

HENRI KOUAM FOUNDATION

ANNUAL REPORT 2025



Cameroon Economic Policy Institute
THE ESSENCE OF CHANGE



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We are delighted to share our annual report with you and we hope that you engage with us further!

Leading research on Economic Freedom

The Cameroon Economic Policy Institute (CEPI) is strengthening economic freedom, entrepreneurship and prosperity in Cameroon through fact-based research, policy advocacy and strategic engagement with authorities to advance free markets in Cameroon.

Founded in 2022, the Cameroon Economic Policy Institute (CEPI) of the Henri Kouam Foundation, led by **Henri Kouam** and **Haiwang Djamo**, has set the tone for “**policy-based**” advocacy for economic freedom. We create freely available content in a variety of accessible formats to inform and shape public debate, reaching an audience that includes government officials and legislators, business and NGO leaders, international and research organizations, universities, and the media.

Table of Contents

6

Letter from the President

8

Year at a glance

12

Key areas of impact

12

Tracking tariffs and the legal challenges

16

Evaluating the economic impact of tariffs

20

Analyzing changes in the US role in the global economy

23

Providing critical research on monetary policy, inflation, and central bank independence

24

Understanding China's economy and analyzing US-China relations

28

Assessing regional and international issues

34

Books

35

Our scholars

35

New PIIE scholars

35

Awards and achievements

38

Events

40

Board of Directors

40

Funding

“

More than ever, we need an institution like Peterson. We need a lively intellectual debate and pragmatic solutions for trade-related issues that are vital for development

Parfait Eppoh
AfCFTA Chief Negotiator, Ministry of Trade

“

In three years, CEPI has emerged as an important source of information, intelligence and recommendations for policymakers. Having written two of their Forewords, the diverse perspectives and evidence provided in their research make them an ideal tool for policy support. They say it like it is, which is refreshing for such a new institution.

Bama Cham
Technical Advisor, Cameroon National Shippers Council

“

[T]he Cameroon Economic Policy Institute (CEPI) is working with , not for policymakers.

Juliot Mbappe
Chef de Cellule des Projets, Ministry of Trade

“

CEPI's has never advocated for any policy change without the support of at least 1000 businesses – a proof that they are inclusive.

Prof. Kelly Mua Kingsely
Head of Finance Operations

“

Three years ago, CEPI barged into my office making a case for funding. Since then, they have achieved a great deal, and policymakers have acknowledged them in writing for their contributions.

In 2023 and 2024, CEPI lowered Vat for locally-made flour products.

In 2025, the caused policymakers to publish import and export procedures online.

I have met two businesses who are completing trade formalities to export formally in Yaoundé.

Emmanuel Yoyo
Founder, Brain Clash and
Former CEO of Phoenix
Construction

Letter from the President



Cameroon is at cross-roads, with industrial policy and state-driven ownership making a return, we must remake the case for economic freedom with evidence, while acknowledging policy cooperation frameworks. It has never been more urgent to stay in communication with policymakers. From tariffs, falling aid levels to a new scramble for critical minerals, our policymaker engagement and evidence-based research will ensure that policymakers make evidence-based decisions that are anchored in Economic freedom. Cameroon does not need to adopt a U.S. or Nordic-style based capitalism – It must find a model of capitalism that reflects its realities and support development with evidence.

In I am pleased to share the results of our research, advocacy, and capacity building events that has seen us train up to 1700 Cameroonians.

GLOBAL TRADE WARS AND RISING ECONOMIC COSTS

The global trade war did not materially impact the Cameroonian economy in 2026, even as inflation remained above the 3% threshold and governments continued to think of strategies to broaden the tax base, even as consumers' disposable incomes took a hit. Our Fellows assessed the impact of U.S. tariffs on imports and local prices, analyzed the impact of falling aid levels and the impact of broader geopolitical shifts on food security.

THE AFRICAN CONTINENTAL FREE TRADE AREA

CEPI experts publish reports, briefs, and policy papers assessing the impact of the AfCFTA on Cameroon and Africa, while providing a step-by-step guide for policy to effectively implement the AfCFTA. Our experts focused on drawing the link between free market reforms and development

outcomes. They recommended for measurable policy reforms such as grading 1500 km of national roads and 500 km of regional roads,

LIBERATION DAY AND US AID CUTS

Our Fellows find that cuts to official development assistance from the United States (U.S.) and higher tariffs will negatively impact consumers due to higher prices. However, Cameroon's trade with the U.S. is less than 2% of the total, so liberation day tariffs will have a transient but persistent effect on countries like Lesotho who export a great deal to the U.S. The Supreme Court struck down the tariffs, too much fanfare.

THE PAN-AFRICAN PAYMENT AND SETTLEMENT SYSTEM (PAPSS)

CEPI scholars showed that every year Africa loses \$5 billion in exchange rate fees from currency conversions. After a year of advocacy, the central bank joined the PAPSS; now we must convince commercial banks. For traders, this will reduce the

CREATING LOCAL DEMAND FOR FLOUR

We advocated for 3-5% of locally-made flour in bread to ensure that we create enough demand for thousands of farmers.

This is important for **800,000 cassava** farmers who mostly work and operate informally and now have a chance to contribute to formal value chains.

ECONOMIC FREEDOM IN THE FACE OF HEIGHTENED GOVERNMENT INTERVENTION

Across the **energy, communication, transport and agriculture sector**, economic freedom will deliver for Cameroonians. As a result, we are calling for policies or the reduction of red-tape to make it easy for the businesses to operate and trade.

As we look ahead to the remainder of 2026, CEPI scholars will be advocating for specific policies that advance economic freedom.

- This year, we will be making the promise of free trade a reality for many more Cameroonians by advocating for a Simplified Trade Regime (STR) to ensure that any one trading goods that are worth less than \$2000 are not subject to expensive and burdensome administrative procedures.
- The State should refrain from nationalizing companies as it does not have a proven track record of solid management. CEPI research finds that up to 70% of State-Owned Enterprises (SOE) are loss-making. The government must ensure that all Directors whose terms have expired leave office as a matter of Transparency, Accountability and Governance.
- The We need to grade a minimum of 1500km of national roads and 500km of regional ones. Since independence, Cameroon grades between 180km – 195km of roads every year. They must grade 1000km to develop effectively, reduce the ccc coo trade and increase regional integration.
- Renegotiation Policymakers must ratify the trade protocols of the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA). This will send a strong signal to markets and create certainty for institutions, businesses, and people as they implement the continental Agreement.
- The agro-processing sector is important, and our experts will be thinking about how to sequence policy and ensure that we increase the production of flour, cereals, and rice to

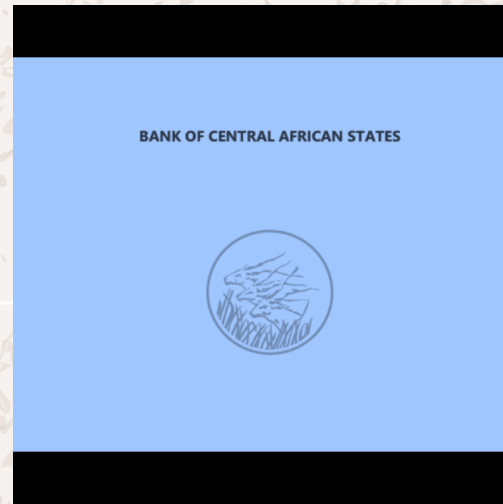
Reach 25% of local demand. As we translate policy to impact, we cannot stop thanking our stakeholders and supporters— including philanthropic individuals, private-sector corporations, foundations, and government institutions

Henri Kouam

President | Cameroon Economic Policy Institute (CEPI)

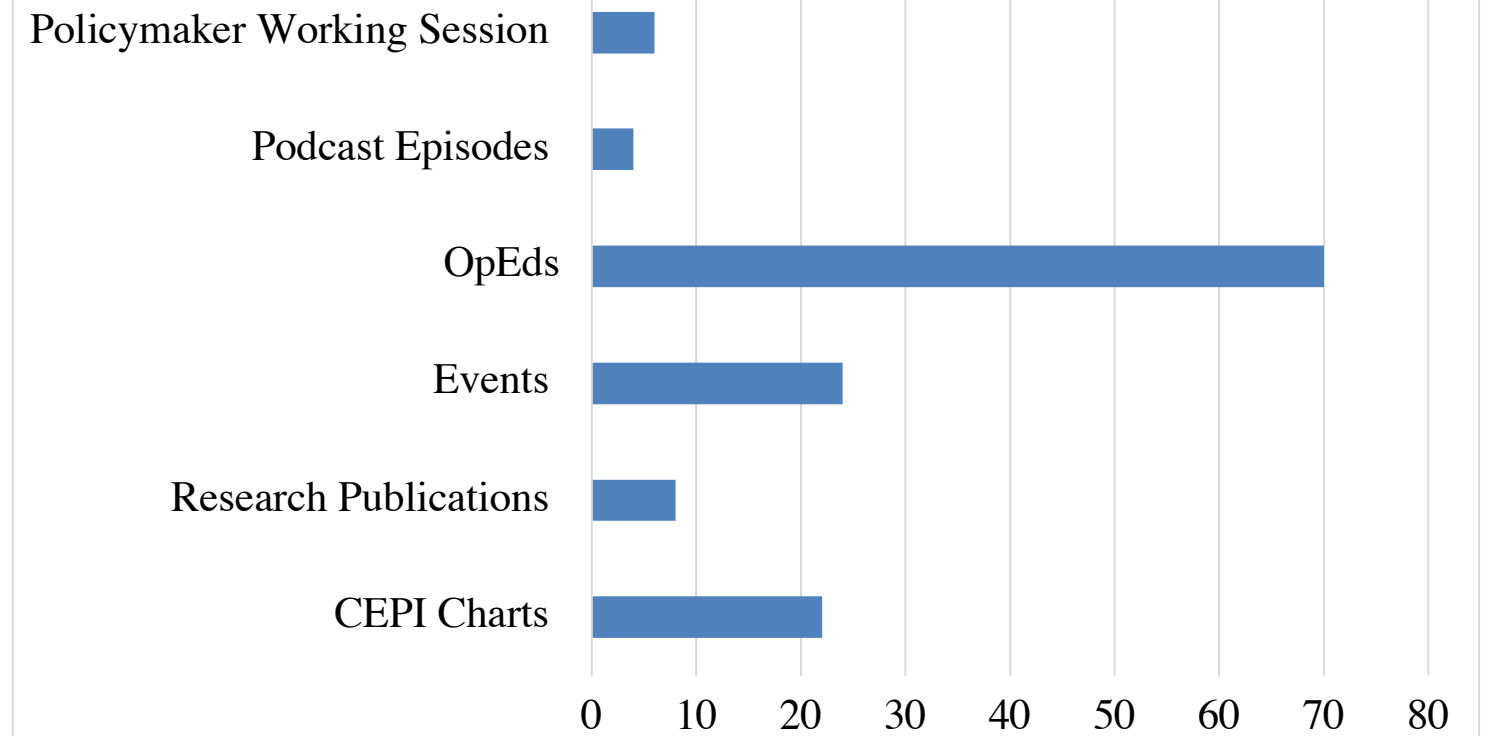
Henri Kouam Foundation

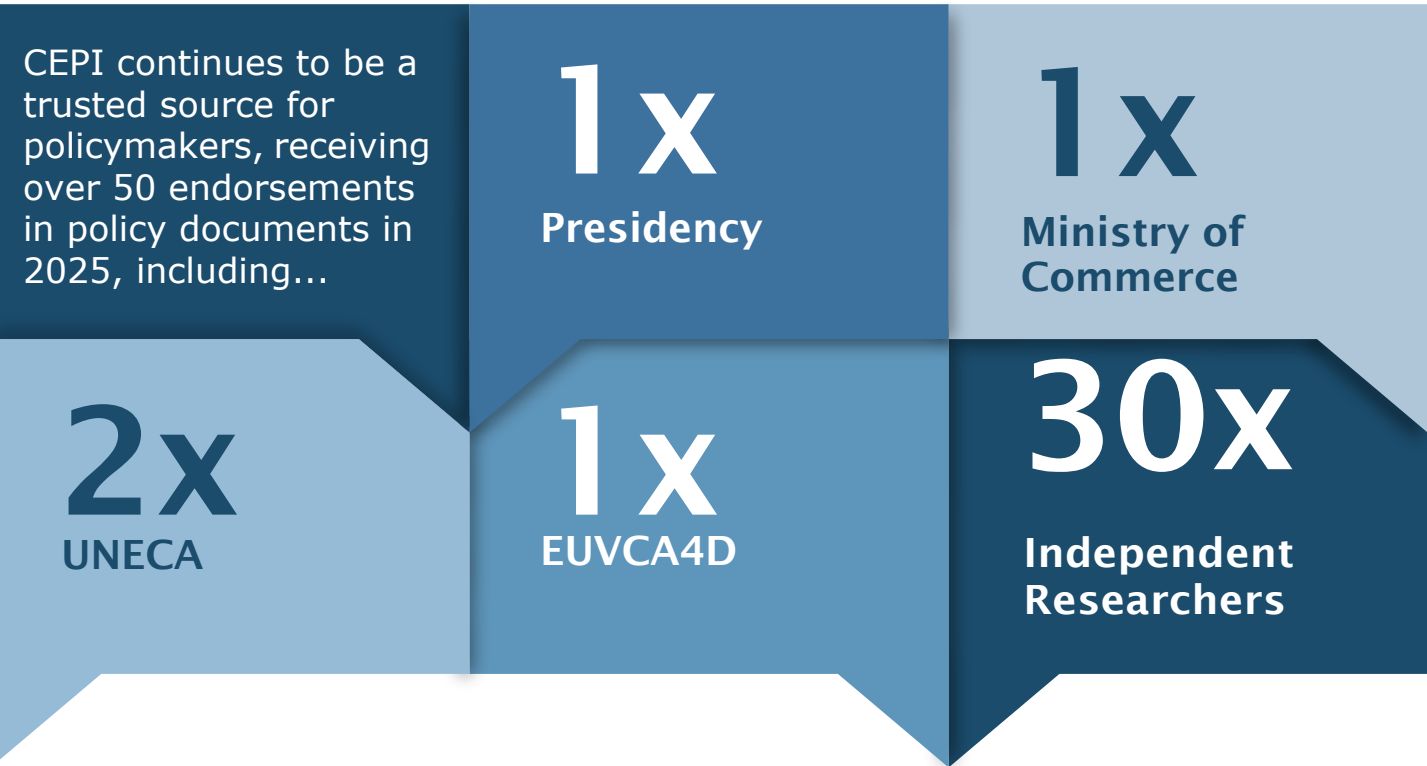
Year at a Glance



The global economy faced great uncertainty in 2025, driven by monumental changes to US policies on trade, immigration, and more that are reshaping countries' economic decisions and foreign relations.

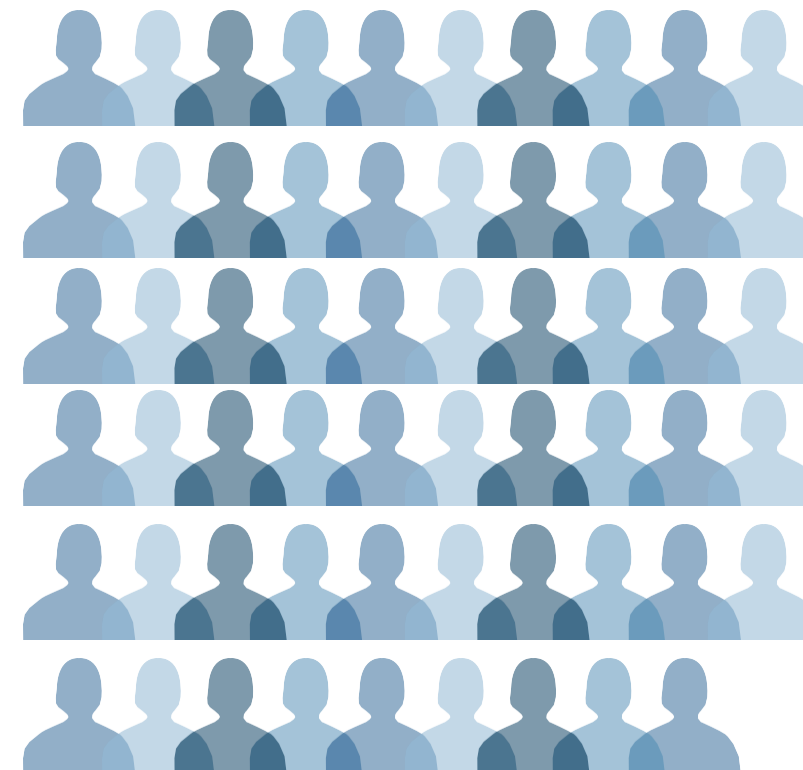
CEPI Contributions





Source: Overton. Citations by Congress include reports by House and Senate Committees, Congressional Research Service, the US-China Economic and Security Review Commission, and the US Government Accountability Office.

Our achievements were possible thanks to the support of our generous donors and the entire CEPI staff.



Research | 16



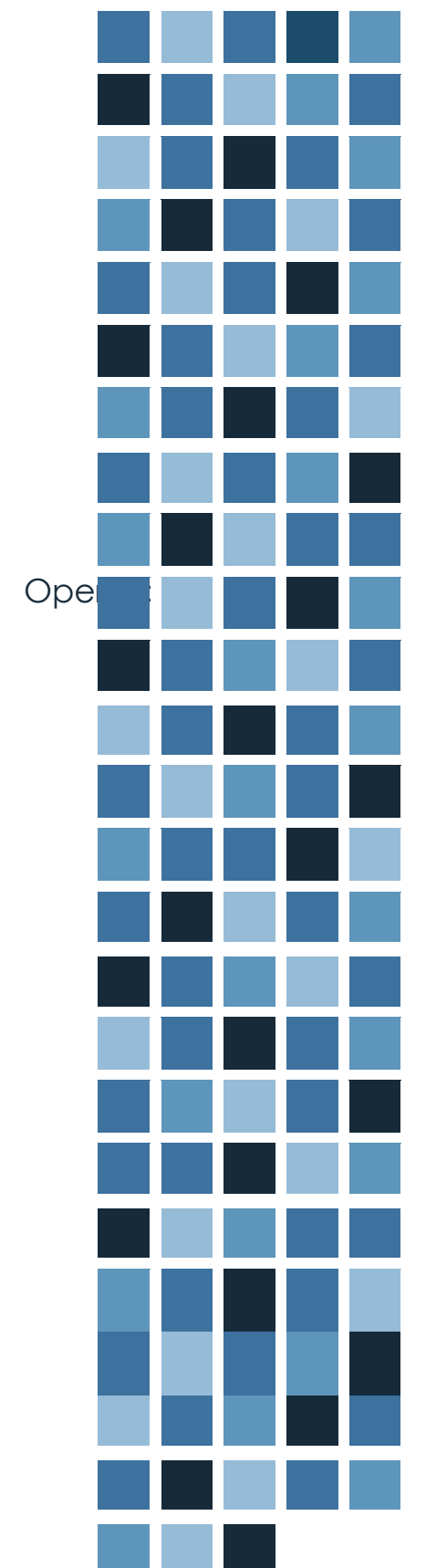
Communications & Publications | 2



Development | 2



Events | 1



CEPI outreach highlights for 2025



#60

Year for most CEPI media citations ever



#1

Most news citations among think tanks per dollar in budget



10%

More event attendees on average in 2025 vs 2024



20%

More web traffic



85%

More clicks from LinkedIn



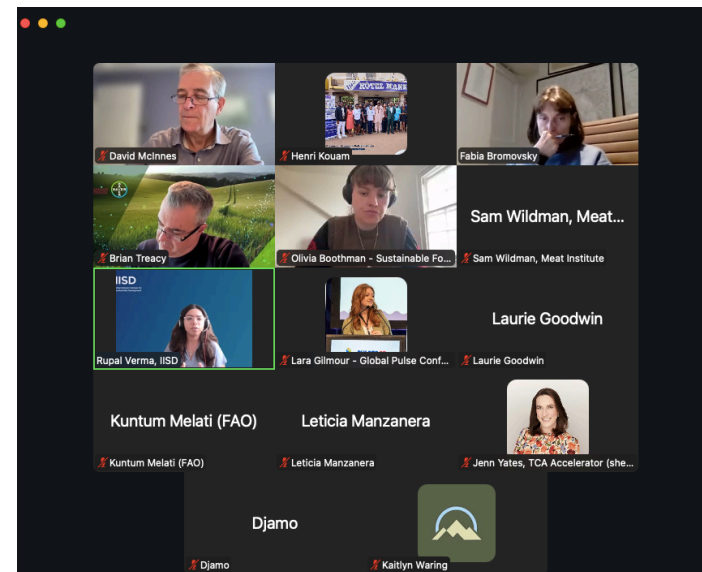
Launched our Podcast series "Trade for You" in 2025 and kick-started our AI academy.

Free Trade, the AfCFTA and Free Markets

“IMPACT OF TARIFFS ON AFRICA TRADE

In Cameroon, CEPI was one of the most prominent voices about the U.S. tariffs on the world, and our experts measured the [implications on wages, inflation and economic growth](#). We provided a synopsis on how export-dependent countries will be affected, especially South Africa and Lesotho. We published in both [Defi Actuel](#) and [Cameroon Business Today](#), reaching over 200,000 Cameroonians. We recommended adapting quickly by accelerating the implementation of the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA). Our experts noted that a careful sequencing of policy is necessary to blunt the long-term impact of lower foreign aid and allow Africa to develop its trade integration through the AfCFTA. For example, passporting rights for banks will increase financial deepening and inclusion on the continent.

Working Sessions



We participated in several working sessions with partners across the world on food standards and how global trade patterns are reshaping policy and development outcomes. From Canada to the U.S., these sessions enabled us to better coordinate with international partners and stakeholders to improve trade and agriculture resilience. CEPI's took part in several high-level panels with international partners such as the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA), UNCTAD and IISD to name a few.

AFCTA PROTOCOLS AN IMPLEMENTATION GUIDE

CEPI Experts published a comprehensive report on the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) protocols and provided a road-map for their implementation to assist policymakers and institutions tasked with accelerating its implementation. [Elishammah Nyaba, Haiwang Djamo, Seraphin Mbarga and Dang Attouh](#) found that Cameroon is already implementing laws that govern competition, goods and services. However, they must align these laws further with the AfCFTA protocols to ensure a balance between social, environmental and economic outcomes.

TRADE AND AGRICULTURE

[Ronald Akono, Henri Kouam, Dr. Egbe-Njie Fride and Haiwang Djamo show how the AfCTA](#) can improve agriculture exports. Specifically, cassava, eru and rice exports are susceptible to rise on the back of the AfCFTA as Cameroon's neighbors are persistent importers of these products. However, policymakers must improve access to electricity and develop digital infrastructure while adopting a [simplified Trade Regime \(STR\)](#) for individuals exporting or importing goods with \$2000 or less. We provide evidence from south and East Africa to illustrate how this can work in Cameroon's Context.

EXPORT AND IMPORT PROCEDURES

Our experts provided a comprehensive guide on [import and export procedures](#) to identify potential areas for reform, accelerate digitization and support greater inclusion by publishing these procedures on specific platforms. Following our advocacy, we successfully led to the publication of all import and export procedures by major government agencies such as the Chamber of Commerce and the Ministry of Trade who updated the procedures to obtain an import and export license for stakeholders and businesses.

Policymakers acknowledge our contribution to policy outcomes, a boon for CEPI's expertise.

[Policy Advaocay with national and international stakeholders in Hotel Franco, Yaounde](#)



CEPI led discussion on product certification costs, PAPSS and the EU Deforestation Regulation (EUDFR)

PAN-AFRICAN PAYMENT AND SETTLEMENT SYSTEM (PAPSS) WILL LOWER TRADE COSTS

The Pan-African Payment and Settlement System (PAPSS) is a payment platform that allows Africans to buy and sell across the continent using their own currencies. Every year, [Africa loses about \\$5 billion](#) in exchange rate and conversion fees. The PAPSS provides an alternative to traditional U.S. and EU-based systems that are expensive and increase trade costs by up to 5%.

Henri Kouam found that the [PAPSS will reduce inflation](#) across the African continent, because African currencies will be less exposed to external shocks such as a unilateral appreciation of the dollar, weaker oil prices and interest rate hikes from advanced economies. He equally showed that these could [reinforce financial stability](#) by reducing demand for dollars and foreign currencies to clear imports. Our advocacy led the central bank to join the PAPSS in June 2026, marking a major milestone in intra-Africa trade and implementation of the AfCFTA. This indicates that trust is growing and CEPI is a credible voice when it comes to trade.

Panel Discussion, Working Sessions and Strategic Engagement

Our goals for 2025 was to popularize import and export procedures to make “free trade” and “free markets” a reality for all Africans. We organized a series of workshops, round table conversations and consultations with senior policy makers at the African Union level, Ministry of Trade and Ministry of Small and Medium-sized enterprises. Participants recommended;



At Hotel Franco, we discussed the role of free markets in advancing the AfCFTA.

- Reduce the administrative and financial cost of business certification for SMEs to lower the barrier to formal market participation.
- Develop alternative credit scoring mechanisms that do not rely solely on certification as a gateway to financing.
- Strengthen sensitization programs targeting entrepreneurs on AfCFTA protocols, rules of origin and export procedures, particularly at the grassroots level.
- Accelerate the digitization of customs and trade documentation to reduce processing time and unofficial costs at border points.
- Grade 1500km of national roads and 1500 km of regional roads.
- All commercial banks and the BEAC should join the PAPSS.

MC14: Unlocking SME Capacity to Accelerate African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) Development Gains’.

CEPI held a roundtable with 50 participants in partnership with [IISD and Atlas during the WTO inter-ministerial conference](#). It was noted that SMES face non-tariff barriers, inadequate infrastructure, and challenges meeting quality and safety standards for regional markets.

The session also highlighted progress in SME integration, including the AfCFTA’s preferential trading regime, Rules of Origin, the Pan-African Payment and Settlement System, and the Protocol on Women and Youth in Trade.



On the sidelines of the WTO inter-ministerial meeting, we led a roundtable discussion with **Bama Cham (Technical Advisor, Cameroon National Shippers Council)** and **Mme. Tientcheu**, the first SME to export under the AfCFTA. This brought to traders, policymakers and stakeholders to chart a faster implementation path for the AfCFTA. These sessions provided the impetus for further collaboration with international partners and enabled us to identify best practices that can be standardized locally – from investment to competition. It was a chance to hear directly from entrepreneurs in field.



The African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) to reduce Violence Against women

Over half of married women experience intimate partner violence, with significant rates of physical violence (34%) and sexual violence (13%). Harmful traditional practices like forced marriage and Female Genital Mutilation persist alongside limited access to supportive services. Since January 2024, 77 cases of feminicides have been reported, mostly by intimate partners”. **Dr. Egbe-Njie Fride, Research fellow, CEPI**



Mr Henri pinpoints the protocol of women youth in trade of the AfCFTA, which seeks to achieve financial inclusion and equality of women and youth in trade, which corresponds to Aspiration 6 of the AU Agenda 2063, an Africa, whose development is people-driven, relying on the potential of African people, especially its women and youth, and caring for children. We showed how women can actively integrate formal agriculture value chains at little cost to help them emancipate sooner.



EMPOWERMENT TRAINING TO REDUCE VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

The training highlighted that women produced 80% of agricultural output in Cameroon and own about 40% of SMEs in the country and also 70% of women in the country are involved in the informal sector and are more likely to be self-employed as compared to men, therefore there is high demand for Formal value chain to add value and process raw materials into finish or semfinished products through women as primary suppliers to industries and exporters in Cameroon and across Africa.



The trainers showed how a faster implementation of the AfCFTA through greater sensitization campaigns and targeted trainings to upskill women on the export and import procedures are necessary to truly empower them.



The trainers also explained the AfCFTA in brief and provided pathways to help women better understand how they can integrate formal value chains.

Strengthening Agro-Industrial Competitiveness through Certification under the AfCFTA

The African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) represents a historic opportunity to shift Africa from a continent of raw material exporters to a hub of industrial value addition. In Cameroon, the agro-industrial sector accounts for a significant portion of GDP and employment.



While the AfCFTA reduces tariff barriers (taxes), it also brings into sharp focus non-tariff barriers (NTBs), specifically Technical Barriers to Trade (TBT). Many Cameroonian SMEs in the food processing sector struggle to access the continental market not because of duties, but because of a lack of internationally recognized certifications (such as ISO, HACCP, or Halal). We recommend lower certification cost, capacity building and sensitization events to ensure more businesses understand the processes and steps to trade under the AfCFTA.



Workshop on Financing Municipal Climate Projects

CEOI and the local government authority together with ICLEI Africa organized a workshop for over 50 civil society actors.



Participants emphasized the need to strengthen municipalities' capacity to prepare and structure climate projects, improve communication between municipalities and financial institutions, and develop mechanisms to mitigate risks for banks



Accelerating climate change adaptation in municipalities is a financial and social imperative, with positive socioeconomic and environmental impacts. We are advocating for a limited government in Cameroon to support free markets.



[Our policy advocacy on climate change](#) seeks to promote private sector investment in climate adaptation and mitigation projects. This working session included the Director of FEICOM, the three largest banks in Cameroon, mayors and senior policymakers at the local level. Prior to this, CEPI provided consulting services to the ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development (MINEPDED) to ensure better reporting under the Global Environment Facility (GEF). Following this, we were designated as a resource organization for the Ministry and are working to ensure that limited government and free enterprise underpin Cameroon's climate adaptation strategy. We are teaching policymakers how to create space for private sector investment



WTO Inter-ministerial Meeting Plenary Session

Together with the international Institute for Sustainable Development (IISD), Henri Kouam our founder and executive director participated in the plenary session with the Director of Tralac (Trudi Hartzenburg), Victor Yuh and the Swiss Minister for Economy and Director of the Swiss Economic Secretariat (SECO) - **H.E. Helene Budliger Artieda..**



The discussions from this opening plenary provide important insights for ongoing work in trade and development, particularly in strengthening SME participation, supporting smallholder inclusion.



The Artificial Intelligence of Everything

Key areas of impact

MACROECONOMIC PROJECTIONS

Artificial Intelligence (AI) is reshaping global trade, employment, incomes and development. CEPI experts produced a number of policy briefs analyzing the implications of AI on the Cameroonian economy.

Our flagship report found that pioneering firms in Cameroon are already leveraging AI for predictive maintenance in timber processing, automated credit scoring in banking, and crop disease diagnosis in agriculture. To harness this momentum, the report advocates for a shift away from bureaucratic control toward a market-driven "National AI Strategy" that focuses on dismantling structural bottlenecks, liberalizing infrastructure, and fostering inclusive growth through a targeted 40% female participation rate in the digital workforce by 2040.

Economic Implications and Adoption of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in Cameroon and Africa

The Implications of AI for Manufacturing, Education, Gender Equality, Employment, Energy, Property Rights, Agriculture and Trade.

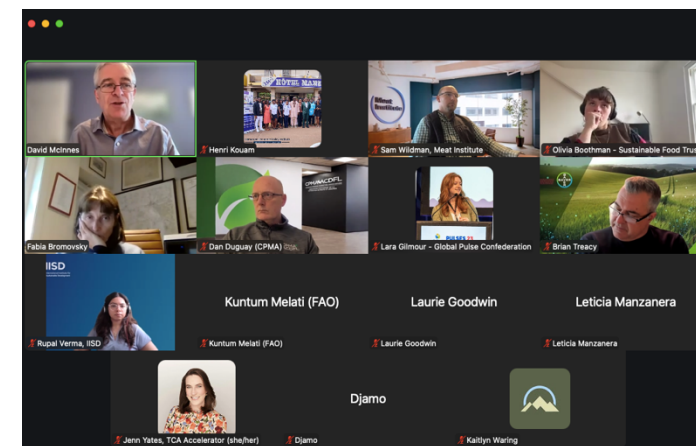


Cameroon Economic Policy Institute

HENRI KOUAM
FOUNDATION

In [Henri Kouam and Paul Tamfu](#) concluded that AI is a vital tool for economic freedom, but regulation should be clear and non-

cumbersome to support low compliance cost and better innovations. [Haiwang Djamo, our National Coordinator](#) notes that Cameroon's highly informal labor market coupled with a gradual adoption of AI technologies in the private sector suggest a more muted initial impact on the employment. While the agriculture sector and repetitive administrative tasks could be replaced, all evidence suggests this will be contingent on how fast companies move to adopt AI.



US Dang Attouh goes further, stating that While the concept of **property rights to consumer data** offers an appealing philosophical mechanism for individual remuneration (property rights enforcement), its practical application is fraught with difficulty given the technical realities of AI. A more pragmatic, if imperfect, solution lies in reinforcing the control-based model by demanding greater algorithmic transparency from developers and AI companies, strengthening collective redress mechanisms, and holding AI developers accountable for the societal impacts of AI.

AI and Free Trade

Ronald Akono and Seraphin Guy Mbarga find that AI remains the most important tool that is mostly recommend to Cameroonian SMEs in order to optimize operations and refine customer experiences through personalized services and data-driven decision-making. As investment in digital infrastructure increase and government initiatives aim to boost the level of

technologies, the potential for AI to reshape the landscape for SMEs become increasingly evident, emphasizing its critical role in future economic prosperity.

The banking sector in Cameroon appears more ready to adopt AI innovations, but adoption and implementation is slow. Artificial Intelligence is increasingly used across Cameroon's banking sector for customer service (Ecobank, UBA), lending (Banque Atlantique), fraud detection (Société Generale) and Behavioral Analysis (Afriland First Bank). The current regulatory regime is light-touch and supportive, but banks should accelerate their push to integrate AI into their services further as it is currently at a nascent stage." Write [Yvan Audrey kamdem](#).

Manufacturing and AI Governance Seraphin Guy Mbarga and Haiwang Djamo provide a detailed brief on how manufacturing firms are adopting AI.

Cameroon's manufacturing sector, boost productivity, and strengthen regional competitiveness. Despite its immense potential, adoption remains constrained by institutional, financial, and infrastructural challenges. This brief demonstrate that rapid gains are possible when businesses operate autonomously and adopt technology to boost performance. Cameroon must prioritize economic freedom, targeted fiscal incentives, and simpler procedures. Anything less and we will continue to experience lost decades in manufacturing.

Our experts find that AI adoption is proceeding slowly across Cameroon and while the current legislation is light touch, greater efforts should be made to protect consumer data and transparency on how AI model are trained are necessary to ensure they remain human-centered. **Innovation should not be clothed in a failing model of governance.**

CEPI Media Engagement – The News

In 2025, CEPI experts were active in the media to achieve three specific reforms;

- Ensure the publication of import and export procedures so that every business can export and import without having to pay expensive fees to consultants.
- Maintain reforms such as the reduction of the Value-Added Tax (Vat) for locally-made flour, renewable energy equipment and agriculture inputs.
- The digitization of tax administration and setting up digital payments systems to reduce compliance cost and save time for businesses that must spend up to 5 hours in tax centers to pay their dues.
- We also called for a faster implementation of the AfCFTA across various media, especially in print papers called for import and export procedures to be published on major platforms.

Summary of Media Advocacy

- [Media Report](#): Experts Brainstorm on Clean Cooking Solutions
- [Media Report](#): Reducing Post-Harvest Loss
- [Media Report](#): Policy Reforms Essential to Unlock Full Potential of Free Trade in Cameroon, CEPI Experts Say
- [Media Report](#): The impact of the African Continental Free Trade Area, AfCFTA, on business revenues in Cameroon
- Stop Pitting [Development Against Climate](#) Goals
- [Cameroon updates investment laws](#) to include provisions for jobs and the environment
- A call for [public investment](#) to support free trade
- [Ronald Akono and Haiwang Djamo](#) were quoted regarding Cameroon's 2025 budget
- Henri Kouam Called for the [Publication of Import and Export procedures on major](#) websites
- [Making the AfCFTA work for SMEs](#)
- [Henri and Djamo](#) call for import and export procedures to be put online
- [CEPI calls for free](#) and fair elections
- [Implications of UK Reduced Tariffs](#)
- [Beyond Trump's Tariff Shock](#), It is Time to Operationalize the AfCFTA
- [CEPI successfully campaigns for 3-5%](#) inclusion of locally-made flour in bakery products
- [Djamo sets the priorities](#) for MC14

Policy Wins

Our Media advocacy contributed to the publication of import/export procedures on major public sector websites. Secondly, all locally-made bakery products must use 3-5% of locally-made flour while we successfully advocated for the adoption of the Pan-African Payment and Settlement System (PAPSS) by BEAC in 2026 (At time of publication of this report).

CEPI Leads Africa's MC14 Advocacy

Our experts set the priority for MC14 for the African Group, outlining key issues ranging from WTO reform, intellectual property issues and Standards and Differential Treatment.



Le Cameroun accueillera la 14e réunion interministérielle de l'OMC : une opportunité pour redéfinir les priorités de l'Afrique

Par Haiwang Djamo, analyste de recherche & Henri Kouam, fondateur Cameroon Economic Policy Institute (CEPI)

INTRODUCTION

Le Cameroun accueillera la 14e réunion interministérielle de l'Organisation Mondiale du Commerce (OMC), un rendez-vous décisif pour l'avenir du commerce international. Dans un contexte de tensions commerciales tendues, de fragmentation des chaînes de valeur mondiales, et de réplis protectionnistes dans plusieurs économies développées, cette rencontre est une opportunité stratégique pour les pays africains de plaider en faveur d'un commerce plus inclusif, équilibré et aligné sur les priorités de développement du continent.

La tenue de cette conférence intervient au moment où l'Afrique est engagée dans un ambitieux chantier d'opérationnalisation de la Zone de libre-échange continentale africaine (ZLECAf). Le consensus de ces dynamiques ouvre la voie à une médiation structurée entre les intérêts africains au sein de l'OMC et la transition structurelle que veut impulser le ZLECAf. C'est donc le moment pour l'Afrique de porter d'une seule voix, de défendre ses intérêts industriels, numériques, agricoles et environnementaux, et de reconfigurer sa position dans les chaînes de valeur mondiales.

Pendant 47 ans, le GATT s'est révélé être une organisation internationale efficace. Au cours de huit cycles successifs de négociations multilatérales, il est parvenu à réduire le niveau moyen des droits de douane dans les pays développés de 40 % après la guerre à environ 6 % à la fin des années quatre-vingt. Les règles de base du GATT en matière de subventions ont été incorporées dans l'Accord GATS. Cela stipule que les membres du GATT qui accordent des subventions, y compris en soutien des revenus ou des prix, ayant un effet direct ou indirect sur l'augmentation des exportations ou la réduction des importations, doivent en informer le GATT et être prêts à discuter de la limitation de la subvention si celle-ci porte gravement atteinte aux intérêts d'un autre membre du GATT. Le reste de l'article est consacré aux subventions à l'exportation.



1. QUELLES SONT LES PRIORITÉS POUR L'AFRIQUE ?

Les pays africains soulèvent plusieurs problèmes majeurs dans leurs relations commerciales avec les pays avancés au sein de l'Organisation Mondiale du Commerce (OMC), notamment en ce qui concerne les subventions agricoles, les subventions énergétiques, et les obstacles au développement économique.

Subventions agricoles : un des problèmes les plus criants pour l'Afrique est la persistance des subventions agricoles massives dans les pays développés. Ces subventions perturbent aux agriculteurs des pays riches de vendre leurs produits à des prix artificiellement bas sur les marchés locaux, ce qui laisse très peu pour nos producteurs locaux. Par exemple, l'Union européenne accorde chaque année environ 100 milliards de dollars à ses agriculteurs, un montant double du PIB de pays comme l'Éthiopie, où une grande partie de la population dépend de l'agriculture. Les pays africains appellent davantage de la suppression de ces subventions dans le cadre des négociations de l'OMC, notamment dans le cycle de Doha, mais cette disposition est repoussée, avec une échéance envisagée seulement pour 2013, liée à la fin de la Politique Agricole commune européenne. Nous devons ramener cet accord à l'attention de l'OMC en 2016.

Subventions énergétiques et planification énergétique : Les pays africains font également face à des défis liés aux subventions énergétiques et à la gouvernance de leur propre politique énergétique. Cependant, les règles internationales, les pressions des institutions financières internationales comme la Banque mondiale et le FMI, ainsi que les initiatives des pays développés, incitent souvent contrairement à l'autonomie. Le Cameroun a supprimé ces subventions, mais les données ont continué à donner des subventions à leur entreprise énergétique. Le CEPI pense que la réduction des subventions est crédible, mais tous les pays doivent réduire les subventions pour accéder aux financements publics. **Public representation et capacité dans le système de règlement des différends :** un autre problème important est la faible capacité des pays africains à défendre leurs intérêts dans le système de règlement des différends de l'OMC. L'Afrique est largement absente de ce système, en raison d'un manque de ressources humaines qualifiées et de stratégies globales adaptées.

Cette situation est aggravée par le blocage institutionnel du système, notamment par des pays comme les États-Unis, ou qui limitent encore plus les possibilités pour les pays africains de faire valoir leurs droits commerciaux. Henri Kouam

2. QUEL LIEN AVEC LA ZLECAF ?

La ZLECAf est avant tout l'un des projets phares de l'Afrique africaine pour stimuler le commerce intra-africain, renforcer

l'industrialisation et améliorer l'autonomie stratégique du continent. La 14e réunion de l'OMC est une occasion de faire converger les ambitions régionales de la ZLECAf avec le système commercial mondial.

En tant que plus grande zone de libre-échange au monde en termes de nombre de pays (54), la ZLECAf peut renforcer la capacité de négociation de l'Afrique au sein de l'OMC. Une Afrique une autour d'un projet commun est mieux positionnée pour défendre ses intérêts collectifs.

Les négociations à l'OMC offrent l'opportunité d'assurer la compatibilité entre les engagements internationaux et les règles de la ZLECAf. Cela est essentiel pour éviter les conflits juridiques, renforcer la prévisibilité du commerce et attirer les investissements.

L'agenda de la ZLECAf, qui encourage la création de chaînes de valeur africaines dans les secteurs agroalimentaires, textiles, pharmaceutiques et numériques, doit être soutenu par des réformes de l'OMC permettant de protéger les industries nascentes, notamment via des politiques d'achats publics et des institutions locales.

3. QUELLE EST LA RESPONSABILITÉ DU CAMEROUN EN TANT QUE PAYS HÔTE ?

Le Cameroun devra œuvrer à la consolidation d'une position africaine coordonnée. En collaboration avec l'Afrique africaine, il est crucial de mettre en place des consultations régionales et sous-régionales pour aboutir à des propositions claires, consensuelles et cohérentes à défendre lors du sommet.

Le succès de l'événement dépendra de la qualité de son organisation. Le Cameroun doit garantir un accueil institutionnel, des infrastructures adéquates, et des plateformes d'échange efficaces entre les délégués, experts et représentants du secteur privé.

La tenue de cet événement au cœur de l'Afrique centrale est aussi une opportunité pour mettre en lumière les défis spécifiques de la région en matière de connectivité, d'industrialisation commerciale et de diversification économique. Bref, cet événement doit être un catalyseur pour les réformes commerciales nationales : simplification des procédures douanières, digitalisation du commerce, soutien aux PME, exportations, promotion de la compétitivité locale, etc.

4. CONCLUSION

Alors que les délégués persisteront et que les nouvelles règles se négocient dans un contexte d'incertitudes géopolitiques, l'Afrique doit faire entendre sa voix. Elle doit affirmer son droit au développement industriel, à la souveraineté numérique, à l'accès équitable au financement du commerce, et à des règles agricoles plus justes etc. Il est également nécessaire d'accroître la mise en œuvre de la ZLECAf pour que l'Afrique pour une ville plus inclusive et le commerce global.

Radio

CEPI experts regularly contributed to Royal Fm and CRTV radio to reiterate a range of reforms that range from grading 1500km of roads, accelerating the adoption of AfCFTA protocols and the Pan-African Payment and Settlement System (PAPSS).



Beyond Trump's Tariff Shock! It's Time To Operationalize AfCFTA Across Africa

Introduction

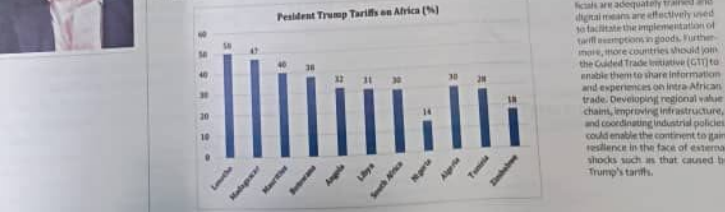
Trump's trade policy has triggered a global shock, but in the region, this report argues that it is a double-edged sword. While it poses a threat to the 15-year-old African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA), it also presents a unique opportunity to accelerate the continent's economic growth and industrialization. This report explores the challenges and opportunities for Africa in the wake of Trump's tariff shock, and offers a roadmap for operationalizing the AfCFTA across the continent.

The AfCFTA's Potential

The AfCFTA is a landmark agreement that promises to create a single market for 1.2 billion people across 54 countries. It is the largest trade bloc in the world, and its successful implementation could significantly boost Africa's economic growth and industrialization. However, the AfCFTA's potential is only realized if it is operationalized across the continent. This report argues that the AfCFTA is a unique opportunity to accelerate the continent's economic growth and industrialization, and offers a roadmap for operationalizing the AfCFTA across the continent.

Challenges and Opportunities

The AfCFTA's implementation faces several challenges, including the need for a strong institutional framework, the need for a strong legal framework, and the need for a strong political framework. However, the AfCFTA also presents several opportunities, including the potential for a strong institutional framework, the potential for a strong legal framework, and the potential for a strong political framework. This report argues that the AfCFTA is a unique opportunity to accelerate the continent's economic growth and industrialization, and offers a roadmap for operationalizing the AfCFTA across the continent.



President Trump Tariffs on Africa (%)

Country	Value	Chg	Chg%
USA	58	47	40
Canada	40	38	32
China	32	31	30
India	30	28	28
Japan	30	28	28
UK	30	28	28
France	30	28	28
Germany	30	28	28

BEYOND TARIFFS AND FALLING AID LEVELS

CEPI experts wrote several opinion pieces calling for a transition towards aid as developing countries cut aid levels to developing countries like Cameroon.

Our experts outline the need to accelerate market-friendly reforms to ensure that more businesses can export and import under the preferential terms of several trade agreements. Specifically, we call for persistent digitization of key tax and social security procedures to reduce compliance cost for businesses and accelerate their inclusion into the formal economy.

CEPI Trainings in the Media

[Event Report](#): CEPI Trains Youths to Integrate Labor Market

[Event Report](#): CEPI Empowers Women to Unlock Potentials

[Event Report](#): Impact of AI on Education

LEVERAGING GLOBAL TRADE POLICY DEVELOPMENTS

The United Kingdom (UK) reduced tariffs on 6500 products for developing countries. We analyze how Cameroon can seize the opportunity to advance trade with the UK and integrate global value chains



UK Reduces Tariffs for Millions of African Products: A Golden Opportunity for Cameroon

Introduction

The United Kingdom (UK) has announced a significant reduction in tariffs on 6,500 products from developing countries, including Cameroon. This move is a major development for Africa, as it opens up new markets for African products and services. This report explores the challenges and opportunities for Cameroon in the wake of the UK's tariff reduction, and offers a roadmap for maximizing the benefits of this opportunity.

The UK's Tariff Reduction

The UK's tariff reduction is a landmark agreement that promises to create a single market for 1.2 billion people across 54 countries. It is the largest trade bloc in the world, and its successful implementation could significantly boost Africa's economic growth and industrialization. However, the UK's tariff reduction is only realized if it is operationalized across the continent. This report argues that the UK's tariff reduction is a unique opportunity to accelerate the continent's economic growth and industrialization, and offers a roadmap for operationalizing the UK's tariff reduction across the continent.

Challenges and Opportunities

The UK's tariff reduction faces several challenges, including the need for a strong institutional framework, the need for a strong legal framework, and the need for a strong political framework. However, the UK's tariff reduction also presents several opportunities, including the potential for a strong institutional framework, the potential for a strong legal framework, and the potential for a strong political framework. This report argues that the UK's tariff reduction is a unique opportunity to accelerate the continent's economic growth and industrialization, and offers a roadmap for operationalizing the UK's tariff reduction across the continent.



Figure 1. Cameroon exports to the UK is Chippy but lower than a decade ago

Year	Value	Chg	Chg%
2007	100M		
2014	120M		
2018	140M		
2024	160M		

Cameroon's exports to the UK have been declining for over a decade. This is due to a combination of factors, including the UK's tariff reduction, the UK's economic growth, and the UK's trade policy. However, the UK's tariff reduction is a unique opportunity to accelerate the continent's economic growth and industrialization, and offers a roadmap for operationalizing the UK's tariff reduction across the continent.

Cameroon's exports to the UK have been declining for over a decade. This is due to a combination of factors, including the UK's tariff reduction, the UK's economic growth, and the UK's trade policy. However, the UK's tariff reduction is a unique opportunity to accelerate the continent's economic growth and industrialization, and offers a roadmap for operationalizing the UK's tariff reduction across the continent.

The [EU Deforestation regulation](#) will have profound implications for Cameroonian cocoa, palm oil and other products that are vital for the livelihoods of millions of small holders and exporters

Policy Advocacy And Engagement

THE IS NO FREE TRADE WITHOUT ECONOMIC FREEDOM

Our [National Coordinator, Haiwang Djamo and Guy Seraphin Mbarga](#) met with the **Mr. Alhadji Oumar**, Head of the Project Monitoring Unit of the Partnership Program in [Fonds Spécial d'Equipement et d'Intervention Intercommunale \(FEICOM\)](#).

This agency is the biggest investor in roads and infrastructure in Cameroon. We were asking them to invest in trade and climate-relevant infrastructure to reduce the cost of trade and improve trade flows between Cameroon and its land-locked neighbors.

Picture with Representative of FEICOM



We recommended investing at least 25% of the public infrastructure project in trade-relevant infrastructure to boost growth and support trade through land routes.

We also advocated for [clean cooking](#) and was mentioned in the Guardian Post and our Op-Ed was featured in Defi Actuel. We draw clear and verifiable parallels between free trade and

climate policy as they are intricately linked in developing countries like Cameroon.

Property Rights: With **Dr. Yselle Malah-Kuete**, we have begun a broad campaign to remind policymakers of instances of abuse and promote property rights both physically and digitally. It is important to note that Chiefs of the 3rd degree have been given new powers, pitting developers against indigenous people who are unaware of their rights and lack the financial capacity to fight for property rights.

Climate and Trade

REPUBLICQUE DU CAMEROUN
Paix - Travail - Patrie

MINISTÈRE DE L'ENVIRONNEMENT,
DE LA PROTECTION DE LA NATURE
ET DU DÉVELOPPEMENT DURABLE

SECRETARIAT GÉNÉRAL

DIRECTION DU DÉVELOPPEMENT DES
POLITIQUES ENVIRONNEMENTALES

N° / L/MINEPDED/SDDPE/SOPE/PL/IM

REPUBLIC OF CAMEROON
Peace - Work - Fatherland

MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT,
PROTECTION OF NATURE AND
SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

SECRETARIAT GENERAL

DEPARTMENT OF DEVELOPMENT
OF ENVIRONMENTAL POLICIES

Yaoundé le 11 DEC 2025

LE MINISTRE
A / TO
The Founder and Executive Director of Henri
Kouam Foundation
Tél. : (+237) 693538157
Email : henri.kouam@camepi.org
-Yaoundé-

Réf : VIL N°CEPI/HKE/AT/2025/090993/MC/CMR
du 17 octobre 2025

Objet : Proposition of Partnership between MINEPDED and the Cameroon Economic Policy Institute (CEPI) of the Henri Kouam Foundation.

The Founder and Executive Director,

In response to your letter with above mentioned reference and subject matter, I have the honour to inform you that your organization, "Cameroon Economic Policy Institute" (CEPI), has been duly registered in the official directory of associations operating in the field of environment, nature protection and sustainable development under the Ministry of Environment, Protection of Nature and Sustainable Development (MINEPDED).

However, I kindly request that you submit to my services, on an annual basis, both the work plan for the current year and the annual activity report of your organization.

Sir, accept my sincere consideration.

PJ :
- Enrollment Certificate

HELE Pierre

Ministère de l'Environnement, de la Protection de la Nature et du Développement Durable - Ministry of Environment, Protection of Nature and Sustainable Development
Immeuble Ministériel N°2, Rond-Point Hilton - B.P. 320 Yaoundé - Tél. : (+237) 222 23 70 45 ; Fax : (+237) 222 23 60 51
Site web : www.minepded.gov.cm - Courriel : contact@minepded.gov.cm Facebook : minepded

Scanned by TapScanner

This letter is a testament to CEPI's work in the policy space. Much of our advocacy is less about pictures and more about

engaging policymakers effectively over the long run. Cameroon has already launched its industrial strategy and the challenge is to make the free markets element of that work better, not reverse it.



Strategic Policy maker Engagement

CEPI attended several closed-door working sessions with policymakers in an attempt to integrate free market thinking into their operations. With the Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development (MINEPDED) we advocate for more market-friendly policies that support entrepreneurship and build the capacity of entrepreneurs that work the

From Policy to Impact

Gary Policy Change is necessary to get the impact we hope for. Lower taxes, quicker procedures and digitized processes are an important step to ensure that free trade becomes a reality for every Cameroonian

Key areas of impact

FREE TRADE WILL LIFT ALL BOATS

Dr. Nchofoung Tii, our research fellow analyzed the [impact of the AfCFTA on wages in Cameroon](#). When both agreements are applied, we observe a GDP increase of US\$918.93 million in 2020 against US\$1,102.29 million in 2030 which represent GDP growth rates of 2.40% and 2.45% respectively. In 2030, if Cameroon's GDP were 5%, both trade agreements will boost GDP to 7.45%. This formed the basis for further research that sought to accelerate the implementation of the AfCFTA.

FISCAL POLICY

Henri Kouam explains the Economic Implications of the Pan-African Payment and Settlement Systems (PAPSS) on Inflation and Financial Stability. As we are engaging the Central Bank to accede to the PAPSS, we needed relevant research that will push policymakers to adopt our research. In 2023, Cameroon's trade deficit exceeded CFA2 trillion for the first time, reaching CFA2.004 trillion, up from CFA1.428 trillion in 2022. This increase of CFA576 billion, or 40.3%, highlights a worsening trade imbalance due to a surge in imports and a decline in exports. The import volume jumped by 11.4% year-over-year in Q3 2024, while exports dropped by 4.9% year-over-year, pushing the trade deficit to 11.7% of quarterly GDP. However, the [PAPSS will improve the resilience of the Cameroonian economy](#) by reducing the economic effects of sudden swings in the value of the dollar.

EU GLOBAL GATEWAY

[Elishammah Nyaba](#) notes that the EU Global Gateway has the potential to foster sustainable development in Cameroon. It will enhance trade and mobility in the country, tackle environmental-related challenges, and develop more resilient and sustainable agri-food systems. However, for these impacts to be seen, there is a need for better communication and information sharing on projects being carried out.

Providing critical research on Economic Freedom, Trade and Development Policy

We are proposing reforms that will remove the barriers to flourishing for businesses and individuals.

Key areas of impact

Should the Bank of Central African States switch to Inflation Targeting ?

Our experts suggests that the central bank may need to reconsider their monetary policy target. In 2023, inflation averaged 7% in Cameroon, which heightens concern about the ability of monetary policy to support the economy and allow households and investors to plan effectively. Targeting a stable exchange rate reduces the impact of imported inflation and could be seen as one of the objectives under an inflation targeting regime.

In order for the central bank to target inflation, the CFA Franc must be allowed to float. However, it may be premature to exit the peg at present as the Euro guarantees macroeconomic stability and prevents wild swings in the CFA. However, the central bank can adjust its tools to ensure that prices rise gradually while advocating for fiscal policy makers to encourage bank lending to SMEs. This will improve the interest rate channel and optimize monetary policy transmission mechanisms.

BEAC



"Inflation targeting is a technique used by central banks to control the general price level. Central banks set a target and try to achieve that target under 'inflation targeting regimes'. Because inflation and interest rates move in opposite directions, central bank actions tend to be transparent under inflation targeting regimes."

CAPITAL CONTROLS

Dang Attouh notes that Capital Controls are bureaucratically inefficient and costly foreign-exchange regulations that prevent timely access to foreign currency. This policy brief looks at the rationale for capital controls in Cameroon, recent legislation regarding capital controls and policy recommendations to support a free and efficient flow of capital.

Policy Recommendations

- The new FX regulation does not allow the opportunity for any exclusions or exceptions for banks and commercial entities. This can negatively impact the operations and activities of companies, increase the cost of trade and business and ultimately reduce their competitiveness. Local and international companies need more tailored guidance from the Bank of Central African States (BEAC) and regulators.
- The terms and authorizations of approving a currency account inside and outside the CEMAC region are not clear. For example, it has not been outlined whether institutions benefitting from previous authorizations from Ministries of Finance may need to request new authorizations from the central bank rather than rely on local authorization. This is a priority as payment for commodities such as oil and gas usually occur in U.S. dollars and requires the creation of a bank account outside CEMAC member states.
- Finally, project revenues should not dictate whether a firm can open a foreign currency account in London or Paris. By focusing on the bankability and returns of projects, this could improve governance and prevent blue collar crimes. However, it could lead to long lead times that can make projects more expensive over the long run. The central bank should provide guidance and use other guarantees and demand better payment schedules to provide companies with more leeway in terms of FX payments.

Understanding the Implications of the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA), Trade Procedures and Artificial Intelligence (AI)

Key areas of impact

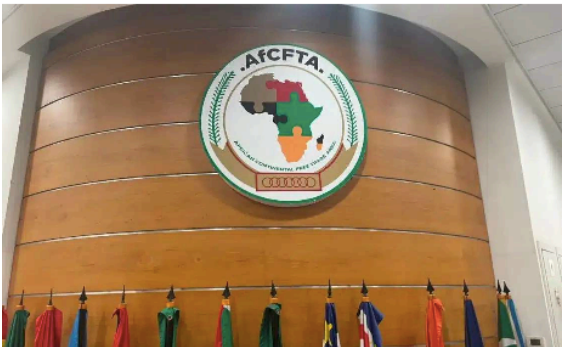
FLAGSHIP REPORT ON AFCFTA PROTOCOLS

CEPI experts provide a detailed examination of the key protocols underpinning the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA), specifically highlighting protocols regarding Intellectual Property (IP), Competition, Digital Trade, and Women and Youth. They evaluate how these harmonized regulatory frameworks are designed to eliminate monopolies, drive cross-border investments, and safeguard innovation across the continent. Focusing heavily on practical integration, the report explores the economic implications of these protocols on local economies like Cameroon's.

[Djamo, Elishammah, Dang Attouh, Dr. Tii and CEPI experts](#) recommend accelerating customs digitization, upgrading physical road infrastructure, improving technical capacity for small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), and reducing the administrative costs of business certification to foster true economic freedom.

A Comprehensive Analysis on the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) Protocols.

Accelerating Implementation of the AfCFTA by Unlocking the Value of AfCFTA Protocols.



FLAGSHIP REPORT ON AFCFTA PROTOCOLS

[Haiwang Djamo, Guy Mbarga Serapphin, Tchoupe Fossi, Ronald Akono and Dr. Chefor Meungwe Daisy](#) provide a practical blueprint for integrating Cameroon into the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) and the Guided Trade Initiative. It meticulously maps out the end-to-end import and export procedures, clarifying vital compliance mechanisms from the Single Window (GUCE) network to SGS inspections and Certificates of Origin.

REPORT: IMPORT & EXPORT PROCEDURE AND DOCUMENTATION IN CAMEROON

Accelerating the AfCFTA Guided Trade Initiative in Cameroon.



Cameroon Economic Policy Institute (CEPI)

1

Rather than just listing regulations, this report acts as a strategic roadmap to modernize trade infrastructure, reduce red tape, and lower cross-border costs. By transforming these complex trade steps into clear, accessible pathways, Cameroon is positioned as a dynamic, business-friendly hub in Central Africa.

For our partners, this report represents a shared vision of economic openness. It provides the transparency needed to unlock new investments, accelerate regional market access, and drive sustainable, collaborative growth across the continent.

Economic Implications and Adoption of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in Cameroon and Africa

The Implications of AI for Manufacturing, Education, Gender Equality, Employment, Energy, Property Rights, Agriculture and Trade.



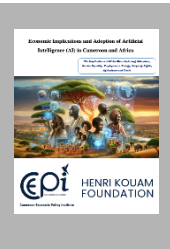
EXPORT AND TECHNOLOGY CONTROLS

All CEPI Researchers and Fellows contributed to this report on AI and recommend;

- Infrastructure Investment: Accelerate public-private partnerships to expand reliable broadband connectivity and develop scalable cloud computing infrastructure.
- Capacity Building: Integrate AI literacy and advanced technical data training into university curricula and vocational programs to build a resilient, future-ready workforce.
- Harmonized Governance: Establish adaptive national AI policies and collaborative regional data governance frameworks to ensure secure, ethical, and inclusive innovation.

By turning these insights into collaborative investments, partners can effectively unlock Africa's digital economy and position Cameroon as a leading te

Relevant and Most Read!



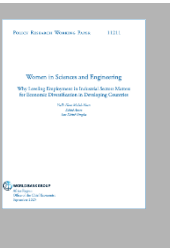
Artificial Intelligence in Cameroon
by Henri Kouam, Haiwang Djamo, Seraphin Guy Mbarga, Tchoupe Fossi, Ronald Akono, Dr. Egbe-Njie Fride, Dr. Annie Nkeng.



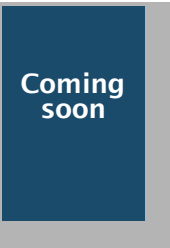
We Should popularize Import and Export procedures for SMEs
by Elishammah Nyaba and Henri Kouam
(Cameroon Business Today)



Cameroon Prepares to Welcome MC14
By Haiwang Djamo
(Defi Actuel, 2025)



Why Leveling Employment in Industrial Sectors Matters for Economic Diversification in Developing Countries
by Yselle Flora Malah-Kuete et al, 2025



Detox: Trimming Government Spending in an Era of Industrial Policy
by **CEPI Research Team**
(CEPI – www.camepi.org)

New CEPI scholars



Dr. Ivo Tassah Tawe joined us in 2025 and is a Research Officer in the Department of Economics and Environmental Sciences, National Centre for Education, Ministry of Scientific Research and Innovation, Yaoundé Cameroon. His research foci are environmental dynamics and risk management, forest cover transitions, land degradation dynamics and climate change with application of Geoinformatics.



Dr. Chefor Ngwenyi Meungwe Daisy is a Cameroonian interdisciplinary researcher and economist specializing in public policy, agricultural economics, and institutional development.



Dr Yselle Malah Kuete is a **Cameroonian development economist and researcher at the University of Yaoundé II.** She currently chairs the Gender Equality Thematic Panel of the Union for African Population Studies (UAPS). Her research focuses on economic transformation, trade, gender equity, labor markets, and education policy in Sub-Saharan Africa.

Awards and achievements



CEPI is among the top 25% of institutions across Cameroon – after 3 years.



Dr. Nchofoung Tii is the third most cited economist in Cameroon and ranks third in the list of top economists by citations.



Dr. Yselle Malah-Kuete, our Research fellow published a ground-breaking paper at the World Bank. She was nominated by Afriland First Bank as breakthrough researcher.



Haiwang Djamo, our national coordinator was admitted to the Africa Liberty Writing Fellowship.

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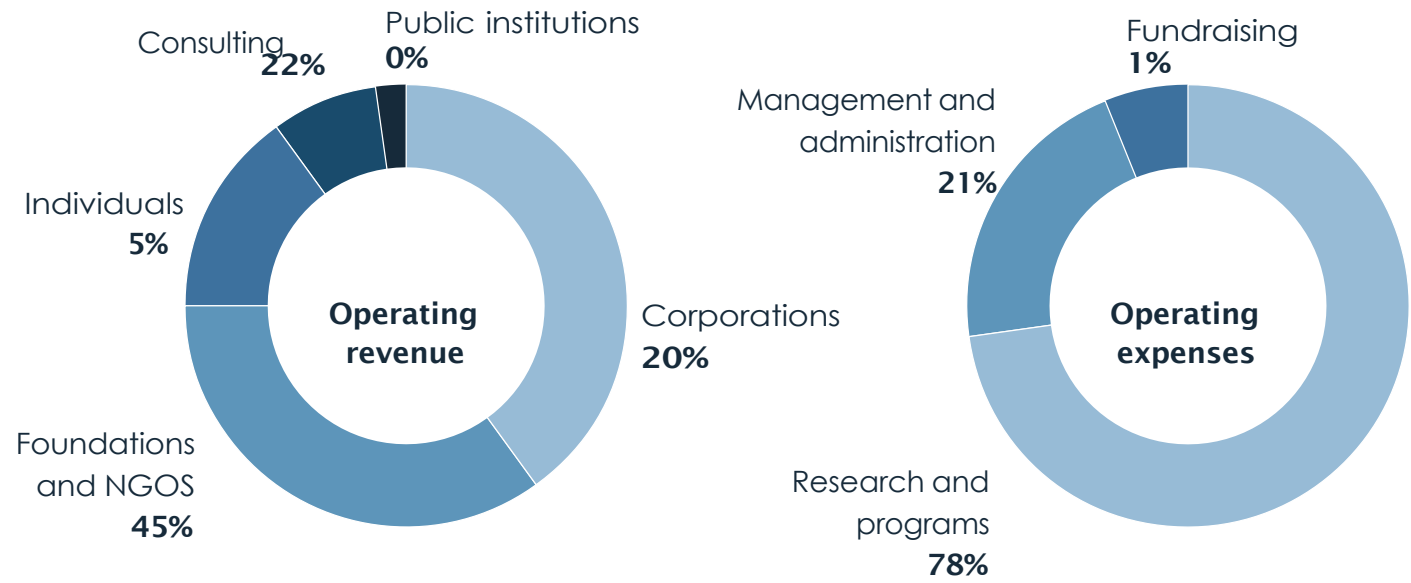
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