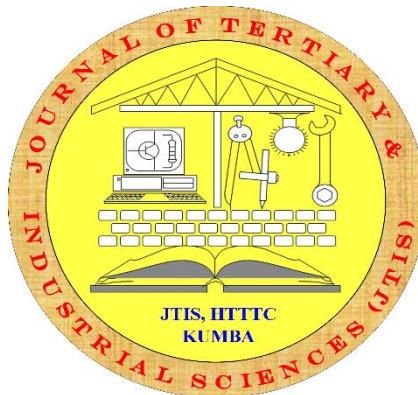


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Impact of the Crisis in Cameroon's North West and South West Regions on Business Organizations: The case of Cameroon Development Corporation (CDC) and Groupe Fokou (FK)

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Abstract

This paper examines the repercussions of the armed conflict in the North West and South West Regions of Cameroon on business organizations, using the Cameroon Development Corporation (CDC) and Groupe Fokou (GF) as case studies. The study employed a mixed research design, that combined and integrated both quantitative and qualitative methods to provide a more comprehensive understanding of the topic under investigation. Quantitative data was mainly gathered from secondary sources, including production and financial records, while qualitative data was collected through interviews of both top ranking officials and lower level employees of the organizations. Descriptive statistics were used to calculate averages and track changes in production and sales, while comparative trend analysis illustrated the impact of the crisis on both agricultural yields and business revenue. The findings of the study revealed that the Anglophone crisis has inflicted severe economic damages to both CDC and GF, leading to steep declines in productivity and revenue. The study recommends the government to enhance security measures, choose the path of reconciliation and healing and provide financial and technical support to the organizations, while the organizations should opt for further diversification of their activities, implement climate-smart practices and enforce workforce reintegration.

Key Words: *Political instability, Crises, Armed conflict, Insecurity, Anglophone Regions of Cameroon, Business Organizations*

1. Introduction

The Anglophone crisis in Cameroon, ignited by protests in 2016 and escalating into armed conflict by 2017, has profoundly reshaped the nation's social, political, and economic landscape. Originating from perceived marginalization of the English-speaking population, this conflict has deep historical roots tracing back to colonial divisions. The integration of the British Southern Cameroons into a predominantly French-speaking Cameroon left the Anglophone community underrepresented, sowing seeds of discontent that have now culminated in unrests. Economically, the crisis has devastated localities like Limbe, Buea, Kumba, and Bamenda, just to name a few. Once thriving commercial centres, these cities have witnessed numerous business closures and daily disruptions. The introduction of "Ghost Town Mondays", where businesses shut down in protest, has become a poignant form of resistance, yet it has paralyzed the economy. Small enterprises, the backbone of these communities, have been particularly vulnerable, struggling amid ongoing uncertainty and violence (Foretia Foundation, 2024). Larger corporations have also felt the impact.

The Cameroon Development Corporation (CDC), established in the mid-20th century, has long been a cornerstone of Cameroon's agricultural sector, particularly known for its

production of rubber, oil palm, and bananas. CDC, a major employer in Cameroon, has suffered extensive damage, including attacks on plantations, destruction of infrastructure, threats and insecurity to workers. This has led to a sharp decline in production, significant revenue losses, widespread job cuts, several months of unpaid salaries, further destabilizing the regional economy. The World Bank notes that Cameroon's GDP growth rate, which was 5.8% in 2015, was downgraded to 3.9% in 2019 due to the crisis (World Bank, 2017).

Similarly, the retail sector has not been spared. Groupe Fokou (FK), one of Cameroon's leading trading companies and a prominent retailer in the Anglophone regions, has faced plummeting sales and disrupted supply chains, challenging its traditional business model and forcing adaptations in response to the volatile environment.

Generally, over the past eight years, businesses in these regions have collectively lost billions in revenue, deepening the economic crisis. The investment climate has also been adversely affected, with both domestic and international investors reassessing their commitments due to ongoing uncertainty. The long-term development prospects of the country are now in question, as the crisis threatens to derail economic ambitions. The Global Centre for the Responsibility to Protect highlights that civilians in the Anglophone regions are at imminent risk of atrocity crimes due to continued violence between government forces and armed separatists (Global Centre for the Responsibility to Protect, 2025, March 14).

The future of Cameroon's Anglophone regions remains uncertain. What began as a quest for political representation has evolved into a complex web of challenges. The persistence of violence, economic decline and eroded investment prospects paint a grim picture. Addressing these issues requires not only political reforms but also economic recovery, reconciliation, and healing. Cameroon's path forward will depend on its ability to confront historical grievances and bridge deep societal divides.

Objective/Justification of the Study

This study strives to establish the impact of the crises in the North West and South West Regions of Cameroon on the productivity of business organizations.

The study seeks to paint a clear picture of the destructive effects of political instability on business investment, enterprise performance, and overall economic resilience in Cameroon's Anglophone Regions. There is urgent need for policy reforms aimed at stabilizing the political environment, strengthening institutions, and fostering economic recovery in regions affected by conflict. By addressing these issues, there is great potential to build a more resilient economy, even in the face of deep-seated instability.

2. Review of related literature

A growing body of research has examined the impact of political instability on businesses, both in Cameroon and other conflict-affected regions. The results consistently highlight the detrimental effects of such instability on economic performance and private investment, making it clear that businesses in these environments face numerous challenges.

Prominent scholars like Achille Mbembe have highlighted how prolonged instability hampers economic growth and development. In his work, "Critique of Black Reason", Mbembe (2017) offers a capacious genealogy of the category of Blackness, from the

Atlantic slave trade to the present, to critically reevaluate history, racism, and the future of humanity.

Ibrahim and Ngahane (2024) explored how political instability affects private investment across African firms. Their study, using data from the World Bank Enterprise Surveys, found that political instability has a significant negative impact on business investment, regardless of the firms' location. Interestingly, they observed that small firms were less affected by this instability. They also highlighted that regulatory, administrative, and infrastructure constraints play a major role in limiting investment, particularly in smaller towns. This research stresses the importance of political stability in creating an environment conducive to business growth (Ibrahim & Ngahane, 2024, p. 37).

Similarly, Watabajia and Shumetie (2021) investigated the relationship between political instability, corruption, and enterprise performance in African countries. Their study of 5,780 enterprises in 2013 and 3,616 enterprises in 2016 across 18 African nations revealed that political instability worsens enterprise performance, particularly through its mediating effect on corruption. This research adds a new layer of understanding to the complex dynamics of corruption, political instability, and business performance in Africa. It suggests that the toxic combination of these factors hampers the ability of businesses to thrive in unstable environments (Watabajia & Shumetie, 2021, p. 913).

In a broader context, Compaoré et al. (2020) focused on how conflict and political instability contribute to banking crises in developing countries. They found that countries affected by conflict are two and a half times more likely to experience a banking crises, with the duration of conflict playing a critical role. For example, the likelihood of a banking crisis increases to 25% in countries where conflict lasts for ten years, compared to 16.4% when the conflict lasts for only two years. The study also pointed out that the fiscal crises caused by conflict reduce a country's productive capacity, cut government revenue and lead to higher unproductive spending, including military expenditure. This demonstrates the far-reaching economic consequences of instability, particularly in terms of long-term financial health (Compaoré et al., 2020, p. 115).

In a more related context, Dr. Pippie Hugues, policy analyst at the Nkafu Policy Institute, in his paper titled "The Anglophone Crises and its effects on Small Business Operations: The Case of Buea, clearly demonstrates that the impact of the crises in North West and South West Regions of Cameroon is particularly severe in the Buea Municipality, where many villages have been emptied of their inhabitants and some on the brink of extinction. He asserts that several businesses in Buea are facing severe challenges, some have closed down and farming, which used to be a primary activity for most of the inhabitants, is practically nonexistent.

In a similar study carried out by the World Bank Group (2021) titled "The Socio-Political Crises in the North West and South West Regions of Cameroon: Assessing the Economic and Social Impact of the Crises, posits that the conflict has resulted in significant destruction of critical assets; schools, health facilities and productive infrastructure have been deliberately targeted and destroyed. The findings further assert that the crises has increased poverty levels and damaged livelihoods and human capital conditions in both affected and neighbouring regions. The study concludes that the crisis has caused a significant contraction of the North West and South West regions' economies.

3. Methodology

This study used a mixed-methods approach to explore the impact of political instability on businesses in Cameroon's Anglophone Regions, combining both quantitative data analysis and qualitative insights from reports and academic literature. Quantitative data was mainly secondary in nature, gathered from production and financial records from two key businesses, the Cameroon Development Corporation (CDC) and Groupe Fokou, while the qualitative data was collected through interviews of top ranking staff of both organizations, including data from government reports, NGO records, and relevant research to provide a fuller context. The CDC's annual reports from 2013 to 2024 provided data on production volumes and crop yields, which allowed for comparisons over time. Data was mainly collected from the CDC head office in Limbe and in other estates within the Anglophone regions. On the other hand, Groupe Fokou's branches in Limbe, Buea, Kumba, and Bamenda, were accessed for data collection. Documentary analysis was used to assess annual agricultural productivity and revenue trends. Time-series segmentation (2013-2024) helped break down data into three periods: Pre-Crisis (2013-2016), Peak Crisis (2017-2020), and Current State of Crisis (2021-2024). This segmentation provided a clear view of how the crisis has affected businesses over time. Descriptive statistics were used to calculate averages and track changes in production and sales, while comparative trend analysis illustrated the impact of the crisis on both agricultural yields and business revenue. Groupe Fokou's sales records from 2015 to 2024 were analysed to track revenue fluctuations, particularly during periods of heightened disruption like "Ghost Town Mondays." In addition, government and NGO reports offered insights into the escalating conflict in Cameroon's Anglophone regions, including infrastructure damage and business closures. Peer-reviewed literature also helped shape the study's conceptual framework, drawing parallels with similar crises in other regions.

4. Presentation of Findings

The findings are presented in statistical frequency distribution tables, followed by descriptive analysis. The first part presents statistics of CDC's production turnover before the crises, at the peak of the crises and the present situation, meanwhile the second part looks at Groupe Fokou's sales turnover within the same periods mentioned above.

Cameroon Development Corporation (CDC)

The Cameroon Development Corporation (CDC), a major agricultural exporter, has long been a cornerstone of Cameroon's agricultural sector, particularly known for its production of rubber, oil palm, and bananas. Over the years, these crops have contributed significantly to the local economy and the livelihoods of numerous families. However, the ongoing crisis in the Anglophone regions has posed significant challenges to the CDC's agricultural output, highlighting both the vulnerabilities and resilience of the sector. The continuous shutdowns hindered production and distribution, affecting everything from harvesting to export shipments. This disruption caused a ripple effect across local economies, impacting suppliers, transporters and smaller businesses, while contributing to job losses and higher living costs.

Pre-Crisis Period (2013-2016)

Table 1: Frequency distribution of production turnover between 2013 and 2016

Year	Turnover (tons/hectare (t/h))		
	Rubber	Palm nut	Banana
2013	1.14	7.50	30.09
2014	1.21	7.60	31.40
2015	1.23	7.40	30.17
2016	0.98	7.10	30.02
Mean	1.14	7.40	30.42

Source: Researcher's computed statistics from CDC Archives (2025)

Before the onset of the crisis, from 2013 to 2016, CDC's agricultural production was characterized by stability and growth. Rubber, oil palm and banana production reached notable peaks during this period. Rubber production averaged approximately 1.14 tons per hectare, with the highest yield recorded in 2015 at 1.23 tons per hectare. Oil palm production remained robust, averaging 7.4 tons per hectare, with a peak of 7.60 tons per hectare in 2014. Banana production was particularly strong, reaching 30.421 tons per hectare in 2016. These years are often remembered as a time when CDC's operations were running near full capacity, supported by favourable weather conditions, effective management practices, and access to international markets. However, the year 2016, when the crises started marked the beginning of a downward trend in productivity.

Peak Crisis Period (2017-2020)

Table 2: Frequency distribution of production turnover between 2017 and 2020

Year	Turnover (tons/hectare (t/h))		
	Rubber	Palm nut	Banana
2017	1.46	8.70	30.02
2018	1.08	4.22	16.84
2019	0.18	1.82	00.00
2020	0.24	3.33	14.92
Mean	0.74	4.52	15.45

Source: Researcher's computed statistics from CDC Archives (2025)

The situation took a drastic turn with the eruption of armed conflict in 2017. The peak crisis period from 2017 to 2020 saw production levels plummet across all three crops. The violence, displacement of workers and destruction of infrastructure rendered normal farming operations nearly impossible. Rubber production, which had remained relatively stable in the years prior, saw a dramatic drop from 1.46t/h in 2017 to 1.08t/h in 2018 and to a devastating 0.18 tons per hectare in 2019. Thus, the average production of rubber within this period dropped from 1.14 tons per hectare in the pre-crisis period to 0.74 tons per hectare. The oil palm sector was also severely affected, with yields

decreasing from 8.7 tons per hectare in 2017 to just 1.82 tons per hectare in 2019. Perhaps most striking was the complete collapse of banana production, which fell from 30.02 tons per hectare in 2017 to 16.84 in 2018 and to astonishing zero in 2019. The abandonment of plantations and the inability to maintain security around the farms led to the cessation of banana cultivation. However, in 2020, banana plantations were rehabilitated, completing the year with a fascinating 14.92 tons per hectare production.

Current State of Crisis (2021–2024)

Table 3: Frequency distribution of production turnover between 2021 and 2024

Turnover (tons/hectare)			
Year	Rubber	Oil Palm	Banana
2021	0.26	3.31	16.84
2022	0.29	3.33	00.00
2023	0.33	3.38	14.92
2024	0.36	4.0	34.45
Mean	0.31	3.51	16.55

Source: Researcher's computed statistics from CDC Archives (2025)

The current state of the crisis, extending into 2024, presents a mixed picture. While the sector has not fully recovered, signs of rebound are emerging, particularly in banana production. Rubber and oil palm yields, though still below pre-crisis levels, have shown incremental growth. By 2024, rubber production reached 0.36 tons per hectare, a significant improvement over the lows of 2020, but still far from the stable yields of the pre-crisis years. Oil palm production has shown a steadier recovery, rising from 3.33 tons per hectare in 2020 to 4.0 tons per hectare in 2024. Banana production has proven to be the most resilient, bouncing back from 0.00 tons per hectare in 2022 to an impressive 34.451 tons per hectare in 2024, surpassing pre-crisis production levels in some years.

Summary of findings

Table 4: Frequency distribution of production turnover before, during and the present state of the crises

Turnover (tons/hectare)			
Period	Rubber	Oil Palm	Banana
Pre-Crisis Period (2013-2016)	1.14	7.40	30.42
Peak Crisis Period (2017-2020)	0.74	4.52	15.45
Current State of Crisis (2021-2024)	0.31	3.51	16.55

Source: Researcher's computed statistics from CDC Archives (2025)

The Cameroon Development Corporation experienced a general decline in production of all its products, namely rubber, oil palm and banana from the pre-crisis period into the peak of the crises, up to the present state of affairs. Rubber production which had fallen steadily to almost floor level is gradually picking up but still far below the pre-crisis

levels. Oil palm yields, though still below pre-crisis levels, have shown significant incremental growth. As for banana production, though the sector has not fully recovered, signs of recovery are eminent.

This partial recovery suggests that, despite ongoing challenges, CDC has managed to adapt. Banana farms, in particular, have been able to re-establish operations more effectively than rubber and oil palm plantations. The resilience of banana production may be due to the crop's ability to thrive in the region's soils with relatively less labour intensity, allowing for faster recovery once security conditions improved. This stands in contrast to the more labour-intensive and infrastructure-dependent rubber and oil palm sectors.

Table 5: Interview Results for C.D.C

S/N	Question	Quotation
1	How many years have you been working in this company?	Among the 5 persons interviewed, 2 top management staff had worked for 12 and 15 years, 1 lower level staff and 2 field workers had worked for 18 years and above
2	Do you think the crises in the north west and south west regions is having an effect on the business of your company?	All the 5 resource persons strongly agreed that the crisis has severely affected operations in the company as activities are not as rigorous as before. The 2 top managers affirmed that they see the results of business turn over and they are not good.
3	How can you compare the performance of the company before the crises and now?	All 5 respondents agreed that operations before the crisis were smooth, people worked with confidence and they were rarely delays in salary whereas during the crisis it was difficult to go to work, the plantations were abandoned and revenue drop
4	How has the crises personally affected you?	All 5 interviewees complained of several months of unpaid salaries and economic hardship. The field workers were particularly scared to go to work because of threats and insecurity
5	What do you think is the future of your company?	The 2 top managers believe if the government found ways to end the crises and gave subventions to the company they will re-emerge while the other 3 workers were of the opinion that the way things are going the company could close down.

Source: Field Survey, 2025

From the interview results, both top management staff and field workers have felt the effect of the crises both at personal level and at the level of the organization. The senior staff see a possibility of full rebounce if the government makes efforts to resolve the crises and supports the country's second employer, CDC through subventions and support. On

the other hand, the lower level staff and field workers fear for a steady decline and complete fall of the company, stemming from their experience in the field. However, this may not be the case as the current state of affairs has signs of greenlight and rebounce as the crises gradually wears out on its own.

2. Groupe Fokou

The ongoing crisis in Cameroon's Anglophone regions, characterized by "Ghost Town Mondays," has had a profound impact on several businesses, particularly Groupe Fokou, a key player in the region's economy. These enforced business shutdowns, beginning in February 2017 and continuing till present date represent over 440 Mondays of forced inactivity, with serious implications for local businesses. Table 5 beneath presents some monthly sales statistics of Groupe Fokou before the crises, at the beginning of the crises and the current state of the crises.

Table 6: Frequency distribution of monthly sales of Groupe Fokou before, during and the present state of the crises

	Sales FCFA/Month)	(Million
Pre-Crisis Period	150 - 200	
Beginning of Crisis Period	100	
Current State of Crisis	50	

Source: Researcher's computed statistics from Groupe Fokou Archives (2025)

A comparison of sales before and during the crisis illustrates the severity of the downturn. Pre-crisis sales hovered between 150-200 million FCFA monthly, but this dropped sharply to 100 million FCFA as the crisis set in, and later to a mere 50 million FCFA. Statistical analysis confirms the crisis's significant effect on the company's financial health, with time series and regression models indicating the long-term challenges posed by the prolonged shutdowns. Groupe Fokou, a company once meeting monthly sales targets of 150 million FCFA, the shutdowns significantly disrupted its operations. Weekly sales that had averaged 5 million FCFA per day dropped drastically, costing the company an estimated 2.1 billion FCFA due to these closures alone. This was compounded by shifts in customer behaviour, including lower discretionary spending, and disrupted supply chains as observed by the authorities of the organization. By the time the crisis had escalated, the company saw its monthly sales plummet to as low as 50 million FCFA, leading to the closure of several branches across the affected regions. While some predict a slow recovery, the road ahead for businesses like Groupe Fokou remains uncertain, dependent on both regional stability and the resolution of the Anglophone crisis. Until then, the economic and societal repercussions of "Ghost Town Mondays" will continue to shape life in Cameroon's Anglophone regions, reinforcing the complex link between political unrest and economic decline.

The impact was not limited to Groupe Fokou. Other companies involved in general commerce in these regions also felt the brunt. The continuous shutdowns have caused severe disruptions in business activities and triggered a ripple effect across local economies, impacting suppliers, transporters, and smaller businesses, while contributing

to job losses and higher living costs. The broader economic picture is bleak. The compounded losses from reduced economic activity have lowered regional GDP and government tax revenue, while also discouraging both local and foreign investment. The situation has led to higher unemployment rates, rising prices, and a general sense of social instability in the affected regions (Actu Cameroun, 2023).

Table 7: Interview Results for Groupe Fokou

S/N	Question	Quotation
1	How many years have you been working in this company?	Two workers were interviewed, one manager and one sales personnel. Both of them had worked for 8 years and above
2	Do you think the crises in the north west and south west regions is having an effect on the business of your company?	Both workers strongly agreed, explaining that they don't longer have customers as before. The manager affirmed that sales turnover and profit margin had fallen drastically and forced their branch in Limbe to close down
3	How can you compare the performance of the company before the crises and now?	Before the crises, they both agreed business was booming, but now they barely have customers in their stores in the Anglophone regions.
4	How has the crises personally affected you?	They both feared to lose their job if the crises continued because with the current business turnover, the company will not be able to pay their salaries and support workers
5	What do you think is the future of your company?	The top manager thinks the company will close some agencies if the crises continued while the sales personnel fear for complete close down.

Source: Field Survey, 2025

Workers of Groupe Fokou have confirmed the poor performance of their business operations caused by the crises and they are pessimistic about the fate of the company in the affected regions if the crisis continues.

Discussion of Findings

This section provides an interpretation of the findings for both CDC and Groupe Fokou, clearly outlining the impact of the crises in production and sales of both organizations respectively and compares the findings with previous studies.

Impact of the crises on the Cameroon Development Corporation (CDC)

Before the crisis, CDC experienced steady growth in all its products, but the escalation of the crisis in 2016 had a devastating impact on its operations. The period from 2017 to 2020 witnessed a dramatic decline in production across all sectors, primarily due to violence, displacement of workers, and destruction of infrastructure, rendering normal farming operations nearly impossible. Workers of the corporation suffered gross rights violations such as murders, amputations, and abductions for ransom. The non-payment of salaries exacerbated the situation, leading to further demotivation and a mass exodus of workers from affected regions. This exodus not only depleted the workforce but also strained local

economies that depended on CDC's operations. As of 2024, the CDC's recovery in all three major products had significantly improved, though uneven, yet some surpassing pre-crisis yields. This suggests that certain crops, particularly bananas, are more adaptable to post-crisis conditions. Looking at it from a broader socioeconomic repercussion, the decline of the CDC has had far-reaching socioeconomic implications. As the second-largest employer in Cameroon, its downturn has led to widespread job losses, reduced local commerce, and declining tax revenues, exacerbating regional poverty. The loss of agricultural exports has further strained the national economy, highlighting CDC's importance beyond the farming sector.

In a related study, the Nkafu Policy Institute (2024), investigated the Anglophone Crises and its effects on small business operations in Buea, revealing that there has been a significant impact of the said crises on small businesses in the city of Buea. The study asserts that several businesses in Buea have closed down and farming which used to be a primary activity for most of the inhabitants, is practically nonexistent, proving further the extent to which the crises has affected these regions economically as revealed by the present study, despite the fact that the latter targeted rather small business operations specifically in Buea.

In another study carried out by the World Bank Group (2021) titled "The Socio-Political Crises in the North West and South West Regions of Cameroon: Assessing the Economic and Social Impact of the Crises," posits that the conflict has resulted in significant destruction of critical assets; schools, health facilities and productive infrastructure have been deliberately targeted and destroyed. The findings further emphasize that the crisis has increased poverty levels and damaged livelihoods and human capital conditions in both affected and neighbouring regions. The study concludes that the crisis has caused a significant contraction of the North West and South West regions' economies, reflecting the findings of the present study.

Impact of the crises on Groupe Fokou (GF)

The ongoing conflict in Cameroon's Anglophone regions has profoundly impacted the local economy, particularly affecting businesses like Groupe Fokou. In fact, the company has faced significant challenges amid the crisis. In June 2023, the company laid off 150 employees, and closed down some of its branches in the Anglophone regions such as the branch in Limbe, citing economic difficulties exacerbated by the conflict as gathered by the researcher during an interview with top ranking officials of the company. The introduction of "Ghost Town Mondays," where businesses are forced to close in protest by separatists has further disrupted commercial activities. This practice, combined with escalating insecurity, has led to a sharp decline in sales for many businesses, including Groupe Fokou. Over the past eight years, businesses in the region have collectively lost billions in revenue, contributing to a broader economic instability in the Anglophone regions and deepening the economic crisis of the country as whole.

When Watabajia and Shumetie (2021) investigated the relationship between political instability, armed conflict and enterprise performance in African countries, they discovered that political instability worsens enterprise performance, particularly through armed conflict. Their study suggested that political instability hampers the ability of businesses to thrive in unstable environments, as reflected in the findings of the present study.

Similarly, Compaoré et al., (2020) focused on how conflict and political instability contribute to banking crises in developing countries. They found that countries affected by conflict are two and a half times more likely to experience a banking crisis, with the duration of conflict playing a critical role. The study also pointed out that the fiscal crises caused by conflict reduce a country's productive capacity, cut government revenue and lead to higher unproductive spending, including military expenditure. This demonstrates the far-reaching economic consequences of instability in the north west and south west regions, particularly in terms of the productive and retail sectors.

Therefore, findings from the present study clearly align with those of previous studies and confirm that the crises in the North West and South West regions of Cameroon has had devastating effects for businesses as it has triggered operational disruptions, economic instability and heightened risks.

5. Conclusion

The Anglophone crisis has inflicted severe economic damage on businesses like the CDC and Groupe Fokou, leading to steep declines in productivity and revenue. Opinions gathered from top management of both organizations have revealed that these political upheavals have had a negative impact on their companies, having an incidence on partnering financial institutions and investors. They assert that there has been a devastation in productivity and economic performance of the companies. Without concerted efforts to address security concerns and provide economic support, the path to recovery remains uncertain. A coordinated approach involving the government, private sector, and international partners is essential to restore stability and revitalize the economy in these regions. Addressing the historical grievances of the Anglophone population and bridging societal divides are crucial steps toward sustainable peace and economic prosperity.

This research has found that for any company, whatever its size, the political instability of a country can have a significant impact on its business operations or the markets in which it operates. The study has contributed to the current body of knowledge of business management by providing new data with regards to the comportment of very large companies in the face of political instability and armed conflict. This research therefore adds a new layer of understanding to the complex dynamics of political instability, armed conflict and business performance in Cameroon. It suggests that these factors hamper the ability of businesses to thrive in unstable environments.

Recommendations for Sustainable Recovery

Addressing the challenges faced by CDC and Groupe Fokou requires a multifaceted approach:

Recommendations for CDC

Enhanced Security Measures: The government should prioritize inclusive peace talks with separatist groups to establish security guarantees for agricultural zones. Community policing initiatives can involve locals in protecting farmlands and ensuring the safety of agricultural workers.

Financial and Technical Support: Providing low-interest loans can enable the CDC to replant abandoned fields, repair essential infrastructure, and invest in modern farming equipment. Collaborations with agrotech firms can introduce precision farming techniques, reducing labour dependency and increasing yields.

Diversification and Climate-Smart Practices: Expanding the CDC's portfolio beyond rubber, oil palm, and bananas can reduce market and conflict-related risks. Investments in drought-resistant crop varieties, efficient irrigation systems, and reforestation programs can help safeguard long-term agricultural sustainability.

Workforce Reintegration: Vocational training programs can equip displaced workers with skills to reintegrate into the workforce effectively. Enhanced social welfare initiatives, including improved access to healthcare and housing, can help retain skilled labour and rebuild the workforce.

Recommendations for Groupe Fokou

- 1) Carryout thorough risk assessment: regularly evaluate the geographical landscape, local conditions and potential impacts on their operations, supply chains and market access.
- 2) Do regular SWOT and Value Chain analyses for branches in the Anglophone regions to identify and close down non profitable or potentially non beneficial branches.
- 3) Diversify by reducing dependence on single market, supplier or location and get different supply chains, investments and customer bases across the other regions. This will spread the risk and enhance resilience
- 4) Secure political risk insurance: to purchase specialized risk insurance to protect against financial losses from political violence and lockdowns.
- 5) Drop prices in a strict minimum to maintain business
- 6) Acquiring low-interest loans can enable the GF to diversify rapidly into new products and new markets in other regions.

Suggestions for further studies

Future research in this domain should explore the effects of the crises in the north west and south west regions of Cameroon on small and medium sized enterprises that make the backbone of the economy, so as to measure the far-reaching economic consequences of the instability. Also, future researchers should not only look at the consequences of armed conflicts on businesses, but also spell out measures to avoid such disastrous upheavals, which unavoidably come with negative effects, not only from economic standpoint, but also social disorders and loss of human lives.

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