

Doing Business in Cameroon

From the mid-1980s to the early 2000s, images of crisis and reform dominated talk of Cameroon's economy. *Doing Business in Cameroon* examines the aftermath of that period of turbulence and unpredictability in the northern city of Ngaoundéré. Taking the everyday encounters between business actors and state bureaucrats as its point of departure, the book vividly illustrates the backstage and interconnected dynamics of four different sectors (cattle trade, trucking, public contracting, and NGO work). Drawing on his training in law and social anthropology as well as his fine-grained ethnography, the author shows how developments in government policies and business regulation have played out in practice, often in ways quite removed from their original intentions. A widespread picture emerges of actors grappling with the long-term implications of selective or suspended enforcement of legal rules. The book deftly illuminates a set of shifting configurations in which economic outcomes such as monetary gains or the circulation of goods are achieved by forgoing the possibility of relying on or complying with the law.

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Doing Business in Cameroon

An Anatomy of Economic Governance

José-María Muñoz

University of Edinburgh

International African Institute, London
and



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The book is dedicated to my family and friends in Ngaoundéré, San Antonio, and Madrid, and to my wife Elena.

Abbreviations and acronyms

AJLC	Association des Jeunes de Ngaoundéré pour la Lutte contre le SIDA / Association of Ngaoundéré Youth for the Fight against AIDS
ANCBC	Association Nationale des Commerçants à Bétail du Cameroun / Cameroon's National Association of Cattle Traders
ANY	Archives Nationaux de Yaoundé / National Archives, Yaoundé
APROSPEN	Action pour la Promotion de la Santé et la Protection de l'Environnement / Action for Health Promotion and Environmental Protection
ARA	Association des Ressortissants de l'Adamaoua / Association of Citizens from Adamaoua
ARMP	Agence de Régulation des Marchés Publics / Public Contracts Regulatory Board
BARC	Bureau d'Affrètement de la Centrafrique / Central African Freight Bureau
BEAC	Banque des États de l'Afrique Centrale / Bank of Central African States
BGFT	Bureau de Gestion du Fret Terrestre / Road Freight Management Bureau
BNF	Bureau National de Fret / National Freight Bureau (Chad)
CAR	Central African Republic
CBF	Cameroon Business Forum
CCI	<i>Chef de centre (départemental) des impôts</i> / MINEFI's head of (district) centre for taxes
CEMAC	Central African Economic and Monetary Community
CFAF	CFA franc
CLSS	<i>Comité local pour la lutte contre le SIDA</i> / local committee for the fight against AIDS

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CNJD	Coalition Nationale des Jeunes pour le Développement / National Youth Coalition for Development
CNLS	Comité National de Lutte contre le SIDA / National Committee for the Fight against AIDS
CODASC	Coordination Diocésaine de Développement et des Activités Sociales – Caritas / Diocesan Coordination for Development and Social Activities – Caritas
CONSUPE	Contrôle Supérieur de l'État / National Audit Office
CORDAID	Catholic Organisation for Relief and Development Aid
COSCA	Collectif des Organisations de la Société Civile de l'Adamaoua / Coalition of Adamaoua's Civil Society Organisations
COTCO	Cameroon Oil Transportation Company
CPAR	Country Procurement Assessment Report (World Bank)
CTT	Coopération des Transporteurs Tchadiens / Chadian Transporters' Cooperative
DB	'Doing Business'
DGI	<i>Directeur Général des Impôts</i> / MINEFI's General Manager of Taxes
DGTC	Direction Générale des Grands Travaux du Cameroun / Cameroon Directorate General of Public Works
DSF	Développement sans Frontières / Development without Borders
ELCOBCAM	Éleveurs et Commerçants à Bétail de Cameroun / Cameroon Cattle Farmers and Traders
FEICOM	Fonds Spécial d'Équipement et d'Intervention Intercommunale / Special Council Support Fund for Mutual Assistance
FIMAC	Fonds d'Investissement des Micro-réalisations Agricoles et Communautaires / Investment Funds for Agricultural and Community Micro-projects
GDP	Gross domestic product
GIC	<i>Groupe d'initiative commune</i> / community initiative group
GIE	<i>Groupement d'intérêt économique</i> / economic interest group

Abbreviations and acronyms

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GTC	Groupe Technique Central / Central Technical Group
GTP	Groupe Technique Provinciale / Provincial Technical Group
HIPC	Heavily Indebted Poor Countries
IMF	International Monetary Fund
INS	Institut National de la Statistique / National Institute of Statistics
LCC	Local community contact (COTCO)
LDP	Livestock Development Project
MINEFI	Ministry of Economy and Finance (now MINFI)
MINEPAT	Ministry of Economic Planning and Regional Development
MINEPIA	Ministry of Livestock, Fisheries, and Animal Industries
MINFI	Ministry of Finance
MINT	Ministry of Transport
MINTAD	Ministry of Territorial Administration and Decentralisation
NGO	Non-governmental organisation
OHADA	Organisation for the Harmonisation of African Business Law
OTTC	Organisation des Transporteurs Terrestres du Cameroun / Cameroon's Ground Transporters' Organisation
PACDDU	Programme d'Appui aux Capacités Décentralisées de Développement Urbain / Support Programme for Decentralised Capacity Building for Urban Development
PADI	Programme d'Appui au Développement Intégré / Programme for the Support of Integrated Development
PARFAR	Programme d'Amélioration du Revenu Familial Rural / Project for the Improvement of Rural Households' Income
PASC	Programme d'Appui à la Société Civile / Civil Society Support Programme
PASOC	Programme d'Appui à la Structuration de la Société Civile / Support Programme for the Structuring of Civil Society
PCPA	Programme Concerté Pluri-Acteurs / Consultative Multi-Actor Programme

xiv Abbreviations and acronyms

PIAASI	Projet Intégré d'Appui aux Acteurs du Secteur Informel / Integrated Project for the Support of Informal Sector Operators
PNDP	Programme National de Développement Participatif / National Programme for Participatory Development
PNG	Programme National de Gouvernance / National Governance Programme
PPRT	Project for the Preparation of the Transport Reform
PSREP	Programme de Sécurisation des Recettes de l'Élevage et la Pêche / Programme for Enhanced Revenue Reliability in Animal Husbandry and Fisheries
RDPC	Rassemblement Démocratique du Peuple Camerounais / Cameroon People's Democratic Movement
RELUFA	Réseau de Lutte contre la Faim / Network for the Fight against Hunger
SETRACAUCAM	Syndicat de Transporteurs par Car et Autobus de Cameroon / Cameroon's Union of Passenger Transporters
SMP	Simplified management programme
SNTRC	Syndicat National des Transporteurs Routiers du Cameroun / Cameroon's National Union of Road Transporters
SOCOOPED	<i>Société cooperative pour la production et le développement</i> / cooperative society for production and development
SP	Société de Prévoyance / Provident Society
Sydev	Synergies de Développement / Development Synergies
TCL	Tchad-Cameroun Logistique
TPG	<i>Trésorier-payeur général</i> / paymaster general
UNDP	Union Nationale pour la Démocratie et le Progrès / National Union for Democracy and Progress
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UPC	Union du Peuple Camerounais
UTA	United Transport Africa