

Building the WACREN Central African Hub

From Connectivity to a Regional Research Ecosystem

What could an AfricaConnect connection in Yaoundé enable beyond connectivity?

A PROPOSITION TO TEST

Omo Oaiya | Chief Strategy Officer, WACREN



WACREN: network • services • community



West and Central African Research and Education Network

NETWORK

A regional research and education backbone connecting national communities to each other and to the global R&E fabric.

SERVICES

Shared capabilities above the network: identity, cybersecurity, collaboration, compute, research and open-science infrastructure.

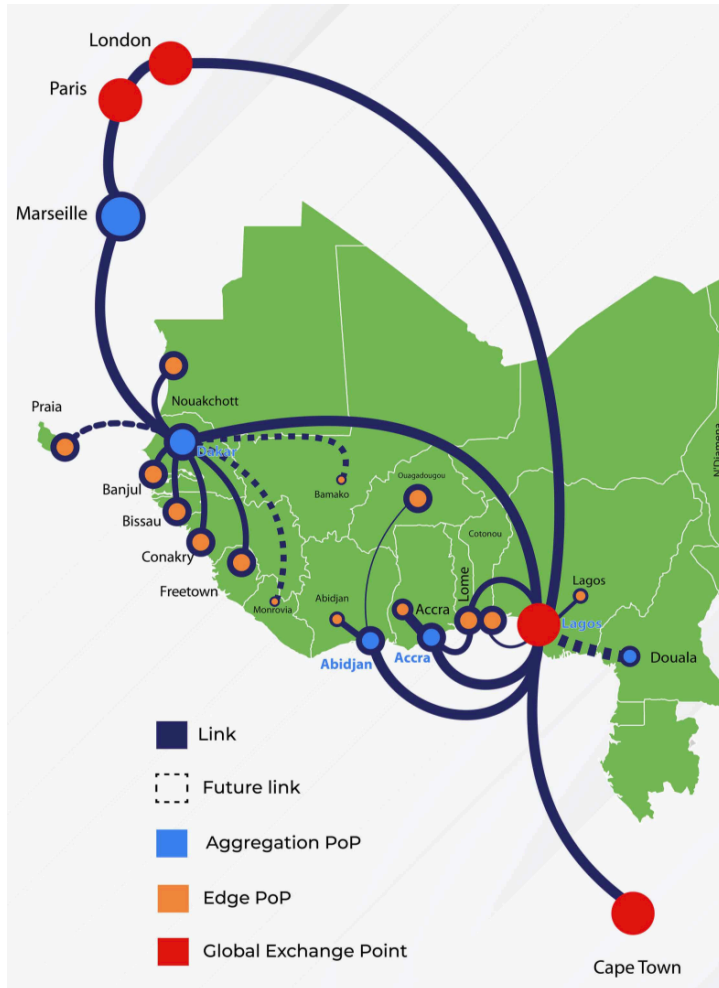
COMMUNITY

NRENs, universities, research institutions, libraries, technical communities and strategic partners.

Central Africa is part of our mandate.

The WACREN network today

A real regional backbone — with Central Africa still the least-developed part of the footprint



**DOUALA IS ON THE MAP.
YAOUNDÉ ISN'T — YET.**

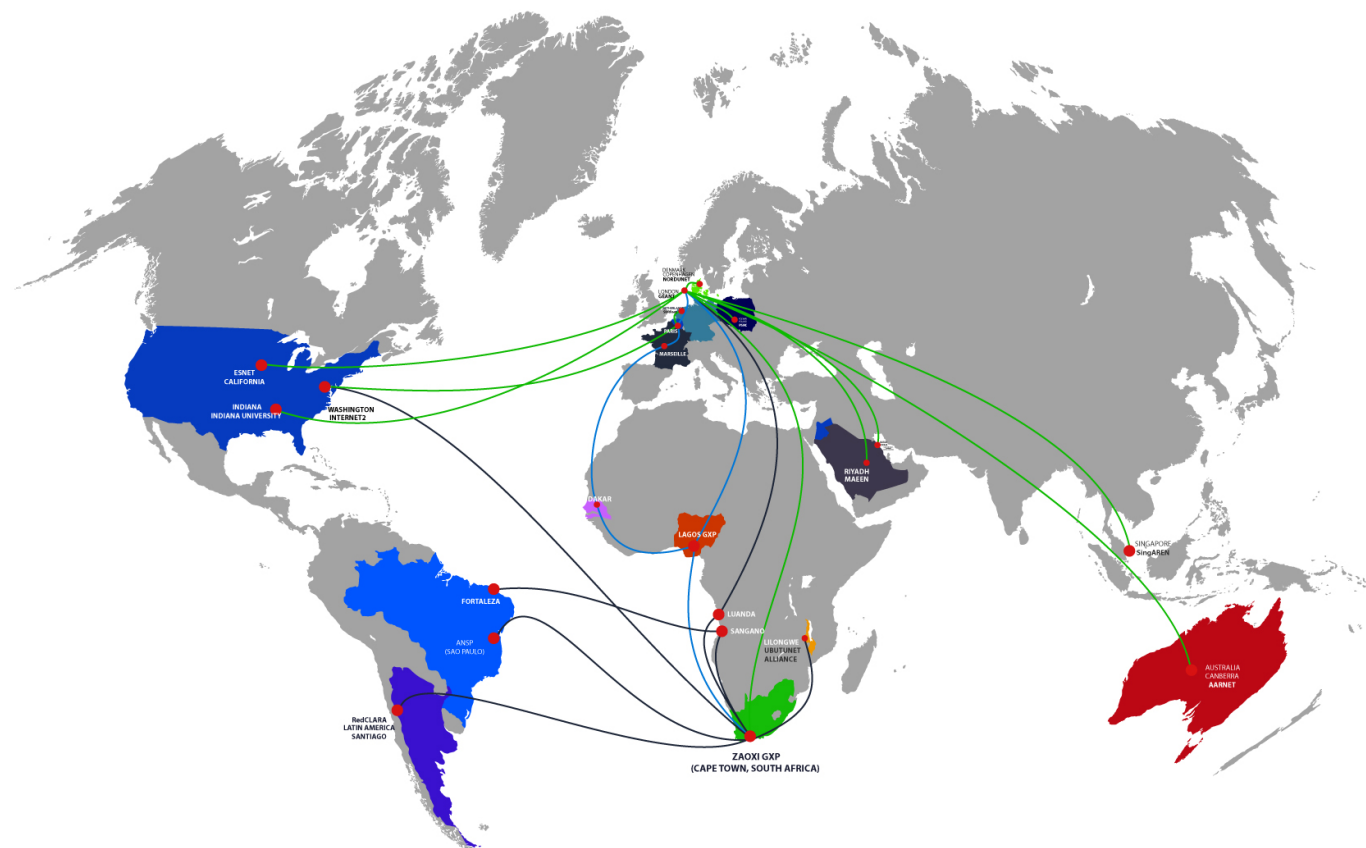
Successive AfricaConnect generations have built a regional R&E network across West and Central Africa, with international exchange points and resilient regional paths.

THE NEXT CONNECTION MATTERS



Part of a continental and global R&E fabric

Connecting Yaoundé to WACREN can connect Cameroon into something much larger



REGIONAL

WACREN ↔ other

African RRENs

GLOBAL

R&E exchange points
and partner networks

A connection to Cameroon is
not simply a route to
WACREN.
It is a potential gateway into
the wider research and
education fabric.

**GEOGRAPHIC ILLUSTRATION OF AFRICA'S FIRST
INTER-RREN CONNECTION, STRENGTHENING NETWORK
RESILIENCE AND GLOBAL COLLABORATION**

AfricaConnect4: connectivity becomes digital research infrastructure



WACREN's 2026–2029 strategy moves from a network provider toward a regional digital infrastructure, platform and trust institution



Connectivity remains foundational — but increasingly the question is what we enable over it.

WHY YAOUNDÉ?

We need to establish an AfricaConnect connection in Yaoundé.

We could treat it simply as another network connection.

Should we?

Or can the connection catalyse a stronger Central African research and digital ecosystem?

What would make people actually use the Hub?

Some things we could start with — not a predetermined service catalogue

eduMEET

COLLABORATE

Cross-institutional
collaboration

eduID.africa + BonafID

ACCESS

Trusted institutional identity
and federated access

TrustBroker Africa

TRUST & SECURE

Cybersecurity trust
and coordination

LIBSENSE

DISCOVER & PUBLISH

Open Science, repositories,
publishing & PIDs

ATI

BUILD CAPACITY

Skills, operators
and communities

What are we missing?

YOU TELL US

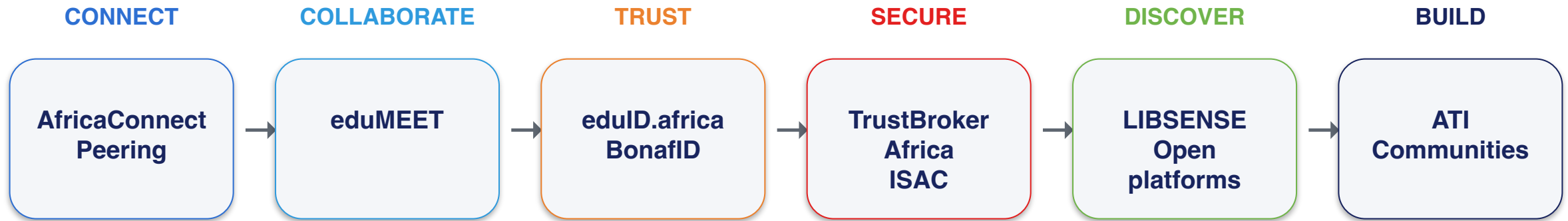
What would create
value here?

Which of these could create visible value in Cameroon within 6–12 months?

One network. Multiple communities. Shared infrastructure.



The 'hub' is an environment in which capabilities can be brought together locally

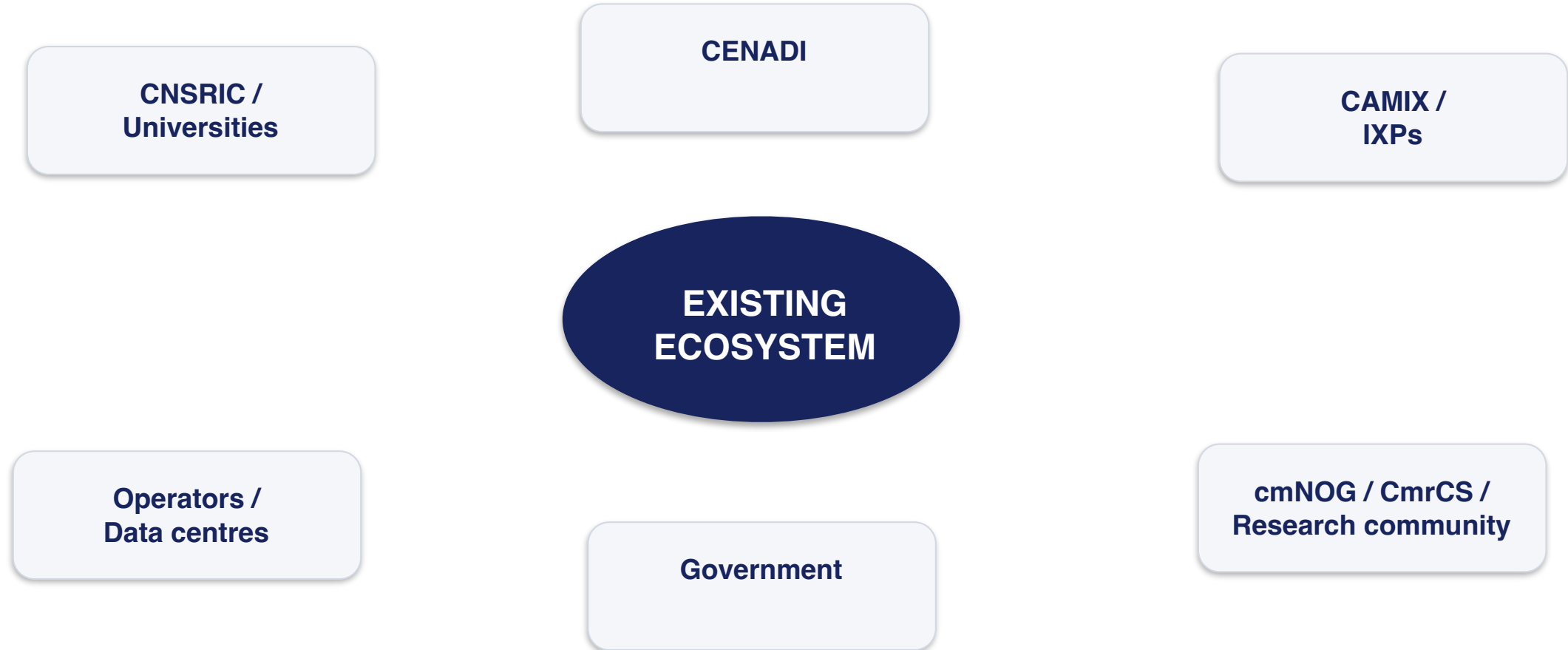


The Central African Hub is not another product.

It is the local/regional environment in which network, trust, services and communities can reinforce one another.

Central Africa does not start from zero

The infrastructure question may be less 'what should we build?' and more 'what have we not connected?'



The opportunity is to connect these assets more effectively — not reproduce them.

So what is a "Central African Hub"?

NOT

- ✗ another data centre
- ✗ another IXP
- ✗ a parallel network
- ✗ a WACREN-owned stack dropped into Cameroon

COULD BE

A federated point of interconnection between

INFRASTRUCTURE

SERVICES

INSTITUTIONS

COMMUNITIES

Build on what exists. Connect what is fragmented. Add only what is missing.

THE PROPOSITION

CONNECT what exists.

SHARE what makes sense.

BUILD only what is missing.

GOVERN it locally and regionally.

The AfricaConnect link is the catalyst — not the hub itself.

Now challenge the proposition

ISOC + WACREN as co-moderators and provocateurs

- 01 **What should we connect?**
- 02 **What should we share?**
- 03 **What must remain locally owned and governed?**
- 04 **Who sustains it — and who pays?**

LET'S TEST IT