

GUIDING CITIZENS THROUGH THE MAJORS STAGES OF THE ELECTORAL PROCESS IN CAMEROON



Brot
für die Welt



Ziviler Friedensdienst
Wir scheuen keine Konflikte.

A production of :

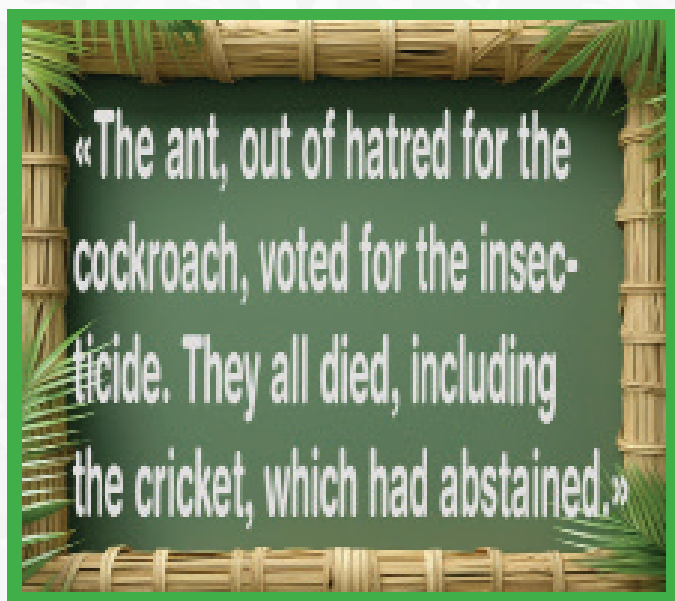
L' Observatoire pour la Paix Durable (OPD)

Under the supervision of :

L' Association pour la Promotion des Actions
de Développement Endogènes Rurales (APADER)

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DEFINITIONS AND LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

APADER : Association pour la Promotion des Actions de Développement Endogènes Rurales

Ballot paper: document by which a voter expresses their choice

Invalid vote: worthless ballot: is considered as invalid vote at the counting: ballot without envelop, envelop without ballot, ballot out of conformity with the pre-prepared by the ELECAM, envelope containing more than one ballot, (if the ballots are identical in the same envelop it is considered as one vote), ballot with signs opened to identify the voter.
Polling Station (voting post): a place where voters go to cast their ballot in an election.

VC: (Voting Card)

«Election charter»: group of people “recruited” by the elites in an electoral fraud mechanism

LVC: Local Voting Commission

ELECAM: Elections Cameroon

Election: A process of choosing a leader by popular vote

Indelible ink: in-erasable ink, diversely coloured, used to mark finger prints in the voting post

Envelop: pocketed paper destined to receive the ballot at a voting post

Voting booth: physical separated disposal destined to preserve the secret of the choice of the voter

NGO: Non Governmental Organization

PPS: President of the Polling Station

PLVC: President of the Local Voting Commission

OR: Official Record

PP: Political Party

Election observer: a designated voter among the voters by the president of the polling station to help in the counting of ballots. This voter must be registered in polling station and must have voted.

Balloting: the whole voting process through which the voters express their choice by the means of ballots

Ballot box or election box: transparent box with an opening into which the voters slot their ballot papers. It should be observed empty and sealed at the beginning of the voting process.

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WHY THIS BOOKLET ?

The production of this document is carried out in a rather turbulent worried context in our country. We are in the year 2025, an electoral year that we have to tackle with assurance as citizens. In the framework of the realization of the activities of the Civil Service Programme for Peace (CSP) in Cameroon, sustained by “Bread for the World”, APADER has decided this year once more to continue with the sensitization and mobilization of citizens.

Some citizens longing for change can't fully engage due to some abuses observed and denounced (the restrictions of public freedoms, the unavailability of voters cards, the partial publishing of the national list of voters, the contested Electoral Code, etc.). Also, citizens' ignorance, indifference and casualness in participating in the electoral process make things worst.

Despite these difficulties, citizens should exercise their right to vote in accordance with the provisions of the Electoral Code and the Constitution. While the challenges seem immense and difficult to overcome, the OPD (Observatoire pour la Paix Durable) members, authors of this booklet believe that the power to effect change lies in our hands, is even a duty. 'A vote is a kind of prayer about the kind of world you want to live in' (George Orwell)

This simplified guide aims at accompanying you through this process which unfolds into three stages: before, during and after the election, and

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also provides you with the tools you need to become a truly committed citizen.

So be an active citizen so that our beloved country turns into a more democratic and prosperous society, our common dream.

PART A : PRE-ELECTORAL STAGE

This involves all the operations that precede the vote: from the registration on the electoral lists to the end of the electoral campaign.



I. What the Electoral Code provides

At the pre-electoral phase, citizens must:

- Register on the electoral list (at the council office or at the local branch of ELECAM or through its

PART A: PRE-ELECTORAL STAGE

mobile services);

- Re-register if one has changed their town or neighbourhood ...

- Ask to have a receipt then his voter's card

- Verify your names (your profession, your home, your date and place of birth, your registration and

your polling station)

NB: in case of error, (absence of name on the list, name poorly written, polling station ...), contact the office or the local branch of ELECAM

II. Worth noting

To be a voter, you should:

- Be a Cameroonian;

- Enjoy your political and civil rights (never been sentenced to a custodial sentence of more than 6 months);

- Have the electoral majority age of 20 years of age or older on the date of the elections;

- Be registered on the electoral list and has obtained a voter's card;

- Enjoy your mental capacities

The pre-election period is also a good time to:

- Demonstrate one's citizenship;

- To mature one's ideas in order the appropriate leader when the time comes;

- Read the programme of the different political parties or candidates;

- Discuss with the influential members of the political parties

- Verify the conformity of the polling stations: maximum of 500 voters.

In sum, during the pre-election period, citizen must be curious, attentive and adequately prepared to collect necessary information to help carry out a consequential choice on the voting day.

PART B : THE ELECTORAL PHASE



It refers to all the operations which take place on the day of the elections

I. What the Electoral Code provides on election day

The citizen must:

- Go to the polling station between 8 AM and 6 PM;
- Be disciplined;
- Enter the room with their identification documents;
- Take the different ballots displayed and an envelope;
- Go into the voting booth to make their choice;
- Drop their envelope into the ballot box;
- Sign and put their fingerprint in indelible ink on the voters' list before leaving with their identification documents.

II. Worth noting

a) Citizens present must:

- Avoid anything that could lead authorities to disqualify them;
- Contest any illegal act, wherever it comes from;
- Ensure that the polling station decor and voting materials are compliant;
- Find the list of voters posted at the entrance of the polling station;
- Avoid to give in to any form of corruption, provocation or promises made in and out of the polling station.

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b) The polling station comprises a voting commission made up of:

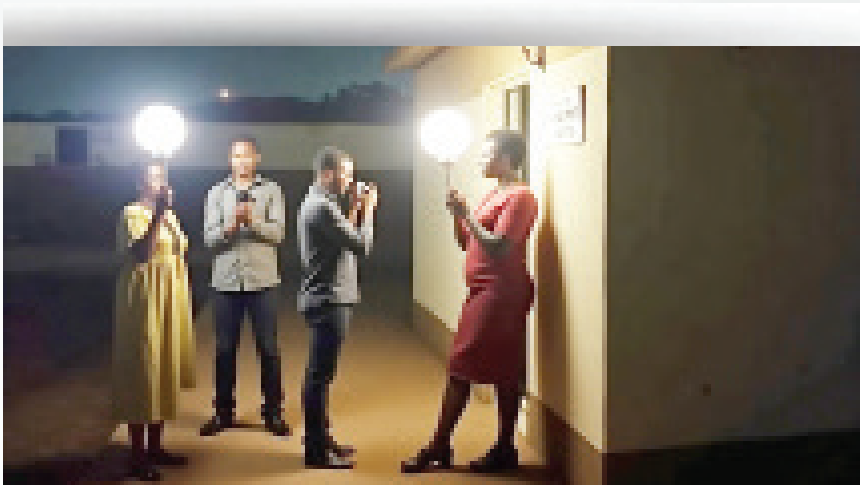


- A president;
- A representative of the administration;
- A representative of each candidate, a list of candidates or political parties.

c) Responsibilities of different actors



- Before the vote starts, the president of the local commission of vote with other members check the conformity of the polling station and all its accessories (empty ballot box, availability of the ballot papers of the candidates or the list of candidates, presence of the voting booth ...);
- A regularly registered voter at a polling station can vote even without a voter's card, but they have to verify his identity;
- A voter unable to carry out the voting process by themselves (caused by a disability ...), can be assisted by another voter of his choice regularly registered on the electoral list of the concerned polling station; this person shouldn't be a candidate, neither a mandatory to the candidate nor from the list of candidates (nor from political parties). He can assist only one person on the voting day;
- The president and the members of the local voting commission can vote on the spot after they had presented their voter's cards;
- The voting citizen must avoid going out of the voting booth with unchosen ballot papers;
- At 6 pm, the president of the polling station must declare the elections closed.



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PART C : THE POST-ELECTORAL PHASE

It begins as soon as the PCLV declares the polling closed. This is done at 6 pm.

I. What the Electoral Code provides

- Citizens have the right to attend the counting operations;
- A citizen who has voted at a polling station may be admitted as a scrutineer;
- Citizens must ensure that any irregularities are noted down in alongside the challenges.

II. Worth noting

- Polling may close in a polling station before 6 pm if the PLVC determines that all expected voters have already voted. It may also close after 6 pm if, at that time, some voters present in front of the polling station have not yet voted;
- Any voter present at the closure of the polling may attend the counting, seated in the room or even standing at the door or window while being disciplined;
- The PLVC designates 2 scrutineers from among the present voters;
- In front of everyone, the PLVC opens the ballot box, empties it, and

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shares tasks between the 2 scrutineers and starts the counting of votes;

- The counting can take place at a local ELECAM branch if the PCLV feels insecure;
- The engaged citizen must come into the room with their personal equipment: calculator, flashlight, camera, in short, anything that would allow them to keep track of everything happening in the counting room;
- The counting phase is a key moment for electoral fraud: the citizen must absolutely protect their vote by being present at this counting;
- The political actors introduce complaints at this moment for any irregularities observed;
- The winner of the presidential election is the candidate who, at the national level and after all electoral disputes have been resolved, obtains the simple majority of votes: do not confuse the result of their polling



« Voting is not only a right, it is a duty. Every citizen has the responsibility to participate in the political life of their country».

L'OBSERVATOIRE POUR LA PAIX DURABLE

L'Observatoire pour la Paix Durable (OPD) is a space for exchange and free expression for citizens. It was born out of the work of APADER within the framework of the Service Civile pour la paix (SCP) program of Pain Pour Le Monde (PpLM). Its goal is to involve citizens in monitoring the quality of the delivery of basic social services in the Ndé Division, with a view to supporting sustainable peace, in other words, to seek to create an environment where citizens live without fear in spirit, an environment with less arbitrariness, less poverty, and less exclusion. This group of citizens from all walks of life works on local governance (Education, Electoral Process...).

Observatoire pour la Paix Durable *denunciation suggestion advocacy*

OPD is non-partisan, secular, ideologically and denominationally neutral

A space where independent citizens who long for social justice and democracy with the view of boosting a harmonious and self-soupted development of our localities, division and country gather and carry out reflexions.

02 priorities sectors

- Local governance**
- Education**
- The electoral process**

Key Instruments

- Collective reflexions**
- education to democracy**
- education to decentralization**
- education to Human Rights**

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PRESENTATION OF APADER

L' Association pour la Promotion des Actions de Développement Endogènes Rurales (APADER) is an organization of the civil society, legalized in Bangangté in 1993, No. 07/RD/F36/BAPP. It is an association which supports development initiatives of grassroots communities and citizens in rural and urban areas, governed by Law No. 053/90 of 19 December 1990 on freedom of association in Cameroon. Its vision as a national civil society organization is to see all members of Cameroonian communities and even those of hitherto disadvantaged groups, actively involved in the rational management of common resources and the equitable distribution of the fruits of growth in the country, for a more stable and developed Cameroon. Therefore, APADER's mission is to:

- Supervise populations, especially disadvantaged groups (especially young people, women, internally displaced people, etc.), to increase the yields of their agro-sylvo-pastoral activities and to integrate them into stable jobs so that they can sufficiently take care of themselves.
- Encourage the population, especially young people, to play their roles as responsible citizens, on the one hand by the appropriation of their rights and duties as individuals, and on the other hand, by the fight against the ethnic, political and religious cleavages that hinder the establishment of free dialogue in society so that they can contribute to the stable and sustainable development of Cameroon.



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