

# **COI QUERY**

| <b>Country of Origin</b>                   | CAMEROON   |
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| Title                                      | Tradition of 'bride price' in marriage   |
| Reference period                           | January 2022 to 9 September 2024   |
| Topic(s)                                   | 1. <u>Information on the tradition</u>   |
|  | <ol> <li>Refund or return of 'bride price', including consequences for<br/>women who leave their husbands and do not return the 'bride<br/>price'</li> </ol> |
|  | 3. Societal attitudes towards women who leave their husbands and do not return the 'bride price'   |
|  | 4. Availability of state protection, including legislation   |
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Cite as: EUAA, Country of Origin Information Query, Cameroon: Tradition of bride price in marriage, 9 September 2024, <u>url</u>



## COI QUERY RESPONSE – Cameroon

# Tradition of 'bride price' in marriage

#### 1. Information on the tradition

According to Encyclopaedia Britannica, bridewealth, also called 'bride price' or 'marriage payment', is a marriage custom which involves 'payment made by a groom or his kin to the kin of the bride in order to ratify a marriage', a practice 'most highly developed' in Africa.¹ According to the same source, bridewealth constituted 'an instrument for the legitimation of a marriage', while it was noted that in many traditional African societies 'the husband could not assume full rights to the sexual, economic, or procreative powers of his wife until a standard portion of the bridewealth had been transferred'.² The United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UNWOMEN) indicated that 'bride price' practice was 'widespread' throughout the sub-Saharan Africa region, which includes Cameroon, [informal translation] 'in both Christian and Muslim communities living in urban and rural areas'.³ Furthermore, Encyclopaedia Britannica defined dowry as a marriage custom constituting 'the money, goods, or estate that a woman brings to her husband or his family in marriage', practiced also in Africa.⁴

In the context of the present query response, sources consulted by the EUAA on the topic of 'bride price', used both the terms 'bride price' and 'dowry' to refer to the practice of payment made by the groom or his family to the bride's family before the marriage. Therefore, both of the two above-mentioned terms were interchangeably used in this query response.

According to sources, there are three types of marriages in Cameroon: civil, religious, and traditional or customary marriages.<sup>5</sup> Sources stated that the tradition of 'bride price' in Cameroon is 'customary'.<sup>6</sup>

The practice of 'bride price' was indicated to be widely used in Cameroon.<sup>7</sup> Specifically, the majority of the Cameroonian ethnic groups, corresponding to 96% of the population, were

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Encyclopaedia Britannica, Bridewealth, n.d., <u>url</u>

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Encyclopaedia Britannica, Bridewealth, n.d., url

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> UNWOMEN, Fiche d'information régionale: Afrique subsaharienne, 2019, url, p. 2

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> Encyclopaedia Britannica, Dowry, last updated 16 August 2024, url

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> Marry on chain, Everything you need to know about marriage in Cameroon, 10 May 2023, <u>url</u>; Ndangoh, M. L., Bride price and marriage under cameroonian family law, 24 February 2022, 28 February 2022, <u>url</u>, p. 9

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> Marry on chain, Everything you need to know about marriage in Cameroon, 10 May 2023, <u>url</u>; Ndangoh, M. L., Bride price and marriage under cameroonian family law, 24 February 2022, 28 February 2022, <u>url</u>, pp. 9, 10; Actu Cameroun, La dot: entre symbole et exagération au Cameroun, 17 July 2019, <u>url</u>

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>7</sup> Awazi African Heritage Center, Cameroonian weddings, n.d., url; Girls Not Brides, Cameroon, n.d., url



reported to have some type of 'bride price', 8 while the customs varied amongst different ethnic groups 9 and are distinctly practiced between different tribes. 10

The tradition of 'bride price' was reported to have various symbolic functions, such as uniting<sup>11</sup> and creating alliances between families<sup>12</sup>, or demonstrating the future husband's ability to assume the responsibilities of married life.<sup>13</sup> The 'bride price' was also reported to serve as a compensation to the bride's family for the loss of the work and services of a family member.<sup>14</sup> The practice was also considered as acknowledgment and a gesture of gratitude from the family of the future husband to the bride's family for raising the future bride.<sup>15</sup>

Sources indicated that in the context of customary marriage in Cameroon 'bride price' was considered as a prerequisite for the solemnization of marriage.<sup>16</sup>

Concerning the procedure of the 'bride price' tradition, sources indicated that at first a list of items to be delivered as 'bride price' are handed over to the suitor.<sup>17</sup> The list could include requests from the parents of the bride, as well as from her siblings and other relatives on both the paternal and maternal side.<sup>18</sup> The bride's family received 'bride price' predominantly in the form of cash<sup>19</sup>, and the amount of money requested as 'bride price' varied according to the geographical region.<sup>20</sup> The 'bride price' was also reported to include: livestock,<sup>21</sup> food

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>8</sup> André, P. and Dupraz, Y., Education and Polygamy: Evidence from Cameroon, 2023, <u>url</u>, p. 3

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>9</sup> Cameroon Tribune, Bride-price: Should a limit be fixed?, 26 April 2021, <u>url</u>

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>10</sup> Djomo Tamen, V. B., La protection de la dot en droit pénal camerounais: un affaiblissement législatif d'une institution traditionnelle, 24 February 2022, <u>url</u>, p. 71, 75

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>11</sup> Actu Cameroun, La dot: entre symbole et exagération au Cameroun, 17 July 2019, url

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>12</sup> Actu Cameroun, Cameroun – Nouveau code pénal: Halte aux abus dans la dotl, 10 August 2016, url

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>13</sup> 237 online, Cameroun – Mariage: La dot à l'épreuve de la modernité, 11 August 2020, <u>url</u>; Actu Cameroun, Cameroun – Nouveau code pénal: Halte aux abus dans la dot!, 10 August 2016, <u>url</u>

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>14</sup> Ndangoh, M. L., Bride price and marriage under cameroonian family law, 24 February 2022, 28 February 2022, url, p. 10; Djomo Tamen, V. B., La protection de la dot en droit pénal camerounais: un affaiblissement législatif d'une institution traditionnelle, 24 February 2022, url, p. 70; UNWOMEN, Fiche d'information régionale: Afrique subsaharienne, 2019, url, p. 2; 237 online, Cameroun – Mariage: La dot à l'épreuve de la modernité, 11 August 2020, url

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>15</sup> Awazi African Heritage Center, Cameroonian weddings, n.d., <u>url</u>; Actu Cameroun, Cameroun – Nouveau code pénal: Halte aux abus dans la dot!, 10 August 2016, <u>url</u>

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>16</sup> R:Ed, The ordeal of widows in Cameroon, 12 January 2024, <u>url</u>; Le360, Cameroun: à cause d'une dot exorbitante, les jeunes Beti se détournent du mariage, 21 January 2023, <u>url</u>; Ndangoh, M. L., Bride price and marriage under cameroonian family law, 24 February 2022, 28 February 2022, <u>url</u>, p. 10; Actu Cameroun, La dot: entre symbole et exagération au Cameroun, 17 July 2019, <u>url</u>

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>17</sup> Actu Cameroun, Douala: Une dot annulée pour 100 000 Fcfa, 29 April 2023, <u>url</u>; Le360, Cameroun: à cause d'une dot exorbitante, les jeunes Beti se détournent du mariage, 21 January 2023, <u>url</u>; Camer.be, La dot au Cameroun: L'argent prend le pas sur la symbolique: Cameroon, 5 September 2018, <u>url</u>

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>18</sup> Actu Cameroun, La dot: entre symbole et exagération au Cameroun, 17 July 2019, <u>url;</u> Camer.be, La dot au Cameroun: L'argent prend le pas sur la symbolique: Cameroon, 5 September 2018, <u>url</u>

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>19</sup> Cameroun24, Faits divers: Il reconnait le beau père de sa fille et décide de rembourser la dot, 26 July 2024, <u>url</u>; Actu Cameroun, Douala: Une dot annulée pour 100 000 Fcfa, 29 April 2023, <u>url</u>; Ndangoh, M. L., Bride price and marriage under cameroonian family law, 24 February 2022, 28 February 2022, <u>url</u>, p. 11

Ndangoh, M. L., Bride price and marriage under cameroonian family law, 24 February 2022, 28 February 2022, url, p. 13; DW, Comment les jeunes apprehendent le mariage?, 25 March 2021, url; Actu Cameroun, Cameroun – Nouveau code pénal: Halte aux abus dans la dot!, 10 August 2016, url

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>21</sup> Le360, Cameroun: à cause d'une dot exorbitante, les jeunes Beti se détournent du mariage, 21 January 2023, <u>url</u>; Camer.be, La dot au Cameroun: L'argent prend le pas sur la symbolique: Cameroon, 5 September 2018, <u>url</u>



provisions,<sup>22</sup> drinks and beverages,<sup>23</sup> textiles and clothes,<sup>24</sup> building materials,<sup>25</sup> agricultural and kitchen equipment such as machetes, knives, and pots,<sup>26</sup> and other materials, such as cartons of soap,<sup>27</sup> tobacco or cigarette cartons.<sup>28</sup>

According to media sources, factors resulting in higher 'bride prices' in Cameroon included the virginity of girls,<sup>29</sup> or the higher educational status of women.<sup>30</sup>

Moreover, according to sources, although the tradition was considered as symbolic, the 'bride price' reached a high cost,<sup>31</sup> and did not always consider the suitor's financial ability.<sup>32</sup> Excessive 'bride prices' was reported to be deemed as an obstacle to marriage in some Cameroonian societies.<sup>33</sup>

# 2. Refund or return of 'bride price', including consequences for women who leave their husbands and do not return the 'bride price'

Information on refund or return of 'bride price', including consequences for women who leave their husbands and do not return the 'bride price' was scarce among the sources consulted by EUAA within time constraints. However, the following information may be relevant.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>22</sup> Actu Cameroun, Douala: l'oncle bloque le mariage pour dot excessive, 31 October 2023, <u>url</u>; Cameroun: à cause d'une dot exorbitante, les jeunes Beti se détournent du mariage, 21 January 2023, <u>url</u>; Actu Cameroun, La dot: entre symbole et exagération au Cameroun, 17 July 2019, <u>url</u>; Camer.be, La dot au Cameroun: L'argent prend le pas sur la symbolique: Cameroon, 5 September 2018, <u>url</u>

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>23</sup> Cameroun24, Faits divers: Il reconnait le beau père de sa fille et décide de rembourser la dot, 26 July 2024, <u>url</u>; Actu Cameroun, Douala: l'oncle bloque le mariage pour dot excessive, 31 October 2023, <u>url</u>; Actu Cameroun, La dot: entre symbole et exagération au Cameroun, 17 July 2019, <u>url</u>; Camer.be, La dot au Cameroun: L'argent prend le pas sur la symbolique: Cameroon, 5 September 2018, <u>url</u>

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>24</sup> Cameroun24, Faits divers: Il reconnait le beau père de sa fille et décide de rembourser la dot, 26 July 2024, <u>url</u>; Le360, Cameroun: à cause d'une dot exorbitante, les jeunes Beti se détournent du mariage, 21 January 2023, <u>url</u>; Actu Cameroun, La dot: entre symbole et exagération au Cameroun, 17 July 2019, <u>url</u>

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>25</sup> Actu Cameroun, La dot: entre symbole et exagération au Cameroun, 17 July 2019, <u>url</u>

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>26</sup> Camer.be, La dot au Cameroun: L'argent prend le pas sur la symbolique: Cameroon, 5 September 2018, url

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>27</sup> Le360, Cameroun: à cause d'une dot exorbitante, les jeunes Beti se détournent du mariage, 21 January 2023, url

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>28</sup> Camer.be, La dot au Cameroun: L'argent prend le pas sur la symbolique: Cameroon, 5 September 2018, <u>url</u>

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>29</sup> Actu Cameroun, Makèpè: après avoir déboursé plus d'une dizaine de millions pour marier une « vierge », l'époux demande le divorce après la nuit de noces, 9 September 2022, <u>url</u>; VOA, Cameroon Single Mothers Protest Forced, Early Marriages, 9 July 2020, <u>url</u>

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>30</sup> Actu Cameroun, Cameroun/Abus: une famille refuse 7 millions pour la dot de leur fille, 25 August 2020, url

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>31</sup> Djomo Tamen, V. B., La protection de la dot en droit pénal camerounais: un affaiblissement législatif d'une institution traditionnelle, 24 February 2022, <u>url</u>, p. 71; Actu Cameroun, La dot: entre symbole et exagération au Cameroun, 17 July 2019, <u>url</u>

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>32</sup> Le360, Cameroun: à cause d'une dot exorbitante, les jeunes Beti se détournent du mariage, 21 January 2023, url; DW, Comment les jeunes apprehendent le mariage?, 25 March 2021, <u>url</u>

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>33</sup> Le360, Cameroun: à cause d'une dot exorbitante, les jeunes Beti se détournent du mariage, 21 January 2023, <u>url</u>; Ndangoh, M. L., Bride price and marriage under cameroonian family law, 24 February 2022, 28 February 2022, <u>url</u>, p. 13; Djomo Tamen, V. B., La protection de la dot en droit pénal camerounais: un affaiblissement législatif d'une institution traditionnelle, 24 February 2022, <u>url</u>, p. 71; Actu Cameroun, Cameroun/Abus: une famille refuse 7 millions pour la dot de leur fille, 25 August 2020, <u>url</u>



A 2022 academic article by a senior lecturer at the University of Ngaoundere, in the Adamawa region of Cameroon, stated that in customary settings once the 'bride price' is paid 'a woman becomes her husband's property and that of her in-laws'. According to the same source, divorce under customary law was 'very difficult and almost impossible', as it was considered in effect only after refunding the full amount of the 'bride price', irrespective of the years of marriage or if the married couple had children. Similarly, in order for a woman to marry another person after divorce, a full refund of the 'bride price' was required. The same source highlighted that consequently 'women are bound to stay in marriage even if it is not in their favour', including in abusive relationships, as the bride-price would have to be refunded by her family to her husband's family.

Furthermore, sources reported that under the pretext of having paid the 'bride price' some husbands subjected their wives to sexual violence and forced intercourse.<sup>38</sup> A 2024 report by the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) also noted that when women were 'not receptive to sexual demands some husbands would threaten or beat their wives or they would starve their families by limiting or denying resources and financial resources of their wives'.<sup>39</sup>

In a 2022 academic article by a political science doctoral researcher at the National Education Center of the Ministry of Scientific Research and Innovation (Centre national d'éducation du Ministère de la recherche scientifique et de l'innovation) in Cameroon, it was noted that the consideration of the dowry as the 'sale or purchase price of the woman' contributed as a result 'to the rise of certain social problems such as concubinage, still referred to in the street as "le viens-on-reste" or "le viens-on-habite", the phenomena of girl-mothers, single-parent families, prostitution'.<sup>40</sup>

Concerning the situation of widows in Cameroon, an article published in January 2024 by the foundation Right for Education (R:Ed),<sup>41</sup> noted that 'members of the in-laws sometimes use widowhood as a means of assuaging their will over the widow, under the pretext that she "belongs" to them because she was "bought with the dowry", including widows facing sexual and physical abuse.<sup>42</sup>

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>34</sup> Ndangoh, M. L., Bride price and marriage under cameroonian family law, 24 February 2022, 28 February 2022, url, p. 10

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>35</sup> Ndangoh, M. L., Bride price and marriage under cameroonian family law, 24 February 2022, 28 February 2022, url, pp. 9, 14

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>36</sup> Ndangoh, M. L., Bride price and marriage under cameroonian family law, 24 February 2022, 28 February 2022, url, p. 14

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>37</sup> Ndangoh, M. L., Bride price and marriage under cameroonian family law, 24 February 2022, 28 February 2022, url, p. 12

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>38</sup> UNFPA, Voices from Cameroon 2023, 12 March 2024, <u>url</u>, p. 20; Ndangoh, M. L., Bride price and marriage under cameroonian family law, 24 February 2022, 28 February 2022, <u>url</u>, p. 16

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>39</sup> UNFPA, Voices from Cameroon 2023, 12 March 2024, <u>url</u>, pp. 20, 25

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>40</sup> Djomo Tamen, V. B., La protection de la dot en droit pénal camerounais: un affaiblissement législatif d'une institution traditionnelle, 24 February 2022, <u>url</u>, p. 71

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>41</sup> Right for Education (R:Ed) is a foundation based and registered in Ghana and Ireland, 'dedicated to educating and empowering people' in several countries Africa. R:Ed, About us, n.d., <u>url</u>

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>42</sup> R:Ed, The ordeal of widows in Cameroon, 12 January 2024, url



Moreover, different local media sources reported on incidents where the brides' fathers and families rejected or returned the 'bride price' back to the families of the future husband, <sup>43</sup> for reasons that the amount requested as a 'bride price' was considered insufficient, <sup>44</sup> or former land disputes between the two families. <sup>45</sup> Incidents in which the suitor or members of his family canceled or withdrew the 'bride price' asked by the brides' families, as they were deemed excessive, were also reported. <sup>46</sup>

L-Frii, a media source based in the Republic of Togo, reported that in April 2024 in the Mayo Louti department of the North region of Cameroon, a man committed suicide, as he was not able to return the 'bride price' to his ex-son-in-law due to social pressure, after his daughter left her marriage and ran away with another man. According to the same source, the man was involved in a legal dispute with his ex-son-in-law concerning his daughter's 'bride price' and was incarcerated for debt.<sup>47</sup>

# 3. Societal attitudes towards women who leave their husbands and do not return the 'bride price'

Information on the societal attitudes towards women who leave their husbands and do not return the 'bride price' could not be found among the sources consulted by EUAA within time constraints.

### 4. Availability of state protection, including legislation

The Cameroonian Law 2016/007 of 12 July 2016 relating to the Penal Code in Section 357 stipulates the following, concerning the abuse in respect of bride-price:

- '(1) Whoever
- a) receives from a third party the whole or any part of a bride-price for the promise in marriage of a woman already married or bound by a betrothal not yet broken off; or
- b) receives the whole or any part of a bride-price before refund to any earlier suitor; or
- c) receives without any right to it the whole or any part of a bride-price for the marriage of a woman; or

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>43</sup> Cameroun24, Faits divers: Il reconnait le beau père de sa fille et décide de rembourser la dot, 26 July 2024, <u>url</u>; AfrikMag, Cameroun/ Une dot retournée 3 jours après la cérémonie... La raison vous surprendra, 17 January 2022, <u>url</u>; Actu Cameroun, Cameroun/Abus: une famille refuse 7 millions pour la dot de leur fille, 25 August 2020, <u>url</u>

 <sup>&</sup>lt;sup>44</sup> Actu Cameroun, Cameroun/Abus: une famille refuse 7 millions pour la dot de leur fille, 25 August 2020, <u>url</u>
 <sup>45</sup> AfrikMag, Cameroun/ Une dot retournée 3 jours après la cérémonie... La raison vous surprendra, 17 January
 2022 url

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>46</sup> Actu Cameroun, Douala : l'oncle bloque le mariage pour dot excessive, 31 October 2023, <u>url</u>; Actu Cameroun, Douala: Une dot annulée pour 100 000 Fcfa, 29 April 2023, <u>url</u>

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>47</sup> L-Frii, Cameroun : pour n'avoir pas pu rembourser la dot à son ex beau-fils, il se suicide [Cameroon: unable to repay his ex-son-in-law's dowry, he commits suicide], 20 April 2024, url



d) demands the whole or any part of an excessive bride-price for the marriage of a girl over 21 (twenty-one) years of age or of a widow or divorced woman; or

e) for want of compliance with his excessive demands for bride-price for the marriage of a girl under the age of 21 (twenty-one), and for no other reason, obstructs her marriage; or

f) receives as heir any such consideration promised to the person from whom he inherits

shall be punished with imprisonment for from 1 (one) to 5 (five) years or with fine of from CFAF 5 000 (five thousand) [about EUR 8] to CFAF 500 000 (five hundred thousand) [about EUR 762] or with both such imprisonment and fine.

(2) Time shall begin to run again for prosecution on payment of the bride-price or of any instalment.'48

According to academic sources, Section 357 of the Cameroonian Penal Code relating to the abuse of dowry, was characterized by certain ambiguities, which raised practical difficulties of the enforcement of the provision.<sup>49</sup> Indicatively, according to these sources, these ambiguities included the lack of a definition for dowry, lack of specific and objective elements and criteria for judging an excessive 'bride price', such as a minimum and maximum threshold,<sup>50</sup> an issue consequently left to the discretion of the judicial authorities.<sup>51</sup>

Provisions on customary dowry from Chapter V in Ordinance No 81/002 of 29 June 1981 on the organization of civil status in Cameroon, stipulate:

[informal translation] 'Article 70.

- 1. The payment or non-payment, in whole or in part, of the dowry, the total or partial execution or non-execution of any matrimonial agreement shall have no effect on the validity of the marriage.
- 2. Any action concerning the validity of the marriage based on the total or partial non-execution of a dowry or marriage agreement is inadmissible on grounds of public policy.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>48</sup> Cameroon, Law No. 2016/007 of 12 July 2016 Relating to the Penal Code, 12 July 2016, url, p. 136-137

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>49</sup> Ndangoh, M. L., Bride price and marriage under cameroonian family law, 24 February 2022, 28 February 2022, url, pp. 10, 13; Djomo Tamen, V. B., La protection de la dot en droit pénal camerounais: un affaiblissement législatif d'une institution traditionnelle, 24 February 2022, url, pp. 73 – 75, 83

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>50</sup> Ndangoh, M. L., Bride price and marriage under cameroonian family law, 24 February 2022, 28 February 2022, url, p. 13; Djomo Tamen, V. B., La protection de la dot en droit pénal camerounais: un affaiblissement législatif d'une institution traditionnelle, 24 February 2022, url, pp. 73 – 75, 83

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>51</sup> Djomo Tamen, V. B., La protection de la dot en droit pénal camerounais: un affaiblissement législatif d'une institution traditionnelle, 24 February 2022, url, pp. 75



#### Article 71.

- 1. Any remittance prior to marriage as dowry or in execution of a matrimonial agreement constitutes the person receiving it as its depositary until the celebration of the marriage.
- 2. If the engagement is broken off, the depositary is bound to return it immediately.

#### Article 72.

The total or partial payment of a dowry can in no case establish natural paternity, which results exclusively from the existence of blood ties between the child and his father.

#### Article 73.

In the event of dissolution of marriage by divorce, the beneficiary of the dowry may be ordered to reimburse all or part of the dowry if the court deems that he bears all or part of the responsibility for the break-up.'52

The 2022 academic article by a researcher at the National Education Center of the Ministry of Scientific Research and Innovation in Cameroon, noted that there is no definition of the customary practice of dowry in the Cameroonian legislation, including in the Penal Code and the Ordinance No 81/002 of 29 June 1981.<sup>53</sup>

Academic sources indicated that, although Ordinance No 81/002 of 29 June 1981 stipulates that the payment or non-payment of dowry has no effect on the validity of any marriage, and the Penal Code provides for punishment for abuse in respect of 'bride price', the customary tradition of 'bride price' itself has not been proscribed or declared as illegal or incompatible with the legislation in place.<sup>54</sup> Therefore it remained under the sphere of customary law.<sup>55</sup>

Local media sources reporting on the topic of high 'bride prices' also noted that, despite the legal restrictions, the custom was a precondition for the formalization of a relationship.<sup>56</sup>

Further information on the availability of state protection, including legislation, for women who leave their husbands and do not return the 'bride price' could not be found among the sources consulted by EUAA within time constraints.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>52</sup> Cameroon, Ordonnance No 81/002 du 29 Juin 1981 Portant organisation de l'état civil et diverses dispositions relatives à l'état des personnes physiques, 1981, <u>url</u>, p. 13

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>53</sup> Djomo Tamen, V. B., La protection de la dot en droit pénal camerounais: un affaiblissement législatif d'une institution traditionnelle, 24 February 2022, <u>url</u>, pp. 71, 80

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>54</sup> Dr. Amandong, E. M., The Extent of the Application of English Laws in the Cameroonian Legal System, May 2023, <a href="https://www.url.nih.gov.nc.nlm.nih.gov.nlm.nih.gov.nc.nlm.nih.gov.nc.nlm.nih.gov.nc.nlm.nih.gov.nc.nlm.nih.gov.nc.nlm.nih.gov.nlm.nih.gov.nc.nlm.nih.gov.nlm.n

Dr. Amandong, E. M., The Extent of the Application of English Laws in the Cameroonian Legal System, May 2023, url, p. 2930; Ndangoh, M. L., Bride price and marriage under cameroonian family law, 24 February 2022, 28 February 2022, url, pp. 10, 13

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