

Stakes and Challenges of Sino-Cameroon Agriculture Cooperation 2008 -2023

Jaff Lionel Leinyuy, Ph. D

University of Yaounde I

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ABSTRACT

Sino-Cameroon Agriculture cooperation has been the engine of Agricultural development especially in the rural communities in Cameroon where china seek for vast tracts of land for agricultural investments. The recent increase in food prices and the high demand for agricultural products in Cameroon and its neighbouring countries have created a scenario for China to invest in agriculture in Cameroon in order to meet the demand in the national and international scene. This opens a lacuna for Chinese companies to sign concessions with the Cameroon government to acquire vast hectares of land for large scale agricultural investments. Chinese companies in Cameroon have been involved in the cultivation of Rice, Maize, Cassava and many other products in order to meet the national and international demands. These companies have acquired vacant and unproductive land in Cameroon for foreign direct investments especially in the locality of Nanga Eboko and santchou. This paper seeks to examine the contributions of the Sino- Cameroon agriculture in the development of Cameroon. A qualitative research protocol was explore to understand the paradigms of the Sino- Cameroon agriculture in Cameroon in strengthening the Sino – Cameroon Cooperation and to meet the high demand of agricultural products. The results portrays that the Sino-Cameroon agriculture cooperation has contributed a great deal to solve the problem of food insecurity in Cameroon. Mechanised agriculture has also been promoted in Cameroon through these ventures which have greatly contributed in the high production of agricultural products to solve the national and international concerns. However large scale land concessions for agricultural investments have affected the rural population that depends of land for their livelihood. This paper therefore makes prospects on revisiting the long term land concessions for agricultural investments and implementing diverse techniques in order to ensure a sustainable and win- win cooperation.

Key Words: China, Cameroon, Economic, Agriculture

INTRODUCTION

Cameroon has been attractive to investors in the agricultural sector that seek for vast tracts of land for foreign direct investment. According to the Food and Agriculture Organisation, Cameroon has about 6.2million hectares of land, of which only 1.3million hectares are cultivated.¹This attracts Chinese companies to invest on agricultural production in Cameroon in other to enhance the Sino- Cameroon cooperation. The trend of foreign direct investment has change in Cameroon especially with the shift from North- South cooperation to South-South cooperation. Cameroon's shift towards South-South cooperation reflects a strategic decision to engage with a broader range of partners and pursue development goals in ways that align more closely with its own interest and priorities. South-South Cooperation offers Cameroon an opportunity to diversify its partners and reduce dependency on traditional North- South Cooperation, which comes with strings attached and influenced by external agendas. China therefore has become one of the central partners of Cameroon to engine her agricultural policies with focused on large scale agriculture, mechanisation of Agriculture and effective transfer of agricultural technology to improve yields. The Forum for china African cooperation aims at exploring

¹ Samuel Nguiffo and Michel Watio, *Agro Industrial Investments in Cameroon: Large Scale and acquisition since 2005*, London International Institute of Environment and Development, 2015.

initiatives to innovate cooperation methods, enrich cooperation content and ensure the effective implementation of agricultural cooperation with shared interest². The cooperation further explores opportunities to strengthen food security giving coordination mechanisms for Belt and road cooperation assistance fund to improve supply Capacity.

Agricultural Cooperation between China and Cameroon is a capital generating avenue where each partner develops winning strategies to make the best of the opportunities to enhance win- win cooperation. Agricultural projects between Cameroon and china has been reinforce following the third Forum for China Africa cooperation held in 2006 in Beijing which paved the way for massive Chinese interventions in Cameroon as evidence in Nanga-Eboko, and Sanctou. The summit in Dakar in 2021 of the forum on China – African cooperation strongly promotes agricultural developments in the Sino- Cameroon relations as an important bench mark for international cooperation with Africa. Despite the execution of all these projects and Chinese techno agricultural knowledge, agricultural cooperation between China and Cameroon is subject to multiple Stakes and challenges. Therefore, this article aimed at Analysing the impact of China's agricultural investments in Cameroon. It specifically seeks to establish whether China's investments in the agricultural sector in Cameroon contribute to transferring agricultural technologies to the local Cameroonian population; the challenges of China-Cameroon agricultural cooperation and the potential measures to stem these limits

The Facets of Sino -Cameroon Cooperation

The Sino-Cameroonian relations were mainly driven by Beijing's willingness to increase the number of its diplomatic allies and showcase its solidarity with the third world countries. Cameroon non alignment policy and hopes to loosen France's dominating influence on Cameroon's economy and foreign affairs and based on the consideration of china not involved in the colonization of Africa open Cameroon to Strengthened her economic allies with China. Major agreements signed since 1971 includes the general trade agreement signed in 1972, agreement of reciprocal protection and promotion of investments and agreement of economic and commercial cooperation in 1997. These agreements enable Chinese enterprises to participate in the socio-economic development of Cameroon³.

However, the turning point in the Sino-Cameroonian relations was at the first Forum on China–Africa Cooperation (FOCAC) held in Beijing in 2000. Since that summit, bilateral trade and economic cooperation projects have rapidly increased and China's presence in this country has substantially deepened and diversified. In the same year, a China Trade Promotion Centre was created in Douala and in 2002, Prime Minister Zhu Rongji visited Cameroon and signed an ambitious agreement for economic and commercial cooperation, a framework accord specifying Chinese willingness to offer grants and loans to Cameroon as well as giving orientations to boost commercial exchanges. In 2007, eight agreements were signed worth \$129 million, increasing technical and economic cooperation. In 2010, China Political People's Consultative Conference Chairman led a parliamentary delegation that allowed the signature of an additional eight cooperation agreements, including a 3.2 billion CFA (\$6.4 million) grant and an interest-free loan to enhance infrastructural development⁴. On the Cameroonian hand, the year 2000 was perceived as a turning point. From the beginning, Yaoundé played a very active role in the FOCAC, using this forum as a platform for promoting Cameroon's role in Sino-African relations as well as a closer bilateral partnership with Beijing⁵. Cameroon in response to the economic and social challenges adopted development strategies detailed on the Growth and Development Strategy Paper and vision 2035.

²Doborah Braitigam, "Green Dreams: Myth and Realities in China's Agricultural Investments in Africa". Available at [http://www/Foreign Direct Investment/MG/2000](http://www.Foreign Direct Investment/MG/2000), access on 24 may 2023.

³ J. P. Cabestain, "China- Cameroon Relations: Fortunes and Limits of an Old Political Complicity" Hong kong Baptist University, *South African Journal of International Affairs*, 2015, p. 3.

⁴ A. Khan, "The emergence of China and Cameroon: Trade Impact and Evolution of Trade Configuration", Dakar, CODESRIA, 2014, p. 99.

⁵ P. Gaillard, *Amadou Ahidjo Patriote et despote, Batisseur de l etat Camerounais*, Groupe Jeune Afrique, Paris, 1994, pp. 173-174.

The pillars of these new strategies were poverty alleviation, becoming an industrialized nation, becoming a middle-class country and consolidating democracy and national unity while respecting the countries diversity. The development strategies were based on increased investments in infrastructural developments and rapid modernization production by improving the business climate and governance, maintaining a high level of growth in order to achieve the millennium development goals and above all improvement in international cooperation by opening Cameroon to the outside world. Today, China has become Cameroon's main external creditor⁶. The needs and interests of the population have been key drivers of this new privileged partnership between Cameroon and China has been one of the key countries to enhance Foreign Direct Investments in Cameroon and above all Economic Growth and Development of the country.

The Sino- Cameroon Agriculture

After several decades of self-reliance, China since the mid-1970s progressively opened up to the rest of the world. In 1999, China adopted the "Go Global policy" which was aimed at encouraging Chinese enterprises to begin investing overseas. This policy has contributed to china's emergence as a global economic power. Today China is one of the cherished development and financial partner of many African countries and Cameroon in particular. The forum for China- Africa cooperation (FOCAC) was established in 2000. During the 2006 edition, China gave as assistance 20 billion US dollars to target infrastructure in Africa for a period of five years⁷. The forum is now an important platform for dialogue where key discussions on investments are made by the Chinese government and African leaders⁸. . Investors seek to focus on the production of agricultural commodity to meet the growing global demand for food. China is often singled out as one of the countries that have invested on agriculture in Africa and Cameroon in particular. According to the World Bank statistics, there are 86 Chinese projects in Africa covering about 8.3million hectares of agricultural land⁹.

In Cameroon, after the establishment of diplomatic and economic ties between Cameroon and china in 1971, China has progressively placed itself at the forefront of developments. The recent national development strategy as detailed in the "vision 2035" documents and the growth and employment strategy paper (GESp) provides justification for huge investments in Cameroon to enhance economic growth and development in Cameroon¹⁰. The Chinese companies are greatly involved to see Cameroon attain this vision in the agricultural sector. Still in line with the vision 2035, the government of Cameroon embarks on the second generation agriculture with the mechanization of agriculture to increase the output and boast agricultural production in Cameroon. As a result, to strengthen Sino- Cameroon diplomatic relations, the republic of China signed an agreement with the Cameroon government to improve on agricultural production in Cameroon.

Tenets of the Sino-Cameroon Agriculture

The first Chinese agricultural investments announced in Cameroon was the establishment in 2006 of the Sino-Cameroon joint venture, called Sino Cameroon Iko agriculture, that would exploit 10,000 hectares of land leased for 99 years from the Cameroon government. The plans were to cultivate rice, cassava, maize and other agricultural products in Nanga Eboko and Santchou. It was estimated at \$120 million, the project was to be financed by FOCAC funds via the Exim Bank¹¹. In Nanga Eboko, preliminary 2000 hectares was tested for the cultivation of rice, cassava and maize. In the concessions signed in 2006; the government of Cameroon gave 10000 hectares of arable land to be cultivated for a period of 99 years in Nanga Eboko and Santchou. This

⁶Pierre Liu, "Impacts of foreign agricultural investment on developing countries": evidence from case studies, Food and Agricultural Organization., [http:// www./C:/Users/user/Downloads/Liu%20\(1\).pdf](http://www./C:/Users/user/Downloads/Liu%20(1).pdf)

⁷Besada, Harry, Yang Wang et Whaley John, «China's Growing Economic Activity in Africa» Working Paper no 14024, Cambridge, MA: National Bureau of Economic Research,2008, P.33.

⁸H.Dureel, " Chinese Investments in Cameroon: Examining the Trends, Challenges and Perspectives on the Environments and Communities, A Report WWF CCPO September 2014, p. 15.

⁹C. Alden, *China in Africa*, London, Oxford University Press, 2009, p. 6.

¹⁰Jean-Bruno Tagne, "Enquête sur la riziculture chinoise-a-nanga-eboko,"<http://camerooninfo.net/stories/0,27126,.html>.

¹¹M. Tsounkeu and DurrelHalleison. "Chinese Investments in Cameroon: Examining the trends, challenges and Perspectives on the Environments and communities". *Cameroon Report World Wide Fund for Nature* , Cameroon, September 2014, P.26.

agricultural venture was aimed at boosting the production of Agricultural products and the effective transfer of agricultural technology to the Cameroonians improve the output of Agricultural products in Cameroon and maximum utilization of land in Cameroon that was considered vacant and unproductive.

Since 2006, the Sino Cameroon Iko agriculture limited in Nanga Eboko and Santchou has involved in the experimentation and application of three main crops namely cassava, rice and maize. These company works closely with the IRAD and the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development (MINADER) in the transfer of technology and in the experimentation and application process.

Types of Products

Rice Cultivation

Chinese rice production scheme introduced in Nanga Eboko since 2006 has recorded improvement in yields, control of dangerous weeds, and the fight against crop diseases, destructive insects and climate stress. Cameroon's potential in rice and other cereals production attracted Foreign Direct Investment from China with the setting up of some large-scale rice farms by the Sino –Cameroon Iko Agriculture Development Company Limited in Nanga Eboko in the center region. The scheme was not only aimed at boosting rice production in Cameroon but also helping to improve on the income of rice farmers, as well as add value to the country's second generation agriculture launched by the government since 2010¹². The government took the engagement to partner with the Chinese government in rice production not only because of their expertise in this sector but more because of their remarked interest to invest and promote agriculture improvement and local rice production in the country¹³. This has reduced importation as the Chinese breed 'un-whitened' rice comes to add to other local breed, Ndop and SEMRY rice produced in the Northwest and the Northern region respectively¹⁴. The area is endowed with enormous resources especially arable fertile land and human resources to produce rice to meet the country's demand and even export to neighboring countries.

Santchou, a town in the west region of Cameroon, has a population of approximately 25,000 people, many of whom are farmers. The Sino- Cameroon agriculture signed a concession that allocated 5000ha of land in Santchou for the cultivation of rice. Santchou was the home of government-supported SODERIM(Société de Développement de la Riziculture dans la Plaine des Mbos) opened in 1978, was a rice research and processing factory that provided valuable inputs to farmers to increase the quality and quantity of their harvest. It provided manufacturing machines for farmers. Farmers were able to bring their rice, in paddy form, for processing and sale. This relieved farmers of the responsibility of transformation of rice to the edible form, packaging, transportation to markets, and sale. SODERIM had a capital of 1550,000,000 *Comminute Financier Africaine* and managed 1500 producers, attracting both immigration to Santchou and economic activity for the town. Due to insufficient funding SODERIM closed its doors in 1988, leaving the farmers of Santchou without access to inputs for their production, without machinery for the transformation from paddy form, and without the equipment to package and process for sale¹⁵. The Sino-Cameroon agriculture was to boost rice cultivation in Santchou and Cameroon in general to reduce the importation of rice and boost local rice cultivation in Cameroon.

Maize Cultivation

Since 2008, the company engaged in the cultivation of maize seedlings in the locality of Nanga Eboko. 200 hectares were used to cultivate maize seedlings to distribute to the local communities for cultivation. Different maize seeds were tasted and new hybrids were experimented with high yielding varieties to be cultivated by the

¹² Interview with Ndukong Devine, Civil Administrator MINADER, 36Aged, Nanga Eboko, 20 April 2023.

¹³ Ministry of Economy Planning and Regional Development, *Republic of Cameroon: vision 2035*, Yaoundé 2009, p. 96.

¹⁴ C.Nforgan, "Cameroon-Chinese-Rice-Cultivation-challenges" available at [http:// climate reporter/2016/15//stress-uploads/htm](http://climate-reporter/2016/15//stress-uploads/htm).

¹⁵ Kim Hortwitz, *Cultivating rice in Import Dependent Cameroon, A case of the Success and Challenges Facing Rice Farmers in Santchou, Cameroon*, Masters Thesis in political science, George Washington university, p.6.

local communities. The cultivation of maize in the experimentation farms was done in mechanized ways which have greatly helped in the transfer of knowledge on mechanized maize cultivation to the local communities¹⁶. As earlier mentioned the company work in collaboration with IRAD and the ministry of agriculture and rural development to produce maize seeds with high yielding varieties. The presence of the company has greatly improved on the cultivation of maize by the local communities.

Majority of the farmer cultivate the new hybrid with high yielding varieties which has greatly improved on the output of maize in the locality. Also, to ensure high yields, the communities are grouped in to common initiative groups(CIG) where the seeds and fertilizers are distributed to the farmers and the technicians of the ministry of agriculture and rural development ensure effective follow up ,organise seminars and educate farmers on the how to go about in the cultivation of the new hybrids¹⁷ .The Sino- Cameroon Iko Agriculture in collaboration with the ministry of agriculture and rural development and IRAD has to an extend contributed in the alleviation of poverty and enhance growth and development in the locality. The experimentation of maize has been a success story in the locality as upper Sanaga in general and Nanga Eboko in particular today is one of the main areas in Cameroon that is involved in the cultivation of maize. Individuals have opened large farms and have engaged in the mechanization of maize in the locality and in the upper Sanaga division thanks to the Sino Cameroon Iko experimentation farm in Nanga Eboko that produce seedlings to supply the large scale mechanized maize farmers.

Cassava

The Sino- Cameroon Iko agriculture had keen interest in the cultivation of cassava which is one of the main crop consumed by the local communities in the upper Sanaga division. Since 2006, they have multiplied cassava seeds that have help improved on the output of cassava in the locality. Cassava experimentation was carried out by comparing technology with the locally produced by the rural Communities.

STAKES OF THE SINO – CAMEROON AGRICULTURE

China's economic growth had a dramatic impact on both import and export, making the people's Republic of China a key element in the global production of china. Cameroon is endowed with enormous resources especially arable fertile land and human resources to produce enough rice to meet the country's demand and even export to neighboring countries¹⁸.The land laws in Cameroon opened land under the national domain for Foreign Direct Investment. The government perceives that Foreign Direct Investment will facilitate the government to achieve her objectives of mechanization of agriculture, alleviation of poverty and to enhance economic growth and development all in the move towards an emerging nation by 2035. That is why Cameroon's potential in rice and other cereals production and the government policy to encourage FDI attracted investment from China with the setting up of some large-scale rice farms by the Sino –Cameroon Iko Agriculture Development Company Limited in Nanga Eboko and Santchou.

The company has also provided opportunities for training and technology transfer in hybrid rice farming by rice farmers in Ndop in the Northwest. The scheme has not only boosted rice production in Cameroon but has also helped to improve on the Agricultural production, thereby adding value to the country's second generation agriculture launched by the government since 2010¹⁹. The Sino- Cameroon agriculture has contributed to accelerate economic growth and development, transfer of technology, create employment, reduce poverty and open up more opportunities for the local population. "We took the engagement to partner with the Chinese government in rice production not only because of their expertise in this sector but more because of their

¹⁶ Interview with Delphinembot, Aged 35, teacher, president of the Common Initiative Goup(CIG) Nanga Eboko, 20 April 2023.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*

¹⁸ J.B.Tagne, "Enquête sur la riziculture chinoise," *Quotidien Le Jour*, 18 August 2010. -

See more at: <http://www.farmlandgrab.org/post/view/16485#sthash.71dlV1wG.dpuf> accessed on 26 November 2016.11:00am

¹⁹ *Ibid.*

remarked interest to invest and promote agriculture in Cameroon in general²⁰. As earlier mentioned, the company worked in synergy with the ministry of agriculture and IRAD to ensure effective transfer of knowledge.

Decisions over land use and ownership carry great potential for promoting empowerment, sustainable livelihoods and food production systems, and dignity. Bad decisions over land can equally expand and entrench poverty, inequality and disempowerment. Understanding the nature of this global rush for land is a step towards choosing paths that may be able to avoid the specter of accelerated land loss and more general disenfranchisement for the rural poor. Large Scale Land acquisition is a strive towards the mechanization of agriculture and the promotion of second generation agriculture to meet with the objectives of the state²¹. According to the government, subsistence and fragmented farming on pieces of arable land cannot improve output. As a result, large scale land acquisition for mechanized farming has increase output. This contributes to fight against food insecurity and food sufficiency, which will greatly, contribute in the alleviation of poverty in the country in general and in the local communities in particular and Africa in General.

The Sino-Cameroon Agriculture has ensured food sufficiency and enhance in Cameroon. Since the food crisis in the 2008 that affected the whole world, the governments of Cameroon encourage large scale land investments. Cameroon has become the second most exploited land in Africa after Egypt as the hub of large-scale land acquisitions by states and private agro-industrial complexes mainly French, Chinese, Singaporean, Malaysian, Indian and American seek for large tracts of land in Cameroon for Foreign Direct Investment on agriculture²². These investors have been attracted into the country partly through generous tax holiday for agro-business ventures and the complete absence of any fees for the use of water resources for irrigation purposes. Cameroon with a total surface area of 475 442km², Cameroon boast of 7.16million hectares of arable land which was increasingly up for grabs at the detriment of local communities and minority groups. About 276 000 hectares of land have been occupied by investors who exploit the land and its produce²³.

Furthermore, it has led to infrastructural development in the local communities. The Pilot Center for Agricultural technologies training was constructed in 2009 in Nanga Eboko and Santchouhas helped significantly to empower farmers especially the youths and women with innovative skills on rice, maize and cassava production and to promote agricultural techniques²⁴.

Also, Sino-Cameroon Agriculture has developed agricultural entrepreneurship in Cameroon. Some Cameroonians have opened large scale farms focused on cultivation for commercialisation. This has increased agricultural output to reach the high demand for agriculture products at the national and international scene. The impacts of the Sino- Cameroon agriculture have also been faced at the macro level. The Government in signing this agreement was aimed at alleviating poverty creating employment and promotes the second generation agriculture in other to achieve its vision in the growth and employment strategy paper and the emergency plan²⁵. That's why the minister of Agriculture and Rural Development said

“It's time for the people of Cameroon to understand that the future is in agriculture, it must move towards the mechanization of its agriculture. It can no longer continue in these times cultivating with a hoe and a pickax.

²⁰ Interview, Henry EyebeAyisi, Cameroon's minister of agriculture and rural development, *Cameroon Tribune* paper no 11496/7539 of 16 October 2016, p.3.

²¹Doka Anatole et al, China- Cameroon Agriculture Cooperation: Challenges of Agricultural Development in Cameroon, *Journal of African Foreign Affairs*, 2021, Pp. 49.

²²V.NgamboukPemunta, “New Forms of Land Enclosure: Multinational State production of territory in Cameroon”, *studiasociologia*, LXI on [Http:// www diva-portal org](http://www.diva-portal.org). p.38.

²³N. Sama, “Cameroon Ranked Most Exploited Land in Africa”, *The Post newspaper*, print Edition No. 01425. 26 March 2013, P.4.

²⁴ Interview with Chin lii Huo, Aged 40, IKO/ CATAC, Santchou, 12 April 2023 .

²⁵Ministry of Economy Planning and Regional Development, *The Republic of Cameroon vision 2035*, Yaounde, 2009, p.4.

That will get Cameroon nowhere. Cameroon also needs considerable capital investments for the development of its agriculture”²⁶.

The agricultural venture has positively impacted the state as the land rents have been a major source of income to enhance developmental projects in the Country. The company pay land concessions to the state and tax which is a source of income to the government. The government used this income to carry out development in the country. Also, the agreement has increase Foreign Direct Investment in Cameroon which has contributed to an increased in the gross domestic product. Moreover, it has strengthened relations between Cameroon and China which have not only centered on agriculture but has spreads to other field to ensure that the state achieved its vision. China is one of the best partners of Cameroon when it comes to developmental issues.

CHALLENGES OF THE SINO- CAMEROON AGRICULTURE

The quest for Foreign Direct Investments in Cameroon and the extent to which it can enhance a win -win Cooperation can only go as the objectives of the relations are concern. The government of Cameroon encouraged Foreign Direct Investments in order to enhance economic growth and development. The development of Cameroon should not depend on Foreign Direct Investment. The imperialistic rule of multinational cooperation in extracting raw materials, exploiting surplus labour and rendering the economy vulnerable to foreign intrusion have negatively impacted Sino- Cameroon Agriculture²⁷.

Transfer of technology has not been effective. This has posed the problem of over dependence in import despites the training given to Cameroonians in the centers open in Nanga Eboko and Santchou to train Cameroonians on techniques of rice, cassava and maize cultivation. This training focused to boost Agriculture in Cameroon and reduced over dependence of importation as agreed in the Sino – Cameroon Agriculture. This is a challenge as Cameroon dependent on food imports to feed its population, despite a huge potential to produce its own food. Cameroon is considered to be import dependent, and is losing its food security and food sovereignty. The degree of reliance on trade in Cameroon has a multitude of negative consequences. Specifically, these include fostering a dependence on highly volatile and monopolized world markets, an absence of a long-term national food security strategy, and harm to domestic agricultural production. In essence, such significant food imports have impacts on agricultural production and farmers, who cannot compete with highly subsidized or inexpensively produced imported foods.

Large concessions to promote the Sino – Cameroon Agriculture have raised challenges on transparency in granting land concessions for foreign investment. Access to information is a problem as the local communities are not aware of the amount of concessions granted by the state. The concessions granted to the Sino-Cameroon Iko agriculture were unsure by the local communities as some indigenes say they have acquired more than 4000 hectares while others talk of 6000hectares²⁸. In most cases, access to information about ongoing project appear in the press, but it is impossible to verify the figures that are published or find out what these projects intend to do on their concessions. Although the administration published a list of sites that were likely to be allocated for forest concessions, it’s not the same for land concessions.

Access to arable land by the local communities become a problem when the state grant large scale land concessions for Foreign Direct Investments. They look for the most fertile areas to acquire the large allotments of land which deprive the local population from access to arable land. The 2000 hectares of land concessions granted by the state to the Sino Cameroon Iko agriculture in this locality deprived the rural population from

²⁶Charles Nfongang, “Chinois au Cameroun: une Incompréhension Foncière”, Available at <http://www.iprcc.org.cn/userfiles/file/Li%20Jiali—EN.pdf>.

²⁷W. Rodney, *How Europe under Developed Africa*, London, Bogle- 1, ouverture. 1973, P. 30

²⁸ P. Kenfack, S. Nguiffo and T. Nkuntchua, *Land Investments Accountability and Law: Lessons in Cameroon*. London, IIED, 2016, p.12.

access to arable land and natural resources. This was mainly because land at the rural area was mostly covered by customary land ownership which is not protected by law²⁹. As such, this land classified under the national domain in which the state is the custodian of land under the national domain. These lands allocated to foreign investors to enhance Foreign Direct Investment and to ensure economic growth and development in the locality.

Moreover, compensation concerns becomes a limitation to the rural population. Land is only compensated when it is covered by land title. Customary land ownership does not protect the land to be compensated in case of land acquisition. The land law allows occupants of national land to be compensated before the occupation of the land the community waits for decades for compensation³⁰.

PROSPECTS OF THE SINO -CAMEROON AGRICULTURE

Chinese agricultural investments in Cameroon have paved the way for practices that have been strongly criticised in recent years including its involvement in land grabbing, its lack of collaboration with IRAD and local universities, the lack of local representativeness in the design and implementation of agricultural projects implemented by China, which prove to be an obstacle to local development. However, China's presence brings hope for agricultural development in Cameroon. The introduction of modern farming techniques and the demonstration of agricultural technologies which underpin China's interventions in Cameroon constitute an opportunity that gradually reinforces the skills of the local population. From the above analysis, revisiting land concessions, ensuring effective transfer of technology, always carry out an impact study before setting up a project resulting from cooperation, coordinate the interventions of Chinese partners at MINADER for more effective monitoring and involve local populations in the development and implementation of Chinese development projects is very important to effectively enhance the Sino-Cameroon Agriculture cooperation.

CONCLUSION

Agricultural cooperation between China and Cameroon is a capital generating avenue where each partner develops winning strategies to make the best of the opportunities in the relations. The proliferation of the Sino-Cameroon agriculture Development has not only raised many hopes and fantasies but has developed a critical setting in the assessment of the Sino- Cameroon Agriculture relations. Based on the above discussions, to promote dynamics and promising relations, the need to foster effective technological transfer in the agriculture relation, ease the accesment of agricultural contracts to enhance effective follow up and above all involve the local communities in the signing of land concessions for agricultural ventures. This will help to limit the conflicts between the company and the rural communities and enhance peaceful coexistence for win-win cooperation.

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²⁹Etude de Base sur la Transparence et la Participation dans les Procesus D, attribution et de Gestion des Concessions Foncières et Minières. Rapport produit par RELUFA ET CANADEL, p. 54.

³⁰ W. Alden, "Whose Land is it? The Status of Customary Land Tenure in Cameroon", www.ifad.org/pub/land/land-grab.pdf, p .10.

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