

# A.I, Service Jobs, and Africa's New Employment Dilemma.

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The Astute Ink

No: 0032

Tuesday, 20 January, 2026

Publisher: Fonban E. Lenzemo

Tel: + 237 674774546 -Yaounde

Price: 400 F

# The ASTUTE iNK

Wisdom, The Truth In Communication

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## Tech

## Guiding Children Toward Responsible Use of Social Media

by the Tech Desk

In today's digital age, social media has become an unavoidable part of children's lives. From WhatsApp and Facebook to TikTok, Instagram, and YouTube, young people are growing up in a world where communication, entertainment, and even education are increasingly online. While these platforms offer opportunities for learning, creativity, and connection, they also present serious risks if not used responsibly. It is therefore the duty of parents to guide their children toward decent and safe use of social media.

One of the first steps for parents is understanding the digital environment their children are exposed to. Many parents struggle to guide their children simply because they are unfamiliar with the platforms their children use. Taking time to learn how these apps work, what content is common, and what dangers exist—such as cyberbullying, online predators, misinformation, and inappropriate content—empowers parents to give informed guidance rather than issuing blind restrictions.

Open communication is essential. Children should feel comfortable discussing their online experiences with their parents without fear of punishment. When children are afraid to talk, they hide problems such as bullying, exposure to harmful content, or pressure to engage in risky behavior. Parents should create a safe space where children can ask questions, report concerns, and share what they see online. Guidance is more effective when it comes through conversation rather than constant warnings.

Parents must also set clear boundaries and rules regarding social media use. This includes deciding at what age children are allowed to join certain platforms, setting time limits, and defining what type of

content is acceptable. Children need structure. Unlimited screen time can affect academic performance, sleep patterns, and mental health. Clear rules—such as no phones during meals, homework time, or late at night—help children develop discipline and balance.

Equally important is teaching children about digital responsibility and consequences. Many young people do not realize that what they post online can remain there permanently. Parents should explain that insulting comments, inappropriate photos, or spreading false information can harm others and also damage their own future opportunities, including education and employment. Teaching children to think before they post—asking “Is this respectful? Is it true? Is it necessary?”—builds digital maturity.

Protecting children's privacy should be a priority. Parents should guide children on the importance of not sharing personal information such as home addresses, school names, phone numbers, or private family matters online. Children should also be taught to use privacy settings and to be cautious about accepting friend requests from strangers, no matter how friendly they appear.

Parents must also lead by example. Children observe adult behavior closely. A parent who spends excessive time on their phone, spreads unverified information, or engages in online arguments sends the wrong message. Demonstrating respectful communication, limited screen use, and critical thinking online reinforces the values parents want their children to adopt.

Finally, parents should emphasize that social media should never replace real life. Encouraging children to engage in reading, sports, family conversations, cultural activities, and community life helps them develop strong social skills and self-confidence beyond the screen. Social media should be a tool, not a controller of their lives.

In conclusion, guiding children toward decent use of social media is not about total restriction, but about education, supervision, and example. With patience, communication, and consistent guidance, parents can help their children navigate the digital world safely, responsibly, and with values that will serve them throughout their lives.



## THE ASTUTE INK

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## Digital safety

# Staying Safe Online: How to Protect Yourself from Hackers



by Tech Desk

The internet has become an essential part of modern life. People now use digital platforms for communication, business, education, banking, and entertainment. While this digital transformation has brought convenience and opportunity, it has also created new risks. Cybercrime is on the rise, and hackers are constantly developing new methods to exploit unsuspecting internet users. From stolen social media accounts to drained bank balances, the consequences of poor online security can be severe.

One of the most common ways hackers gain access to personal accounts is through weak passwords. Many users continue to rely on simple passwords such as names, dates of birth, or repeated number patterns. These passwords are easy for hackers to guess using automated tools. A strong password should be long and combine letters, numbers, and symbols. Using different passwords for different platforms is equally important, as a single breach can expose multiple accounts if passwords are reused.

Another effective way to protect online accounts is by enabling two-factor authentication. This security feature requires users to confirm their identity through an additional step, such as a one-time code sent to a mobile

phone or email address. Even when a password is compromised, two-factor authentication can prevent unauthorized access. Many email providers, social media platforms, and financial institutions now offer this option, yet many users still ignore it.

Hackers frequently use deception to trick people into giving away their personal information. Phishing messages, which often arrive via email, SMS, or messaging applications, are designed to appear legitimate. They may claim to come from banks, mobile money services, or government institutions and often create a sense of urgency. Users are urged to click a link, confirm their details, or reset their password. Clicking such links can lead to fake websites that steal sensitive information. Internet users should always be cautious and avoid responding to unsolicited messages requesting confidential details.

Keeping devices and software up to date is another critical aspect of online safety. Software developers regularly release updates to fix security weaknesses that hackers can exploit. Using outdated operating systems or applications exposes devices to unnecessary risk. Regular updates, including antivirus software, help close these security gaps and protect against new threats.

Public Wi-Fi networks also present significant risks. While free internet access in public spaces may be convenient, these networks are

often unsecured. Hackers can intercept data sent over public Wi-Fi, including login details and personal information. Users should avoid accessing sensitive accounts such as online banking or email while connected to public networks unless proper security measures are in place.

Social media has become a major source of personal information for cybercriminals. Oversharing details such as birthdays, phone numbers, locations, and daily routines can make it easier for hackers to target individuals. Privacy settings should be reviewed regularly, and users should limit the amount of personal information visible to the public.

Backing up important data is another essential habit. Cyberattacks such as ransomware can lock users out of their files and demand payment for recovery. Regular backups stored securely can help individuals restore their data without giving in to criminals.

In conclusion, online safety depends largely on awareness and responsible behavior. Hackers often succeed not because they are highly skilled, but because users are careless or uninformed. By adopting simple security practices and remaining vigilant, individuals can protect themselves and enjoy the benefits of the digital world without unnecessary risk.



## Sports

# AFCON 2025: The Rise And Fall Of The Atlas Lions; Politics, Fate Or Poor Performance?



By The Sports Desk

From the opening whistle of the Africa Cup of Nations to the dramatic final night in Rabat, Morocco's Atlas Lions looked every inch a champion in waiting. They dominated games, controlled possession, and dispatched opponents with authority. On paper and on the pitch, Morocco were the tournament's most consistent side. Yet, when the dust finally settled, the trophy belonged to Senegal, leaving Morocco with applause for their rise — and uncomfortable questions about their fall.

The story of Morocco's AFCON campaign cannot be told without addressing both footballing excellence and growing controversy. A Dominant Run Shadowed by Officiating Questions

There is no denying Morocco's quality. Match after match, they imposed themselves with tactical discipline and technical superiority. However, as the tournament progressed, murmurs of questionable officiating began to follow them.

Teams that faced Morocco raised concerns, none louder than Cameroon, whose supporters and analysts pointed to two clear penalty incidents that were neither awarded nor reviewed by VAR. These moments passed without scrutiny, planting early seeds of doubt about consistency in officiating whenever Morocco

were involved.

Those doubts returned — louder and more explosive — in the final.

The Final: When the Game Slipped Into Controversy

The AFCON final between Senegal and Morocco was tense, cagey, and emotionally charged. As the clock ticked deep into stoppage time, Senegal appeared to have struck the decisive blow. A late goal sent the Senegalese bench into celebration — only for it to be disallowed for an alleged foul, with claims that Achraf Hakimi had been pushed.

Moments later, the narrative flipped completely.

Brahim Díaz went down in the Senegal penalty area. This time, VAR intervened. After review, a penalty was awarded to Morocco in the 98th minute.

The contrast was glaring. In earlier incidents against Morocco, VAR remained silent. In a moment that favoured Morocco, VAR was decisive. The optics alone were enough to ignite controversy across Africa.

Senegal's Protest and a Leader's Intervention  
Outraged by the decision, Senegal head coach Pape Thiaw instructed his players to leave the pitch in protest. The team headed toward the dressing room, creating a scene rarely witnessed in an AFCON final.

What followed, however, became one of the most powerful moments of leadership African football has seen.

As reported by the BBC, Sadio Mané, with the support of goalkeeper Edouard Mendy, went into the dressing room and personally convinced his teammates to return. After discussions involving former coach Claude Le Roy and football legend El Hadji Diouf, Mané made it clear: African football could not afford such an ending.

"The world was watching," Mané later said. "Football should not stop for even ten minutes... I'd rather lose than see this kind of thing happen to our football."

Nearly 16 minutes after the penalty was awarded, the game resumed.

The Moment That Defined the Final  
Brahim Díaz, one of the stars of the tournament, stepped up to take the penalty he had won. Instead of power or placement, he opted for a Panenka-style kick, a decision that stunned many.

Edouard Mendy read it with ease and caught the ball.

In that moment, the momentum shifted irreversibly. Confidence drained from Morocco. Belief surged through Senegal.

Extra time followed, and Pape Gueye's thunderous strike sealed Senegal's victory and their second AFCON crown.

Empty Stands, Empty Ending

Perhaps the most painful image of the night came not from the pitch, but from the stands. Before the trophy presentation, Moroccan fans flooded out of the stadium, leaving nearly



## Sports

three-quarters of the venue empty. A final meant to celebrate African football ended amid visible disappointment and abandonment by the hosts' supporters.

### Post-Match Reactions and the Blame Game

Morocco's head coach Walid Regragui did not hide his frustration. He criticised Pape Thiaw's decision to call his players off the pitch, saying:

"The picture we gave of Africa was a little shameful. The coach asked his players to leave the field. It had already started from the press conference before the match."

Yet, many across the continent saw the episode differently. Former players and pundits praised Mané's intervention, calling him an ambassador for African football. Former Nigeria star Daniel Amokachi

said Mané "went the extra mile," while ex-Morocco international Hassan Kachloul admitted African and world football were "losing" until Mané stepped in.

Politics, Fate, or Poor Performance?

So why did Morocco fall?

Politics and officiating controversies certainly clouded their journey. Fate played its cruel role through a missed penalty. But football ultimately rewards composure in decisive moments. Senegal kept theirs. Morocco did not.

The Atlas Lions rose high, perhaps higher than any other team in the tournament.

Their fall was not due to lack of talent but to hesitation, controversy, and a single decision taken in the harshest spotlight.

Their rise is undeniable. Their fall, however, is a lesson one African football will not forget anytime soon.

### Brahim Díaz message to fans and their football federation after the match

**My Soul Hurts:** I dreamed of this title thanks to all the love you all gave me, every message, every moment of support that made me feel I wasn't alone".

"I fought with everything I had, with all my heart".

"Yesterday night I failed and I take full responsibility. I apologize from the bottom of my heart".

"It will be hard for me to recover, because this wound doesn't heal easily... but I will try".

"Not for myself, but for everyone who believed in me and for everyone who suffered with me".

## Column

# AI, Service Jobs, and Africa's New Employment Dilemma



In Cameroon, service jobs employ a large segment of the urban population. Young graduates answer customer service calls, process mobile money transactions, manage hotel desks, and work as clerks and cashiers. These are not luxury jobs but rather survival jobs. As businesses adopt chatbots, automated payment systems, and self-service platforms, the question becomes urgent: What will become of the displaced workers go?

Unlike developed economies, Cameroon lacks strong social safety nets. When a worker loses a job, there is often no unemployment benefit, no retraining program, and no

clear pathway into a new career. AI does not just threaten income, it threatens dignity, family stability, and social cohesion. In a country already grappling with youth unemployment, AI risks deepening an already fragile situation.

AI literates insist that technology creates new opportunities, and in theory, they are right. But this argument assumes access to digital skills, stable electricity, quality education, and affordable internet conditions that remain uneven across much of Africa. It is unrealistic to expect a supermarket cashier in Douala or a call agent in Buea to suddenly become a data analyst or AI engineer.

Africa's challenge is not innovation itself, but unequal readiness. If AI adoption is driven purely by profit, without human-centered policies, the continent risks importing technology that solves corporate problems while creating social ones. Development cannot be measured by how many machines we install, but by how many people we uplift.

**T**he way forward requires deliberate action. Governments must integrate AI planning into national employment and education strategies. Technical and vocational training should be expanded to prepare workers for new roles in digital services, maintenance, creative industries, and entrepreneurship. African policymakers must also engage in global conversations on ethical AI, ensuring that local realities are not ignored in global technological decisions.

AI should be a tool for African progress, not a shortcut to African unemployment. If managed wisely, it can enhance productivity and create new forms of work. If mismanaged, it may widen inequality and silence the very workforce that drives our economies. The choice, as always, is ours. AI has come to stay.

**By LENJO VALERY LENJO.  
DIGITAL-AGRO ENTREPRENEUR.**



**A**rtificial Intelligence (AI) is quietly reshaping the world of work, and Africa is not immune to that. In Cameroon and across the continent, service-sector jobs, once seen as reliable sources of income for millions are increasingly under threat. From bank halls and call centers to supermarkets and transport services, AI-powered systems are steadily replacing human labor. The artitude of most Cameroonians to always joke over everything and a syndrome of care less or inattentive ADHD, the promise of efficiency with AI is real, but so is the danger of widespread joblessness.



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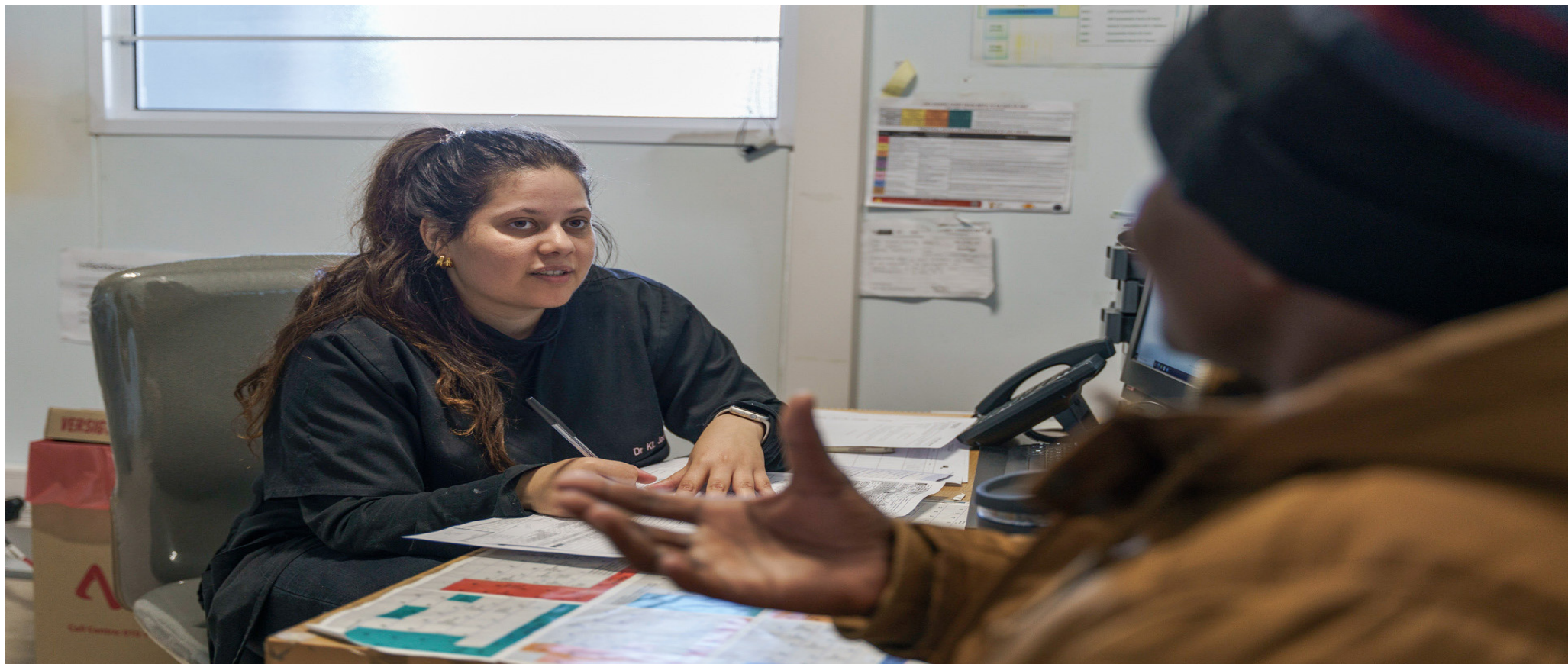


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## Health

# WHO releases updated recommendations on HIV clinical management



**T**he World Health Organization (WHO) has released updated recommendations on HIV clinical management providing new and revised guidance on antiretroviral therapy, management of vertical HIV transmission, and tuberculosis (TB) prevention for people living with HIV. These recommendations support an evidence-based, cost-effective approach to improving treatment outcomes, reducing HIV-related mortality and accelerating progress towards ending AIDS as a public health threat.

The guideline reflects significant advances in HIV treatment since the last consolidated WHO guidelines published in 2021 and responds to emerging evidence on optimized antiretroviral regimens and simplified options to TB preventive treatment for people living with HIV. Optimizing antiretroviral therapy.

The updated recommendations confirm dolutegravir-based regimens as the preferred option for initial and subsequent HIV treatment and introduce important changes for people whose treatment regimen is no longer

effective. When a protease inhibitor (PI) is needed, darunavir/ritonavir is now recommended as the preferred option, replacing earlier preferences for atazanavir/ritonavir or lopinavir/ritonavir. The guideline also supports the reuse of tenofovir and abacavir in subsequent regimens based on improved outcomes, programmatic advantages and potential cost savings.

The guideline also recommends the use of long-acting injectable antiretroviral therapy in specific circumstances, such as for adults and adolescents who face challenges adhering to daily oral regimens; oral two-drug regimens are also recommended as treatment-simplification options for selected individuals who are clinically stable.

Strengthening the prevention of vertical HIV transmission Despite major progress in eliminating vertical transmission, new infant HIV infections continue to occur, particularly during breastfeeding. The updated guideline emphasizes a person-centred, public health approach that supports maternal choice and infant well-being. WHO continues to recommend that mothers with HIV exclusively breastfeed for the first six months, with continued

breastfeeding up to 12 months and possibly up to 24 months or longer, alongside effective maternal antiretroviral therapy and appropriate complementary feeding. All HIV-exposed infants should receive six weeks of postnatal prophylaxis, preferably with nevirapine, while infants at higher risk should receive enhanced triple-drug prophylaxis. Extended infant prophylaxis may be used until maternal viral suppression is achieved or breastfeeding has stopped.

**Prioritizing TB prevention in people living with HIV**

Tuberculosis remains a leading cause of death among people living with HIV. To improve uptake and completion of TB preventive therapy, WHO now recommends three months of weekly isoniazid plus rifapentine (3HP) as the preferred TB preventive treatment regimen for adults and adolescents living with HIV.

**O**ther WHO-recommended regimens remain options based on clinical and programmatic considerations. Mainstreamed interventions will facilitate better integration of services and aim at reducing TB-related mortality in people living with HIV while simplifying service delivery. Supporting countries to accelerate impact

“These updated recommendations reflect WHO’s commitment to ensuring that people living with HIV benefit from the most effective, safe and practical treatment options available,” said Dr Tereza Kasaeva, Director, Department of HIV, TB, viral Hepatitis and STIs of WHO Headquarters in Geneva. “By simplifying treatment, improving adherence and addressing persistent gaps in prevention, they will help countries strengthen HIV programmes and save lives.”

The recommendations will be integrated into the next edition of the WHO consolidated HIV guidelines and are intended to inform national HIV programmes, clinicians, partners and communities worldwide.

Source: [www.who.int](http://www.who.int)





# Football Betting: A charming poisoned cup for Cameroonian youths



by Fonban Emmanuel

On match days in Buea, a university town known for its large student population, football betting quietly takes centre stage. Before the first whistle is blown in Europe or Africa, many young people are already glued to their mobile phones. Most do not physically gather in one place; instead, they follow Telegram groups, Facebook pages, and online betting communities where daily predictions are shared. In bars, classrooms, and recreational spots where they meet, discussions revolve around possible match outcomes, odds, and accumulators, all driven by the hope that one ticket could change their lives overnight.

Most of those involved are students and unemployed youths struggling to survive in a difficult economic environment. For them, football betting appears to offer a quick escape from financial hardship. With as little as 500 or 1,000 francs CFA, young people place bets hoping to wake up as overnight millionaires. The

reality, however, is far from the dream. Football is unpredictable, and the chances of winning big are slim. Unexpected events such as red cards, injuries, missed penalties, or disallowed goals often destroy carefully planned tickets. These uncertainties have stolen joy from many on countless occasions. What begins as excitement quickly turns into frustration, anger, and regret. Yet, despite repeated losses, many refuse to quit. Betting addiction has gradually become a charming cup laced with poison—attractive on the surface but destructive over time. Young people return again and again, convinced that the next game, the next ticket, or the next weekend will finally favour them. Although betting companies constantly advise users to “bet responsibly,” addiction often pushes bettors to act recklessly.

Losses are chased with desperation, and emotions replace logic. One frustrated bettor remarked bitterly, “Na man weh want heart break d put heart for Cameroon. This country na ashawo.” Such statements reflect the emotional damage caused when football loyalty and financial hope collide. Football betting is often seen as

a male-dominated activity, but young women are increasingly involved. In Buea today, almost every young person owns at least one betting account. Betting applications have become as common as social media apps on mobile phones. Despite continuous losses, belief in betting remains strong. Many believe that one day, their odds will finally align.

The emotional rollercoaster of betting is evident in reactions shared online. After a major loss, one bettor wrote, “Haaland was a ghost. He wasn’t even in the stadium today. My ‘Haaland to Score and City to Win’ ticket is now a piece of toilet paper.” Another lamented, “City had 70% possession and zero big chances. My ‘Over 2.5 Goals’ bet failed because they refused to show up.” These reactions reveal the frustration and helplessness bettors often experience. There are moments of extreme tension as well. “I nearly had a heart attack,” one bettor confessed after multiple goals were disallowed in a single match. Another expressed regret after cashing out early: “I cashed out for 5,000 francs. Ten minutes lat-

er, the ticket was worth 80,000. I hate this game.” These stories show how betting affects not just finances, but mental and emotional well-being. While there are verified breakthrough stories of individuals who have won large sums through football betting, these cases are rare. They are widely shared and heavily promoted, creating the illusion that success is common. What often goes unnoticed are the many more youths who lose consistently behind every celebrated win. Their stories remain untold.

This pattern is not unique to Buea. Across Cameroon and much of urban Africa, football betting has deeply embedded itself into youth culture. In cities where job opportunities are limited and hope feels distant, betting presents itself as an easy solution. However, beneath the excitement lies a slow-burning danger. Football betting has evolved beyond simple entertainment. It has become a reflection of the struggles, desperation, and misplaced hopes of many young Cameroonians. Until broader issues such as unemployment, economic hardship, and youth empowerment are addressed, the charm of betting will remain—and so will its poison.

Hide Lost ☐

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2,000.00	5.96	

17:49, Sat 17/01		ID: #10666275654
Result:		LOST
STAKE	ODDS	
3,000.00	4.80	



## Society

# Killings in Ngarbuh, Kumba, Gidado: Children in Graves, Shooting still On Where shall we find compassion?



*Images circulated of Some of the kids seriously injured in the Gidado attacks, taking treatment in the hospital*

by

**Fonban Emmanuel**

The final whistle in the CamThe recent massacre in Gidado, Mbandrung in Ndu Sub-Division, where at least fourteen civilians among them women and children were brutally killed, has once again forced Cameroon to confront the human cost of its protracted Anglophone conflict. Nearly a decade after the crisis erupted in 2016, the war continues to consume its most innocent victims: children who neither understand nor benefit from the politics driving the violence. Gidado is not an isolated tragedy. It follows a disturbing pattern that has become all too familiar. On February 14, 2020, thirteen children were killed in Ngarbuh. Later that year, on October 24, 2020, seven schoolchildren were shot dead at Mother Theresa International Bilingual Academy in Kumba, inside a classroom meant to be a place of safety and hope. Different locations, same outcome—children paying with their lives for a conflict shaped by adults.

Preliminary accounts of the Gidado killings suggest the attack may have been retaliatory, following a security operation carried out in the area days earlier. Allegations reportedly emerged that some members of the local community had collaborated with security forces. Whether proven or not, the consequences were devas-

tating. Unarmed civilians were deliberately targeted, including children as young as two years old. What wrong has these children done to be deprived of life by those holding guns? If bullets flying are already killing them, who then has the responsibility of protecting them?

Human rights lawyer and advocate Nkongho Felix Agbor (Agbor Balla) described the killings as “morally indefensible,” stressing that the victims posed no threat. “These were unarmed civilians—families who posed no danger to anyone,” he said, noting that the deliberate targeting of children, women, and the elderly constitutes “a grave crime under international humanitarian law and international human rights law.” Agbor Balla further warned that no grievance or political objective can ever justify the slaughter of civilians, adding: “Children must never be casualties. Communities must never become battlegrounds. Collective punishment is a crime.” He called for a credible, independent, and transparent investigation, insisting that justice for the victims is “not optional—it is a legal and moral obligation.”

The Prime Minister, Chief Dr. Joseph Dion Ngute condemned the attack as “barbaric and cowardly.” H.E Dion Ngute said on his X page that he learned of the killings “with deep sorrow and grave concern,” describing them as “an assault on peace, national unity, and the authority of the State.” He extended condolences to the

bereaved families, wished the injured a speedy recovery, and reaffirmed the determination of President Paul Biya to restore peace and security, calling on the population to cooperate with defence and security forces so the perpetrators are brought to justice. While the official response echoes previous condemnations after Ngarbuh and Kumba, critics argue that statements alone have failed to prevent the recurrence of such atrocities. This concern was strongly expressed during discussions on CRTV’s Press Hour. Journalist and Youth Leader Princeley Njukang lamented what he described as a dangerous normalisation of violence. “We’ve become too accustomed to condemnations,” he said. “They kill, we condemn, and then wait for the next set of killings to happen and condemn again. I don’t think we can keep going down this route.”

Njukang questioned repeated claims of a return to normalcy, arguing that peace cannot be declared while people remain afraid and children continue to die. “What does it mean to say we are accelerating community dialogue,” he asked, “when people are still disgruntled, afraid of speaking, and still feel that shooting is a way out?”

At the heart of this crisis lies a painful contradiction: children are being killed for a political struggle they do not participate in, vote for, or benefit from. They are not negotiators, fighters, or decision-makers. Yet they bear

the heaviest burden of a war waged in their name.

International law is clear. Children have an inalienable right to life, protected by global conventions to which Cameroon is a signatory. Each massacre that goes unpunished weakens these protections and sends a dangerous signal that innocent lives are expendable.

From Ngarbuh, to Kumba, to Gidado, the message is painfully consistent. Without decisive action, accountability, genuine dialogue, and sustained intervention by competent authorities and international partners, the cycle of violence will continue. Cameroon cannot find peace on the graves of its children. Ending the war is no longer just a political imperative; it is a moral emergency. Until words are matched with action, the nation will continue to face the same haunting question after every tragedy: why should children pay the ultimate price for a conflict they do not understand and from which they will never benefit?





## ForeignNews

# Greenland latest: Starmer was the gravest I've ever seen him as scale of NATO crisis becomes clear



▶ 2:25

Sir Keir Starmer: "A trade war is in no one's interest"

**A**s Donald Trump fails to rule out taking Greenland by force, and threatens tariffs against those who oppose him, Sir Keir Starmer left us in no doubt we are facing the most serious crisis in the transatlantic relationship in decades, with huge uncertainty about what comes next.

An emergency news conference in the Downing Street briefing room and the prime minister the gravest I've seen.

He came to level with the public about the predicament we are in, and the consequences for us all should President Donald Trump follow through on his threat to slap tariffs on the UK and take control of Greenland.

He left the audience in no doubt that we are facing the most serious crisis in the transatlantic relationship in decades, with huge uncertainty about what comes next.

Sir Keir Starmer was the most forthright I have seen him as he broke with President Trump, strongly criticising tariffs and insisting that on the matter of Greenland, the UK would not bend, whatever the consequences as he reminded the US that alliances were built on partnership, "not pressure". But the prime minister also used this moment to try to de-escalate, as he stressed the importance of the US-UK relationship and dodged the matter of retaliatory tariffs in an effort to avoid any further poking of the bear.

It doesn't, by the way, mean the UK has ruled this option out - rather it is not a preferred solution

and London would rather talk about other options. But the UK pointedly chose at this moment not to follow the EU by raising the prospect of retaliatory tariffs. That EU package, I'm told, could be released on Thursday.

## Trump refuses to rule out using force | Greenland latest

Transatlantic relations between the US and Europe are facing an unprecedented challenge due to Donald Trump's desire to annex Greenland.

The arctic island is part of Denmark, a NATO ally with which the US has a defensive pact, but that hasn't dissuaded Trump.

Warning against the influence of Russia and China, he claims he needs the territory for security reasons.

And he hasn't ruled out seizing it by force; offering a guarded "no comment" when asked by our US partner network NBC News on Monday.

In a bid to allay the president's fears, several European nations contributed troops to a reconnaissance mission in Greenland - but he seemed to interpret it as a message to the US.

So he sent a message back - threatening to slap eight European countries with 10% tariffs from 1 February, raising to 25% from 1 June, unless the US is allowed to buy the territory.

Sky News understands Trump has conceded, in a phone call with Sir Keir Starmer, that he may have misinterpreted the reason for the troops' deployment in Greenland.

But he has doubled down on the threatened tariffs - which the prime minister says are "completely

wrong" - telling NBC he "100%" intends to impose them.

And in a message sent to Norway's prime minister, Trump said his failure to win the Nobel Peace Prize (for which he blames Norway itself) meant he no longer thinks "purely" of peace.

Meanwhile, the economic impact of his tariff threat is already being felt in stock markets of the nations involved.

## Trump's extraordinary letter to Norway Will EU unleash its most powerful trade weapon?

As I understand it, the prime minister is also "very unlikely" to attend Davos this week, given that there is no big set pieces on multilateral issues - be that Ukraine or Greenland, for now, that are likely to be resolved.

Instead, Keir Starmer will press on with his preferred method - talking intensely behind closed doors while saying as little as possible in public.

Danish minister reveals depth of rift

But if the prime minister doesn't want to reveal what is being said in private, the gravity of this rupture in the transatlantic alliance was laid bare by the Danish foreign minister and former prime minister, Lars Rasmussen - in London for talks with the foreign secretary - as he recounted the meeting he'd had with Vice President JD Vance and Secretary of State Marco Rubio in Washington last week.

"The meeting we had last week left me with the clear impression that the president, honestly and full-heartedly, wants to acquire Greenland. But we



also made it crystal clear that this is a red line,” he told me in an interview after his meeting with

Yvette Cooper.

“We agreed to disagree. The concerns raised at the meeting and also in public, about security in the Arctic - [Trump’s] concerns - we want to accommodate. Therefore, we agreed that we should move this dialogue from social media and Truth Social and other arenas into a meeting room where we could discuss whether there could be a solution building on what we already have agreed in the past.”

Up for discussion was the US massively increasing its presence in Greenland, and the stepping up of NATO on the island, as well as guarantees stopping any presence of China in Greenland stretching out for 10, 20 or 30 years.

“I thought, we have managed not to solve the problem, but to find a pathway forward. It was disrupted by the statement from the president. And that’s a reality of life,” said Mr Rasmussen, as he spoke of his appreciation of the UK and other allies coming to stand by the Danes’ side.

Bur what it also reveals is the depth of this transatlantic rift over Greenland.

Hours after the prime minister suggested he didn’t think President Trump would send in troops to

Greenland and called on the US to resolve these differences through dialogue, the US president told reporters he would impose 10% tariffs on the UK and other European countries that had sent troops to Greenland for a NATO exercise last week, and refused to rule out military force.

### Europe’s last hope to rein in Trump?

That we are in this situation a year into the Trump presidency is shocking and bewildering. For decades, the transatlantic alliance has framed our world order. Now that is being undone as President Trump exercises the law of power rather than working in the rule of law that has governed international relations since the Second World War.

Escalation in Greenland would rupture the NATO alliance should the leading member move directly into conflict with another partner, the Danes, who stood with the US after 9/11, suffering similar amounts of casualties to the US in Afghanistan.

It would trigger a trade war that would do all of us harm. It could result in the US withdrawing from Ukraine and embolden a Russian aggressor on the

edge of Europe. The consequences are as unimaginable as they are serious.

But ultimately, President Trump knows he has the economic and military power to face down Europe, and it will take more than European diplomacy to persuade him to back down

With the US president due at the annual World Economic Forum summit in Davos on Wednesday, huge attention will be paid to what he has to say in Switzerland - but it will be back in Washington where the difference might be made, as Mr Trump draws fire back home from Republicans in Congress.

If the Europeans can’t rein him in, will his domestic lawmakers?

Republican House Speaker Mike Johnson met with Sir Keir in London on Monday, with the prime minister reiterating his position on Greenland and tariffs.

The best hope the Europeans have is to persuade Congress to act. The transatlantic relationship is, after all, bigger and more enduring than one man.

Source: news.sky.com

## ForeignNews

# Three reasons why Trump wants Greenland and how he might achieve it

**A**t face value, if President Trump is determined to secure Greenland, the military option is probably the least risky. But in attacking a fellow NATO member it would almost certainly mark the end of NATO in its current form.

**Donald Trump is not the first US leader to be interested in securing Greenland, the biggest island in the world.**

During the Second World War, the US occupied Greenland when Denmark was occupied by Germany, but at the end of the war the US was reluctant to leave.

In 1949, both the US and Denmark joined NATO, and in 1951 they signed a treaty which legally obliged the US to defend Greenland.

This was followed in 1953 by the US building Thule Air Base, which has subsequently been renamed Pituffik Space Base.

The US has three primary reasons for believing that Greenland is vital to its national security.

- First, ballistic missile early warning.

Although Greenland lies in the Arctic Circle and appears to be well north of any direct track between Russia and the US, the Earth is not a perfect sphere - the diameter at the poles is around 43km (26 miles) smaller than at the equator.

This means the shortest distance between Russia and the US tracks over Greenland.

So to track - and potentially destroy - ballistic

missiles bound for the US, requires tracking and missile capability on Greenland territory (which

also explains why transatlantic commercial aircraft fly a great circle route that takes them closer to the pole than the equator).

- Second, the Northern Sea Route (NSR) and Northwest Passage (NWP).

Over 90% of global trade travels via the sea, and the advent of global warming is opening up new trade routes that have historically been frozen and impassable for most of the year.

Read more:

### Military action in Greenland ‘always an option’ - White House

Farage says Trump ‘won’t’ invade Greenland Shipping goods from Europe to Japan is a 13,000-mile transit; however, this reduces to 6,000 miles via the NSR, offering significant savings.

Ensuring freedom of passage on these new trade routes is a US security concern.

- Third, Greenland has considerable mineral wealth, including uranium, and 50 billion barrels of oil and gas; however, the hostile climate has traditionally made it very difficult to extract these valuable resources.

But what options might the US consider to achieve its security requirements?

Negotiate - The US already has a military base in Greenland and Denmark has made clear it is open to discuss expanding US military presence in the

region.

However, it is clear the US lacks confidence in Denmark’s longer-term ability to curtail continued Russian and Chinese interest in the region.

Purchase - The US has attempted to buy Greenland many times before.

Indeed, in 1946 the US offered \$100m to buy the island (around \$1.3bn in today’s money), but was told “Greenland is not for sale”.

Military action - The US already has a military presence in Greenland, and the Greenlanders themselves have no national military capability.

Denmark is responsible for Greenland’s defence and security, but would be no match to counter US military aggression should Mr Trump decide on that course of action.

At face value, if the US president is determined to secure Greenland, the military option is probably the least risky option.

However, in attacking a fellow NATO member it would almost certainly mark the end of NATO in its current form, and would plunge many European countries into a security crisis, given the very real threat that Russia currently poses.

By

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Source: Sky News (news.sky.com)



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