



Child Protection in Southwest Cameroon Amidst the Anglophone Crisis

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Abstract

The Anglophone Crisis in Cameroon, a conflict which originated from socio-political and economic issues, has escalated into a humanitarian concern, notably impacting children's rights and safety. This paper aims to explore the complex challenges faced by children and examine the measures taken for their protection during this period characterized by civil unrest and violent conflicts. Drawing from oral interviews, human right reports and some secondary sources, we delved into the direct and indirect effects of the Anglophone armed conflict on children within the South west region of Cameroon. The paper argues that, child protection has been the most neglected human right issue in the Anglophone crisis regions of Cameroon. The paper adopts a mixed research method. The sampling technique employed for this paper was a purposive sampling with a sample size of 30 participants. Our findings reveal that children within this conflict region face child protection issues ranging from physical harm, disruption of education, psychological trauma, child labor, neglect and exploitation. Addressing child protection issues in Southwest Cameroon requires urgent action and a diverse approach. Local governments, NGOs, and international organizations must collaborate to ensure the safety and well-being of children in the Region. Finally, the paper proposes an integrated framework for improving child protection mechanisms by enhancing community resilience in southwest Cameroon, advocating for policy reform, and reinforcing international collaboration. The paper also underscores the urgency for tailored responses to protect vulnerable populations in the crisis hit regions of Cameroon in particular and other African countries facing same issues.

Keywords: Armed Conflict; Child Rights Violations, Health Crisis, Child Soldiers