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**Master's Thesis of International Studies**

**Reducing Child Marriage in Cameroon:  
Case of Tignere Sub-Division, Adamawa Region,  
Cameroon**

**카메룬의 조혼 감소: 아다마와 지역의 티네레 세분 사례**

**August 2023**

**Graduate School of International Studies  
Seoul National University  
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# **Reducing Child Marriage in Cameroon: Case of Tignere Sub-Division, Adamawa Region, Cameroon**

A thesis presented by

By

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A dissertation submitted in partial fulfilment  
of the requirements for the degree of  
Master of International Studies

**Graduate School of International Studies  
Seoul National University  
Seoul, Korea**

# **Reducing Child Marriage in Cameroon: Case of Tignere Sub-Division, Adamawa Region, Cameroon**

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## Abstract

# **Reducing Child Marriage in Cameroon: Case of Tignere Sub-Division, Adamawa Region, Cameroon**

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Child marriage in Cameroon as well as in most African countries is a major pre-occupation to State and private stakeholders. This scourge has known very little positive evolution in the Northern Regions of Cameroon despite efforts deployed. Tignere Sub-Division, a locality in the Adamawa Region is known to possess the highest cases of child marriage in Cameroon reason chosen as case study.

In cognizance of the high prevalence of early and forced marriages in the area of study, this piece of work sets as principal objective to propose a multi-sectoral and integrated approach to lessen the phenomenon. Specifically, the study also makes an insight on the drivers, stake holders and limitations of present measures to curb the menace. To attain these objectives, a systematic methodological approach was used comprising of secondary as well as primary data collection including household survey, interviews, focus group discussions and observations.

Field findings ascertained that the principal drivers of early marriages include low level of education (12%), poverty (15%), religion (33%), custom and tradition (40%) resulting to 90.3% of child marriage. Such drivers have permitted the manifestation of different forms of early marriages such as dictatorial instructions (63.38%), negotiation (12.9%), force (19.84%), and peer pressure (3.18%). Only 4.40% of the inhabitants of the study area know the legal age of marriage.

The failure of programs and policies to restrain child marriage are frustrated by Social Community perception, stigmatization faced by girls and probable psychological and mental distress associated with denouncing family members, complicity of the judicial system, amalgam between customary, religious and State laws, Insufficient programs to permit the re-integration of adolescents victims of child marriage., Insufficient coordination of sectorial policies to tackle the issue of child marriage, Weak synergy that exists between actors and stake holders geared towards the protection of children's right, Unavailable current data concerning child marriage.

Faced with these difficulties in combatting child marriage, suggestion are made. They include Ameliorate the legal framework and its environment, Promote education and economic opportunities for girls, Village and community reporting mechanism and referral strategy, Create a platform for stake holders involve in the fight against child marriage.

**Keywords:** Child marriage, Early Marriage, Forced Marriage, Tradition, Religion, Education and Reduction.

**Student Number: 2021-29020**

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## **Abbreviations**

ALVF: Association de lutte contre les violences faites aux femmes

AUC: African Union Commission

CDP: Community Development Plan

CRTV: Cameroon Radio Television

CSO: Civil Society Organisation

DHS: Demographic Health Survey

GIZ: German development cooperation

ICRW: International Centre for Research on Women

NGO: Non-Governmental Organisation

SDG: Sustainable Development Goals

UNFPA: United Nations Fund for Population

UNHRC: United Nations Human Right Commission

## **Acronyms**

AEFALSH : Association des étudiants de la Faculté des Arts, Lettre et Sciences Humaines

CIDIMUC : Conseil des Imams et Dignitaires Musulmans du Cameroun

CONAC: Commission Nationale Anti-Corruption

MINEPAT: Ministry of Economy, Planning and Regional development

MINESEC: Ministry of Secondary Education

MINPROFF: Ministry of Promotion of Women and the Family

NASLA: National School of Local Administration

UNICEF: United Nations International Children Economic Fund

USAID: United States Agency for International Development

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# Chapter 1: General Introduction

## 1.1 Study Background

The Sahel<sup>1</sup> harbours more than 20 million girls' victim of child marriages (UNICEF, 2021) with Nigeria harbouring 31 % of these brides. In the Sahel, over half of teenage girls are forced into early marriages. Especially in central Sahel were 7 out of 10 teens are prone to be child brides. More than 95 % of adolescent girls are not attending schools. Young women in this geographic space who are void of education are ten times more susceptible to get into child marriage than their secondary school education counterparts (ALVF-EN, 2022)

According to the population council, 2006, “before the age the ages of 15<sup>2</sup>, one in every seven girls in third world nations gets involved into forced marriage”. Amongst the 331 million girls in under-developed nations, close to half of this number are forecasted to get into a union before their 18<sup>th</sup> birthday. Bruce and Clark, 2004<sup>3</sup> estimated that at this pace, additional 25,000 more girls every day will be married off in the up-coming decade.

Close to fourteen million adolescent and teenage girls are forced into unions every year<sup>4</sup> (UNFPA, 2012) relative to arrangements made by their parents. By UNICEF statistics 2021, the organisation estimated that close to 400 million women aged 20-49 (representing 41% of women in this age group) were dashed into child married before the legal age of 18 years. Despite the reduction in the percentage of forced marriage on a general basis in the world during the last 30 years, child marriage remains popular in some regions especially within the youngest

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<sup>1</sup> UNICEF, “*in Child Marriage in the Sahel.*” Available from <https://data.Unicef.Org>. accessed on 6/2/2022  
The Sahel stretches from northern Senegal on Africa’s Atlantic coast to northern Eritrea on the Red Sea. The region is defined by its climate – a semi-arid zone bordered on the north by the Sahara Desert and on the south by tropical savannas. Maps vary as to the Sahel’s precise size, since the region does not neatly align with physical or geopolitical boundaries. For development purposes, the Sahel is often defined as a selection of countries in the area that face a common set of risks. For example, the United Nations Support Plan for the Sahel encompasses 10 countries: Burkina Faso, **Cameroon**, Chad, Gambia, Guinea, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Nigeria and Senegal. The Sahel Adaptive Social Protection Program of the World Bank focuses on six countries: Burkina Faso, Chad, Mali, Mauritania, Niger and Senegal, whereas the Norwegian Refugee Council includes Burkina Faso, **Cameroon**, Chad, Eritrea, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal and Sudan, describing the Sahel as the world’s “most neglected and conflict-ridden region.

<sup>2</sup> OHCHR, «ending forced and early marriage in Cameroon”. Available from <https://www.ohchr.org>. accessed on 6/2/2022

<sup>3</sup> Idem,

<sup>4</sup> UNFPA-UNICEF « les mariage des enfants en Afrique de l’ouest et Central »available from <https://www.unicef.org> . accessed on 6/2/2022

generation notably in rural areas and amongst the most vulnerable. Around 1 out of 3 (70 million) young women in the globe aged 20-24 were sunk into marriage and 1 out of 9 teenage girl (23 million) got into a union before reaching 15 years of age (UNICEF, 2012).

If nothing is done, by 2030 the world will be witnessing an annual average child bride of 14% from 14.2% in 2010 to 15.1 million (UNICEF, 2012). Africa bears the highest rates of child marriage in the world while South Asia possesses the highest number of brides. Africa harbours 30 of the 41 countries globe-wise with prevalent rates of 30% or more of early marriages. The current trajectory of Africa in issues related to child marriage is such that it needs to be accelerated by 11 times in order for her to reach the target set by SDG to be attained by 2030 (UNFPA-UNICEF, 2022)

According to the International Centre for research on Women (ICRW) <sup>5</sup>, analysis using measure DHS STAT compiler 2021, Sub-Saharan Africa had fifteen<sup>6</sup> of the hotspot countries, Central America had one, Middle East had one and three in South Asia. Eight countries in Sub Sahara Africa has 50 percent of women experiencing early marriages and five of them are found in West Africa.

Child marriage in Cameroon is common. In 2017, 31% of girls were married off before their 18th birthday, and the national median age for first marriages is 18.5 years. Cameroon holds the 8th highest marriage rate before age 15 amongst African countries, with 10.7% of Cameroonian women married before age 15 as of 2020 (MINPROFF).

The concept of child marriage<sup>7</sup> is conventionally used to denote a legal or traditional union between people wherein one or both partners are below the legal age of marriage. Or literally, some authors use it to pinpoint marriages before the ages of 18 years. Child marriage could take the form of force or marriage by instructions. No matter the definition, child marriage involves the non-consent of the girl child to be married others decide for them.

The motivation of this study is more<sup>8</sup> emergent bearing the fact that early marriage affects the livelihood of girls regarding obstacles it puts to education, constant inter-generational poverty, high health risk (obstetric fistula risks, risk related to STI's and complications related to pregnancy), minimises the dignity and safety of girls and grabs the

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<sup>5</sup> Accessed from <https://documentation.lastradainternational.org>

<sup>6</sup> Accessed from <https://documentation.lastradainternational.org>

<sup>7</sup> Accessed from [www.girlnotbride.es](http://www.girlnotbride.es)

<sup>8</sup> Accessed from <https://documentation.lastradainternational.org>

rights of girls. Child marriage prevent girls of their childhood and the possibility of pursuing their education and emancipation, as well as the denier of them making their own choices into adult roles amongst which we have forced sex and pressure to bear children.

The present study paints a picture of the underlying drivers responsible for child marriage in Cameroon in general and **Tignere sub-division** in particular, examine the strength of the legal environment, evaluate the level of implication of civil society organisations and strategize on reversing the situation. Likewise, the success stories concerning strategies of other countries that have known a phenomena reduction in issues of child marriage will be captured and contextualised in the area of the present study and Cameroon in general.

In the context of the present study, Child marriage denotes marriages undertaken below the legal required age which is 18 years according to the Cameroon penal code of 2016. Child marriage just as ascertained by many organizations is synonymous to early marriage in this study. Concerning forced marriages, its relevance in this study is drawn from those child or early marriages in the study area wherein force, fraud or coercion has been used to be achieved.

## **1.2 Context and Justification**

Cameroon has known a progressive evolution concerning the legal framework guiding child marriage. The constitution of Cameroon consecrates child protection in its preamble as a priority. Ordinance n° 81/02 of June 29, 1981 was enacted as law on civil status registration. Cameroon signed the UNCRC on September 25, 1990 and ratified it on January 11, 1993. Eighteen (18) years later, the 1981 civil status registration ordinance was amended, unfortunately without any changes on the provisions relating to the age of majority of children, especially the girl child, for the purpose of marriage. Cameroon ratified the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child in 1997, including Article 21 which bears the reduction and prohibition of child marriage

In Cameroon the ordnance n° 81/02 of June 29, 1981 was amended and supplemented by section 52(1) of law n° 2011/011 of May 6, 2011 to organize civil status registration and various provisions relating to the status of persons which provides that: “No marriage should be celebrated if the girl is a minor of 15 years old or if the boy is a minor of 18 years old, unless for serious a waiver has been granted by the President of Republic”. The new penal code enacted on the 12<sup>th</sup> of July 2016, aims at putting an end to child marriage.

Under section 356, the new penal states that;

1. Whoever forces anyone to marriage shall be punishable with a prison sentence from 5-10 years with a fine 25000-1 000 000 (USD \$45-\$1 700).
2. If the victim is under the legal age of 18 years, the punishment would not be less than 2 years of prison sentence no matter the attenuating circumstances.
3. Whoever gives in marriage a boy or a girl under 18 shall be punished as under the last two foregoing subsections.
4. With proofs the courts may strip off the offender from any parental authority and disqualify him from being the guardian of who so ever according to the time prescribed in section 31(4) of the penal code..

Despite the evolution of this plethora of laws and legislation in Cameroon, figures concerning child marriage in Cameroon have known a steadfast and the phenomenon is occurring in certain parts of Cameroon at an unprecedented and alarming rate. The demographic and health survey (DHS) of 2018 portrayed that 13% of women aged 25-49 ascertained to have been in a union before the age of 15 years and 36% before the age of 18 years. In effect, 6 % of young girls aged 15-19 got into their first union before their 15<sup>th</sup> anniversary. For those aged 20-24 years, 11% affirmed to have been married before the ages of 15 years, and just 30 % had exactly 18 years (DHS, 2018).

ICRW in 2006, ranked Cameroon 15<sup>th</sup> with a 47.2% of women married before 18years which is the legal age of marriage for girls. Again, the median age at marriage stood at 17 years whilst the tipping point age at marriage was 13. At this same period Cameroon's median age gap was 7 while the highest age gap was 59. UNFPA database using household surveys attributed Cameroon 36% girls who get married before the legal age. About 31% of girls in Cameroon in 2017 were married off before their 18th birthday, 10% married before they turn 15 (ALVF). In 2019, the social institution and gender index (SIGI) attested that about 22% married women in Cameroon are less than 18years of age.

As early as 12 years, early marriages were pervasive in remote Regions (Emery, 2013; UNECA, 2010). Such Regions reportedly were the Adamawa, North and Far North Regions. Child Marriage beneath the legal age is rampant in Cameroon especially prevalent in the Northern part of the country which is mostly made up of the Muslim community. In certain parts of the North, the rate of prevalence surpasses 75%.

Compared to one tenth of girls in secondary schools, and above half of uneducated girls are presently married but girls who have undergone higher education are spelled out from this scourge. The Instability in North West and South West accounted for 855 000 children drop out of school by ending 2019 which is a high risk factor for the girl child (UNICEF).

Child marriage is experienced in all localities of Cameroon even though with variations. Such practices are higher in the rural areas than urban areas. There also exists a disparity between the three Northern regions and seven Southern regions. Averagely, localities in the Northern region of Cameroon are more prone to child marriages compared to those of the South. Against the background of a slow regression to this scourge, the Cameroonian legislation has witness a constant upgrade.

The choice of Tignere Sub-Division is backed by the fact that, the rates of child marriage in many areas in the Northern Regions is high in general and Tignere Sub-Division stands out as one of the localities with highest proportions of child marriage which reaches 80 % in rural areas (DHS, 2018). Bearing accordance that there exist is a relationship between girl's education and child marriage, Tignere Sub-Division has one of the lowest rates of literacy at all levels which in turn intensifies the child marriage scourge in Tignere Sub-Division.

### **1.3 Statement of Problem**

The Northern part of Cameroon is an integral part of the Sahel region which has the most elevated proportions of child brides in Africa (ANAPRODH<sup>9</sup>, 2021). Three-fourth of women aged 20-29 are married before they are of aged 15 in most regions of Cameroon (DHS, 2018). The Northern Regions of Cameroon portray exacerbated percentages of child marriage, up to 79 % are concerned by child marriage in some localities of the North. ALVF, 2016 as well as the DHS, 2018 revealed that in certain parts of the Northern Regions, suitors take girls for marriage as early as 11 or 12 years.

Girls are instructed and brain washed while teenagers in the Northern Regions that early marriage is a virtue and value to womanhood. Teenagers are therefore convinced and forced at tender ages and consequently dropping out of school. Amongst women of 15-49 years who have attended secondary education and above in Cameroon, the three Northern Regions register the least percentages. Far North 1%, North 2% and Adamawa Region represents 3%. This

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<sup>9</sup> Association nationale de promotion et protection de droit de l'homme au Cameroun, is a special consultative body to the United Nations ECOSSOC, **Bureau de Genève-Suisse -14. Avenue Frontenex CP 6363 1211Genève6Email : [anaprodhge@gmail.com](mailto:anaprodhge@gmail.com)** Tel : 0041 765156280

therefore, portrays the correlation that exists between low levels of education and hikes of child marriage especially in the study area.

Marrying the girls off very early represents a principal financial boom and this is supported by the precarious situation of the girl's family in most cases. According to custom and tradition, the bride groom gives to the bride's family what is known as "bride price" in form of cash, goods and mostly livestock since the area is one of the highest in cattle rearing. Poor families are instigated by the fact that the younger the girl the higher the bride price reason why most families give out their daughters before puberty. Some older men boost their virility by taking teenage girls for spouse. In Tignere culture, it is believed that a young girl is pure so it avoids health infections to older men.

Child marriage programs in the **Tignere sub-division** as in most rural localities in Cameroon are few and more programs are needed where prevalence is highest. The dominant causes of child marriage in the area of study include family perception, low level girl's education or illiteracy, poverty, religious and traditional influence. Attempts to reduce child marriage involves domains of education, health, legal and economic policy and techniques such as community mobilization and awareness raising are undergone. ALVF reveals that communication and collaboration between the different program is weak and limited to an extent hindering therefore the propagation of lessons learned and to be learnt. Essential tools used for follow up and evaluation of best practices as well as identifying effective programs are scarce amongst child marriage programs. The unique health, social, educational and economic needs of married girls are underserved by existing child marriage programs.

The laws guiding forced and early marriage need a profound reform and an acute vulgarization of programs in favor of eliminating child marriage especially in rural areas like Tignere Sub-Division. This could attenuate the influence of customs and traditions.

#### **1.4 Research Questions**

This study has a principal research question and specific research questions.

##### **❖ Principal research question**

How can Child marriage be reduced in Cameroon in general and Tignere Sub-Division in particular?



### ❖ **Specific research questions**

- 1- What factors could be identified and used to reduce the risk of or increase protection of young girls against child marriage in Tignere Sub-Division.
- 2- Who are the different stake holders and their roles/limitation in combatting child marriage?
- 3- What are the limitations of existing legal texts against child marriage?
- 4- Can a multi-dimensional strategic plan curb child marriage?

## **1.5 Research Objectives**

Two sets of objectives are designed for this study. A main objective and specific objectives

### ❖ **Main research Objective**

Develop strategies/programs to curb child marriage in Cameroon

### ❖ **Specific research Objective**

- 1-Bring out drivers of early marriages in Tignere Sub-Division
- 2- Identify different stake holders and their roles/limitation in combatting child marriage
- 3- Short list limitations of existing legal texts against child marriage in Tignere Sub-Division
- 4- Design a multi-dimensional strategic plan to curb child marriage in Tignere Sub-Division.

## **1.6 Delimitation of Study**

This study is delimited on a triple plan. They include periodic or temporal, thematic and spatial delimitation.

### **1.6.1 Periodic delimitation**

This study runs from 1981 to 2022. The first texts on family law were promulgated in Cameroon in 1981. It is true that this text was enacted in relation to realities of this era wherein marriage of teenage girls was not considered a taboo by many people. So, this study also investigates the vision of marriage of girls under ages of 15 years between the periods 1981 to

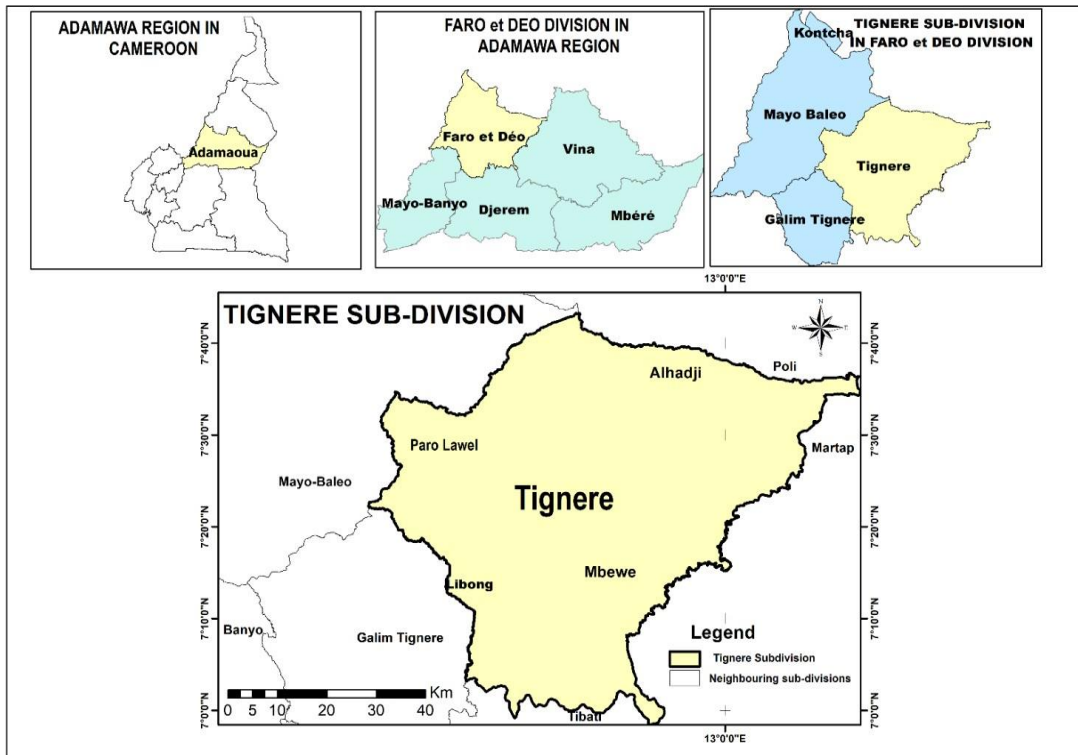
2016 where it was permitted by law. And an evaluation is made between the periods 2016 to 2022 which involves the period wherein the legal age for child marriage was step up to 18 years.

### **1.6.2 Thematic delimitation**

Child marriage in the context of the present study involves teenage girls given out to marriage generally below the ages of 15 years. These girls are usually given out to much older men. The study also explores the causes of this child marriage which include amongst others socio-cultural factors such as religion, level of education, weight of tradition and customs, poverty economic factors such as female economic capacitation. Strategy, programs and policies are reviewed in this study so as to shape them to fit the context of child marriage in Tignere Sub-Division.

### **1.6.3 Spatial delimitation**

Tignere Sub-Division is found in the Faro et Deo Division of the Adamawa Region of Cameroon. Situated between latitude 7° and 8° North of the equator and longitude 12° and 13° East of the Greenwich meridian. Tignere Sub-Division is bordered to the North by the Faro division (North region), to the North West by the Mayo-baleo, to the South by the Djerem basin, to the East she is bordered by the Vina Division and to the West by the Galim-Tignere Sub-Division. The surface area of Tignere Sub-Division is about 5000km<sup>2</sup> with a population of 34 167 people (BUCREP, 2022).



**Figure 1:** Location of study area (Source- Administrative data, National Institute of Cartography 2020)

## 1.7 Plan of Work

Chapter one is the general introduction elaborated to include the background of study, Context and Justification, the research problem, Research questions, Research objectives, and Delimitation of Study. Chapter 2 includes works reviewed related to child marriage from causes, policies consequences to solutions of child marriage in different contexts. In chapter 3, theories were exploited in an operational manner as well as the principal concepts harbouring the present thematic. Chapter 4 presents the technics of data collection involving both qualitative and quantitative data collection realisable through procedures such as observation, interviews, focus group discussions as well as house hold survey. Chapter 5 dwells on Policy implementation and Field Data analysis. This involves a scrutiny of the legal environment, policies and program related to curbing child marriage, analyses of successes and failures of policy put in place by stake holders. Chapter six proposes strategies to curb Child Marriage using a multi-dimensional approach to redress the hurdles to child marriage reduction and elimination. Some of these approaches are taken from different contexts and countries wherein certain laws, policies, programs have known acute success in redressing the upward surge of early marriages.

## Chapter 2: Literature Review

A broad spectrum of literature has been explored and exploited to establish the scientific framework of the present research work. It ranges from the causes, consequences, policies, laws, programs and solutions to early and forced marriages in different contexts as well as in Tignere Sub-Division of the Adamawa Region of Cameroon. For comprehensive understanding, works reviewed were partitioned in approaches, including the legal environment and programs, causes and consequences, trends and patterns and preventive approaches to child marriage.

### 2.1 Approaches Explaining the Causes and Consequences of Child Marriage

**The United States Agency for International Development<sup>10</sup> (USAID, 2007)** in “New Insights on preventing child Marriage, a global analysis of factors and programs” examined the principal causes plaguing child marriage in developing countries. Amongst the 12 most important factors responsible for child marriages, this report pinpoints four as predominant. They include girl’s education, age gap, economic status and religion. Furthermore, analysis is made on the consequences associated with child marriage. Talking about maternal health, teenage women bearing children are susceptible to face vehement health problems. Maternal mortality<sup>11</sup> is higher amongst young women as well as hypertension prior to pregnancy because their bodies are not ready for child birth (Save the children 2004, Mathur, Greene and Malhorta 2003). Other consequences include poor infant health, domestic violence and decision making<sup>12</sup>, education and economic status. Girls who marry early cannot further their education and take advantage of educational opportunities due to social hindrances such as taking care of children, pregnancy, reduced mobility (Mathur, Greene and Malhorta 2003).

Just like the USAID report above, the present research makes an in-depth analysis of the different causes of child marriage in Tignere Sub-Division. The latter differ from the former in that all the causes to child marriage are taken into consideration and treated as equal and independent.

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<sup>10</sup> [WWW.ICRW.ORG](http://WWW.ICRW.ORG)

<sup>11</sup><sup>11</sup> Accessed from <https://documentation.lastradainternational.org>

<sup>12</sup> [www.Docplayer.net](http://www.Docplayer.net)

**Anju Malhotra, (2015) in “causes, consequences and solutions to forced marriage in developing countries”** made a rundown of the causes of child marriage in developing countries. They include poverty, limited education, and insecurity in face of conflict, tradition and religion. As consequences this author pin pointed aspects such as increase maternal and infant health risk, sexual violence, deprive childhood of future and proposed a plethora of solutions. The present study in Tignere Sub-Division also dwells on the causes of child marriage but does not insist on examining the consequences. The former leaves out certain causes such as family perception which are a predominant cause of child marriage in our area of study. Such causes are well diagnosed in the present research.

**U.S citizen and immigration service 2002**, show cased the role of parents in child marriage in Cameroon. Children are often given out to marriage without their consent. The husband in some cases is much older than the bride and has to pay a considerable dowry or bride price which puts the girl in a situation comparable to that of a property detained by the husband. This situation is aggravated when the husband dies considering his age, the young girl being considered the husband’s property is forced to marry the brother of the decease. Failure to accept, the girl is obliged to refund the dowry which is very difficult in many cases since most of the girls suffer from acute pauperisation. In line with the observation above, the present study looks at the behaviours of girls after their forced marriages. How many of them can revolt while their husbands are alive, how many can be liberated upon death of their husbands, how many have the courage to run away and give less consideration to customs and tradition? Include some of the interrogation that the present study tries to answer.

**Save the Children (2004) in “State of the World’s Mothers 2004”**. This report makes a run-down of consequences to which child brides are exposed to. Amongst the most important of this point we have infant health, financial status, maternal health, domestic violence and decision making. The report paints a picture of ills associated to teenage motherhood. Teenage girls<sup>13</sup> are faced with increased proportions of maternal mortality and hypertension<sup>14</sup> resulting from pregnancy because their bodies are not yet ready to receive children. In line with this research, the leitmotiv of our study stem from the point of view that child marriage is harmful to women and the society. While this study dwells on the consequences of child marriage, our research goes behind to analyse the root causes of child marriage in Tignere Sub-Division.

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<sup>13</sup> <https://www.unicef.org>

<sup>14</sup> <https://resourcecentre.savethechildren.net>

## 2.2 Approaches Explaining the Legal Environment, Policies and Programs Against Child Marriage

**Association National de promotion et de protection des droits de l'homme (ANAPRODH)** in « *Contribution sur les mariages d'enfants, mariages précoces et mariages forcés ; suivant la résolution 71/175 de l'Assemblée* » made a run-down in the evolution of the legal framework against child marriage and abuses. The Cameroon Government have ratified international treaty and conventions geared at eliminating ill practices against children. They include, United Nations Convention on children's' right, the elimination on all kinds of discrimination against women's convention, the African charter for the well-being of children. Laws and regulations has equality undergone dynamism in Cameroon. These include the Cameroonian constitution which protects youths, civil code that obliges men to protect children and prohibit child slavery, and the penal code that penalizes forced marriage. The interest of our study in Tignere Sub-Division does not end at making a taxonomy of laws and regulations against child marriage as is the case of **ANAPRODH** but investigate how such measures have impacted the phenomenon of child marriage in this locality of North Cameroon.

**Joar Svanemyr, 2013** publish a piece of work hovering around laws to change the practice of child marriage in Africa. The principal aim was to provide the representative of the people with 1) the situational analysis of child marriage over Africa, 2) examine the status of regulation in ten African countries, 3)diagnose the legal environment concerning force marriage and present policy recommendations and research axes.

In the same vein, the present study examines the existing legislation as the former and makes policy recommendations to strengthen the legal environment. But the present research goes above making proposition to amend the legal environment. It also brings out the drivers of child marriage and proposes a global and local strategy that fits the local context to reduce child marriage

**Global program to end child marriage, 2020** “*technical note for global program to end child marriage*” this note asserts that the least age at a union should stand at 18 years as already adopted by legislation of many countries. The note goes further to explicit that despite the plethora of laws, reduction in child marriage remains a major issue. It is very difficult to criminalize<sup>15</sup> child marriage since it is a complex and polarizing issue. The application of laws and regulations related to child marriage is an imminent signal to advocate of force marriage

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<sup>15</sup> <https://www.unicef.org>

that this practice is counter-valued, illegal and punishable. Nevertheless, the criminalization of early marriages could put children and families at risk. The process of criminalization poses a lot of debates between country laws on one hand and on the other hand religious and customary laws, which are usually contradictory. Nations should put in place automatic registration of births, civil, customary and religious marriages. Child marriage should be end by the system of governance and justice which also includes the dynamism of social norms, gender norms and the provision of services and increased opportunities for teenage girls. The present study in Tignere Sub-Division advocates for proper enforcement of existing laws and policies both national and international but goes above such laws to render conscious the local population of the study area of the ills and dangers of child marriage.

**African Union Commission (AUC, 2013)<sup>16</sup>**, during the “International Conference on Family Planning”, brought out statistics regarding thirty two African countries that have sealed the legal age into a union at 18 years for both sexes and even above for few countries such as Rwanda, Lesotho, Libya and Algeria. From the conclusions of AUC commission, a global campaign was designed to stop child marriage in Africa. Looking at the campaign of the African Union commission they target solution from a broad base perspective.

The present study envisages solutions at the local level. Global and national legislation will be used to remain legal but strategies proposed in this study must reflect the prevailing context in Tignere Sub-division.

**The United States Agency for International Development (2007)** in “New Insights on preventing child Marriage, A Global Analysis of Factors and Programs. After examining 20 hot spot countries, this study noticed averagely in most communities and Countries, most programs against child marriage involve community mobilisation and awareness raising (48%) programs on skills education (20%) social marketing education (20%). Over 18% of programs from these countries are non-formal education efforts. Very few programs keep records on births and marriage (5%) which help in enforcing child marriage regulations, development of local policies, and the application of national policies at grassroots level (3%), just 2 % of these programs ensure that girls who give birth at early stages can continue schooling after such events and 2% provide reproductive health services to child bride. Little programs provide information on follow-up and evaluation or determination of results.

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<sup>16</sup> Accessed from <http://au.net>

This study shows that most programs in various countries are non-formal with the weaknesses they comport, our present study in Tignere sub-division aside implementing national policies is geared towards the proposition of local policies that reflects the context of Tignere sub-division. Furthermore, a participatory follow-up and evaluation system is proposed in our study.

### **2.3 Approaches on Child Marriage Prevention**

**The United States Agency for International Development (USAID, 2007)** in “New Insights on preventing child Marriage, a global analysis of factors and programs” proposed protective factors to child marriage. According to this research, economic status is a prime protective factor. For they ascertained that poorer households offer little opportunities and avenues for girls. So, girls from viable economic background may be less exposed to child marriage compared to those from poor backgrounds. Education is another important protective factor, the more a woman is educated the lesser chances for such girls to be susceptible to early marriages. Education is globally accepted as the most significant factor for delaying age at marriage of girls (UNICEF, 2005)<sup>17</sup>. Other factors include age gap and polygyny. The cited protective factors by USAID are examined in our present area of study (Tignere Sub-Division) but protective factors related to the context and area of our study are also proposed for experimentation.

**L’Association de Lutte Contre les Violences Faites aux Femmes** in the Far North of Cameroon (ALVF-EN) in «*MARIAGES PRÉCOCES ET FORCÉS AU CAMEROUN: RÉSULTATS DES RECHERCHES* » brought forth the principal reasons underscoring the high rates of child marriage in the far North Regions of Cameroon. According to data obtained from this research, traditional norms account for 41% of forced marriages in these regions of Cameroon. Faced with these constant hikes of forced marriages, ALVF preconizes some suggestions. Amongst such solutions can figured the amelioration of the legal framework especially the 1981 family law, not only should the Cameroon government create incentives to augment girls’ education but school programs especially at the primary level should be inclusive of dangers and risk of child marriage, sex education notably sex equality, sexual and reproductive health and impulse educative talks in schools and communities. In line with these measures, our study in Tignere sub-division makes propositions to redress the rates of child

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<sup>17</sup>USA-AID.GOV



marriage though only measures adapted to the context of the study area will be taken into consideration.

**Association National de Promotion et de Protection des Droits de L'Homme (ANAPRODH)**, haven made a situational analysis of child marriage in Cameroon during the general assembly of the High commissioner of human rights of the United Nations, the association brought forth some of the principal reasons hindering a reduction in hikes of child marriage observed in Cameroon especially in the Northern Regions were the phenomenon is a canker worm. Such difficulties include the persistence of socio-cultural factors that do not favor the blossoming of children especially girls, insufficient human and financial resources, insufficient programs geared towards the integration of victims of forced marriages and female genital mutilations, insufficient coordination of sectorial policies in favor of children, weak synergy existing between actors in charge of child protection, unavailability of current data on child marriage and absence of a harmonize reference system bearing coordinates of victims of child and forced marriages.

**Ministry of Women's Empowerment and the Family, (MINPROFF 2016)** in *“PROGRES REALISES EN MATIERE D'ELIMINATION DES MARIAGES PRECOCES ET FORCES AU CAMEROUN”* dresses the situational analysis of child marriage, the regulatory framework, difficulties and perspective to curb this inhuman practice. To reinforce the actions of actors in the field in the fight against child marriages, this Ministry advocates for an increase in budgets for social services and child protection, multiplication of centers to receive and empower girls in distress, reinforce research on socio-cultural factors that stand out as major causes of child marriages in our context, increase sensitization on social scourges, vulgarization of legal instruments in charge of child protection. Though such measures are proposed at the National level in Cameroon, our study in Tignere Sub-Division will examine the feasibility of such measures and redesign them to fit the context of the study.

**African Union Commission (AUC, 2013)**, during the “International Conference on Family Planning” launched a two year campaign with objective of augment the application policies and instruments developed by the A.U. They include, the African Youth Charter which is the epicentre of the A.U second decade on education (2006-2009) and serves as a direct investment in the youth, African charter on the rights and welfare of the child (1999), African union social policy framework (2009), African governance infrastructure, continental policy framework on sexual reproductive health, AU campaign on accelerated reduction of maternal

new born and child mortality in Africa, the charter for African cultural renaissance, African women's decade and the Maputo protocol on rights of women in Africa.

One of the present study's objectives is to bring up an action plan aimed at sensitising and mobilising different actors in Tignere sub-division for the implementation of existing policies as well as those developed and proposed in this study against child marriage

### **Chapter 3: Theoretical and Conceptual Framework**

This part of the work explores concepts and theories. The definition of concepts here is done in an explanatory manner. The views of certain authors are taken into consideration. The concepts are defined in an operational manner which means that the contextual definition of concepts in the present work is derived from the views of other authors. This section also brings out theories that are useful to the present study. Theories exploited in the framework of this study include the theory of change, theory of culture of poverty and new integrative theory.

#### **3.1 Theory of Change**

This theory was postulated by *Girls not Brides*<sup>18</sup>. It demonstrates that there is no one solution to put an end to early marriages and insists on the participatory approach should we think stopping force marriages. Whilst program may take different forms, local contexts should be taken into consideration while redressing child marriage scourge. This theory is an important framework and tool for all stakeholders governmental or not to tap ideas and ideologies so as to adapt to their country's realities. This theory is directed to old actors of the domain as well as new actors still trying to have an appropriate grasps of the phenomenon in an attempt to develop a wider spectrum.

The theory of Change has seven levels, which include the **problem statement**, catalysing strategy, strategies, outcome, results, impacts and vision (Margaret Greene,). There exists a wider and broader spectrum on how change can occur and noting that the different levels are not linear in nature. The **problem statement** in this theory encapsulates the scale, depth, drivers, and impacts of child marriage to the society. This first level of this theory permits our study to dress the contextual analysis of child marriage in Tignere Sub-Division. This first premise permits us to measure in length, width and the deepness of child marriage scourge in the area of the present research. Furthermore, the theory also instigates us to bring out the

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<sup>18</sup> Accessed from <https://www.girlsnotbrides.org>

numerous drivers of child as well as the adverse effects of child marriages in Tignere Sub-Division.

The second level of the theory of change is the **catalysing strategy**. This level postulates that combatting child marriage should not take an isolated approach but a global one. Ending child marriage involves sustainable and national, regional, and international works that are coordinated by long term efforts embedded in local activities. This level also implicates identifying opportunities to coordinates efforts. Make available information and data concerning child marriage from different contexts so as to permit a better apprehension of programs and projects geared towards reducing child marriage. This second level of a theory of change is useful in the present work in the sense that information and data from this study will be vulgarise to the local, national, regional and international community so as to develop a broader strategy that out ways Tignere Sub-Division. The positive experiences of other localities in combatting early marriages from other contexts are exploited and contextualise in our area of study.

The third level of the theory of change is the phase of **strategy formulation**. In this theory, four strategies are proposed which are interlinked and used in a complex combination. The first strategy is empowering girls through training, skills and information. The second strategy involves the mobilisation of families and communities. Their mobilisation creates awareness about the ills of child marriage and the alternative role that girls can play in the advancement of the society. Such that, communities themselves could put an end to giving out their tender girls. The third strategy is that of providing services such as education, health and justice. These services could permit girls not to be given out at early ages for marriage. And fourthly, establish and implement laws and policies. Laws prohibiting child marriage should be formulated, promulgated and implemented in all localities. Just as assigned by this theory, the present study in Tignere Sub-Division develops strategy involving awareness raising, sensitisation, and education etc.

The fourth level involves **outcome**. It encompasses evolution in behaviours and girl's condition, families and communities, services and regulation. Approaches are adopted per context to achieve these outcomes including research to providing services, advocacy or capacity building. The outcome are the changes hoped to be seen as a results of strategic activities put in place. Our study in Tignere Sub-Division, envisages a lot of out come from the suggestions that will be made prior to child marriage in the area.

The fifth level concerns **results**. These are evident dynamics on the ways of individuals, families, communities, program implementers and law enforcement officials as a consequence dynamics in attitude and conditions. On like the theory of change, the present piece of work in Tignere Sub-Division envisages results prior to the suggestions that are made. And such results hover around comporment changes of families, communities of Tignere.

The sixth level is that of **impacts**. A lasting impact on child marriage necessitates that girls meet their aspirations. It is when girls can make their choices in terms of time and whom to marry that we can evaluate impact of strategies put in place. The seventh stage is that of **Vision**, which articulates over the global objective to be attained. Not only should child marriage phenomenon be prevented but girls should be empowered so as to get married when they desire. Girls should be permitted to acquire skills and knowledgeable enough to participate in decision making.

This theory is used in the present research to re-orientate the programs, strategies of different stakeholders in tackling the problem of child marriage. The approach used by the theory of change which insist on contextualising solutions will be appropriated by the present study. Then, the seven steps proposed by the change theory will be used in this study to demonstrate a change of paradigm in reducing child marriage.

### **3.2 Theory of “Culture of Poverty”**

This theory propounds the elementary and real causes of poverty are attributed to the “**culture of poverty**”. It postulates that poverty is a set of beliefs transmitted over generations, values and skills socially generated and held individually (Paul Nkwi et al., 2019). These dysfunctions are not to be put on the responsibility of individuals for, they are only victims of the subculture or culture. On the pretext of poverty, families and communities tend to send their teenage girls into marriage. The correlation between poverty and child marriage has been attested by organisation such as ALVF that have worked extensively in North Cameroon.

This theory is used in the present study to show the relationship that exist between poverty and child marriage. Most girls are trapped into child marriage not because they want but because the community have imposed certain beliefs and values on them that makes them remain precarious. In our study area, poverty can be considered a social construct were the roles of girls are defined by culture.

### **3.3 The New Integrative Theory**

This theory was first postulated by Walgrave (1992) in his social welfare work and it contributed to the understanding of and integration of socially in-adapted youths in to the society. The new integrative theory was postulated to substitute the “social welfare approach” in the work of Tifuh (2012). This theory is situated on societal inequalities,” (walgrave, 1992). Tifuh (2012) noted that the essence of the new integrative theory as we are postulating in this research work states that all youth problems and aspirations are centred on their effective and positive integration into the adult dominated society of work and all the socio-cultural, psychological, legal-political, socio-professional and economic advantages that emanate from it. The theory further brings out evidence of the integration process of youths in the 21st century as a positive consideration, socialization and definition that stimulate, initiate and analyse them to awareness of their responsibilities, rights and obligation in the society. The effective and efficient integration of young people into the adult society will solve the in-adaptation, exclusion and marginalization of this group. Contextualizing the above analysis in the case of these young people, we noticed that there is dis-functioning and antagonism which characterize this target population. In this era of globalisation and multiple challenges, youths are not to be seen as a problem but partner in development. They are to be seen in terms of their contribution and participation in nation building and social integration in particular. The theory highlights the need for integrating youths in nation building. This theory gives the study more credibility in that, empowering a youth is a process of participation, and in giving integration as an output. If the principle of inclusion is well implemented in the Tignere sub-division, the girls forced at tender ages to get married will thus be integrated in the society as part of decision makers. This will go a long way to reduce some of the challenges faced by this group of young girls and will also lead to the socio-economic development of the municipality and Cameroon at large.

The New Integrative theory is a step ahead of what we seek to underscore in the present piece of work. The government and the educators in this area should consider the integration of the young girls forced to marriage or those under perspective of being forcedly married. Thus, the empowerment of these youths will end many other Youth related issues and especially such as juvenile delinquencies, prostitution, unemployment, marginalisation etc.

### **3.4 Theory of Normative Spectrum**

This theory recited by Beniamino Cislighi et al., 2019 ponders<sup>19</sup> on four characteristics that determines the practice of a norm. Primo, its detectability: Social norms have less influence on less detectable practices. Secondo, involve sanctions: the norm highly influences depending on the level of approvability for complying or not. Thirdly, involves the gap between the practice and cognitive distance. When the norm becomes popular, it directly has a stronger influence. The fourth is the interdependence of the practice: Any one component of the community could disrupt the norm by not complying with it. This theory postulates that these four characteristics have point of intersection which directly results to four levels of influence (obligatory, appropriate, tolerate and possible).

In obligatory practices, intense social pressure obliges stake holders to conform; this practice is an appropriate way to gain collective outcome and results, it involve a situation where actors themselves reciprocally play the role of police on each other to ensure everyone complies.

Individual results achievement do not permit deviations from norms though appropriate practices can permit deviations. For instance a teenager can drink alcohol to acquire social status but his/her peers may not be influence by such derives. Actors think that people surrounding them will confirm their actions but their basic aim is not the approval of others concerning their actions. Definitely, at the lowest level of influence, norms can provide a model of what persons are into as a form of social learning through cognitive accessibility.

The four characteristics of norms: obligatory, appropriate, tolerated, and possible are juxtaposed in the present piece of work. Concerning obligatory practices, this work looks at the extent to which families are compelled to give out their tender girls for marriage in the area of study.

### **3.5 Conceptual Framework**

Concepts defined and reviewed in this piece of work include early marriage, child marriage, forced marriage and dowry. For UNFPA (2006), early marriage is synonymous to child marriage. Whilst forced marriage presents certain differences.

#### **3.5.1 Early marriage**

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<sup>19</sup> Accessed from <https://www.researchgate.net>

According to **UNICEF (2006)**, Child marriage is a form of marriage be it formal or informal where a child under the legal age which for many countries is 18years lives with a partner. More girls are affected than boys in issues related to child marriage. For this organisation, children's rights are not respected in child marriage as well as their exposure to various forms of violence, exploitation and abuse. Early marriage is a mixture of economic and social strength. In localities where child marriage is prevalent, early marriage is part and parcel of the social values and behaviours that reflects the low consideration to intrinsic and human rights of the girls.

**ALVF (2016)<sup>20</sup>**, sees early marriage as a similar union whether formal or informal of a child generally less than 18 years for most countries to a person having the legal age or to another person without the legal age or considered a child. Generally aged men or more mature men get married to teenage and tender girls and there is usually a great gap of gender equality.

. This association also pinpoints out the required age that is the regulatory age and marriage age also differs from one country to another. Culture, tradition and customs always surpasses existing legislation despite the 18 year bar put for normal marriages by many countries. This is usually in conjunction with parental agreement especially in situations of teenage pregnancy. The practice of child marriage has widespread consequences for both partners. Wide research has been made about the consequences of child marriage to girls but there also exist such consequences on boys and such include early fatherhood, inadequate or absence of educational and career opportunities. In their definition, they further highlighted some general causes of girls' early marriages. They include hardship, bride price, culture, traditions and customs, religious and social pressures as well as illiteracy.

**Girls Not Bride** identifies early marriage as a general concern propelled by poverty, gender gaps, social norms, insecurity and consequences that accompanies the phenomenon.

When girls and women are regarded as second class human being, void of their basic rights and prerogatives and downgraded because of their sex, the concept gender equality is applied. People follow certain rules in an attempt to belong to groups because of peer and social pressure, coercion by authorities who detain power all this falls under what is term social norms.

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<sup>20</sup> Accessed from <http://www.fillespasepouses.org>

Individuals, girls, and families faced with poverty turn to regard marriage as an ultimate solution for economic and financial safety.

According to this organisation, force marriage as well as early marriage child marriage signifies the same thing. A union in which both partners do not possess the legal age of marriage (18 years).

**GIZ 2013**, defines early marriage as a union of individuals whose level of physical, emotion, sexual and psychosocial development makes them unable to freely and fully consent to marriage.

### **3.5.2 Forced marriage**

**US citizen and immigration services** defines forced marriage as one with an element or more of force, coercion or fraud and where both or one party does not agree to the union. Agreement denotes that partners into a union have given words, free and full consent to the union. Forced marriage may occur as a result of family members using physical or emotional abuse, threats, or deception to obtain consent by force. Forced marriage can be accompanied by consequences such as stalking, assault, violence.

**MINPROFF** conceptualises force marriage as a marriage in which one or more parties is married without their consent or against their will. A marriage can also become a forced marriage even if both parties enter with full consent if one or both parties are later forced to stay in marriage against their will. It should be noted that a forced marriage differ from arranged marriage in which both parties presumably consent to the assistance of their parents or a third party such as a matchmaker in finding and choosing a partner. There is often a continuum of coercion used to compel a marriage, ranging from outright physical violence to subtle psychological pressure.

To **UNHR**, Child and forced marriage (CFM) is a human rights violation and a harmful practice that disproportionately affects women and girls globally, preventing them from living their lives free from all forms of violence.

CFM is a threat to the living conditions and futures of girls and women around the world, robbing them of their agency to make decisions about their lives, disrupting their education,



making them more vulnerable to violence, discrimination and abuse, and preventing their full participation in economic, political and social spheres.

## Chapter 4: Research Methodology

A systematic approach involving both primary and secondary data collection was used in this study. Secondary data collection involved the exploitation of Internet documents, articles, reports, books and existing documents. Primary data was obtained through questionnaires administration, observations, interviews, informal and formal discussions. This section of the work presents the research procedures, research instruments (interview guide, questionnaires, observation guide and checklist) and difficulties faced in bringing out findings of the study as design by the researcher.

### 4.1 The Study Matrix

Cameroon is made of 10 regions amongst which, three are referred to as Northern regions of the country. They include the Adamawa (Ngaoundere as capital), North (Garoua as capital), and Far North (Maroua as capital). This region is made up of five divisions namely Vina, Mbere, Djerem, Mayo Banyo et Faro et Deo. These divisions are in turn divided into administrative sub-divisions. The Adamawa region is amongst the poorest region of Cameroon. The Adamawa region is situated at an average altitude of 1000m above sea level and considered the watershed of Cameroon due to many rivers of the country that find their source here (Cameroon atlas, 2010). The Region and sub-division can best be described by information in table 1.

**Table 1: Main characteristics of the Adamawa Region and Tignere Sub-Division**

Characteristics	Adamawa Region	Tignere Sub-division
<b>Surface area</b>	63 701 km <sup>2</sup>	5000km <sup>2</sup>
<b>Population</b>	1 183 551 persons	34 167 persons
<b>Level of education</b>	Primary (men) 20% Secondary (men) 12% Primary (women) <5% Secondary (women) 3%	Primary (men)- 12% Secondary (men) 6% Primary (women) <3% Secondary (women) 1%
<b>Principal economic activity</b>	Agriculture, pastoral nomadism, trade	Agriculture, pastoral nomadism, trade
<b>Ethnic groups</b>	Muslim fulbe, tikar Gbaya	Muslim fulbe, Tikar
<b>Incidence of poverty</b>	63%	71%
<b>Religion</b>	Islam (>70%) Christians Atheist	Islam (>80%) Christians Atheist

Source: MNEPAT, MINESEC 2022

The choice of an area in the Adamawa Region is prior to the high prevalence of child marriage in general in this Region and Tignere Sub-Division in particular. In the Adamawa Region, 30% of girls aged less than 15 years have started procreation (Demographic and health survey, NIS 2018) and a majority are from forced marriages (MINPROFF, 2020). Whilst the median age for women in their first union in the Adamawa Region stands at 16.6 years that for Tignere Sub-Division is way beyond 14 years (ALVF, 2020). The Adamawa Region ranks second after the Northern Region in terms of polygamy with 38% of married persons being polygamous. The polygamous situation in Tignere Sub-division is exacerbated of which young girls less than 15 years are victims (MINPROFF). The demographic and health survey carried out in Cameroon in 2018 showed that 38% girls were married before the legal age of marriage which is 18 years. But in the Tignere Sub-Division, up to 79% are married off before the age of 15 years especially in its rural areas. The above statistics testifies the amplitude of child marriage in Tignere Sub-Division and for this, a hypothetico-deductive method and emperico-inductive method are used for this study.

In Cameroon, Tignere Sub-Division has the highest rates of child marriage (MINPROFF 2016, DHS 2020) and regroups all the forms and factors observed in other parts of the Sahel responsible for child marriage. Whilst many localities in Cameroon harbours just one or two factors accounting for child marriage, Tignere Sub-Division harbours a complex combination of such factors. Despite this hikes of child marriage, the area has not benefited from adequate attention from public and civil society organisations. The presence, persistence of all forms and factors of child marriage coupled with little attention from stake holders, justifies our choice of study in Tignere Sub-Division.

#### **4.2 Pre-Survey of the Study**

A preliminary survey was carried out in the study area in January 2022. The aim of this survey was to explain to the council officials, administrative officials, traditional authorities and civil society organization the base line of the present piece of work and seek orientation. A pre-test questionnaire was established and 50 questionnaires distributed to both the rural and urban areas of Tignere. The aim of this questionnaire was to make sure the objectives and hypotheses set for the study were relevant. The pre-survey also aimed at evaluating the financial, material and human resources necessary to carry out field work of the study.

#### **4.3 Selection and Training of Field Survey Assistants**

The study entailed the collection of varied data and information on the entire area of study. The study is specific in that it necessitated attending many conferences, meetings, seminars and community works. Many of the aforementioned activities could be taking place at the same period. There was therefore the need for field survey assistants. Taking into consideration the nature of the study as revealed by the preliminary study, field survey assistants were selected and prepared. In total there were (4) field survey assistants. Two of them were graduates from the higher teachers training college Maroua and two from the University of Ngaoundere. The field assistants were chosen based on their background knowledge in scientific research and data collection. The field survey assistants were divided into 2 groups and each group responsible for information gathering in rural and urban space of Tignere Sub-division.

Field survey assistants were all natives of Tignere Sub Division. As in many areas of Cameroon, certain information can easily be gotten by natives of the locality. Many household have a very low level of education and can neither express themselves in French or English language. The need therefore to choose survey assistants, origin of this area was unavoidable so that they could converse with the indigenes in their local languages. The first exploratory trip through the quarters and villages of the study area permitted the mastery of the terrain, define the topic in concrete terms and establish useful contacts especially with municipal councilors, traditional authorities and civil society organizations.

#### **4.4 Methods of Data and Information Collection**

Qualitative and quantitative methods of data collection were used in the realization of this piece of work. Research in social sciences as a scientific discipline has evolved with time. Before now, some researchers based their sources of data collection on observation and interviews. Today, there is a wide variety of possibilities such as the internet, extracting out existing literature and even carrying out interviews and surveys by emails. The research methods chosen for this research are practical. The questions who, what, when, where for how long are answered by the present methodology.

This part of the work makes a detailed description on how information for this study was obtained. Many researchers hold that a research work should bring out the different steps used in carrying out a scientific piece of work. In the case of the present work, the research started with the exploration of secondary documents treating the same issue at stake. Simultaneously, observations were carried out in the study area in order to dress out the

scientific context of the study. The bulk of the work consisted in obtaining views from a sampled population.

#### **4.4.1 Data from secondary sources**

After the pre-survey which had as prime objective to permit the study ascertain the statement of the problem, intensive documentary research was carried out thereafter. This consisted in reading and analyzing literature concerning the issue at stake. Documentary research procedure helped the study to demonstrate that child marriage is of scientific interest. Theories, concepts and models advanced by some authors fostered the understanding of the persistence of child marriage in Tignere Sub-Division. The literature of other researchers helped the study to come up with scientific conclusions in relation to facts gathered from the views of other authors.

Reviewing existing literature permitted an effective spotting out of areas which have not been researched on or where there is need for a case study in-depth research. In this study, there was need for the review of case studies in other areas to grasp experience which may replicate and then permit a comparison with our findings. Documentary research was carried out in many documentary centers in Cameroon.

- **University libraries**

A series of research works were exploited both published and unpublished on the causes, consequences, programs, policies, consequences and solutions of child marriage. There were many unpublished works consulted at the University of Yaoundé I central Library and the recent Masters and PH.D library of the AEFALSH of the University of Yaoundé I. The department libraries of Sociology, History and Anthropology of the University of Yaoundé I were also exploited. These libraries which were mostly rich in dissertations and theses on child marriage permitted the author to have a grasp of how the phenomenon is operating in other parts of Cameroon and the world at large. The libraries of the higher teacher's training college of the University of Ngaoundere were of utmost importance for this is the only University in this region which harbors most of the scientific research especially issues concerning child marriage which is a major pre-occupation of feminist in the area.

- **Specialised libraries**

Specialized libraries on women and development studies were also visited. A diversity of books, journals, articles, newsletters and end of course dissertations were exploited in these centers. These include the Paul Ango Ela centre of Yaounde which is very rich in documents

concerning gender and development. This library permitted the researcher to have a grasp of the evolution of child marriage in Cameroon and other parts of the world. The regional Pan African institute of development in Yaounde, Buea and Douala were equally visited. The visit to the Pan African Institute for development were very important because it permitted the researcher to broaden his scope on case studies carried on child marriage in other parts of Cameroon especially the Northern Regions. The NASLA library in Buea that was also exploited enriched the work with notions on the role of council management and all forms of discrimination against women. It should be recalled that it is in this center that municipal councilors are trained. So, a lot was learned from specialized books and publications found in this library.

The archives of **L'Association de Lutte contre les Violences faites aux Femmes (ALVF)** in their regional office of the Adamawa Region was consulted. This is the biggest association in the Northern Regions of Cameroon working on women emancipation. Their archives gave the research rich insight on the different forms of violence endured by women and young girls. The association also detains works on the situational analysis of child marriage in most parts of the Northern regions of Cameroon.

The works of PLAN Cameroon, an international N.G.O were equally exploited. This organisation has works on methods of sensitisation and mobilisation of indigenes against child marriage, the right of education for all and propagation of policies, laws and programs to reduce child marriage in Cameroon.

The council of imams and Muslim dignitaries (CIDIMUC) center in Adamawa was visited to find out existing literature on how Islam which is the predominant religion treats the question of child marriage. A rich literature was obtained from this center concerning the perception of Islam on child marriage and women education and how this is merged with the laws of the Cameroonian State.

The UN-Women center in Yaoundé provided the study with information on concerning the reinforcement of capacities of justice personnel on the application of United Nations conventions on the elimination of all forms of discrimination against women, rights of children, partnerships with community medias for the dissemination and vulgarization of children's right and fight against ill cultural practices.

- **Study of monthly, semester and annual reports**

The monthly, semester and annual reports of the different departments of the Ministry of women empowerment and the Family (MINPROFF) were exploited from 1981 to 2022. This Ministry implements the policy of the Cameroonian State in the domain of child marriage eradication. So, the exploitation of this different reports provided the study with general tendencies of child marriage in Cameroon.

The Divisional delegation of MINPROFF for the Faro-et-Deo also saw their termly archives explored. This Division has information on Tignere Sub-Division and the three others that make up the Division. Data and information from this Division was very important because this delegation is the direct representation of MINPROFF in the area. So, all other stake holders and actors work under their banner. Statistics, role of different actors, successes, failures, perspectives in the fight against child marriage concerning the division was gotten from this area.

The different reports of UN-Women Cameroon, PLAN Cameroon, CIDIMUC, ALVF, and others were exploited to understand the causes of child marriage in Tignere, appreciate the application of existing laws, policies and programs in the study area, evaluate the consequences and especially formulate innovative formulae to curb child marriage in the area of study.

- **Exploration and exploitation of the print and audiovisual media**

This study explored many local newspapers such as Cameroon Tribune, la voix du paysan, le Messenger, Mutations, the post, the herald and international journals such as Jeune Afrique economique, Jeune Afrique and many others which were vital for this study. Concerning the audiovisual media, Cameroon radio television (CRTV) which is leading in this sector provided information on the different meetings, colloquiums, seminars debates and conferences on child marriage and discriminations against children. Such information permitted the research team to attend meetings and training seminars on our subject matter. Programs on CRTV channel such as Scene de presse, press hour and regional news were fruitful for this study. It also permitted the researcher to broaden his spectrum of information and data. Other medias that enriched the study with information include l'oeuil du Sahel, Canal 2 international with women hour, Vision 4 with their program women's story, equinox with parole des femmes. All this programs in one way or the other furnished information for the study.

The above sources of gathering information were complemented by modern and advance information and communication technology such as the internet.

- **Internet Exploitation**

Concerning early marriages and rights of children, very few libraries propose documents capable of giving a global view on these themes. But the internet came in as a solution to this problem. Through the internet, works from all over the world were read. This permitted the research to have a panoramic and detail view child marriage in different context of the globe.

#### **4.4.2 Research Instruments**

This involves all the tools used in collecting information necessary for this study. In this research, three main research instruments were conceived and used. They include a questionnaire, interview guides and check-list and observation guide. This section is subdivided into three: the description, justification and validation of the instruments mentioned.

- **Description of Research Instruments**

This part of the work is concerned with quantitative and qualitative research instruments, which are the questionnaire, interview guide, observation guides and check list to obtain information. According to Grawitz (1990), a questionnaire is a tool used in the collection of information. To her, “a questionnaire is a means of essential communication between the researcher and the stakeholder”. It consists of various series of questions concerning the problem of the work, which the stakeholders are being called upon to give their opinions as a given sampled population.

The questionnaire for this study is structurally divided into five main parts. The first part of the questionnaire constitute the identification of respondents and the second part is based on the questions related to factors responsible for child marriage in Tignere, the third part poses questions on the role of stake holders, the fourth part ponders on effectiveness of policies and programs already implemented in the domain of child marriage and last part treat questions related to, suggestions aimed at redressing the situation of child marriage in Tignere Sub-Division

Interview guides were equally administered alongside the questionnaire to some of the stakeholders. This is a qualitative research instrument, mostly used for key and resource persons. Interview guides were administered to government officials, Muslim dignitaries, civil society organisations, and women houses and quarter heads.

Observation guide aside documentary research permitted the research to confirm the existence of child marriage problem in the study area. It equally helped the research to



appropriately formulate the questionnaire and interview guide. Observation took place throughout field work.

Check List helped the research realise the conceptual part of our work. The various documents exploited permitted the research establish a check list in which important issues evoked in other studies were drafted and put under observation in the present research .

- **Justification of Research Instruments**

The qualitative and the quantitative research tools in this work were the questionnaires and the interview guide respectively. With respect to the quantitative research instrument, the questionnaires were used due to its capacity to reach a good number of stakeholders. The questionnaire also has an advantage that it is easy to conceive and used. Choices were made for the respondents to mark the convenience answer. These respondents did not need any expertise on any particular field to help them answer the questionnaires. This therefore enabled all the stakeholders to express their options on the issues at stakes in this study.

Interview guides used in this study were directed to resource persons of the study area. To facilitate information collection, a tape recorder was used to permit the researcher have all the information during interviews. The interview guide was designed for specific responses. As such questions that needed debate were formulated to be answered by qualified persons who did have time to answer many questions as in the questionnaire. This instrument was also important in this work because it permitted information which could not be gotten through the questionnaire research tool, to be gotten.

- **Validation of instruments**

The content of the research instruments were validated. There exists an internal and external validation. Concerning internal validation, this was done by my supervisor (Examiner) and the Director or co-supervisor (Department of Gender Promotion - MINPROFF). Concerning external validation, experts and professionals in the domain of the study are appropriate for this task. Concretely the questions included in the research questionnaire and interview guide were validated by the co-supervisor of the work. Externally, the questionnaires and interview guides were submitted to Ph.D. holders and masters' students for validation.

#### **4.4.3 Data from primary sources**

Documentary research conducted in the study area facilitated data collection. These secondary data sources and information were not satisfactory. Hence a plethora of techniques

in collecting primary and secondary data were used. Primary data has that advantage that it provided not only quantitative but also qualitative data. It also furnished information for the visual and cartographic presentation of findings.

Four field assistants aided during this phase of research. Field work was done to verify the hypothesis elaborated for the study so as to attain the set objectives of the study. Questionnaires and interview guides were established to respond to the research problem. An observation chart was also drafted to guide the collection of field data. Several field trips were carried out. They were geared towards achieving observations, unstructured interviews to be sure of the objectives, hypothesis and statement of problems that constitute the backbone of the study. Several field trips were organized.

Pretesting was the final stage in the validation of our questionnaire. The pretesting was to verify whether the questions are adapted to the research hypothesis. In this regard, some questions were rephrased, others rejected while some were restructured in an attempt to enable the researcher perfect these instruments. After recording the complaints of the respondents, the questionnaires were taken back to the supervisor for final validation. At this point the supervisor did his final appraisal to the questionnaire and gave his final accord.

#### ▪ **Observational procedure**

Observation as a scientific procedure permits the researcher to build a strong base which enables us to see the distance that exists between the existing situation and that which is desired to be attained.

Direct observation figures amongst the oldest tools used in the past by social scientist. Field phenomena can well be appreciated through direct observation. In social sciences, this tool is accompanied by snap shots to clearly demonstrate the existence or non-existence of something and visually show field findings. Direct observation consisted in watching at the behaviors of those concerned by child married. That is how the parents who give out their daughters at early ages behave during conversation with research team, the behavior of the little girls concerned by child marriage and observation of their bodies to have traces of physical violence from their husbands who are usually much older. Observation also consisted in evaluating the existing centers in charge of rehabilitating and re-integrating girls traumatized from child marriage.

#### ▪ **Focus group discussions**

Methodologically, a focus group should comprise 10-30 persons depending on the objectives of the theme. These discussions enable people with different view point to put forth their views, assumptions, differences, difficulties and come to a compromise beneficial to the entire community. This tool permitted the gathering of information and data of a large number of people in comparatively little time.

A Focus group discussion was organized at the Tignere council premises. Amongst certain important stake holders present were municipal workers, quarter heads, representatives of civil society organizations and administrative authorities of the area under study. This focus group discussion permitted stake holders to expose their missions, successes and obstacles in combatting child marriage.

Three other focus group discussions were organized in Haoussa, Bourle, Tikar quarters. It should be noted that the Focus group in Haoussa quarter was uniquely composed of men and the ones in Bourle and Tikar quarters only of women. The reason being that in a Muslim society, men and women cannot be sited on the same table. The theme of brainstorming hovered around mentalities, religion, and perception of child marriage in Tignere.

- **Semi-Structured Interviews**

The game of asking questions in an arranged manner and listening to answers brought forth are good ways of obtaining information. It stems amongst the techniques of grasping qualitative data. This method entails exchanging with persons of various categories. In the present study semi-structured questions were posed to key and resource persons of the study area.

The interview with the divisional delegate of MINPROFF was concentrated on the successes and failures of Government policies in curbing child marriage in the study area. Heads of civil society organisations GIZ PARSE, CIDIMUC, ALVF, Girls not bride were interviewed on the prime causes of child marriage, the level of implementation of their strategies to reduce the phenomenon and their collaboration with other stake holders notably the Cameroon Government.

#### **4.4.4 Household survey**

The choice of using a questionnaire for this research was to ensure adequate quantitative data to a greater extent and to a lesser extent grasp qualitative data. The questionnaire was designed in a way as to know the level of understanding of the child marriage process by the

potential respondents. The questionnaire included both close ended and open ended questions. This was to give a high margin for respondent to express their views.

The approach that was adopted for the distribution of the questionnaire was the face to face approach. This permitted the researcher and his field assistants to aid some of the respondents in filling the questionnaire. This led to a high response rate. About 70% of the questionnaires were administered in this way. The drop and pick afterwards questionnaire method were used for the other 30 % of the households that could not fill the questionnaires instantly.

▪ **Sampling for Questionnaire Administration**

Due to the large population of the study area, a total head count was not possible, so a sample survey method was used. The target population in this study are the inhabitants of Tignere Sub-Division. The sampling technique used is the simple Random sampling technique. According to Francis Gendrau (1993), “with Random sampling, we obtain estimates without systematic error or very negligible errors which are closer to zero”. This sampling method proved to be the best for this study because the houses in the city are not numbered, so systematic and stratified sampling was impossible regarding the means at the disposal of the research team. In the Random sampling technique, all the individuals of the target population have the same opportunity to be included in the sample frame. From the sample frame a sample size was derived for Tignere Sub-division. The sample size was determined by considering the total population of Tignere Sub-Division as per the general population and housing census of Cameroon.

To obtain a sample size for the present study, certain considerations were taken into account. Against this background, the conception of **Nwana (1982)** which states that if the population is in many thousands, a 5% sample size is representative. Applying this authors’ view, the following number of questionnaires were distributed in the different quarters of Tignere Sub-Division.

**Table 2: Validated sampled questionnaire for each space**

Area	Quarter	Number of households	Validated sample based on 6%
Tignere Urban Space	Haoussa	175	10
	Mayo-Bororo	420	25
	Yelwa	252	15
	Fada	276	16
	Tapare	199	12
	Lac	176	10

	Mayo-djarandi	421	25
Lamidat De Tignere (Rural Space)	Bourle	666	41
	Djactadou	440	27
	Doualayel	654	40
	Garbaya Yelwa	317	20
	Gassanguel	234	15
	Libong Marche	339	22
	Louguere Sadou	500	30
	Paro Lawel	253	16
	Tikar	225	15
Ranch Faro	225	15	
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>5772</b>	<b>354</b>

Source: Field work, 2022

The low literacy level of certain respondents especially in the rural part of the study are made the work a bit tedious for the field assistants and the researcher. Certain respondents had to get their questions translated into “fulfulde<sup>21</sup>” by the research team and the answers then written in English on the questionnaires.

#### ▪ The questionnaire response rate

Many field trips were carried out by the research team to the area of research and added to the point that the field assistants are based in the zone of study. The rate of response to the questionnaires was very high. This impressive rate can be attributed to the field assistants who were resident in the study area. They were also very helpful since most permanent residing inhabitants of the study are know them, certain respondents could easily attend to the research team in their presence.

After sorting and cross checking, 341 questionnaires were validated for analysis. This gave a response rate of 96.32%. The rate of response for each area is shown on table 3.

**Table 3:** Questionnaire response rate

Area	N <sup>o</sup> of questionnaire administered	N <sup>o</sup> of questionnaire retained for analysis	% Obtained survey	% response rate
Tignere Urban Space	113	110	31.07	97.3
Lamidat De Tignere (Rural Space)	241	231	65.25	98.6

<sup>21</sup> Ffulde is a popular national language spoken by more than 50% of the inhabitants of the Northern regions of Cameroon.

<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>354</b>	<b>341</b>	<b>96.32</b>	<b>96.3</b>
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Source: Field work, 2022

#### **4.4.5 Data Analysis**

The retained questionnaires were analyzed using statistical package for social sciences. A series of statistics were constituted which formed a base for this piece of work. From these statistics, tables were derived which were later transformed into graphs, pie charts histograms and also inserted into maps. Data from the questionnaire was complemented with other data collected from field observation, published and unpublished documents, annual reports of government institutions and other stake holders. The data was analyzed to establish the past and current relationship of child marriage. Two basic data analysis procedures used were descriptive and analytical. A descriptive procedure in form of frequency distribution analysis was applied to describe the primary variables of the study and the associated indicator items, mainly as they related to the study objectives and hypotheses. Variable relationships were determined by the use of analytical procedures. Data from questionnaires was analysed with the SPSS software.

#### **4.4.6 Field survey difficulties and limitations of the research methodology**

Information and data collection for the present work was a huge challenge. The first difficulty was witnessed at the administrative phase. The procedure for obtaining research authorizations from the different administrative and council authorities was at times too long. This really delayed the research and altered its realization schedule.

Another difficulty of this study was the difficult understanding of the research objectives of the present study by certain actors who had been cited at the beginning phase as important actors. Even some stake holders could not help the researcher because they never understood what the research was all about. These workers at times held key positions in the society but were not very helpful to the research team.

Furthermore, another difficulty that arose during data and information collection for this study was the shortage of funds. A research work of this magnitude requires a lot of funds hence this put the researcher at times in a difficult financial situation since he was the sole sponsor of this study. The inadequacy of funds at certain times delayed the grasping of certain data so, the researcher at certain times had to postpone certain field trips. Nevertheless, the researcher and his team were able to obtain all the required data as programmed at the beginning of the study.

## Chapter 5: Analysis of Field Findings

This chapter analysis data and information obtained by the various research tools (questionnaire, interview guide, observation guide) used in this study. This chapter makes a scrutiny of the objectives set for this study through an appraisal of the point of view of respondents. Table 4 shows an insight of the identification of respondents.

**Table 4: Characteristics of respondents**

<b>I-AGE</b>	<b>NUMBER OF RESONDENTS</b>
10-15, 15-18 years	83
18-25, 25-35 years	75
35-45, 45-60 years	182
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>341</b>
<b>II- LEVEL OF EDUCATION</b>	
No formal education	150
Primary level	156
Secondary level	25
University level	10
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>341</b>
<b>III-GENDER</b>	
Male	51
Female	290
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>341</b>
<b>IV-RELIGION</b>	
Islam	322
Christians	7
Others	12
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>341</b>

**Source: Field work, 2022**

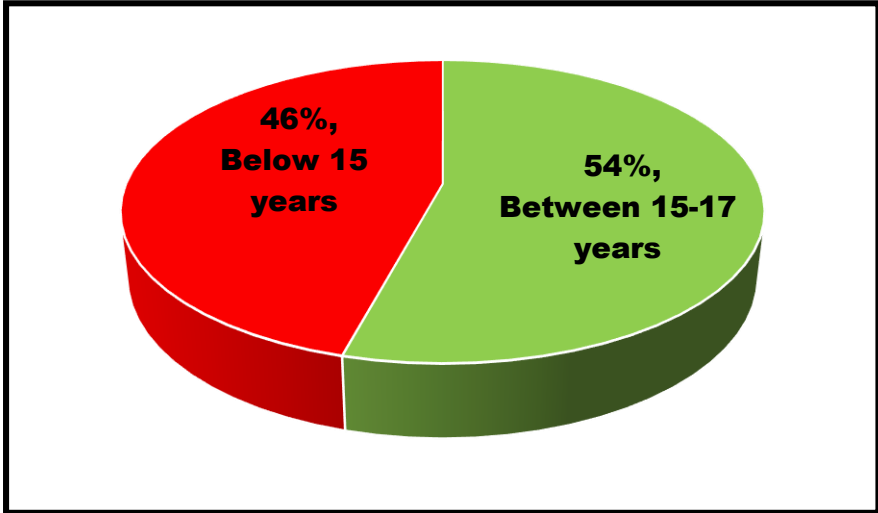
Table 4 shows the principal identification characteristics of respondents in relation to child marriage. Regarding age, all age groups were sampled to have a grasp of the perception of this scourge in Tignere Sub-Division. The two sexes were also included in the sample to permit the study also have the point of view of men in the area of study. Religion and level of education were also considered as they represent some of the drivers of early marriages.

**5.1 Victims and Forms of Child Marriage in Tignere Sub-Division**

The number of girls who are victims to child marriage, the different forms and drivers that promote child marriage in the area of study are identified and analysed in this section.

**5.1.1 Victims to child marriage**

The present Cameroonian law sets the legal age for marriage at the age of 18 years for girls. Amongst the 290 women that constituted part of the sample for this study, **262** of them representing **90.3%** happened to have been given out for marriage or gotten into marriage before the legal age. Some of them got into marriage as early as 13 years of age. This signifies that only 28 women out of 290 sampled went into marriage above the age of 18 years.



Source: Field work, 2022

**Figure 2: Percentage representation of girls involved in child marriage**

Amongst the 262 girls, victim of early marriages, figure 2 shows that up to 46 % of girls get married before the ages of 15years in the area of study. During field investigation, a CIDIMUC dignitary told the research team that most of these girls are betrothed as early as 10 years old to their future husbands who are much older than them and at times are 4-5 times much older than the brides. On the other hand, 54% of the girls in the study area get into marriage between the ages of 15-17 years all below the legal age.

**5.1.2 Forms of child marriage**

Field data portrayed that child marriage in Tignere sub-division occurs in four different forms. They include **instructions, negotiations, peer pressure and forced marriage**.



**Table 5: Different forms of child marriage in Tignere Sub-Division**

	<b>Form</b>	<b>Number of Respondents</b>	<b>Percentage %</b>
1	Instruction	166	63.38
2	Verbal persuasion	34	12.97
3	Force	52	19.84
4	Peer pressure	10	3.81
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>262</b>	<b>100</b>

**Source: Field work, 2022**

Table 5 shows that the form of marriage that is common place is that through **instructions** dictated by parents usually the father or uncles of the adolescent girl. Amongst the 262 brides to have been victims of child marriage, **63.38 %** went into marriage through dictatorial instructions from their parents or family. At times, some girls resist to propositions made by their families to be given out at tender ages to marriage. Generally, such results from an early emancipation or girls who go above primary education. With such resistance, certain families tend to convince such girls by show casing to them the strength of marriage as a cultural value or again portray the curses that will be levied on them if they refuse such early marriages. Field findings portrayed a 12.97% child marriage which takes the form of **Verbal persuasion**. When the adolescent girls oppose in a vehement manner the fact of becoming brides at an early stage, **force** is used to take them to their bride groom. Field work revealed a 19.84% link to forced marriage. This forced form of marriage can be expressed through trade of women, arranged marriage, complaisant marriage, marriage to resolve a problem, kidnapping, wife bought by correspondence. Lastly, there is a small fraction of girls who get into early marriages simply because most of her age mates are already either married or betrothed. At times they undergo **peer pressure** which makes them think there are only valuable if they evolve under the banner of a man. This small fraction of early marriage represents 3.81% of girls, victim of child marriage.

## **5.2 Causes of Child Marriage**

Amongst the causes of early marriages in Tignere Sub-division, the most preponderant include low level of education, poverty, religion, and custom and tradition.

### **5.2.1 Low level of education**

Tignere Sub-Division is one of the localities with the lowest educational level in the Northern regions and Cameroon in general with less than 1% of girls attaining secondary education. According to ALVF (2014), 76% of school drop-out girls are victims to early marriages and only 8% of school girls are concerned by child marriage in Cameroon. Marrying

at younger ages correlate with low or little formal education. On the other side of the coin, having a higher education reduces the probability of girls indulging in early marriages (UNICEF, 2005). Table 6 shows the educational situation of the area under study which augments early marriages.

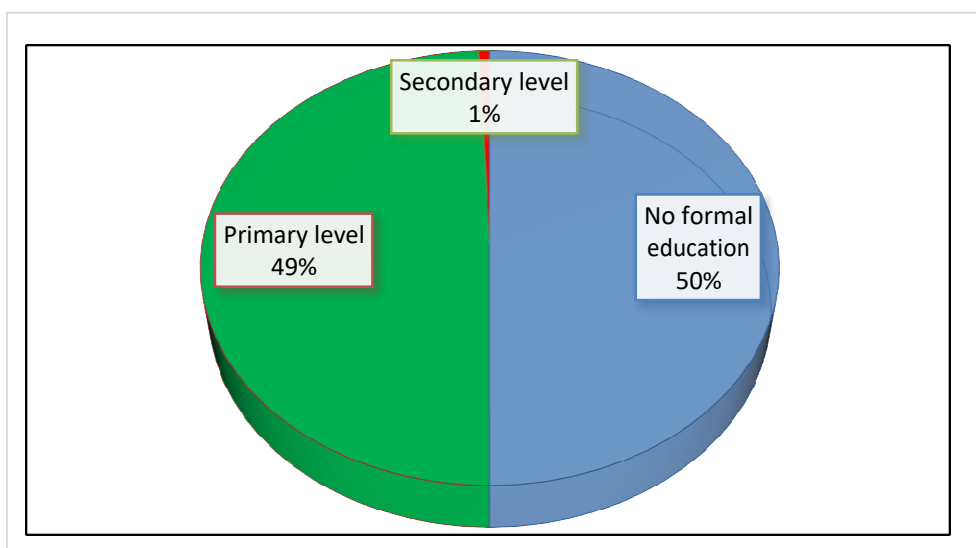
**Table 6: Level of girl’s education influencing hikes in child marriage**

Level of education		Number of Respondents	%
<b>1</b>	No formal education	146	<b>50.34</b>
<b>2</b>	Primary level	139	<b>47.9</b>
<b>3</b>	Secondary level	4	<b>1.41</b>
<b>4</b>	University	1	<b>0.34</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>290</b>	<b>100</b>

**Source: Field work, 2022**

Table 6 shows the general educational level of respondents. The bulk oscillates between no formal education and primary level. Girls are generally concerned with these two levels to a tune of more than 98.24%. Very few women attain secondary education, mostly men go to secondary as well as university level. Most of the girls have neither received no formal education or are drop-out of primary schools. According to the ICRW (2015), when the greatest role attributed to a wife is that of homemaker, mother, wife, the vision of her going to school becomes slender. One of field respondent working for PLAN Cameroon revealed to the research team that most parents in Tignere Sub-Division think that is beneficial and more rewarding in slimming the education resources on girls than boys. This there pushes families to dish out girls for marriage tenderly.

Lack of education according to a field informant from PLAN Cameroon told the research team that, uneducated parents are likely not to be aware of laws forbidding child marriage in Cameroon. Furthermore, uneducated parents may undervalue education especially that of girls. Without education, the future of girls is put at stake and they have limited options for their future, especially in situations of child marriage since brides have no or limited opportunity to grasp vocational skills and be ripe for income generating activities. When child marriage occurs in girls without any education, such girls become very vulnerable to abuses and domestic violence. Figure 3 shows the different level of education of the 290 girls and women that constituted part of the sample for this study.



Source: Field work, 2022

**Figure 3: Educational level of female respondents**

Figure 3 shows that only 1% of girls have attended secondary school. Most of girls to have attended secondary schools did not even finish the first cycle of the secondary school. In the primary education, 49% of girls have only been to primary schools most of who are drop-out before their first certificate. And 50% have never been to schools. Such low levels of education have a direct correlation with hikes of child marriage. The more a girl is educated the less she is exposed to child marriage. And such is a situation in Tignere sub division.

### 5.2.2 Poverty

Poverty augments the susceptibility of child marriage and women in possession of income generating activities are protective (ICRW, 2007). The poorest Countries of the world possesses the greatest rates of child marriage (ICRW, 2006). Just like many localities in Cameroon, most people in Tignere Sub-Division live below the threshold of the poverty line. Field investigation showed that most inhabitants of the study area live in abject and absolute poverty as attest by table 7.

The theory of **the “culture of poverty”** finds its place in the way poverty is considered and managed by people of Tignere Sub- division. So, parents and community belief poverty in their community is a culture reason why they do not think that their girl children could have a bright future which could change her situation and that of the family but instead it could be alleviate through dowry received.

**Table 7: Monthly revenue of households**

Monthly Revenue (FCFA)	Number of Respondents	% Representation
< 10000 (<\$20)	95	27.85
10000-20000 (\$20-40)	89	26.1
20000-30000 (\$40-60)	67	19.7
30000-40000 (\$60-80)	35	10.26
40000-50000 (\$80-100)	30	8.76
> 50000 (>\$100)	25	7.33
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>341</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: Field work, 2022

Table 7 reveals that more than 50% of households of Tignere Sub-division live on less than one dollar a day which simply means they are considered to be very poor by the United Nations definition of poverty. There is part of households who live on more than a dollar a day, but the problematic stems from the fact that these households are constituted of very large families with an average of 7 persons per household. Some household at times are made up of more than 20 persons. So, even households that earn more than 1dollar a day, if divided by the total number of members of the family, they fall below the poverty line.

An informant from an association fighting against child marriage said marrying girls at an early age is a technique put in place by most parents to reduce financial burden of the family as it reduces the number of people to feed, clothe and sponsor in school. According to Malhotra et al. (2003), poor families think they possess fewer possibilities, smaller resources and ideas to invest in other options for girls.

At times girls who get into early marriage from peer pressure do so because of their poor state. Field investigation portray that in Tignere Sub-Division, such girls prefer to get married because a man saves as a financial cover and also adds value to the status of the young girl.

A CIDIMUC informant revealed that some parents send their daughters off for marriage in Tignere in an attempt to pay-off their debts towards friends or other families.

Summarily, poverty plays a huge part in fostering early marriages in Tignere. Limited finance often puts a priority on educating the sons in the family over educating girls (Hague international Model United Nations Qatar 2020). The lack of instruction and education prevent girls from getting jobs. So, girls become dependent on a man to marry her, throwing away the

possibility to be independent of a man. This forces girls who experience domestic violence after marriage to remain silent since they have no alternative since they are reliant on the men.

### **5.2.3 Custom and Tradition**

In Tignere, marriage is a social norm and a goal for the families of the adolescent girl (PLAN WARO, 2014). Marriage is attributed to actual and representative gain, and also augments the status of girls and their families in their localities. Early marriages are also propelled in the area of study by the act of bride price. This consist of the bride groom's parents paying a sum of money or giving material things to the bride's family. In Tignere Sub-Division, the younger the girl is, the more money or expensive material items such as cows, goats, bags of rice and groundnut etc the groom's family offer to her parents. On the contrary, when the girl is too old, her age poses problems because the bride's family bids very low and at times the family of the bride groom can reject such a marriage because of traditional considerations that if she was a good girl she would have been married before then.

Custom and tradition in Tignere Sub-Division put parents under immense pressure. This therefore obliges parents to give out their daughters to marriage very early. The customary logic is that there is high risk for a girl to become sexually active before marriage as she gets older and a woman who is dis-virgin before marriage brings dishonour to her family and community. In Tignere, virginity at marriage is keenly considered which there influence the view that girls must get married earlier. Parents too for fear of the unknown, and social expectations prefer early marriage. In Tignere child marriage is a way of cementing family and tribal settings in our area of study. Keeping and re-enforcing family ties is an important part of marriage in many communities of Tignere Sub-Division. Offering a girl as a bride is a not uncommon way to settle debts or services (Population Council, 2009).

### **5.2.4 Religion**

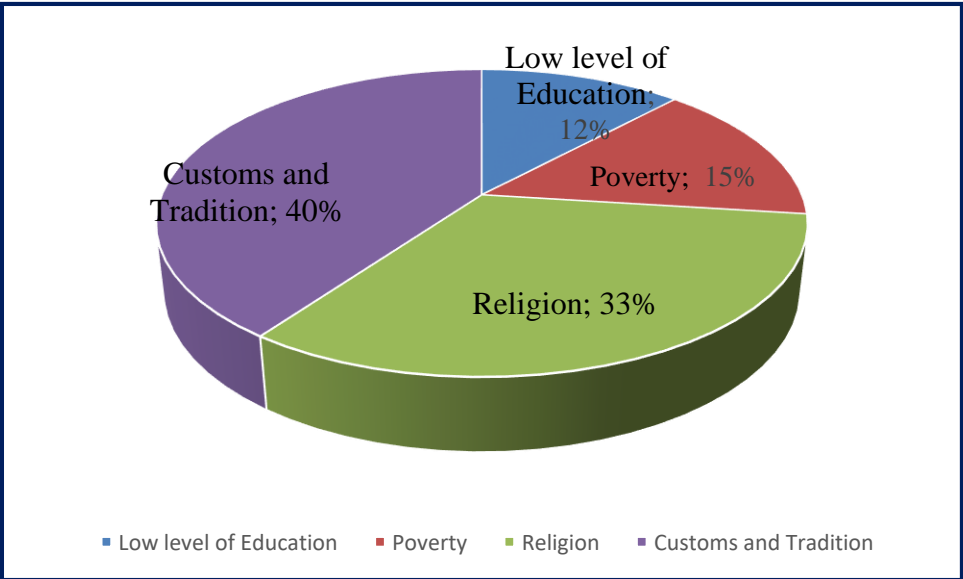
According to PLAN 2014, Islamic countries and communities with majority Muslim populations tend to have higher rates of child marriage. More than 80% of Tignere inhabitants are of the Islamic obedience (CIDIMUC, 2022). Some parents in the area of study justify their act of sending off their adolescent girls for marriage at tender ages by quoting verses of the Qur'an which is the holy book of the Muslims. A CIDIMUC dignitary told the research team that in due course, there has been the development of an Islamic branch which is very "extremists" in their appreciation of Qur'an verses. Such extremists who are usually spiritual leaders at mosques have polluted the marriage arena by praising early marriages and supporting

their arguments by their holy scriptures. This has caused Muslim faithful to adhere to the predications of their dignitaries. Thus, augmenting the rate of child marriage in Tignere Sub-Division.

A study carried out in Cameroon in 2016 by MINPROFF demonstrated that 15% of religious leaders, judiciary police officers and other administration officials were of the opinion that early marriages protects teenage girl. This therefore demonstrates that even a part of educated people in Cameroon have been absorbed by other socio-cultural factors which makes them protagonists of child marriage.

In Tignere Sub-Division, most Muslim and traditional families consider early marriages as a sacred way of protecting girls against abortions and unwanted pregnancies. Still, according to Muslim dignitaries, marriage of a young girl is regarded as a social success, such that after 15 years a young girl who is not yet married starts being considered as a failure, prostitute, or sorcerer. And above all, in Muslim families, the marriage of a young girl brings honour and pride to their families. All these factors contribute in exacerbating child marriage in Tignere which is a Muslim dominant community.

Figure 4 shows the different percentage representations of the principal factors responsible for high rates of child marriage in Tignere Sub-Division.



Source: Field work, 2022  
**Figure 4: Representation of factors influencing child marriage**

On top position, customs and traditions represents 40% amongst the factors at the helm of causes of child marriage, on the second position, religious reasons represent 33 % while poverty and low level of education represents 15% and 12% respectively.

According to ALVF, generally in Cameroon, the principal causes of child marriage are of socio-cultural origin and represents 41% of this phenomenon, and link to ancestral considerations. In many Cameroonian societies traditional practices legitimate child marriage. In the second position, child marriage is caused by economic factors in view bettering family life. Child marriage for financial benefits in Cameroon represents 31% of the phenomenon. This is mostly the case of poor families. The non-respect of the law guiding marriage practices represents 16%. And lastly, religious considerations represent 11%.

### **5.3 Legal Environment, Policies and Programs Against Child Marriage**

The last penal code of Cameroon dated 2016 stipulates that any person who forces a child into marriage is punishable by law and the legal age for female children to get married stands at 18 years. The provisions of the Cameroonian law relating to child marriage seems to be ignored by many in the Tignere community.

#### **5.3.1 Knowledge on the legal environment**

Tradition, customs, religion and low level of education over plays the legal framework guiding the rights of children especially that of decision to get marriage. Other regulatory frameworks such as civil, customary and religious law do co-habit and are the root of discord which foster informal and underage unions on pretext of religion and other socio-cultural factors. In Tignere, family law in most cases is in the hands of Islamic courts which redefine and overlook the minimum age, as ascertained by Boureima 2013, community and religious leaders without whom custom wedding cannot be celebrated, overlook violations of the minimum age (Boureima, 2013) ignoring the pace set by the legal and judicial framework. Table 8 shows the views of Tignere respondents on the legal age to marriage.

**Table 8: Opinion on legal age of marriage**

Age	Number of Respondents	%
13-15	296	86.80
15-18	30	8.80
18+	15	4.40
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>341</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: Field work, 2022

Table 8 reveals that 86.80% of inhabitants consider girls between the ages of 13-15 years as possessing the legal age of marriage. 8.80 % of inhabitants say the legal age of marriage hovers from 15-18 years and only 4.40% know the legal age as recommended by law.

Majority of marriages in Tignere Sub-Division are conducted outside of legal structures. The structures recommended by law are Councils since they harbor civil status registry, and special secondary civil status registries. It becomes difficult for municipal authorities to control marriages and their legality when such are celebrated out of the legal space provided by law. Most marriages are done in religious and traditional circumstances not considering the exigencies of the law. This is amplified by the misinterpretation of Islam religion and culture and tradition on child marriage. The phenomenon of child marriage is exacerbated in the peripheries of Tignere Sub-Division due to lack of resource persons to implement the law and legislation related to child marriage. The aforementioned factors explain the reasons why people in area of study careless about the legal age of marriage.

**5.3.2 Factors restricting denunciation and application of sanctions provided by law defaulters related to child marriage**

Field investigation attested that no single person has been punished for haven given out an under-aged child for marriage or a man who takes an under-aged girl for a wife in the area of study. The denunciation process and application of punishments provided by the law faces a lot of obstacles

**5.3.2.1 Denunciation of child marriage in Tignere Sub-Division**

The rate of denunciation of child marriage in Cameroon in general remains low. The level of denunciation in Tignere Sub-Division is almost inexistent. Though there is a denunciation brigade in Tignere center, the general public is not aware of this institution and there exist very low collaboration between this structure and victims to child marriage. Civil



society organizations should be prompt in denunciations which is not always the situation presently. Very few organizations such as MINPROFF, PLAN, CIDIMUC and ALVF are active though insufficient in covering the whole community coupled with the silence of victims to child marriage imposed by norms of the community. In Tignere Sub-Division, Islamic religious and traditional leaders are a great obstacle to the fight against child marriage. Acts of denunciation are meager and almost inexistent in the area of study except for few cases. This tardiness of denunciation is explained by the following points that are perceptible in our area of study:

- **Social stigmatization faced by girls and probable psychological and mental distress associated with denouncing family members.** In most cases, girls victim of child marriage in the area of study, are stigmatized if ever they denounce their parents and relatives to have forced them in marriage. The society therefore regards such denouncers as being at the margin of community norms which then condemns to cemetery silence. If ever such denunciation is done by the victim, the community harasses the victim mentally and psychologically which can lead to mental stress of the denouncer.
- **Social impact on children of the dissolution of child marriage, families added to ostracization.** Generally, pressure is mounted on victims of child or forced marriage who disgruntle, and are times obliged to close their mouths because of the future of the children she would have been delivered of in the marriage. Note should be taken that most of women victim of child marriage have a high fecundity and birth rate since they come to marriage very young. It is usually several years later in marriage with many children that some of these girls think of leaving the marriage arena. Very few adolescent girls succeed in braving the social pressure to leave their husbands forced upon them in the early stage of marriage. So, the presence of kids makes some victims to remain in marriage despite the unfavorable conditions. In certain communities of the area of study, departing from marriage simply means exclusion from the family and the community. An informant from the rural part of Tignere Sub-Division who is undertaking a training program with ALVF testified that she was rejected by her family and all members of her community because she escaped from the 60 years old man to whom she was forced.
- **Difficulties in reclaiming dowry payments and financial impacts on families.** Against the back drop of poverty, many parents sell out their daughters to resolve their

financial problems as noted in the section above. The girls, victim of child marriage and other family members who may not be in accordance with the scourge are forced to remain silent because of the financial implication should the girl leave the marriage. In the Tignere Sub-Division, the dowry of some adolescent girls may be very costly, especially when the girl's virginity is ascertained. An informant in the field revealed that some dowries could cost as much as ten cows with each cow costing not less than 250 000 FCFA. It therefore becomes almost impossible for the young brides to denounce or leave marriage because they are conscious of the fact that their families will have to reimburse all the dowry to the groom's family. In very few cases the groom's family have succeeded in paying back the dowry when the adolescent girl escapes from marriage since most of the family live below the poverty line. A CIDIMUC member said to the research team that when a young girl runs away from marriage, the tendency is that the bride's family look for an immediate replacement since the family is unable to pay back.

- **Community perception:** It becomes very difficult to fight against a scourge in an environment where people ignore the legal norms and have normalized the gap. Victims and sympathizers have to face the whole community in trying to combat child marriage. Very few people especially women will encourage others to denounce the phenomenon of child marriage. Even those who are fundamentally not in a compromise with the situation of forced marriage are forced by societal perception to be silent.

### **5.3.2.2 Applications of sanctions provided by the law on child marriage in Tignere Sub-Division.**

The Cameroon penal code of 2016 in its section 356 prescribes sanctions of 5-10 years for anyone who compels another into marriage. And an imprisonment of not less than 2 years when the victim is less than 18 years. In Cameroon as a whole, application of laws related to child marriage is very complex.

- **Complicity of the judicial system**

A feminist activist working for an association "*save the woman*" told the field researchers that most of the administrative officials in Tignere Sub-Division are origins of the Northern regions of Cameroon. So, the practice of child marriage to them is very normal since some of them used the same procedure to be married. It therefore becomes difficult for actors

who come from communities where they were taught child marriage is a good thing to fight against such a practice.

The judicial system is usually very slow bringing solutions to issues concerning child marriage. Not only are some officials accomplice and, negligent, but the old groom could always corrupt those responsible for enforcing law and order as attested by a field informant.

Above the complicity of the judicial system, victims of child marriage who are underage have problems in taking cases of child marriage to court relative to their age, lack of resources, inadequate or lack of knowledge and high dependency and fear of marginalization, reprisals and stigma.

- **Amalgam between customary, religious and State laws**

In Tignere Sub-Division, there exist very influential religious and traditional customary leaders who often are custodians of the tradition and are referred to in any litigation no matter the nature or domain. Such custodians do not interpret issues of child marriage in line with the State laws that most of them are ignorant of. So, in the area of study, customary and traditional opinions seem to over-take the State's law. Those in charge of applying and enforcing the law in terms of child marriage have to contend with popular opinion guided by traditional and religious considerations which are opposed to official texts in matters of marriage. Whenever issues of child marriage occur, inhabitants run to religious and traditional jurisdictions that are always in favour of child marriage and very few cases do make recourse to State institutions.

### **5.3.3 Evaluation of Government programs and policies to fight child marriage in Tignere Sub-Division**

Aside the legal and judicial framework which is still to be perfected, the phenomenon of child marriage in Cameroon has gained some actions in favour of curbing the scourge though ineffective in Tignere Sub-Division.

#### **5.3.3.1 Actions of advocacy, capacity reinforcement and sensitization**

- On the 25<sup>th</sup> June 2013, a plate form of collaboration was signed between MINPROFF and CIDIMUC (*CONSEIL DES IMAMS ET DIGNITAIRES MUSULMAN DU CAMEROUN*) that fosters synergy of actions to fight female genital mutilation, early and forced marriage and other forms of violence on women. This plate form of collaboration has not really yielded expected fruits in Tignere Sub-Division because CIDIMUC which is a Muslim organization is confronted by other Muslim extremists who on the contrary encourage early marriages.

More to that, some CIDIMUC members in the area of study are amongst Muslim extremist making this platform a failure to reduce child marriage.

- In the framework of the campaign entitled “*Because I am girl*”, Plan International Cameroon signed a petition to permit girls say no to early and forced marriages. Though Plan International Cameroon have been very instrumental in fighting against child marriage in the Northern regions of Cameroon, the state of things in Tignere Sub-Division have not really favored their actions.
- With the support of UNICEF, sensitization campaigns have been engaged to foster education especially that of the girl child and discouraging early and forced marriages. Socio-cultural factors that are preponderant in the area of study such as customs, religion have not really permitted an acute increment of girl’s education hence not arming them against child marriage.
- The government created a network engaging actors of civil society with the support of the French embassy and UNWOMEN. The actions of this network unfortunately have not really been felt in Tignere Sub-Division. The few civil society organization that operates in the area of study do not do so in synergy with other actors which makes their tasks more cumbersome and difficult. This network has remained theoretical and around major towns of Cameroons.
- Capacity reinforcement of judicial personnel, justice auxiliaries notably magistrates, lawyers, notaries, bailiff on the application of conventions bearing elimination of all kinds discrimination as well as convention on children’s right. Unfortunately, in Cameroon, most qualified government personnel especially of the judicial sector live and work in principal towns of Cameroon such as Yaoundé and Douala. Tignere, being a remote area does not benefit from the services of these qualified State personnel who could have ensure law enforcement and reduce the incident of child marriage and its consequences. Very few of such highly trained judicial personnel exist in Tignere Sub-Division, not only are there few, but acts of corruption aggravates the situation. According to the CONAC<sup>22</sup> report of 2021, the Justice sector is amongst the most corrupt in Cameroon.
- The Government have signed partnerships with community radio station to favor the diffusion of programs that fight to restore children’s right and negative socio-cultural practices. The precarious situation of families in Tignere do not permit them acquire electronic equipment such as Television sets, radios and other appliances. The electricity situation is very bad in the area of study as many households are not connected to an electric line. So,

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<sup>22</sup> National anti-corruption commission

even those who possess radio sets cannot get them functional due to constant black-out. In Tignere rural area, the situation is worst because people do not possess the culture of listening the radio stations even if they happened to have the means.

- The implementation of the program entitled “**Because I Am A Girl**” (BIAAG) and “**Learn Without Fear**” (LWF) designed to promote inclusive education and fight against sexist violence in school milieu. This campaign has known no implementation in the Tignere school milieu. The situation is worsened by the fact that a girl’s education is considered by many in the area of study as a waste of time and resources. Therefore, such programs are confronted with stiff resistance from majority of the inhabitants of area of study.
- Organization of an annual youth parliamentary session that convene youths in the Cameroon national assembly to express problems and grievances affecting youths. Two youths are usually designated annually to express youth problems of the FARO ET DEO division where from Tignere constitute one of the sub-divisions. Field findings revealed that no youth parliamentarian from the study area have ever developed a program to curb child marriage. An informant said most of the youth designated to carry the voices of youth of the study area are usually children of high place State functionaries or influential men in the society who go to parliament just to create their personal contacts and enjoy indemnity paid them.
- The production of sensitization materials such as brochures, posters, cartoons, sketches in view of vulgarization of children’s right, fight against negative cultural practices and family education. This sensitization program by MINPROFF is very limited in Tignere and mostly carried out in the urban perimeter. Worst still, the high level of illiteracy renders the material put at the disposal of inhabitants in exploitable. So, in most cases financial resources are used to produce sensitization material which cannot be exploited by the population of Tignere which for most part cannot read or write.
- The creation of village committee for follow-up and implementation of actions against negative cultural practices that hinders the blossoming of girls and women. No village committee has been put up in Tignere sub-division by stake holders to fight child marriage. An informant told the research team that such a village committee may be difficult to be put in place for fear of being put at the margin of the society for probable members of such a committee.

### **5.3.3.2 Measures and concrete actions to foster the progressive eradication by tackling root causes, socio-cultural and economic factors inherent to child marriage**

- The creation of centres to welcome women who are victims of violence and other negative traditional practices. Since this project was launched only two public centres exist in Yaounde and Douala. Other areas like Tignere are void of such public centres but on the contrary, there is a civil society organization that possesses a centre that welcomes and help in one way or the other, women victims of child marriage and other abuses. Even though this centre faces a lot of financial constraints thereby limiting her capacity and capability.
- The psychosocial and socio-economic support of adolescent girl's victim to child marriage in women and family empowerment centres. There exists a women house in Tignere that deploys efforts to assist women from all works of life. The problem of the centre in Tignere is the lack of specialist in the psychological and psychosocial aspects. When girls forced to child marriage succeed in coming to this centre, officials of the MINPROFF working herein ensures judicial and economic support through training to help them engage in income generating activities so as to render them independent.
- In the women empowerment centres, not only are girls victim of all sorts of violence trained but they receive finances to indulge in income generating activities. In Tignere, the demand for financing small projects is higher than the limited funds that the MINPROFF allocate for this cause. Our interview with one of the State functionary working at the Women house of Tignere brought us to the conclusion that what the government allocate for such needs cannot even cover 10% yearly needs. This forces some of the girls who have escaped from child marriage to be very vulnerable.
- To curb child marriage, material and family assistance should be given to poor and needy families by the government. Field interaction with informant brought to our notice that no such initiative has ever existed in Tignere Sub-Division
- A multi-dimensional platform was to be put in place made up of forces of law and order, civil society organizations and sectorial ministries. Unfortunately, this has remained more of a discourse than a reality.

These measures aimed at curbing child marriage by the government has known a lot of setbacks both because of factors related to the national environment as well as local realities. The following difficulties were obtained by our study.

### **5.3.3.3 Difficulties encountered in initiating and implementing government prone policies to reduce child marriage**

These obstacles come from the local population themselves as well as the central government represented by the MINPROFF at local levels.

- **There persist socio-cultural factors that hinders and reduces the effects of child marriage reducing programs.** Despite efforts put in place to reduce child marriage in Cameroon and Tignere, there exist socio-cultural factors explained in section 5.2 that have not favored the fast reduction and eradication of the child marriage scourge.

- **Insufficient human and financial resources to combat child marriage in Tignere.** Specialist in the domain of child marriage, female genital mutilation and the protection of children's right in general are very few. Also, financial resources allocated for child protection is very meagre. The line ministries directly involved in child protection that is the Ministry of Social Affairs and Ministry of Women and the Family have the lowest budgets amongst ministries. Furthermore, the budgetary line for child protection is under-way very insufficient.

-**Insufficient programs to permit the re-integration of adolescent victims of child marriage.** Even if we can applaud the existence though inefficient of certain programs geared at reducing child marriage, there are lack of programs to permit victims of child marriage after divorce or those who succeed to escape from such marriages.

-**Insufficient coordination of sectorial policies to tackle the issue of child marriage.** There is sluggishness from the different sectorial ministries in properly coordinating the task assigned them in tackling child marriage. This is the case of brigades that are created to follow-up those involve in child marriage practices that are almost non-functional.

-**Weak synergy that exists between actors and stake holders geared towards the protection of children's right.** There is lack of coordination between different stake holders involved in the sector. Bearing in mind that a single actor cannot tackle the phenomenon, it necessitates a combination of actions from different stake holders.

-**Unavailable current data concerning child marriage.** The phenomenon of child marriage is a galloping phenomenon which necessitates constant data update for proper follow-up. In Cameroon, and Tignere in particular, data in many aspects of child marriage are not known. Examples of statistic not known are the number of girls forced to child marriage who undergo domestic violence, number of girls who succeed in leaving the arena of child marriage, number of girls who succeed in going back to school after the trauma of child marriage etc. we

have the impression that civil society organizations are more engaged in the fight against child marriage than the government.

**-Absence of a harmonise reference system of children victims of child marriage.**

No official harmonize reference document exist in Cameroon which permits actors of the sector to work on the phenomenon. Each actor uses national laws, international laws and policy and programs put in place to fight the scourge. But there is no National strategy for the fight against child marriage that permits actors to follow a defined methodological approach.

#### **5.4 Civil Society Organizations and Their Actions in Curbing Child Marriage in Tignere Sub-Division**

Many stake holders combatting or protecting children's right are present in the Northern part of Cameroon. Note should be taken that Tignere Sub-Division have not been of particular attraction to these Organizations. But the locality benefits from the actions of these organizations as part of their general zones of intervention. Whilst Tignere has one of the highest rates of Child marriage in Cameroon.

Field findings showed that only **25%** of respondents agreed to know organizations that are fighting against child marriage in Tignere Sub-Division. Most of such respondents are those situated in the Tignere town whilst **75%** mostly located in the peripheries and rural area have never heard of any organization that discourages child marriage. This situation is explained by the Tignere Sub-Division is just a locality amongst many others in the Northern Regions, so faced with limited material, financial, technical and human resources, these organization are obliged to ration their resources to cover their area of influence (Informant PLAN Cameroon, 2022).

##### **5.4.1 Domains of action of Civil Society Organization**

In relation to the objectives and resources of each organization, they define their zone of influence and domains of intervention in protecting children's right in relation to available resources certified the Divisional delegate of MINPROFF in Tignere Sub-Division.

**a) CIDIMUC (CONSEIL DES IMAMS ET DIGNITAIRES MUSULMANS DU CAMEROUN)**

The principal objective of the organization is to fight female genital mutilation, early and forced marriages, and other forms of violence against women. This Muslim religious organization sensitizes Muslim faithful on the ills of female genital mutilation, contradict Islamic extremist who prone child marriage as an Islamic value. Their best method of



vulgarization is through homogenous focus groups solely constituted of men especially on prayers days after Friday prayers. Some Islamic spiritual fathers in Tignere have adhere to the ideologies of this organization and this permits such preachers to orientate their message in the mosque. But most Muslim in Tignere are not comfortable with some of their actions like that of limiting child marriage. This organization could really be instrumental if it could attract the adhesion of most Muslim dignitaries in the area of study.

#### **b) Plan Cameroun**

The objective of plan in Cameroon is to build evidence-based interventions in an attempt to reduce child marriage. They support policy in educational sector and behavioural dynamics to curb child marriage. Map exiting data, actors and adequate practices on child marriage in Cameroon and sort out drivers of this scourge. And make recommendations for further and future actions in tackling child marriage in Cameroon.

Plan Cameroun has participated in drawing a global picture of child marriage in Cameroon. The organization is progressively constituting a data base for most localities concerning child marriage in Cameroon. In Tignere Sub-Division, Plan Cameroon has been very instrumental in training leaders of associations who would in tend train their members. The representative of Plan Cameroon for the Northern Region said they have trained 5 leaders of association from Tignere on carrying out research on child marriage and monitoring the evolution of the phenomenon. The organization has also sponsored the production of supports such as banners, flyers and gadgets use for sensitization against child marriage. She also supports financially and materially associations that encourage girl's education in the area of study.

#### **c) ALVF (L'Association de Lutte Contre les Violences Faites aux Femmes)**

This is the association with the greatest impact in terms of the fight against child marriage in the Northern Regions of Cameroon. This is involved in sensitization and organization of seminars, work-shops and conferences in the study area. During field work, the association was trying to consolidate the situation of child marriage in The Faro et Deo Division. The association is the lone association to possess a center in the Division that welcomes victims of child marriage and permit them to obtain professional skills so that they can re-integrate the society after the trauma and experience of child marriage. During field work, there were 6 victims of child marriage in the ALVF center, under the mentorship of a psychologist and receiving training in diverse domains such as tailoring, make-up, catering etc.

Field Respondents were of the opinion that civil society organizations could not fight child marriage without the upper hand of the government. Most ascertained that if repressive and coercive measures do not accompany sensitization and training then it will be difficult for child marriage to be redressed in Tignere Sub-Division.

### **GIZ-PARSE**

This German development agency is an actor of the fight against child marriage. She has been very instrumental in the Anglophone regions of Cameroon in fighting child marriage. She recently defined objectives which are still under implementation in the Northern regions of Cameroon. Amongst the most important of such objective are:

- Cartography and evaluation of child protection approaches;
- Adapting local realities to child-based community protection techniques;
- Capacity reinforcement and development of CSO combatting child marriage.

## **Chapter 6: Propositions to Address Child Marriage Practices**

This chapter makes propositions prior to the situational analysis of child marriage presented in the study area. The propositions range from the amelioration of the legal environment to tackling socio-cultural factors that fosters child marriage in Cameroon and Tignere Sub-Division in particular.

### **6.1 Ameliorate the Legal Framework and Its Environment**

The present legal framework is not adequate to fight early and forced marriages. The code of the child and the family initiated since 1997 has not yet been translated into a legal instrument which is an obstacle in the Cameroon legislation to combat child marriage. It is judicious that specific laws on children and early marriages be adopted in Cameroon. Without the implication of legislators, it will be difficult to face this scourge.

It is imperative to harmonize all laws (civil, customary, criminal, family) concerning the issue of child protection especially child marriage. A child should be defined as someone who has not yet attained the age of 18 years. This will then permit those who brand customary laws in Tignere Sub-Division to promote child marriage to be brought to book. And also, campaigns should be organized in Tignere so as to educate the people on the hierarchy of judicial norms such that people in this locality should know that there are laws that are above other laws. Train key stake holders in the religious, judicial and formal justice system. If this is done then, the Cameroon penal code could well be applied in respect of its dispositions guarding child marriage. The harmonization of all laws related to marital issues have been registering success in **Ghana** since the enactment of the children's act of 1998.

Civil registration should be strengthened in all parts of Cameroon. This will permit the systematic registration of all births and marriages. There are situations in the Northern part of Cameroon where it is difficult to prove the age of the girl child because of lack of birth certificates which might complicate law enforcement by the municipal magistrate during marriage. So, this study proposes an up-step in civil status records which will go a long way to reduce age fraud to access marriage of adolescents. An approach including traditional and religious leaders should be adopted to raise awareness of the law and the dangerous side it represents for girls. And ensure the child marriage cases are reported to competent authorities.

Promote alternative interpretation of religious texts and raise alarm of the negative effects of early marriage on adolescent girls, children, families and communities.

The justice system in Cameroon should take into account non-discriminatory, inclusive and gender sensitive protection acts and furnish free legal help for all especially children. The local authorities concerned about law enforcement and implementation in Tignere Sub-Division as well as in other localities of Cameroon should be well trained to respond to issues of early matrimony and gender-based violence. Follow-up and look ways of the implementation of the battery of laws.

In Tignere, administrative tolerance and complicit of certain civil servants who have the responsibility of law enforcement against child marriage should be punished when they do not ensure that the law prevails. Sanctions could include warning, end of contract or retrieving their professional licence. The Southern African Development Community (SADC)Parliamentary law insist on sanctions of civil servants, and since the application of this law, **Malawi** and **Mozambique** with the highest rates in the region have witness an increase in law enforcement by administrative and judicial authorities. It is true that the present penal code of Cameroon makes provision for sanctions but they are very meager. The sanctions should be up-graded such that the groom marrying the adolescent child should be considered as the first offender and be exposed to harder punitive measures followed by other accomplices who may be subjected to milder sanctions

The government and other stake holders should support the sharing, transfer and exchange of experience with criminal justice techniques related to forced marriages with the community of Tignere. The experience of the North West Region which has known considerable success should be extended to Tignere.

Generally, the justice system in Cameroon is complicated, so, access to justice should be made simple and easy especially for young girls who have been married, divorced or are widows. Furthermore, the youths' victims or not should be encouraged to engage in advocacy and become stung activist for children's right and probable reforms on early marriages.

Cameroon should develop a **national legal monitoring** body that is specialized in children's right especially early and forced marriages. This body would be in charge of collecting information on children's right and early marriages so as to vulgarize them for usage by stake holders of the sector which will also go a long way to help in the sensitization process. This national legal monitoring body, would on monthly basis, make commentaries and analyze

principal judicial decisions, experience of girl's victim to child marriage, as well as the support brought by stake holders to victims of early and forced marriages. This body would also share the success stories of other countries amongst to all citizens.

## **6.2 PROMOTE EDUCATION AND ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITIES FOR GIRLS**

The demographic and health survey carried out in Cameroon, 2020 showed that there is a direct relation between girl's education and child marriage. The chances of a girl to be involved in early marriage when she receives complete secondary education becomes slimmer. Keeping girls, the longest time possible in school is the best way of retarding marriage for them. Just as in many other localities of the Northern Regions, girls in Tignere sub-division should be encouraged to go to school through scholarships, free access to education especially at the primary level and secondary level as well as aid in socio-professional integration. A sort of affirmative action or positive discrimination of the girl child in education should be encouraged by the State and also stimulate parents to invest in girls education.

In **Burkina Faso**, an innovative project was developed between 2008-2010 by the population council in collaboration with the Ministry of social affairs supported by UNICEF to reduce child marriage and to empower and inform young girls on sexual issues. The project involved "mother-educators" who were charge with information diffusion on sexual issues and pregnancy, scholarship for adolescent girls that are unmarried and schooling, awareness raising with elders, religious and other community members. The mother-educators were women who were victims of early marriages. Such that, as former victims, they could better tell the community the ills of early marriage. These mother-educators were trained and imparted with the necessary skills to share information. Results showed that adolescent girls gained knowledge on early pregnancy, consequences of early and forced marriages, increased the use of sexual and reproductive health services. Such a program implemented by the government involving key stake holders in Tignere would awaken these community on the ills of child marriage. For it to succeed, all stake holders in the sector need to play their role to avoid possible harsh slanders on the mother-educators.

Civic education and geography syllabuses in primary and secondary schools should integrate the concept of child marriage. This would awaken children at the base and the implication of professionals of basic education is a guarantee to raise awareness about early and child marriage. For the success of this proposition, a program should be developed that sensitizes on laws and dangers of this scourge. Some themes such as responsible parenthood,

factors of sexual violence and reproductive health, dangers of early marriages etc. The Cameroonian schooling arena is therefore called upon to invest in fighting this scourge through a review of school syllabuses, the integration of this theme in the initial continues training of teachers and permanent educational talks on the phenomenon.

Poverty in Tignere being one of the causes of child marriage, ameliorating and up-lifting the economic and financial situation of may play a role in mitigating and restricting child marriage. In accordance with the third level analysis of the **theory of change**, which stipulates that the first strategy is empowering girls through training, skills and information. Providing employment opportunities for unmarried girls immediately they finish school. Income earned by a girl goes a long way to alleviate her family's precarious situation and correlates in delaying marriage. Job opportunities should also be offered to parent generations this could reduce the rate at which they send off their daughters to child marriage. Parents would not let their daughters get married early if they do not feel economically pressured to do so. Norms on bride price and dowry should be addressed so as to discourage parents from being incited by the economic and financial gains of such.

It is worth noting the case of **Benin and Togo** wherein Plan International have piloted successful youth economic empowerment projects within a program entitled "violence against children" aimed at combatting abject poverty responsible for pushing families to marry off their daughters (Plan, 2013). The target population included youth vulnerable to violence, victims of child trafficking and child labor as well as child marriage. The prime objective was to reduce young people's dependency ratio, render them autonomous and lessen their vulnerability to violence. Plan provided credit facilities to permit young people start-up small businesses such as petit trading, hair dressing, make-ups etc. Empowering youths builds their economic capacity, make them stronger, reduces their probability of being victims of child marriage and support their families. More than 800 girls were trained on gender, communication and leadership skills, as well as life skills. This project has been instrumental in enhancing girl's leadership skills. Also, testimonies of girls subjected to early marriages on consequences of child marriage, their education health and dignity through social media, radio programs. Such a project should be initiated and implemented in Tignere Sub-Division. This will go a long way to permit emancipation of the girl child. The **integrative theory** ascertains that the effective and efficient integration of young people into adult society will solve the in-adaptation, exclusion and marginalization of the young.

### **6.3 Information Dissemination, Awareness Raising, Community and Social Mobilization and Behaviour Change Communication**

Information vulgarization, conscientiousness, and adapted communication are needed to be initiated and implemented in Tignere Sub-Division as a means to redress child marriage.

Behaviour change communication (BCC) and community mobilization are an effective set of techniques for promoting social change (USAID). These techniques of communication fosters discussions about child marriage. It is a means that influences social norms. BCC and community mobilization should be encouraged and employed so as to have both a comprehensive view and change social norms that encourage child marriage and to ultimately reduce its practice and prevalence (USAID, 2017). The **theory of normative spectrum** postulates in its second level “appropriate” that individuals could deviate from social norms. Since child marriage is a social norm in Tignere, BCC comes in as supported by the normative spectrum theory to cause a positive disequilibrium.

Plan Waro 2014, proposes information dissemination strategies that could be transposed to our study area for implementation as a strategy to lessen child marriage. Issues related to child marriage should be an integral part of community development plans (CDP) and planning meetings. Generally, most often CDP hover around infrastructural development which bring a lot of people patterning to the same community together. During planning meetings, since it is a point of converge for most members of the community, communication against child marriage should be passed on. Being an integral part of CDP, signifies that the fight against child marriage will be budgeted and a specific plan in relation to local realities of Tignere Sub-division. Community meetings should involve general discussions accompanied by theatres, drama sketches to show case the negative side of early marriages and pass on strategies to stop force marriage. Information leaflet portraying the present legislation should be designed such that all members of the community no matter their level of education would understand the limits of their traditional norms in relation to matrimony. This strategy of leaflets have largely been used by “*ASSOCIATION DES FEMMES JURISTES DU NIGER*” and presently registering encouraging results.

Communication should be improved through avenues such as dissemination of advocacy kits, TV/radio adverts, new media platforms and journal publications (AUC, 2013). A radio program sponsored by UNICEF in the Kayes Region; **Mali** known as “let’s protect our girls” has become one of the favorite programs of the inhabitants of this locality. The radio

program is broadcast in the dialect of the locality which facilitates understanding. Living testimonies of victims in the community are broadcasted which further makes the program a success. In Tignere, a program can be developed to fight child marriage and broadcasted in the local vernacular. It is true that due to poverty most houses in the rural area of Tignere do not possess a radio post but this could be overpass by providing community radio sets and such programs broadcasted on market days or weekly ceremonial days were people gather in large numbers regularly. In the urban space of Tignere, people are more open to modernity so, a radio program like that of **Kayes region** will help sensitize the community against child marriage. A local newspaper should be created in Tignere which will give regular information on the general tendency of the situation and strategies to minimize its effects.

Dialogue and awareness raising of traditional and religious leaders. As already noted, culture, tradition and customs, Islam are the root cause of child marriage in Tignere Sub-Division. A constant platform between traditional and religious leaders with stake holders that matter should be a priority. This would help alleviate the present state of child marriage in Tignere.

Engaging girls as ambassadors for advocacy and campaigns (Plan Cameroon, 2014). This strategy has been successful in Christian known territories of Cameroon. In the littoral region for example, girls have been used for campaigns against child marriage especially those who have been victims to the phenomenon. According to Plan Cameroon, the campaign was a huge success in the littoral region of Cameroon. The realities of Tignere is different, for girls are still regarded as objects and should not have opinion but rather consume opinion of social norms. For this campaign to be successful in the area of study a deep sensitization of traditional and religious leaders should be under-taken.

Youth awareness should be raise through meeting for both school and out of school children. Today the social media platforms could be used since most youths are connected to the internet and are lovers of plate forms such as Facebook, WhatsApp, common in the area of study to arouse the youths about early marriages. It is true that such a measure could only be successful in Tignere urban area due to the presence of certain modern facilities.

#### **6.4 Village and Community Reporting Mechanism and Referral Strategy**

In **Mali** and **Niger**, the CSO such as World Vision and Plan International have focused on strengthening community level child protection and referral mechanisms as a tool to address child marriage (**Plan Waro, 2014**). In **Senegal**, precisely in the Kolda region, child protection



early warning committees are established at zonal, village and school levels under the banner of the Velingara child protection project. These committees permit to report all issues to competent authorities and structures related to child marriage. This has therefore reduced the perception of girls as kitchen utensils in Kolda region. In Tignere Sub-Division, just like in Kolda region, early warning committees should be set-up in all quarters, villages and communities. This will permit authorities in Tignere to be aware of any tentative early marriage which could therefore prompt their early intervention to stop the marriage process either through dialogue or through coercion. As of now, no warning committee exist in Tignere Sub-division.

In **Burkina Faso**, the referral program in the zone of Sanmatenga PU consist of identifying victims of early marriages and facilitating their removal from marriage (Plan Waro, 2013). When girls are successfully removed from early marriages, they are referred to an association that deals with child protection. The girls are now sent to specialized centers run by catholic sisters who offer them to learn and acquire some professional skills like catering, agribusiness, sewing to make them autonomous. This centers receive funding from Plan Burkina Faso.

### **6.5 Create a Platform for Stake Holders Involve in The Fight Against Child Marriage**

Statistics show a sluggishness of the Cameroonian State in encouraging the professionalization of public and private stake holders engaged in the fight against child marriage. A **synergy** should be developed so as to federate all actors under one or many platforms. Without a good synergy of these actors, it will be difficult to curb child marriage in Cameroon. Knowledge, know-how of all organizations in the sector should be mutualized to ensure efficacy and efficiency in the fight against the menace. A synergy can permit actors in Tignere not only mutualize their strength, but also synchronize their actions. A cartography of actors involved with child marriage should be identified. Those who work on prevention, mitigation, response and how programs are conceived and followed-up.

In such a platform, the government can always inform CSO about the country's priorities, available partnerships and propositions of legislatives reforms.

Partnership amongst the various stake holders in Tignere sub division would be instrumental to reducing child marriage. Plan Cameroon, GIZ, CIDIMUC, ALVF could sign a memorandum of understanding (MOU) which would permit them be more productive in the field of fighting child marriage in Tignere. We have the impression that most CSO's embrace

the same aspects of child marriage whilst much is still to be done. A MOU will permit division of labor which will facilitate the implementation of each CSO program. Partnerships are needed with organizations such as WHO, religious associations, private sector, national police, and other professionals important in the sector. The diversification of partners is an impetus to tackle child marriage both strategically as well as practically (Louise Wetheride, 2014).

## **6.6 Initiation of Cross-Sectoral Approach**

No one program tackling a specific sector is capable of terminating child marriage. This goes in line with the **theory of change**, which clearly elaborates in its second level known as the catalyzing stage that fighting child marriage requires a global approach than an isolated one. The phenomenon of child marriage embraces a plethora of factors responsible for its constant hikes. So, only a multi-sectoral approach can bring sustainable solutions to child marriage. Programs should equip young girls with know-how, knowledge, skills and behaviors that will enhance and support their emancipation. There should be some sort of inter-woven in program implementation geared at combatting child marriage. Empowering girls economically, ensuring their stay at school, disseminating information on child, dialoguing with religious and traditional rulers should be done simultaneously so as to ensure durable and harmonize elimination of ill practices against children.

Child marriage spans a diversity of domains including education, legal, economic, health and approaches such as projects, program, policies and laws, advocacy, raising awareness at local as well as at international level. An integrated approach used to redress child marriage will consequently be the success of programs geared at increasing marriage age of young girls.

## **6.7 Specific suggestions to redress child marriage in Tignere Sub-Division**

### **❖ Educational talks**

Educational talks should be organized amongst young girls so as to liberate them from the fear of social stigmatisation if they refuse early marriages. These talks should put them in confidence as to the possibilities of living a normal social inclusion even if they resist early marriages. They should be given orientations on the steps to be adapted if they ever face menace of force marriages from their relative such as referring themselves to the denunciation centres.

Educational talks amongst parents especially men, should be organized at quarter and village levels to demonstrate the ills of early marriages. Demonstrations on the health disadvantages to

young girls should be portrayed so as to scare parents from accepting this scourge. The ills of letting girls become mothers at precocity should be made known to parents.

The ignorance of the population on the present existing legal environment could be curbed by organising educational talks at quarter and village level. Experts could help demonstrate the penalties reserved for parents who force children less than 18 to marriage. The tolerance of the judicial sector should be made known to parents and clearly explicit the laws of 2016 that previews years of imprisonment for any person charged with forcing a young girl into marriage.

#### ❖ **Initiate and uplift the rate of denunciation centres**

To uplift the rate of denunciation of child marriage in the study area, a denunciation centre should be created in each quarter. To minimise cost, the residence of the quarter heads could be used for such a centre. Community mediators who are voluntary workers could be trained and equipped with didactic material in registering cases of such ill marriages. These centres should also register cases where it is noted that the judicial system exercises complicity towards defaulters and transfer to competent unit set by justice and MINPROFF competent services for such cases which for now is functional only in Douala and Yaounde.

#### ❖ **Creation of special data centre**

A special data centre should be created in the Northern region of Cameroon and the head quarter should be lodged in Tignere Sub-Division considering the amplitude of the phenomenon. This centre should possess day-to day data on the evolution of child marriage in respect to number or percentage, victims who refuse to get in child marriage, victims endangered with health problems, stakeholders and their area of attack, and evolution of general policies of child marriage. This centre would permit appropriate policy formulation and could foster a match between measures taken to address the situation and this scourge.

#### ❖ **Special integration and inclusion program**

A centre should be created in Tignere with the objective of receiving girl's victims of child marriage who either succeed in divorcing or escaping. This centre should provide these victims with security guarantee, employment perspectives through training in fields such as catering, seamstress, hair dressing, agriculture etc. If a victim of child marriage is received by such a centre and is able to live a normal life after being into such a marriage then they could serve as role models for other little girls victims to child marriage. The training offered by this centre would permit a certain degree of autonomy and independence of girls victim of child marriage.

### ❖ **Education and employment**

Specific regulations should be enforced in Tignere to ensure girls do not drop out of schools before they complete the second cycle of the secondary schools. Just as stipulated by many authors, the more a girl stays in school, the lesser her chances to indulging in child marriage. The specificity of Tignere in matters of child marriage necessitates a special educational program especially in primary school and early secondary schools where lessons on the ills of child marriage should clearly be labelled. Reinforcement workshops should regularly be organised amongst teachers especially of the secondary education so as to permit them dynamise their approach towards the teaching of the phenomenon.

The poverty level in Tignere can be reduced by creating employment opportunities in relation to existing resources. Tignere is one of the areas in Cameroon endowed with pastoral cattle rearing. This rearing could be modernised by the government and create employment for all. Side activities such as tanneries, dairy production, and production of food for calves could be developed. This would go a long way to empower parents economically and monetarily which could indirectly reduce their intentions of giving out their daughters because of poverty.

For all these propositions to be effective, it requires that the Cameroon government and civil society organisations conjugate their actions in a complementary manner.

## Conclusion

The violation of children's right in Cameroon like in many countries in Africa is a nuisance to the blossoming of this age group. Child marriage which is one of the most expressive forms of these abuses needs to be handle meticulously and with a lot of agility to permit these children fully participate in development. The causes of early marriages in Tignere Sub-Division are similar to those in most regions of Cameroon, Africa and developing countries. The principal causes of this menace to children's blooming in the area of study include poverty, illiteracy, religion, customs and traditions. Other meager causes also exist.

The fight against child marriage in Cameroon have been impede by a plethora of factors ranging from a weak legislation, added to the fact that its implementation is clogged by uncountable challenges. Tignere is a purely religious (Islam) and traditional whereby decisions are taken in cognizance to pre-establish norms that have no correlation with the modern laws of the State. Unfortunately for advocates for elimination of child marriage practices, the resources at the disposal of the Cameroonian State are insufficient to fight this scourge. CSO do palliate the insufficiencies and weaknesses of the State in the combat against early and forced marriages.

The slowness in reducing child marriage practices are explained by a multitude of factors including the weak synergy existing between stake holders of the sector, a legal framework not fully adapted to the practice, insufficient information in the data base concerning child marriage, Complicity of the judicial system, Amalgam between customary, religious and State laws, Insufficient programs to permit the re-integration of adolescents victims of child marriage, Insufficient coordination of sectorial policies to tackle the issue of child marriage, Absence of a harmonize reference system of children victims of child marriage. Faced with all this challenges in tackling child marriage in the area of study, this study proposes a systemic and integrated approach to curb this threat.

In Cameroon in general and Tignere in particular, measures such as Ameliorating the legal framework and its environment, Promote education and economic opportunities for girls, Information dissemination, awareness raising, community and social mobilization and behavior change communication, Village and community reporting mechanism and referral strategy, Creating a platform for stake holders involve in the fight against child marriage, and Initiating

a cross-sectoral approach which considers all sectors and actors in a cross-sectional and systemic manner.

This study presents a few limitations which in no case reduces its pertinence of data and information. The study could have made use of a deep stratification of girl's victim to child marriage to further understand strategies used to engage them in their different forms of marriage. Focus group discussions involving girls presently married through force and those that have succeeded in escaping from such marriages would have been an added impetus to this study.

Further research should be carried out on how traditional and religious authorities could be persuaded to fully join in the fight against forced and child marriage aside propositions already made in this study.

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## Abstract

카메룬을 포함한 아프리카 국가 대부분에서 조혼은 개인적인 차원과 국가적 차원에서이다. 노력에도 불구하고 카메룬 북부 지역에서 이러한 사회적 재앙은 크게 나아질 기미를 보이지 못했다. 그 중 티크네레는 카메룬 지역에서 조혼 비율이 가장 높은 지역으로 알려져 있어서 사례 연구의 대상으로 택했다.

해당 연구 분야는 조혼과 강제결혼이 상당하다는 인식을 기반으로 본 연구는 이 현상을 줄이기 위해 다중영역 및 통합적 접근법을 제안하는 것을 목표로 한다. 구체적으로 또한 본 연구는 주된 행위자와 이해관계자들에게 통찰과 문제 현상을 억제하기 위한 조치의 한계를 제공한다. 이러한 연구 목표를 이루기 위해 본 연구는 가구 조사 인터뷰 심층 집단 토론과 관찰을 포함한 차 자료를 보완하는데 체계적 방법론적 접근을 사용했다.

현장 조사 결과에 따르면 조혼의 주된 행위자는 낮은 교육 수준 빈곤 종교 관습과 전통을 포함하며 이는 총 조혼의 50%를 구성한다. 이러한 주된 행위자는 강압적 지시 협상 무력 또래 압력과 같이 다양한 형태의 만행을 저질렀다. 연구에 참여한 현지인 중 단 만이 법적 혼인연령을 알고 있다.

사회 공동체의 인식, 소녀들이 마주할 낙인, 가족을 비난하는 것과 관련한 심리적 및 정신적 고통, 사법 체계의 복잡성 그리고 관습, 종교, 법의 혼합, 조혼 피해 청소년을 재통합하기 위한 프로그램이 불충분한 점, 조혼을 다루기 위한 각 정책적 조정이 불충분한 점. 아이들의 권리를 지키기 위한 행위자와 이해관계자 사이의 시너지 부족, 조혼에 관한 데이터를 이용 불가능하다는 점에 의해 조혼을 제한하기 위한 프로그램과 정책의 실패는 좌절했다.

## **APPENDICES**

## APPENDIX I

### QUESTIONNAIRE TO HOUSEHOLDS

Kindly answer the questions below by putting TICK against in the box that corresponds to your answers. Where your answer options are not provided, kindly fill the spaces provided. Your answers shall be confidential and used for this scientific research work only.

#### I. Identification of Respondents

- 1- Gender      a) Male       b) female
- 2- Level of education   a) Primary    b) secondary    C) professional education   
                              d) University    e) No Education
- 3- Age    1) 10-15 years     2) 15-18 years     3) 18-25 years     4) 25-35   
years  
                              5) 35-45 years     6) 45-60 years     7) Above 60 years
- 4-Religion    1) Christian     2) Muslim     3) Others.....
- 5- Monthly revenue (FCFA thousands) .....

#### II. SECTION I Drivers of child marriage in Tignere-Sub-Division

- 1a-Are you a victim of child marriage   1) Yes     2) No
- 1b- If Yes, at what age 1) Less than 15    2) Between 15-17 years    3) above 18  
years
- 1c-If yes, what form   1) Negotiation    2) Forced marriage    3) Instruction
- 4) Others.....
- 2a-Have you ever sent your child to marriage before the age of 15 years 1) Yes    2) No
- 2b-If yes, do you know it is wrong 1) Yes     2) No
- 3-What are some of the causes of child marriage in your area?
- 1) Poverty     2) Religion     3) Custom and Tradition
- 4) Low level of education    5) Others precise .....

#### III. SECTION II Identification of existing stake holders in Tignere Sub-Division

- 1a-Do you know any Organization that works against child marriage 1) Yes    2) No
- 1b- Which type? 1) N.G.O    2) Associations    3) Youth movement

4) Religious institutions  5)

Others.....

2- Have you ever been sensitized on the ills of child marriage by any organization? 1) Yes

3- Have you ever received any training through seminars, conference, workshops, symposiums?

1) Yes

2) No

4- Do you think that these organizations can help in reducing child marriage? 1) Yes  2) No

5- What are some of the shortcomings of these Organizations in combatting child marriage?

Precise .....

6a- Does the MINPROFF through her delegations and women's houses play a role in combatting child marriage? 1) Yes  2) No

6b- If yes, precise the role.....

#### **IV-SECTION III. Legal environment, policies and programs against child marriage**

1- Do you know the legal age for a girl to get married? 1) 12-15 years  2) 15-18 years   
3) 18+ years

2- Do you know the marriage age provided by the penal code of 2016? 1) Yes  2) No

3- Do you know that getting married below the marriage age is punishable by law? 1) Yes   
2) No

4a- Do you know any person that has been sanctioned because of Child marriage? 1) Yes   
2) No

4b If yes, what was the nature of the sanction.....

4- How do the people of Tignere perceive the existing legal environment?.....

5- Do you know any program/ policy in Tignere to fight child marriage.....

Thanks for your cooperation

## **APPENDIX II**

### **INTERVIWE GUIDE TO STAKE HOLDERS**

- When was your organisation created?
- Why did you organisation choose the fight against child marriage?
- What are the long, medium and short term objectives of your organisation?
- What are your successes and failures in fighting child marriage?
- What are the challenges faced by your organisation in child marriage
- Do you collaborate with state institutions or other CSO?
- How optimistic is your organisation about the future of child marriage?