

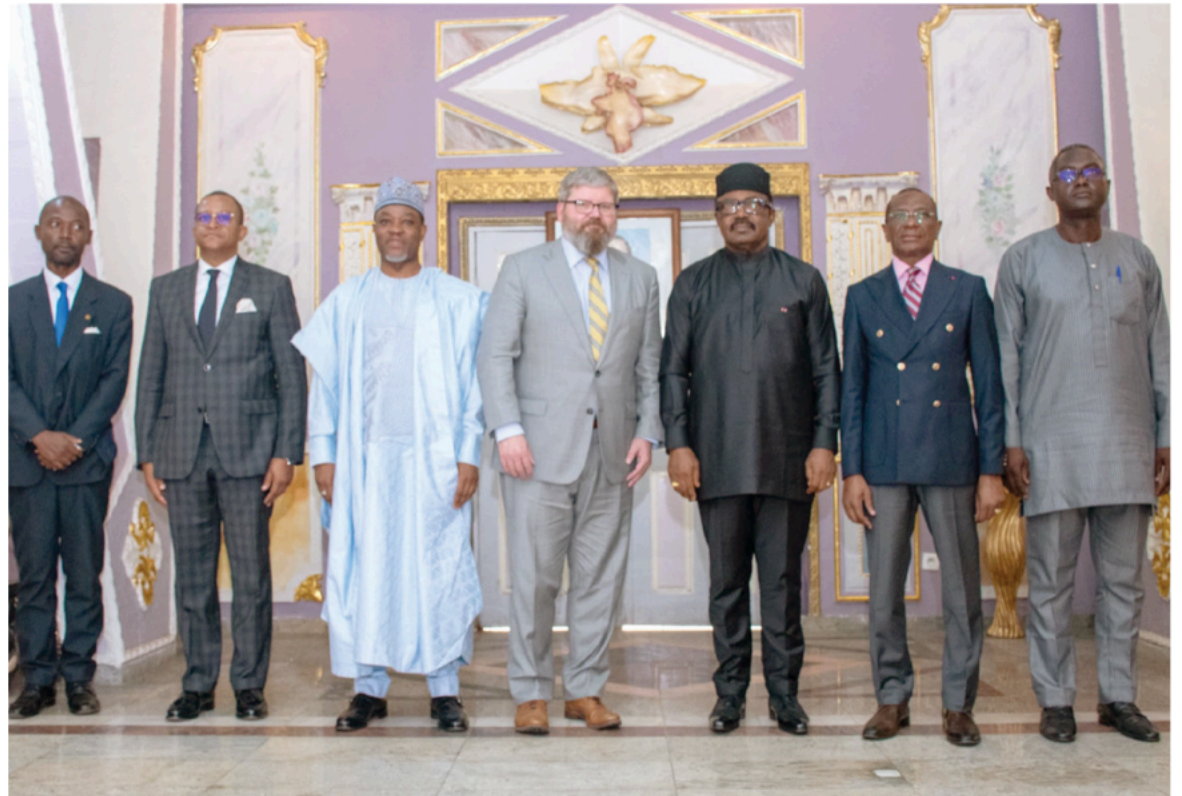
International Monetary Fund Resident Representative Hands Credentials

■ Toomas Aarand Orav presented the copies of his lettres of introduction to Minister Felix Mbayu during an audience on May 10, 2024.

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The newly designated Resident Representative of the International Monetary Fund, Toomas Aarand Orav, has presented his lettres of introduction to the Minister Delegate to the Minister of External Relations in charge of Cooperation with the Commonwealth, Felix Mbayu. This was during an audience the former accorded the later on May 10, 2024 at the Ministry of External Relations. Both personalities exchanged ideas of development reforms for Cameroon. Toomas Aarand Orav, 50, has about 14 years of professional experienced with the financial institution which he now leads in Cameroon. Going by his professional CV, he has spent some nine years of his career within the IMF in Africa, with a particular attention on Equatorial Guinea, Gabon and Cameroon. Prior to his appointment, he was Senior Economist, Non-Concessional Lending, at the Strategy, Policy and Evaluation Department of the IMF in Washington

DC, a position he occupied since 2019. He is credited for the completion of two IFR programmes, launch of one EFF programme (ongoing), and the completion of the first two reviews of the EFM programme, as Economist of the Department of Strategy, Policy and Evaluation in charge of Ukraine (September 2021 - October 2023). Toomas Aarand Orav has also completed some benchmarking programmes in Somalia between February 2019 and December 2020. As for Gabon the Economist at the African Department of the Bretton Wood institution, (February 2015- February 2019) he contributed to the launch of the EFF programme for Gabon and missions to Equatorial Guinea and Cameroon. Toomas Aarand Orav is equally lead author of the Regional Economic Outlook chapter of the Africa Department titled "Tax Revenue Mobilization in Sub-Saharan Africa: What Are the Opportunities?" The now Resident Representative of IMF for Cameroon has also been Economist for Sierra Leone and Guinea, where he



Sustainable development occupies centre stage within the operational roadmap.

coordinated the launch of ECF programmes in the two countries. The financial expert who has a Master's Degree in European Economic

Policy, obtained from the London School of Economics in 2000 has equally served at the Secretariat of the IMF. There, he was Head of Board

Operations. He has also held the position of Counsellor at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Estonia between May 1997 to October 2019.

Accelerating Local Development Resilience Communities Project Launched



The objective is to improve the resilience capacity of communities.

■ The FCFA 190 billion project that spans a period of five years was kick-started by Decentralisation and Local Development Minister, Georges Elanga Obam on May 10, 2024.

At the moment, Cameroon is affected by three complex humanitarian crisis which are; Boko Haram in the Far North Region, the influx of refugees mainly from the Central African Republic and the ongoing socio-political tensions in the North West and South West Regions, causing knock-on effects in other regions, notably the West and Littoral Regions. In addition to these man-made crises are natural disasters. Unfortunately, these crises have increased poverty, destroyed livelihoods and significantly reduced human capital in affected regions, with the multiplier effect on other regions of

the country. Faced with this situation and in a bid to create resilient societies that can better manage the shocks, government put in place the Local Governance and Resilient Communities Project (PROLOG). As a means of supporting Cameroon in her initiative, the World Bank Group has provided some funds to the government in the form of a loan of 300 million dollars (approximately FCFA 189 billion) for a five-year period. Decentralisation and Local Development Minister, Georges Elanga Obam was thus launching activities for the effective start of the project on May 10, 2024 in Yaounde. The development objective of the project is to improve community access to climate resilient infrastructure and strengthen local capacity to manage resources and deliver services. Specifically, it aims to strengthen community participation in local planning and governance, provide key climate-resilient community infrastructure, and strengthen the capacity of local authorities to manage resources and implement public investment. A total of six regions, based on the assessment of

spatial vulnerability, factors of violence and the spill over effect of crises in neighbouring countries were selected for areas of intervention. And they include the Far North, Adamawa, North, East, South West and North West Regions. While calling on the judicious use of the resources provided by the World Bank, the Minister noted that it also puts them at task to attaining set objectives. Expected results are that 70 per cent of the population should feel their resilience infrastructure problem solved, and the same percentage of the population consider their investment needs met. It is also envisaged that the lives of 50 per cent of women and 20 per cent of refugees in various communities will be touched directly through the project. The World Bank's Practice Manager for Social Development for West and Central Africa, Nicolas Perrin said the funds were provided based on the practicality of the projects presented. He added that the action is in line with the decentralisation and sustainable development policy of Cameroon.

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Réactions

« Il s'agit de bâtir des infrastructures résilientes »

■ Georges Elanga Obam, ministre de la Décentralisation et Développement local.

« Il s'agit de ressources qui sont mises à disposition par la Banque mondiale au projet des collectivités territoriales décentralisées, des communes, des régions et aussi des administrations, dans la perspective de leur donner la capacité de répondre aux préoccupations des populations dans un contexte particulier marqué par des crises et des déplacements. Il s'agit également de leur donner la capacité de bâtir des infrastructures qui sont résilientes aux changements climatiques que l'on observe aujourd'hui, s'assurer qu'on fait la promotion du genre et des populations défavorisées. C'est l'ensemble de ces communautés que nous voulons prendre en charge pour qu'à terme, les solutions qui sont trouvées, non seulement contribuent au développement local, mais aident également à la résolution des crises qu'on observe dans notre pays. Si nous avons bien travaillé dans les cinq prochaines années, avec une dotation d'à peu près 190 milliards de F, on devrait voir les crises se résorber, le développement local progresser et nos administrations outillées pour pouvoir accompagner les collectivités territoriales décentralisées. »



"World Bank Supports Decentralisation Reforms"

■ Nicolas Perrin, Practice Manager for Social Development for West and Central Africa, World Bank.

"The World Bank is very happy to support in the implementation of the decentralisation reforms in Cameroon. This project is worth 300 million dollars (about FCFA 190 billion) and seeks to support local institutions to implement some basic services to the communities with the involvement of the communities themselves through planning and priorities. So we look forward to supporting the government and the Ministry and the institutions in their efforts for implementing this project."



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