Providing Access to Relevant Quality Education and Psychosocial Support to Conflict-Affected Children in Cameroon
## Summary

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Objective of First Emergency Response</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Response</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Snap shot of First Emergency Projects in the NW/SW</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Target areas</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ECW I</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ECW II</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Introduction

Since 2016, the North-West and South-West (NW/SW) regions of Cameroon have been embroiled in a brutal civil conflict between Francophone government military forces and Anglophone non-state armed groups (NSAGs). As of January 2019, 444,213 people had been displaced within the NW/SW regions alone, with an additional 80,000 displaced to neighbouring Littoral and West regions and at least 30,000 Anglophone Cameroonians having fled to Nigeria (ECW I & II report).

Less than 10% of school-aged children (pre-primary, primary, secondary) have access to any educational opportunities in NW/SW regions. Only 20% of formal schools remained operational and had a reduced enrolment of 50-80% due to the financial difficulty and threats parents faced in trying to send their children to school. Few informal or non-formal education activities were available at the community level.

As a result of violent clashes, attacks on civilian populations, and a corresponding economic crisis, the humanitarian situation had greatly deteriorated, triggering in 2019, the request for Education Cannot Wait (ECW) First Emergency Response (FER) funding.

In July 2019, UNESCO through ECW support, urgently started implementing an Emergency Response Plan to enable access to inclusive and equitable education for school-age children in these two regions. The project directly reached out to 39,183 boys and girls under this intervention. The beneficiary communities included Fako, Manyu, Meme, Boyo, Mezam, and Ngokentunjia Divisions of the NW/SW regions.

Due to the outbreak of the COVID-19 in December 2019, the conditions of children were worsening. The crisis had already disrupted the education of over 1.8 million school-aged children with some totally stopping formal education and many others schooling amid persistent health risk and armed threats. This condition triggered a second ECW funding in April 2020 to support COVID-19 Emergency Response in the Education Sector in the SW and NW of Cameroon.
Objective of First Emergency Response

The overall objective of the ECW programme was to improve access to quality education for conflict-affected children in the North West and South West regions of Cameroon.
Response

In line with the urgent needs identified within the Education in Emergency (EIE) Cluster Strategy; the project focused on the following urgent priority actions in education:

17 July 2019 – 31 December 2020
1. Support non-formal centres through the production and dissemination of pre-recorded lessons and internet-based online/offline learning modules, as well as training teachers/facilitators/peer leaders on their use.

2. Capitation grants to confessional and lay private schools that are operating at a significantly reduced enrolment rate.

3. Support to monitoring of school closures, affected schools, and attacks on education.

03 April 2020 – 03 December 2020
4. Support COVID-19 Emergency Response in the Education Sector,

Capitalizing on the successes from the first response in July 2019, UNESCO was given a second EIE funding to implement activities to prevent the spread of COVID-19 and enable a continuum of education for children in the SW/SW of Cameroon.
Snap shot of First Emergency Projects in the NW/SW

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Project</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Total amount received</th>
<th>Duration</th>
<th>Status</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>ECW I</strong></td>
<td>Providing access to quality education and psychosocial support to conflict-affected children in NW/SW regions of Cameroon</td>
<td>$1,100,000 USD</td>
<td>17 July 2019 – 31 December 2020</td>
<td>Completed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>ECW II</strong></td>
<td>COVID-19 Emergency Response Project in the Education Sector - Cameroon</td>
<td>$1,000,000 USD</td>
<td>03 April 2020 – 03 December 2020</td>
<td>Completed</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Target areas**

- **South West Region:** Fako, Manyu and Meme Divisions
- **North West Region:** Boyo, Mezam and Ngokentunjia Divisions
**ECW I**

Providing access to quality education and psychosocial support to conflict-affected children in NW/SW regions of Cameroon

**KEY RESULTS:**

**Outcome 1 - Conflict-affected girls & boys have access to alternative education supports and material:**

**Children enrolled into community learning spaces**

![Gender distribution chart]

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Girls</td>
<td>14,917</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boys</td>
<td>14,266</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>29,183</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The number reached exceeded the proposed project target of 17,085 (8,542 boys, 8,543 girls) children, representing a 71% increment in the total beneficiaries reached for this particular action.

- Among these children, at least 1,449 (768 boys and 681 girls) learners from the CLS have successfully transitioned to formal education/schools in various grades in the new academic year 2020/2021.

**Learning facilitators trained**

![Gender distribution chart]

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>97</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

They were also trained on Education in Emergency (EIE) Minimum Standards, management of learners and community learning spaces, distance learning using educational technologies and psychosocial support for better learning outcomes.
Providing Access to Relevant Quality Education and Psychosocial Support to Conflict-Affected Children in Cameroon

**Teachers and facilitators trained**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Females</th>
<th>Males</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>97</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>48</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Teachers and facilitators trained as learning material content developers and producers as per Avicenna standards.

**Benificiaries of capitation grants**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Girls</th>
<th>Boys</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1,741</td>
<td>898</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>843</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This grant enabled them to stay in school and seat for the final exams for 2019/2020 academic year.

**Lessons produced & uploaded**

<p>| |</p>
<table>
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<tr>
<th></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>600</td>
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</table>

600 lessons of non-formal education material have been produced & uploaded on the distance-learning platform.

- The learning material contents are for Primary school level 1 in Mathematics, English language, Science and Technology, and Life-skill, and Secondary school cycle 1 in Mathematics, English language, Physics, Chemistry, Biology, and Life-skills.

- The UNESCO online learning platform was also extensively used by learners from formal schools during the COVID-19 schools’ lockdown. The open online portal has 74,440 registered learners while 44,800 are learners from formal schools who found it very resourceful.
**Outcome 2 - Conflict-affected girls and boys have access to formal education:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Children gained access to formal education</th>
<th>Girls</th>
<th>Boys</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>656</td>
<td>692</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>1,348</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

More than 1348 children got into formal education against the proposed 1,153 learners (14.5% increment) in 11 private and confessional schools that benefited from capitation grants.

- These grants supported school fees in primary and secondary schools that are operating at significantly reduced enrolment rates, to increase access to education for vulnerable families who are not able to pay fees for their children.

- Among these children, a total of 237 (121 girls and 116 boys) children registered and sat for final exams: 100% success was recorded. Out of the, 233 from primary school become eligible to enrol into secondary school; 4 children from secondary education passed the exam and moved to higher education.

**School Authorities trained**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Female</th>
<th>Male</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>74</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

School authorities received a 5 day training on school management, leadership, monitoring of capitation grants, EIE, and psychosocial support.
Outcome 3 - Support documentation of school closure and attacks on education:

Community learning centres Equipped

Equipment including Tablets, Raspberry Pi 4 Model B, SD cards, Solar Power Bank, Speakers, Nano projectors, Wi-Fi box, and USB keys were given to facilitate fix and mobile learning operations.

UNESCO developed a simple data gathering tool that was used by local implementing partners and selected formal schools to document and report attacks on schools. Due to the sensitivity of such information, UNESCO worked with the NW/SW Education Cluster in corroborating the information for safety and risk mitigation.
ECW II

Education in Emergency first response to COVID 19 crisis in Cameroon

KEY RESULTS:

Outcome 1: Crisis affected boys & girls access formal & non-formal education through distance learning platforms

Two digital learning platforms integrating the 2 education sub-systems and encompassing the cycles of basic and secondary education were developed. https://unesco-ecw.avcn.fr (Avicenna Platform); https://monecolenligne.cm (National French); https://myscholonline.cm (National English).

1,320 audio records (720 for primary, 600 for secondary) produced. Subjects include English, Science and Technology, Life Skills, Mathematics at primary school level; English, Mathematics, Life Skills, Biology, Physics, Chemistry for secondary (Form 1 to 5).
Providing Access to Relevant Quality Education and Psychosocial Support to Conflict-Affected Children in Cameroon

Networks established

3

(i) Network of formal schools that benefitted from trainings; (ii) Network of implementing partners; (iii) Network of Confessional and Lay Private Schools, Education Secretariats.

Technical Staff trained

150

73 male staff and 77 female staff were trained on e-learning/teaching, production and digitalization of lessons, EIE, PSS in the midst of COVID-19 and distance education to strengthen the resilience of schools and ensure school continuity in the midst of COVID-19.
Production centres established to support the digitalisation of lessons

Three production centres were established to support the digitalization of lessons produced which are being uploaded on the various platforms.

Outcome 2: Children learn at the right level

Learners on learning platforms

266,435

A total of 266,435 children (Female 133,610 Male 132,823) across the national territory have access to education through the various learning platforms of UNESCO. Out the 266,435 learners, we have 29,183 from the North West and South West (21,303 children studying through offline Nano servers’ system at mobile centers while 7,880 use the online platform on personal devices).
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**Learners reached through the mobile application**

![Gender distribution chart for mobile app learners]

- **Female**: 191,779
- **Male**: 114,332
- **Total**: 306,111

Developed to facilitate learning on phone and tablets, including 134,245 primary (54,346 boys and 79,899 girls) and 57,534 secondary (23,101 boys and 34,433 girls)

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**Learners reached via radio**

![Gender distribution chart for radio learners]

- **Female**: 1,256,299
- **Male**: 670,745
- **Total**: 1,927,044

Developed to facilitate learning on phone and tablets, including 701,927 (Girls 329,991 Boys 371,936) and Secondary 554,372 (Girls 255,563 boys 298,809)

- Broadcast of the recorded lessons was launched in April 2020 on the national radio (CRTV).
- During the live broadcast of lessons through exchange and sharing platforms, teachers carried out pre-assessment to assess learners’ previous knowledge, diagnostic assessment (to identify difficulties), formative assessments (to monitor learners progress during the learning) and summative assessment (to assess the learners overall performance after learning).
Outcome 3: Improved safety and protection in learning environment for crisis-affected girls and boys during school closure and during school reopening

Stakeholders trained on emergency preparedness, risk management, PSS and distance learning

Teachers, administrators and community facilitators were trained on emergency preparedness, risk management, Psychosocial Support (PSS) and distance learning.

STRENGTHENING EQUITY THROUGH CROSS-CUTTING (ECW I & II).

Inclusion was promoted by UNESCO both in formal education and nonformal education.

Learners with disabilities in formal education

Children with disabilities including 1126 Girls 914 boys were assisted under the capitation grants to re-enroll back to formal schools.
Providing Access to Relevant Quality Education and Psychosocial Support to Conflict-Affected Children in Cameroon

**Learners with disabilities in nonformal education**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Girls</th>
<th>Boys</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>964</strong></td>
<td><strong>462</strong></td>
<td><strong>502</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Vulnerable children, including 462 girls 502 boys with disabilities were enrolled in the non-formal community learning spaces.

- UNESCO ensured that protection, gender, PSS, and inclusion remained cross-cutting themes in all training and community mobilization engagements.
In 2019 UNESCO initiated distance education through the digitalization of accelerated competency based learning materials to use in non-formal education.

With the assistance of various Education Secretariats (Catholic Education Secretariats, Presbyterian Education Secretariat, Baptist Education Secretariat, Lay Private Education Secretariat) and in close collaboration with the respective Ministries for education, UNESCO was able to galvanize local competent teachers to digitalize accelerated competency based learning materials.

This led to the successful digitalization of more than 1320 lessons (720 primary and 600 secondary). These digitalized lessons were uploaded on the UNESCO-ECW Avicenna Platform (https://unesco-ecw.avcn.fr). Using a conflict sensitive approach, four subjects were selected for primary education (English, Science and Technology, Life Skills and Mathematics)

and 6 subjects for secondary education (English, Mathematics, Life Skills, Biology, Physics and Chemistry for secondary). The content of the above subjects are universal and this boosted the acceptability of the program within the community for the non-formal education.
In North West and South West Regions of Cameroon before the outbreak of COVID-19, children were given an exciting second chance and alternative to study in a very safe and exciting manner which has rekindled their zeal and interests to learning.

Through the Education Cluster, UNESCO was able to engage and trained members of the Education Cluster in 2019 on using the UNESCO-ECW Avicenna distance learning platform developed specifically for the North West/South West regions of Cameroon.

Local NGOs from North West (Cameroon Association for Bible Translation and Literacy, Caritas Bamenda, Community Humanitarian Emergency Board, Community Health and Social Development for Cameroon) and South West (Authentique Memorial Empowerment Foundation, Caritas Mamfe, Foundation for Inclusive Education, Humanitarian Association for Dynamic Youths, Islamic Private Education Secretariat, Pan African Institute for Development – West Africa and Reach-Out) began replicating this training in 260 Community Learning Spaces owned by these local NGOs.

Children's safety is best guaranteed as these community learning spaces are mostly found within places of worship and mosques.

Children's safety is best guaranteed as these community learning spaces are mostly found within places of worship and prayers such as churches and mosques.
Children increasingly study at home using the UNESCO Avicenna Platform (https://unesco-ecw.avcn.fr)

With a common consensus that the education of their children cannot wait, parents began supporting the initiative of home learning using the UNESCO Avicenna Platform.

This has enabled so many children to keep their brains active. They are learning in an exciting manner and more user friendly as compared to the traditional learning method. Children safely study from the confines of their home without fear of being kidnapped or beaten by armed men for pursuing their fundamental human right.
COVID 19 boosted the relevance and usage of the UNESCO-ECW Avicenna Platform

To overcome these challenges, an innovative tool that permits learners to access the 1320 lessons even without internet and electrical connection was specially introduced for underprivileged communities. Learning kits that comprise of nano servers, tablets, solar battery systems, nano rechargeable projectors, and Bluetooth speakers were provided and used to reach over 21,303 children with learning materials via designated safe learning spaces.
Despite the electricity challenges and unstable internet connections in the North West and South West Regions of Cameroon, the UNESCO-ECW Avicenna Platform offered a solution to these challenges.

The socio-political crisis within these two regions intensified the problem of electricity which posed a major challenge to education.

To overcome these challenges, an innovative tool that permits learners to access the 1320 lessons even without internet and electrical connection was specially introduced for underprivileged communities. Learning kits that comprise of nano servers, tablets, solar battery systems, nano rechargeable projectors, and Bluetooth speakers were provided and used to reach over 21,303 children with learning materials via designated safe learning spaces.
Learning has been made smart and exciting for children in North West and South West Regions in Cameroon.
At least 1,449 learners from the 260 Community Learning Spaces in the North West and South West Regions successfully transitioned to formal education.

The UNESCO-ECW Avicenna accelerated competency based learning materials came to breach an existing gap in education by preparing these out-of-school children for a smooth reinsertion into formal education. Within the 260 community learning spaces in North West and South West, at least 1449 learners (768 boys and 681 girls) moved smoothly into formal education.
Through the provision of capitation grants, a total of 1741 children (898 boys and 843 girls) were enrolled in school for 2019/2020 academic year. As a result, Distance Education was fostered in some schools that benefited from UNESCO-ECW capitation grants through the donation of 68 Laptops/Computers.
1. \(-76 + 58 = \)
2. \(-3 - 3 - 3 = \)
3. \(-3 \times -3 = \)