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Ngole Elizabeth Nneh Obi



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Ngole Elizabeth Nneh Obi

Postgraduate Student: Faculty of English Law, University of Buea

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Abstract

Purpose: The purpose of the study was to explore and analyze the challenges related to the collection and distribution of royalties for musical works in Cameroon. The music industry plays a significant role in the cultural and economic development of the country, making it crucial to ensure a fair and efficient system for royalty management.¹

Methodology: The study employed qualitative method that involved a combination of literature review, interviews, and analysis of existing data. Relevant literature on royalty collection and distribution systems in both national and international settings were examined to provide a comprehensive understanding of the subject matter.²

Findings: The findings of this study highlighted several significant challenges faced in the collection and distribution of royalties. These issues contribute to the overall inefficiency and unfairness of the current royalty system, resulting in financial loss of artists. Based on the research findings, several recommendations are proposed to address the identified challenges.

Unique Contribution to Theory, Practice and Policy: The theory of the research sheds light on the specific challenges faced by rights holders in musical arts in Cameroon, providing a comprehensive understanding of the complex dynamics of the local music industry.³ In terms of policy, this study has the potential to influence the development and implementation of policies related to royalty collection and distribution in Cameroon. The research findings and recommendations can be used as evidence-based insights by policymakers, copyright organizations, and government agencies to shape new policies or reform existing ones.⁴ Overall, the unique contribution of this study lies in its comprehensive analysis of the challenges faced in the collection and distribution of royalties for musical works as well as its practical recommendations for addressing these challenges. By bridging the gap between theory, practice, and policy, this research aims to make a meaningful impact on the music industry in Cameroon and potentially serve as a reference for similar contexts globally.

Keywords: *Challenges, Collection, Distribution Royalties, Musical Works*

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¹ This study aims to identify the key obstacles faced by stakeholders and propose recommendations to address these challenges.

² Additionally, interviews were conducted with various stakeholders including musicians, composers, music producers, record labels, and representatives from the musical arts collective management body to gather insights and viewpoints.

³ The proposed establishment of a centralized and transparent organization for royalty management,

and standardized procedures and guidelines, offers a practical framework for improving the efficiency and fairness of the system.

⁴ By advocating for the establishment of a fair and transparent royalty management system and the enforcement of stronger copyright laws, this study contributes to the policy discourse surrounding intellectual property rights and creative industries in Cameroon.

INTRODUCTION

Collective management of copyrights and neighboring rights is one option within the copyright and neighboring rights system that requires or allows artists to administer their rights through Collective Management Bodies (CMB).⁵ One of the main mechanisms developed by copyright owners to monitor infringement has been the collective systems of management and enforcement of rights; in particular the CMBs.⁶ Managing copyright and neighboring rights individually may not always be realistic.³ An artist or performer, for instance, cannot contact every single radio station to negotiate licenses and remuneration for the use of their songs. On the other side, it is not practical for a radio station to seek specific permission from every author or performer for the use of each song. CMBs thus facilitate rights clearance in the interest of both parties and economic reward for rights holders.⁷ CMBs have been defined by European Union legislation as “any organization which manages or administers copyrights or rights related to copyright as its sole purpose or as one of its main purposes”⁴. CMBs license rights, collect and distribute royalties on behalf of the copyright holders⁸. CMBs are, in most cases, non-profit entities⁹; their legal form can be either private or public.¹⁰ In conformity with article 19 of Decree No 2015/3979/PM of 29 September 2015 implementing the Copyright Law of 19th December 2000, CMB shall be freely administered and managed following the modalities and procedures prescribed by the existing law and its modality of application.¹¹

Article 16(1) of Decree implementing the Copyright Law of 19th December 2000 stipulates that only one CMB can be created in each of category of copyright or neighboring rights as such Category B is for musical arts. The National Society for Musical Arts known in its French acronym as SONACAM (*Société Nationale de l'Art Musicale*); is the CMB the manages the rights of artists in the music industry in Cameroon. Sections 75(1) of the Cameroonian.¹² Subsection (3) provides that creating a CMB shall be without prejudice to the freedom of authors and holders of neighboring rights to directly exercise their rights. SONACAM is the

⁵ Alina Trapova, *reviving collection management: will CMOs become the true mediators they ought to be in the digital single market?* European Intellectual Property Review 2020, 42(5), 272-280, pg. 2

⁶ Lionel Bently, Brad Sherman *Intellectual Property Law* (New York: Oxford university press, 2009) pg. 274 ³ Tarja Koskinen-Olsson, Nicholas Lowe, educational material on collective management of copyright and related rights: mod 2, management of copyright and related rights in field of music, August 30, 2012 WIPO Publication.

⁴ Directives 98/84EC of the European Parliament and the council of 20 November 1998 on the legal protection of services based on, or consisting of Conditional Access.

⁷ Olugbenga Ajani, Olatunji, Kayode Ibrahim Adam and Faith O. Aboyeli, *Collective management of rights in musical works and sound recordings: a critique of the copyright society of Nigeria*, International Review of Intellectual Property and Competition Law, 2017, HC 2017, 48(7), 838-863, pg 1

⁸ Mahàly Ficsor, *Collective management of copyright and related rights*, (Geneva: WIPO, 2002) pg. 18

⁹ Decree No 2015/3979/PM of 25 September implementing the Law No 2000/11 of 19th December 2000, Article 16(2) CMB is a civil society of non-profit.

¹⁰ Dr Christophe Seuna. “Bulletin du droit d’auteur ; LES ORGANISMES DE GESTION COLLECTIVE AU CAMEROUN”, Juillet-Septembre 2004

¹¹ Daniel Gervais, *the cultural role(s) of collective management organizations*, European intellectual property review 2018

¹² Copyright Law of 19/12/2000 provides grounds for artists of musical works of copyrights and neighboring rights to create CMB for the exercise of their exclusive rights.

sole CMB approved by the Ministry of Arts and Culture (MINAC)¹³ to manage both copyright and neighboring rights in musical works and sound recordings it therefore represents authors, publishers, lyricists and other actors in the music industry.¹⁴

This article explores the challenges relating to the collection and distribution of royalties for musical works in Cameroon. It examines the difficulties faced by music creators and CMO in Cameroon, such as the lack of transparency and accountability in the royalty collection and distribution process, the difficulty in tracking and reporting the use of musical works, and the challenges of ensuring that royalties are distributed fairly and equitably to rights holders. Additionally, it considers some of the potential solutions to these challenges, including the use of digital technologies to track and report the use of musical works, the establishment of more transparent and accountable royalty distribution systems, and the need for greater collaboration and cooperation among stakeholders. By addressing these challenges, we can help to promote a vibrant and sustainable music industry in Cameroon that benefits everyone.¹⁵

THE CURRENT STATE OF ROYALTY COLLECTION AND DISTRIBUTION IN CAMEROON

The function of SONACAM like any other copyright CMB is to administer the rights declared to it by its members. It has the authority to license copyrighted works and collect fees as part of non-voluntary licenses or individual licenses negotiated on behalf of its members.¹⁶ In Cameroon Article 20 of the Decree of 25th September 2015 relates that the MINAC is the government authority that determines the distribution of royalties between CMBs after prior consultation. Distribution of royalties is carried out through various stages.¹⁷ Collection of royalties is carried on by the different CMBs which are deposited in special account. This activity is supervised by the Commission that controls the CMBs in Cameroon, the Commission for Control of Collective Management Organizations abbreviated in its French acronym as CCOGC. The CCOGC then deposits the approved amount of royalties in SONACAM's account for subsequent distribution to its members. The identification commission of SONACAM sits to attribute paternity based on three criteria. First of all reports from the forms deposited at FM stations will be considered,¹⁸ longevity in the house (Adeherants, Stagaire and Société honoraire)¹⁹ and sounding that's how popular an artists is in terms of his or her works no matter

¹³ Article 25 of the Decree of 25th September 2015 states that any society that desires to managed rights collectively as stipulated in articles 16 has to make a request addressing such to the Minister in charge of arts and culture.

¹⁴ SONACAM which was set up as a result of an elective general assembly has a duty to promote, protect and enforce the rights of artists in the music industry in Cameroon.

¹⁵

¹⁶ SONACAM most commonly take care of the following rights: The right of public performance (music played or performed in discotheques, restaurants, and other public places); The right of broadcasting (live and recorded performances on radio and television); The mechanical reproduction rights in musical works (the reproduction of works on CDs, tapes, vinyl records, cassettes, mini-discs, or other forms of recordings); The right of reprographic reproduction of literary and musical works (photocopying); Related rights (the rights of performers and producers of phonograms to obtain remuneration for broadcasting or the communication to the public of phonograms).

¹⁷ Article 17 of the Articles of Association of SONACAM

¹⁸ The specific distribution plan applies where a license is issued in respect of a clearly identifiable work or where a log of use submitted by a licensee clearly ascertains the works in respect of which royalties are being paid

¹⁹ The general distribution plan, on the other hand, applies in cases where the royalties collected cannot reasonably be ascribed to any specific work or where members at the Annual General Meeting (AGM) agree that a token be paid to all members irrespective of the number of times their works have actually been used.

how recent your membership is. It is also part of SONACAM's statutory responsibilities to be accountable to both its members and the supervising government agency the CCOGC. In the field of neighboring rights, the law provides for a right of remuneration payable to performers or producers of phonograms or both when commercial sound recordings are communicated to the public or used for broadcasting.²⁰ The fees for such uses are collected and distributed by the CMB of category E recently created by performers and producers of phonograms.²¹

How Royalties are Collected and Distributed in Cameroon in General

The primary functions of any CMB are documentation, identification of users, collection and distribution of royalties.²² They are all enormously detailed procedures, time-consuming and expensive to administer. Imagine the size of the documentation task that is required to properly document the hundreds of thousands of works that have a brief spark of commercial value and then remain forever in the so-called "dormant repertoire". Any system with administrative integrity must undertake the task but if it were to be truly "efficient" the society would only expend its efforts on the 15% of its repertoire that is active.²³ Of course, it cannot but such cost efficiency factors keep arising in any examination of CMBs. Another example of this is in the identification and distribution area. If the use of every work by every artist was perfectly reported and perfectly recorded, it might be feasible to avoid instances in which a disgruntled rights owner could complain that, "I know my work was copied/performed/etc. but I didn't get any royalty."¹⁹ Something must be wrong with the CMB.

²⁴SONACAM relies upon sampling techniques, approximation techniques; a balance between the absurd cost of obtaining perfect records and the aim of getting as much money to as many of the right people as possible. Collection too, is an expensive and inherently inefficient aspect of the musical rights body.²⁵ If one could license just a limited number of users, the process would be easy.²⁶ Similarly, if all licensees were fastidious in their self-reporting of uses, it would be easy.²⁷ Instead, users object to paying license fees, or object to the quantum or under-report of their usage of copyright material, and all of this demands that the CMB have an extensive obligation to the enforcement of their members' rights.²⁸ CMBs are expected to strive to effectively collect remuneration or license fees on behalf of right holders and distribute the collected revenue to the correct right holders expeditiously and accurately, in the same vein

²⁰ Article 56(1) Cameroonian copyright law of 19th December 2000

²¹ Decree of 25th September 2015

²² Olugbenga Ajani Olatunji, Kayode Ibrahim and Faith O. Aboyejeli, Collective management of rights in musical works and sound recordings: a critique of the copyright society of Nigeria, *International Review of Intellectual Property and Competition Law* 2017, 48(7), 838-863, pg 1

²³ Face to face interview with Ateh Bazore President of the Board of directors of SONACAM ¹⁹ Artist TOKI LALA

²⁴ Ibid

²⁵ Koskinen-Olsson T, Lowe N (2012) Educational material on collective management of copyright and related rights WIPO Publisher, Geneva.

²⁶ Alina Trapova Reviving collective management: will CMOs become the true mediators they ought to be in the digital single market? 2012 Sweet & Maxwell and its contributors.

²⁷ Ateh Bazore President of the BOD of SONACAM.

²⁸ Ben Sihanya, Copyright Law in Kenya, *International Review of Intellectual Property*, 2010, vol 8, 926-947, pg 13 ²⁵ Mahàly Ficsor Collective Management of copyright and related rights.

they are expected to continuously improve their performance e.g. by applying industry best practices and measuring their performance using industry standard performance indicator.

SONACAM's members' rights are inadequately managed both in terms of locality coverage and user coverage. CMB plays a critical role in ensuring that royalties collected and are distributed fairly to music creators.²⁵ To ensure fair distribution of royalties, SONACAM requires music creators to become members and register their works in order to be eligible for royalty collection and distribution.²⁹ This helps to ensure that royalties are distributed only to rights holders who have registered their works with their organization. Royalties are collected from various sources, such as broadcasters, music venues, and streaming services.³⁰ They use a variety of methods to track and report the use of musical works, including monitoring radio and television broadcasts and analyzing streaming data. A range of methods are used to distribute royalties by CMB to rights holders, including direct payments, bank transfers, and digital payments.³¹ They may also use a formula to calculate the share of royalties that each rights holder is entitled to receive, based on factors such as the number of times their works have been used, the type of use, and the revenue generated.³² CMB are required to be transparent about their operations and to provide regular reports to rights holders on the collection and distribution of royalties.³³

CMB uses a range of tools and strategies to ensure that royalties are distributed fairly to music creators.³⁴ SONACAM's licensed uses are largely restricted to big users such as brewery companies, broadcasting stations, hotels, transportation businesses, one telecommunication companies, butcheries, and a few department stores and restaurants scattered across the major cities.³⁵ SONACAM has concluded a milestone joint agreement for the signing of a joint accord with the Minister of Arts Culture and the Minister of Commerce which is aimed to solve the biggest problem of royalty collection with one of their biggest users which are bars and beer distribution companies. There are about two hundred thousand bars in Cameroon, hence collection of royalties from each of them is difficult. This joint agreement will oblige beer distribution companies to pay royalties to SONACAM's agents from the source. SONACAM has proposed the sum of fifteen Frs. (15 FRs) for each crate of beer sold and this will enable every beer drinker in Cameroon to pay copyright royalties.³⁶ SONACAM has engaged in large sensitization talks on royalty collection amongst radio users.

Discussion of the Challenges Facing SONACAM

The collection and distribution of royalties for musical works in Cameroon is not a bed of roses several challenges are recorded in the collection and distribution of royalties.³⁷ There is lack of

²⁹ Ateh Bazor President BOD SONACAM

³⁰ Ateh Bazor President BOD SONACAM

³¹ KIM, Byungil Collective management of rights and distribution amongst right holders –from the Korean perspective, Hanyang Journal, 2016 4HLL24, pg 1

³² Ibid

³³ Kim Byungil, Collective management of rights and distribution amongst right holders –from the Korean Perspective, Hanyang Journal Law

³⁴ Ateh Bazor President BOD SONACAM

³⁵ Ateh Bazor ibid

³⁶ Most often beer is consumed in ceremonies where music is played so this agreement or decision will permit every beer consumer to pay royalties.

³⁷ Odile Ngaska former President of SOCAM.

a centralized database that contains information about all the musical works produced in Cameroon, consequently it becomes feasibly difficult for the SONACAM to identify and track the usage of musical works. In addition, many artists in Cameroon are not aware of the existence of collecting societies, and even those who are aware may not understand how they function. This lack of awareness makes it difficult for collecting societies to collect royalties on behalf of artists. There is a burden of infrastructure. The infrastructure in Cameroon is not well developed, and this affects the collection and distribution of royalties. There are limited digital platforms for the distribution of music and the collection of royalties, which creates challenges for both artists and collecting societies. The lack of transparency in the collection and distribution of royalties is a major challenge in Cameroon. There have been reports of corruption and mismanagement of funds by collecting societies, which has eroded the trust of artists in the system. The enforcement of copyright laws in Cameroon is weak, and this has contributed to the proliferation of piracy. This makes it difficult for collecting societies to collect and distribute royalties for musical works. In the last two decades, the Musical Copyright Arts Society SONACAM has been inundated with in-fighting over royalties with associated CMBs in the same category.³⁸ The most prominent is a longtime battle with its fierce rival, the Cameroon Music Corporation CMC over royalty collections. The Ministerial Decision No 0053 of June 12, 2020 authorizing all CMBs that were created before 2017 to go into the field collect royalties from users has been a major challenge for SONACAM. Presently, a lot of users are confused on who is legitimate to collect royalties for the exploitation of musical works. The political instability in Cameroon cannot be ignored. Cameroon has experienced political instability in recent years, which has affected the music industry. The instability has led to a decline in music sales and live performances, which has impacted the collection of royalties for musical works. In summary, the challenges relating to the collection and distribution of royalties for musical works in Cameroon are multifaceted and require a concerted effort from all stakeholders to address them.

CHALLENGES FACED BY MUSICIANS IN CAMEROON IN RECEIVING THEIR ROYALTIES

Royalty collection and distribution in Cameroon is facing several challenges that require immediate attention to ensure that artists and other stakeholders in the creative industry receive their fair share of royalties. Below are some possible ways forward to address these challenges: The Cameroonian government can strengthen the existing copyright laws to ensure that they are up-to-date and effective in protecting the rights of artists and other stakeholders. This can include establishing more stringent penalties for copyright infringement and ensuring that the legal framework is in line with international best practices. The collection of royalties in Cameroon can be improved by establishing a more efficient and transparent royalty collection system. This can include the use of technology to track and monitor the use of copyrighted material, and the establishment of a centralized database to facilitate the collection and distribution of royalties. There is a need to increase public awareness about the importance of respecting copyright laws and paying royalties. This can involve public campaigns to educate the public on the value of creative works and the need to support artists by paying royalties. Collaboration between stakeholders: The various stakeholders in the creative industry, including artists, copyright societies, and government agencies, need to work together to address the challenges facing royalty collection and distribution. This can involve the

³⁸ Mr. Lema director of operations SONACAM interview, interview 7th August 2023.

establishment of partnerships and collaborations to develop and implement effective solutions. There is a need to build the capacity of stakeholders in the creative industry to better understand copyright laws and royalty collection processes. This can include training programs for artists and copyright society staff, as well as the establishment of educational programs to raise awareness about intellectual property rights.

Overall, addressing the challenges facing royalty collection and distribution in Cameroon requires a multi-pronged approach that involves the government, copyright societies, artists, and other stakeholders. By working together and implementing effective solutions, it is possible to ensure that artists receive their fair share of royalties and that the creative industry in Cameroon can thrive. The distribution is done based on the information collected from the various sources, which is then analyzed to determine the amount of royalties each member is entitled to receive.³⁹

However, there are several challenges faced by musicians in Cameroon in receiving their royalties. Musicians have raised concerns about the lack of transparency in the collection and distribution of royalties by SONACAM. Some musicians have accused the organization of mismanagement and corruption, which has eroded their trust in the system. Furthermore, many musicians in Cameroon are not aware of the existence of SONACAM and the services it provides. This lack of awareness makes it difficult for musicians to register with the organization and receive their royalties. Inadequate infrastructure is also a pitfall, not well developed, which affects the collection and distribution of royalties. The lack of digital platforms for the distribution of music and the collection of royalties makes it difficult for musicians to receive their royalties in a timely manner. These challenges need to be addressed to ensure that musicians receive fair compensation for their creative works.

Lack of Transparency in the Collection and Distribution Process

Lack of transparency can manifest in different ways, including opaque processes, insufficient or incomplete reporting, and a general lack of accountability⁴⁰. One of the primary concerns is the lack of transparency in the collection of royalties.⁴¹ There have been reports of unreported usage of musical works, which means that some royalties are not being collected.⁴² This can happen when there is no clear system in place to track the usage of musical works or when the data provided by licensees is incomplete or inaccurate. Another issue is the lack of transparency in the distribution of royalties.⁴³ This can happen when the criteria for the distribution of royalties are unclear or when the organization responsible for the distribution of royalties is not transparent in its processes. The lack of transparency in the collection and distribution of royalties can have a significant impact on the music industry in Cameroon.

³⁹ In Cameroon, royalties are collected from various sources, including radio and television stations, music streaming services, concert organizers, and music venues. SONACAM also collects royalties from neighboring rights organizations in other countries for the use of Cameroonian musical works.

⁴⁰ Alina Trapova, *reviving collective management: will CMOs become the true mediators they out to be in the digital single market?*

⁴¹ According to a user during a face to face interview, they are no fix rates, it is mostly negotiable.

⁴² Ateh Bazor President of the Board of Directors of SONACAM.

⁴³ There have been allegations of mismanagement and corruption in the distribution of royalties, with some artists claiming that they are not receiving their fair share of royalties

Difficulty in Registering Musical Works and Obtaining Necessary Documentation

The process of registering musical works and obtaining necessary documentation can be a challenge for musicians in Cameroon. This challenge is often due to factors such as the lack of access to information, inadequate infrastructure, and limited resources. One of the challenges is the lack of access to information on the registration process. Many musicians may not be aware of the requirements for registering their musical works or may not know where to go to obtain the necessary documentation. This can make it difficult for them to register their works and receive royalties for their creative efforts.

Another challenge is inadequate infrastructure, which can make it difficult for musicians to access the necessary documentation. For example, some musicians may not have access to computers or the internet, which makes it difficult for them to access online registration portals or download necessary forms. Additionally, there may be limited physical locations where musicians can go to register their works, which can make the process more difficult and time consuming.

Limited Access to Information about Royalty Collection and Distribution

Limited access to information about royalty collection and distribution can be a challenge for musicians in Cameroon. This challenge can be due to factors such as the lack of awareness, inadequate infrastructure, and limited resources.

THE IMPACT OF THESE CHALLENGES ON THE CAMEROONIAN MUSIC INDUSTRY

The challenges in collecting and distributing royalties mean that musicians in Cameroon may not receive their fair share of revenue for their creative works. This can limit their ability to invest in their careers and produce new music, which can ultimately lead to a decline in the quality and quantity of music produced in the country. A lack of transparency and accountability in the music industry can discourage investment from both domestic and international investors.⁴⁴ This can limit the growth of the music industry in Cameroon, including the development of new talent, the establishment of new recording studios, and the expansion of music distribution channels. Furthermore, the challenges in collecting and distributing royalties can make it difficult for Cameroonian musicians to gain international visibility and recognition. This can limit their ability to connect with audiences outside of Cameroon and to expand their fan base, which can ultimately limit their career opportunities.

In conclusion, the challenges faced by musicians in Cameroon in collecting and receiving royalties can lead to decreased income for musicians. This can have a significant impact on their ability to sustain their careers, invest in their creative works, and grow their fan base. Addressing these challenges will require a concerted effort from all stakeholders, including musicians, collecting societies, the government, and investors, to improve transparency, increase education and awareness, and invest in infrastructure to support the music industry.

⁴⁴ Kim Byungil, Collective management of rights and distribution amongst right holders –from the Korean perspective, Hanyang Journal of Law, 2016, 4 HJL 24

Possible Way Forward to the Challenges Facing Royalty Collection and Distribution in Cameroon

Royalty collection and distribution in Cameroon is facing several challenges that require immediate attention to ensure that artists and other stakeholders in the music industry receive their fair share of royalties. Below are some possible ways forward to address these challenges:

The government of Cameroon can strengthen the existing copyright laws that is the law of 19th December 2000, to ensure that they are up-to-date and effective in protecting the rights of artists and other stakeholders, especially in the domain of digital rights. This can include establishing more stringent penalties for copyright infringement and ensuring that the legal framework is in line with international best practices. Furthermore, the collection of royalties in Cameroon can be improved by establishing a more efficient and transparent royalty collection system. This can include the use of technology to track and monitor the use of copyrighted material, and the establishment of a centralized database to facilitate the collection and distribution of royalties.⁴⁵ There is a need to increase public awareness about the importance of respecting copyright laws and paying royalties. This can involve public campaigns to educate the public on the value of creative works and the need to support artists by paying royalties. Various stakeholders in the music industry, including artists, copyright societies, and government agencies, need to work together to address the challenges facing royalty collection and distribution. This can involve the establishment of partnerships and collaborations to develop and implement effective solutions. There is also a need to build the capacity of stakeholders in the music industry to better understand copyright laws and royalty collection processes. This can include training programs for artists and SONACAM staff, as well as the establishment of educational programs to raise awareness about intellectual property rights. Overall, addressing the challenges facing royalty collection and distribution in Cameroon requires a multi-pronged approach that involves the government, copyright societies, artists, and other stakeholders. By working together and implementing effective solutions, it is possible to ensure that artists receive their fair share of royalties and that the creative industry in Cameroon can thrive.

Conclusion

The challenges facing royalty collection and distribution in Cameroon include, Lack of effective legal framework: The existing copyright laws in Cameroon are outdated and not effectively enforced, leading to rampant copyright infringement and a lack of protection for artists and other stakeholders. The current royalty collection system in Cameroon is inefficient and lacks transparency, leading to delays in the distribution of royalties and a lack of trust among stakeholders. There is a lack of public awareness about the importance of respecting copyright laws and paying royalties, which has contributed to the widespread infringement of copyrighted material. There is a lack of capacity among stakeholders in the creative industry, including artists and copyright societies, to effectively manage and collect royalties. The impact of these

⁴⁵ Digital fingerprinting is a technique that embeds an imperceptible digital watermark in copyrighted material. This watermark can be used to track and monitor the use of the material, even when it is altered or manipulated. When the material is used, the digital fingerprint can be detected, and the use of the material can be traced back to the source.

challenges on the music industry in Cameroon is significant. They have led to a lack of financial support for artists, making it difficult for them to make a sustainable living from their creative works. Additionally, the challenges have limited the growth of the music industry in Cameroon and hindered its ability to compete on the global stage. As a result, many talented artists have left the country in search of better opportunities elsewhere.

To SONACAM, artists, and other stakeholders in the creative industry, need to work together to address the challenges facing royalty collection and distribution in Cameroon. This can involve establishing partnerships and collaborations to develop and implement effective solutions. To the Cameroonian government, policymakers should strengthen the copyright laws to ensure that they are up-to-date and effective in protecting the rights of artists and other stakeholders. This can include establishing more stringent penalties for copyright infringement and ensuring that the legal framework is in line with international best practices.⁴⁶ To the public, we advise on the need to increase awareness of the importance of respecting copyright laws and paying royalties. This can involve supporting artists by paying for their creative works and spreading the word about the value of creative works. Ultimately, addressing the challenges facing royalty collection and distribution in Cameroon requires an intensive effort from all stakeholders. By working in synergy and implementing effective solutions, we can ensure that artists receive their fair share of royalties and that the music industry under SONACAM in Cameroon can thrive.

⁴⁶ WIPO TOOLKIT

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List of Acronyms and Abbreviations

IP: Intellectual Property

CMC: Cameroon Music Corporation

WIPO: World Intellectual Property Organization

SONACAM: Cameroon National Music Corporation