THE POPULATION OF CAMEROON IN 2010
of a town. This notion is mainly characterized by an administrative criterion. At the regional level, there are great variations in the urbanization rates. Thus, the Littoral and Centre Regions have extremely high rates which are 96.1% and 74.8% respectively. None of the other 8 regions of the country has an urbanization level which is at least equal to the national average rate.

Chart no. 6: The 2010 Urbanization Rate per Region

CONCLUSION

The profile of the population of Cameroon as of 1 January 2010 portrays significant demographic stakes. The population growth is still high. Population characteristics are, namely, a great geographical disparity, a galloping urbanization and extreme youthfulness.

This demographic situation of Cameroon is, at the same time, an advantage for the country and a picture of development problems. It is an advantage in terms of the national market dealing with the consumption of goods and services, and of development problems as concerns the social needs to be satisfied (health, education, employment, social protection, etc).

Taking cognizance of these facts, it is advisable for targeted topics for studies to be analysed so as to satisfy Government needs in the domain of development and social protection.
INTRODUCTION

As of 1 January 2010, the population of Cameroon stood at 19,406,100 inhabitants. This figure is based on an analysis of the demographic trends of the 1976, 1987 and 2005 Censuses.

In 1976, Cameroon had 7,663,246 inhabitants; in 1987, it was 10,493,655 inhabitants. In 2005, the final 3rd GHPC results indicated that there were 17,463,836 inhabitants in Cameroon. This upward trend confirms the fact that there is a steady population potential in the country (the average annual population growth rate is estimated at 2.8% during the 1987-2005 period, and at 2.6% between 2005 and 2010).

On the strength of the population trends thus noticed from 1976 to 2005, it is possible to obtain, on a yearly basis, the past and projected figures of the population of Cameroon.

I. OVERALL POPULATION AS WELL AS SEX AND AGE STRUCTURES

From 2005 to 2010, the population of Cameroon increased at an average annual rate of 2.6%. At this rate, and other things being equal, this population will double in approximately 27 years, that is, about 2037. However, it should be remarked that the decrease in growth rate between 2005 and 2010 was due to:

- a relative increase in the mortality rate which was attributable to:
  - maternal mortality (it increased from 430 deaths per 100,000 live births during the 1989-1998 period, to 669 during the 1998-2004 period (DHS));
  - the impact of HIV/AIDS;
  - child mortality (it increased from 64.3 deaths per 1,000 in 1991 to 74.1 deaths per 1,000 in 2004 (DHS));
- a relative decrease in fertility measured on the basis of the total fertility rate (this rate increased from 6.4 children per woman in 1978 (NFS) to 5.8 children in 1991 (DHS)); it then fell to 5.2 children in 1998 (DHS) and 5.0 children in 2004 (DHS). This decrease was more significant in urban areas than in rural ones.

1.1 SEX STRUCTURE

Since 1976, the population of Cameroon has mainly comprised women. However, as the years go by, there is a gradual movement towards a male/female parity.

1.2 AGE STRUCTURE

The 2010 population is still characterized by its extreme youthfulness. The median age is 17.7 years while the average age is 22.1 years. The age group below 25 years is 64.2%. It should be mentioned that the number of old persons (60 years and above) is not insignificant. In fact, it is 5% of the overall population.
1.3 POPULATION PYRAMIDS

Generally, the population pyramid of Cameroon in 2010 is similar to the ones in Sub-Saharan countries. It has a very broad base and it gradually narrows as ages increase. This pyramid indicates that there is a high fertility rate and a high mortality rate. As concerns age groups, there is no great difference in the case of sex structures at young ages; differences are clearly noticeable only at old age. The said pyramid portrays the extreme youthfulness of the population of Cameroon.

The age pyramid of the urban population of Cameroon portrays an unstable situation right up to about the age of about 25 due, obviously, to the internal migration of youths for educational and economic reasons. The consequence is a high increase in the population of the groups of young persons. As ages increase, the pyramid continues to narrow.

The age pyramid of the rural population portrays a high fertility rate and an insignificant figure as concerns the active population. This insignificant figure may be due to a high migration rate of young adults towards urban areas. Moreover, active women are more than active men in number.
The population of Cameroon in 2010

Among the most populated regions, two are very populated owing to their national status. They are, namely, the Centre, that contains Yaounde, which is the political and administrative capital, as well as Littoral, which is the economic capital.

Chart no. 5: The Population Sizes of Regions (% ) in 2010

In terms of the occupation of space, the following provinces have the highest population densities: Littoral (141.5 inhabitants per sq. km), the West (128.5 inhabitants per sq. km), the North-West (104.3 inhabitants per sq. km) and the Far North (101.6 inhabitants per sq. km). Conversely, the regions with the lowest population densities are the East (7.4 inhabitants per sq. km), the South (14.7 inhabitants per sq. km) and Adamawa (15.9 inhabitants per sq. km).

III. URBANIZATION

According to the environment of residence, the 2010 urban population of Cameroon stands at 10,091,172 inhabitants as against a rural population of 9,314,928 inhabitants. Table no. 4 presents the distribution of the population according to sex and regions.

Table no. 4: Population Distribution According to Regions and on the Basis of the Environment of Residence and Sex

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>2010 urban population</th>
<th>2010 rural population</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Female</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adamawa</td>
<td>204,124</td>
<td>202,933</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Centre</td>
<td>1,318,714</td>
<td>1,319,934</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>East</td>
<td>168,401</td>
<td>165,245</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Far North</td>
<td>424,969</td>
<td>414,062</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Littoral</td>
<td>1,370,984</td>
<td>1,384,027</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North</td>
<td>283,294</td>
<td>274,714</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North-West</td>
<td>369,693</td>
<td>390,766</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>West</td>
<td>419,908</td>
<td>448,454</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South</td>
<td>138,876</td>
<td>129,987</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South-West</td>
<td>331,030</td>
<td>331,057</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cameroon</td>
<td>5,029,993</td>
<td>5,061,179</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The 2010 urbanization rate in Cameroon is estimated at 52.0%. This high rate is based on the notion of...