MboaLab is an open and collaborative space located in the village of Mefou-Assi, Yaoundé, Cameroon. The word “Mboa” has different meanings in native Cameroonian languages: in Matakam, it means “new”; in Ewondo, it means “unique”; in Duala, it means “village”. Literally translated, MboaLab is a unifying village dedicated to creation; even better, it is a laboratory for social innovation, community education, collaboration and mediation at the service of the community.

**Aim and missions**

The aim of MboaLab is to catalyze sustainable local development and improve people’s living conditions through open science. To this end, the main missions of Mboalab are as follows:

* provide community and lifelong education for the population, as well as formal education for the younger generations;
* serve as a platform for exchanges on issues related to local context;
* mediate between local communities and academia;
* propose solutions that meet the needs of communities, using local knowledge and open digital technologies;
* raise public awareness of environmental issues;
* facilitate access to basic health care.

**Our vision of sustainable local development**

We advocate for the character of a local development, which is conferred by the imperative to have it emerge from the communities themselves; this is what ensures its relevance and sustainability. In other words, sustainable local development needs to be thought by and for the members of a given community. To do so, it is important to break the unenthusiastic spirit that exists among many Cameroonians, by training healthy, educated citizens capable of critical thinking on issues related to their immediate environment. By choosing education and health as priority axes, associated with its role as a mediator between Science-Technologies-Societies; we can say clearly that Mboalab could be a powerful catalyst for local sustainable development.

**Mboalab Biotech and its role in the achievement of our mission.**

Mboalab Biotech is a node of the Open Bioeconomy Lab hosted in MboaLab space. Established in 2018, the lab currently runs a number of projects amongst which is the **open enzyme manufacturing project**. At its core, Mboalab Biotech is focused on making biotechnology research and tools more accessible to labs around the world through scientific research and development and local production of reagents. We are committed to the development of open educational resources as well as simple and cost-effective protocols that can be applied in resource-limited laboratories. We also provide scientific research projects targeting local health issues, internships opportunities, and training sessions to young local scientists in order to equip them with molecular biology and DIY- Biology skills, and prepare them for employment.