



HOPE FOR CHILDREN INTERNATIONAL

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THEORY OF CHANGE FOR RESOLVING CAMEROON'S POST-ELECTORAL CRISIS

Title: A Theory of Change for Resolving Cameroon's Post-Electoral Crisis
Subtitle: Addressing Root Causes and Building Sustainable Peace
Presenter: Hope for Children International (HOCI)
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Introduction and Problem Statement

Title: The Crisis in Context: Deep-Seated Tensions

Content:

- Cameroon faces recurrent post-electoral disputes, most recently following the controversial October 12, 2025 presidential elections
- Deadly protests, opposition challenges, and a government crackdown highlight a perilous moment for national stability.
- The crisis is a symptom of long-standing governance failures, not just electoral issues.

GOAL:

- To present a Theory of Change (ToC) framework for moving from conflict to sustainable political stability in Cameroon.
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Understanding the Root Causes (The "Problem Tree")

Title: Root Causes of the Crisis

Content:

- **Authoritarian Governance:** President Biya's long tenure of office (since 1982) and repression of the opposition.
- **Flawed Electoral System:**
 - Multiple ballot system open to manipulation and voter intimidation.
 - Lack of independence and impartiality of the electoral body (ELECAM) and the Constitutional Council.
 - Untimely and non-transparent result announcements.
 - Manipulation of the Returning Reports (PVs) from polling station to the Divisional ELECAM offices.
 - Opaque manner of compiling results from the polling stations
 - The interdiction of announcing results coming from the polling stations
- **Ethno-Political Tensions:** Disputes often turn into ethnic divisions between political camps, fueled by social media misinformation and historical grievances.
- **Marginalization & Inequality:** Persistent corruption, poor public services, high youth unemployment, and the ongoing Anglophone conflict contribute to widespread dissatisfaction.
- **Lack of Transition Plan:** Failure to prepare for a constitutional transition beyond the current leadership.

The Theory of Change (ToC) Framework

Title: Our Theory of Change (ToC)

Content:

- **Implement** inclusive reforms, foster genuine dialogue, and ensure accountability...
- **Then** trust in state institutions will increase, tensions will de-escalate, and grievances will be addressed through legitimate channels...
- **Ultimately leading to** a peaceful and stable Cameroon with legitimate, consensual electoral outcomes and inclusive governance.

Key Pillars of Change:

1. Electoral and Constitutional Reform
 2. Inclusive National Dialogue & Consensus Building
 3. Justice, Accountability & Confidence Measures
 4. Socio-Economic Inclusion and Addressing the Anglophone Crisis
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Pillar 1: Electoral and Constitutional Reform

Title: Building a Credible Electoral System

Interventions:

- **Enhance Independence of ELECAM:** Appoint members based on merit and neutrality, not political affiliation, through consultation with all stakeholders.
 - **Ensure Transparency:** Implement real-time, transparent result tabulation and publication process.
 - **Judicial Reform:** Ensure the Constitutional Council acts as an impartial arbiter of disputes, with transparent procedures and timely implementation of decisions.
 - **Prepare for Succession:** Establish a clear and consensual constitutional plan for political transition to avoid a succession crisis.
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Pillar 2: Inclusive National Dialogue and Consensus Building

Title: Fostering Genuine Dialogue

Interventions:

- **Government-Opposition Dialogue:** Initiate dialogue outside of parliament to build consensus on key reforms.
- **Inclusion of All Stakeholders:** Ensure civil society, women, youth, faith leaders, and the diaspora are part of dialogue processes.
- **Address Hate Speech:** Develop mechanisms with social media companies and media outlets to limit inflammatory content and misinformation, which fuels ethnic tensions.

- **Confidence Building Measures:** Scale down inflammatory rhetoric and release political detainees and activists to ease tensions ahead of polls.
 - **Stop provocative and intimidating use of language:** Ministers should address the population with respect, instead of intimidating them.
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Pillar 3: Justice, Accountability and Confidence Measures

Title: Ensuring Justice and Accountability

Interventions:

- **Investigate Violence:** Launch independent investigations into all reports of killings, arrests, and human rights violations related to post-election violence.
 - **Strengthen Rule of Law:** Promote a human rights-based approach to governance and law enforcement.
 - **Combat Corruption:** Implement autonomous and performance-based financing mechanisms to increase transparency and tackle systemic corruption.
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Pillar 4: Socio-Economic Inclusion and Addressing the Anglophone Crisis

Title: Addressing Root Inequalities

Interventions:

- **Address Anglophone Crisis:** Engage in serious talks with hardline Anglophone leaders, addressing the root causes of the insurgency and implementing special status with meaningful decentralization.
 - **Economic Opportunities:** Provide effective socio-economic alternatives to violence for at-risk groups, particularly youth (high unemployment).
 - **Gender Equality:** Promote women's empowerment and participation in political and economic life, which is linked to reduced electoral violence.
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Monitoring Progress and Key Assumptions

Title: **Monitoring Progress and Key Assumptions**

Monitoring Indicators:

- Passage of key electoral reform legislation.
- Number of political prisoners released and dialogue initiatives successfully held.
- Reduced incidents of post-electoral violence and hate speech.
- Increased voter turnout and trust in the process.

Key Assumptions:

- The government has the political will to engage in genuine reform.
- The opposition will participate constructively in dialogue and refrain from violence.
- International partners will consistently support and pressure for reform.
- Civil society and media can operate freely and safely.

Conclusion and Call to Action

Title: **Conclusion and The Way Forward**

Content:

- Resolving Cameroon's post-electoral crisis requires a holistic approach addressing political, social, and economic root causes.
- The proposed Theory of Change provides a roadmap for sustainable peace through concrete interventions.
- **Call to Action:** Urge all national political and social actors, supported by international partners (UN, EU, AU), to act swiftly and decisively to implement these reforms to prevent further instability and ensure a peaceful future.

Thank You