

Friedrich Ebert Stiftung Cameroon/ Central Africa

# *Evaluation of MDGs 2 and 3 in basic education 2000 - 2015 achievements and challenges*

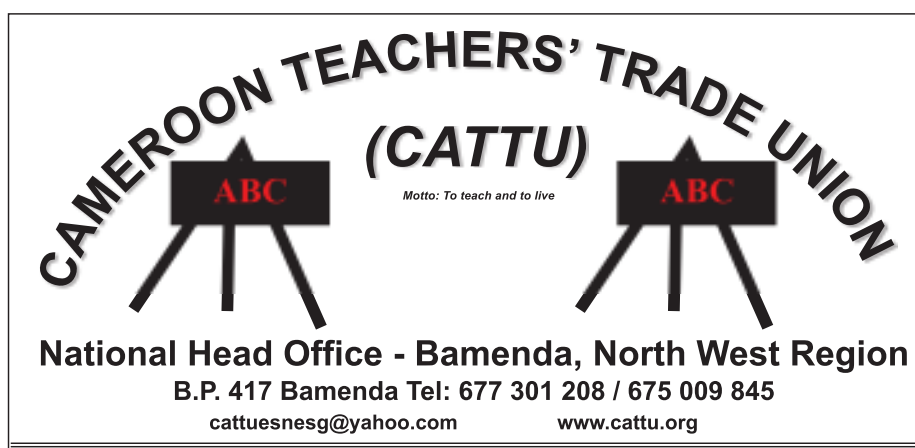


Study elaborated by CATTU

**FRIEDRICH  
EBERT**   
**STIFTUNG**

# ***Evaluation of MDGs 2 and 3 in basic education 2000 – 2015 achievements and challenges***

Study elaborated by the  
Cameroon Teachers' Trade Union (CATTU)



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## **Presentation of the Cameroon Teachers Trade Union (CATTU)**

Created in 1996, the Cameroon Teachers' Trade Union (CATTU) addresses specific issues pertaining to the teaching profession. Maintaining the traditional trade union commitment of improving the working and living conditions of its members, CATTU exhausts every avenue to enhance the growth of the education industry in Cameroon. By this token, it seeks to assure better jobs and more revenue which should logically translate into better living conditions for the Cameroonian teachers. Shaping school curricular, type and systems of education, CATTU is bent on advocacy for alternative educational options to enable the Cameroonian youths meet the challenging needs of the labour market.

Some of CATTU's measurable achievements are: the creation of the University of Bamenda and the twin colleges of education; the Higher Teacher Training College and the Higher Technical Teacher Training College in Bambili. These demonstrate CATTU's endeavours to buttress stakeholders' commitment in the growth of the education industry in Cameroon and her desire to make meaningful input to Cameroon's political, economic and social progress. It would not be an overstatement to say that Cameroon's 2020 economic and 2035 emergency visions could make giant strides if education is given more consideration.

With a membership of over 2000 teacher spread across the national territory, CATTU taps from best practices, research, training and professional exchanges to drive through global, regional and national educational programmes and reforms for a better educational system for Cameroonians.

## **Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung (FES) – Foundation for social democracy**

The Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung (FES) is the oldest political foundation in Germany with a rich tradition in social democracy dating back to its foundation in 1925. The foundation owes its creation and its mission to the political legacy of Friedrich Ebert, the first democratically elected German President.

The work of our political foundation focuses on the core ideas and values of social democracy – freedom, justice and solidarity. This connects FES with social democracy and free trade unions. As a non-profit institution, FES organises its work autonomously and independently.

### **FES promotes:**

- a free society, based on the values of solidarity, which offers all its citizens the same opportunities to participate on political, economic, social and cultural levels, regardless of their origin, sex or religion;
- a lively and strong democracy; sustainable economic growth with decent work for all;
- a welfare state that provides more education and improved healthcare, but at the same time combats poverty and provides protection against the challenges that life throws at citizens;
- Germany as a country that is responsible for peace and social progress in Europe and in the world.

With our international network of offices in more than 100 countries, we support a policy for peaceful cooperation and human rights, promote the establishment and consolidation of democratic, social and constitutional structures and are pioneers for free trade unions and a strong civil society.

## **Preface**

Education is the most important means to develop human resources, impart appropriate skills, knowledge and attitudes. It is the basis for developing creativity, innovation, science and technology in order to harness our resources, develop our industries and a global knowledge economy. For Africa, education is the right means to find its place in a global community.

Education is the tool by which Africa will entrench a culture of peace, gender equality and positive African values. The African Unions' second decade of education for Africa 2006-2015, has a vision of an integrated, peaceful, prosperous Africa, driven by its own people to take its rightful place in the global community and the knowledge economy. Conferences of Ministers of education have continued to reiterate the need for increasing access to education, improving quality and relevance and ensuring equity.

Today the world is a global village, interconnecting multicultural societies and necessitating that all societies and their citizens become educated about the world beyond their national borders. This calls for the need of a global exchange on educational policies through base line inquiries at individual, community, and national level, while respecting local allegiances and cultural diversity with the overall aim to improve education in our global societies. This global education should be guided by a shared international ethic based on a system of universal values which recognize human rights as the United Nations Human Rights Charter.

**FES educational policy:** FES from its very beginning has been an institution for education. Our founding Father, the first democratically elected German President, Friedrich Ebert, devoted his fortune to our foundation in order to guarantee schooling for the economically and socially deprived but young gifted and socio-politically active students. The FES scholarship programme still exists until today and each year, there are numerous students in Germany and worldwide, benefiting from FES's funding. The promotion of lobbying for equal and high quality education as the essential basis for a better future for societies, their development and progress has always been the focal point of FES's work.

So it was more than obvious for us to enter into a partnership with the Cameroon's Teachers Trade Union (CATTU) some 15 years ago. This partnership has succeeded in research and training on a wide range of subjects, some of which are: the educational options for Cameroon beyond 2035, curriculum development, gender and education, education and decentralization, youth illegal migration and corruption in Cameroonian schools and last but not the least, the chances in technical education. From these topics, one can clearly recognise the engagement of CATTU to improve the working conditions of educational workers, as well as that of the Cameroonian society.

The present report: a CATTU/FES partnership, is an evaluation of the realization of the Millennium Development (MDG) goal number 2 "Achieve Universal primary education" and number 3 "promote gender equality and empower women" in Cameroon. This report is not intended to show proof that Cameroon has failed to achieve some aspects of these MDGs but rather, to analyze the problems and context, as well as suggest the way forward.

We strongly wish that CATTU continues its work and interest in the improvement of the Cameroonian society and hope that this report will inspire decision makers in Cameroon to take action.

**Mrs. Susanne Stollreiter**

Resident Representative

Friedrich Ebert Stiftung (FES) Cameroon/Central Africa

## **Note of thanks/Gratitude by CATTU**

The research that led to the compilation of this report would never have been possible without the financial and technical assistance of the Friedrich Ebert Stiftung (FES). We are particularly grateful to the FES for its readiness and availability to support the process: from its inception, survey questionnaires, data collection, data analysis, reporting, workshop, editing, translation, publication and the public conference presentation.

We want to thank particularly Mrs. Susanne Stollreiter, Resident Representative of the FES for the time she devoted to see this project achieve its desired results. We specifically thank FES projects manager, Mrs. Susan Bamuh Apara for her commitment to this project.

The Cameroon Teachers' Trade Union (CATTU) expresses immense thanks and gratitude to all teachers who braved the terrible roads in enclave rural areas of Cameroon, to gather the information contained in this document.

Particular thanks go to the members of the CATTU project team: Kwasi Wilson, Kukwa Caroline, Abongwa Mercy, Semma Valentine, Gwanyama Irene and Mukong Frederick who, sometimes worked under pressure and into very late hours to enable CATTU meet tight deadlines.

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## **LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS USED**

<b>C2D:</b>	Debt Relief and Development Programme (Contrat Désendettement et Développement)
<b>CATTU:</b>	Cameroon Teachers' Trade Union
<b>CS:</b>	Civil Service Teacher
<b>CT:</b>	Contract Teacher
<b>EFA:</b>	Education For All
<b>FENASSCO B:</b>	National Federation of school sports, league B
<b>FES:</b>	Friedrich Ebert Stiftung
<b>MDG:</b>	Millennium Development Goal
<b>PTA:</b>	Parent Teacher Association
<b>UNESCO:</b>	United National Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation

## **PART ONE**

### **Introduction**

The Cameroon Teachers' Trade Union (CATTU) has (for close to 20 years - 2 decades) been at the vanguard of social justice, human rights and human development in the education sector. This has been made possible thanks to the fruitful collaboration with its partners, prominent amongst them, the Friedrich Ebert Stiftung (FES). Through advocacy and lobbying, seminars and workshop trainings, negotiations, demonstrations, industrial actions etc., CATTU has registered successes in influencing the Cameroonian government to address particular social, educational and developmental needs at national and regional levels. Some of successes are the extension of the retirement age of teachers to 60 against 55 years for most public service workers, the institution of research allowances for teachers, the provision of the minimum package for school administration, the creation of the Higher Technical Teacher Training College in Bamenda, the upgrading of the Higher Teacher Training College (ENS) Bambili in the North and the creation of the University of Bamenda all in the North West region of Cameroon.

Cameroon as a member of the concert of nations has been part of several International conferences and signatory to many International conventions. As one of the 189 signatories to the United Nations Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), and one of the 164 signatories to the Education for All (EFA) framework Dakar 2000, the government has been making measurable efforts to achieve these goals and visions.

The magic year for the attainment of the MDGs 2015 is almost ending, CATTU in partnership with the FES, put together this report on the evaluation of some aspects of MDGs 2 and 3 which hinge on universal primary education for all as well as gender equality and the empowerment of girls and women. This document is intended to gauge the progress made in achieving these 2 goals in Cameroon and check the lapses. It suggests recommendations which should be used to advocate and lobby education stakeholders to embark on reforms that should enhance equal access to education for boys and girls, achieve complete universal primary education in rural and urban Cameroon as well as provide educational alternatives which will improve on human capital.



## **Project title**

The title of this project is: **“Evaluation of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs): Achievement of Universal Primary Education” (Goal n° 2) and “Promotion of Gender Equality and Women Empowerment” (Goal n° 3).**

## **Project objectives and results**

The document evaluates the level of attainment of MDG 2 and 3 in some selected areas in 2 regions of Cameroon using data on the boy/girl pupil ratio; the male/female teacher ratio in primary schools, school mapping and infrastructure. This document is a lobby tool which should trigger CATTU, government and other education stakeholders to embrace sustainable inclusive reforms to narrow the gender disparity in education and female empowerment in Cameroon. CATTU can also press the government to review its policy on the creation of schools and the present school mapping situation in Cameroon.

With equal access to education for both boys and girls, government will be able to strengthen the social dimension of development processes in Cameroon.

Embarking on this evaluation exercise, public awareness has been created on the short comings of MDG 2 and 3. CATTU, as an imposing trade union with good track advocacy and lobby records, can now bring pressure to bear on the government and other education stakeholders to speed up the development of qualified human capital, infrastructure and human rights, enhance social justice as well as sustainable social and economic development in Cameroon.

It is timely to push through more gender sensitive reforms in Cameroon following a January 2015 publication of the National Gender Policy by the Ministry for Women’s Empowerment and the Family. The main thrust of this policy document is the promotion of the status of the Cameroonian woman through education, improved access to credit facilities, decision making, gainful employment, the promotion of the right of women to inheritance, the prevention of all forms of discriminations and violent acts against women and girl children, etc.

An August 2015 pilot food for children programme by the Ministry of Basic Education to encourage children in rural areas to obtain at least primary education, is another window of opportunity for CATTU to enhance its advocacy and lobby towards universal primary education for all in Cameroon.

## **PART TWO**

### **SURVEY OUTLINE/ Methodology**

#### **1. Conception, design and production of survey tools**

January 23<sup>rd</sup> to 26<sup>th</sup> 2015, CATTU and an education development think tank, brainstormed, reflected, conceived and designed questionnaires for data collection.

#### **2. Training of surveyors (Data collectors)**

February 2015 to March 2015 CATTU trained 17 data collectors (10 men and 7 women) in order to achieve the desired results. They were drawn from schools and educational establishments from 5 divisions in the English speaking part of Cameroon-the North West and South West regions (Mezam, Momo and Menchum division in the North West as well as Fako and Ndian divisions in the South West).

March 9<sup>th</sup>-30<sup>th</sup> 2015 the data collectors were deployed on the field with 500 questionnaires. They met the target groups and collected the required data despite some difficulties encountered.

April 6<sup>th</sup> – 18<sup>th</sup> 2015 a team of 6 (3 male; 3 female) seasoned analysts reviewed and synthesised the questionnaires results.

#### **3. Difficulties encountered during data collection**

Several challenges were faced at the level of data collection. Some of these include:

- The very bad state of roads in some areas, especially with the outset of the early heavy rains,
- The reluctance of some school directors to release especially financial information and to provide other data for fear of victimization from hierarchy,
- The misunderstanding of the survey objectives by some authorities, who insinuated that the exercise was a political ploy to ridicule the government. They therefore refused to provide requested information,
- Administrative bottlenecks, as some administrators needed clearance from their hierarchy before providing any statistics,
- Some school head teachers who were attending to professional imperatives would not delegate collaborators to access certain school records.
- There was a lack of a proper filing system and the poor handling of administrative documents, especially in institutions where head teachers had been replaced.

It took the determination and commitment of the collectors, who in some cases made more than two visits to get the needed information.

#### **4. Preliminary presentation of survey results**

In a three days seminar/workshop on May 21<sup>st</sup> to 23<sup>rd</sup> in Bamenda, 35 teachers, education authorities and experts improved the survey report through input papers, best case practices, experience sharing, critical analysis, group work, etc.

## **PART THREE**

### **Presentation / interpretation of results**

All 500 questionnaires were returned from the field. During the analysis, irregularities were noticed and some questionnaires were taken out for lack of purpose and relevance to the issues at stake. This report therefore emanates from 473 retained responses which have been interpreted and presented as follows.

#### **A. Proportion and distribution of trained teachers in primary schools**

Between 2000 and 2006, there were more Parent Teacher Association (PTA) teachers than Contract Teachers (CT). In the former category, they were paid minimal salaries determined by the available financial dispositions of the PTA. The salaries were low and in some instances below the then Minimum Wage of 28.000 FCFA (about 44 Euros) in Cameroon. Even the 2008 Minimum wage raise to 36.000 FCFA (About 56 Euros), is far below survival, even in the less expensive rural areas. The PTA teachers had no job security as they could be fired any time this association runs into any financial crisis. This same working condition of the PTA teachers obtains even today.

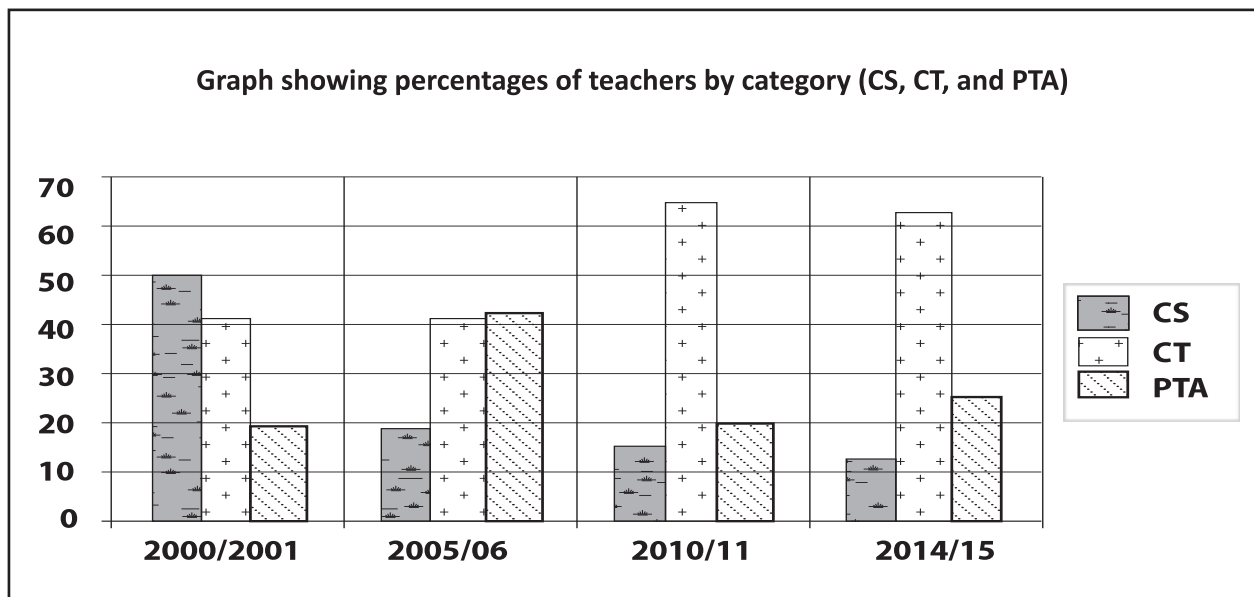
For the Contract Teachers, their salaries were and remain lower than that of the Public Service (PS) teachers. These teachers accept pre-determined indecent salaries which are usually far below subsistence level or the United Nations (UN) poverty line of one dollar (1\$) a day. These teachers do not have social security amenities like family allowance, health insurance, job safety, retirement benefits etc.etc. Worst still, their status bars them from any form of collective bargaining. Some of these teachers are forced to accept this status because of the very low employment rate or the high unemployment rate of 33% in Cameroon.

By 2011, the number of contract teachers rose steeply and the number of civil servants and PTA teachers dropped drastically. Eminent reasons for this drop are that many civil servants went on retirement, some died and some left the corps/sector. Some of the reasons for which teachers quit the profession could be attributed to the unattractive salaries since the 1994 draconian civil service salary cut which has remained steady since then, Brain drain to seek for better jobs and pay opportunities etc.

To fill the gap, PTA teachers' situation improved as they were recruited as contract teachers by the government, thanks to the French Debt Relief and Development Programme (C2D). Even under these conditions, their working and living conditions remain deplorable.

In 2014 and as part of government's effort to enhance her efforts in attaining quality universal primary education for both boys and girls, the government slightly increased the number of Civil Servant and PTA Teachers. Some contract Teachers were absorbed into the public service through a competitive entrance examination with a consequent improvement in their living conditions through better pay and job security. Government created more schools but this measure was not matched by enough manpower to meet the increasing teaching challenges.

Evaluation of MDGs 2 and 3 in basic education 2000 – 2015...



Source: CATTU survey on MDG 2 & 3 (2015)

**Observation:** The 2000/2001 statistics as compared to that of 2014/2015 indicate that government has not done enough to recruit many civil service teachers. Contract teachers are disgruntled because of the injustices of low pay and the inability to go on transfer even to join their spouses (for women). They are denied the possibility to upgrade skills and pay package. Their contracts clearly state that they will have to resign their jobs in the event of going for further studies. CATTU fears that if this trend continues unchanged, there will come a time when Basic Education will be the preserve of unmotivated contract and PTA teachers, some of whom are untrained and this would worsen the already poor quality of teaching and learning.

The official teacher to pupil ratio is 1:45 (source: Government text). The survey revealed that the ratio is 1: 63 on average. However, due to poor personnel deployment, there are schools with lower ratios (1:20) and others with higher ratios (1:80).

Having identified general and core competences to be achieved in primary education like basic knowledge in mathematics, science and technology, development of logical thinking abilities and feeling of patriotism, development of autonomy, entrepreneurial, artistic and ICT skills, physical education, communication skills with focus on mother tongues of learners (in line with EFA goal number 6), the government has not been able to recruit enough teachers to effectively accomplish these goals.

Even after Cameroon qualified for the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries Initiative (HIPC) in 2006, and with the World Bank Educational assistance as well as the C2D funding, which pumped more money into social sector development with education featuring high on the scale, these initiatives have not met the recruitment of sufficient teachers to cater for the training needs of the growing boys and girls population in Cameroon. Consequently, there is an acute shortage of personnel as the average number of teachers per school (complete cycle, 1 – 6) was three (3).

As a result of insufficient teachers, some are overworked as some start the day say in primary 1, leave work on the chalk board for the pupils, step over to another class say primary 3, does the same, then ends the day in primary 6- an examination class.

The number of working hours lost notwithstanding, what more than compensates is the fact that teachers do prepare their lessons at home in order to provide valuable and qualified teaching. Teachers also correct scripts out of official working hours. These leave them with little time to rest.

Government should in its policy of affixing a teacher to pupils, ensure that each class has a teacher. By this token, a primary school running from primary 1-6 should have at least six (06) teachers even if there is only one pupil in a given class. Thus, G.S Wumsom in Momo Division of the North West region for example, a primary 6 school with an enrolment of 72 pupils, should have more than the present two teachers considered to give a ratio of 1:36.

## B. Teachers

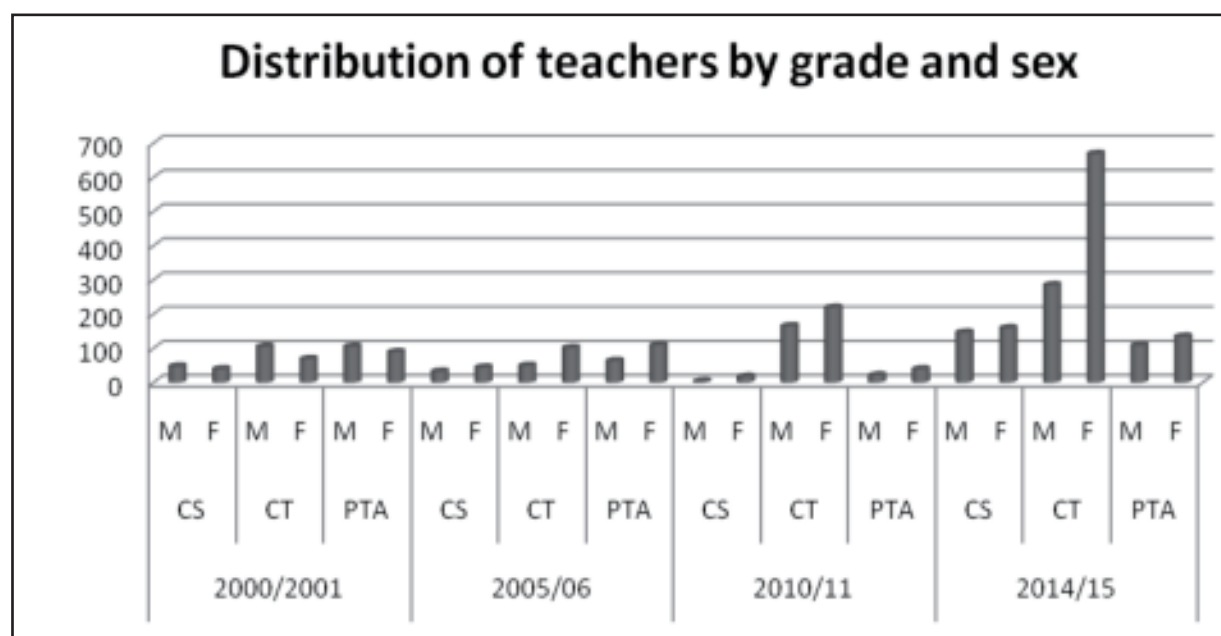
### i) Distribution of teachers by Grade and Gender

Before 2005, there were more male Civil Service (CS) teachers, Contract Teachers (CT) and PTA teachers than female teachers. Between 2005 and 2011, the trend changed, with more female than male teachers in all the categories.

In 2010/2011, there was a very significant drop of male CS teachers and PTA teachers in contrast to an increase in CT teachers. In the same year, the number of male teachers was lower than the number of female teachers in every category.

In 2014/2015, the number of female CT teachers witnessed a geometric rise above male CT teachers because the male lost interest in the profession and female teachers were favoured at recruitment.

Since 2005, government has been making some efforts in promoting gender equality and empower women by giving them employment opportunities. (fig. 2 below)

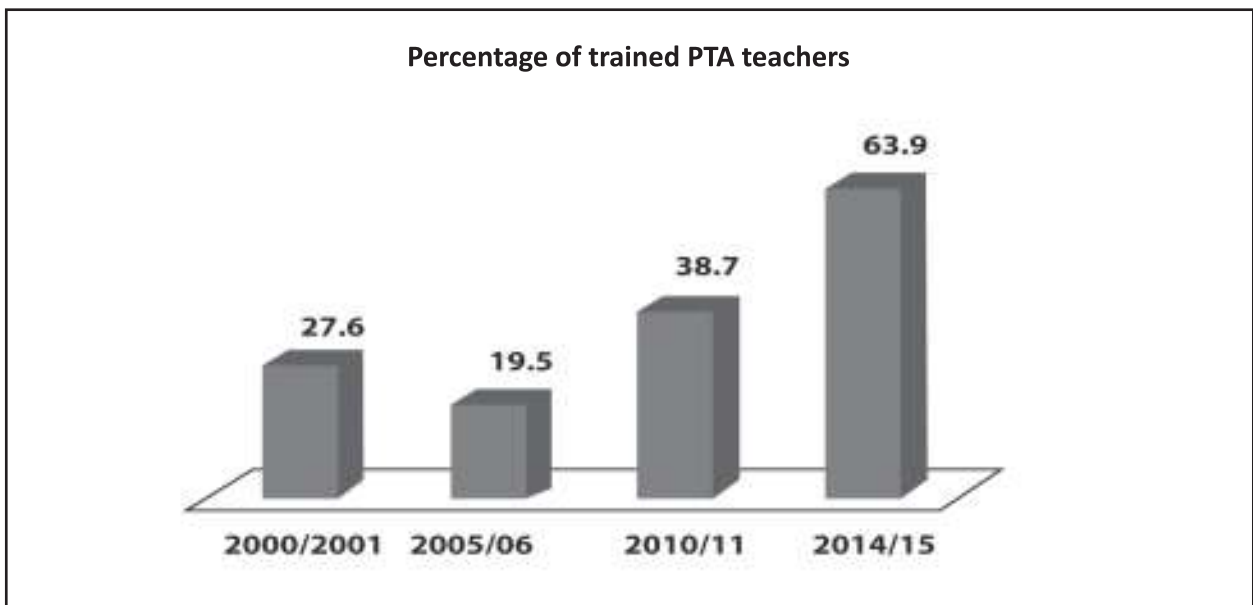


Source: CATTU survey on MDG 2 & 3 (2015)

**Observation:** The number of female teachers recruited has grown progressively and more significantly in the year 2014/2015 although it is not clear whether the availability of more female than male (contract) teachers is a direct result of government’s intention to promote gender equality, or an attempt by government to simply attain a certain recruitment level, or still, a consequence of lack of male interest in teaching in primary schools.

### ii) Training of PTA teachers

It was equally observed that most PTA teachers between 2000 and 2011, were not professionally trained. This had an impact on the quality of education for the Cameroonian child especially in rural areas. In 2014/2015, the situation is different though for other reasons. (fig 3) Serving as PTA teacher is virtually a condition sine qua non to be recruited by the government.

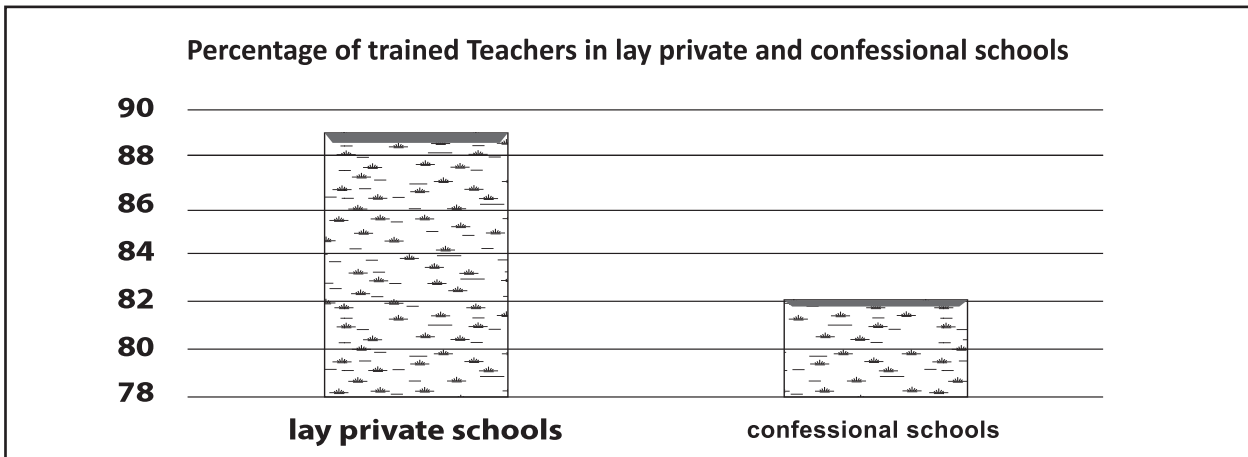


Source: CATTU survey on MDG 2 & 3 (2015)

**Observation:** The survey revealed that the number of PTA teachers was almost constant between 2000 and 2006 but most of them were not trained. Between 2010 and 2015, the proportion of recruited PTA teachers witnessed a slight increase but experienced a drop by half the figure in 2000/2001. However, many more of them are now trained in order to have the necessary qualification and experience. This would enable them to postulate for recruitment as CT.

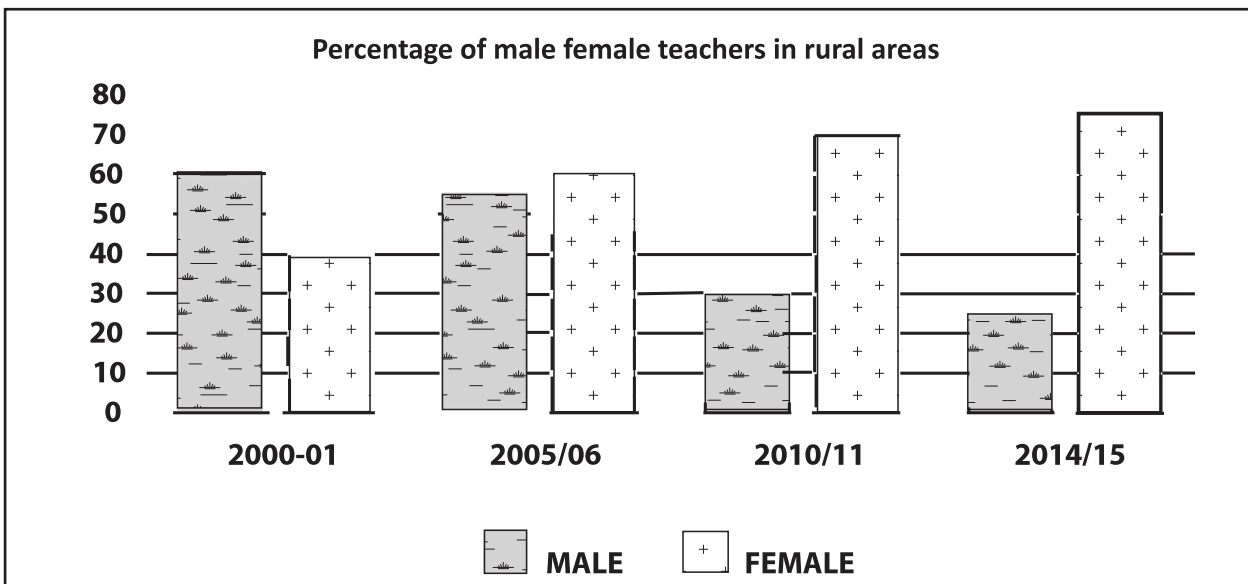
### iii) Alternative opportunities for teachers

Unfortunately, a good percentage of this manpower is not recruited by government. The lay private and confessional schools absorb and make use of them even if they do not provide them with needed job satisfaction.



Source: CATTU survey on MDG 2 & 3 (2015)

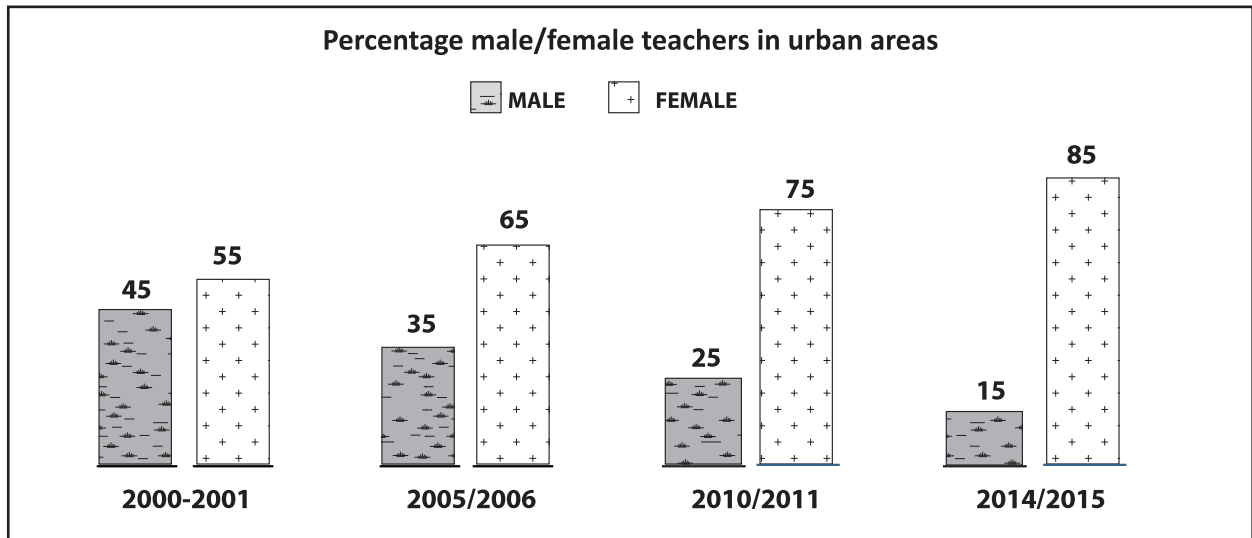
iv) Distribution of male/female teachers in urban/rural areas



Source: CATTU survey on MDG 2 & 3 (2015)

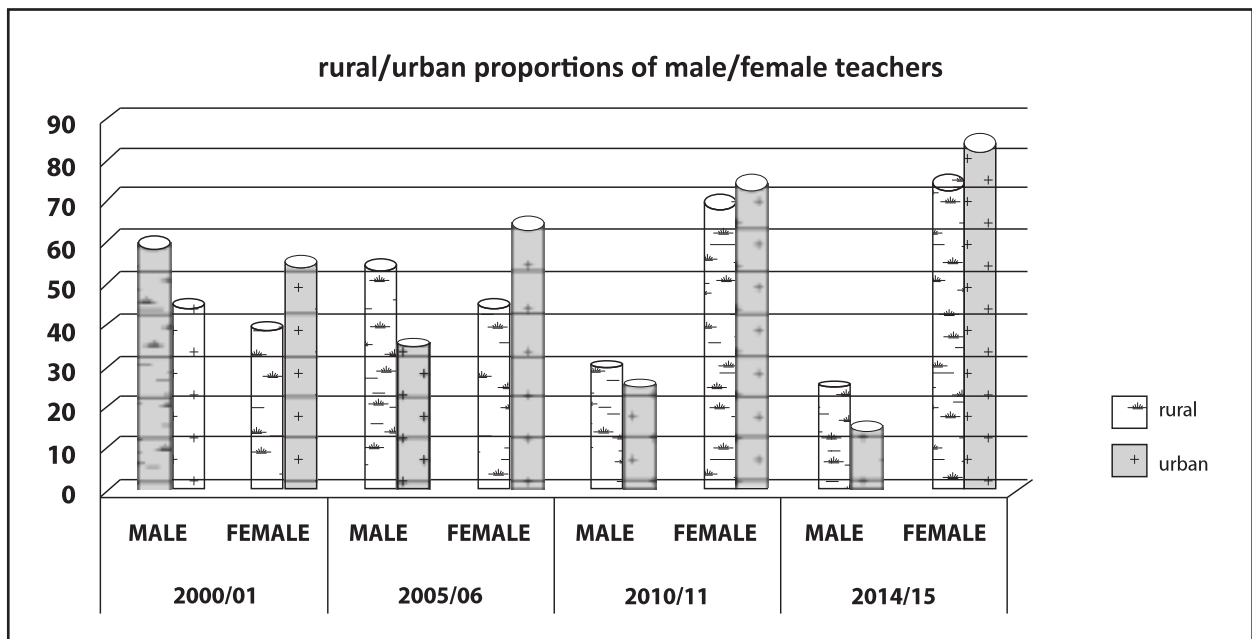
**Observation:** It was observed that the proportion of male teachers in schools in the rural areas has been decreasing systematically. In spite of this decline, the proportion of male teachers in rural areas is higher than that in urban areas.

Evaluation of MDGs 2 and 3 in basic education 2000 – 2015...



Source: CATTU survey on MDG 2 & 3 (2015)

Generally there are many more female teachers in our schools today.



Source: CATTU survey on MDG 2 & 3 (2015)

**Observation:** in the urban areas, schools have a high density of female teachers. Female teachers are more concentrated in the urban areas than in the rural areas. Most of them are not willing to work in rural areas. The acute lack of social amenities especially inadequate health care services and road infrastructure were indicated as some reasons for female teachers' unwillingness to work in rural places. Government should improve the provision of social amenities so as to attract and maintain teachers in such enclave and underdeveloped areas.



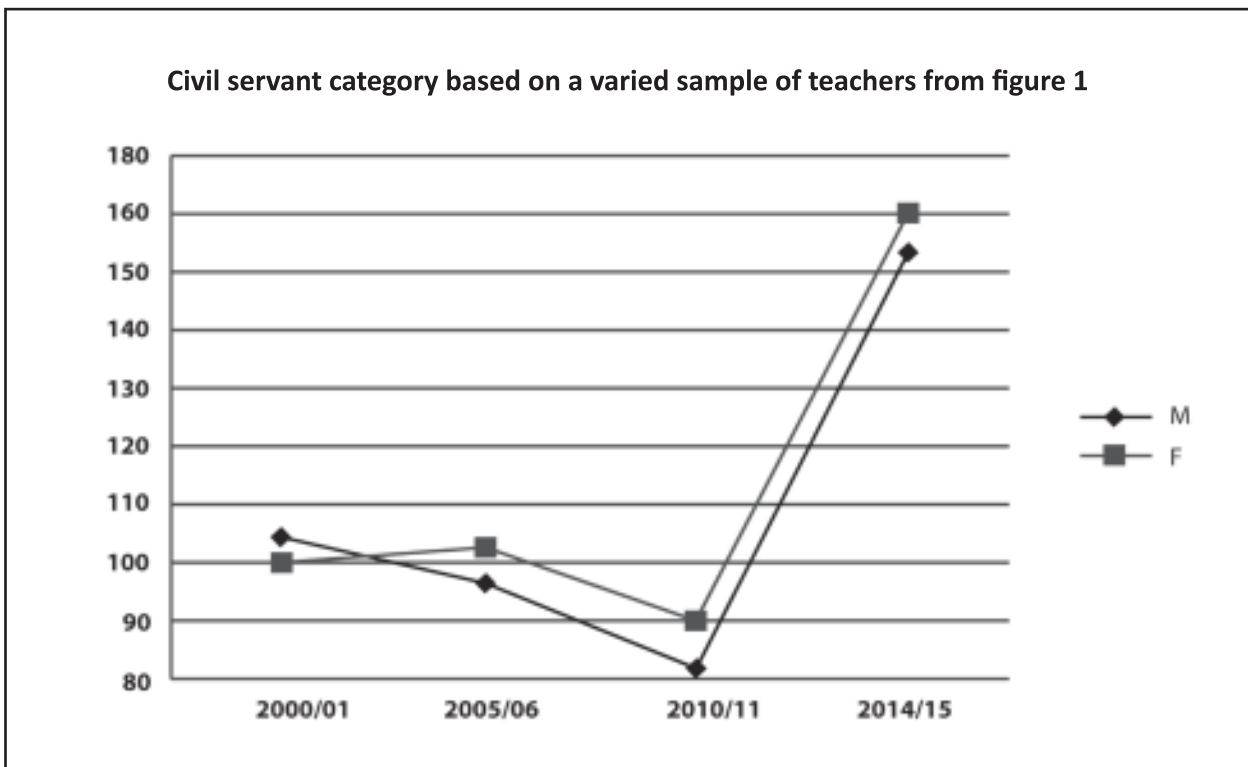
For the married, the men prefer their wives to work with them in towns. This brings out the particular gender concern that some women are incapable of making decisions concerning their own careers and other aspects of their lives.

There is a need for government to enact legislation regarding the posting of teachers irrespective of sex and grade as responses to expressed field needs.

Inadequate distribution of teachers implies that pupils in distant places and some from some ethnic minorities especially in the rural areas cannot *have access to, and complete free and compulsory primary education of good quality (cf EFA Goal 2)*.

**v) Trend of male/female Civil Servant teachers**

In 2000, there were more male civil servant teachers than their female counterparts. By 2005/2006, there were more female civil servants than male. Between 2005 -2010, there was a drastic drop in both male and female civil servants teacher ratio even though there were more female than male teachers. Between 2010/2011 and 2014/2015, the percentages of male and female teachers witnessed increases with the female still significantly dominating the male.

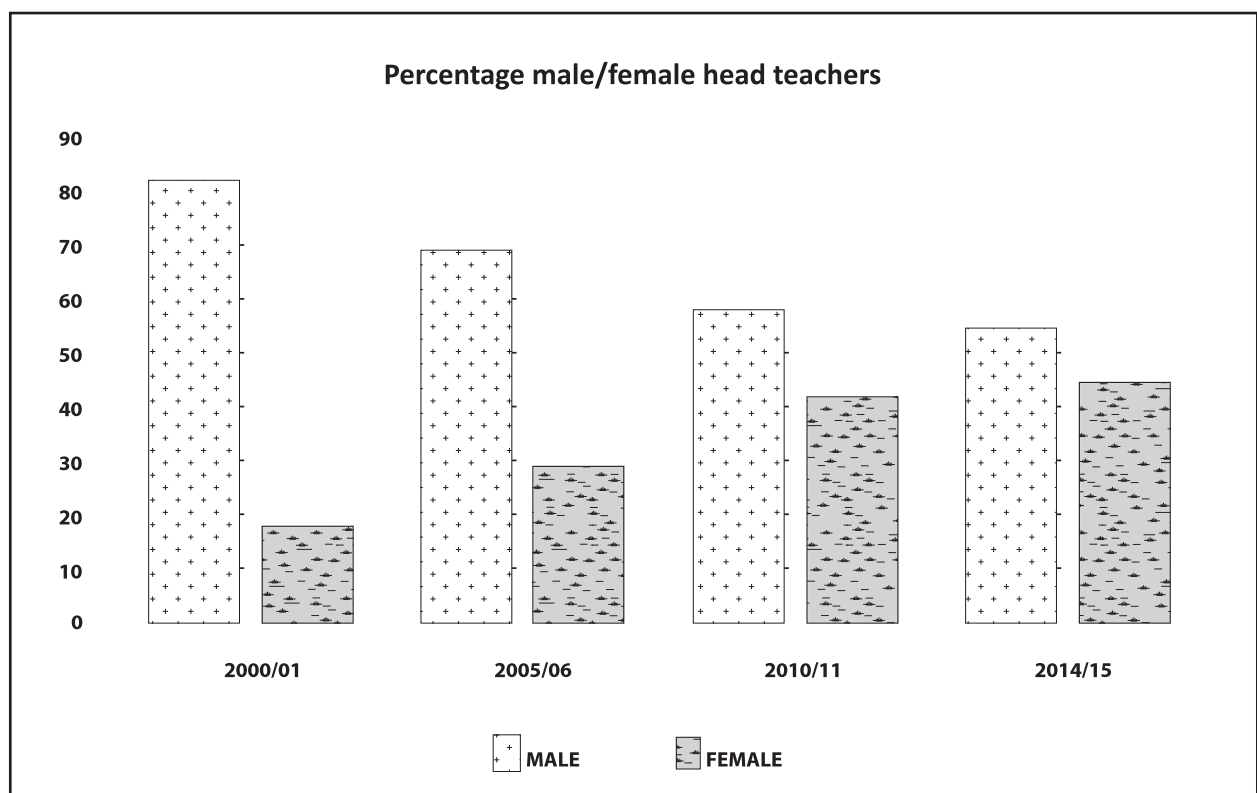


Source: CATTU survey on MDG 2 & 3 (2015)

**Observation:** conscious of the need for gender equality, social justice and female empowerment, the government, far from what obtained in 2001, has been able to give female teachers more opportunities though a lot still needs to be done. According to the Regional Delegate of Basic Education for the North West Mrs. Fon Susan, there risks to be no more CS teachers in Basic Education by the year 2020. Most of the CS teachers in service are in their last years before retirement.

**vi) Male/female teachers in Positions of responsibilities**

In spite of the huge number of female teachers in Primary Schools, it was also observed that more male teachers were appointed to administrative positions as head teachers. Between 2001 and 2006, the percentage of male Head Teachers more than doubled that of the female. However, from 2005 to 2015, the percentage of female head teachers increased steadily though falling below the male percentage. Of the 10 Regional Delegates of Basic Education, only two are female. Of the 7 Divisional Delegates in the North West Region, only one is a female. There are more female teachers in the nursery and primary schools because a female stereotype labels women as care givers who can better nurture children. Only female teachers head nursery schools.



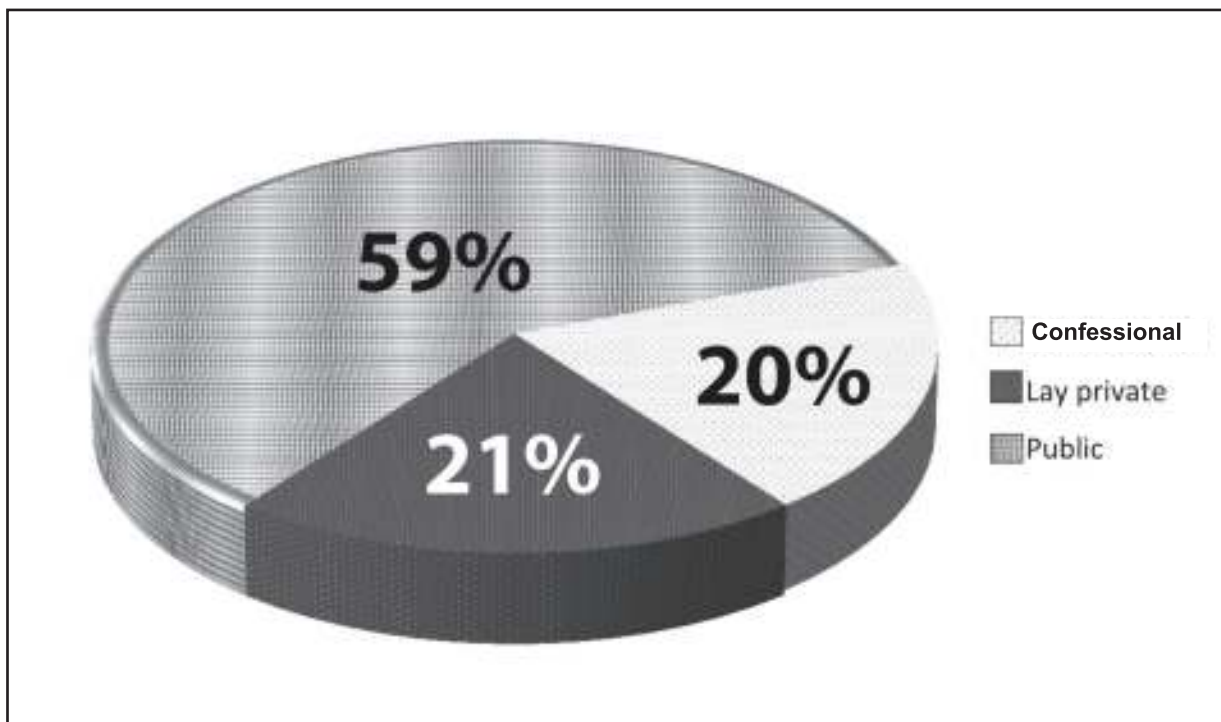
Source: CATTU survey on MDG 2 & 3 (2015)

**Observation:** there is still gender inequality and inadequate women empowerment. The direct consequence is the low participation of women in public life and decision making. This is an indication that Cameroon is still a male chauvinist society. Social justice and fairness demand that more female teachers should be appointed as school directors because they far outnumber the men. Government should as a matter of giving equal chance and opportunity to male and female teachers, appoint more females into positions of responsibility, given that they have demonstrated the same competence as their male counterparts and have the numeric advantage.

## C. School type and enrolment ratio

### i) School type

About 59% of schools in Cameroon are public schools while 41% are lay private and confessional schools. This situation is a pointer that a lot still has to be done to attract children to public schools which are supposedly free and have more trained teachers.

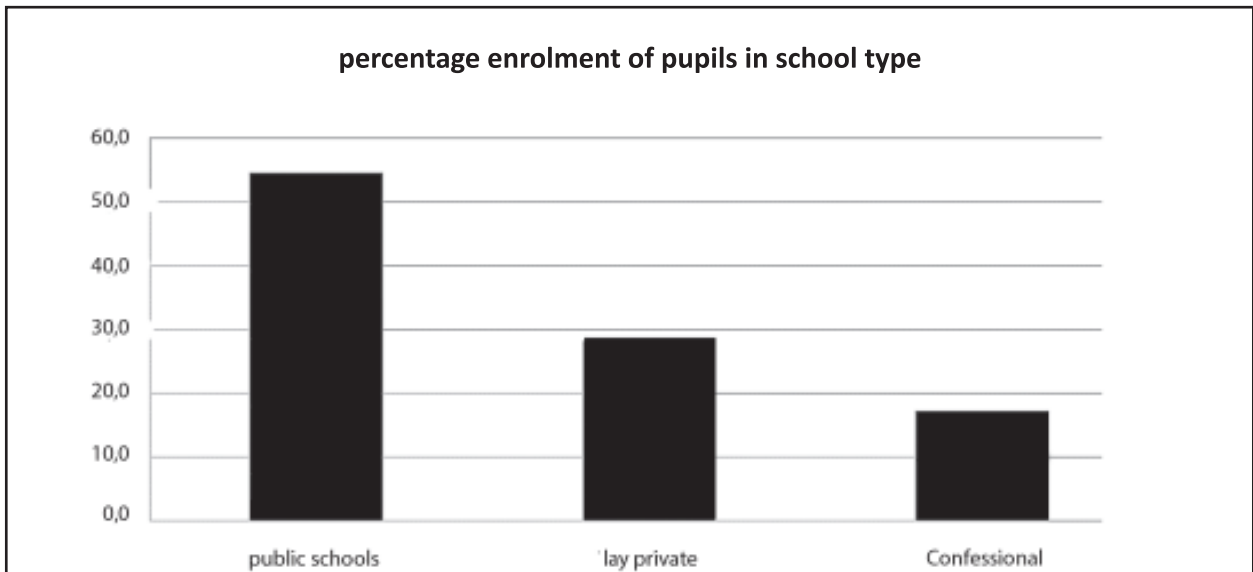


Source: CATTU survey on MDG 2 & 3 (2015)

**Observation:** the enrolment percentage of pupils in public schools is about 59% as against 41% for lay private and confessional schools, put together. That almost half of the pupils are enrolled in lay private and confessional schools, where high fees are charged, indicates that much still has to be done by the public schools and the government. There is a strong correlation with the observations made on Fig. 1.

Government needs to create more schools and equally provide adequate infrastructure and manpower to address the learning needs of all young people and to ensure *equitable access to appropriate learning and life skills programmes* (cf. EFA Goal N<sup>o</sup>.3)

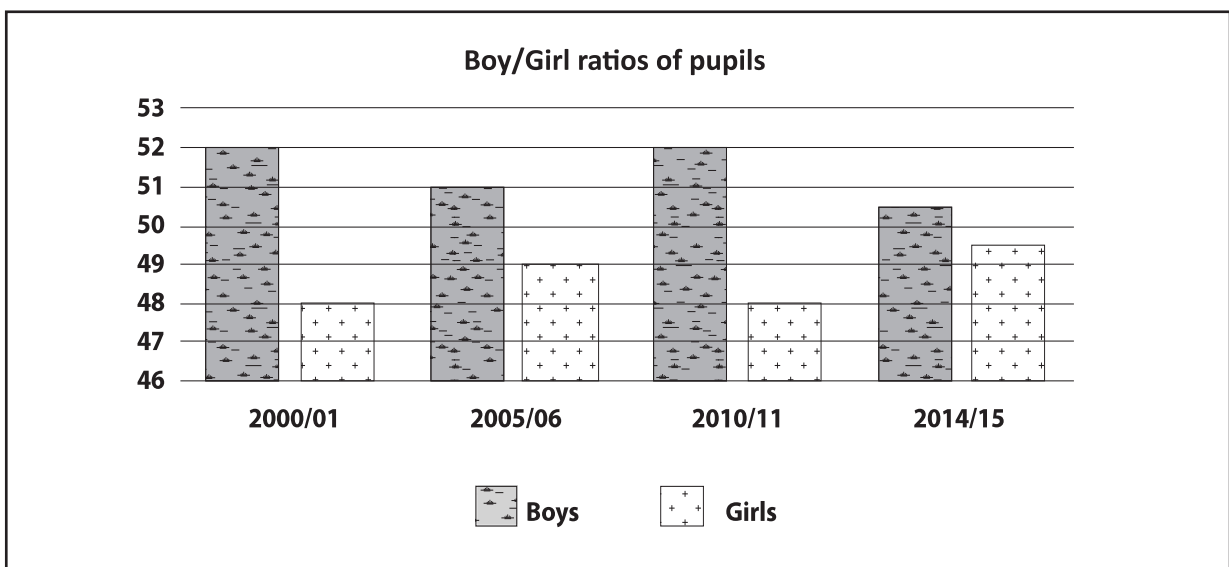
**ii) Enrolment per School type**



Source: CATTU survey on MDG 2 & 3 (2015)

**iii) Boy/Girl ratios in Public schools**

Between 2000 and 2005, the boy/girl pupil enrolment ratio was almost equal. But between 2005 and 2010, there was a wide disparity, as many more boys were enrolled than girls. While the ratio is almost at parity in the urban areas, boys far outnumber girls in the rural areas. However, there was a slight increase especially in female enrolment in 2015.



Source: CATTU survey on MDG 2 & 3 (2015)

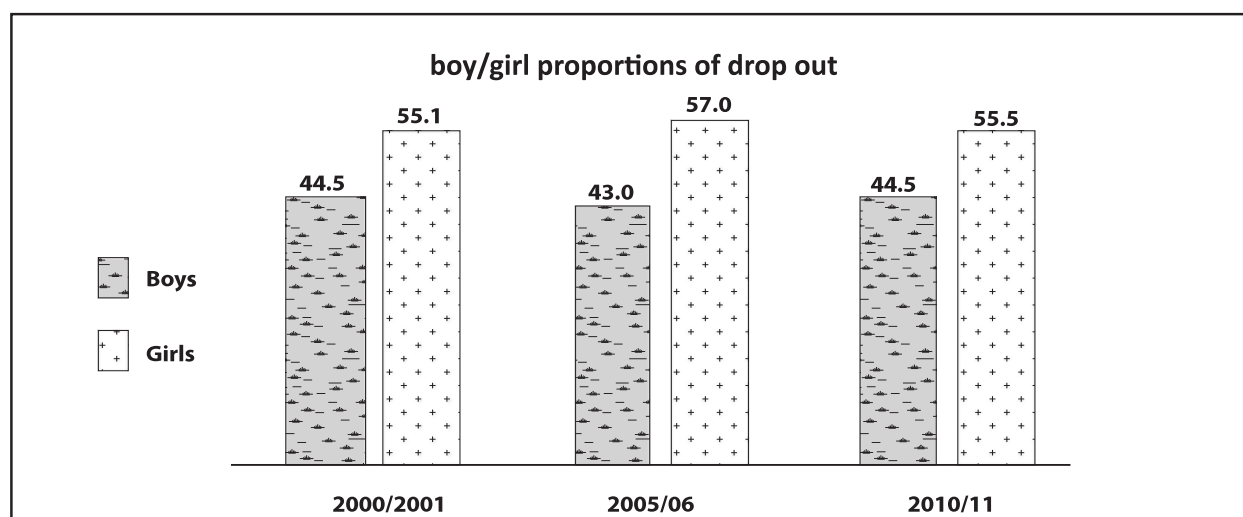
**Observation:** it is observed that there is an imbalance in the boy/girl enrolment in schools and lack of equal opportunities as male children are still privileged over the girls. Parents, who for the most part bear the burden of sponsorship, when their financial means are limited, prefer to send the boys to school while the girls are sent into forced and early marriages in some areas of Cameroon. In some instances, the girls are asked to stay at home and help with house chores while the boys are in school. Furthermore, some girls are sent to learn low income generating trades like tailoring and hair dressing while the boys go to regular schools.

**Recommendations:** Government and education stakeholders need to intensify campaigns, programmes and reforms especially in rural areas, to reduce and why not stamp out any form of gender discrimination and other bias. PTAs, Development Associations and the media could be relied upon to relay these measures and play focal roles in this regard. Such campaigns will help to *expand and improve comprehensive early childhood care and education, to the advantage of vulnerable and disadvantaged children (cf. EFA Goal N° 1).*

## D. Survival rates (effective completion of cycle)

### i) Boy/girl drop out ratio

Even though there is a lower percentage of girls enrolled in our schools generally, the survey revealed that the girl survival rate in schools is lower, as many more girls drop out of school than the boys. Social and cultural occurrences are held responsible for this behaviour -the girl could be victim of unplanned pregnancy, she could be sent into some kind of forced labour or some illegal migration as a house help or for commercial sex, or still, her parents may be unable financially to continue taking care of her school needs etc.



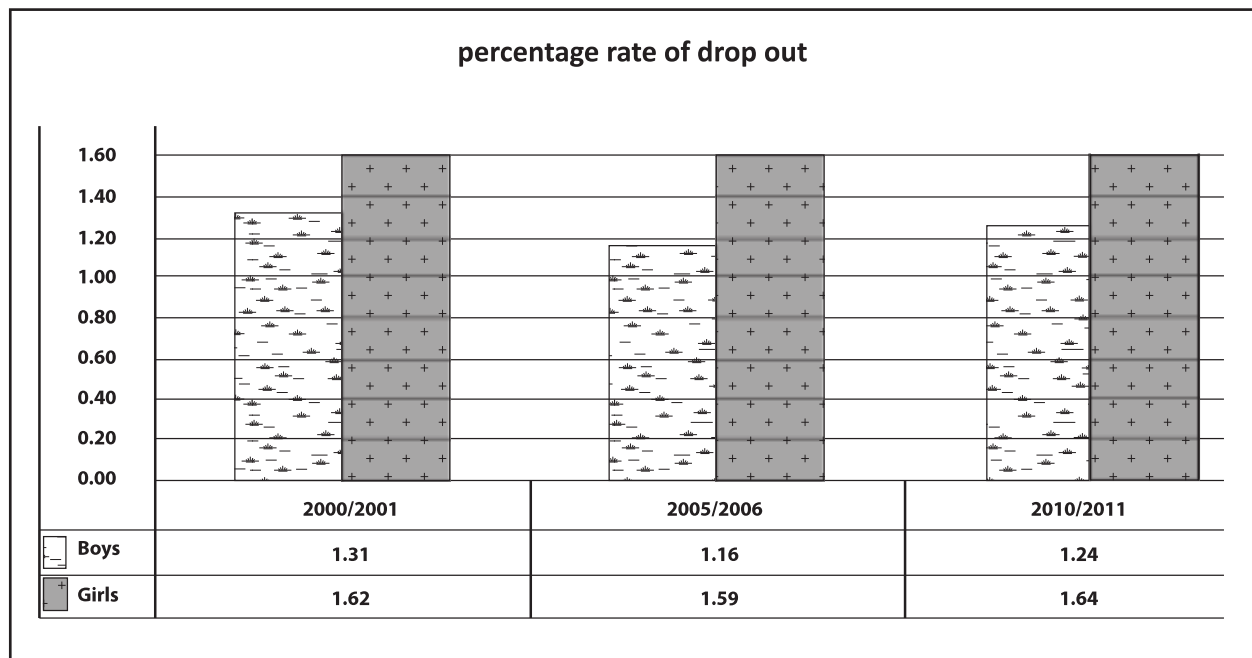
Source: CATTU survey on MDG 2 & 3 (2015)

**Observation:** this unfortunate situation is caused by irresponsible parent-hood and low income levels with the consequent social problems of child trafficking, child sex abuse and trade, child labour and early marriages. Girls are still compelled to marry against their will and forced out of school. Gender based violence, early/unplanned pregnancies, discrimination, sexual harassment; rape, etc are factors that militate in favour of the high rate of girl drop out.

**Recommendation:** the judiciary needs to be reformed to ensure that civil laws take precedence over traditional and customary laws. Strong legal actions should be taken against those who seek to foster stigmatization and abuse the rights of girls. Gainful deployment of educational personnel would ensure a sustainable learning process and may retain the girls in school.

**ii) Drop out rate**

The percentage of female drop out is steadily increasing over that of the fluctuating male percentage.



Source: CATTU survey on MDG 2 & 3 (2015)

**Observation:** this calls for serious reflection. The girl is still a victim of gender discrimination. The higher rate of drop out has a direct consequence on her socio-economic liberty and health. Government needs to re-strategise its policies and make primary education not only free but compulsory.

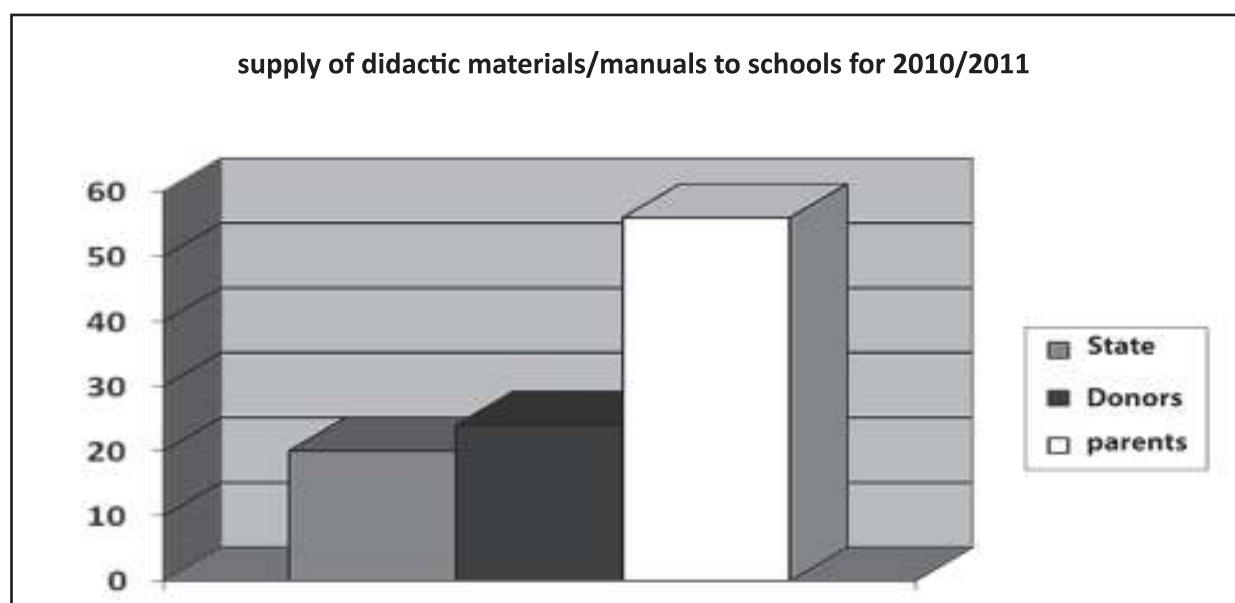
In spite of the fact that the female population of Cameroon is 52% against 48% for the male, there are more male pupils enrolled in schools than female and many more girls are dropping out of school than boys. So, government should implement more friendly legislation on female education.

**Recommendations:** NGOs dealing with the promotion of gender equality and equity need to set up antennas in rural areas for effective presence and close monitoring. Parents, traditional authorities and other stake holders within the communities need to ensure that pupils, especially girls complete the basic cycle of education. Young girls in particular should be empowered with knowledge on challenges of adolescence.

## E. School manuals/didactic materials and infrastructure

### i) School Manuals/Didactic materials to Pupils

More than 70% of school manuals and some didactic materials are provided by parents and donors while the state supplies less than 25%. Since parents play a major role in this regard, it can unreservedly be inferred that education is not *free* and *not accessible* to all.



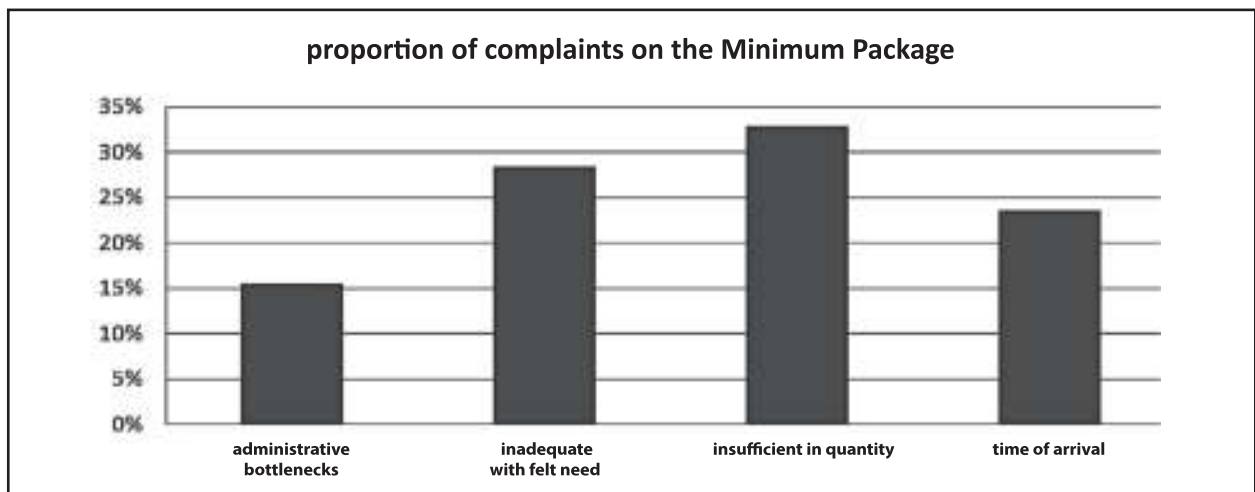
*Source: CATTU survey on MDG 2 & 3 (2015)*

**Observation:** government efforts to provide didactic materials and to encourage both teachers and learners to produce them from local and recycled materials have proven to be largely insufficient. Supply has to meet the needs of learners, teachers and the learning objectives. Some of the materials should reflect a given degree of accuracy to serve its purpose. For example, a black board ruler should be calibrated to demonstrate the notion of measurement; maps need to have scales etc.

Government should put in place a book and school manual policy that will make books more affordable and accessible to learners. The recently announced three year cooperation to this effect with the World Bank, hardly took into consideration a possible growth in pupil enrolment. Therefore, the weight of providing school needs will still fall squarely on parents.

### ii) Didactic Material to teachers

To achieve universal primary education, the government decreed free primary education for all with the provision of the “**minimum package**” scheme to provide basic didactic materials to teachers in all public schools. The survey revealed that the provision of this package has met with several challenges. Not only is the package inadequate in terms of expressed needs, it is largely insufficient.



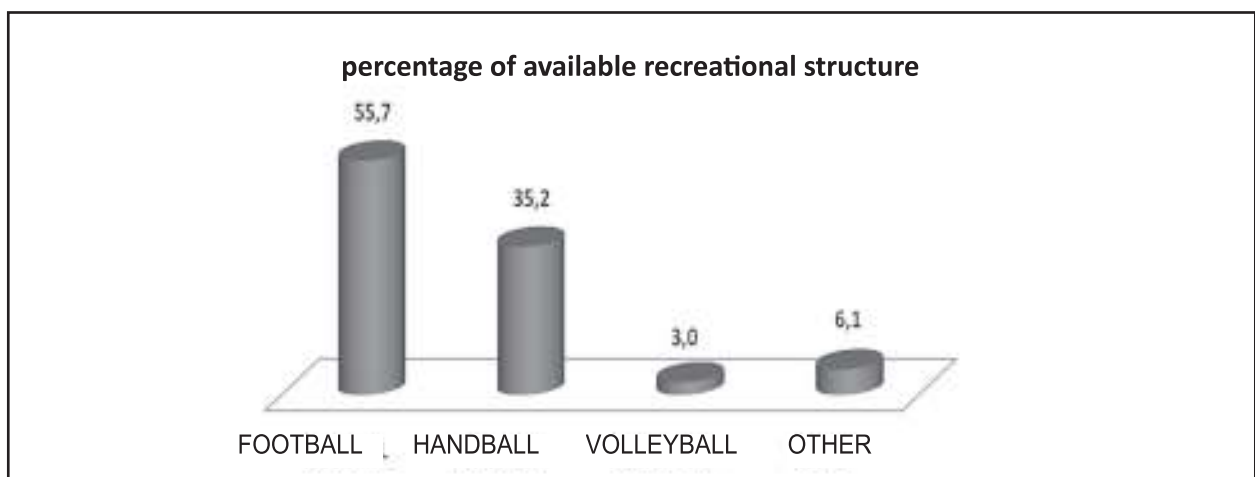
Source: CATTU survey on MDG 2 & 3 (2015)

**Observation:** administrative obstacles, faulty need analysis and the late arrival of the minimum packages to schools cause serious inconveniences especially at the beginning of the school year. This has been a serious impediment in achieving MDG 2.

The minimum package that was introduced to address a situation of limited means has since experienced gross limitations. Government’s treasury having improved considerably, the state should revert to giving direct credits to schools. The provision of these materials should address expressed needs of each respective school so that quality education and excellence could be ascertained especially in the domains of literacy, numeracy and essential life skills (cf. EFA goal n° 6)

### iii) Recreational Facilities

More than 55% of the limited recreational facilities available are in the football and handball disciplines. The available spaces are semi-permanent or make-shift and are usually unsuitable for the practice of such sports. The boys make use of them while the girls go after other games like hopscotch etc.



Source: CATTU survey on MDG 2 & 3 (2015)

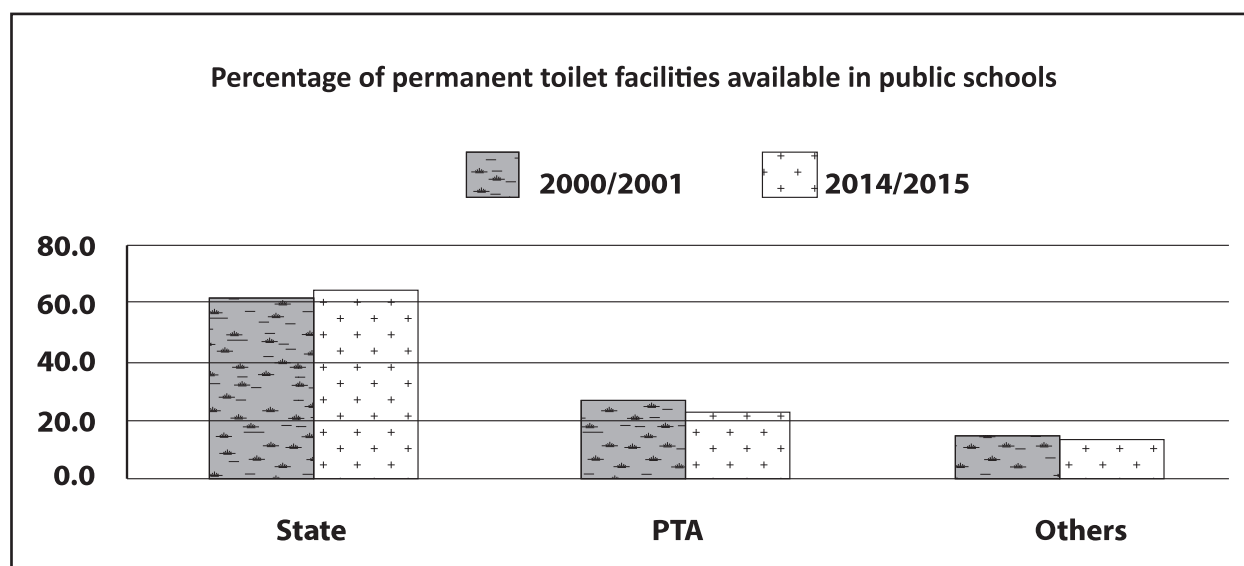


**Observation:** pupils are expected to exhibit all types of sporting talents during the National Primary School Games known as FENASSCO B games. Sadly enough, there are very limited opportunities to build and harness their skills. As a consequence, many schools hire participants who compete on behalf of their schools—a clear case of introduction to corruption at an early age.

**Recommendations:** government and Councils should create community sporting complexes targeting specific institutions. These should have facilities that will enhance the psycho motor development of the learner’s e.g table tennis, lawn tennis, basketball courts, etc.

**iv) Hygiene and sanitation**

Hygiene is a necessary condition for good and effective education. The government from 2000 to 2015 has been making a conscious effort to provide toilet facilities and water points in public schools. The PTAs and other education stakeholders have also been making significant contributions in this regard.

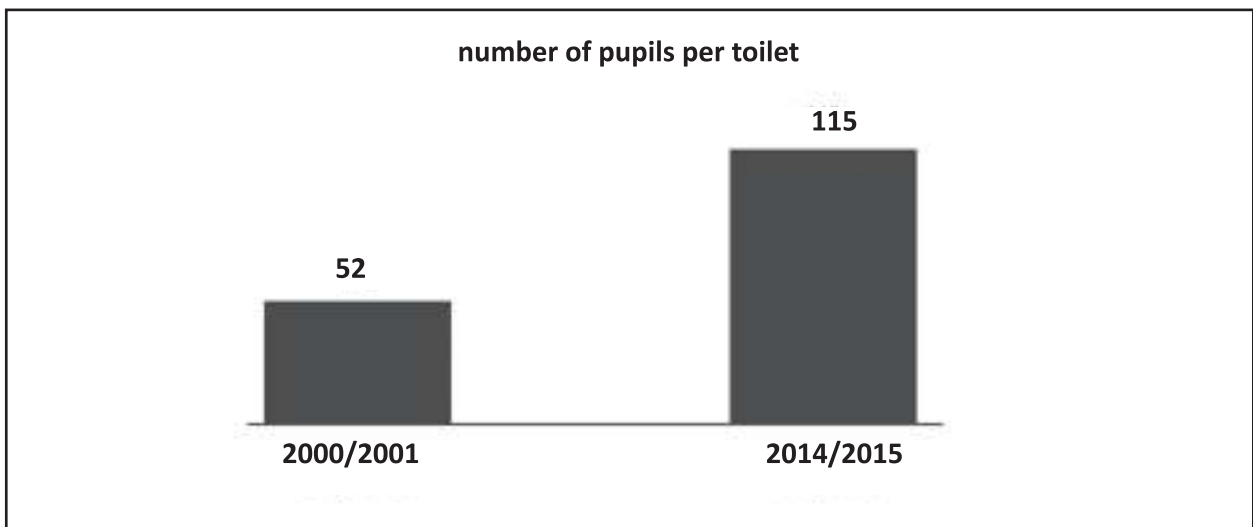


Source: CATTU survey on MDG 2 & 3 (2015)

**Observation:** nonetheless, the conscious effort is not commensurate to the growth in pupil enrolment. From 2000 to 2015, pupil enrolment has far outnumbered the available total number of toilets.

2014/2015, the number of pupils per toilet stands at 115 in contrast to 52 pupils per toilet in 2000/2001.

Evaluation of MDGs 2 and 3 in basic education 2000 – 2015...

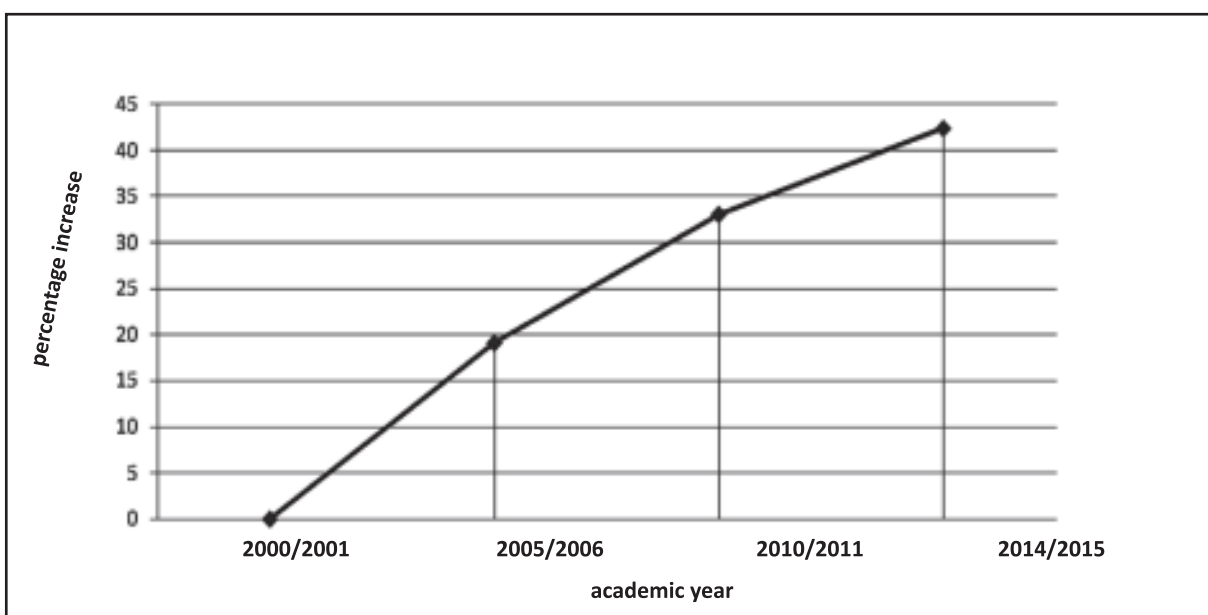


Source: CATTU survey on MDG 2 & 3 (2015)

**Observation:** this is a wake up call for the government to provide more toilet facilities in all the schools so as to ensure proper sanitation, good health and a healthy working environment. Poor sanitary/hygienic conditions negatively affect learner’s concentration and performance. (*healthy mind, healthy body*).

**Recommendations:** Government should provide more toilet and sanitary facilities in schools as an urgent measure for health preservation. When PTAs construct additional classrooms, this should be matched with additional toilets.

From the above observations, government’s efforts to achieve MDG 2 and 3 have not been satisfactory despite the steady increase in the percentage of pupil enrolment in public schools from 2000 to 2015.



Source: CATTU survey on MDG 2 & 3 (2015)

### **v) School Mapping**

It was noticed that schools are generally accessible. However, some schools are too close to each other and suffer from enrolment deficiency as well as man power insufficiency. GS Manji and GBS Manji in Bafut sub division, of Mezam Division of the North West Region and GS Guneku and GS Mbemi of Mbengwi Central sub division of the Momo division of the North West Region are cases in point. The two sets of schools are separated by 200 metres only, with a total of less than 200 pupils in all. A merger of these schools (or at least some of their classes) will go a long way to enhance input in manpower and learning time, etc.

### **vi) Education Rate**

To help accelerate government action in the implementation and provision of all the recommendations contained in this survey report, CATTU strongly suggests the institution of an Education Rate which could be raised from the following sources – all Civil Servants and regular private sector workers; members of parliament/senate/government; big and small businesses; bilateral and multilateral donors as well as from the government. The government should at all times provide at least a third of the budget expected from the Education Rate.

### **vii) Creation of Education Boards**

The 1998 law on Orientation of Education in Cameroon makes provision for the creation of such boards to manage different aspects of education.

- The Education Rate should be managed by the Education Boards taking into consideration the English and French sub systems of education.
- The Education Boards should be specifically charged with the provision of all types of infrastructure in schools from Basic to tertiary education.
- The Education Rate should not carry taxes and any other levies
- The Education Boards should work directly with schools and PTAs. This way, with 8 million francs for example, the Board can comfortably build three classrooms instead of just one as is the current government's stance. This way, the infrastructure will match the ever growing school enrolment.
- The ministries of education will consequently be left with the provision and management of human resources only.

### Summary of recommendations

1. Government should review its policy of affixing a teacher to a specific number of pupils.
2. There is need for government to enact legislation concerning the posting/transfer of teachers irrespective of sex and grade. This should be based on expressed field needs.
3. Government should improve the provision of social amenities so as to keep teachers in a particular locality.
4. Government should reform the judiciary system to ensure that civil laws take precedence over traditional laws. Legal action should be taken against those fostering the stigmatization and abuse of the rights of the girls. Adequate deployment of personnel will ensure continuous learning and improve on the survival rate at school.
5. The 2015 national gender policy should be made operational, with the accompanying text of application and an action plan known to all stake holders for appropriate mainstreaming.
6. There is the need to promote the collection of good quality data and research, to identify gaps in the implementation of educational policies and also to ensure the availability of gender disaggregated data showing clearly how these policies relate to male and female teachers.
7. Drawing from the Cameroonian national gender policy, the ministries of education should come up with a gender sensitive code of conduct for the schools.
8. The government should reinforce the application of policies aimed at fighting various forms of violence against women and girls in Cameroon.
9. To curb female student drop-out, the government should promote, support and intensify sensitisation on basic concepts of gender, introduce comprehensive sex and family life education at all levels of the educational ladder.
10. Government should put in place a book and school manual policy that will make books more affordable and accessible to learners especially at the level where education is described as free.
11. Government's treasury having improved considerably, the state should revert to giving direct credits to schools.
12. The provision of materials should be a consequence of the expressed felt needs of the schools so that quality education and excellence could be ascertained especially in the domains of literacy, numeracy and essential life skills (*cf. EFA goal n° 6*)
13. Government/Councils should create community sporting complexes targeting specific institutions. These should have facilities that will advance the psycho motor development of the learners. E.g. table tennis, lawn tennis, basketball courts, etc.
14. Government should provide more toilets and sanitary facilities in schools as an urgent measure for health preservation so that young girls' health is not compromised.
15. Government has to review its policy on the creation of schools and the present school mapping situation. It would be cost effective to shut down some schools and merge others to gain man power and quality instruction.
16. Government has to review its policy especially on the integration of contract teachers and bridge the gap between working and living conditions of contract teachers and civil servant teachers.
17. The state should eradicate the evident gender inequality by appointing more women as head teachers.

## **Final submission**

The efforts so far implored have paved the way for a better implementation of policies to improve quality primary education in Cameroon. Literacy and numeracy levels have to be used to measure progress and adjust accordingly. An increase in the number of teachers in 2014/2015 is seen as part of government's efforts towards achieving the MDGs 2 and 3. Regrettably, these steps are at the dawn of the evaluation period and cannot have any wash back effect. However, more commitment and engagement is exhorted from all educational stakeholders government, PTAs, Councils, Parliamentarians, Senators, Private sector operators, Civil Society organisations and the teachers themselves, to cover the unfinished business on the attainment of MDG 2 and 3. Hence, CATTU reaffirms its stance to call for the holding of a forum on Education in Cameroon during which progress made on the achievement of MDG 2 and 3 would be tabled. Also this forum should provide strategies to make primary education free and compulsory for all as well as to enhance efforts on gender equality and the empowerment of girls and women. Teachers should adopt a code of conduct which makes them touch bearers of high moral and ethical values as well as promoters of quality education in Cameroon. Teachers should deplore relentless efforts in bridging gender gaps. With equal access to education for both boys and girls, government will be able to build the knowledge necessary to eradicate poverty, hunger, disease and integrate the social dimension into development processes in Cameroon.

### **References**

1. Millennium Development Goals
2. Inspectorates of Basic Education Annual Reports for 2000/2001 – 2013/2014
3. CATTU report: Cameroon's Educational System 50 years after independence-The need for a new curriculum

Friedrich Ebert Stiftung Cameroon/ Central Africa

# *Evaluation of MDGs 2 and 3 in basic education 2000 - 2015 achievements and challenges*



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