



**Three-year strategy plan of the Cameroonian national
committee of Blue Shield**

2022/2024

**"WITH THE BLUE SHIELD, LETS PROTECT OUR CULTURAL
HERITAGE IN DANGER"**

CONTEXT :

Cameroon has been officially at war with Boko Haram since May 2014. Although the conflict has gradually waned in intensity, after peaking in 2014 and 2015, recurring incidents and attacks, and a sharp rise in suicide attacks from May to August 2017 remind us that the jihadist movement is far from being defeated. Since May 2014, 2,000 civilians and soldiers have been killed and more than a thousand people have been kidnapped in the Far North region. Between 1,500 and 2,100 Boko Haram fighters were also reportedly killed in battles against the Cameroonian defense forces or vigilance committees. The fight against Boko Haram has only worsened the already precarious economic situation of the four million inhabitants of this region. Nevertheless, the populations have demonstrated a great capacity for adaptation and resilience which offers the Cameroonian government and international partners the possibility of implementing development policies integrating the diversity and fluidity of the economic traditions of this border region between Nigeria and Chad. The Far North of Cameroon is a veritable crossroads of trade routes and cultures. In addition to trade, its economy is structured around agriculture, livestock, fishing, tourism, freight transport, crafts and hunting. The informal sector is predominant and smuggling activities occupy a considerable place. The local economy is dominated by wealthy merchants and traditional chiefs, often members of the ruling party, who hold high positions in the administration.

History of the Blue Shield in Cameroon:

HERITAGE ASSESSMENT OF THE SITUATION

The security situation in the English-speaking North-West and South-West regions of Cameroon has deteriorated since the end of 2017. Deadly violence has been taking place since the end of 2016 in the English-speaking North-West and South-West regions of Cameroon. South West. In the Far North, the army is also deployed to fight Boko Haram jihadists who have been launching repeated attacks since 2014 on Cameroonian populations. This is how Cameroon lives to the rhythm of upheavals: political, economic, social and cultural instabilities due to the abuses of the Islamic sect Boko Haram on the one hand, and the security crisis in the two English-speaking regions on the other hand; Added to this is the covid-19 pandemic. In the Far North of Cameroon, insecurity is alarming. It is now estimated that more than 460,000 people have been displaced in the region because of the violence. Attacks by armed groups are on the rise. These anthropogenic crises have done a lot of human, material and cultural damage to the Cameroonian population. These repetitive crises are always the first threat to cultural heritage. They promote not only the destruction of cultural property, but also their illicit trafficking. Cultural property then becomes a privileged target during armed crises. Since the outbreak of these hostilities, many museum institutions have closed their doors, those who resist most often see their works destroyed, looted and stolen. More than half of the museums in the regions in crisis no longer have staff on duty even though they have not closed their doors. The Royal Museum of Babungo and the Royal Museum of Mokolo in the North West and Far North Region of Cameroon are among many institutions that are severely affected by the consequences of the security crisis in the western and northern regions of Cameroon. Cameroon. In addition, buildings for educational and health purposes, including historical

monuments, were partially or totally destroyed. Along the way, the appearance of the coronavirus comes to deal a very hard blow to the previous situation, since the phenomenon is on the scale global and national. Whether small or large museums and cultural sites, both public and private, they have had to close their doors, and most of them for an indefinite period. It is estimated that 90% of some 33 museums and heritage sites in Cameroon are subject to total, partial or eventual closure. Cultural activity in Cameroon derives almost 80% of this income from visits and these visitors are in recent years, Cameroon is facing several complex crises: the Far North region is seriously affected by the Boko Haram in the Lake Chad Basin; in the Eastern region, the arrival of refugees from the Central African Republic has increased humanitarian needs by more than 30%; and the North-West and South-West regions are weakened by the so-called "Anglophone" crisis. Faced with this particularly volatile situation, many communities have had to flee, leaving behind their traditional practices, built heritage and artistic collections. Following the repeated destruction and looting of cultural property in the Far North by Boko-Haram, Prior to these crises, the region's rich heritage and local museums were a key unifying element, bringing communities together and creating income-generating activities such as cultural tourism. To restore culture and hope, Cameroon Blue Bouchier carried out a rapid damage assessment mission to seven cultural sites and museums, with particular emphasis on safeguarding built heritage and securing museums and their collections. This assessment revealed that built structures, such as the Royal Palace of Bafut and the Goto Goulfey Tower, and the Babungo Museum all inscribed on the UNESCO World Heritage Tentative List, were damaged. Stone shrines were demolished, monuments were hit by bullets and some museum collections were destroyed. The recurring violence has also led to the displacement of entire communities, which had the effect of disrupting practices and expressions of intangible cultural heritage.

In all countries facing insurrectionary movements, the question of reconstruction or development policies arises when the conflict decreases in intensity. Cameroon is no exception to this trend. Government and development actors need to combine ongoing emergency projects with longer-term development projects. They must stop perceiving the Far North and the NOSO only as regions to be assisted, but rather consider it as an area of economic opportunities that could promote local development and the revival of growth for the whole of Cameroon. . Thus, the protection of cultural heritage during an armed conflict is a challenge, which can sometimes endanger the responders. However, this protection of cultural heritage corresponds to a deep need for communities, because it gives them a sense of continuity in turmoil and uncertainty.

THE AXES OF THE THREE-YEAR STRATEGY PLAN:

Culture and heritage belong to everyone, and access to them, in all its forms (material and immaterial), is a fundamental right . The protection of culture and the natural world is a moral duty for individuals, communities and regional and national governments. They support heritage because they derive benefits from it. The recurrence of disasters which have seriously damaged or destroyed part of our cultural heritage in recent years, as well as the intentional or unintentional destruction of this heritage as a result of ethnic or religious conflicts or wars have underlined the need to undertake a real information campaign to safeguard and protect, as much as possible, the cultural memory to pass it on to generations future. The protection of cultural heritage includes three types of measures, which complement each other:

- long-term preventive measures, independent of a claim;
- operational forecasting measures: this is the subject of the plan for safeguarding cultural

property, a genuine emergency and crisis management plan;

- Return-to-normal measures.

THEME 1: AWARENESS AND POPULARIZATION PROJECT OF THE HAGUE CONVENTION FOR THE PROTECTION OF CULTURAL PROPERTY IN THE EVENT OF ARMED CONFLICT (1954) IN CAMEROON

. Objective: To sensitize the national community on the stakes of the Layé Convention of 1954 on the need for the implementation of the said convention in Cameroon at a time when the country is going through security crises.

Activities: Three training sessions will be organized
Location: Yaoundé, Maroua, Buea,

Target audiences: Local elected officials, traditional chiefs, curators and managers of cultural heritage, soldiers, magistrates, association leaders, populations living near endangered sites, civil servants, etc.

Number of participants per training session: 35/40 people

Estimated budget: 4,000,000 FCFA or 6,106 Euro.

THEME 2: PARTICIPATION OF BUREAU MEMBERS IN NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCES, SEMINARS AND WORKSHOPS

OBJECTIVE:

Strengthen the capacities and the sharing of skills of the members of the national committee of the blue shield of Cameroon in order to optimize the safeguarding of cultural property.

Activities: Learning experiences (participating in seminars, symposia, and workshops on issues related to the protection of cultural property in situations of natural or anthropogenic crises).

Number of participations: 10/15 scientific activities
Estimated budget: 2,000,000 FCFA or 3,100 Euro.

THEME 3: CONTINUE THE STATE OF PLAY ON CULTURAL PROPERTY IN CAMEROON

Objective:

Take stock of the situation of the state of protection of cultural property in danger in Cameroon.

Activities: Collection of data on the ground related to the situation of the state of cultural property in conflict or post-conflict zones

Location: Crisis-prone regions in Cameroon

Support: Production of a report on the state of Cameroonian cultural property in danger

Estimated budget: 1,500,000 FCFA or 2,290 Euro.

General total of the three-year strategy plan:
7,500,000 FCFA or 11,496 Euro.

Conclusion:

In sum the Cameroonian national committees of Blue Shield work in the field with professional of heritage and Museum with security force and army to protect our treasure and heritage in this sad time. We built program, activity and action to be efficient on our strategy.