

**COMMISSION DES DROITS  
DE L'HOMME DU CAMEROUN**

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**CAMEROON  
HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION**

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**THE CAMEROON HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION SUMMARY  
INFORMATION ON VISITS TO DETENTION FACILITIES  
CONDUCTED IN 2021 AND 2022**

➤ **VISITS CONDUCTED IN 2021**

The CHRC visited 21 prisons, 93 police custody units, two other detention facilities (Hôpital Jamot and the Meri DDR centre), in 2021. The information presented on the tables below was obtained during the prison visits.

No.	DESCRIPTION	MEN	WOMEN	MINORS	OBSERVATIONS
<b>CENTRE REGION</b>					
1.	Names of prisons visited	Yaoundé Central Prison (24/11/2021), Main Prisons of Yaoundé (3/12/2021), Mfou (25-26/11/2021), Akonolinga (7-8/12/2021) and Nanga-Eboko (24-25/11/2021)			
2.	Total number of prisoners	4,578	176	116	5,317
3.	Number of detainees awaiting trial	3,249			2,703 in Yaoundé Central Prison
4.	Average time spent in custody	/	/	/	no information
5.	Number of women with children in custody	/	/	/	no information
6.	Number of U-21 in custody	/	/	116	88 in Yaoundé Central Prison
<b>EAST REGION</b>					
1.	Names of prisons visited	Bertoua central prison			
2.	Total number of prisoners	489	15	43	547 all convicts
3.	Number of detainees awaiting trial	650			
4.	Average time spent in custody	/	/	/	
5.	Number of women with children in custody	/	/	/	
6.	Number of U-21 in custody	/	/	Not specified	Only the number of minor convicts is known 43
<b>FAR NORTH REGION</b>					
1.	Names of prisons visited	Maroua central prison			
2.	Total number of prisoners	1,514			No detailed information
3.	Number of detainees awaiting trial	1,167			



4.	Average time spent in custody	/	/	/	available
5.	Number of women with children in custody	/	/	/	
6.	Number of U-21 in custody	/	/	/	
LITTORAL REGION					
1.	Names of prisons visited	Douala central prison, Edea main prison			
2.	Total number of prisoners	5,100			4,600 in Douala Central Prison
3.	Number of detainees awaiting trial	/	/	/	
4.	Average time spent in custody	/	/	/	
5.	Number of women with children in custody	/	/	/	
6.	Number of U-21 in custody	/	/	/	
NORTH REGION					
1.	Names of prisons visited	Garoua central prison and Guider main prison			
2.	Total number of prisoners	2,088	36	51	2,175 of which 1,777 in Garoua prison
3.	Number of detainees awaiting trial	1,645			
4.	Average time spent in custody	/	/		
5.	Number of women with children in custody	/	/	/	
6.	Number of U-21 in custody	/	/	51	
NORTH-WEST REGION					
1.	Names of prisons visited	Bamenda central prison and Bali Secondary Prison			
2.	Total number of prisoners	/	/	/	654 (614 in Bamenda Central Prison)
3.	Number of detainees awaiting trial	/	/	/	373
4.	Average time spent in custody	/	/	/	
5.	Number of women with children in custody	/	/	/	
WEST REGION					
SOUTH REGION					
1.	Names of prisons visited	Ebolowa central prison, Kribi main prison and Bengbis secondary prison			
2.	Total number of prisoners	670			No detailed information available
3.	Number of detainees awaiting trial	389			
4.	Average time spent in custody	/	/	/	
5.	Number of women with children in custody	/	/	/	
6.	Number of U-21 in custody	/	/	/	
SOUTH-WEST REGION					
1.	Names of prisons visited	Buea central prison and Kumba main prison			
2.	Total number of prisoners	1,747	54	40	1,841 of which 1,462 in Buea prison
3.	Number of detainees awaiting trial	1,170			1 031 in Buea
4.	Average time spent in custody	/	/	/	
5.	Number of women with children in custody	3			All three women and babies are in Buea Central Prison



## ➤ VISITS CONDUCTED IN 2022

The CHRC visited nine prisons and a civic re-education centre from January to March 2022. The table below outlines the information from the visits.

No.	DESCRIPTION	MEN	WOMEN	MINORS	OBSERVATIONS
CENTRE REGION					
1.	Names of prisons visited	Mbalamayo main prison			
2.	Total number of prisoners	341	10	20	The prison has a total of 371 prisoners for a capacity of 120. Therefore, the prison is overcrowded.
3.	Number of detainees awaiting trial	185			/
4.	Average time spent in custody	/	/	/	no information
5.	Number of women with children in custody	/	/	/	no information
6.	Number of U-21 in custody	/	/	20	/
1.	Names of prisons visited	Bafia main prison			
2.	Total number of prisoners	391	5	21	The prison has a total of 417 prisoners for a capacity of 200. Therefore, the prison is overcrowded.
3.	Number of detainees awaiting trial	272			/
4.	Average time spent in custody	/	/	/	no information
5.	Number of women with children in custody	0	0	0	/
6.	Number of U-21 in custody	21			/
7.	Names of prisons visited	Monatéle main prison			
8.	Total number of prisoners	325	15	10	The prison has a total of 410 prisoners for a capacity of 150. Therefore, the prison is overcrowded.
9.	Number of detainees awaiting trial	290			
10.	Average time spent in custody	/	/	/	no information
11.	Number of women with children in custody	0			/
12.	Number of U-21 in custody	10			/
1.	Names of prisons visited	Ntui main prison			
2.	Total number of prisoners	317	7	6	The prison has a total of 330 prisoners for a capacity of 300.
3.	Number of detainees awaiting trial	249			
4.	Average time spent in custody	/	/	/	no information
5.	Number of women with children in custody	6			/



6.	Number of U-21 in custody	6	/
<b>NORTH REGION</b>			
1.	Names of prisons visited	<b>Garoua central prison</b>	
2.	Total number of prisoners	1,777	The prison has a total of 1,777 prisoners for a capacity of 500. Therefore, the prison is overcrowded.
3.	Number of detainees awaiting trial	1,112	/
4.	Average time spent in custody	8 months for misdemeanours and 18 months for felonies	/
5.	Number of women with children in custody	7	/
6.	Number of U-21 in custody	32	/
1.	Names of prisons visited	<b>Guider main prison</b>	
2.	Total number of prisoners	408	The prison has a total of 408 prisoners for a capacity of 300.
3.	Number of detainees awaiting trial	196	/
4.	Average time spent in custody	8 months for misdemeanours and 18 months for felonies	/
5.	Number of women with children in custody	2	/
6.	Number of U-21 in custody	19	/
1.	Names of prisons visited	<b>Poli main prison</b>	
2.	Total number of prisoners	180	The prison has a total of 180 prisoners for a capacity of 50. Therefore, the prison is overcrowded.
3.	Number of detainees awaiting trial	110	/
4.	Average time spent in custody	8 months for misdemeanours and 18 months for felonies	/
5.	Number of women with children in custody	6	/
6.	Number of U-21 in custody	4	/
1.	Names of prisons visited	<b>Tcholliré main prison</b>	
2.	Total number of prisoners	443	The prison has a total of 443 prisoners for a capacity of 200. Therefore, the prison is overcrowded.
3.	Number of detainees awaiting trial	116	/
4.	Average time spent in custody	8 months for misdemeanours and 18 months for felonies	/

5.	Number of women with children in custody	7	/
6.	Number of U-21 in custody	3	/
1.	Names of prisons visited	<b>Tcholliré civic re-education centre</b>	
2.	Total number of persons in the Centre	191	/
3.	Number of detainees awaiting trial	/	/
4.	Average time spent in the Centre	5 years	/
5.	Number of women with children in custody	0	/
6.	Number of U-21 in custody	0	/
7.	Status of cases	All convicted	/
8.	Common crimes	Armed robbery and murder	/

### 8. Average cost for prisoner's food per month or per year

The average cost of feeding each prisoner per day is 408 CFA francs, the annual budget for this operation has increased by 45 per cent in five years, from 2,570,000,000 CFA francs in 2016 to 5,015,891,000 CFA francs in 2020.

### 9. Health situation in prisons

The budget for the care of prisoners, whether they have been convicted or remanded in custody, has not been increased since 2019. It was 1,015,000,000 CFA francs, for an average of 32,227 CFA francs per prisoner per year, in 2020.

The CHRC observed an acute lack of qualified medical staff assigned to the various detention facilities visited and of appropriate medication in the prisons of Poli, Guider and Tcholliré 1.

### 10. Common crimes that prisoners are accused of and possible sanctions under the law

Prisoners are generally arrested under proceedings for acts such as felonies or misdemeanours as defined by Law No. 2016/007 of 12 July 2016 relating to the Penal Code and are liable to the following penalties:

- a felony shall mean an offence punishable with death or with loss of liberty for a maximum of more than 10 years and fine where the law so provides
- a misdemeanour shall mean an offence punishable with loss of liberty or with fine, where the loss of liberty may be for more than 10 days but not for more than 10 years, and the fine more than 25,000 FCFA.



## **11. Recommendations of the NHRI of Cameroon for a constant improvement of the prisons conditions**

### **To the Minister of Justice**

- generalise the use of prison labour for the production of food for prisoners
- take measures to improve the quantity and quality of the daily food ration for prisoners
- build or equip infirmaries where needed, and to ensure that they are equipped with basic materials and medicines
- take all preventive measures to reduce the spread of contagious diseases such as scabies, in this case by providing prisoners with antiseptic soaps and respecting the rules of hygiene and sanitation discussed above
- improve conditions of detention through the construction of new prisons and the extension of existing ones, where possible, to enable especially the effective separation of different categories of prisoners
- speed up court proceedings to reduce the number of prisoners and relieve prison congestion
- ensure the effectiveness of alternative penalties provided for by the law
- ensure that the provisions of the criminal procedure code for minors, whose detention is the exception, are effectively respected
- provide the public prosecutor's offices with vehicles to facilitate visits to check prisons
- provide prisons with vehicles for the transport of prisoners and adapted sleeping equipment
- build or modernise and equip prison administrative blocks.

### **To prison officials**

- extend to all prisons the computerised filing system concerning the legal status of prisoners
- set up a system for reporting and punishing corrupt practices and the use of money for services within prisons
- expand vaccination programmes against the most common diseases in prisons
- promote collaboration between the Ministry of Social Affairs (MINAS), child protection organisations and the prison administration to provide health and nutritional care for the newborns of mothers in prison
- promote the social reintegration of prisoners by extending training programmes in areas such as agriculture, livestock farming, carpentry, masonry, sewing, etc., in collaboration with the relevant authorities.

### **To regional and local authorities**

Further contribute to the improvement of the general conditions of prisons by implementing various projects within the prisons. This includes providing food aid and support for health, hygiene and sanitation (disinfection of prisons, emptying of septic tanks etc.), and programmes for water supply and the supply of generators for backup electricity.

