affected areas upon a ceasefire, to address the lack of education and reduce the risks of exploitation;

17. Ensure access to quality education for Mbororos and other indigenous peoples, including by providing access to education in their own language.

**G. CIVIL REGISTRATION**

To the government

18. Provide all persons with **equal access to basic civil registration** and free of charge including insurance of necessary documentation for registration and many other rights such as access to education, work, and health care and to ensure full access to humanitarian assistance, even during forced displacement. To this aim:

   a. Effectively implement the universal birth registration project by, inter alia, allocating adequate resources for that purpose;
   b. Establish institutional mechanisms for facilitating documents issuances procedures in a rapid, transparent, and accessible process;
   c. Abolish birth registration and certificate issuance fees by effectively enforcing free access as provided for in the 2011 Act;
   d. Ensure IDPs the access to civil registration and the acquisition of lost civil documents (e.g. birth certificates, national identification card)
   e. Conduct information campaigns, particularly in rural areas, to inform of the overall registration procedure and encouraging parents to report births;
   f. Collect national specific system of disaggregated data on the number of people without birth certificates in collaboration with the government, CSOs, and international organisations;
   g. Strengthen the financial, technical and human resources of the National Bureau of Civil Status in order to make the access to basic civil registration more accessible throughout the territory, including, where necessary, by using mobile units to this end;
   h. Organise mobile court hearings, including in IDP camps, to facilitate the granting of substitute birth certificate judgments for populations without a birth certificate.

**H. DISARMAMENT AND CONFLICT RESOLUTION**

To the government

19. Incorporate without delay a **comprehensive and effective gender perspective** and take into account local realities into the national process of Disarmament, Demobilisation, and Reintegration of former combatants in the Far-North,

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5. Involve IDPs and local communities, traditional and religious leaders in planning and implementing the DDR program
North West and South West regions; include in the Program strict and precise mechanisms for the protection of ex-combattants from reprisals and ensure their full reintegration into society;

20. Engage in genuine and comprehensive negotiations between all warring parties to put an immediate end to armed conflicts, starting by implementing a ceasefire in all conflict-affected regions in the country. To this end:

   a. Establish without delay an inter-agency committee responsible for designing and implementing a conflict-resolution process including warring parties of the North-West and South-West armed conflict and neutral parties for the peacebuilding process (e.g. international organisations, local communities, and CSOs);
   b. Reinforce the regional collaboration between the Lake Chad Basin countries affected by the Boko Haram insurgency for implementing comprehensive regional conflict resolution mechanisms.


I. REPRESENTATION IN DECISION-MAKING BODIES

   To the government

22. Ensure an all-inclusive bottom-up approach to peace dialogues between government and grassroot communities protecting the rights of women, minorities, and marginalised groups;

23. Prioritize immediately an intersectional approach to gender, peacebuilding, and conflict prevention, where disability, age, ethnicity, class, religion, migration status, among others, interact on multiple and simultaneous levels;

24. Enhance women and girls’ representation and participation in all peace and conflict resolution processes by implementing a quota system of at least 30% of women at all local, regional, national, and international levels, including in the National Dialogue and other peacebuilding committees;

25. Ensure the participation of women survivors of conflict-related violence in discussions concerning the current armed conflict and considering proposals for conflict resolution.

26. Review and reinforce without delay the concrete implementation of the National Action Plan of the UNSC Resolution 1325 with specific commitments towards building stronger partnerships with CSOs and providing adequate funding for the monitoring and evaluation of the NAP and the implementation of the recommendations in the GCA as a foundation for constitution-making process.

J. GOVERNANCE

   To the government

27. Ensure urgently the effective participation of decentralized local communities and guarantee transparency and accountability of the government towards the population. To this end:

   a. Ensure the effectiveness of decentralisation by ensuring the policy and power transfer from the central government to the decentralised territorial collectivities to implement public policies and decision-making at the local level
   b. revise the existing law on land tenure (Ordinance 74-1 of 6 July 1974 and the following amendments thereto) in order to ensure the responsibility and capacity of decentralized territorial collectivities to adopt
and implement land policies according to local specificities and to distinguish between land for agricultural activities and for pastoral activities;

c. Ensure urgently the **protection of indigenous people’s rights to lands, territories, and natural resources** by adopting a specific law on the rights of indigenous people to the existing law on land acquisition, including the preservation of land tenure of indigenous communities in the absence of land title;

d. Create a **multi-stakeholder commission to guarantee land rights** in all conflict-affected regions and establish consultancy spaces for the communities at risks of forced evictions to access land rights information and judicial institutions

e. Ensure a **comprehensive dialogue and collaboration** between traditional leaders, community leaders, religious leaders, representatives of political parties, and CSOs by establishing periodic meetings on cross-cutting issues at the local level;

f. Ensure the effective implementation of the bilingualism policy by the National Commission for the Promotion of Bilingualism and Multiculturalism (CNPBM) in consultation with all relevant stakeholders, including civil society, in order to ensure equal treatment of the English-speaking minority and eliminate their marginalisation and discrimination in employment, education and access to legal services.

g. Strengthen the independence and powers of the members of the National Commission for the Promotion of Bilingualism and Multiculturalism by ensuring that its members have expertise in human rights and non-discrimination.

**H. HATE SPEECH**

**To the judiciary**

28. Enforce without delay the law 2019/020 on punishing hate speech corollary to the politicization of ethnicity and ending impunity;

**To the Government**

29. Undertake public awareness measures to reduce inter-community tensions by promoting citizenship beyond ethnic identities and take the necessary measures to sanction any hate speech and discriminatory remarks in the public sphere.