



BANGOLAN CHIEFTAINCY CRISIS

A Comprehensive Report

By

Oscar C. Labang, Ph.D.

with assistance from Dero Momoh

Photo Credit: Dero Momoh



SUMMARY

Cameroon is generally considered a peaceful and stable nation in comparison to her neighbours. However, closer scrutiny exposes a high record of intra-ethnic conflicts and inter-ethnic wars which manifests as political, economic, environmental conflicts, battles over natural resources between farmers and graziers, as well as land, boundary and territorial clashes between villages. While the international community continues to erroneously appreciate the general picture, these recurrent tribal wars and conflicts are taking a devastating toll on the lives of human beings relegated to the margins of existence. The North West Region is a hot bed for most of these conflicts and wars and several studies show that political warlords use conflicts as means of fanning flames of division for personal political ambition.

In July 2016, the Ngoketunjia Young Elites (NGOYE) and the Kencholia International Foundation (KIF), in partnership with the Center for Disaster and Emergency Management Studies at St. Lawrence University Ngoketunjia commissioned this report on the on-going chieftaincy crisis in Bangola. Shocked by the degrading situation of displaced families, the arbitrary arrests of young people, and the abuse of human rights by forces of the Rapid Intervention Unit (BIR) as well as the apparent lack of humanitarian and medical assistance at any level, these organizations requested an urgent comprehensive report which could be used as a blueprint for intervention and assistance. Bangolan is one of the 13 Villages that make up the Ngoketunjia Division (Ndop plains) of the North West Region of Cameroon. It is located in the Babessi Subdivision and has a population of about 20,000 people.

In February 2016, the people of Bangolan witnessed a distressing turn of events as several families lose their homes, their property, their family members, and friends in the midst of a chieftaincy crisis. The psycho-social and economic impacts are profound as the people continue to wonder how they got into this and how soon the government is going to take definitive steps to put an end to the crisis. It is important to note that the crisis is affecting other areas surrounding Bangolan and has the potential of inspiring similar conflicts and crises in other villages in Ngoketunjia.

The Bangolan Chieftaincy crisis which attracted public attention in February with the dethronement of Fon Chafah and the enthronement of Fon Salim is an on-going conflict which has had severe consequences on the life of the community and the neighboring villages. In a little less than 6 months, the crisis has transformed the peaceful and loving village of Bangolan into a chaotic scene with thousands of affected people. Most Bangolan people are still processing the shock of witnessing the on-going destruction and devastation of homes, neighborhoods and personal property. The response of the administration has been limited to the deployment of forces of law and order who have been accused of perpetrating varied forms of human rights abuse. There has been little

or no humanitarian assistance and thousands of children, women, and elderly affected by the crises have been abandoned to fend for themselves in the midst of tight security and a disrupted social order. Although Bangolan is in serious need for assistance in emergency shelter, healthcare, food security and public/personal safety, there has been little or no response from the government, non-governmental, religious or cultural organizations.

The purpose of this report is to provide comprehensive information on the crisis and its effects on the people of Bangolan. It provides an overview of the crises, and analyzes its possible causes based on information collected from interviews, news media reports, eyewitness accounts, and official Memos. It also examines the effects of the crisis on the Bangolan Community and makes recommendations on what steps need to be taken immediately to provide assistance to the affected villagers while preventing such crisis in future. It ends with a financial assessment of the destruction caused by the crisis on individuals and the community.

Consequent on the fact that the crisis is still on-going and requires careful consideration of facts, every attempt has been made to avoid any form of bias. The report draws information from multiple media sources, interviews, eye witness accounts and data collected by NGOYE Team on the field. These sources were carefully screened for possible biases, and in most instances only verifiable facts have been used.

Oscar C. Labang, Ph.D.
St. Lawrence University, Ngoketunjia



TABLE OF CONTENTS

SUMMARY	2
OVERVIEW OF CRISES IN NGOKETUNJIA	5
OVERVIEW OF BANGOLAN CRISIS	6
EMERGENCE OF CRISIS IN BANGOLAN	7
VIEWS (CAUSES) OF THE CRISIS.....	10
EFFECTS OF THE CRISIS ON BANGOLAN	12
RECOMMENDATIONS	16
FINANCIAL ESTIMATES OF DESTRUCTION	18
CONCLUSION	19
NOTES:.....	19



OVERVIEW OF CRISES IN NGOKETUNJIA

The Ngoketunjia Division in the North West Region of Cameroon has over several decades been a hot bed of tribal and ethnic conflicts. There are several types and forms of inter and intra-ethnic conflicts in this area and their causes are different and often complex. In other parts of the North West Region the conflicts are caused by disagreements between pastoral communities, and agricultural communities. In Ngoketunjia Division they range from conflicts caused by political interests to wars about the territorial dimensions or boundaries of particular villages. The political evolution of Cameroon and the resultant politicization of traditional rulership in parts of the North West Region (where tradition is still in full force) have ushered in a new form of conflict between and within communities. This new form of conflict has increased the burden of the communities and made them even more vulnerable to crises and mass destructive action; though little is done by the administration, the Cultural and Development Associations, and Non-Governmental Organization to curb these problems. When a war is over or when one conflict ends, the administration assumes that its repressive approach has worked; traditional rulers and councils go back to their routine while waiting for another war/conflict; and NGOs build on the propaganda sometimes for personal profit. The communities are left to bear the impact of the war or conflict.

These wars and conflicts often have severe psycho-social consequences on the villagers though the post-conflict intervention often grossly ignores such consequences. The psychological effect on children, women and the elder is often undermined. The physical and structural damage leaves families and whole communities in worse off conditions. Educational, health and administrative institutions also feel the bitter effects of such conflicts as sometimes angry mobs do not pay attention to the overall effect of their actions.

The Bangolan crisis is an exemplification of the critical challenges that villages in Ngoketunjia and the North West Region are facing. Such challenges



include: impoverished communities, social injustice and inequality, violence, poor infrastructure, degrading natural resources and the absence of healthcare and social services. The lack thereof of a national, regional or divisional emergency relief and support system from the government and the nonprofit sector make the effects of crises, wars and conflicts even more severe because victims during, and after the conflicts are abandoned to their plight. In instances where assistance is offered by the government, the lack of a well-structured system and the culture of corruption/embezzlement make it difficult and sometimes impossible for the victims to receive the help allocated to them.

OVERVIEW OF BANGOLAN CRISIS

As of July 15, 2016, the Bangolan crisis had resulted in damage that is estimated at about 116,020,000frs CFA. About 26 homes had been burnt or destroyed, and an average of 156 children, women, youth and elderly people had been displaced. Also, 4 people had died while 9 critically wounded people are still hospitalized. In the midst of crisis, 22 bikes had been burnt and 3 shops had either been burnt or looted. This is in addition to the public damage on infrastructure. Other atrocities like rape, and human rights abuse mostly perpetrated by troops in the Rapid Intervention Unit (BIR) cannot be reported at this time because rape and sexual harassment is still a taboo in the community. Also, the helpless victims have no one to talk to because of the heavy militarization of the village by the Governor of the North West Region.

In a little less than 6 months, the peaceful and loving village of Bangolan has been transformed into a chaotic community with thousands of children, youth, women, and elderly still struggling to process the shock of the devastation of homes, neighborhoods and personal property and the on-going terrorizing of the community by forces of law and order. Apart from the deployment of BIR who have been accused of perpetrating human rights abuses, there has been little or no humanitarian assistance and the affected population has been abandoned to fend for themselves in the midst of tight and oppressive security. Although Bangolan is in serious need of assistance in emergency shelter, healthcare, food security and public/personal safety there apparent has been no response from the government, non-governmental, religious or cultural organizations. The response



of the administration has often ended at the level of the formation of crises committees, which have seldom been able to put forth an effective framework for conflict resolution in the region.

For a community that is already impoverished, and which is largely dependent on subsistence agriculture for survival, the scale and impact of the crisis is unprecedented and devastating as petit-traders can no longer open their shops, farmers cannot tend their crops and community markets and other institutions cannot operate as usual. The destruction of property resulted in the burning and looting of shops which has left the shop owners wanting on how to survive. Also, the burning of motor bikes, which was the main source of income generation, has rendered many young people jobless and without any means of livelihood. The resources of host families in Bangolan and surrounding villages are being used to support Bangolan people who have escaped their village either because of fear of repression or the need for shelter in the wake of the destruction.

EMERGENCE OF CRISIS IN BANGOLAN

The Bangolan Chieftaincy crisis, which has just gained public attention in recent months, has been a long standing dispute, especially within recent years of the reign of Fon Isaac Chafah. Before the escalation of violent conflict on February 19, 2016, the people and kingmakers of Bangolan had declared that because Chafah had committed grievous and intolerable acts against the customs and traditions he was enthroned to guard and preserve, he was no longer their ruler¹. The dethronement resulted from the removal of ancestral stone at the palace and the burning of cultural artifacts by Fon Chafah on 9th December 2015.

Asked by The Cameroon Daily Journal about the situation in the village, Fon Chafah said:

“Well it is horrible what we are living through in the village.”

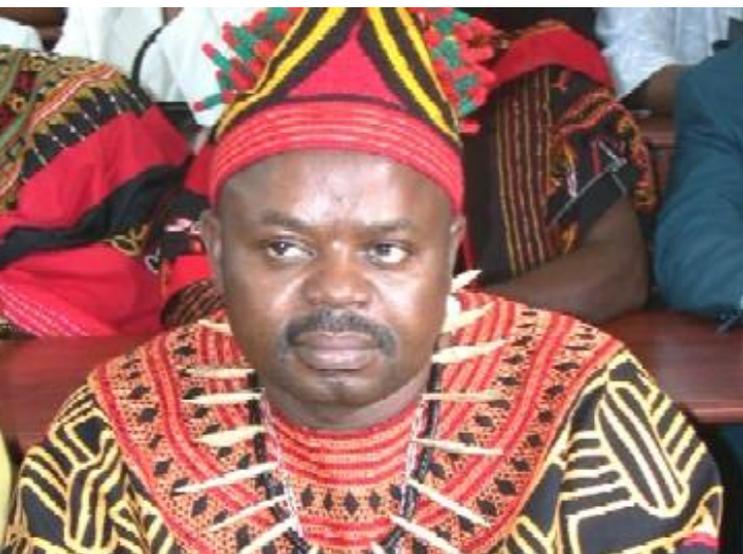
Records show that the S.D.O of Ngoketunjia and the D.O of Babessi had been monitoring and managing the problem from the beginning. The Memo of



27th February 2016 presented to the Governor during the meeting at Babessi states that on the 10th February 2016, the S.D.O of Ngoketunjia and the D.O of Babessi were present when the people of Bangolan expressed their wishes through the votes of the kingmakers, and Fon Chafah was dethroned through an overwhelming majority of votes. The Kingmakers also voted in support of the enthronement of Fon Salim who is a step-brother to the dethroned Fon.

From an interview granted by Fon Chafah to the *Cameroon Postline*, the crisis escalated on the 17th February 2016ⁱⁱ, while he was away in Yaounde with other traditional rulers to present a motion of support to President Paul Biya for his candidature in the 2018 Presidential election. Pro-Chafah sources allege that the people who enthrone Fon Salim did not have appropriate traditional authority to enthrone a new Fon and ruler of the Kingdom of Bangolan. In another interview with *The Cameroon Daily Journal* Fon Chafah claims that the attack on his chieftaincy is sponsored by individuals and he knows the individuals. In his own words *“Those who are sponsoring it know for what reasons they are sponsoring it and we know all of them, it is being sponsored and we know those who are sponsoring it”*ⁱⁱⁱ. From the statement of the Governor of the North West Region L’Afrique Lele to CRTV, the incidents surrounding the Chieftaincy crisis was a coup planned by those he calls *“fake kingmakers and notables”*, who enthroned a *“fake fon”*^{iv}. The Governor’s position contradicts the fact that the S.D.O and the D.O of the Municipality were present and witnessed the dethronement through the Kingmakers’ votes.

The crisis spiraled out of control on 19th February 2016 when the Governor visited Bangolan in an effort to restore peace and order. Reports carry that the belligerent faction in the conflict exploited the presence of the Governor to create scenes of hostility which resulted in the militarization of the village. A separate Memo to the Governor by Bangolan elites published in World Echoes Newspaper states *“... peace was maintained in Bangolan until late in the evening on the 19 of February 2016 when Mbipefah Usman Forpeh the brother of Chafah Isaac exploited your presence by firing gun shots with life bullets and orchestrating other mischievous acts together with his children, chafah’s children that excited violence to use it as a bridge to make use of the BIRS”*. The incidents generated tension and violence and the angry population of Bangolan blocked roads, and threw stones at the Governor’s convoy. This led to the arbitrary and mass arrest



of Bangolan people. *Cameroon Postline* reports that “Over 300 persons were arrested alongside Salim Mbipefah and detained in Ndop and Bamenda”. Another newspaper, *Cameroon Concord*, report shows that as of June 23 a significant percentage of these people had been detained for over 4 months.

The sudden death of Fon Salim on 15th June 2016 (not long after release from prison) sparked a new set of controversies, and heightened tensions as the villagers demanded that Fon Salim must be buried according to the traditional procedures for the burial of a Fon in Bangolan. The royal remains of Fon Salim is held at a mortuary in Foumban, and Fon Chafah is currently in Yaounde. The village of Bangolan is still in an unpredictable state as life is yet to return to normal and the presence of forces of law and order is still very conspicuous.



VIEWS (CAUSES) OF THE CRISIS

The Bangolan Crisis seems to have two causes based on the direction from which one looks at it. These causes are explained from the point of view of the scholar Michael Brown^v who accounts for ethnic conflicts from four perspectives: weak states, political issues, economic issues and cultural issues. From one perspective, the crisis is caused by political issues while from another it is caused by cultural issues. On an overall basis, it is caused by a weak government incapable of providing a mechanism for enforcing the rules that could avert such crisis. It is important to understand the views of the crisis particularly because the crisis is still in progress and needs conflict resolution efforts. The view of the crisis is not an attempt to say which is true or correct or predominant but to provide possible perspectives from which to understand the positions of different parties involved in the crisis.

Cultural Issue: From one perspective, the crisis is said to have its roots in the clash of cultures particularly traditional African (Bangolan) beliefs and Judeo-Christian belief. Several media reports as well as the Memo of the Elders to the Governor titled “*Enthronement of a New Fon of Bangolan*” and Memo of Bangolan Elites to the Governor, PM and MINTAD hold that the crisis resulted from cultural issues particularly the dethronement of Fon Chafah. The cause of the dethronement of Fon Chafah and the enthronement of Fon Salim was the burning of traditional artifacts and relics by Fon Chafah who is considered to have embraced Christianity. The Memos state that Fon Chafah was dethroned because he had failed in his duty as protector and preserver of the cultural heritage of Bangolan. At a time when other Fons and villages in Ngoketunjia are harnessing their cultural artifacts for the creation of museums which attract tourists and generate economic benefits to the community, the people of Bangolan find it difficult to believe that their own cultural artifacts were being destroyed by those who are supposed to protect and preserve it.



There are conflicting versions about dethronement in Bangolan culture. An unverified pro-Chafah Letter to the Governor claims that such dethronement has never happened in the history of Bangolan and will not be allowed to happen now. However, the Memo of the Elders and Elites to the Governor cites examples of dethronements that have occurred in Bangolan History. A portion of the Memo states that “*According to our customs and traditions, the same fate fell on the following Fons namely: Ndimenkeh and Fongozzo who were peacefully dethroned and replaced without any bloodshed and, up till; today, we are living and working together and giving them their due respect as former Fons*”^{vi}.

Political issues: The politicization of traditional power, and the lack of respect for traditional authority by those who believe that traditional rulers align with particular political ideologies is considered to be a possible cause of conflict. In the case of the Bangolan Crisis, political issues seem to be one of the underlying causes. According to the unverified letter addressed to the North West Governor, the “opposition camp” is responsible for the events leading up to the conflict. It states that “His (Chafah XI) steadfast support for the ruling party and the state institutions has attracted him hatred from the opposition camp”^{vii}. The new Fon Salim that was enthroned in the absence of Fon Chafah XI is said to be a staunch SDF militant. Bangolan therefore seems to be the arena for the exhibition of long standing tension over political ideology.

Weak Government: While political issues and cultural issues are central to the Bangolan crisis, a major cause of most of the ethnic conflicts in the North West Region is what Brown refers to as a “weak state”: “Weak governments can create conditions favorable to the emergence of [inter and intra-] ethnic conflicts” (86). Weak government manifests itself in several ways which may include: marginalization, divide-and-rule practices, discrimination, and outright negligence of some segments of society. According to J.A. Mope Simo, it is



“widely believed that the government has a hand in the emerging instability”^{viii} that the North West Region has been facing as a whole. In the case of the Bangolan crisis, there has been a clear manifestation of weak government at the Divisional, Regional and national levels. It doesn’t suffice for the Prime Minister to give instructions for a careful and immediate handling of the conflict without creating the framework for concrete action and follow-up. The Governor ordered the arrest of Bangolan people and when the people exercised their constitutional right to protest against the arbitrary arrests, he told them to go back to the S.D.O of Ngoketunja. Also, the information provided to the media by the Governor is contradictory to what the S.D.O and the D.O of Babessi knew about the crisis. These are indications of incompetency at the level of the administration in the management of this crisis and others around the Region. As Kimengsi^{ix} observes, the Human Rights Commission of the North West Region has in other instances “blamed the administration for negligence and tardy reaction to the clashes” (169).

Weak government could also be through the absence of institutional structures designed to identify, prevent, mitigate, respond to and evaluate such crisis. In Cameroon, the administration’s response to most inter-ethnic and intra-ethnic crisis/wars and even to natural disasters focuses on only one aspect of disaster and emergency management – the deployment of forces of law and order who in most cases engage in human right abuses in the attempt to subdue the populations. This is a major weakness in the government’s ability to manage crisis and disasters. The government needs to take measures and create an emergency system that is capable of identifying, mitigating, responding and evaluating such crisis/conflicts and disasters. The administration has been criticized severally for the creation of post crisis and disaster commissions which make recommendations that are never implemented.



EFFECTS OF THE CRISIS ON BANGOLAN

Inter-ethnic and intra-ethnic conflicts in the North West Region of Cameroon has caused and continue to cause untold suffering to the populations especially women, children and elderly. In the conflict prevalent areas, there has been deterioration in the quality of life, and development projects have been disrupted. Overall, the political, economic and cultural institutions have been significantly weakened because events are judged not on the basis of reason and logic but on political ideological lines.

Human Right Abuse: Media reports show that several people of Bangolan are still in pre-trial detention and little or nothing is being said or done about their situation. The Governor confirms that several people were arrested and will be prosecuted according to the laws of Cameroon. Apparently, the mass arrest of Bangolan people was an intimidation strategy by the administration and not an attempt to identify those responsible for the civil unrest. This is why following the arbitrary and mass arrests; no attempts have been made to screen those arrested so that innocent people can be released. More than 300 people were arrested and jailed in relations to the crises. *Data from the field shows that a great number of people are still in custody.*

“Several men and boys have fled the village for fear of being arrested by elements of the Battalion D’Intervention Rapid (BIR) that was recently deployed there on the orders of the Governor of the Northwest Region, Adolph Lele L’Afrique. Many schools are closed while the streets and market squares of the village are virtually deserted.”

(Source: BamendaOnline.met)

Victimization and scape-goating has also led to the arrest of several people who may not have been part of the supposed coup. Thus, several innocent people who happened to be in the right place at the wrong time or to be in the wrong place at the wrong time are languishing in jails with no one to listen to their cry of innocence. In a system where human dignity and rights are respected, measures are taken as soon as possible to clear the innocent and release them while prime suspects may be held back for further investigation. The State of Cameroon is holding several Bangolan people in police custody without verifiable and justifiable reason other than that they MIGHT have been part of the protest. The Sub-Section President of the CPDM, Mr Mendueh Prederick, decries the fact that he and others were detained for over 4 months without reason; his motor bike and other property was confiscated and he has never received them back^x.

Police/Military Brutality – the first recourse of the administration in the event of crisis or conflict is always to send in large numbers of police, gendarmes and BIR to the conflict zones. These forces of law and order sent with the mission to safeguard the peace and protect the people/property often become forces of unlawfulness and disorder as they try to subvert the people. Reports by the new outlet *Bamenda Online* show that villagers have reported cases of rape perpetrated by the forces of law and order^{xi}. It is difficult to provide statistics on such incidents because rape is still considered a taboo and is not talked about or discussed in many parts of Cameroon. Victims fear the stigma and prefer to deal with their plight in hiding. Police and military brutality was so severe that on February 27, 2016 at an enlarged meeting with the Governor and S.D.O of Ngoketunjia, the people presented “*a memo against the militarisation of our village, wanton arrest, destruction, military terrorisation, massive displacement of the villagers and persecution of our people*”. Eye witness accounts from Bangolan and statements from some of the hospitalized victims indicate the forces of law and order are responsible for most of the casualties incurred. The statement from one elder to *The Meridian* summarizes police/military brutality in Bangolan “[*there are*] *others in hospitals because of pains inflicted by the military while others are in hiding in neighboring villages for fear of arrests*”.



Loss of Lives and the disintegration of family cohesion: Reports from Bangolan indicate that at least 4 deaths were recorded (including directly or indirectly that of the newly enthroned Fon Salim) and 9 people were critically wounded. The fear of arrest and victimization caused several hundreds to flee from the village to neighboring villages and dense bushes for hideout. These deaths, imprisonments and exiles have significantly affected and continue to affect Bangolan families including those who might not have had any interest in the Chieftaincy squabbles or might not have been involved in any of the mob actions.

The lives of thousands of children, women, and elderly people in Bangolan have been affected directly or indirectly by the crisis. Children and

We are harassed everywhere. Also, this is the period we have to nurse rice seedlings but we have not been able to do so. Our farms have been abandoned. We won't even sleep in our houses because we are afraid it can be burnt down at night. Our children are with relatives in neighboring villages”

(Anonymous lady to Hot Cocoa Radio)

teens who have been exposed to the violence and bloodshed of the conflict have simply been left to suffer the psychological effects. Elderly people who before the crisis had very little medical care have been deprived of the critical healthcare that they need.

Destruction of Property and interruption of Farming cycle: The destruction of property is often a serious consequence of inter and intra ethnic conflicts. In the case of Bangolan, several houses were burnt and others were reduced to very bad conditions. Looting and stealing accompanied the destruction of property. Several people have therefore lost a great deal of their property and are left to begin from the scratch with no support from the administration. Recent reports from Bangolan show that at least 26 houses have been burnt or destroyed, at least 22 bikes have been burnt, 2 shops set ablaze and 1 looted.

Faced with the devastation, Bangolan families and the community cannot be expected to pick up the fragments of their life and continue as if nothing happened.



RECOMMENDATIONS

The absence of any form of humanitarian assistance and a committed will to resolve the crisis has left the affected people of Bangolan in a condition of devastation. The disruption of agricultural, economic and social activities has had severe consequences on the people; and the overwhelming presence of BIR in the village continues to create a tense atmosphere under which it is difficult to fully engage in profitable activities.

The Need for Assistance

Bangolan is in critical need of assistance in the areas of food security, emergency shelter, reconstruction, healthcare, personal safety and conflict resolution. Information from Bangolan indicates that there has been little or no response from the government, non-governmental, religious or cultural organizations or any organization that has the capacity to help. The crisis which started in February has continued for close to 6 months now and the longer it takes, the greater the destruction and displacement. Farming which is the main method of food supply has been disrupted and families have to devise new ways of feeding themselves for long periods of time.

Whole families are homeless because their homes were burnt and/or their property was destroyed and/or looted. Data from the field show that at least 26 homes were destroyed either by fire or violent means. These families cannot simply be left to their fate. It is important that the Ministry of Social Services take urgent steps to provide assistance to these families.

The people also need assistance at the level of the respect of human rights and security. It is unacceptable for the forces of law and order to simply bundle groups of Bangolan people and throw them in jail with no efforts to clear the innocent and release them. Arbitrary and mass arrest is never the solution to a crisis. We are confident that when Prime Minister Philemon Yang issued instructions for the handling of the conflict he did not mean that Bangolan people should be arrested and locked up arbitrarily. While we advocate that those found guilty be prosecuted according to the law, we strongly advocate that the innocent be given a chance to clear their names and get released. These people need the assistance of human right organizations because of the lack of representation at the legal level.

The absence of any form of humanitarian assistance and a committed will to resolve the crisis has left the affected people of Bangolan in a condition of devastation.

Commitment to Prevention

Scholars like Jude Ndzifon Kimengsi have blamed the recurrence of inter-tribal wars and intra-ethnic conflicts in Ngoketunjia and other parts of the North West Region on the belligerent spirit of the people. We recommend that mechanisms should be developed to help the people with a change in mindset. Non-Governmental Organization as well as cultural and development association have to take a leading role in the process of preventing such inter and intra-ethnic crisis. Groups like the Ngoketunjia Development and Cultural Association (NGODECA) have to develop a system that guarantees a commitment to prevention of wars and conflicts in the Ngoketunjia Division. The political elite (who have been blamed as part of the cause) need to take a hard look at the pain and suffering that their political ambitions are causing the people. They need to serve as agents of developments for the division and not for particular villages or political ideologies.

A major step in the commitment to prevention is conflict resolution. By now, most Ngoketunjia people have come to the realization that the reoccurrence of conflicts has devastating effects on human and community development.

A major step in the commitment to prevention is conflict resolution. By now, most Ngoketunjia people have come to the realization that the reoccurrence of conflicts has devastating effects on human and community development. There is therefore the urgent need to prioritize the management of conflict and to promote a culture of peace and peaceful co-existence. The people of the North West Region as a whole are in need of both traditional peace processes rooted in the cultures of the people and state policy on peace building^{xii}.

The Need for an Emergency Management System

The people of Bangolan, of Ngoketunjia and of Cameroon suffer from different types of conflicts, crises and emergencies and so deserve an emergency management system that can go into action immediately a conflict, crisis, or war occurs. The government of Cameroon has often been blamed for responding to conflicts, crises and emergencies by forming commissions which make recommendations that are kept in ministerial file cabinets while waiting for another incident. Cameroonians need emergency management systems at the national level, Regional, Division and Subdivisional Levels. It is unacceptable that in the 20th Century, a crisis in Bangolan leaves people helpless for several months, and the government at all levels is unable to provide any form of assistance except arrest. Those who were sick before and during the crisis received no medical attention. Those who were homeless didn't get temporary housing; and the elderly were allowed to struggle for themselves in the middle of

a crisis; and women and children were abandoned to save themselves. This does not reflect a context in which the government loves and protects its citizens.

FINANCIAL ESTIMATES OF DESTRUCTION

As Fonkem Achankeng observes, inter-ethnic conflicts have “less gravity in terms of the numbers of casualties, refugees and displaced persons, and the spread of disease, famine and environmental devastation”^{xiii}. However, for already impoverished communities like Bangolan with inadequate and poorly equipped medical and social facilities, the smallest conflict or crisis can have severe and lasting impacts on the people’s health and wellbeing. The destruction that Bangolan has witnessed and continue to witness as the crisis prolongs is affecting the economic stability of the already penurious community. The loss from the crisis is estimated at 116,020,000frs CFA as outlined below:

Estimate of Damage Caused by the Bangolan Chieftaincy Crisis			
Property Damaged	Qty	Unit Cost	Total Cost
Houses	26	3,700,000	96,200,000
Bikes	22	475,000	10,450,000
Shops burnt/Looted	2	900,000	1,800,000
Shops Looted	1	300,000	300,000
			108,750,000
Household Property			-
Television sets	22	50,000	1,100,000
Couch/Chairs	22	10,000	220,000
Gen. Household	22	50,000	1,100,000
Restore Electricity	1	2,500,000	2,500,000
			4,920,000
			-
Hospital Bills	9	150,000	1,350,000
Deaths	4	250,000	1,000,000
			2,350,000
Total			116,020,000

It is important to note that because the crisis is on-going at a slower rate than before, there are possibilities that these estimates will change within a short while. To keep the reader informed and to provide updated information, we will maintain a website where updated information will be published as we receive it.

CONCLUSION

This report is written without any prejudice on the outcome or final determination of the case which has been reopened at the Ndop Court of First Instance. It is not intended to absolve the perpetrators of the destructive and criminal activities if and when they are found. It is intended to provide a comprehensive outlook of the on-going Bangolan Chieftaincy crisis. Because several issues related to the crisis have not been resolved, there are strong possibilities that updated versions of this report will be published in the near future. Bangolan is a traditional community with profound respect for their cultural values. It is a village with huge potentials for progress in agriculture, education and commerce. Such potential needs to be harnessed for the greater good of the community, the Division and the nation.

NOTES:

- ⁱTamukong Roland Angong “Bangolan Chieftaincy crisis, Grievances since 1982 Exposed”. *World Echoes Newspaper*. <http://worldechoesnewspaper.blogspot.com/2016/02/cameroon-ngoketunjia-bangolan.html>
- ⁱⁱFon Chafah Issac’s Interview to *Cameroon Postline*.
- ⁱⁱⁱNfor Hanson Nchanji, “BANGOLAN CRISIS: I am Ready For the Worst - Fon CHAFAH”, in *The Cameroon Daily Journal*. March 22, 2016. <http://www.cameroonjournal.com/national-news/bangolan-crisis-i-am-ready-for-the-worst-fon-chafah/>
- ^{iv} Governor Lele L’Afrique’s Interview with *Cameroon Radio Television*. *Bamenda Online.net*. <http://bamendaonline.net/blog/bangolan-crisis-silence-curfew-declared/>
- ^vMariana Tepfenhart, “The Causes of Ethnic Conflicts”. <https://journals.lib.byu.edu/spc/index.php/CCR/article/viewFile/20789/19261>
- ^{vi} “Human right abuses feared in Bangolan as Military terrorize villagers to Unmask Palace “Coup” Plotters”. *The Focus Online*. 28 February 2016. Accessed July 2016.
- Brenda Kiven, “North West Region, Bangolan Crisis: Villagers Fleeing to Avoid Harassment”. *Cameroon Concord*. June 23, 2016.
- ^{vii} “Bangolan king makers blame the SDF for “coup” attempt at the Bangolan palace”. *The Focus Online*. 28 February 2016. Accessed July 2016.
- ^{viii} J.A. Mope Simo, “Land Disputes and the Impact on Disintegration in Contemporary Western Grassfields: Case Study of the Ndop Plains” in *Regional Balance and National Integration in Cameroon: Lessons Learned and the Uncertain Future*. Ed. Paul Nchoji Nkwi, and Francis B. Nyamnjoh. Bamenda: Langaa, 2011. p. 309.



^{ix}Jude Ndzifon Kimengsi, “Developing a Tri-Phase Model for Land Conflict Resolution in Some Conflict-Ridden Parts of the North West Region of Cameroon”.

^xMendueh Frederick’s Interview reported in Cameroon Concord on June 23, 2016.

^{xi} “Bangolan Crisis: Silence Curfew Declared”, *Bamenda Online.net*.

<http://bamendaonline.net/blog/bangolan-crisis-silence-curfew-declared/> March 1, 2016.

^{xii} Mohamud Adan and Ruto Pkalya. *Conflict Management in Kenya Towards Policy and Strategy Formulation* Ed. Elizabeth Muli. Practical Action, 2006. ix.

^{xiii} Fonkem Achankeng. “Conflict and conflict resolution in Africa: Engaging the colonial factor”. African Center for the Construction Resolution of Disputes. 12 July 2013.

<http://www.accord.org.za/ajcr-issues/%EF%BF%BCconflict-and-conflict-resolution-in-africa/>

We appreciate feedback and suggestions

Send inquiries to: bangolancrisis@yahoo.com