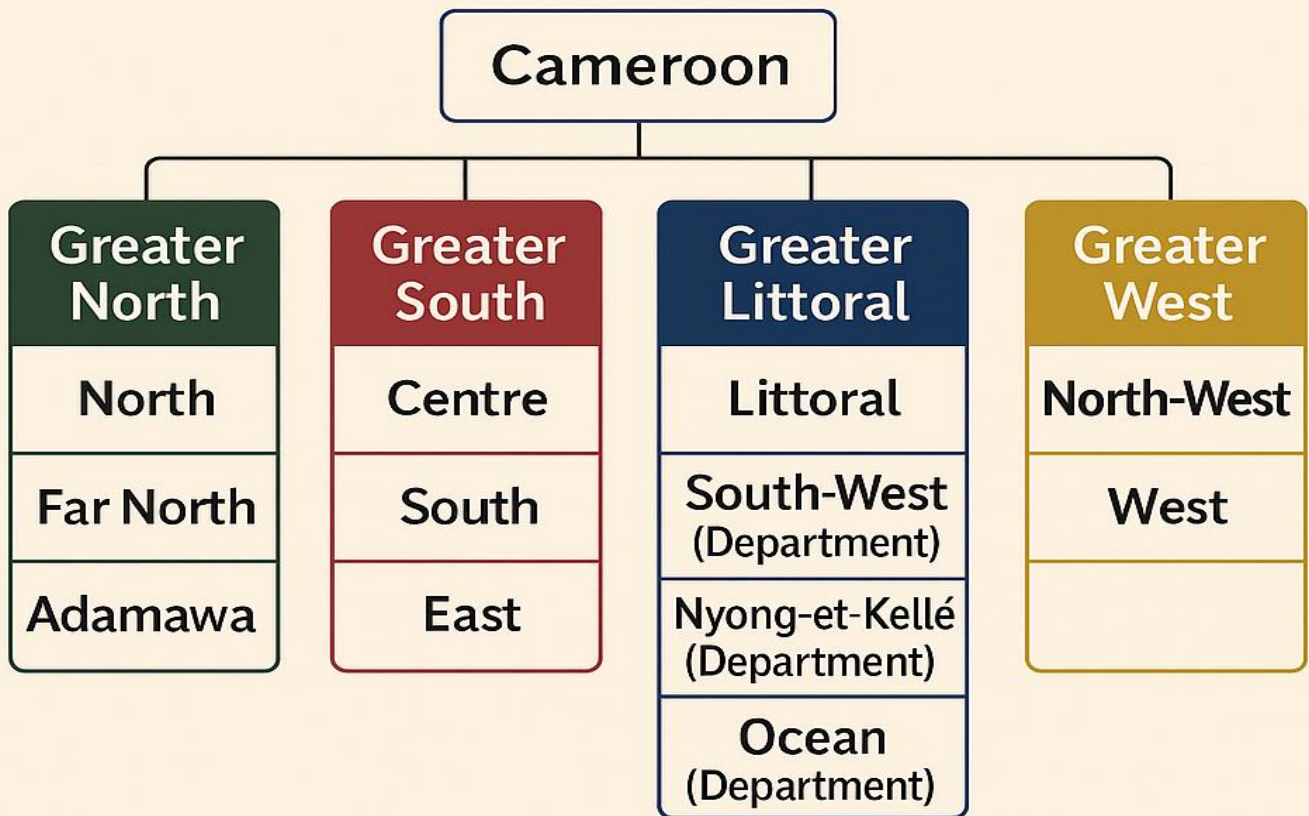


BUILDING A COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENTAL STATE

CAMEROON DIVIDED INTO FOUR MAJOR FEDERATED REGIONS



MLDC - Prof. Yab

**CONSTRUCTION OF A COMMUNITY
DEVELOPMENTAL STATE (EDC) IN CAMEROON
BY THE MOVEMENT FOR THE LIBERATION AND
DEVELOPMENT OF CAMEROON (MLDC)**

**THE LEGAL FOUNDATIONS OF CAMEROON IN FOUR
LARGE FEDERATED REGIONS**

The Legal Foundations of Cameroon in Four Large Federated Regions



TABLE OF CONTENTS

The Legal Foundations of Cameroon in Four Large Federated Regions	1
Executive Summary	3
General objective of reform	3
Why Four Federated Regions?	3
Presentation of the Four Federated Regions	3
Legal and institutional pillars	3
Political and strategic justification	4
Conclusion	4
The Legal Foundations of the Federal Developmental Model	5
Four Large Federated Regions	5
The Constitution: Pillar of Federalism	7
Key Institutions of the Federal Model	9
The Federal Constitutional Court	10
The National Council of Regions	11
Regional Parliaments	11
Legal Mechanisms for Conflict Management	12
Conflicts of Jurisdiction	13
Judicial Arbitration: The Role of the Federal Constitutional Court	14
Institutional Guarantees: Regional Ombudsmen	14
Investigation and Review Mechanisms	15
Shared Sovereignty between the Central State and the Regions	15
Distribution of Skills	16
Exclusive Competences of the Central State	16
Exclusive Competencies of the Regions	17
Shared Skills	18
Intergovernmental Coordination Mechanisms	18
The National Council of Regions	19
Intergovernmental Forums	20
Legal Mechanisms for Resolving Disputes	20
Advisory Committees and Working Groups	21
Bibliography	22

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This strategic document (first part), written by Professor Jimmy Yab for the Movement for the Liberation and Development of Cameroon (MLDC), proposes a major constitutional reform aimed at reorganizing the Republic of Cameroon into four large federated regions within the framework of a Community Developmental State (CDS). It is a legal, institutional, and political response to the structural impasses of the current centralized model, marked by the marginalization of certain regions, the weakness of the welfare state, identity tensions, and chronic underdevelopment.

General objective of the reform

The project aims to put Cameroon back on its feet by establishing territorial governance based on subsidiarity, regional accountability, intergovernmental cooperation, and social equity. The federal model is thus seen as a lever for administrative efficiency, national peace, and endogenous economic development.

Why Four Federated Regions?

The choice of the number four is a strategic choice, based on a logic of geographical proximity, socio-cultural homogeneity, economic complementarity and political resilience. This division allows of :

1. **Simplify the administrative architecture** compared to the current 10 regions, whose fragmentation prevents real development planning.
2. **Strengthen national cohesion** by integrating English-speaking areas into two distinct groups (Grand Ouest and Grand Littoral), while promoting their legal, cultural and linguistic specificities.
3. **Reduce regional inequalities** by consolidating budgetary and human capacities around powerful federal centers.
4. **Respond to** historical political tensions (notably the Anglophone crisis) by proposing appropriate, legally regulated and politically stable autonomy.

Presentation of the Four Federated Regions

1. **The Far North:** includes Adamawa, the North, and the Far North. This is a geostrategic but marginalized region. It will benefit from massive investments in agro-pastoralism, irrigation, technical training, and the fight against insecurity.
2. **The Great South:** composed of the Center, South and East, the forestry and political heart of the country, this region will aim for reconciliation between sustainable development, rural equity and good governance of natural resources.
3. **The Grand Littoral:** integrating the Littoral, the South-West, the Ocean and Nyong-et- Kélé , this hub will become the country's logistics, port and industrial platform. It will also respond to the Anglophone challenge through explicit legal recognition of linguistic and cultural rights.
4. **The Great West:** bringing together the West and the Northwest, this region relies on the entrepreneurial spirit, the dynamic diaspora and food crops to become an industrial and technological hub.

Legal and institutional pillars

The proposed federal reform is based on three foundations:

- **A new federal constitution:** clear, inclusive, protective of fundamental rights (linguistic, social, environmental) and guaranteeing equality between regions.
- **Robust federal institutions:** Federal Constitutional Court, National Council of Regions, regional parliaments, regional ombudsmen, mediation and arbitration mechanisms.
- **Shared sovereignty:** the central state retains defense, diplomacy and currency; the regions manage education, health, local resources, economic development; certain skills (environment, infrastructure) are shared and coordinated.

Political and strategic justification

The current system, inherited from postcolonial centralism, has reached its limits. It produces a bloated administration, widespread distrust of the state, ineffective development, and an explosion of separatist demands. The transition to four large federated regions represents a middle path between destructive secessionism and paralyzing centralism. It responds:

- to efficiency requirements (fewer entities, more resources);
- to the imperatives of peace (reintegrating Anglophone demands into a legitimate constitutional framework);
- to the needs of sustainable development (each region can plan according to its strengths);
- to democratic expectations (real decentralization, regional representation, transparency).

Conclusion

The document constitutes a roadmap for rebuilding the Republic, escaping the neocolonial trap, and building a Cameroon united in its diversity. The MLDC thus proposes a model of community-based developmental federalism that does not divide, but unites. This project combines vision, legal rigor, and a sense of territorial justice. Its adoption would pave the way for lasting national reconciliation, profound institutional modernization, and economic recovery structured by local communities.

THE LEGAL FOUNDATIONS OF THE FEDERAL DEVELOPMENTAL MODEL

The implementation of a federal community development model translated by The reorganization of Cameroon into four major federated regions is based on solid legal foundations capable of responding to Cameroon's specific challenges. With its unique linguistic, cultural, and geographical diversity, Cameroon is at a strategic crossroads where profound constitutional and institutional reform is necessary to ensure effective, inclusive, and responsive governance. The legal foundations of this model into four major federated regions aim to define the relationship between the central government and the regions, establish conflict resolution mechanisms, and protect the fundamental rights of citizens in a fair and transparent framework.

FOUR LARGE FEDERATED REGIONS

The proposal to reorganize Cameroon into four large federated regions is part of a vision of decentralized governance, aimed at better managing the country's ethnic and cultural diversity, strengthening local autonomy, and promoting more balanced economic development . Cameroon is a mosaic of peoples, languages, and traditions, and the current model, based on ten administrative regions, is showing its limitations in terms of resource management, local decision-making, and national cohesion . By adopting a developmental federal structure in four large territorial entities, it becomes possible to optimize governance by reducing administrative burdens and promoting a more equitable distribution of resources. This reform would also help alleviate sociopolitical tensions by giving populations greater autonomy to define their economic and cultural priorities while maintaining national unity .

The proposed territorial reorganization is based on the creation of four large federated regions: the Grand Nord, the Grand Sud , the Grand Littoral and the Grand Ouest . Each of these regions would bring together several current administrative entities based on their geographical, cultural and economic proximity. This division aims to better structure the country into homogeneous development centers, equipped with reinforced means to plan and implement public policies adapted to their local specificities. One of the main objectives is to decentralize decision-making centers and accelerate the development of infrastructure, education and basic services by relying on more dynamic administrative structures that are closer to the realities of the populations. However, the implementation of this reform would require a clear legal framework, a well-planned transition process and an inclusive dialogue with all stakeholders.

The **Far North would bring together the** North, Far North, and Adamaoua regions. This federal entity would face major challenges related to security , the fight against terrorism , and adaptation to climate change. Indeed, this region is highly exposed to incursions by terrorist groups such as Boko Haram , which slows its economic development and increases social instability. Economically, the Far North is an agro-pastoral region with strong potential in livestock farming and Sahelian agriculture, but it suffers from a deficit in modern infrastructure and access to markets. One of the objectives of this federation would therefore be to strengthen investments in irrigation, livestock farming, and road infrastructure in order to boost the local economy and stabilize the region socially. Furthermore, an educational policy adapted to the specific needs of local populations, particularly in terms of vocational and technical training, would accelerate the economic emancipation of this part of the country.

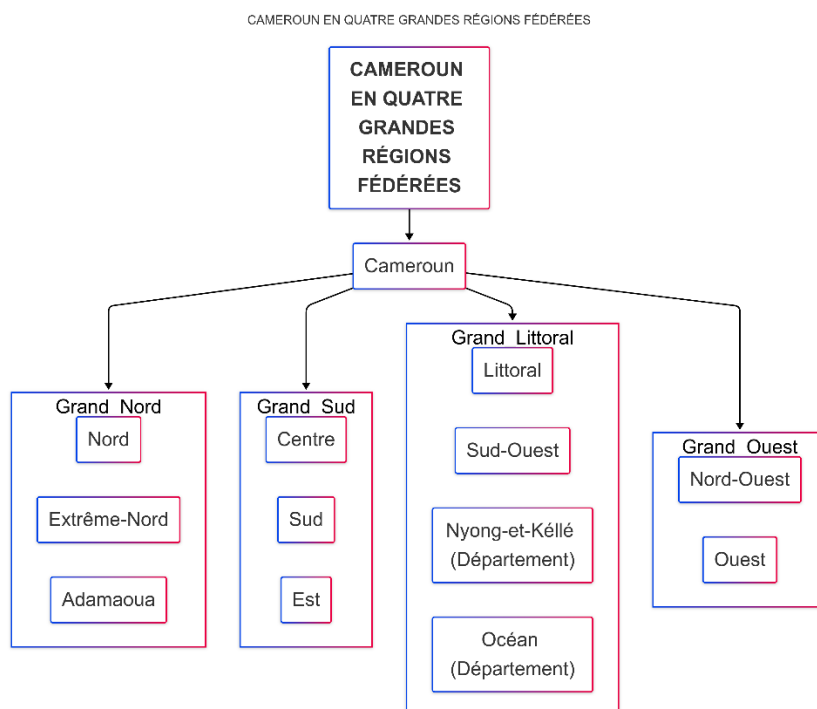
The **Great South** would bring together the current Central, Southern, and Eastern regions. This federation would constitute the political heart of the country, since Yaoundé, the national capital, is located there. Rich in natural resources , particularly forests and minerals, this region represents a strategic asset for Cameroon in terms of biodiversity and

extractive industries . However, despite its assets, the Great South remains marked by economic inequalities between its urban centers (such as Yaoundé) and its isolated rural areas. One of the priorities of this federation would therefore be to strengthen transport and energy infrastructure to facilitate economic integration and improve the living conditions of rural populations. In addition, environmental protection and sustainable management of forest resources would be major issues in order to preserve the ecosystem while effectively exploiting the economic potential of the region.

The **Grand Littoral would comprise the** Littoral and Southwest regions , as well as the departments of Nyong-et- Kélé and Océan. This federation would become Cameroon's main economic hub thanks to the presence of Douala , the country's economic capital and largest city. Benefiting from strategic access to the Atlantic Ocean, this region would play a central role in international trade, logistics and industrialization . The autonomous port of Douala and the port infrastructure of the Southwest, particularly those planned in Kribi , constitute major levers for making the Grand Littoral an engine of growth and regional integration . However, the region is also marked by sociopolitical tensions, particularly in the Southwest, where the Anglophone crisis has weakened the social and economic fabric. A well-thought-out federal policy would better respond to the aspirations of local populations, particularly in terms of cultural and linguistic autonomy, while consolidating national unity . Furthermore, increased efforts should be made to modernize urban infrastructure, clean up local finances and boost industrialization to maximize the economic potential of this region.

The **Grand Ouest would encompass the** Northwest and West regions, known for their economic dynamism and strong cultural identity. This federation would be distinguished by its flourishing agriculture, particularly in the production of coffee , cocoa , and other strategic food crops. It is also a region characterized by an influential diaspora and a strong entrepreneurial tradition, making it a key pole for the country's industrialization. However, this region faces significant sociopolitical challenges, particularly due to the Anglophone crisis that is heavily affecting the Northwest. Federal reform would increase the responsibility of local governments in managing social and economic tensions, promoting more inclusive development, and adapting public policies to the realities on the ground. Strengthening transport and communications infrastructure, as well as the establishment of special economic zones , could transform the Grand Ouest into a true industrial and commercial hub, capable of competing with major African metropolises.

Adopting a federal model structured around four major regions would represent a significant step forward toward more efficient governance, closer to citizens, and better adapted to Cameroon's challenges . By allowing each federation to manage its resources autonomously while remaining integrated into a coherent national framework, this reform would promote economic development, social inclusion, and political stability. However, implementing this model would require a thorough national dialogue to ensure a smooth transition and avoid further imbalances. The central government would retain a key role in defense, diplomacy, and macroeconomic regulation , while the federations would be responsible for local management, economic development, and public services. Ultimately, a well-thought-out federal reform could be the engine of a Cameroon that is more prosperous, more equitable, and more resilient to the challenges of the 21st century.



The four-region federated model is based on three main pillars: a clear and robust constitution, institutions adapted to local and national realities, and legal mechanisms for managing conflicts. These elements not only guarantee institutional stability; they also contribute to strengthening the legitimacy of regional and central governments, while placing community development at the heart of governance .

THE CONSTITUTION : PILLAR OF FEDERALISM

A Fundamental Text Adapted to the Cameroonian Context

The Constitution is the cornerstone of any federal system . It establishes the fundamental principles of governance , guarantees the fundamental rights of citizens, and organizes the distribution of powers between the different levels of government. For Cameroon , a federal Constitution must be an inclusive instrument that reflects the aspirations of its citizens while addressing the country's specific challenges. These challenges include marked linguistic and cultural diversity, significant economic disparities between regions , and political tensions, particularly in the English-speaking regions .

Distribution of skills

The distribution of powers between the central government and the regions is one of the fundamental aspects of a federal constitution. According to Wheare (1963), a federal constitution must clearly delineate the areas of competence of each level of government to avoid overlaps and conflicts. In the case of Cameroon , this delimitation will have to take into account regional specificities and the strategic responsibilities of the central government.

1. Exclusive powers of the central State :
 - a. National defense , foreign policy, and monetary regulation will remain under the control of the central government . These areas require strong national coordination to preserve the country's territorial integrity and sovereignty .

- b. Practical example: Trade negotiations with international partners , particularly in the context of the export of natural resources , will be conducted by the central state to ensure a uniform position on the international scene.
2. Regional skills :
- a. The federated regions will exercise sovereignty in areas such as education , health , local economic development and natural resource management . This will allow for governance that is more adapted to local realities.
 - b. Practical example: The Great South , rich in forest resources, will be able to adopt specific laws to regulate the sustainable exploitation of forests and preserve biodiversity.
3. Shared skills:
- a. Some areas will require cooperation between the central state and the regions , such as the management of national infrastructure or the response to humanitarian crises.
 - b. Practical example : The development of a railway network linking the Far North to the Far Coast could be financed by the central state , while the regions concerned would participate in planning and managing local impacts.

This distribution of competences should be specified in the Constitution , with clear mechanisms for managing overlaps or disputes. For example, the German Constitution (Grundgesetz) includes a detailed list of exclusive and concurrent legislative competences, which could serve as a model for Cameroon .

Guarantees of fundamental rights

The Federal Constitution should also guarantee the fundamental rights of citizens and communities , regardless of their region of origin. According to Rawls (1971), a just society is based on principles that guarantee equality of opportunity and the protection of minorities. In the Cameroonian context, these guarantees should include:

- 1. linguistic and cultural minorities :
 - a. English-speaking regions will benefit from explicit recognition of English as an official language, as well as guarantees for the use of English in local government and schools. This type of arrangement has been used successfully in Canada , where both French and English are recognized as official languages at the national and provincial levels.
- 2. Equal rights and opportunities:
 - a. The Constitution should ensure that all citizens have access to the same public services, regardless of their region of residence. This includes access to education, health care and infrastructure .
 - b. Practical example: A resident of the Far North must be able to benefit from the same educational opportunities as a resident of the Great Littoral , thanks to national equity policies .
- 3. Environmental rights:
 - a. The protection of the environment and natural resources must be enshrined in the Constitution to ensure sustainable development . This includes specific rights for communities dependent on natural resources, such as the indigenous Pygmy peoples of the Great South .

Intergovernmental Cooperation Framework

An effective federal constitution must provide mechanisms for cooperation between levels

of government. According to Ostrom (1990), polycentric governance , where multiple power centers collaborate, is more effective in managing common resources and shared responsibilities.

1. Intergovernmental forums:
 - a. The Constitution should establish regular forums to enable coordination between the regions and the central government . These forums could include annual meetings of regional executive heads and the central government.
 - b. Example: An intergovernmental conference could be convened to discuss the distribution of infrastructure funds or public health priorities .
2. Interregional agreements :
 - a. Regions should be able to conclude bilateral or multilateral agreements to manage joint projects, such as the sharing of water resources or the construction of transregional infrastructure.
 - b. International example: In the United States , states often collaborate on joint projects, such as managing shared watersheds, through interstate agreements.
3. Conflict resolution mechanisms :
 - a. The Constitution must provide a clear legal framework for resolving conflicts between the central government and the regions , or between the regions themselves. This includes the possibility of mediation by the National Council of Regions and arbitration by the Federal Constitutional Court.

A Constitution born of national consensus

To be effective and legitimate, the Federal Constitution of Cameroon must be developed in an inclusive and participatory manner. This involves holding a national constitutional conference, where representatives of the different regions , political parties, civil society and linguistic minorities will be invited to participate.

1. Participatory process:
 - a. A broad public consultation should be organized to gather citizens' opinions on the principles and provisions of the Constitution . This will strengthen the legitimacy of the final text.
2. Comparative models:
 - a. Cameroon could take inspiration from South Africa , where the Constitution post-apartheid was developed following an inclusive process that involved public consultations and multi-stakeholder negotiations.

The Federal Constitution is much more than a legal document; it is the very foundation of Cameroon's unity and development . By clearly defining the competencies of the different levels of governance , guaranteeing the fundamental rights of citizens, and establishing mechanisms for intergovernmental cooperation , it provides a solid foundation for a prosperous and inclusive federation. However, its effectiveness will depend on the political will and commitment of national and regional actors to respect its principles.

KEY INSTITUTIONS OF THE FEDERAL MODEL

Institutions are the operational pillars of the federal model . They translate into practice the principles enshrined in the Constitution and ensure the smooth functioning of interactions between levels of governance . In the context of Cameroon , the establishment of appropriate institutions is crucial to meet the needs of the regions while maintaining national

unity . These institutions include the Federal Constitutional Court, the National Council of Regions, and the regional parliaments . Each of these entities plays a distinct but complementary role in managing relations between the central government and the regions.

THE FEDERAL CONSTITUTIONAL COURT

Role and functions

The Federal Constitutional Court is a key institution in any federal system . Its main role is to ensure compliance with the Constitution , arbitrate conflicts between different levels of government, and protect the fundamental rights of citizens.

According to Wheare (1963), an effective Constitutional Court must have the ultimate authority to interpret the Constitution and resolve disputes between levels of governance . In the Cameroonian model, the Federal Constitutional Court will play a central role in ensuring consistent application of constitutional principles throughout the country.

Main mandates :

1. Review of the constitutionality of laws:
 - a. The Constitutional Court will examine whether laws adopted by regional parliaments comply with constitutional principles.
 - b. Practical example: If a region adopts a controversial tax law that could discriminate against certain companies, the Constitutional Court may intervene to assess its compliance with the Constitution .
2. Arbitration of conflicts of jurisdiction:
 - a. The Court will arbitrate disputes between the central state and the regions , or between the regions themselves.
 - b. Example: A conflict between the Grand Littoral and the central State over the management of port fees could be submitted to the Court for an impartial resolution.
3. Protection of fundamental rights :
 - a. The Constitutional Court will ensure that citizens' rights are respected, even in the event of problematic regional or national legislation.

Structure and composition

The composition of the Federal Constitutional Court should reflect a balance between representatives of the central state and the regions to ensure national legitimacy.

1. Independent judges:
 - a. The judges will be appointed by a joint commission composed of representatives of the regional parliaments and the national parliament .
 - b. International example: In Germany , judges of the Federal Constitutional Court are appointed jointly by both houses of Parliament, a model that could inspire Cameroon .
2. mandate :
 - a. Judges will have a limited but renewable term to preserve their independence while ensuring regular rotation.

THE NATIONAL COUNCIL OF REGIONS

Role and functions

The National Council of Regions is an intergovernmental platform designed to facilitate policy coordination between regions and the central government . It provides a space for dialogue where regional representatives can defend their interests while participating in the formulation of national policies .

Main mandates :

1. Coordination of national policies :
 - a. The Council will consider bills and policies that impact multiple regions .
 - b. Practical example: A national infrastructure policy could be discussed in Council to ensure that it meets the specific needs of regions .
2. Facilitation of interregional cooperation :
 - a. The Council will encourage regions to collaborate on joint projects, such as natural resource management or the construction of transregional infrastructure .
 - b. Example: The Grand Sud and the Grand Littoral could collaborate on a maritime transport project , coordinated by the Council.
3. Conflict mediation :
 - a. In the event of a conflict between regions or with the central State , the Council will play a mediating role before any recourse to the Constitutional Court .

Structure and composition

The Council will be composed of representatives from the regions and the central state , with a president elected for a rotating term to ensure fair representation.

1. Balanced composition:
 - a. Each region will send an equal number of delegates, while the central state will be represented by ministers or senior officials.
2. Rotating Presidency :
 - a. The Council presidency will rotate regularly between regions to avoid any domination by one region or the central state .
3. Specialized working bodies:
 - a. The Council will have specialist committees to examine specific issues, such as education , health or the environment .

REGIONAL PARLIAMENTS

Role and functions

parliaments are at the heart of local governance in a federal system . They are responsible for developing regional laws, overseeing the regional executive , and managing budgets.

Main mandates:

1. Local legislation:

- a. parliaments will adopt laws in areas of regional competence, such as education , health and economic development .
 - b. Practical example: The Far North Parliament could adopt an irrigation law to improve agricultural resilience to droughts.
2. Control of regional budgets:
- a. Parliaments will approve regional budgets and monitor their implementation by the regional executive .
 - b. Example: A regional parliament might require an annual report on the use of funds allocated for school construction.
3. Collaboration with citizens:
- a. parliaments will play a role in promoting citizen participation by organizing public consultations on draft laws.

Structure and composition

1. Local representation:
 - a. Members of regional parliaments will be elected directly by citizens to ensure their legitimacy.
 - b. International example: In Switzerland , cantonal parliaments are elected by citizens, offering a model of democratic inclusion.
2. Specialized commissions :
 - a. Each parliament will have standing committees to deal with specific issues, such as education or the environment .
3. Relations with local administrations :
 - a. Parliaments will work closely with local governments to ensure effective implementation of policies.

The key institutions of the community-developmental federal model play a central role in achieving the objectives of federalism . The Federal Constitutional Court ensures respect for constitutional principles, the National Council of Regions facilitates intergovernmental cooperation , and regional parliaments ensure governance adapted to local realities. By establishing these institutions with clear structures and well-defined mandates, Cameroon will be able to strengthen the legitimacy of its governments and ensure balanced and effective management of relations between the central state and the regions .

LEGAL MECHANISMS FOR CONFLICT MANAGEMENT

In a federal system , conflicts between the central government and the federated entities, or between the regions themselves, are inevitable. These tensions may concern the distribution of powers, the sharing of resources, or the interpretation of laws. Effective management of these conflicts is essential to maintain the unity and stability of a federal state. In Cameroon , where cultural, linguistic, and economic diversity exacerbates differences, robust legal mechanisms are essential to ensure peaceful and equitable resolution of disputes. According to Wheare (1963), an effective federal system relies on clear and impartial mechanisms to arbitrate disputes between different levels of government.

This section explores the legal mechanisms needed to manage conflicts in Cameroon's proposed community-based developmental federal model . These mechanisms include mediation, judicial arbitration, and institutional safeguards such as regional ombudsmen.

CONFLICTS OF JURISDICTION

Jurisdictional conflicts arise when central and regional governments claim responsibility in a given area, or when they adopt conflicting policies. In the Cameroonian context, where regionalist demands are strong, preventing and resolving these conflicts must be a priority.

Definition and examples of conflicts

1. Vertical conflicts: Between the central state and the regions .
 - a. Example: A region decides to legislate on mining , an area where the central state also exercises powers.
 - b. Impact: These conflicts can lead to administrative paralysis or inefficient use of resources.
2. Horizontal conflicts: Between regions .
 - a. Example: Two regions claim the right to exploit a natural resource located on their common border.
 - b. Impact: These disputes can exacerbate interregional tensions and harm cooperation.

Mediation : A Preventive and Peaceful Tool

Mediation is a non-binding method of conflict resolution , where a neutral third party helps the parties involved find a mutually acceptable solution. This approach is particularly effective in preventing tensions from escalating.

Role of the National Council of Regions in mediation

The National Council of Regions will play a central role in mediating intergovernmental conflicts.

1. Facilitating dialogue:
 - a. The Council will organize meetings between the parties to discuss disputes and explore solutions.
 - b. Example: A dispute between the Grand Sud and the central State on the distribution of mining royalties could be dealt with as a priority by the Council.
2. Development of agreements:
 - a. The Council may propose compromise agreements, ensuring that the interests of all parties are taken into account.
3. Conflict prevention :
 - a. By holding regular consultations between the regions and the central government , the Council will be able to identify potential tensions before they escalate.

Benefits of Mediation

Speed: Mediation processes are generally faster than court proceedings.

Reduced cost: Mediation avoids the high costs associated with legal disputes.

Flexibility: The proposed solutions can be adapted to the specific needs of the parties.

International example: In Canada , provincial and federal prime ministers meet regularly to resolve political disputes, a practice that could inspire Cameroon .

JUDICIAL ARBITRATION : THE ROLE OF THE FEDERAL CONSTITUTIONAL COURT

When mediation fails, judicial arbitration becomes necessary. The Federal Constitutional Court is the final arbiter of disputes between the central state and the regions .

Mandates of the Court in Arbitration

1. Interpretation of the Constitution :
 - a. The Court will rule on the constitutionality of laws adopted by the regions or the central state .
 - b. Practical example: If a region legislates on a foreign policy issue, the Court will have to determine whether this encroaches on the exclusive competences of the central State .
2. Resolution of jurisdictional conflicts:
 - a. The Court will arbitrate disputes concerning the distribution of jurisdiction.
 - b. Example: If a region challenges the legality of a national law that affects its natural resources , the Court will have to decide.
3. Protection of fundamental rights :
 - a. The Court will ensure that citizens' rights are respected, even in cases of controversial regional or national legislation.

Structure and independence of the Court

To ensure its impartiality, the Federal Constitutional Court should be composed of judges appointed by an independent commission, including representatives of regional parliaments and the national parliament .

1. Mandate of judges :
 - a. Judges will have to serve limited but renewable terms to preserve their independence .
2. Transparency :
 - a. The Court's decisions should be published and made publicly available to strengthen citizens' confidence in the judicial system.

International example : In Germany , the Federal Constitutional Court plays a similar role, ruling on disputes between the federal states and the central government.

INSTITUTIONAL GUARANTEES: REGIONAL OMBUDSMEN

ombudsmen are independent institutions responsible for protecting citizens against abuse of power and monitoring the application of laws.

Role of ombudsmen

1. Law enforcement monitoring:
 - a. The ombudsmen will ensure that regional governments comply with laws adopted by regional and national parliaments.
 - b. Example: An ombudsman might investigate allegations of mismanagement of public funds in a region.

2. Recourse for citizens:

- a. Citizens will be able to contact the ombudsmen in the event of a violation of their rights or administrative injustice.
- b. Example: A citizen deprived of access to health services due to local administrative decisions could request intervention.

3. Promoting transparency :

- a. The ombudsmen will publish annual reports on their activities, highlighting the challenges and successes of regional governance.

Structure and financing

1. Institutional independence :

- a. The ombudsmen will be appointed by regional parliaments, with mandates protected from political pressure.

2. Adequate resources:

- a. Each region will have to allocate sufficient funds to enable ombudsmen to carry out their functions effectively.

International example: In Sweden, the ombudsman system plays a central role in monitoring public administration, offering a model that could be adapted to Cameroon .

INVESTIGATION AND REVIEW MECHANISMS

Investigation and review mechanisms are additional tools to manage institutional conflicts and enhance transparency .

1. Commissions of inquiry:

- a. In the event of a major conflict, an independent commission of inquiry may be set up to analyze the causes of the dispute and propose solutions.

2. Constitutional revision:

- a. If a conflict reveals a flaw in the Constitution , a revision procedure may be initiated to adjust the relevant provisions.

Practical example: If a recurring conflict over mining royalties highlights an ambiguity in the distribution of powers, a constitutional revision could clarify this issue.

Legal mechanisms for conflict management are essential to ensuring the stability and effectiveness of a federal system . By combining mediation, judicial arbitration, and institutional safeguards, Cameroon can establish a federal model capable of managing the tensions inherent in its diversity. These mechanisms, supported by strong institutions such as the Federal Constitutional Court and regional ombudsmen , provide a solid foundation for building an inclusive and sustainable federation.

The legal foundations of Cameroon's community-based developmental federal model provide a solid foundation for ensuring inclusive and effective governance . The Constitution , as the supreme text, establishes the rules of the game for each level of government, while key institutions ensure checks and balances and policy coordination. Through these mechanisms, Cameroon can transform its historical challenges into opportunities, building a prosperous and equitable federation.

SHARED SOVEREIGNTY BETWEEN THE CENTRAL STATE AND THE REGIONS

sovereignty is a central pillar of federalism , where authority is distributed between the

central state and the federated entities. This model helps balance powers, ensure regional autonomy while maintaining national unity . In the context of Cameroon , characterized by unique linguistic, cultural, and geographical diversity, shared sovereignty offers a solution to address local grievances without compromising the integrity of the state. This section explores the areas of competence assigned to each level of governance and the intergovernmental coordination mechanisms necessary to ensure harmonious cooperation between the central state and the regions .

According to Wheare (1963), "federalism is based on the division of powers between governments which are coordinated and independent in their respective spheres." Within this framework, shared sovereignty in the Cameroonian federal model is designed to reflect this interrelationship, where each level of government plays a complementary role according to its competences.

DISTRIBUTION OF SKILLS

The distribution of powers is the operational basis of any federal system . It determines the areas in which the central government and the regions can act independently, in a shared or complementary manner. For Cameroon , where regional diversity is a key characteristic, a clear distribution of powers is necessary to ensure effective governance, avoid conflicts of jurisdiction and respond to local needs while preserving national unity . According to Wheare (1963), an effective federal system is based on a "division of powers between governments which are coordinated and independent in their respective spheres." This section explores the exclusive powers of the central government, those of the regions, and areas of shared cooperation.

EXCLUSIVE COMPETENCES OF THE CENTRAL STATE

In a federal system , certain powers are reserved for the central state because of their strategic importance for national unity and sovereignty . These powers generally include national defense , foreign policy, and monetary regulation.

1. Defense and National Security

- a. National defense is a fundamental responsibility of the central state . It guarantees territorial integrity, the security of citizens and the state's ability to respond to internal and external threats.
- b. Practical example: In the Cameroonian context, the fight against Boko Haram in the Far North is an example of a security challenge requiring a centralized approach. Coordination between the armed forces and intelligence services at the national level makes it possible to mobilize the resources and skills needed to counter this threat.
- c. Academic Perspectives: According to Burgess (2006), a centralized national defense is essential in federal states to avoid military fragmentation that could weaken the response to crises.

2. Foreign Policy

- a. International relations, including the signing of bilateral or multilateral agreements, are the exclusive responsibility of the central state . This area requires a consistent approach to represent national interests on the international stage.
- b. Example: The Economic Partnership Agreements (EPAs) between Cameroon and the European Union were negotiated by the central state to ensure overall benefits for the national economy .

- c. Comparative model: In Germany , the federal government is the only actor authorized to negotiate with foreign states, an approach that could be adapted to Cameroon .
3. Monetary and Economic Regulation
- a. As a member of the Central African Economic and Monetary Community (CEMAC), Cameroon delegates certain monetary functions to supranational institutions, but national economic regulation remains under the control of the central state .
 - b. Example: The Bank of Central African States (BEAC), although independent, operates under the supervision of the central governments of the region, including that of Cameroon .

EXCLUSIVE COMPETENCES OF THE REGIONS

In a federal model , regions have exclusive powers in areas that require a local approach, adapted to economic, cultural and environmental realities. These powers help promote participatory governance and decentralized decision-making.

1. Education
- a. Regions will have exclusive responsibility for managing their education systems. This includes designing school curricula, managing educational infrastructure, and recruiting teachers.
 - b. Practical example: In the Far North , where educational needs are influenced by agro-pastoral activities, specific programs could be developed to integrate practical learning into the curriculum.
 - c. Academic perspectives: Bird and Vaillancourt (1998) emphasize that decentralization of education improves the efficiency of educational systems by adapting policies to local needs.
2. Health
- a. The management of health care , including the construction and management of hospitals, as well as the implementation of public health programs, will be devolved to the regions .
 - b. Example: The Grand Littoral could develop specific initiatives to combat communicable diseases in densely populated urban areas, while the Grand Ouest could focus on improving maternal and child care.
 - c. Comparative model: In India , the federal states manage their own health systems , which allows them to adopt policies adapted to their specific needs.
3. Natural Resource Management
- a. Each region will be responsible for the management of natural resources located within its territory, including forests, mines and water resources.
 - b. Example: The Great South , rich in tropical forests, could adopt specific laws to regulate logging and preserve biodiversity.
 - c. Academic perspectives: Ostrom (1990) emphasizes that local management of natural resources , combined with participatory governance mechanisms , improves the sustainability and resilience of ecosystems.
4. Local Economic Development
- a. Regions will have the power to promote small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), attract investment and manage local economic infrastructure.
 - b. Example: The Great West , known for its entrepreneurial dynamism, could establish special economic zones to encourage trade and innovation .

SHARED SKILLS

Shared competences concern areas where the central government and the regions must collaborate to ensure national coherence while respecting local specificities. These areas include the environment , infrastructure and humanitarian crisis management .

1. Environment

- a. Environmental preservation requires coordination between regions and the central government . National standards can be adapted to local contexts to maximize their effectiveness.
- b. Example: A national reforestation strategy might be implemented differently in the Far North , where efforts would focus on combating desertification, and in the Far South , where the emphasis would be on preserving tropical forests and wildlife.
- c. Comparative model: In Switzerland , the cantons collaborate with the federal government on environmental policies, a model that could inspire Cameroon .

2. Infrastructure

- a. Major infrastructure projects , such as highways and railways, require coordinated planning and financing between the central government and the regions .
- b. Example: The construction of a highway linking the Far North to the Far Coast would involve financial and technical collaboration between the two regions , supervised by the central state , knowing that this highway would serve Chad and therefore be a source of revenue .
- c. Academic Perspectives: According to Rodden (2004), national infrastructure is more effective when planned and executed within a collaborative governance framework.

3. Humanitarian Crises

- a. Natural disasters and humanitarian crises require rapid mobilization of resources at all levels of government.
- b. Practical example: In the event of flooding in the Far North , the central government could provide logistical and financial support , while the region would manage relief operations on the ground.

The distribution of powers is a key element of the community-based developmental federalism proposed for Cameroon . By clearly defining exclusive and shared powers, this approach ensures governance adapted to local needs while maintaining a coherent national vision. Exclusive powers of the central government , such as defense and foreign policy, strengthen national unity , while regional powers , such as education and natural resource management , allow for responses to local specificities. Shared areas, such as the environment and infrastructure , illustrate the need for cooperation between different levels of governance. By combining autonomy and collaboration, this distribution of powers provides a solid foundation for an inclusive and prosperous Cameroon.

INTERGOVERNMENTAL COORDINATION MECHANISMS

In a federal system , intergovernmental coordination is essential to ensure harmonious governance between the central state and the federated entities. These mechanisms help manage relations between levels of government, prevent conflicts of jurisdiction and encourage cooperation on common issues. In the community-based developmental federal

model proposed for Cameroon , intergovernmental coordination mechanisms play a key role in ensuring the effectiveness of public policies while respecting regional autonomy .

Intergovernmental coordination relies on formal institutions and informal frameworks that facilitate dialogue, collaboration, and dispute resolution. According to Bolleyer (2009), “the quality of coordination mechanisms directly influences the stability and performance of federal systems.” This section explores the main intergovernmental coordination mechanisms, including the National Council of Regions , intergovernmental forums, and legal tools for resolving disputes.

THE NATIONAL COUNCIL OF REGIONS

The National Council of Regions is a key institution in the proposed federal model. It provides a formal platform where representatives of the regions and the central government can dialogue and collaborate on issues of national interest.

Roles of the National Council of Regions

1. Coordination of national policies :
 - a. The Council serves as a forum to review policies and projects that impact multiple regions . This includes areas such as infrastructure , the environment and crisis management .
 - b. Practical example : A national policy aimed at developing a railway network linking the Far North to the Far Coast could be discussed in the Council to ensure a fair distribution of costs and benefits.
2. Facilitation of interregional cooperation :
 - a. The Council encourages regions to collaborate on common initiatives, such as sharing water resources or developing infrastructure .
 - b. Example: The Grand Sud and the Grand Littoral could collaborate on maritime transport projects to strengthen regional trade.
3. Conflict mediation :
 - a. In the event of disagreement between regions or between a region and the central state , the Council can act as mediator before the dispute is brought before the Federal Constitutional Court.
 - b. Practical example: A dispute over the distribution of revenue generated by the ports of the Grand Littoral could be dealt with by the Council.

Structure and Composition of the Council

1. Regional and national representatives:
 - a. The Council is composed of elected delegates from the regions and representatives from the central government . Each region sends an equal number of representatives to ensure fairness in decision-making.
2. Rotating Presidency :
 - a. The presidency of the Council is held in rotation by the regions to avoid any domination by one region or the central state .
3. Specialized committees :
 - a. Standing and ad hoc committees are created to examine specific issues, such as education , health or the environment .

Comparative model: In Germany , the Bundesrat, which represents the Länder, plays a similar role in facilitating coordination between levels of governance . An adaptation of this model could be effective in Cameroon .

INTERGOVERNMENTAL FORUMS

Intergovernmental forums are informal mechanisms where officials from central and regional governments meet regularly to discuss issues of common interest. These forums complement formal institutions such as the National Council of regions .

Objectives of the Intergovernmental Forums

1. Policy harmonization:
 - a. The forums help coordinate policies in shared areas, such as education , the environment and infrastructure .
 - b. Example: A meeting of regional education ministers could harmonize school curricula while respecting local specificities.
2. Conflict prevention :
 - a. By facilitating dialogue, forums reduce tensions before they escalate into institutional disputes.
 - b. International example: In Canada , provincial prime ministers and the federal government meet regularly to discuss national priorities, a model that could inspire Cameroonian practices.
3. Sharing best practices:
 - a. Regions can exchange ideas and experiences to improve the implementation of public policies.
 - b. Example: The Grand Ouest could share its successes in supporting SMEs with other regions .

Structure and Frequency of Meetings

1. Regular meetings:
 - a. Intergovernmental forums are held quarterly or annually, as needed. Meetings may be organized by sector (health , education , infrastructure) or at a general level.
2. Presidency:
 - a. Meetings are chaired by a representative elected from among the participants to ensure neutrality.

LEGAL MECHANISMS FOR RESOLVING DISPUTES

Despite coordination efforts, disagreements between the central government and the regions , or between the regions themselves, are inevitable. Legal mechanisms allow these disputes to be managed peacefully and impartially.

Mediation

1. Role of Mediation :

- a. Mediation, often supervised by the National Council of regions , is a non-binding method that encourages parties to reach a mutual agreement.
 - b. Practical example: A conflict over export taxes in the Great South could be resolved through mediation before becoming an institutional crisis.
2. Benefits :
 - a. Speed: Disputes are resolved quickly, avoiding lengthy legal proceedings.
 - b. Reduced cost: Mediation is less expensive than judicial arbitration.

Arbitration Judicial

1. Role of the Federal Constitutional Court :
 - a. The Court is the last resort for resolving constitutional disputes. It ensures that laws and policies respect the division of powers defined in the Constitution .
 - b. Example: If a region challenges a national law on the exploitation of natural resources , the Court will decide based on constitutional principles.
2. Structure of the Court:
 - a. The Court is composed of judges appointed by a joint commission to guarantee their independence and impartiality.

Academic Perspectives: According to Elazar (1987), a strong Constitutional Court is essential in federal systems to ensure the balance of powers between central and regional governments.

ADVISORY COMMITTEES AND WORKING GROUPS

In addition to formal institutions, advisory committees and ad hoc working groups may be created to address specific issues.

1. Advisory Committees:
 - a. These committees are composed of experts, regional representatives, and members of civil society. They offer recommendations on specific policies.
 - b. Example: A committee on sustainable forest management might include environmentalists, representatives from forest regions, and national officials.
2. Ad hoc working groups :
 - a. These groups are formed to respond to specific needs, such as managing a humanitarian crisis or implementing an infrastructure project.

Intergovernmental coordination mechanisms are essential to ensure the cohesion and effectiveness of a federal system . The National Council of regions , intergovernmental forums, and legal tools such as mediation and judicial arbitration provide solid platforms for resolving disputes and promoting cooperation. By combining these formal and informal mechanisms, the community-based developmental federal model proposed for Cameroon can address the challenges of regional diversity while strengthening national unity . These practices, inspired by international examples and adapted to the Cameroonian context, provide a solid foundation for harmonious and inclusive development.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Acemoglu, D., & Robinson, J.A. (2012). *Why Nations Fail: The Origins of Power, Prosperity, and Poverty*. Crown Publishing Group.
- Ajayi, JFA, Goma, LKH, & Johnson, GA (1996). *The African Experience with Higher Education*. James Currey.
- Bayart, J.-F. (1989). *The State in Africa : The Politics of the Belly*. Fayard.
- Bourguignon, F., & Morrisson, C. (2002). "Inequality Among World Citizens: 1820–1992". *American Economic Review*, 92(4), 727–744.
- Brinkerhoff, D. W., & Brinkerhoff, J. M. (2002). "Governance Reforms and Failed States: Challenges and Implications". *International Review of Administrative Sciences*, 68(4), 511–531.
- Castells, M. (2010). *The Rise of the Network Society*. Wiley-Blackwell.
- Deaton, A. (2013). *The Great Escape: Health, Wealth, and the Origins of Inequality*. Princeton University Press.
- Fukuyama, F. (2011). *The Origins of Political Order: From Prehuman Times to the French Revolution*. Farrar, Straus, and Giroux.
- Gerschenkron, A. (1962). *Economic Backwardness in Historical Perspective: A Book of Essays*. Belknap Press of Harvard University Press.
- Haggard, S., & Kaufman, R.R. (1995). *The Political Economy of Democratic Transitions*. Princeton University Press.
- ILO (International Labor Organization). (2019). *World Employment and Social Outlook: Trends 2019*. ILO Publications.
- Krugman, P. (1991). *Geography and Trade*. MIT Press.
- Lewis, W. A. (1954). "Economic Development with Unlimited Supplies of Labor". *The Manchester School*, 22(2), 139–191.
- Mkandawire, T. (2001). "Thinking About Developmental States in Africa". *Cambridge Journal of Economics*, 25(3), 289–313.
- North, D.C. (1990). *Institutions, Institutional Change, and Economic Performance*. Cambridge University Press.
- Putnam, R.D. (1993). *Making Democracy Work: Civic Traditions in Modern Italy*. Princeton University Press.
- Ravallion, M. (2001). "Growth, Inequality, and Poverty: Looking Beyond Averages." *World Development*, 29(11), 1803–1815.
- Sachs, J.D. (2005). *The End of Poverty: Economic Possibilities for Our Time*. Penguin Press.
- Todaro, M.P., & Smith, S.C. (2020). *Economic Development*. Pearson Education.
- UNDP (United Nations Development Program). (2020). *Human Development Report 2020: The Next Frontier—Human Development and the Anthropocene*. UNDP Publications.
- Williamson, J. (1990). *Latin American Adjustment: How Much Has Happened?* Institute for International Economics.
- World Bank. (2008). *World Development Report 2008: Agriculture for Development*. World Bank Publications.
- Yifu Lin, J. (2012). *New Structural Economics: A Framework for Rethinking Development and Policy*. World Bank Publications.
- Zimmermann, K.F. (2005). "European Labor Mobility: Challenges and Potentials". *De Economist*, 153(4), 425–450.

