ANNUAL REPORT

WIKIMEDIANS OF CAMEROON USER GROUP

(JULY 2017 – JULY 2018)
Introduction

Affiliated in July 2017, our User Group has amongst its members a linguistic diversity including French and English natives/speakers with a wide background range of skills: developers, content producers, writers, bloggers, journalists, translators, photographers, linguists, etc. This extreme variety human resource is an asset and a strength regarding the Wikimedia movement advancement in Cameroon.

This first year was a continuation of activities and projects initially implemented both individually either in groups. They helped raising awareness about the User Group and subsequently, leading to an asset structuring through a directoire organ.

This report will present all activities carried out (training sessions and projects) in between July 2017 and July 2018 including, but not limited to, international meetings, partnership agreements, encountered challenges, cost aspect, and ultimately frameworks.
I.  Local and international meetings.

1. Local meetings

The Wikimedians of Cameroon User Group peculiarity is that its members and activities are disseminated in three Cameroonian cities (Yaoundé, Douala and Buea); and lately, meetings have been initiated and launched in Cameroon northern part where one of the members is now an assigned educator staff. It is therefore in these different areas that we organized among others trainings, workshops, WikiData editathons, and press conferences, award ceremonies, in projects like Wiki Loves Africa, Wiki Loves Earth, WikiLoves Women, and Wikikwatt: Neighborhoods of Yaounde on Wikipedia.

Most meetings organized by the community are currently underway based on projects in Cameroon, either individually or in groups:

Wiki Loves Women
Launched in 2016, its aim is highlighting the contributions and achievements of renowned African women as well as drawing attention to the specific challenges faced by African women in their daily lives. Georges Fodouop who is the coordinates it in Cameroon.


Wiki Loves Africa
It is an annual photographic contest to promote the image of Africa in Wikipedia. Cameroon took part at all editions since its launch with the following statistics:

https://meta.wikimedia.org/wiki/Wikimedians_of_Cameroon_User_Group
Wiki Loves Earth
Cameroon took part in the two previous editions in 2017 and 2018 as presented in the following table:

https://tools.wmflabs.org/wiki Loves/earth
Art & Feminism
A project aims adding Wikipedia content related to female artists. As part of a collaboration established in connection with the Wiki Loves Women project, we organized four training sessions in Douala and Yaoundé, accordingly, with the following results:

Francophone contribution month.
It is about workshops organized in March through the Francophonie and which aims to improve Wikimedia projects in French. We participated by twinning the editathons of Art and Feminism.
Wikimedia Workshop
This is a workshop to introduce within new volunteers to the installation and configuration of the Wikimedia environment for programming. We presented The WikiData APIs and the Commons tools one, as well as projects using these different APIs. Several participants said they were open to contribute to other community projects.

WikiData Editathon
Held for three days in Buea, these editathons based on WikiData, Wikipedia and Commons aimed to involve the majority Wikimedians living in Buea and Wikimedia projects to arouse in them the desire to contribute. It allowed the achievement of many goals.

File:Wikidata Editathon Buea 268.jpg by Alangi Derick (WMCommons, CC-BY-SA 4.0)
WikiKwatt: Neighborhoods of Yaounde on Wikipedia
Project born from the collaboration with the Goethe Institute in Yaoundé, it aims to create articles on Yaounde's neighborhoods accompanied by illustrations, but especially the training of community members living in Yaoundé to contribute to Wikipedia, to Wikimedia Commons and WikiData.

In addition to these local meetings and projects, several members of the User Group took part in international meetings like the Francophone WikiConvention in September 2017 in Strasbourg in France, in Wikilndaba in March 2018 in Tunis in Tunisia, in Wikimania in July 2018 in Cape Town, South Africa.

2. International meetings
Cameron was represented during several Wikimedia movement meetings, both African and European levels.

The Francophone WikiConvention, Strasbourg, France.
Reached to its second edition, it was the second time that a member of the User Group took part in this meeting after the one in Paris, 2016.

File:Wikiconvention Strasbourg.jpg by Geugeor (WMCommons, CC-BY-SA 4.0)
It was a dissemination of experiences allowing us to strengthen our actions on the ground once back. We set up new local projects.

WikiIndaba
Cameroon marked its presence to WikiIndaba various editions since its creation: in South Africa, 2014; Ghana, 2017; and Tunisia, March 2018.

Experiences gained through the Medinapedia project led us to initiate the WikiKwatt project: Neighborhoods of Yaounde on Wikipedia whose milestones are still on going. We also implemented practical sessions related to the Wiktionary for the promotion of Cameroonian local languages.

We did a presentation, as well as an intervention at a meeting of developers. Nowadays, WikiData provides a support to community members during monthly meetings at the Goethe Institute in Yaounde.
Wikimania
The 2018 edition in South Africa was unique for Cameroon. For the first time, two members represented Cameroon. This participation was very enriching and fruitful: our presentation during the Learning Days was on the theme: How might folks stay engaged?

On a technical level, we acquired several expertise such as Working with Wikimedia technology, developing extensions for MediaWiki and Wikidata queries. In addition, the participation of the African development community increased.

A collaboration set on and underwent within the framework of Wiki Loves Women through the InterWikiWomen Project in which we contributed (in Douala) by translating from English to French of several articles of the Armenian women.

We capitalized several commitments made at the end of our participation, for the community’s sake.

II. Community Life
As mentioned above, the community has its members spread across the cities of Yaoundé, Douala and Buea. In order to communicate on a regular basis, we created a WhatsApp group in addition to other existing communication media that are more or less used. We are planning in the coming
months to hold monthly regular meetings in Buea. During the past year, we held two meetings (editathon and workshop) in Buea in July 2017 and in March 2018.

In Douala, several members took part in editathons as part of the Francophone contribution month, the Art and Feminism project, the InterWiki Women Collaboration project on Armenian women. They demonstrated vivid dynamism during the organization of the various activities (press conferences, varnishing and awards ceremonies ...) in connection with the Wiki Loves Africa and Wiki Loves Earth photo competitions.

In Yaounde, the User Group strong core has about fifteen members who meet every 2nd Saturday of the month at the Goethe Institute. As part of the WikiKwatt project, the community strengthened progressively through members’ commitment and contributions to the Wikimedia movement and other projects that will emerge in the months to come.

To sum up, some difficulties excepted, we have a vivid existing community, which keeps strengthening over months through specializing, accordingly its members fields of expertise (photographers, developers, linguists, translators, etc.).

III. Partnerships

These mobilization and impact could have not existed without the support of local partners at several levels:

Technical trainings
As part of the Wiki Loves Women project, partnerships with women's associations facilitated the organization of our trainings. Note that some members of the community come from these different formations.
Holding meetings

The Goethe Institute in Yaoundé granted us once a month; an IT room equipped for our meetings and relayed our meetings on their various communication media (programs, website, etc.). In addition, in Yaounde, Afroleadership, an incubator has graciously available to us its premises for some of our training as part of the project Wiki Loves Women.

In Douala, we meet on all occasions at the ActivSpaces, an incubator.

Supporting projects

With Wiki Loves Africa and Wiki Loves Earth, we established a collaboration with photographers' associations, some of which are members of the User Group. These associations helped us advocating during these different ongoing competitions.

The Orange Foundation and Prunet Photo Lab, which hosted the exhibition for two weeks and the awards ceremony, supported the latest Wiki Loves Earth contest.

Future

We established several contacts and yet remained to lead to a realization:

O the Regional Delegate in charge of in Douala is open to a collaborative platform for projects eventually supported by the Ministry of Arts and Culture.

O Several associations promoting local languages are willing to training,

O We contacted the National Archives Center as well as the association of librarians, archivists, documentarists and museographers of Cameroon.
IV. Encountered problems
In addition to the problems of commitment and mobilization of members that remain a constant challenge, our User Group faces since few months of leadership crisis between some founding members.

V. Prospects
Some elements to consider in the coming months:

• Preserving the gains

• Extend our presence further

• Try to resolve misunderstandings between founding members

• Hold a general meeting to set up a management body and validate the texts of the User Group

• Launch new projects related to the skills of members:
  
  o Photographic project on the traditional chiefdoms of western Cameroon, in the Grass fields Area.

  o Training to promote Cameroonian local languages in Wikipedia

  o Strengthening partnerships and realizing new partnerships

  o Participation in AfroCine Project

  o WikiData Training Seminar for Developers.

VI. Finances
Most of the finances used come from the various Rapid grants solicited for the different projects and trainings according to the following table:
In addition, note that our User Group has acquired a camera.


Conclusion

At the end of this first report, we want to address our gratitude to the Wikimedia movement as a whole for its support, advices and shared experiences. We want to be grateful to the various partners and to all members of the community for their commitment.

We also want to recognize that in one year (July 2017 - July 2018); our goals of existence through activities and projects, we achieved commitment and mobilization of members, even if there are still some shortcomings.

We want to move forward, focus on what unites us and not on what divides us, remaining open to all contributions that would allow us to maximize our potential.