



# SUPinfos

*Ad augusta, per angusta - Moving towards excellence through the narrow way*  
Bilingual Monthly Review of the Ministry of Higher Education

**Special Issue**  
**January 2022**

**E- NATIONAL HIGHER EDUCATION NETWORK:**

## **A boost to the University Digital System**





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## H.E. Paul BIYA

President of the Republic of Cameroon, Head of State

**« We need to radically transform the image of Higher Education in Cameroon »,**

*H.E. Paul BIYA, President of the Republic of Cameroon, Speech to the Youth, 10 February 2008.*



## Joseph DION NGUTE

Prime Minister, Head of Government

**« The dynamisation of Higher Education will continue (...) by the development of excellence pools and partnerships »,**

*National Assembly, 29 November 2019.*

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# THE UNIVERSITY DIGITAL SYSTEM: PAUL BIYA'S METHOD: RIGOUR AND AUDACITY

In order to ensure the digital transformation of Cameroon's Universities through the digitalising of teachings and administrative activities in Universities, the Head of State, His Excellency Paul Biya puts in place a forward-looking project : the **E-NATIONAL HIGHER EDUCATION NETWORK** the implementation framework agreement of which with the technical and financial support of the People's Republic of China was signed on 18 June 2015 at Beijing by Cameroon's Minister of the Economy, Planning and Regional Development and the Chinese Minister of Trade, in the presence of Cameroon's Prime Minister, Head of Government.

What is Paul Biya's method? Rigour, pragmatism and rational audacity. Let's explain how it works.

### 1 – What is the E-National Higher Education Network?

The E-National Higher Education Network project comprises of four main components:

1. The manufacturing in China, transport to Cameroon and distribution in Universities of 500 000 laptop computers to students from public and private universities;
2. the construction, equipment and operation of nine (9) ultra-modern university digital development centres, including one in each state university and one centre at the Congo-Cameroon Inter-states University at Sangmelima ;
3. the putting in place of a virtual network for the interconnection of State universities and the Ministry of Higher education (IUN) managed by a National Centre of Digital University System to be built, equipped and placed at the disposal of MINESUP ;
4. The design, development and operation of the Cameroon Higher Ed-

ucation Integrated Computer Management System (SIGIRES).

### 2 – What is the steering and management mechanism?

The supervision of the E-National Higher Education project was entrusted to the Ministry of Higher Education by the Minister of State, Secretary General of the Presidency of the Republic through correspondence No. 5211CF/SGIPR of 25 July 2016. This project is funded by Exim-



**Jacques FAME NDONGO**  
Minister of State,  
Minister of Higher Education

bank China to the tune of CFAF 75 billion, in line with loan agreement No. CHINA Eximbank GCL No. (2015) 11 TOTAL No. (550) signed on 22 August 201 by Mr. Emmanuel Nganou Djoumessi, Minister of the Economy, Planning and Regional Development. The appropriate legal opinion of the loan agreement that paved the way to the actual implementation of the project was signed on 30 December 201 by Professor Seraphin Magloire Fouda, Secretary General of the

Prime Minister's Office. The loan agreement provides that payments relating to the project are made directly in China, at the request of MINEPAT, on the basis of reports on the progress of work forwarded by MINESUP, through Eximbank China to the benefit of the project contractor, the Sichuan Telecom Construction Engineering Co. Ltd company and Fortune Centre, Hi-Tech Incubation Centre in the city of Chenghu in China.

### 3 – What has already been achieved?

The state of execution of this project, the physical execution rate of which has been evaluated at 95% and the financial execution rate at 93,6% by Eximbank China is as follows: 500 000 PBhev computers have been manufactured at Shenzhen in China, conveyed to Cameroon and placed at the disposal of MINESUP by the project contractor. MINESUP has given out 490 000 computers to eight state universities and 106 Private Institutions of Higher Education operating legally who have as duty to distribute them to all Cameroonian students duly registered for the 2017-2018 and 2018-2019 academic years, and possibly, to those registered for the 2019-2020 academic year, in accordance with the state of needs forwarded to MINE-SUP by the Heads of those university institutions (the computers have been stocked and transferred to the different regions by MINDEF. 10 000 residual computers are still in stock in the stores of the Presidential Guard). The nine University Digital Development Centres and the National Centre for University Digital System have been fully constructed and equipped.

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## E- NATIONAL HIGHER EDUCATION NETWORK PROJECT: The Driving Force of Digital University

*As the result of the futuristic vision of the President of the Republic, His Excellency Paul BIYA, the project progressively places the Cameroonian university on the digital path and gives it an opening on international academic standards.*

**T**he E-National Higher Education Network Project is a vast project materializing the Vision of the Head of State, His Excellency Paul BIYA. Its implementation by the Prime Minister, Head of Government gives a decisive impetus to the digital transformation of the 3rd generation Cameroonian University. This futuristic and revolutionary project is the result of a fruitful cooperation between China and Cameroon. Ownership of this Project was instructed to the Minister of Higher Education by the Minister of State, Secretary General of the Presidency in his correspondence No 5211CF/SGIPR of 25 July 2016. The project is funded by Eximbank China to the tune of F CFA 75 billion under the credit agreement No. CHINA Eximbank GCL No (2015) 11 TOTAL No (550) signed on 22 August 2016 by Mr. Emmanuel Nganou Djoumessi, the Minister of Economy, Planning and Regional Development at that time. The legal advice in line with the credit agreement, which paved the way to the effective implementation of the project, was signed on 30 December 2016 by Professor Séraphin Magloire Fouda, Secretary General at the Prime Minister's Office.

The credit agreement indicates that payments for the project shall be made directly in China, at the request of MINEPAT based on progress reports submitted by MINESUP, by Eximbank China to the project owner, Sichuan Telecom Construction Engineering Co. Ltd, whose head office is located at the Scientific Technology & Fortune Center, Hi-Tech Incubation Center in the city of Chengdu, China. The E-National Education Network project which is structured in four main components is an adequate response to the exponential increase in student demand. The aim is to develop in a long term, a strong and quality component of distant Higher Education capitalized under the form of an institution of a State University entirely dedicated to online Higher Education: The Digital University of Cameroon. The E-National Higher Education Network project



is part of the process aiming at building the Digital University of Cameroon. It aims at: putting in place in State Universities physical infrastructure (computer and telecommunications networks, data centres) and intangible (E-Administration and E-learning) performance, facilitating access of students to digital terminals and capacity building which is vital to the digital transformation of the Cameroonian University.

### Components

The E- National Higher Education Network Project has four components:

1. The manufacture in China, the transport to Cameroon and the distribution in Universities of 500 000 laptops to students of public and private Universities;
2. The construction, equipment and operationalization of nine (09) state-of-the-art University Digital Development Centres, including one in each State University and one at the Congo-Cameroon Inter-State University in Sangmelima;
3. The putting in place of a virtual interconnection network of State Universities and the Ministry of Higher Education (RIC) managed by a National Centre for Digital Universities to be built equipped and put at the disposal of MINESUP;

4. The design, development and exploitation of the Integrated Management Information System of Higher Education in Cameroon (SIGIRES).

### Achievements

Regarding the effective operationalisation of this project, the physical execution rate is estimated at 95% and the financial execution rate at 93.6% by Eximbank China. 500,000 PBhev computers were manufactured in Shenzhen, China, transported to Cameroon and made available to MINESUP by the contractor. MINESUP made 490,000 computers available to eight State Universities and 106 legally registered private Higher Education Institutes which were responsible for distributing them to all Cameroonian students regularly enrolled during the 2016-2017 academic year, and to students enrolled during the 2017-2018 and 2018-2019 academic years, and eventually to those of the 2019-2020 academic year, in accordance with the statements of needs transmitted to MINESUP by the Heads of these University Institutions. The nine University Digital Development Centres and the National Interconnection Centre are fully built and equipped. SIGERES is fully developed.

Venance Majolie EVINDI

## PRESIDENTIAL DONATION OF 500,000 COMPUTERS: Cameroonian students join the world knowledge cyberspace

*The gesture of the Head of State to Cameroonian student youth is presented as the pillar of construction of the third generation university.*

The Head of State, H.E Paul Biya took the engagement to offer computers to public and private student youths of Cameroon, in accordance with the vision "One Student One Computer". The initiative aimed at systematizing and generalizing the use of ICT among the student population in order to expose them to the digital environment. This is a "psychological trigger" which is necessary for youth to launch innovative projects and their "insertion in the digital universe which now shapes the socialisation and transcendence process of this segment of the population. Students who are regular, eligible and registered in the national file of the 2016-2017 academic year, benefited from this gift from the President of the Republic. 500,000 computers have been granted in eight State Universities and in Private Institutions authorized by the National Commission for Higher Education.

Within the framework of the implementation of instructions in Correspondence No. 521/CF/SG/PR of 25 July 2016, the company Sichuan Telecom Construction Engineering Coltd, the contractor of the E-National Higher Education Network project proceeded on 26 November 2017, after validation of all financial and technical prerequisites under the supervision of the Ministry of Higher Education, to the manufacturing of 500,000 computers, as part of the presidential gift to students in a well-known Chinese factory (Shenzhen Vingfei Technology Coltd). The implementation of the presidential speech by the government within the framework of the E-National Hi-



gher Education Network project whose long-term goal is to generalize and systematize the use of ICTs by Cameroonian students, is actualized by the donation of 500 000 computers. This component "one student - one computer" was placed under the diligence of the Minister of State, Minister of Higher Education, Prof. Jacques Fame NDONGO. With the label, PBhev (Paul Biya Higher Education Vision), the PBhev computer has the following characteristics: colours (white/black), a weight of one kg for a screen size of 10.1 inches, the Intel Atom processor: 1.44 GHz, a 2GB RAM, SSD hard drive: 32 GB, 8 hours of battery autonomy, connectivity: Bluetooth, Wi-Fi, Modem, USB, RJUS and a Windows 10.64 bits Operating System. These computers offer access to the World University Cyber Space adapted to the student's needs. CFAF 50 billion is the cost corresponding to the component relating to the acquisition, transport, distribu-

tion and maintenance of 500,000 computers, that is a unit cost of CFAF 100,000 per computer.

The distribution operation was done in successive waves:

- Yaounde I and Yaounde II Universities got their computer tools in December 2017 after the arrival in Yaounde of the first lot of computers manufactured in China;
- Bamenda, Buea, Douala and Dschang Universities followed on 13 February 2018 (after the arrival in Yaounde of the first batch of the second lot on 9 February and the arrival of the second batch of the second lot on 11 February 2018);
- Maroua and Ngaoundere Universities as soon as the third lot arrives by boat (April-May 2018);
- New students of the 2017-2018 academic year of State Universities and HEPIs upon arrival by boat of the third lot (April-May 2018).

Olive TSENDE &  
C. Messi





**H.E. Paul BIYA,**  
President of the Republic of Cameroon

## E-NATIONAL HIGHER EDUCATION NETWORK PROJECT

*“We need to radically transform the image of  
Higher Education in Cameroon”,*

*(H.E. Paul Biya, 10 February 2008)*

# Implementing the Digital University



All these infra-  
structural achieve-  
ments that are  
reflected in this  
brochure are part  
of the dynamics of  
Building the 3rd  
Generation Univer-  
sity of Cameroon.

**T**he New University Governance instructed by the Head of State, His Excellency Paul BIYA and implemented by the Government is bearing fruit through the modernization of the national higher education system. This transformation is taking place in the context of a robust and quality component based on on-campus and distant Higher Education with the E-National Higher Education Network Project as final result. In concrete terms, major progress has been made so far through the complete construction of 10 University Digital Development Centres, including eight in State Universities, one at the Congo-Cameroon Inter-State University and the National Supervision Centre of the University Interconnexion Network.

All these infrastructural achievements that are reflected in this brochure are part of the dynamics of Building a 3rd Generation University in Cameroon. In order to make this vast project operational, the city of Sangmelima experienced the flavour of special days, on 1st September 2021, during the launching ceremony of the test phase and operation of the Congo-Cameroon Inter-State University Digital Development Centre (UIECC). This is a strong signal, which announces similar events to come in the eight other State Universities strongly involved in the materialisation of the digital economy in the field of Higher Education.

Jean Marie AMVAMA

# Focus:

MATERIALISATION OF THE SECOND PHASE OF THE E-NATIONAL HIGHER EDUCATION NETWORK PROJECT:

## Presentation of the Digital Development Centre system

*University Digital Development Centres are the second component of the presidential E-National Higher Education Network project. To this effect, ten centres have been built, including one in each of the eight (8) State Universities, one centre at the Congo-Cameroon Inter-State University and one for the National Supervision of the University Interconnexion Network. It should be noted that the ten University Digital Development Centres are built with the same architecture.*

Gérard Willy NYA NOUATCHA

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## MINESUP/CAMTEL FRAMEWORK AGREEMENT

# Towards a 36 times more powerful connection in Universities

*Cameroonian universities are becoming the hub of cyber revolution. This paradigm shift is linked to the signing, on 8 September 2020, of a framework agreement between the Minister of State, Minister of Higher Education (Prof. Jacques Fame Ndongo) and Mrs Judith Yah Sunday, épouse Achidi Achu, Director General of Cameroon Telecommunications (Camtel).*



francs when the agreement is implemented, a reduction of 95.43%. The agreement also provides for the establishment of a 16 Gigabit communication network that connects the optical fibre to the central services of the Ministry of Higher Education. The agreement ultimately has four objectives: a better global cyber-tracking of the Universities, an optimal quality of Internet service, an increased capacity of the bandwidth, a better legal intelligibility of the digital governance in the Universities. In this revolutionary movement, Cameroonian universities will not only be able to rationalise their functioning, but will also be more visible on the international level and consequently, conquer better rankings in the list of world universities. Among

This ceremony took place in the presence of Madam the Minister of Posts and Telecommunications, the Heads of Public University Institutions, the Temporary Coordinator of the Congo-Cameroon Inter-State University in Sangmelima, the Director General of the Economy at the Ministry of the Economy, Planning and Territorial Development, the Director General of the National Agency for Information and Communication Technologies as well as the representative of the Ministry of Finance. This act is the highest expression of the will of the President of the Republic, His Excellency Paul Biya, within the framework of the implementation of the E-National Higher Education Network project, a strategic axiom for the construction of the 3rd generation Cameroonian University. The key point of this framework agreement is the supply of a very high speed internet bandwidth, which increases from 263 megabits/second for all universities to an offer of 9334 megabits/second. Thus, Camtel agrees to provide the State Universities, the Congo-Cameroon Interstate University (Sangmelima campus) and the National Centre for the Supervision of the Interconnection Network of the State Universities, with very high speed Internet access,

a bandwidth of 1600 megabits per second, as well as an extension of the network to the new auxiliary campuses of public university institutions (Bafia, Bertoua, Ebolowa, Foumban, Garoua, Kaelé, Kousseri, Meiganga, Nkongsamba, Yabassi).

This qualitative leap makes it possible to improve the visibility and intelligibility of universities in the global cyberspace of knowledge. The internet bandwidth of all these State Universities has been increased from 263 megabits at a cost of 552 million CFA francs to 9333 megabits per second as from 1 January 2021. Thanks to the Camtel-Minesup framework agreement, the power of this bandwidth will soon be multiplied by 36 for a preferential cost, barely the double of the current price for an exponential digital capacity. The cost of a megabit will fall from the current 175,000 CFA francs to 8,000 CFA



other things, they will be able to benefit from better referencing on international search engines and the dissemination of scientific news. With a view to speedy materialisation, the Vice-Chancellors and Rectors of State Universities as well as the Temporary Coordinator of the Congo-Cameroon Inter-State University have already signed specific conventions concerning this Camtel-Minesup framework agreement.

**V. Lafortune Mbarga Essomba**

## E-ADMINISTRATION:

# Issues and challenges of the Digital University of Cameroon

*Administration changes with digital and procedures are simplified within the Ministry of Higher Education.*



The process of building the Digital University of Cameroon that subsumes the E-National Higher Education Network project continues its glorious march towards its effective operationalization. In the dynamic for the establishment University Digital Development Centre (CDNU), the E-Administration is part of the efficient digital infrastructure component. This sub-component strengthens university administration through a harmonized university management computer system and a (University Data Center). Generally defined as the use of information and communication tech-

niques, the E-Administration has as cardinal vocation, the improvement of the management of public affairs in the vector of the administration/ citizen's relationship. It is in this line that the Ministry of Higher Education has made a firm commitment to guarantee users a "faster and more efficient services".

The administration innovates with the digital which systematically breaks with the old analog tradition, to use the expression of the Minister of State, Minister of Higher Education, Triptych Switcher: Quality assurance, professionalization and digitization of teaching

and employability of graduates. This is a policy dear to the Head of State, His Excellency Paul Biya and implemented by the Prime Minister, Head of Government.

A tool for multiple issues and challenges, the E-Administration, through the development of UNDCs in the eight State Universities and the Congo-Cameroon Inter State University, contributes to the digitisation of the University of Cameroon, and even better, the digitisation of its procedures and its internal functioning. These improvements promote the transparency and agility of administrative procedures.

Witness these words of the Minister of State, Minister of Higher Education, in response to the question of Honourable KUM John NJI'S on the delay of the procedure of equivalences issuance during the Parliamentary Session of November 18, 2021: "The E-National Higher Education Network project that is being implemented is the solution to the slow pace of authentication process of certificates so far."

**Jean Marie AMVAMA**

## E-NATIONAL HIGHER EDUCATION NETWORK

# Project contribution to the Covid-19 pandemic

Initiated by the President of the Republic, His Excellency Paul Biya, the current crisis related to the COVID-19 pandemic has made it possible to highlight the foresight of the Head of State regarding the development of digital university in our country. Thanks to the presidential project implemented in universities, they have managed to make a rapid change from face-to-face to online teaching methods. It was thus realized that in practice, beyond any theoretical speculation, the impact of the E-National Higher Education Network project on students, tea-

chers and institutions were already largely positive, before the project's closing date. This is the vision of President Paul BIYA for university youth: resolute linkage to the planetary cybernetic space, educational innovation, access to cognitive modernity, in the movement of the knowledge economy. Due to the disruptions experienced in 2020 due to the COVID 19 pandemic, Eximbank China has recently extended the project closing date from December 31, 2020 to April 22, 2022. The extension period of the project will allow to complete the following works: the upgrade

and calibration of the power supply of the campuses to adapt them to the operation of the University Digital Development Centre, the test of operation and the implementation of the CDNU and the National Network of Digital Interconnection of the Universities of Cameroon (RIC). The same applies to the installation of SIGIRES at MINESUP and in the Universities, the training and transfer of skills to national counterparts or the devolution of Centres to MINESUP and the Universities.

**Venance Majolie EVINDI**

# The 10 University Digital Development Centres



The National Supervision Centre of the University of Yaounde Interconnexion Network



University of Buea Digital Development Centre



University of Douala Digital Development Centre



University of Dschang Digital Development Centre



University of Maroua Digital Development Centre



University of Ngaoundere Digital Development Centre



Congo-Cameroon Inter-State University Digital Development Centre of Sangmelima



University of Yaounde I Digital Development Centre



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University of Bamenda Digital Development Centre