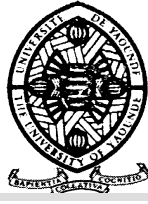


THE UNIVERSITY OF YAOUNDE I

POST-GRADUATE SCHOOL FOR SOCIAL
AND EDUCATIONAL SCIENCES

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THE DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY



UNIVERSITÉ DE YAOUNDE I

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FORMATION DOCTORALE (CRFD) EN
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UNITÉ DE RECHERCHE ET DE
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DEPARTEMENT D'HISTOIRE

**TRADE RELATIONS BETWEEN CAMEROON AND THE UNITED
STATES OF AMERICA DURING THE AFRICAN GROWTH AND
OPPORTUNITY ACT (AGOA) REGIME, 2000-2022**

**A Dissertation Submitted and Defended in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for
the Award of a Master of Arts (M.A) Degree in History**

Specialization: **History of International Relations**

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To my lovely mothers,

Eveline Agha, Bridget Ndi, Odette Forkwa and my late father Samuel Fomben

ABSTRACT

This present study is focused on “Trade Relations between Cameroon and the United States of America during the African Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA) Regime, 2000-2022.” The dissertation examines the outcome of the African Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA) in Cameroon and investigates reasons why Cameroon did not benefit much under AGOA. It presents Cameroon’s foreign trade policy and the nature of Cameroon’s relations with the United States. It shows how the framework of AGOA created opportunities for Cameroon and Sub-Saharan Africa. Finally, the study makes an evaluation of AGOA in Sub-Saharan Africa in general and in Cameroon in particular, with emphasis on problems faced by AGOA and the Cameroon’s trading sector. By the end of the 20th century, Sub-Saharan Africa and Cameroon in particular had poor records in trade relations with the United States. It was against this backdrop that the U.S. Congress signed AGOA as a law in 2000, in order to enhance and diversify the exports of these countries by permitting the exportation of certain products without custom duties (tariffs and quotas). Also, AGOA aims at increasing U.S. investment and promoting job opportunities in the beneficiary countries. It was for these reasons that Cameroon sought for admission under AGOA. After 19 years of participation under AGOA, Cameroon did not maximize the opportunities offered by this regime as compared to other countries. It was thus necessary for this study to investigate the reasons for the poor participation of Cameroon under AGOA and also evaluate the impact of this program on the society of Cameroon. For this investigation to be done, the qualitative research method was used to gather primary and secondary sources through observations, interviews, surveys, and secondary research. A deductive and diachronic analysis of these sources led to results which stipulate that the lack of a National AGOA Strategy, lack of government support to exporters, and AGOA criteria account for the failure of Cameroon under this regime. However, the evaluation made, indicates that AGOA increased Cameroon’s exports to the U.S.A and thus a favorable balance of trade, but the government was unable to diversify Cameroon’s exports.

RÉSUMÉ

Cette présente étude qui porte sur « Trade Relations between Cameroon and the United States of America during the African Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA) Regime, 2000-2022 », vise à examiner les résultats de « African Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA) » au Cameroun et de découvrir les raisons pour lesquelles le Cameroun n'a pas beaucoup bénéficié de l'AGOA. Elle présente la politique du commerce extérieur du Cameroun et la nature des relations entre le Cameroun et les États-Unis. Elle montre comment le cadre de l'AGOA crée des opportunités pour le Cameroun et l'Afrique subsaharienne, et l'étude fait également une évaluation de l'AGOA en Afrique sub-saharienne et au Cameroun en mettant l'accent sur les problèmes rencontrés par l'AGOA et le secteur commercial du Cameroun. A la fin du 20ème siècle, l'Afrique sub-saharienne en général et le Cameroun en particulier avaient de mauvais résultats dans les relations commerciales avec les Etats-Unis. C'est dans ce contexte que le Congrès américain a signé l'AGOA en tant que loi en 2000, afin d'accroître et de diversifier les exportations de ces pays en permettant l'exportation de certains produits sans droits de douane (tarifs et quotas). En outre, l'AGOA vise à accroître les investissements américains et à promouvoir les opportunités d'emploi dans les pays bénéficiaires. C'est pour ces raisons que le Cameroun a sollicité son admission dans le cadre de l'AGOA. Après 19 ans de participation à l'AGOA, le Cameroun n'a pas maximisé les opportunités offertes par ce régime par rapport aux autres pays. Il était donc nécessaire pour cette étude d'enquêter sur les raisons de la faible participation du Cameroun à l'AGOA et aussi d'évaluer l'impact de ce programme sur la société camerounaise. Pour mener à bien cette enquête, la méthode de recherche qualitative a été utilisée pour rassembler des sources primaires et secondaires par le biais d'observations, d'entretiens, d'enquêtes et de recherches secondaires. Une analyse déductive et diachronique de ces sources a abouti à des résultats qui stipulent que l'absence d'une stratégie nationale de l'AGOA, le manque de soutien gouvernemental aux exportateurs et les critères de l'AGOA expliquent l'échec du Cameroun sous ce régime. Cependant, l'évaluation faite indique que l'AGOA a augmenté les exportations du Cameroun vers les États-Unis et donc une balance commerciale favorable, mais le régime n'a pas été en mesure de diversifier les exportations du Cameroun.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

AGOA	African Growth and Opportunity Act
AUC	African Union Commission
BDCs	Beneficiary Developing Countries
BIT	Bilateral Investment Treaty
BOT	Balance of Trade
CCIMA	<i>Chambre de Commerce d'Industrie des Mines et de l'Artisanat</i>
CDC	Cameroon Development Co-operation
CEMAC	<i>Communauté Economique et Monétaire d'Afrique Centrale</i>
EU	European Union
EXIM	Export Import
FCFA	<i>Franc de la Communauté Financière Africaine</i>
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GNP	Gross National Product
GSP	Generalised System of Preferences
IMF	International Monetary Fund
INS	<i>Institut National de la Statistique</i>

LDBC	Least-Developed Beneficiary Developing Country
LDC	Less Developed Country
MNC	Multinational Cooperation
MINCOMMERCE	<i>Ministère du Commerce</i>
NAS	National AGOA Strategy
NCCB	National Cocoa and Coffee Board
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
NSC	National Security Council
NWCA	North West Cooperative Association
OAPI	<i>Organisation Africaine de la Propriété Intellectuelle</i>
OCA	Operation Crossroads Africa
OPIC	Overseas Private Investment Cooperation
PTA	Preference Trade Agreement
RECs	Regional Economic Communities
ROO	Rules of Origin
FTAs	Free Trade Areas
SSA	Sub-Saharan Africa
TPEA	Trade Preferences Extension Act
USA	United States of America
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
USCB	United States Census Bureau
USD	United States Dollar
USITC	United States International Trade Commission
US-PCV	United States Peace Corps Volunteers
USTR	United States Trade Representative

WTO	World Trade Organisation
YALI	Young African Leaders Initiative

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GENERAL INTRODUCTION

Context of Study

Trade constitutes the backbone of many economies of the world. Cameroon gained independence with her economy fully engaged in agriculture as the principal economic activity. Most of her products could not be consumed locally and she also needed to acquire certain products that could not be produced locally due to the low level of industrialization, thus there was need for external markets. It was against this backdrop that external trade became inevitable for Cameroon as she began signing diplomatic relations with the rest of the world with aims of establishing trade relations. Trade contacts between the territory known today as Cameroon and the Thirteen American Colonies (USA) date back since the 17th century with the advent of the Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade.¹ Even though the relations that existed between both parties at that time were barbaric and pessimistic, they however, turned to be promising towards the end of the 20th century as the U.S. Foreign policy changed towards Sub Saharan Africa (SSA) in general and Cameroon in particular with the fall of the Communist bloc in the early 1990s.²

Trade became optimistic and legitimate with the signing of diplomatic relations between Cameroon and the United States of America in 1960.³ The general U.S. regard towards Africa after the Second World War was centred on the containment of Communism as stipulated by the Truman Doctrine and the spread of democracy (especially the independence of the colonised).⁴ The United States were not also interested in trade with many African countries because of the numerous civil wars which characterized newly independent African states. Even though this was not the case with Cameroon, real trade between her and the USA started growing in the later years of the 20th century especially with the signing of the Bilateral

¹ U. Nwokeji et D. Eltis, "Characteristics of Captives leaving the Cameroons for the Americas, 1822-37", *the Journal of African History*, Vol. 43, No. 2(2002), Cambridge University Press, 2002, pp. 191-210.

² Interview with Witney Schneidman, about 65 years, U.S. Senior International Advisor for Africa, USA, 3 August 2022.

³ *Idem*.

⁴ V. H. Bieleu, *Politique de Défense et Sécurité Nationale du Cameroun*, Paris, l'Harmattan, 2002, p. 453.

Investment Treaty (BIT) in 1986,⁵ which entered into force in 1989. The BIT had as aims to encourage developing countries, like Cameroon, to adopt macroeconomic frameworks and structural policies that had the potentials of stimulating economic growth and development. This treaty and its aims were, however, never realised by both parties given that African economies fell into deep economic crisis in the later years at the signing of the said treaty.⁶ As a remedy to this backdrop, the U.S. government then enacted the creation of the African Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA) in 2000⁷ in order to reduce the difficulties faced by SSA to integrate in world trade.

AGOA resolutions created more opportunities and chances for Sub-Saharan African (SSA) countries in general and Cameroon in particular as Section 104 and 502 provided duty-free treatment to the U.S. imports of certain products, (see chapter 2.2.2) from eligible SSA countries given that Cameroon became eligible on October 2, 2000.⁸ Thus, AGOA permits free export of Cameroon's goods in agricultural products, energy related products, apparel and textile products, forest products, and other miscellaneous manufactures. Apart from trade opportunities, AGOA aims at improving political democratic reforms in eligible countries, stimulating economic growth and economic development, enhancing poverty reduction and the promotion of regional integration through Regional Economic Communities (RECs) and Free Trade Areas (FTAs) in SSA. It was because of the aforementioned opportunities that caught the attention of many SSA countries like Cameroon to seek admission in the AGOA Program. Therefore, it was necessary to analyse the various activities that took place between Cameroon and the United States under AGOA for the years Cameroon participated under this regime given that her eligibility status was shaken as from January 1, 2020,⁹ and some few years after AGOA exclusion.

⁵ Office of the United States Trade Representative, Executive Office of the president, "Cameroon Bilateral Investment Treaty", February 26, 1986.

⁶C. R. Besso, et al, "African Growth and Opportunity Act: Growth, Competitive and Diversification of Cameroon's Export" *Laboratory of Analysis and Research in Mathematical Economics (LAREM)*, University of Yaoundé II, Soa, 2013, P. 1.

⁷ W. Brock, "African Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA): Background and Reauthorization", *Congressional Research Service (CRS)*, April 2015, P. 1.

⁸ See Appendix 1

⁹ D. Paquette "Trump ends trade benefits for Cameroon over persistent human rights violations", *Washington Post*, 2019.

Conceptual Framework

For clear understanding of the topic and avoidance of ambiguity, it was judicious to define the concepts that form the structure of the topic. It is in this same light that concepts like trade, relations, AGOA, and regime have been clarified in the subsequent paragraphs.

The word “**trade**” is complex and attached to many meanings. Bernstein defines trade as the exchange of goods and services from one person or entity to another often for money.¹⁰ He equally examines it as the activity of buying and selling, or exchanging, goods and/or services between people or countries. Trade between countries is termed as “foreign trade” or “international trade” which can be bilateral or multilateral. While bilateral trade signifies trade between two countries, multilateral trade refers to trade between three or more countries. But in the context of this study, trade refers to the act or process of buying and selling, or exchanging commodities (not including services) within a country or between countries. This work is focused on bilateral trade between Cameroon and USA; however, the concept of multilateral trade is integrated where necessary since the subject matter falls under AGOA which is a multilateral trade program. The word trade is synonymous to the word “commerce”; commerce applies to trade on a large scale and over an extensive area. As such, the word “commerce” has been used often as a synonym to the word “trade”. It should be noted that this piece of work bases its analyses on the exchange of goods only, not including services.

Freeman and Brian Job define the word “**relation(s)**” as social, political, economic, or personal connections or dealings between individuals, groups, nations, etc.¹¹ The word relations equally refers to various contacts between people, groups, or countries and the way in which they behave towards each other. It is equally referred to as the relationships that exist between two people, organizations, or countries, and whether these relationships are good or bad. From the above definitions, the context of this present study matches with the relationships or contacts that exist between countries, that is to say the relationship Cameroon and the USA. Therefore “trade relations” implies the relationship or contact that involves the buying and selling, or exchanging, goods between both countries.

AGOA is an acronym that stands for “African Growth and Opportunity Act”.¹² From this appellation, the word “**growth**” means the development or getting bigger in size, number,

¹⁰ W. Bernstein, *A Splendid Exchange: How trade shaped the World*, Atlantic Books, United States, 2008, p. 47.

¹¹ J. R. Freeman et B. L. Job, “Scientific Forecasts in International Relations: Problems of Definitions and Epistemology”, *International Studies Quarterly*, 1979, p. 122.

¹² Brock, “African Growth and...”, p. 1.

value, or strength.¹³ It is also defined as an increase in the success of a business or a country's economy, or in the amount of money invested. The word “**opportunity**” is defined by Roemer as a favorable juncture of circumstances for advancement or progress.¹⁴ The word also means a time or set of circumstances that makes it possible to do something, example: increased opportunities for export. The word “**act**” is also as a written law passed by the parliament, congress, etc., OR a document attesting a legal transaction OR the recorded decisions or proceedings of a committee. The present study has considered the concept “act” to be a written law passed by the U.S. Parliament and Congress, and signed by the U.S. President.

The last word “**regime**”, according to Marc Levy, is a social institution that influences the behavior of states and their subjects. It consists of informal and formalized principles and norms, as well as specific rules, procedures and programs.¹⁵ It refers to a particular government or a system of government. It is also a system or an ordered way of doing things. It can be replaced by the words policy, plan, or program. The synonym that has been used for the word regime is the word “program”.

Relevance of the Study

First and foremost, this work is of scientific interest in the sense that it contributes to historiography in general and to those of Cameroon and the United States in particular. It therefore increases the field of commercial historiography. Also, this work constitutes didactic interest through the evaluation made on AGOA and the foreign trade policy of Cameroon. The weaknesses highlighted and recommendations made if applied by policy makers will go a long way to solve problems not only relating to trade relations between Cameroon and the United States, but also problems affecting the Cameroon's economic and investment relations with the rest the of the world. This is because the business environment (atmosphere) plays an important role in foreign and domestic investments.

This study shows how AGOA is beneficial to Cameroon (eligible countries) and to the United States. By treating the total value of exports to USA from 2000 to 2019 under AGOA, this study helps to compare trade flows before and after the creation of AGOA. From the

¹³ A. P. Thirlwall, “Trade, Trade Liberalisation and Economic Growth: Theory and Evidence”, African Development Bank, 2000.

¹⁴ J. E. Roemer et A. Trannoy, “Equality of Opportunity: Theory and Measurement”, in *Journal of Economics Literature*, 2016, p. 1299.

¹⁵ M. A. Levy et al., “The Study of International Regimes”, *European Journals of International Relations*, 1995, p. 313.

statistics and data gotten, it becomes possible to determine whether AGOA has been beneficiary to Cameroon or not in, product enhancement, product diversification, creation of job opportunities, encouragement of regional integration, economic growth, just to name a few. A study on U.S. imports to Cameroon provides us with the opportunity to compare the Balance of Trade (BOT) between both countries and relate its effects to the economic growth and development of Cameroon.

Theoretical Framework

It is important for research studies in social sciences in general and specifically in the History of International Relations to be based on theories because these theories help and guide the researcher to better understand the treatment of the subject matter. Given the fact that there are many theories in International Relations, the choice of a theory is strictly related to the relationship that exists between the said theory and the topic in question. It is in this same prospect that the theories of Liberalism and Functionalism have been integrated in this piece of work.

The theory of Liberalism developed as early as from the 17th century with liberal ideals of great thinkers like John Locke¹⁶, Immanuel Kant¹⁷, Voltaire (François-Marie Arouet) and Adam Smith. Unlike the Realism, Liberals based their theory on international cooperation, non-states actors on the international scene, international institutions, international trade and the spread of democracy.¹⁸ The proponents of this theory believe that power politics should not be the primordial goal of international relations, rather, interaction through trade, economic, cultural and financial means, international organizations and democracy will reduce war and bring peace amongst states given that democracies do not fight each other.¹⁹ This theory replaced the mercantilist theory of trade. Mercantilism was a form of economic nationalism which sought to increase the prosperity and the power of a nation through restrictive trade practices with the aim of reducing imports, thereby supporting domestic employment.²⁰ This theory becomes effective in this work in the sense that trade relations between Cameroon and the United States are forms of international cooperation and strive to establish Commercial Liberalism. This is clearly seen in the AGOA process as the program gives free export

¹⁶See J. Locke, *Two Treatises of Government*, 1689.

¹⁷See I. Kant, *Perpetual Peace: A Philosophical Sketch*, 1795.

¹⁸B. E. Shiraev, *International Relations*, New York, Oxford University Press, 2014, p. 78.

¹⁹*Ibid.*

²⁰J. J. McCusker, *Mercantilism and the Economic History of the Early Modern Atlantic World*, Cambridge University Press, 2001, P. 37.

opportunities to eligible SSA countries. AGOA also promotes regional integration in Africa through the Rules of Origin (ROO, see chapter two, 2.3.1), which is in line with the theory of Transnationalism and the later prohibits the national interests of states in world politics and advocates for the integration of the international society thereby considering the value of non-governmental actors.

Another theory of International Relations is Functionalism. This theory arose during the interwar period and developed by David Mitrany²¹ and Ernst Bernard Haas²² in the 1940s. Contrary to the self-interest of states as regarded by Realists, functionalists see a common interest and shared by states as well as non-states parties also. The functionalist approach refutes the realist idea of state power and political influence by admitting that collective governance, material interdependence; functional/technical/economic integration will meet human needs through functional agencies.²³ This theory strives for profitable collaboration and integration. It is therefore important in this study because it is in line with AGOA's aim of fostering economic integration in SSA through AGOA Rules of Origin (ROO). Despite the fact that it is not easy to achieve trans-regional integration between the United States and SSA, the USA through AGOA encourages regional and Sub-Regional integration in Africa.

Choice of the Study

The conceptualization of this topic was motivated by attending graduate seminars in one of the courses entitled *La Place de l'Afrique dans l'Histoire Internationale du Monde*. While carrying out research on the seminar topic *La Politique africaine des Etats Unis* given to us under the above course, we came across the appellation "AGOA" which talked about free exports from SSA to the United States. This inspired us to carry further research on trade relations between Cameroon and the USA as a case study under AGOA in order to know the level at which Cameroon was successful under the program and vice versa.

Scope and Delimitation

This piece of work is focused on Cameroon and the United States of America from 2000 to 2019. It is important for us to explain the time and geographical setting of this present study.

²¹D. Mitrany, *The prospect of Integration: Federation or Functional? in International Regionalism*: Boston, 1968, p. 52.

²²L. N. Nkouengam, "Les Echanges Commerciaux Transfrontaliers entre le Cameroun et la Guinée Equatoriale à l'épreuve des textes de la CEMAC (1994-2012)", mémoire de Master en Histoire, Université de Yaoundé 1, 2016, p. 15.

²³ Mitrany, *A Working Peace System*, Chicago, Quadrangle Books, 1966, p. 35.

The time scope of this study runs from 2000 to 2019. The first date 2000 represents the year which the U.S. Congress and President Bill Clinton signed AGOA into law (May 18, 2000). Even though AGOA was introduced into the U.S. House of Assembly in 1999 by Philip Miller Crane, it was only signed and entered into force on May 18, 2000.²⁴

The second date 2022 represents the year which the International Monetary Fund (IMF) stated that, Cameroon had recorded a 0.5% fall in economic growth. Cameroon was classified as being at high risk of debt distress which could be sustainable through improved exportation. This influenced Cameroon and the Cameroon's Minister of Economy, Planning and Regional Development to relaunch talks with the United States of America to end its suspension from the African Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA). This is because, the former U.S. President Donald Trump suspended Cameroon from the AGOA program on the pretext of persistent gross violations of internally recognised human rights by Cameroonian security forces.²⁵

Cameroon found on the Gulf of Guinea is a Central African country and sometimes identified as a West African country because of its crossroad position between West and Central Africa. It is bordered to the north by Chad, to the west by Nigeria, to the east by Central African Republic and to the south by Equatorial Guinea, Gabon and Congo. Its coastline stretches along the Bight of Biafra, part of Guinea and the Atlantic Ocean. The country is composed of many ethnic groups who speak about 280 native languages.²⁶ English and French are the official languages of Cameroon, inherited from her colonial masters (Britain and France) after independence on January 1, 1960 and October 1, 1961.²⁷ Cameroon has a total surface area of 475,442 km² and is the 53rd largest country of the world with an estimated population of about 26,545,864 inhabitants in 2020 making it the 51st populated country of the world.²⁸

The United States of America (USA) is a country located in North America made up of 50 states with total land surface of 9,800,000 km² (3rd largest country)²⁹ and a total population of 331,449,281 people as estimate of 2020 (3rd most populated of the world).³⁰ The USA is made up of many races like white (71%), black (14%), Asia (7.2%) and others (1.5%). The

²⁴Brock, "African Growth and...", p. 1.

²⁵ C. VanGrasstek, "The African Growth and Opportunity Act: A Preliminary Assessment" A Report prepared for the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, New York, 2003.

²⁶P. Asya, "Linguistic diversity in Africa and Europe", *Languages of the World*, 2011, <https://www.languagesoftheworld.info/geolinguistics>, consulted Sunday 7 November 2021 at 6:07 am.

²⁷Kouega et Jean-Paul, "The Language Situation in Cameroon", *Current Issues in Language Planning*, Vol. 8, No. 1, 2007, pp. 3-94.

²⁸United Nations, "World Population Prospects 2020".

²⁹United States Encyclopaedia Britannica.

³⁰United States Census, "Census Bureau's 2020 Population Count", 2020.

country got independence from the British in 1776 (July 4) and inherited English as the official language. The United States shares borders with Canada to the north, Mexico to the South, and few maritime borders with Bahamas, Cuba and Russia.³¹

Literature Review

Many authors and researchers have put in place many documents concerning relations between Cameroon and the USA be it commercial relations, economic relations, political relations, diplomatic relations, or socio-cultural relations. Documents on the above mentioned domains acted as guides for the choice of this topic and also contributed to the realization of this study. Thus, it is important to analyse the various existing literature on relations between Cameroon and the United States with emphasis laid on commercial or trade relations.

Amin in his article³² examines the foreign policy of Cameroon towards the United States immediately after her independence. His analysis made it clear that the fact that the United States is a super power is beneficial to Cameroon in the sense that Cameroon stands to reap from political and economic proceeds. Also, the United States equally benefits resources and raw materials from Cameroon. The author went further to show the extent at which diplomatic relations with the USA were to help counter France's interference in the country given that Cameroon signed a handful of agreements (article 6 of the Cooperation between France and Cameroon since 1959) with France and these agreements gave France the audacity to intervene in Cameroon's foreign and domestic affairs. Amin also made it clear that the United States was also interested in relations with Cameroon with the aim of countering communist activities under the Union of the Peoples of Cameroon (*Union des Populations du Cameroun* – UPC). This literature helped a lot in the realization of this work especially in the first chapter, which highlights grounds for the establishment of bilateral relations between Cameroon and the United States. It also gave a broader understanding on the notion of diplomatic relations and reasons for their establishment between Cameroon and the United States, it made provisions for the analysis made on economic cooperation between Cameroon and USA in the 20th century.

Ngameni, in his thesis,³³ made an analysis on Cameroon's trade with the whole world, but the part that concerned this present study talked on exchange in trade with America. Here, he

³¹Simpson et Victoria, "Countries with which the U.S. shares Maritime Borders", *WorldAtlas*, 2020.

³² J. A. Amin, "Cameroon's Foreign Policy towards the United States", *Revue d'Histoire Outre-Mers, Persée*, 1999.

³³ G. E. Ngameni, "Le Commerce Extérieur du Cameroun : Une analyse historique de 1960 à 2010", Thèse de Doctorat/PhD. en Histoire des Relations Internationales, Université de Yaoundé 1, 2016.

made it understandable that the principal trading partner of Cameroon from 1970 to 2010 in the American continent was the USA (6th in the world), followed by Brazil, Canada and Costa Rica. He stated that the dominant export to the USA was petrol, given that Cameroon began exporting petrol in 1977. From his analysis, it is clear that Cameroon and the USA still trade in the same products before the advent of AGOA and the USA still stand as the cornerstone of Cameroon's trade with America. The literature of Gomsi became relevant to this study through the analysis given by the author on the high exportation of petroleum by Cameroon to the United States before the signing of AGOA. This permitted us to understand that before the creation of AGOA, Cameroon's exports to the United States were dominated by energy related products. Thanks to his work, it was possible to conclude that AGOA is not a program meant to exploit the resources of SSA beneficiary countries.

Besso et al, in their article³⁴ made it clear that real commercial relations between Cameroon and the USA began in 1986, when the U.S. signed the Bilateral Investment Treaty (BIT) which aimed at leading developing countries Cameroon to adopt macroeconomic policies to enhance growth but this treaty was more to a failure because of the economic crisis that affected the world on a general scale and African economies few years later, thus causing the United States to create another trade program in 2000 with name AGOA. This program then led to increase Cameroon export to the States in agricultural products, textile, and energy minerals. They ended by saying that despite the low weight of Cameroon's exports under AGOA to the United States, these exports greatly influenced the evolution of the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) growth rate. This particular review has contributed a lot to the analysis made on the impact of AGOA on Cameroon's exports.

Williams, an analyst in International Trade and Finance produced a report³⁵ for Members and Committees of the U.S. Congress in 2015 and in this report, Brock analysed the components of the AGOA legislation, U.S. import trends associated with AGOA, the impact of AGOA on African economies and U.S.-Africa trade, and the issues surrounding the reauthorization of AGOA in 2015. He said that AGOA is essentially an expansion of the United States Generalised System of Preferences (GSP) as it provides preferential treatment access to the U.S. markets for more products such as apparel, and sets out additional eligibility criteria

³⁴ C. R. Besso et al, "African Growth and Opportunity Act: Growth, Competitive and Diversification of Cameroon Export", *Laboratory of Analysis and Research in Mathematical Economics (LAREM)*, University of Yaoundé II-Soa.

³⁵ R. W. Brock, "African Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA): Background and Reauthorization" *Congressional Research Service (CRS)*, April 2015, pp. 1-22.

and other components not part of GSP. The provisions of AGOA are important because they make it comprehensible that the said program is non-reciprocal and unilateral, thus different from other U.S. trade preferences. From this report, much knowledge has been acquired on the AGOA program which has been used in the treatment of data on Cameroon's exports to the USA. It also gave the floor for the construction of the second chapter of this work which is a clear understating of AGOA as a trade program.

Njuafac in his thesis³⁶ concentrated part of his work on "AGOA provisions for Commercial Relations" with the United States. In this part, he talked on circumstances which led to the creation of AGOA; that is the poor participation of SSA countries in trade with the USA as they accounted barely 1% of total U.S. imports, exports and Foreign Direct Investment by 1999. According to Njuafac, AGOA was to be of great importance to SSA in general and Cameroon in particular in the sense that its provisions were to create a trade economic forum between the USA and SSA to facilitate trade, investment and economic growth; expansion of SSA's product under the GSP, reducing quotas and tariffs on apparel (clothing) where Africans enjoyed a comparative advantage, and, establishment of free trade agreements and creation of economic communities. In due regards to this, Cameroon fulfilled all the eligibility criteria and was listed amongst the thirty-four SSA countries published on October 2, 2000. He continued to say that it was a good thing for Cameroon as the president of the Republic expressed gratitude towards the U.S. Government given that AGOA opportunities were to help contribute to economic growth and poverty reduction. From the work of Njuafac, it is seen that he focused on the resolutions and importance of AGOA without giving statistics in exchange of goods and services between Cameroon and the USA. Therefore, it became necessary to produce a piece of work that has analysed total imports and exports of Cameroon towards the United States along the AGOA Program. His thesis also permitted mastery on the basis of bilateral relations between Cameroon the United States as highlighted in the first chapter of this work.

Frii-Manyi publicly defended a doctoral thesis³⁷ in 2009 in which she made an analysis on economic cooperation between Cameroon and the United States in the domain of agriculture under the United States Agency for International Development (USAID). She made it clear in her work that agriculture constituted the backbone of post-independent Cameroon since a greater portion of her exports were made up of agricultural products. According to Frii-Manyi

³⁶ K.F. Njuafac, "The United States and the Democratization Process in Central Africa 1990-2001: The Case of Cameroon and Chad", Doctorate thesis in History, University of Yaoundé I, 2011/2012.

³⁷ R. A. Frii-Manyi, "The United States Agency for International Development and Agriculture in Cameroon, 1962-1994: A Historical Analysis", Doctorate thesis Ph.D. in History, University of Yaoundé I, 2008/2009.

this project put in place statistics and planning programs within the Ministry of Agriculture. Judging from the literature of Frii-Manyi, it is clear that the USAID was instrumental in Cameroon's Agricultural Sector with the creation of many products that transformed Cameroon's agricultural sector. As such, the above literature has been of great importance to this work as it gave proper understanding of the subject given that a greater share of what Cameroon exported to the U.S. comes from agricultural sector. This review also gave room to evaluate the credibility of AGOA in the domain of product diversity, given the fact that agriculture with highest potentials of employment in Cameroon did not export up to half of total export under AGOA. It also made it possible to see a sort of relationship between USAID and AGOA as far as NWCA is concerned.

Nzadiba in his Master's dissertation³⁸ treated the presence of the United States in Cameroon in many domains like political, economic, socio-cultural and on security. What concerned this present study in his work is related to the economic domain especially the part he talked of AGOA. After giving a clue on what AGOA signifies, the author went forward to talk on the eligibility criteria under AGOA. Here, he sub-divided the criteria into socio-political and economic criteria. Out of the criteria, he threw an eye on the advantages of AGOA after listing the various Cameroonian goods protected under this program. Concerning advantages, he made us to understand that AGOA enlarged the scale for Cameroonian products to the U.S. markets and thus, exports to the U.S. increased since the creation of AGOA in 2000 unlike the previous years. From his analysis, it shows that Cameroon's exports increased from 21,231,000 USD in 1992 to 37,174,000 USD in 2001, the first year of AGOA in existence. Since then, exports have been increasing until 2009 where they fell by 75% because of the financial crisis that touched every country of the world. Between 1990 and 2000, Cameroon's total export to USA valued 1,759,000 USD meanwhile from 2001 to 2009 it increased to 169,468,000 USD signifying a great increased. From Nzadiba's piece of work, he based his analysis on one-way trade (export), which is from Cameroon to USA limiting the period under AGOA from 2000 to 2009. Thus, there became need to enlarge the field of study on two-way trade between Cameroon and the United States from 2000 to 2019.

Paul Bikai in his book³⁹ outlined the nature of Cameroon's external trade by bringing out some important accords signed by Cameroon in order to ameliorate foreign trade, and he

³⁸ J. Y. Nzadiba, "Les enjeux de la présence des Etats Unis en Afrique Centrale : Le cas du Cameroun 1992-2010", Mémoire en Histoire des Relations Internationales, Université de Yaoundé I, 2014/2015.

³⁹P. Bikai, *Guide du Commerce Extérieur du Cameroun*, Editions Informatique Maison, 2006.

also talked on the important governing bodies of Cameroon's foreign trade. It is well underlined in this book that Cameroon has signed many bilateral commercial accords with countries like the United States, the United Kingdoms, China, Canada, and many others including African countries. Accords were ratified with the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS), the African Export-Import Bank (AFREXIMBANK), just to name a few. Concerning the supervision of trade in Cameroon, it is mainly under the control of the state through ministries and public institutions. This book was highly important for the realization of this work because it facilitated the comprehension of the functioning of Cameroon's Foreign Trade Policy, and it equally really put in place guidelines that were followed to access those places with sources necessary for the development of this piece of study.

Amin in his article⁴⁰ brought out the various foreign policy objectives of President Ahmadou Ahidjo during the establishment of relations with the United States. According to him, the foreign policies objectives of Ahidjo have been very instrumental in Cameroon's relations with the United States till date. This is because, by the time he left power, he had shaped Cameroon's foreign policy for a long period of time and Cameroon's foreign policy remained conducted in a way similar to that of Ahidjo. Apart from Equality, Non-interference, and Sovereignty, Ahidjo also based his foreign policy objectives on Liberalism and Economic Development. He maintained good friendly ties with both communist and non-communist countries. The author went further to state that, the removing of USAID office in Yaoundé and the loss of membership in AGOA showed how Cameroon was willing to pay any price to maintain its national sovereignty. The literature of A. Amin was important in the analysis made on the establishment of bilateral relations between Cameroon and the United States.

Pascal Nguéfouet in his *mémoire*⁴¹ highlighted commercial activities between Cameroon and USA from 1960 to 1990. He stated that notwithstanding the fact that president Ahidjo's visits to the USA (1962, 1967, 1969, 1982) were more diplomatic, they conducted to trade and economic benefits between Cameroon and the USA in three principal aspects (investment, trade, and U.S. dependence on Africa's petrol). He thus noticed that tangible trade between Cameroon and the USA only started from 1971 and that is why he started analysing from that year. From 1971 to 1982, Cameroon had been enjoying a favourable trade balance up to 8,811 million FCFA in 1982. It is clear in his work that the U.S. Foreign Policy towards Cameroon

⁴⁰ J. A. Amin, "Equality, Non-interference, and Sovereignty: President Ahmadou Ahidjo and the Making of Cameroon-U.S. Relations", in *African Studies Review*, University of Dayton, 2021.

⁴¹ A. P. Nguéfouet, "L'axe Diplomatique Washington-Yaoundé (1960-1990): Fondements, Enjeux et Perspectives Historiques", *Mémoire en Histoire des Relations Internationales*, Université de Yaoundé I, 2012/2013.

between 1960 and 1990 was based on political factors like democratization and economically attracted by the raw materials and minerals of Cameroon. This literature therefore gave us underground reasons behind the creation of AGOA.

The Ministry of Trade⁴² has equally produced many Statistical Yearbooks on Trade that were exploited to realise this work. These statistical yearbooks outlined Cameroon's general trade with the entire world, showing the principal exports and imports of Cameroon over time. Also the books make tables showing the principal trading partners of Cameroon from the various continents and types of goods Cameroon exports and imports from these top partners. The yearbooks were relevant because they showed the domains or the products that have been at the apex of importation by the United States from Cameroon before the coming of AGOA and thus gave us the ability to analyse and evaluate the impact of AGOA on Cameroon's exports to the States and export diversification.

Craig VanGrasstek produced a report⁴³ to the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development in 2003 and he presented the various preferences of the U.S. with AGOA at the top of the list of non-reciprocal regional preferences with a total of 0.8% U.S. import and 46.6% total share enjoying preferences. He made it clear that AGOA is a sort of continuation of the U.S. Generalized System of Preferences (GSP) as it expanded product coverage as well as tariff and quota free exports of textile and apparel products to the U.S. After displaying the list of qualified SSA countries, VanGrasstek tabled the total of U.S. imports from beneficiary SSA in 2001. It is in this same light that Cameroon exported 44,011,710 USD in oil and gas, 252,691 USD in apparel, 57,362,750 USD in other products with a total 101,627,151 USD in 2001. With the list of preferential products imported by the U.S. from SSA, the top products included energy related products, followed by agricultural products, and, textile and apparels. His analysis showed that imports from SSA increased from 5% in 1992 to 60% in 2002 and tariffs on these exports declined from 1.5% in 1999 to about 0.6% in 2002. This implies that AGOA has been beneficial and successful at the beginning and thus, more study was needed on its impact on Cameroon's export to USA.

After going through the above literature, it was necessary to produce a piece of work different from those of the above authors. The first difference between this study and the literature above is on the scope of study. This work runs from 2000 to 2022 whereas the

⁴² MINCOMMERCE, "Statistical Yearbook on Trade", 1992-1916.

⁴³ C. VanGrasstek, "The African Growth and Opportunity Act: A Preliminary Assessment" A Report prepared for the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, New York, 2003.

literature above was centred before and on the first decade of the 21st century. Most of the analyses made in the literature did not concern two-way trade while this work is focused on a two-way trade analysis, with provisions made on the balance of trade between Cameroon and the United States, and between SSA and the United States. Furthermore, this present study equally looked at the reasons why AGOA was not successful in Cameroon but succeeded in other countries like Lesotho. More to that, this work examined the challenges faced by AGOA and the Cameroon trading sector.

Statement of Problem

Like any research work has its own problems, it is not an exception for this piece of work. Cameroon is a country blessed with many raw materials like crude oil, timber, cocoa, coffee, cotton amongst other, but, the inability of Cameroon to transform all these raw materials into finished and semi-finished products because of her low technical knowhow has caused her to engage in economic trade with many countries of the world. Nevertheless, countries with high technological knowhow still engage themselves in external trade because; it is difficult for a country to live in solitude. Hence, trade between within the world becomes unavoidable. It is in this same vein that Cameroon engaged in trade with the USA since the signing of diplomatic relations in 1960.⁴⁴ With greater trading opportunities offered by the U.S. to SSA through the enactment of AGOA in 2000,⁴⁵ Cameroon joined this trade program in order to amass maximum trading benefits from the United States. As such, many beneficiary SSA countries have been making great use of AGOA whereas Cameroon did not utilize up to 20% of the opportunities offered by this program during the nineteen years of participation under AGOA. This thus created a vacuum that needed to be filled by answering the following question: what reasons accounted for the poor participation of Cameroon under AGOA? To easily answer the above questions, the subsidiary questions below were considered.

Research Questions

- In what way has Cameroon's foreign trade policy shaped bilateral relations between Cameroon and the United States?
- Is the framework of AGOA a mutual beneficial trade program to the eligible countries and to the United States or not?

⁴⁴ Bieleu, *Politique de Défense...*, Paris, l'Harmattan, 2002.

⁴⁵ Brock, "African Growth and...", April 2015.

- What outcomes were recorded in Cameroon under AGOA and what reasons account for the poor participation of Cameroon under AGOA?
- What were the effects of AGOA on the economy of Cameroon and what are the challenges faced by AGOA and Cameroon's trading sector?

Objectives of the Study

This present study has both general and specific objectives.

General Objective

In a general manner, this work aims at finding out reasons why Cameroon did not utilize the opportunities provided by the AGOA regime.

Specific Objectives

The work strives to:

- Present Cameroon's foreign trade policy and how it has influenced Cameroon's relation with the United States.
- Show how the framework of AGOA creates opportunities for eligible countries and benefits for the United States.
- Analyze the outcomes recorded in Cameroon under AGOA and reasons for low AGOA utilization ratio.
- Evaluate AGOA on the economy of Cameroon, and highlights the challenges faced by AGOA and Cameroon's trading sector.

Sources and Methodology

As far as sources are concerned, it was necessary visiting documentaries at the level of the Ministry of Trade (MINCOMMERCE) and the National Institute of Statistics (*Institut National de la Statistique INS*). It was equally necessary visiting documentaries like the main library of the University of Yaoundé I, the library of the Faculty of Arts, Letters and Social Sciences (*FALSH*) of the University of Yaoundé I, the library of the International Relations Institute of Cameroon (*l'Institut des Relations Internationales du Cameroun IRIC*), the library of Heritage Higher Institute of Peace and Development Studies (HEHIPEDS), and the library of *Cercle Histoire Géographie et Archéologie (CHGA)* of the university of Yaoundé I.

With that which concerned methodology, the qualitative method was used to gather oral information from resource persons with the help of a question guide. This was done through interviews with government officials, private individuals, and some business men who have a clue on the subject matter. A total of fifteen persons were interviewed at the level of the AGOA Resource Center, MINCOMMERCE, the Cameroon Chamber of Commerce, Industries, Mines and Crafts (*La Chambre de Commerce, d'Industrie des Mines et de l'Artisanat CCIMA*). The information gotten was analyzed using a deductive method of data analysis.

At the level of data analysis, the deductive analytical approach permitted us to move from a general notion on AGOA in SSA to specific evaluations and conclusions in Cameroon. According to Léon Halkin⁴⁶ historical criticism is a scientific method designated to distinguish right from wrong. Given the fact that the pillars of History as a discipline are centered on a rigorous methodology, a critical mindset and the search of objectivity, the data gotten from the above sources were analyzed in relation to these pillars⁴⁷. First and foremost, it was necessary to prepare oral data by transcribing interviews and the written sources were then arranged in syntheses. A diachronic analysis permitted us to classify the activities and outcomes of AGOA thematically. This directed us to the development of data coding system and the identification of recurring themes which permitted us to evaluate AGOA from a general perspective to a particular point of view.

Problems Encountered

It cannot be affirmed that this piece of work was realized without hindrances. The main problem encountered was at the level of data collection. Many research centers were unable to be consulted because of varied reasons. This was the case with the National Archives of Yaoundé which was closed throughout the entire research period because of construction projects which were on going and all documents had been packed and kept, making access and consultation suspended. We intended getting information on diplomatic relations between Cameroon and the United States at the National Archives of Yaounde. Also, a demand was made to the Ministry of External Relations for authorization of the consultation of its archives, to our greatest surprise after a couple of weeks, it was communicated to us that consultation had been halted till further notice and we waited for months but no sign was ever gotten from the ministry again. Also it was impossible to have access to the archives of the U.S. Embassy,

⁴⁶ L. Halkin, *Initiation à la critique historique*, Paris, Armand Colin, 2ème édition, 1982, p. 18.

⁴⁷ <https://www.scribbr.com/category/methodology/>, consulted Monday 6 September 2021 at 1:27 pm.

after going there many times, it was only possible to access the American Center which contains just books and no archival documents. It was equally impossible to have access to the archives of the Ministry of Small and Medium Size Enterprises. In order to overcome these obstacles, oral sources were used. Also, other documents were taken into consideration, even though characterized with their own setbacks. These documents used to mitigate the challenges encountered included documents of the Ministry of Trade and the National Institute of Statistics.

At the level of gathering oral information, it was equally difficult to meet up with some informants. Some of them gave appointments and they were unable to be point. Also, it was difficult to locate individuals who have mastery on AGOA. Even some workers at the CCIMA and the regional delegation of the Ministry of Trade in Douala were unable to respond to our question guide. To overcome this problem, it was necessary to carry interviews with some American specialists on zoom.

The collection of information from the archives of the Ministry of Commerce was also cumbersome in the sense that, it was strictly prohibited for documents to be photocopied or stored in any digital and retrieval form. This posed a serious problem at the level of constructing indexes. As a remedy to this problem, it was necessary studying and analyzing all the documents instantly which was somehow tedious and consumed at lot of time.

More to that, it was difficult carrying on research during the Total Energies Africa Cup of Nations 2021, which was hosted by Cameroon from January 9 to February 6. During this period, a communiqué passed by the Head of State obligated public institutions to close by 2 p.m. This made data collection during this period very slow as research institutions closed earlier than usual. This problem was witnessed at the Central Library and the library of the Faculty of Arts, Letters and Social Sciences (FALSH) of the University of Yaoundé I, the library of the International Relation Institute of Cameroon (IRIC), the National Institute of Statistics (INS), and the Ministry of Trade. To overcome this barrier, documents had to be photocopied and taken home for exploitation which was costly.

Organisation of the Work

In order to better understand the subject matter and ease reading, the entire work has been divided into four main chapters as follows;

Chapter One gives background knowledge on the basis of bilateral relations between Cameroon and the USA while outlining reasons for such relations. It also treats the U.S. Foreign policy towards SSA, the different domains in which Cameroon cooperates with the United States and makes a clarification on Cameroon's Foreign Trade Policy.

Chapter Two focuses on the African Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA), putting in place Origin, reasons for the creation of AGOA, resolutions and evolution, the AGOA Law and the Generalised System of Preferences (GSP). It makes provisions for the AGOA Forum and the EXIM Bank by showing their roles, and it analyzes trade flow between the U.S. and beneficiary SSA countries.

Chapter Three tackles trade and investment relations between Cameroon and the United States under the AGOA Program with emphasis on bilateral trade between Cameroon USA before 2000, this chapter shows the trade profiles of Cameroon and the USA during AGOA (2001-2019), AGOA-related investment and brings out reasons why Cameroon did not maximise the opportunities offered by AGOA.

Chapter Four makes a general assessment of the African Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA), underlines its implications on Cameroon's economy, on SSA. It also outlines the problems faced by AGOA, by Cameroon's trading sector and makes provisions for the way forward.

CHAPTER ONE

THE BASIS OF BILATERAL RELATIONS BETWEEN CAMEROON AND THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

Introduction

Before the creation of the first U.S. Diplomatic Office in Cameroon in 1957, the Republic of Cameroon and the United States had little or no formal interactions until the signing of diplomatic relations between them in 1960. However, it is stated that some Cameroonians set their feet on U.S. soils during the advent of slave trade.¹ After independence in 1960 and the establishment of bilateral relations, mutations between both states have increased. Thus, what reasons account for the signing of diplomatic relations between Cameroon and USA? As a result of the diplomatic signature, cooperation between Cameroon and USA increase in the domain of trade. The poor trading relations that existed between the United States and Cameroon in particular, and with Sub-Saharan Africa in general influenced the U.S. Congress to enact AGOA as a law in 2000. This chapter thus traces the historical setting of AGOA, the background knowledge on trade exchanges between the United States and SSA because similar signatures were signed between the USA and many Sub Saharan African (SSA) countries and more to that, AGOA is a multilateral trade program which could be easily be understood when analysed at the level of SSA with references to Cameroon.

1.1. Grounds for The Establishment of Diplomatic Relations Between Cameroon and The United States of America

Relations between Cameroon and the U.S. have been positive, despite the fact that, from time to time, these relations have been challenged by priorities on political and economic liberalisation, and human right abuses. Both partners have common objectives in countering regional treats to security and stability such as Boko Haram, public health and economic

¹ H. L. Frederick, "African Americans Reclaim Their Ancestral Heritage in Cameroon" Consulted 05/02/2021, found at <https://web.archive.org/web/20130521013928/http://www.thenorthstarnews.com/Story/Africa-Americans-Reclaim-Their-Ancestral-Heritage-in-Cameroon>.

development, issues on democracy, environmental protection, and regional security among others.² Other than these common objectives, the official relationship that exists between Cameroon and the USA since 1960 is based on other state political, economic, socio-cultural reasons amongst others. These reasons set out grounds on which bilateral relations are based on.

1.1.1. Grounds in relation to political perspectives

First and foremost, Cameroon seeks to establish relations with countries that are able to respect and admit the independence and national sovereignty of the state.³ It is in this same line that the Cameroon head of state President Paul Biya, commented on Cameroon-U.S. relations in the following words:

*En ce qui nous concerne, nous sommes ouverts à la coopération avec les différents pays qui acceptent une telle coopération mais qui respectent la souveraineté du Cameroun et qui sont disposés à promouvoir des relations mutuellement bénéfiques entre eux et le Cameroun... mais nous envisageons, simplement, d'avoir avec tous les pays respectueux de notre souveraineté, des échanges normaux.*⁴

Also, the affirmation of the independence is also another reason for Cameroon's engagement in bilateral relations with the United States. The United States is a super power and Cameroon stands to benefit both politically and economically. Also during the period of Ahidjo, he wanted to use the USA in order to counter balance France's influence in Cameroon. This is because at the eve of the independence of Cameroon, both countries had signed many agreements which permitted France to interfere in Cameroon's affairs. In the same way, A. Anim underlined that, "...Cameroon entered a series of entangling alliances with France. Those political, military, economic and cooperation accords gave France the authority to intervene in Cameroon domestic and foreign affairs at any given time of the day".⁵ In addition to this, Cameroon at this period in time was faced with the Nationalists problems in Cameroon who were in touch with Pro-communist countries like Egypt, Ghana and Russia.⁶

The United States of America also engaged in bilateral relations with the Republic of Cameroon because of numerous reasons such as the implementation and expansion of U.S. principles, the quest to achieve American objectives and also national interest. It is however

²E. J. Eluke, "The Role of the African Growth and Opportunity Act in the Implementation of the U.S. Economic Policy Objectives in Central Africa", in *European Political and Law Discourse*, Volume 3, 2006, p. 35.

³ Amin, "Equality, Non-interference, and Sovereignty: President Ahmadou Ahidjo and the Making of Cameroon-U.S. Relations", in *African Studies Review*, University of Dayton, 2021, p. 24.

⁴Y. A. Chouala, *La politique Extérieure du Cameroun : Doctrine, acteurs, processus et dynamiques régionales*, Editions Karthala, Paris, 2014, p. 181.

⁵ Amin, "Cameroon's Foreign Policy", p. 212.

⁶ *Ibid.*

important to note that one of the main objectives of states on the international scene is to achieve national interest. The U.S. was focused on expanding democracy in the world with the desire to set a moral example for others in foreign affairs as part of their major principles.⁷ It is worth noting that, the United States used democracy as a globalisation tool to spread her influence and satisfy her interest around the globe. According to American Politician, Jonathan Sunshine, European activities during the second half of the 19th century were against democracy. It is in this same line that Jonathan Sunshine stated that “External influence which was held in Europe before 1830 took an anti- democratic fundamental approach which retarded democratization”.⁸

The foreign policy of the United States also targets liberalism since the beginning of the early decades of the 20th century as stipulated by the American President Woodrow Wilson at the eve of the end of World War I in 1918. They were against colonialism and strived for the liberation of those countries under colonial yoke especially African countries.⁹ This was to help maintain the status-quo or the balance of power in the world and also counter against the spread of communism.¹⁰ The U.S. foreign policy towards Cameroon was (is) also to fight against terrorism especially Boko Haram. The geographical location of Cameroon is a vital factor for U.S.-Cameroon relations. The central position of Cameroon in Central Africa in particular and Africa in general makes it a crossroad between East, North, West and Southern Africa thereby giving geostrategic and geopolitical advantages. The opening of Cameroon to the Atlantic Ocean makes the country a gateway into other Central African Countries as Cameroon is well attached to the Gulf of Guinea. This makes it easy for transportation of goods and personnel with the United States. Cameroon had also been attractive to the United States because of the political stability that characterised the country after independence.

1.1.2. Grounds in relation to economic perspectives

The USA was motivated to sign diplomatic agreements with Cameroon because of the availability of raw materials, natural resources and large markets in Africa in general and in Cameroon to be specific. It is believed by the Oil and Gas Journal that Cameroon possesses oil reserves of about 400 million barrels, which increased subsequently following the peaceful settlement of the Bakassi Conflict, an area rich in oil.¹¹ Amongst the natural resources present

⁷ D. V. Edwards, *The American Political Experience: An Introduction to government*, 4th Ed. New Jersey, Englewood Cliffs, 1988, p. 574.

⁸ *Ibid.*

⁹ Amin, “Equality, Non-interference, and Sovereignty, p. 14.

¹⁰ Njuafac, “The United States...”, pp. 41-45.

¹¹I. Ndzesop, “The Place of Cameroon in U.S. Policy toward Central Africa after the events of September 11, 2001”, Master’s dissertation in Diplomacy, IRIC, 2007, p. 44.

in Cameroon (oil, gas, petrol, timber, cotton, rubber, minerals), the U.S. became interested in Africa's petrol at the period when the acquisition of petrol from the Middle East declined in early years of the second half of the 20th century. The interesting thing about Cameroon's reserves is that a majority of it is located off-shore in the Rio de Rey Basin in the Niger Delta which makes exploitation much easier. The Chad-Cameroon Pipe Line with terminal in Kribi also disposes about 250,000 barrels of Chadian petrol which is a point of interest to the United States.¹² Apart from acquiring raw materials and mineral resources from Cameroon, the United States also had the desire to gain the large market provided by the increasing population (5.409.000 in 1960 which was growing at the rate of 3.23%. Cameroon constitute a large market for U.S. arms as the sale of these arms in Cameroon increased from 3.000.000 U.S. dollars (3%) to 20.000.000 million U.S. dollars (80%) in 1966 and 1980 respectively.¹³ The strategic position of Cameroon at the centre of Africa and at the Gulf of Guinea makes it easy for the U.S. to easily have access to the sub region. This can be visible through the Chad-Cameroon Pipeline project which makes the USA the highest investor in Cameroon.¹⁴

1.1.3. Grounds in relation to socio-cultural perspectives

Other reasons for the establishment of relations with Cameroon include cultural interest due to the cultural diversity of Cameroon as she is commonly known as "Africa in miniature",¹⁵ Cameroon's bilingual nature (English and French as official languages) gave its status and prestige as far as culture is concerned, Ahidjo added to this in the following words:

We must refrain from any narrow and blind nationalism and avoid any complex, when absorbing the learning of other cultures. When we consider the English language and culture and the French language and culture, we must regard them as an acquirement of the universal civilisation to which we belong.¹⁶

The bilingual status also makes it easy for American Diplomats to express themselves freely with the changes of not understanding reduced.¹⁷ Moreover, Cameroon is endowed with many touristic sites such as Mount Cameroun, which is the highest peak in Central and West Africa, water bodies like Lake Oku, lake Nyos, Ekom-Nkam Waterfalls, Menchum Falls, and Lake Barombi which play an important role for American tourists. Also, there exist parks and

¹² Amin, "Equality, Non-interference, and Sovereignty, pp. 6-9.

¹³ *Ibid.*, pp. 21-22.

¹⁴ Eluke, "The Role of the African...", p. 36.

¹⁵ M. D. Gadsden, "United States Response to African Educational and Cultural Policies", in *Beyond Constructive Engagement: U.S Foreign Policy towards Africa*, E.P. Skinner (ed.), New York, Paragon House Publishers, 1986, p. 185.

¹⁶ Anim, "Cameroon's Foreign Policy...", p. 223.

¹⁷ Belinga, "Les Chefs de...", p. 87.

zoos such as; Mefou National Park, Limbe Wildlife Centre, Limbe Botanic Garden, Bois Sainte Anastatsie, Lobeke National Park, Ecopark, Campo Ma'an National Park, Benoue National Park, Bouba Njida National Park, and many others.

1.2. Background Knowledge on Trade Relations Between Cameroon and The United States of America

Trade between Cameroon and the United States during the 20th century was influenced by the GSP, authorized in the Trade Act of 1976 and came into force in 1976. The GSP provided preferential duty-free treatment to over 3,500 products from Developing and Least Developed beneficiary Countries.¹⁸ In order to improve trade between both parties, a Bilateral Investment Treaty was signed in 1986 and came into force in 1989. However, this treaty yielded no fruits because of the economic crisis that shook the world in the following years.

1.2.1. Survey on exports

Outside the European Union (EU), the United States was the largest market for Cameroon's export, but its importance has fallen drastically since the 1980s.¹⁹ In a general manner, Cameroon's exports to the USA before 2001 were the same products exported to other parts of the world. These exports were generally made up of primary products and few of slightly transformed products.²⁰ Cameroon's exports to the USA from 1960 to 1978 mostly comprised of crude agricultural and forest products such as Robusta coffee, Arabica coffee, cocoa, natural rubber, and semi manufactured product like cocoa butter. This trend took another dimension as the country became an oil producer in 1977 when Kole field was put on production.²¹ Its production increased to about 186,000 barrels daily in 1985 but started reducing as from 1986 when the price of oil collapsed.²² This explains why crude petroleum was the most prominent product-export of Cameroon to the United States as from 1977. It is important to note that the analysis made on Cameroon's exports to the United States before 2001 as from 1992 is related to availability of data. The table below shows Cameroon's export to the United States before AGOA.

¹⁸ USTR, "U.S. Generalized System of Preferences Guidebook", Executive Office of the President Washington D.C., 2020.

¹⁹ "Trade Policy Review Mechanism Republic of Cameroon", Report by the Secretariat, January 1995, p 8.

²⁰ Goms, "Le Commerce Extérieur..." p. 201.

²¹ B. C. Sanyal et al, "Development of the Oil Industry in Cameroon and its Implication and Training", a report of Scientific and Technological Development and its impact in Educational Planning, *International Institute for Educational Planning*, Paris, 1990, p. 32.

²² National Hydrocarbons Corporation, www.snh.cm/index.php/en/18-contenu-en/hydrocarbons-in-cameroon, consulted on Friday 01 April 2022 at 2:00 pm.

Table 1: Cameroon's exports to the U.S. between 1992 and 2000 (Quantity in tons and Value in millions of USD)

Year	Quantity	Value
1992	101,265	83.9
1993	123,980	101.2
1994	68,238	54.8
1995	72,990	57.3
1996	86,520	64.6
1997	70,769	57
1998	60,536	53.3
1999	93,981	77.6
2000	184,323	155.1
TOTAL	862,512	704.8

Source: United States Census Bureau and Institute Nationale de la Statistique, « Annuaire Statistique du Cameroun 1991-2 000 », Ministère de l'Economie et des Finances, Direction de la Statistique et de la Comptabilité Nationale (DSCN).

The table above clearly indicates that total quantity and value of Cameroon's exports towards the USA started decreasing in 1994. In 1993, quantity of export was 123,890 tons but fell to 68,238 tons in 1994 and value from 101.2 million USD to 54.8 million USD respectively. This fall in export came as a result of the decrease in the price oil in that same year as earlier explained above. The decrease in export kept on falling right down to 60,536 tons equivalent to 53.3 million dollars in 1997. The devaluation of franc CFA in January 1994 was the reason for the fall in value as from 1994.²³ That is why the decrease in value was not equivalent to that of quantity. Between 1992 and 2000, Cameroon exported to the United States a total quantity of 862,512 tons of products worth 704.8 million US dollars. Relating quantity to value, it is evident from the table that there was a wide gap between quantity and value and this is mainly because Cameroon's exports mostly comprised of primary products which had a little value in the world market. This is well illustrated in the table below.

Table 2: Composition of prominent exports to the USA 1997-2000 (Quantity Q in tons and Value V in millions of Francs CFA)

Product description	1997		1998		1999		2000	
	Q	V	Q	V	Q	V	Q	V

²³ INS, « Annuaire Statistique du Cameroun... », p. 16.

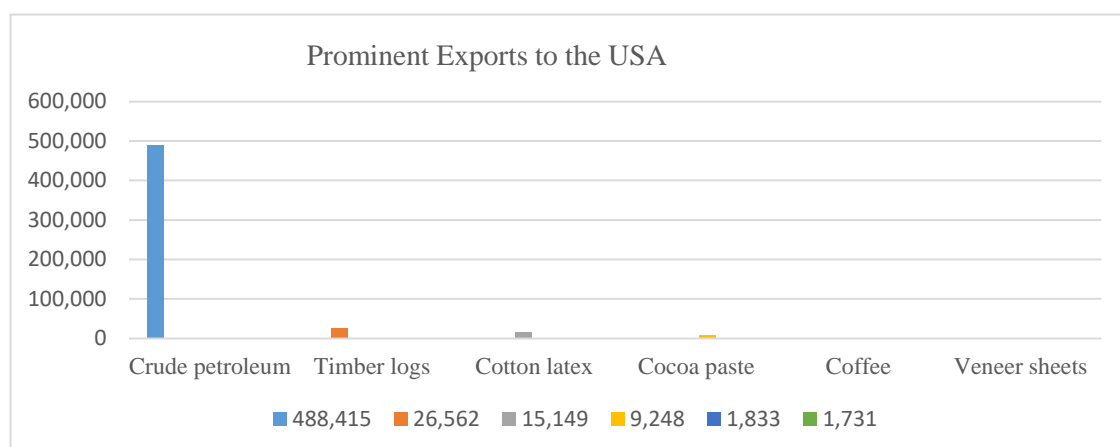
Crude petroleum	95,644	5,850	110,978	6,049	274,595	21,775	107,079	9,764
Timber logs	4,945	1,154	5,629	1,298	5,167	1,366	10,821	2,839
Cotton latex	4,722	2,235	4,245	1,969	3,790	1,419	2,392	1,151
Cocoa paste	1,724	523	1,948	654	1,680	966	3,896	4,082
Coffee	52	57	54	59	812	718	915	1,128
Veneer sheets	407	0.4	565	0.7	485	0.6	274	0.3
Total	107,494	9,819.4	123,419	10,029.7	286,529	26,244.6	125,377	18,964.3

Source: National Institute of Statistics, “Cameroon Statistical Yearbook 1997”.

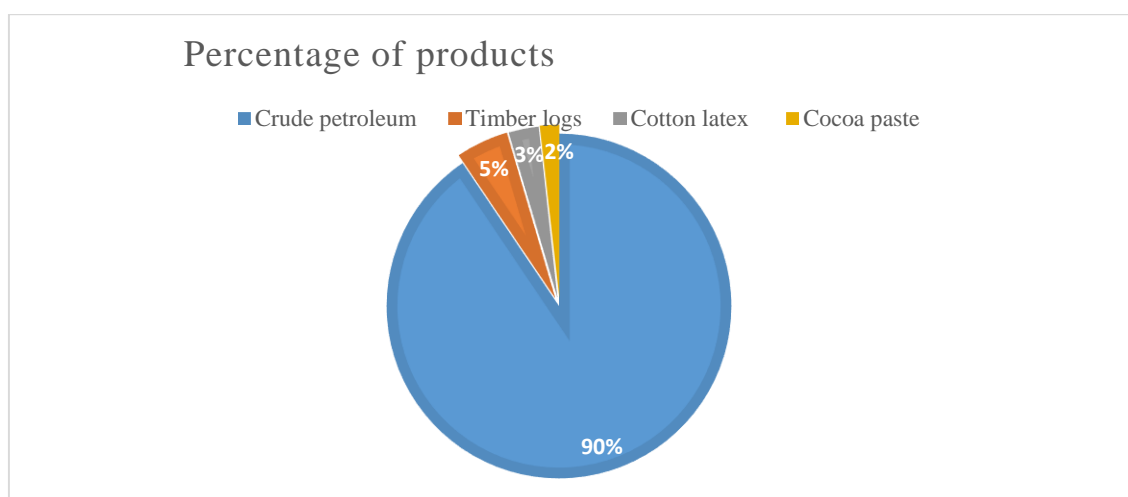
The first remark made from the table above is the nature or type of goods exported by Cameroon to the United States. Amongst the six prominent products exported, none of these products constituted finished goods. These products when added together in the years 1997, 1998, 1999, and 2000, they represented a total quantity of 1,771,219 tons and the total value was 65,058 million FCFA. This explains why there existed a gap between quantity and value of Cameroon’s exports. It is worth noting here that this applied to trade between Cameroon and other partners in the domain of export.²⁴ We can see that petroleum which became Cameroon’s main export as from the 70s topped the list of exports to the USA from 1997 to 2000 with a total quantity of 588,296 tons equivalent to 43,438 million FCFA. The highest export of crude petroleum was recorded in 1999 with quantity of 274,595 tons valued 21,775 million FCFA. It is worth noting that 1999 was the glorious year in export to Cameroon as this year indicated increase in all product sectors. From 1997 to 2000, Cameroon’s export of crude petroleum, timber logs, cotton latex, cocoa paste, coffee and Veneer sheets to USA registered a total quantity of 642,819 tons equal to 65,058 million FCFA. It is important to note that commercial exchange between Cameroon and the rest of the world witnessed since 1992 an increase in value. Thus, the level of exportation increased from 487 billion FCFA to 1,085 billion FCFA from 1992 to 1997, which is an increase of about 120%.²⁵ This has been illustrated in the charts below.

²⁴ INS, « Annuaire Statistique du Cameroun... », p. 16.

²⁵ INS, « Annuaire Statistique du Cameroun... », p. 16.

Chart 1: Graphical illustration of prominent exports to the USA (figures in tons)

Source: Realized by the Author with data from “Cameroon Statistical Yearbook 1997”.²⁶

Chart 2: Graphical illustration of prominent exports to the USA (figures in tons)

Source: Realized by the Author with data from “Cameroon Statistical Yearbook 1997”.²⁷

The above charts are meant to clearly show the weight of energy-related products, exported by Cameroon to the United States from 1997 to 2000. From the charts, energy-related products occupied a greater share to the extent that other products like coffee and veneer sheets were almost invisible.

1.2.2. Survey on Imports

So far, the leading and largest exporter to Cameroon in the late 80s and 90s was France with a share of about 45% and other principal European suppliers like Germany, Italy and

²⁶ See Appendix 5

²⁷ See Appendix 5

Netherlands. Outside Europe, major suppliers of Cameroon included the United States, Japan and some important African neighbors like Nigeria.²⁸ The United States has always been Cameroon's top trading partner in America. The table below shows the quantity and value of goods imported by Cameroon from the United States before the creation of AGOA.

Table 3: Cameroon's imports from the U.S. between 1985 and 2000 (Quantity in tons and Value in millions of USD)

Year	Quantity	Value
1992	19,483	57.1
1993	17,183	48.5
1994	18,830	53.7
1995	16,353	45.6
1996	25,238	71.1
1997	41,941	121.4
1998	28,656	75
1999	13,987	37
2000	19,697	59.4
TOTAL	182,368	568.8

Source: Institut Nationale de la Statistique, "Annuaire Statistique du Cameroun 1991-2000", Ministère de l'Economie et des Finances, Direction de la Statistique et de la Comptabilité Nationale (DSCN).

From 1992 to 200, Cameroon imported a total quantity of 182,368 tons of goods which were equivalent to a total sum of 568.8 million UD dollars. The highest import was recorded in 1997 where quantity was at 41,941 tons and value represented 121.4 million US dollars. The lowest imported was in 1999 during which total quantity of goods imported from the United States stood at 13,987 tons and only represented a monetary value of 37 million US dollars. It is imported to note that the United States exported mostly finished goods to Cameroon thus making the value of their products relatively higher as compared to Cameroon's products. The highest quantities of imports during these years are illustrated in the table below.

²⁸ "Trade Policy Review...", p 10.

Table 4: Composition of prominent imports from the USA 1997-2000 (Quantity Q in tons and Value V in millions of Francs CFA)

Product description	1997		1998		1999		2000	
	Q	V	Q	V	Q	V	Q	V
Cereals	42,406	5,301	19,511	3,210	6,744	993	32,298	4,642
Vehicles and tractors	783	2,555	872	3,683	581	1,292	484	2,478
Hydrocarbons	16,690	2,227	24,555	3,359	48,013	5,856	26,696	3,662
Mechanical equipment	4,164	26,945	5,857	33,473	2,632	3,701	2,389	16,964
Electrical equipment	150	2,126	447	3,189	288	2,753	213	1,992
Papers and cartons	9,030	3,179	8,125	2,960	6,784	2,523	8,672	3,832
Chemical products	4,228	1,684	9,809	2,204	1,757	1,038	712	2,655
Rubber	304	1,155	372	1,534	253	680	398	1,879
Plastic materials	533	951	1,065	1,404	491	701	657	1,206
Iron and steel works	2,125	3,697	2,751	4,966	814	1,208	1,033	1,485
Photographic optical devices	228	1,867	191	2,029	97	839	136	1,542
Tools	79	769	134	1,202	⁻²⁹	-	-	-
Space navigation	-	-	-	-	11	591	13	607
Ready-made textiles	-	-	-	-	758	544	801	629
Total	76,692	52,456	73,689	63,212	69,223	22,719	74,502	43,573

Source: National Institute of Statistics, "Cameroon Statistical Yearbook 1997".³⁰

²⁹ Years with no trade data.

³⁰ See Appendix 5

From the table above, unlike Cameroon's exports to the USA, a cross section of the goods imported by Cameroon was made up of finished goods. These goods included: Chemical products; vehicles and tractors; electrical, mechanical and chemical products; photographic devices; and ready-made textiles amongst others. All these products were finished products with high monetary value on the world market thereby reducing the gap between quantity and value. In a nutshell, Cameroon exported more and earned less while the USA exported less and earned more.

1.2.3. Balance of trade between Cameroon and the USA

The notion of trade balance is complex and at times conflictual. Whilst many people think that trade deficit or unfavourable balance of trade is a negative aspect on an economy, some experts and economists refute this thought. The International Monetary Fund (IMF) stands on the fact that trade deficit affects foreign exchange through poor balance of payment.³¹

This is why when whenever the foreign exchange system is hurt, it becomes difficult for countries to carry out international transactions especially on trade. On the contrary, Ben Bernanke³² admits that countries with trade surpluses dispose negative externality on their trading partner. He illustrated this by saying that the fact that Germany enjoys trade surpluses affects demands from other countries thereby reducing production and employment. According to Norrlof Carla³³, the consistent U.S.' trade deficit create a large market for other countries to export their products and a greater probability for her citizens to enjoy greater production than consumption. It should be noted that if the US was interested in trade surpluses, a free trade program like AGOA would not have been created. This is thus important for AGOA beneficiaries like Cameroon which has been able to export a certain portion of her products freely to the US markets through AGOA. The table below shows balance in trade between Cameroon and the USA before the creation of AGOA.

³¹ International Monetary Fund "How can the IMF help in Crisis? Getting a member country's economy back on track"

³² B. Bernanke, "Germany's trade surplus is a problem", Brookings, 2015.

³³ C. Norrlof, "America's Global Advantage: US Hegemony and International Cooperation" Cambridge University Press, 2010, p. 89.

Table 5: Balance of Trade (BOT) between Cameroon and the USA 1985-2000 (figures in millions of USD)

Year	Exports CAM³⁴	Imports CAM³⁵	BOT CAM³⁶	BOT USA³⁷
1992	83.9	57.1	26.8	-26.8
1993	101.2	48.5	52.7	-52.7
1994	54.8	53.7	1.1	-1.1
1995	57.3	45.6	11.7	-11.7
1996	64.6	71.1	-6.5	6.5
1997	57	121.4	-64.4	64.4
1998	53.3	75	-27.7	27.7
1999	77.6	37	40.6	-40.6
2000	155.1	59.4	95.7	-95.7

Source: Realised by the author with data from the National Institute of Statistics and the U.S. Census Bureau.

As indicated in the table above, Cameroon has been enjoying a trade surplus with the United States from 1992 to 1995 and from 1999 to 2000. During this glorious period, the highest trade surplus was witnessed in 2000 whereby Cameroon had a surplus of 95.7 million US dollars and the lowest surplus was witnessed in 1994 which accounted for 1.1 million US dollars. This was as a result of the devaluation of the franc CFA. However, the United States also had three years of trade surpluses, that is to say from 1996 to 1998 and the surpluses were 6.5 million US dollars, 64.4 million US dollars, and 27.7 million US dollars accordingly. This is well illustrated in the graph below.

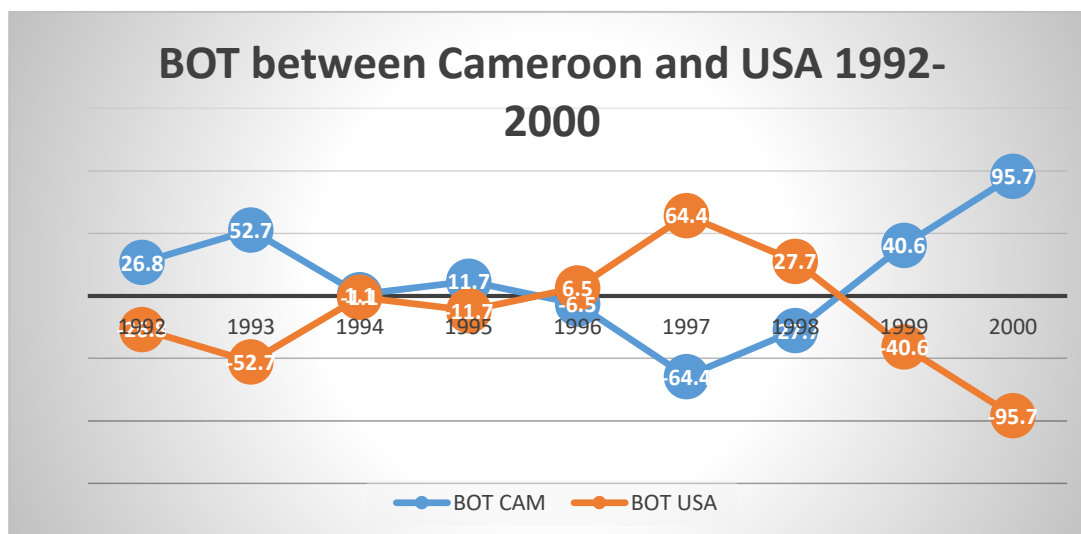
³⁴ Exports CAM signify exportation by Cameroon to the United States or U.S. imports.

³⁵ Imports CAM signify importation by Cameroon from the United States or U.S. exports.

³⁶ BOT CAM signifies balance of trade for Cameroon.

³⁷ BOT USA signifies balance of trade for the United States.

Graph 1: Balance of trade between Cameroon and the USA from 1992 to 2000 (figures in millions of USD)



Source: Realised by the author.

This graph illustrates what has been explained above. The blue and orange curves represent balance of trade for Cameroon and USA respectively. The graph shows the undulating nature of balance of trade between Cameroon and the United States of America. It is clear from the graph that the devaluation of FCFA in 1994 affected Cameroon's trade as the curve representing trade balance for Cameroon witnessed the lowest surplus. It is important to note that balance of trade between Cameroon and USA was inversely related. This implies that the same amount of deficit recorded by Cameroon in any year was the same amount of surplus recorded by the USA and vice versa. The low figures in trade exchange between Cameroon and the United States and between the United States and SSA inspired the United States to bring up a new trade program AGOA in order to ameliorate the situation.

1.3. Historical Setting and Overview of AGOA

The idea of the creation of AGOA originated from the initiatives of a U.S. Congressman who introduced it to the Legislative and Executive powers before it was signed by the President. It was enacted as law in 2000 because of many reasons. At the creation of AGOA, many resolutions were put in place and since its creation; AGOA has evolved over time with many changes as highlighted in the following paragraphs.

1.3.1. Origin and grounds for the creation of AGOA

The first persons to sow seeds of AGOA were Jim McDermott (a former Foreign Service Medical officer based in Zaire) and Michael Williams who was the Chief of Staff for Jim McDermott. The former worked with Ed Royce to table the idea in the U.S. House and Assembly during the administrations of Presidents William J. Clinton and George W. Bush.³⁸ On February 2, 1999, it was introduced in the U.S. House of Assembly by Phil Crane. After a period of six months, Roll Call Vote was organised on July 16, the same year before being passed to the Senate on November 3, 1999. It should be noted that the House registered 234 votes in favour and the Senate recorded 76 votes.³⁹ A joint conference was held between the House and the Congress on May 4, 2000 where the both legislative houses made the final decision and AGOA was signed into law President Bill Clinton on May 18, 2000.⁴⁰

With what concerns reasons, the AGOA act was signed due to the poor participation and record registered by Sub-Saharan African countries in commercial activities and investment by the U.S. in their respective countries. In the late 1990s, the United States Department of Commerce Data gave an account on commercial interactions between the U.S. and Sub-Saharan countries. These countries accounted just slightly one percent of U.S. total imports, exports, and Foreign Direct Investment (FDI).⁴¹ With what concerns the Total-Two Way Trade (TTT), it was dominated uniquely by petrol exporting countries (South Africa, Angola, Nigeria and Gabon) that represented about 35.000.000.000 U.S. dollars. It is against this back drop that the 106th U.S. Congress decided on the 18th of May 2000 to adopt a new trade and commercial act, and investment policy that was to improve trade benefits and assistant programs to Sub-Saharan countries known as the African Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA).⁴² The objectives of this act include (primary objectives), the deepening and expansion of trade and increase investment relationship with Sub-Sahara Africa. Secondary objectives include, aids to facilitate the rate of integration of Sub-Saharan Africa in to global economy; promote economic growth, as well as economic development; promote regional integration with the possibility of establishing Free Trade Area(s)⁴³ for mutual benefit to the U.S. and SSA; the accordance of concrete advantages

³⁸ "AGOA architect McDermott knighted in Lesotho –AGOA.info – African Growth and Opportunity Act", agoa.info. <https://clerk.house.gov/evs/1999/roll307.xml>, consulted on Thursday 1 April 2021 at 2:09 pm.

³⁹ Interview with Witney Schneidman, about 65 years, U.S. Senior International Advisor for Africa, Yaoundé Zoom, 3 August 2022.

⁴⁰ See Appendix 1

⁴¹ AGOA LAW, Section 101 (2), Section 105 (e).

⁴² *Ibid.*

⁴³ A Free Trade Area is the region encompassing a trade bloc whose member countries have signed a Free Trade Agreement (FTA). Such agreements involve cooperation between at least two countries to reduce trade barriers, import quotas and tariffs, and to increase trade of goods and services with each other, free movement of persons

to creators of enterprises and farmers, facilitate credits to American enterprises willing to invest in SSA; reduce tariff and non-tariff barriers including other measures acting as obstacles to smooth trade between the USA and SSA; re-enforce the private sector in SSA; establish a forum for commercial and economic cooperation between the USA and SSA; and put efforts to the flourishing of the civil society and political liberty in SSA.⁴⁴

In order to be eligible for this program, African countries were obliged to eliminate trade barriers.⁴⁵ It is important to note that the eligibility for this program was for the 48 Sub-Saharan countries excluding those of North Africa (Algeria, Egypt, Libya, Morocco, and Tunisia). The North African countries were exempted because they were considered by the United States as economically advanced countries.

1.3.2. Resolutions of AGOA

At the creation of AGOA, the U.S. Congress came out with some resolutions found in Section 101 and Section 105 of the AGOA law, these resolutions were as follows; they were to start by creating a forum for trade and economic interaction between the United States of American and African countries which was to foster investment and trading activities amongst both parties; the prolongation of the eligibility of African products for free-duty entering in U.S. markets under the GSP⁴⁶; the removal of existing quotas on textile and all apparel products from Africa; the U.S. president was to submit a plan to attest for the establishment of free trade agreement with Sub-Saharan African countries; private investment was to be increased by the USA in the concerned countries through the Overseas Private Investment Committee (OPIC).⁴⁷ It thus provided the sum of 650,000,000 USD for loan guarantees and finances for investment in Africa.⁴⁸

In order for AGOA to achieve its goals of increasing trade and investment between the United States and Sub-Saharan countries, they deemed it necessary to reduce hindrances to successful trade like tariff and non-tariff barriers and other obstacles, and they also gave

considering an opened border. It is the second stage of economic integration. For more information on FTA visit https://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/free-trade_area.

⁴⁴ Nzadiba, "Les Enjeux de la...", p. 103.

⁴⁵ Njuafac, "The United States..." p. 222.

⁴⁶ A program designed to promote economic growth in the developing world, provides preferential free-duty treatment for approximately 3,500 products from a wide range of designated Beneficiary Developing Countries (BDCs), including many Least-Developed Beneficiary Developing Countries (LDBDCs).

⁴⁷ It is the U.S. Development Finance Institution that mobilizes private capital to help solve critical world challenges and provides foreign investors with financing, guarantees, political risk insurance, and private equity investment funds.

⁴⁸ AGOA LAW, Section 101 (2), Section 105 (e).

assistance to efforts made by Sub-Saharan African countries towards regional integration, the negotiation for mutual and reciprocally beneficial trade agreements.

1.3.3. The evolution or metamorphosis of AGOA

AGOA was signed as public law in May 18, 2000 by President Bill Clinton known as AGOA I and since then the act has been amended by many authorities. During the first months of existence, President Bill Clinton issued a proclamation on October 2, 2000 listing 34 countries in SSA including Cameroon as eligible for trade benefits under AGOA. With time, many countries have been designated eligible, while others removed because they were not making continual progress towards establishing the rules set forth under the eligibility criteria indicated in the subsequent part of this work. The evolution of AGOA has passed from AGOA I to AGOA IV with many other extensions.⁴⁹ AGOA II was signed and became effective upon enactment on August 6, 2000 by President Georges Bush known as the Trade Act of 2002. This act encouraged investment and narrowly increased trade activities for SSA countries under AGOA. The amendments made in AGOA II touched knit-to-shape articles⁵⁰, hybrid apparel articles, merino wool sweaters; it doubled the apparel cap for apparel made in Africa from regional fabric made with regional yarn from 3% to 7% over 8 years.⁵¹

AGOA was further amended by the same President on July 12, 2004 in what is commonly known as the Acceleration Act of 2004 or AGOA III.⁵² The main significance of this acceleration is that it extended the initial end date of AGOA from 2008 to September 30, 2015 (additional period of seven years), it also extended the third country fabric provision from September 2004 to September 2007 (additional period of three years).⁵³ Other secondary provisions of AGOA III include; modifications of the rules of origin giving a broader base for the assembling of articles in the United States and in SSA as a whole; increase eligibility for some apparel products like collars, cuffs, drawstrings, padding/shoulder pads, waistbands, belts attached to garments, straps with elastics and elbow patches for all import categories to be eligible; encourage bilateral investment agreements; encourage the development of infrastructure to improve land transport, roads, railways and ports that will enhance information

⁴⁹One Hundred Sixth Congress of the United States of America, at the second session, held in Washington Monday, 24 January, 2000, p. 6.

⁵⁰ The term “knit to shape” applies to any apparel article of which 5à percent or more of the exterior surface area is formed by major parts that have been knitted or crocheted directly to the shape used in the apparel article.

⁵¹ AGOA LAW, Sec. 103., “Extension of African Growth and Opportunity Act”.

⁵²U.S. House of Representatives, Committee on Ways and Means, “AGOA Acceleration Act of 2004: Report to Accompany H.R. 4103”, 108th Cong., 2nd sess., H. Rept. 108-501, p. 19.

⁵³ Interview with Witney Schneidman, about 65 years, U.S. Senior International Advisor for Africa, Yaoundé Zoom, 3 August 2022.

and communication linkages; and improve cooperation between custom services at ports and airports in both the USA and SSA in order to reduce time in transit as well as increase efficiency and safety procedures.⁵⁴ Note should be taken that during the first three years of AGOA, direct benefits included the creation of 190,000 jobs and the attraction of 340 million USD in new investment to SSA.⁵⁵

On December 20, 2006, AGOA IV was initiated by President Bush entitled the Text of Africa Investment Incentive Act of 2006.⁵⁶ The principal articulation of this act is that it extended the third country fabric provision for five years, from September 2007 to September 2012, it also extended textile and apparel provisions of the AGOA program until 2015, it expanded duty-free treatment of textiles or textile apparel articles originating entirely in one or more lesser-developed beneficiary country, and provided special rules for fabrics or yarns produced in commercial quantities or abundant supply in any designated SSA country for use in qualifying apparel articles.⁵⁷

The Acceleration Act of 2004 of AGOA III extended AGOA to September 2015. Before the arrival of the previous date, the United States Congress had made investigations in relation to AGOA and found that since its enactment, AGOA has enhanced trade, investment, job creation, and democratic institutions throughout Africa; AGOA has promoted economic growth, development, poverty reduction, democracy, the rule of law, and political stability in SSA countries; elimination of barriers to trade and investment in SSA including high tariffs, forced localization requirements, restrictions on investment and custom barriers (see 4.1.1), thus, the U.S. Congress deemed it necessary to extend AGOA beyond 2015.⁵⁸ It is due to this effect that the Trade Preferences Extension Act (TPEA) containing AGOA extension was enacted in 2015. TPEA amended AGOA in General Section 506B of the Trade Act of 1974 (19 U.S.C. 2466b) by striking “September 30, 2015” and inserting “September 30, 2025”. It is important to note that the above extension involved modifications for rules of origin for duty-free treatment for articles of beneficiary SSA countries under the GSP, review of eligibility under the GSP, biennial AGOA utilization strategies, and agricultural technical assistance for Sub-Saharan Africa.⁵⁹ The picture below represents the extension of AGOA.

⁵⁴ AGOA LAW, Sec. 103.

⁵⁵ U.S. Department of State, “Sec. Powell and Foreign Minister of Mauritius Cultaree Open Third AGOA Forum”, Dec 9, 2003, pp. 2-4. Found at internet address <http://www.usinfo.state.gov>, retrieved Sept. 23, 2004.

⁵⁶ See Appendix 1

⁵⁷ <https://legacy.trade.gov/agoa/legislation/agoa4.asp>.

⁵⁸ One Hundred Fourteenth Congress of the United States of America, at the first session, Washington, Tuesday 6, January, 2015.

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*

Picture 1: U.S. President Obama signing the AGOA Trade Preference Extension Act of 2015 into law



Source: Bill H.R. 1295-Trade Preferences Extension Act of 2015.

The picture shows the occasion and official extension of AGOA from 2015 to September 2025 on Monday 1 July 2015 by President Obama. During this ceremony, he stated that; “For 15 years, the African Growth and Opportunity Act has provided tangible economic benefits and opportunities to Sub-Saharan Africa by helping companies improve their competitiveness and building a strong private sector”.⁶⁰ Given the benefits AGOA has recorded beyond 2015, the question on its future has become food for thought for many AGOA beneficiary countries and economic analysts. However, interview with Schneidman speculates that AGOA will be prolonged before expiration in 2025.⁶¹ The AGOA program provides many opportunities to its beneficiary countries, and it equally displays a set of benefits to the United States.

1.4. AGOA Opportunities and Benefits

Following the independence of many SSA countries in the second half of the 20th century, the newly independent states sought to achieve economic growth through many methods including international trade. Sub-Saharan Africa, generally considered as the region with the largest number of fast developing economies blessed with much natural potential, became a key element in the U.S. policy towards Africa in trade especially after the end of Apartheid in the 1990s.⁶² As a result of the enactment of AGOA as a law, the trade program is of great

⁶⁰ “AGOA Extension: For the 10 years, President Obama endorses”, <https://cgeci.com/extension-of-agoa-for-10-years-president-obama-endorses/>, Consulted on Wednesday 29 June 2022 at 6:03 pm.

⁶¹ Interview with Witney Schneidman, about 65 years, U.S. Senior International Advisor for Africa, Yaoundé Zoom, 3 August 2022.

⁶² C. V. Jones and R. W. Brock R, “U.S. Trade and Investment Relations with Sub-Saharan African and the African Growth and Opportunity Act”, *Congressional research Service*, June 26, 2012, p. 1.

importance to both the United States and the beneficiary countries. That is why this part has analysed AGOA opportunities to the beneficiary countries and the benefits of AGOA to the United States. For AGOA opportunities to be clearly outlined, it was necessary to show the influence of these opportunities on trade data based on imports and exports between the United States and Sub-Saharan Africa before and after the implementation of AGOA.

1.4.1. AGOA Opportunities to the Beneficiary Countries

The framework of AGOA offers many opportunities to its beneficiary countries. To begin with, it provides preferential access to U.S. markets for eligible products. Beneficiary countries equally have improved access to U.S. credits and technical expertise under AGOA. Furthermore, the program also permits a high-level dialogue on trade and investment between the United States and the AGOA beneficiary countries via the U.S.-Sub Saharan Africa Trade and Economic Forum. Moreover, AGOA permits free export of new commodities not eligible under the Generalised System of Preferences. For instance, Sierra Leone, Ghana and Ethiopia have exported dry beans to the U.S. under AGOA even though in small quantities.⁶³ In addition, the program permits a beneficiary country to get up to about 30% of raw material of a product, from another beneficial member within a sub region through its Rules of Origin (ROO). AGOA also gives provisions for trade surpluses through export enhancement. The program encourages the creation of direct and indirect job opportunities. It influences the beneficiaries to respect human rights, democracy and abstain from violent activities in order to remain eligible for the program.⁶⁴

In order to determine the validity of AGOA opportunities, trade flow between the United and AGOA members have been analysed before and after the creation of AGOA. Before AGOA, top imports from the beneficiary countries or SSA were oil, diamond and platinum, natural gas, aluminium ores, textile and apparel, vehicles, cocoa, rubber, cobalt, iron and steel, titanium ores. Top imports from USA were machinery, aircraft (including parts), vehicles (including parts), electric machinery, medical equipment, electronics, chemicals, plastics, cereals, and others.⁶⁵ Favourite U.S. trading partners in SSA in the 1990s were South Africa, Mozambique, Zimbabwe, Mauritius, Zambia, Kenya, Swaziland, and Tanzania. The table below shows trade flow between the United States and SSA before AGOA.

⁶³ S. Shapouri et M. Trueblood, "The African Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA): Does it really present Opportunities?", *Agricultural Policy Reform and the WTO*, 2003, p. 10.

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 10.

⁶⁵ United States Department of Commerce, Bureau of Census.

Table 6: Trade figures in goods between the USA and SSA from 1985 to 1999 in millions of USD

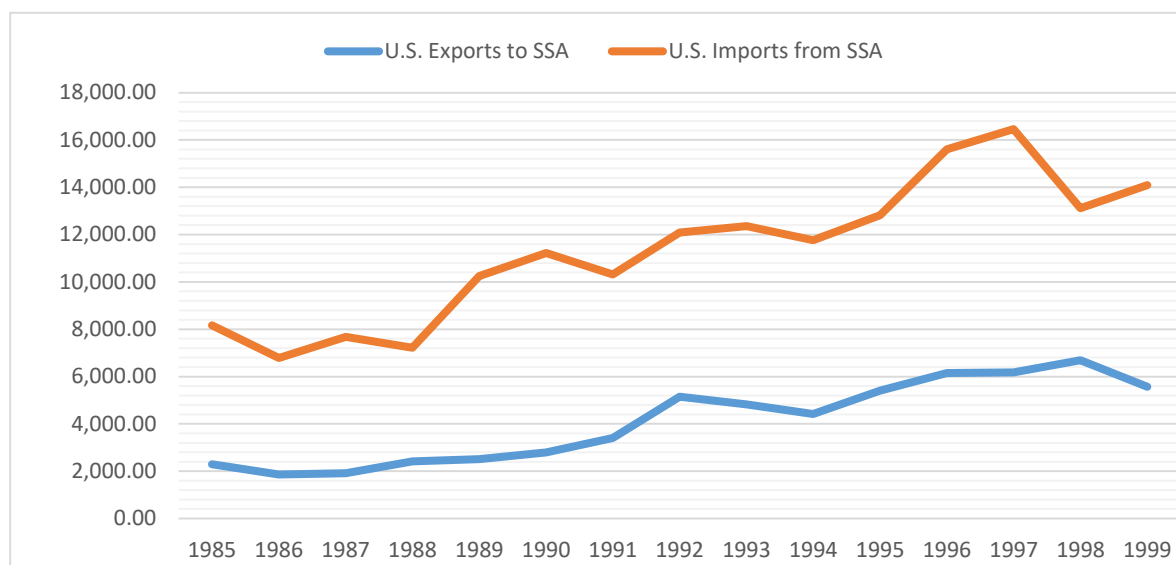
Year	U.S. Exports/SSA Imports	U.S. Imports/SSA Exports	Balance of Trade USA	Balance of Trade SSA
1985	2,299.4	8,163.1	-5,863.7	5,863.7
1986	1,854.2	6,789.7	-4,935.5	4,935.5
1987	1,918.3	7,681.8	-5,763.5	5,763.5
1988	2,421.3	7,213.8	-4,792.5	4,792.5
1989	2,505.7	10,248.0	-7,742.3	7,742.3
1990	2,791.9	11,222.5	-8,430.6	8,430.6
1991	3,401.3	10,309.3	-6,908.0	6,908.0
1992	5,149.9	12,088.3	-6,938.2	6,938.2
1993	4,821.7	12,362.6	-7,540.9	7,540.9
1994	4,424.3	11,765.6	-7,341.3	7,341.3
1995	5,406.7	12,812.8	-7,406.1	7,406.1
1996	6,152.8	15,607.7	-9,454.9	9,454.9
1997	6,169.5	16,455.3	-10,285.8	10,285.8
1998	6,694.4	13,119.1	-6,424.7	6,424.7
1999	5,568.2	14,086.4	-8,518.2	8,518.2
TOTAL	55,354	169,926	-114,572	114,572

Source: United States Census Bureau (USCB).

Choosing to analyse trade data between the United States and SSA from 1985 does not mean that trade between both parties started in 1985. Trade between the United States and SSA dates back since the middle of the 20th century but it has been analysed here as from 1985

because of the availability of data. A better understanding of the above table can be achieved from the graph that follows.

Graph 2: Curves showing multilateral trade between USA and SSA (1985-1999) figures in millions of USD



SOURCE: Realised by the author with data from the United States Census Bureau (USCB).

From the above graph, it can be seen that trade between the USA and SSA countries has been increasing to a greater extent of about 75%. During this period the year that experienced the least amount of trade exchange was 1986 with a trade value of 1,854.20 million USD import from USA and 6,789.70 million USD export to the USA. The low level of trade between can be explained by the fact that it was hindered by the economic crisis that stroked many economies of the world especially those of Sub-Saharan Africa.⁶⁶ Despite the low value in 1986, trade between both partners increased in export to the USA to about 16,455.3 million USD in 1997 and import from the USA to SSA increased to 6,694.40 million USD in 1998.

1.4.2. AGOA Benefits to the United States

AGOA is not beneficial to SSA only. The United States stands to achieve political and economic benefits from AGOA. Politically, the United States benefits from AGOA through its eligibility criteria or conditions of admission. One of the criteria states that, a SSA should be declared eligible if it does not engage in activities that undermine United States national security or foreign policy interests. This specific criterion permits the U.S. to achieve its foreign policy

⁶⁶C. Hewitt de Alcantara et D. Ghai, "The Crisis of the 1980s in Africa, Latin America and the Caribbean: Economic Impact, Social Change and Political Implications, in *The Social Effects of Globalisation*, UNRISD, Geneva, 1989, pp. 1-30.

objectives through AGOA. Also, the U.S. uses AGOA to counter communism given the fact that, the U.S. President is not authorised to designate a communist country or a country that carries out communist ideologies as eligible under AGOA. To add, a beneficiary country must not recognize or enforce the arbitral rewards to U.S. citizens or corporations.

Economically, the United States benefits from a variety of products from SSA. These products include; energy-related products, mineral products, forest products, agricultural product, apparel and textile products, chemical products, just to name a few. The exportation of these products from SSA in general and from Cameroon in particular, gives the U.S. the opportunity to exercise consumer's choice, satisfaction and improved living standard because of availability. For instance, about 90% of Cameroon's export under AGOA was made up or energy-related products. When combined with those from SSA as a whole, it implies that AGOA constitute an energy source to the United States. The United States uses AGOA to eliminate all barriers to U.S. trade and Investment in the beneficiary country. For instance, South Africa imposed anti-dumping duty on U.S. chicken, pork and beef exports in 2000 because of the risk of the bird flu infection. This caused President Obama to express his intentions of suspending duty-free treatment for all AGOA eligible agricultural products from South Africa. South Africa was reinstated after the anti-dumping duty was cancelled.⁶⁷ Again, more of AGOA imports are primary products and semi-finished goods. These products have a low value when exported in their primary state. The United States then transform the raw materials, especially minerals, into finished goods and thus, make enormous benefits in international trade. What the U.S. benefits from AGOA can be illustrated with trade statistics in the table below.

Table 7: Trade figures showing AGOA benefits between the USA and SSA from 2000 to 2019 in millions of USDs

Year	U.S. Exports/SSA Imports	U.S. Imports/SSA Imports	BOT USA	BOT SSA
2000	5,932.7	23,487.4	-17,554.7	17,554.7
2001	6,941.6	21,286.3	-14,344.7	14,344.7
2002	6,025.0	17,891.1	-11,866.1	11,866.1
2003	6,870.9	25,633.3	-18,762.3	18,762.3
2004	8,340.0	35,879.5	-27,539.5	27,539.5

⁶⁷ Akiko, "Current Issues on...", p. 17.

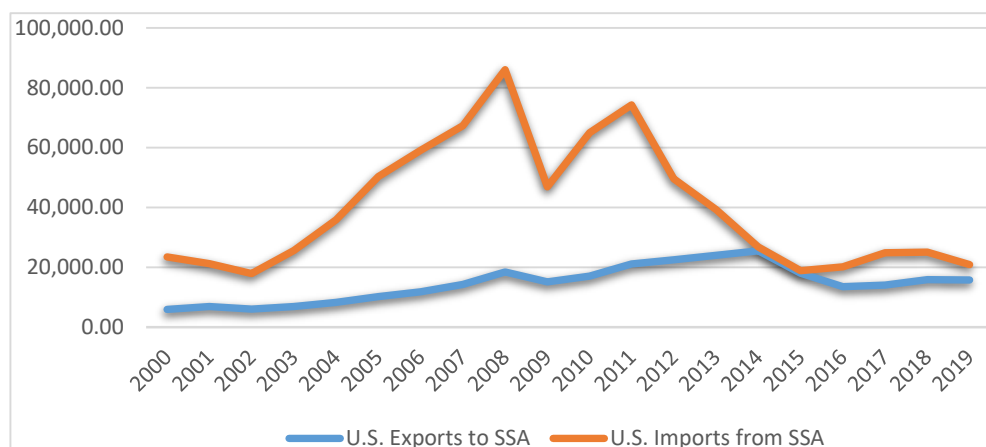
2005	10,210.7	50,364.6	-40,153.9	40,153.9
2006	11,859.7	59,092.8	-47,233.1	47,233.1
2007	14,296.1	67,357.8	-53,061.7	53,061.7
2008	18,471.9	86,052.7	-67,580.8	67,580.8
2009	15,155.1	46,900.6	-37,745.6	37,745.6
2010	17,109.9	65,025.9	-47,916.0	47,916.0
2011	21,165.2	74,322.0	-53,156.8	53,156.8
2012	22,502.6	49,624.4	-27,121.8	27,121.8
2013	23,977.8	39,293.9	-15,316.2	15,316.2
2014	25,490.9	26,784.6	-1,293.7	1,293.7
2015	18,005.3	18,849.3	-844.0	844.0
2016	13,484.0	20,160.0	-6,676.0	6,676.0
2017	14,066.7	24,855.6	-10,788.8	10,788.8
2018	15,879.0	25,077.3	-9,198.2	9,198.2
2019	15,802.8	20,947.5	-5,144.7	5,144.7
TOTAL	291,587.8	798,886.3	-507,298.5	507,298.5

Source: United States Census Bureau (USCB).

The high figures registered in exports by SSA showed the level of raw materials, mineral resources and energy products gotten from SSA through AGOA. At the genesis of AGOA, U.S. imports have been high in energy related products (oil and gas) and apparel which accounted for approximately 12.3 billion dollars and 9.6 million dollars in 2001 respectively. A greater portion of oil and gas originated from Nigeria, Angola, Gabon, The Republic of Congo, Equatorial Guinea, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Cameroon and Ivory Coast while apparel originated from Mauritius, Lesotho, South Africa Madagascar, Kenya and many other SSA countries.⁶⁸ The USDC made it clear that U.S. AGOA imports in 2018 accounted for 11.97 billion USD which accounted for 48% of total U.S. imports from SSA. This has been illustrated in the graph below.

⁶⁸United Nations, "The African Growth...", New York, 2003, p. 14.

Graph 3: Curves showing multilateral trade benefits between USA and SSA (2000-2019)
Figures in millions of USDs



Source: Realised by the author with data from the United States Census Bureau (USCB).

From the graph above, it can be seen that prior to the creation of AGOA, the peak of trade between USA and SSA was in 1997 with highest figures like 16,455.70 million USD, value for goods exported to the United States and 6,167.50 million USD, value for goods imported from the United States by SSA. However, this peak in 1997 is not even equivalent to the least years since 2000. This is to say that the poorest year since the creation of AGOA was in 2002 with SSA export worth 17,891.10 USD which is higher than the peak in 1997 before AGOA was implemented. This goes a long way to show the effectiveness of this program and the enormous benefits the United States gets through AGOA.

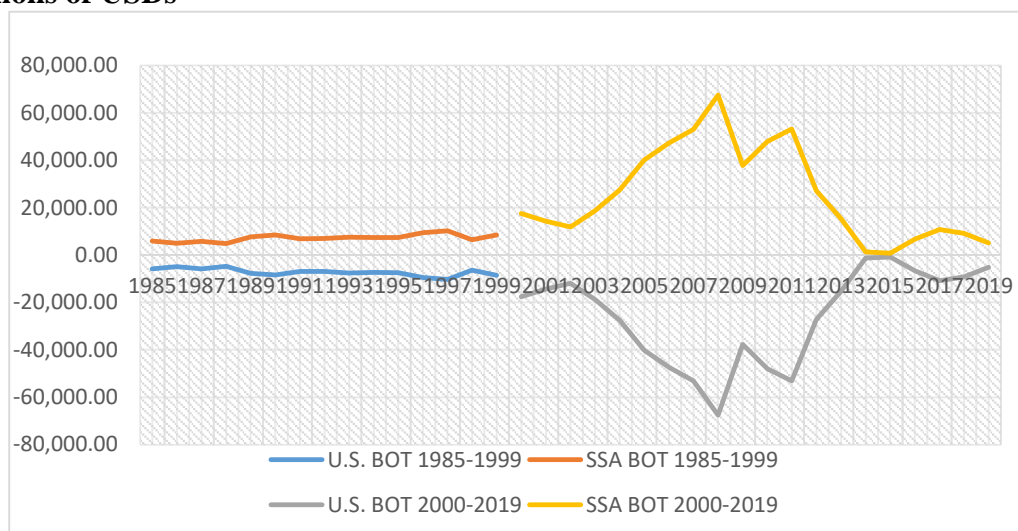
1.4.3. AGOA as a Mutual Beneficial Trade Program

As mentioned earlier, AGOA is mutual beneficial trade program to the United States and Cameroon in Particular, and SSA in general. The success of trade is mostly determined by BOT or commercial balance. BOT is the difference between the monetary value of a country's exports and the monetary value of a country's imports for a given period.⁶⁹ BOT is gotten by subtracting the value of imports from the value of exports, thus, a country that imports more goods and services than it exports in terms of value has an unfavourable BOT or trade deficit whereas a country that exports more goods and services than it imports has a favourable BOT or trade surplus. Among the top world trading countries, the United States has always recorded an unfavourable BOT topping the list in 2019.⁷⁰ From the data in table 5 and 6, a graph of four curves clearly shows BOT between the USA and SSA as illustrated below.

⁶⁹W. Kenton, "Balance of Trade (BOT)" in *Investopedia*, 2021.

⁷⁰*Ibid.*

Graph 4: Curves demonstrating AGOA as a mutual beneficial trade program. Figures in millions of USDs



Source: Realised by the author with data from the USCB.

In a nutshell, the graph above shows that, before AGOA, SSA did not export much to the United States and recorded a low trade surplus. Simultaneously, the U.S. did not enjoy surplus products from SSA. But with the coming of AGOA, both parties have had distinguished benefits, which are; trade surplus and import variety for SSA and the U.S. respectively. The orange and blue curves represent SSA's BOT and the U.S. BOT between 1985 and 1999 respectively and the yellow and grey curves represent BOT for SSA and the United States between 2000 and 2019 sequentially. Before the creation of AGOA, SSA experienced the highest favourable BOT with the USA in 1997 with a surplus monetary value of 10,285,000 USD and the United witnessed the least deficit in 1986 worth -4,935,000 USD. From the years 2000, trade balance between both parties grew wider especially in 2008. In this year, the difference in trade rose up to 67,580,000 USD which constituted a surplus for SSA and a deficit for the USA.

Balance of trade plays an important role in the economic growth of a country. Given that most indicators of economic growth constitute the state of BOT, it implies that a favourable BOT will lead to an increase in Economic Growth and vice versa. Trade surplus is accompanied with increased GDP and GNP, increase in employment, higher industrial production and increase in human and net capital. Human capital which is qualification and accumulated knowledge contributes to labour productivity that is a prerequisite for technological advancement and thus a determinant of economic growth. A trade deficit implies increased

importation. Thus, an increase in consumption and a subsequent increased in standards of living for the United States.

Conclusion

This chapter has treated the reasons for the establishment of bilateral relations between Cameroon and the United States. Many reasons account for its establishment. Such reasons run through political, economic, and socio-cultural, this explains why there has been cooperation in these domains, especially the domain of trade. The chapter has equally analysed background activities on trade between Cameroon and the United States before the 21st century, putting in place surveys on export and imports, and the balance of trade between both countries. From the analysis made on trade, it is clear that AGOA was created because of poor trading relations between both countries. This chapter went further to put in place the historical setting of AGOA by outlining reasons for its creation, resolutions, and the various changes that have taken place since its creation in 2000. Therefore, how does AGOA function and how does its framework influence economic (trade) relations between the United States and Cameroon?

CHAPTER TWO

THE FRAMEWORK OF THE AFRICAN GROWTH AND OPPORTUNITY ACT (AGOA)

Introduction

The African Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA) is a nonreciprocal trade preference program that was signed as a law in May 2000 by the U.S. President Bill Clinton.⁷¹ The AGOA Program authorized the U.S. president to designate Sub-Saharan African countries as beneficiaries, eligible for duty-free treatment for certain additional products not included for duty-free treatment under the Generalized System of Preferences (GSP), as well as for the preferential treatment for certain textile and apparel articles. The U.S. president may designate a country as a beneficiary Sub-Saharan country eligible for AGOA benefits if he determines that the country meets the eligibility criteria (see chapter 2.2.1) set forth in section 104 of AGOA (19 U.S.C. 3703) and section 502 of the 1974 Act (19 U.S.C. 2462). In order to enhance trade between the United States and SSA, a forum was created known as the AGOA Forum which brings U.S. representatives and Heads of States of SSA yearly to discuss issues concerning trade flows between both parties. This chapter thus traces the origin, it examines the AGOA Law and eligibility criteria for admission and eligible products, it also presents the AGOA general Rules of Origin. The chapter ends by showing the foreign policy of the United States towards Sub-Saharan Africa and Cameroon's foreign trade policy. These two policies are important because they set the basis on which trade relations between Cameroon and the United States are being manifested.

2.1. The AGOA Law and the Generalised System of Preference (GSP)

At the creation of AGOA, the U.S. Congress came out with some resolutions found in Section 101 and Section 105 of the Declaration known as the AGOA Law. This law outlined

⁷¹ Brock R. Williams, "African Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA): Background and Reauthorisation, *Congressional Research Service Report*, April 22, 2015, p. 1.

the basis for a SSA country to become eligible and the various products eligible under the AGOA. It should be noted that AGOA in other words is a continuation of the GSP since all the products eligible under the GSP are covered by the AGOA Law.

2.1.1. Eligibility criteria for admission as a beneficiary SSA country

According to Section 104(a) of the Trade Act of 1974, as amended (containing the GSP eligibility criteria)⁷², the U.S. President is authorised to designate a SSA country eligible if he determines that the country has established or is making continual progress towards establishing the followings:⁷³ A market based economy that protected private property rights, incorporated and open rule based trading system, with the minimization of government intervention in the market through price control, government ownership of economic assets, and subsidies; The rule of law⁷⁴, a fair trial and equal protection under the law; Political pluralism; The right to due process; The elimination of barriers to U.S. trade and investment⁷⁵; Economic policies to reduce poverty; A system to combat corruption and bribery like signing and implementing the convention on combating bribery; Protection of international recognized worker rights (the right of association, the right the organize and bargain collectively, no usage of force on any form of compulsory labour, minimum wage rate, and acceptable working conditions (work hours and health safety); National treatment and measures to create a conducive environment for domestic and foreign investment;; Does not engage in activities that undermine United States national security or foreign policy interests; Does not engage in gross violation of internationally recognised human rights or provide support for acts of international terrorism and cooperate in internal efforts to eliminate human rights violation and terrorist activities.

According to Section 502(b) and (c) of the Trade Act of 1974 as amended⁷⁶, the President is authorised not to designate any SSA country eligible or as a beneficiary country if: the country is a Communist country,⁷⁷ unless its products receive normal trade relations treatment, it is a member of WTO and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) or is not dominated or

⁷²R. E. Lighthizer, “2020 Biennial report on the Implementation of the African Growth and Opportunity Act”, Office of the United States Trade Representative, June 2020, p. 80.

⁷³AGOA LAW, Section 104.

⁷⁴ A principle of governance in which all persons, institutions and entities, public and private, including the state itself, are accountable to laws that are publicly promulgated, equally enforced and independently adjudicated, and which are consistent with international human right norms and standards. It requires, as well, measures to ensure adherence to principles of supremacy of law, equality before the law, accountability to the law, fairness in the application of the law, separation of powers, participation in decision-making, legal certainty, avoidance of arbitrariness, and procedural and legal transparency.

⁷⁵ Interview with Witney Schneidman, about 65 years, U.S. Senior International Advisor for Africa, USA, 3 August 2022.

⁷⁶ Lighthizer, “2020 Biennial report...”, p. 82.

⁷⁷ Nzadiba, “Les Enjeux de la...” p. 102.

controlled by international communism (Section 502(b)(2)(A)); The country participates, arranges or is a party to any action that has the effect of withholding vital commodity resources or raises their prices to unreasonable levels, causing serious disruption of the world economy (Section 502(b)(2)(B)); The country affords preferential treatment to products of a developed country which has, or is likely to have a significant adverse on U.S. commerce (Section 502(b)(2)(C)); The country has nationalized, expropriated or otherwise seized property, including trademarks, patents, or copyrights owned by a U.S. citizen without compensation (Section 502(b)(2)(D));⁷⁸ The country does not recognize or enforce the arbitral awards to U.S. citizens or corporations (Section 502(b)(E)); The country aids or abets, by granting sanctuary from prosecution, any individual or group which has committed international terrorism (Sec. 502(b)(2)(F)); The country has not taken or is not taking steps to afford internationally-recognized worker rights, including the right of association, the right to organize and bargain collectively, freedom from compulsory labour, a minimum age for the employment of children, and acceptable conditions of work with respect to minimum wages, hours of work and occupational safety and health (Sec. 502(b)(2)(G); The country has not implemented its commitments to eliminate the worst forms of child labour, as defined by the International Labour Organization's Convention 182 (Sec. 502(b)(2)(H); this provision was added by the Trade and Development Act of 2000 in Section 412).⁷⁹

In addition to the above requirements, the President is obliged to take into consideration the following aspects:⁸⁰ A country's expressed desire to be designated a beneficiary country (Sec. 502(c)(1)); The country's level of economic development (Sec. 502(c)(2)); Whether other major developed countries extend preferential tariff treatment to the country (Sec. 502(c)(3)); The extent to which the country provides "equitable and reasonable access" to its markets and basic commodity resources and refrains from unreasonable export practices (Sec. 502(c)(4)); The extent to which the country provides adequate and effective protection of intellectual property rights (Sec. 502(c)(5)); The extent to which the country has taken action to reduce trade-distorting investment practices and policies and reduce or eliminate barriers to trade in services (Sec. 502(c)(6)); Whether the country has taken or is taking steps to afford internationally recognized worker rights, (Sec. 502(c)(7)).⁸¹

⁷⁸ Lighthizer, "2020 Biennial report...", p. 83.

⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 82

⁸⁰ *Ibid.*

⁸¹ AGOA, Title 1 of the Trade and Development Act of 2000, Pub. L. 106-200.

Section 506A of the 1974 Act requires the American president to monitor and annually review the progress of each Sub-Saharan country in meeting the forgoing eligibility criteria in order to determine if a beneficiary SSA country should continue to be eligible and if a Sub-Saharan African country that currently is not a beneficiary, should be designated as a beneficiary. If the U.S. president realizes that a Sub-Saharan country is not making continual progress in meeting the eligibility requirements, the president must terminate the designation of the country as a beneficiary SSA country.⁸² The president may also withdraw, suspend or limit the application of duty free treatment with respect to specific articles from a country if he determines that it will be more effective in promoting compliance with AGOA eligibility requirements rather than terminating the designation of the country as a beneficiary Sub-Saharan African country.⁸³ In due respect to the above requirements, Cameroon was declared eligible for the AGOA program on the 2nd of October 2000. The subsequent table shows the various countries eligible for AGOA treatment as of June, 2019.

Table 8: List of AGOA-eligible Countries (as of June, 2019)

Countries	Date declared AGOA eligible
Angola	December 30, 2003
Benin, Botswana, Cameroon, Cape Verde, Chad, Congo (Republic) Djibouti, Ethiopia, Gabon, Ghana, Kenya, Lesotho, Malawi, Mauritius, Mozambique, Namibia, Nigeria, Rwanda, Sao Tome and Principle, Senegal, South Africa, Tanzania, Uganda, Zambia,	October 2, 2000
Burkina Faso	December 10, 2004
Comoros, Togo	January 30, April 17, 2008
Cote d'Ivoire, Guinea, Niger (restored)	October 25, 2011
Gambia	December 31, 2002,
Guinea Bissau (restored)	December 23, 2014
Liberia	December 29, 2006
Madagascar, Mali (restored)	January 26, 1, 2014
Sierra Leone	October 23, 2002
Togo	April 17, 2008

Source: Realized by the Author with information from the Office of the United States Trade Representative, “Annual Review of Country Eligibility for Benefits under the African Growth and Opportunity Act”, 28, June 2019.

⁸² *Ibid.*

⁸³ *Ibid.*

The table above shows the countries that were declared eligible under AGOA for the year 2019. The U.S. President designated thirty-nine countries eligible as indicated above. It should be noted that some countries were considered ineligible because they did not meet up with the requirements or eligibility criteria stated above. Seychelles and Equatorial Guinea were not eligible under AGOA as from the year 2019 because they graduated from the GSP.

2.1.2. Eligible Products under AGOA

The AGOA proclamation provided treatment for an increase of over 1,835 items adding to the 4,650 items that were already eligible for duty-free treatment under the GSP.⁸⁴ It is important to note that the products eligible on the U.S. markets through AGOA must be (a) produced and imported directly from the beneficiary country into the United States, (b) at least 35% of the appraised value of the product must be the “growth” product or “manufacture” of a beneficiary developing country, as by the sum of the value or cost of materials produced in the beneficiary developing country and the direct cost of processing in the country.⁸⁵ However, some products that contain raw materials from other regional countries within SSA are still eligible under AGOA. This is meant to foster regional integration within the various sub regional groupings found in SSA.⁸⁶

The various products under the AGOA program ranges from apparel products to many other commodities as follows; The greatest portion or percentage of products imported by the USA under the AGOA program constitute mainly of energy related products (11.2 billion USD) which represented 75.9% and 79.5% in 2002 and 2003 respectively. The second product highly imported by the U.S. under AGOA constitute of Apparel and textile products, textile products which constituted 8.9% and 8.5% in 2002 and 2003 respectively and accounted for 1.2 billion USD. Textile and Apparel articles qualifying for free duty treatment include (a) apparel assembled in one or more AGOA beneficiary countries from U.S. yarn and fabrics; (b) apparel made of SSA regional yarns and fabrics, subject to a cap;⁸⁷ (c) apparel made in a designated Less Developed Country (LDC) of third country yarns and fabrics; (d) certain cashmere and merino wool sweaters; (e) textiles and textile articles produced in a Least-Developed Beneficiary Developing Country (LDBC); (f) certain hand loomed, handmade, ethnic printed fabrics, or folklore articles and (g) apparel of yarns and fabrics not produced in commercial

⁸⁴ VanGrasstek, “The African Growth...”, p. 17.

⁸⁵ Brock, “African Growth and Opportunity...”, pp. 7-8.

⁸⁶ Interview with Olivier Dimala, 45 years, Economist/President of AGOA Resource Center, Douala, 18 July 2022.

⁸⁷ Brock, “African Growth and...”, p. 9.

quantities in the United States (determination must be made that the yarn or fabric cannot be supplied by the U.S. industry in a timely manner, and to extend preferential treatment to the eligible fabric).⁸⁸

Other apparel and textile products not mentioned above may include footwear (boots, socks, shoes, and sandals), fabric and yarn (any material made through weaving, knitting, spreading, stitching, felting, crocheting, bonding). In the same line transportation equipment represented 731.3 million USD, energy related products, minerals and metal were 412.5 million USD, agricultural products decreased from 2.4% to 1.7% in 2000 and 2003 respectively. Chemical related products, forest products, electronic products, machinery and miscellaneous manufactures consisted of smaller of U.S. imports in the same years. U.S. imports from Cameroon under AGOA increased from 115.8 million USD in 2002 to 147 million USD in 2003 and from January to June 2004, it dropped to 125 million USD.⁸⁹ It is important to note that over a thousand of products are covered under AGOA in addition to the 4650 product coverage under GSP,⁹⁰ thereby making it difficult to mention all the categories of these products. Thus, the products mention in the above paragraphs and in the table below are selected as most prominent articles under AGOA.

Table 9: Prominent products eligible for duty-free treatment under AGOA

N°	Product Categories	Product Description	Duty Rate out of AGOA
1	Aluminium	Stranded wire, cables, steel core	4.90%
2	Animal Products	Live chickens, goats, ducks, guineas, foxes, geese, turkeys	4.50%-6.80%, 2cents/kg
3	Cereals	Barley, wheat, rice, millet	0.1cents/kg- 2.1cents/kg, 14.90%

⁸⁸Department of Commerce, Office of Textile and Apparel (OTEXA) Summary of AGOA textile and apparel provision at OTEXA website, <http://www.otexa.ita.doc.gov/>, consulted on Thursday 5 May 2022 at 9:45 pm.

⁸⁹U.S. Department of State telegram, “Cameroon: USITC study on U.S.-Sub Saharan African Trade and Investment,” message reference n° YAOUND01060? Prepared by U.S. Embassy, Yaoundé, July 2004.

⁹⁰ Interview with Olivier Dimala, about 45 years, Economist/President of AGOA Resource Center, Douala, 18 July 2022.

4	Cheeses	Colby cheese, gouda cheese, soya cheese, processed cheese	2.70%-250%
5	Chemical Products	Lubricating oils, finishing agents, dye carriers, herbicides, hydraulic brake fluid, fatty alcohol, insecticides, binders, resin acids, alkali metals, calcium, acetone	0.6cents/kg-1.5 cents/kg, 5.30%-11.90%
6	Cocoa and Coffee Products	Chocolate, low-fat chocolate crumb, coffee substitute containing coffee	1.5 cents/kg, 10%
7	Dairy Products	Malt extract, margarine cheese, butter, condensed milk, fats and oil	0.3cents/kg-15.4 cents/kg, 9.60%-20%
8	Fats and Oils	Coil oil, cottonseed oil, crude peanut oil, soybean oil, fat of sheep, goat, linseed oil, pig oil, vegetable fats and oils	0.43cents/kg-11cents/kg, 3.80%-19.10%
10	Footwear	Soles, open toes, heels, golf shoes, sandals, athletic footwear, waterproof product	78cents/kg, 3%-37%
11	Fruits and its products	Citrus juice, grape juice, orange juice, pineapple juice, apples, avocados, cherries, blueberries, citron, limes, strawberry, plums, lemons, papayas, watermelons	0.8cents/kg-13.4cents/kg, 2.5%-16%
12	Iron and steel	Alloy stainless silicon, heat resisting steel, electrical steel, ferrozirconium, bars, rods, wire, pipes, tubes,	0.40%-7.80%
13	Leather and skin	Animal skin, cases, bags, gloves, trunks	2%-17%
14	Machinery and parts	Housed bearings, transmission equipment, shaft couplings, inner and outer rings	2.40%-9.90%

15	Petroleum oils and products	Distillate and residual oil from bituminous minerals, kerosene, lubricating oil, motor fuel blending stock, oil from bituminous,	7%
16	Television and vehicle parts	Monochrome video monitor, cathode-ray TV and monitor tube, flat panel screen, bicycle, wheels, vehicles for transport of persons, goods, road tractors,	2.50%-25%

Source: Realized by the author with information from the United States International Trade Commission (USITC).

Note should be taken that the above table does not show all the products eligible under AGOA given there are over 4,600 products eligible and all these products cannot be presented in a tabular manner. It shows just those products that are mostly and commonly exported.

2.1.3. The United States Generalised System of Preferences (GSP)

The United States GSP is a program similar to AGOA which has intentions of promoting economic growth in the developing countries of the world by providing preferential free-duty treatment for about 3,500 products from many Beneficiary Developing Countries (BDCs) and other Least-Developed Beneficiary Developing Countries (LDBDCs). This program was authorised by the Trade Act of 1974 and came into force in 1976.⁹¹ AGOA is actually related to the GSP in the sense that all items eligible under the GSP are also eligible under AGOA but there are some items eligible under AGOA but not valid for GSP. It is in this same line that Williams Brock outlined that “In terms of general benefits and eligibility criteria, AGOA is similar to the GSP, a U.S. trade preference program that applies to more than 120 developing countries”.⁹² AGOA, however, covers more products and includes additional eligibility criteria beyond those in GSP. Additionally, AGOA includes trade and development provisions beyond its duty-free preferences.⁹³ Some articles are prohibited by the law from receiving GSP treatment whereas these same articles are eligible for preferential treatment under AGOA. Examples of such articles include; most textile and apparel products, watches, footwear, work

⁹¹Office of the United States Trade Representative, Executive Office of the President, “U.S. Generalized System of Preferences GUIDEBOOK”, Washington D.C., November 2020, p. 4.

⁹² Interview with Olivier Dimala, about 45 years, Economist/President of AGOA Resource Center, Douala, 18 July 2022.

⁹³Brock R. Williams, “African Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA): Background and Reauthorization”, Congressional Research Service Report, April 22, 2015.

gloves, leather apparel, import-sensitive steel, glass and electronic products.⁹⁴ It is important to have in mind that knowledge on the GSP is important for this work because most of the tables and graphs showing statistics on trade between Cameroon and the U.S. are analysed in relation with AGOA and GSP. The following table shows a list of BDCs and LDBDCs for the U.S. Generalised System of Preferences.

Table 10: GSP-Eligible Beneficiaries Sub-Saharan African Countries (as of November 2020)

Angola	Comoros	Ghana	Mauritania	Uganda
Benin	Congo (Brazzaville)	Guinea	Mauritius	Sierra Leone
Botswana	Congo (Kinshasa)	Guinea-Bissau	Mozambique	Tanzania
Burkina Faso	Côte d'Ivoire	Kenya	Namibia	Somalia
Burundi	Djibouti	Lesotho	Niger	South Africa
Cameroon	Eritrea	Liberia	Nigeria	Zambia
Cape Verde	Ethiopia	Madagascar	Rwanda	Zimbabwe
Central African Republic	Gabon	Malawi	Sao Tomé and Príncipe	
Chad	Gambia	Mali	Senegal	

Source: Adapted from the Office of the United States Trade Representative and Executive Office of the President, Washington D.C.

2.2. AGOA's General Rules of Origin and The AGOA Forum

Rules of Origin (ROO)⁹⁵ are essential for trade programs to prevent trade deflection and transshipment because goods produced elsewhere can be imported by a beneficiary country and in turn desire to export it under AGOA with no or insufficient domestic value adding activities

⁹⁴Office of the United States Trade Representative, "U.S. Generalized System...", Washington D.C. November 2020, p. 6.

⁹⁵ROO are the requirements which set out the working and processing that must be undertaken locally or domestically in order for a product to be considered the "economic origin" of the exporting country. ROO are necessary in the case where some materials used in the production of some goods are imported from other countries. In a general manner, preferential ROO are based on the principle that a good must be wholly produced in the beneficiary country or where imported materials are used before being transformed locally.

having taken place.⁹⁶ Thus, it is important to underline the various conditions under which goods are to be exported duty-free under AGOA. In order to have effective dialogue on issues concerning AGOA, both stakes put in place the AGOA Forum which was inaugurated by the U.S. Secretaries of State, Treasury and Commerce, and the United States Trade Representative (USTR) on October 29-30, 2001, in Washington D.C. It was agreed for the venue of the meetings of the above mentioned forum to be rotational between the USA and SSA. That is why the second meeting was held in Mauritius from 15 to 17 January 2003 which focused on trade investment, socio-economic development issues and joint measures to enhance democracy and good governance.⁹⁷

2.2.1. AGOA General Rules of Origin

There exist many different test methods to help the determination of origin of a product. These include a Tariff Heading Jump⁹⁸, a Percentage Test⁹⁹, a Technical Requirement¹⁰⁰ and many others. AGOA ROO is based on a percentage methodology whereby domestic content must attain a certain level of threshold. Amongst these ROO, there are special rules applicable to the apparel sector.¹⁰¹ AGOA rules require that any eligible product must be a growth or manufacture product of an eligible country. These products become growth or manufacture after passing through the screening of the Percentage Test method.¹⁰² The following rules include AGOA ROO except for textile and apparel products;

- The product must be imported directly from the AGOA beneficiary country into the United States;
- Items must be growth, product or manufacture of one or more AGOA-beneficiary countries. These requirements can be jointly met by more than one AGOA-beneficiary. This concept is called “cumulation¹⁰³ of origin”;

⁹⁶A. Mattoo et al, “The African Growth and Opportunity Act and Its Rules of Origin: Generosity Undermined?”, *International Monetary Fund*, June 2002.

⁹⁷U.S Department of State, “Sec. Powell and Foreign Minister of Mauritius Cultaree Open Third AGOA Forum”, Dec 9, 2003, <http://www.usinfo.state.gov>, consulted on Saturday 8 January 2022 at 5:06 pm.

⁹⁸Tariff Heading Jump is a method whereby the final product is classified under the HS coding nomenclature under a different heading to its non-originating imported materials.

⁹⁹ Percentage Test is a method whereby a certain percentage or wet threshold must be met, usually expressed as a minimum threshold of a local content.

¹⁰⁰Technical Requirement is a method whereby specific technical or processing conditions must be met as defined.

¹⁰¹ Interview with Witney Schneidman, about 65 years, U.S. Senior International Advisor for Africa, USA, 3 August 2022.

¹⁰² A. Mattoo et al, “The African Growth...”, p. 6.

¹⁰³ Cumulation is a deviation from the principles that goods must be produced entirely in the country of exportation, or have undergone sufficient working or processing there, in order to qualify as originating goods. Cumulation makes it possible for good from a free trade partner to be treated the same as those originating in the country of exportation.

- Products may incorporate materials sourced from other non AGOA-beneficiary countries given that the sum of the direct cost or value of the materials produced in one or more designated AGOA-beneficiary countries, plus the direct cost of processing undertaken in the AGOA-beneficiary countries equal at least 35% of the product's appraised value at the U.S. port of entry. That is to say cost of local materials plus direct cost of processing must be equal to or greater than 35%.
- A total of up to 15% of the 35% of local content value (as appraised at the U.S. port of entry may consist of U.S.-originating parts and materials. This concept is called bilateral cumulation of origin.

ROO for apparel and textile products are different from those of other products. These rules essentially require that apparel be assembled in eligible SSA countries and the yarn and fabric be made either in African Countries or in the United States. Also, custom requirements insist that a United States-Chaired Inter-Agency committee must determine inter alia, that countries have an effective visa system and enforcement procedures to prevent unlawful transshipment and the use of counterfeit documents.¹⁰⁴

2.2.2 AGOA Forum

According to the Public Law 106-200 of the AGOA legislation, provisions were made for the establishment of a United States-Sub-Saharan African Trade and Economic Cooperation Forum known as the AGOA Forum. The AGOA Forum is also supported by the U.S. Congress in Section 103 containing the legislation policy statements. The requirements of this forum are also outlined in Section 105 which commands the U.S. President to convoke or assemble “annual high-level meetings between appropriate officials of the United States Government and officials of the governments of Sub-Saharan African Countries in order to foster close economic ties between the United States and Sub-Sahara Africa”

Obligations of the U.S. President in the AGOA Forum

The AGOA legislation requires the president to: direct the Secretaries of Commerce, the Treasury, State and the United States Trade Representative to host the first annual forum along with counterparts from SSA countries that have qualified for AGOA benefits. It is in this same vein that the first AGOA Forum meeting was held by the United States in Washington D.C. 2001 from 29-30 October;¹⁰⁵ encourage representatives of the private sector to host similar

¹⁰⁴ A. Mattoo et al, “The African Growth...”, p. 7.

¹⁰⁵ Akiko YANAI “Current Issues on the African Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA)”, *IDE Discussion Paper*, n° 661, 2017, p. 11.

meetings in conjunction with the AGOA Forum; encourage in consultation of the U.S. Congress, non-governmental organisations from the U.S. and Sub-Sahara Africa to host meetings in conjunction with the AGOA Forum for the purpose of discussing issues that concern increasing trade and investment relationships between U.S. and SSA and also promoting joint ventures between small and large size business. This point has led to the holding of many AGOA Forum sessions in SSA with the first being in Port Louis, Mauritius in 2003 from 15-17 January and the main theme was “Trade and Investment: Tool for Growth and Development”¹⁰⁶. Apart from its primary aims (trade and investment), the AGOA Forum session in Mauritius also laid emphases on the enhancement of democracy and good governance, and the fighting against HIV/AIDS; invite representatives from appropriate Sub-Saharan African regional organisations and government officials and lastly; the president had to meet “to the extent practicable” with the heads of governments of SSA countries that have qualified for preferences under the legislation, and those SSA countries that the president determines are taking substantial positive steps toward meeting the eligibility requirements of the legislation (as mentioned in Section 104), not less than once every two years for the purpose of discussing the issues described earlier.¹⁰⁷ The table below represents AGOA Forum Meetings and themes.

Table 11: AGOA Forum Meetings (2001-2019)

Year	Venue	Main Theme
2001 (the 1st)	Washington, D.C. (USA)	--- ¹⁰⁸
2003 (the 2nd)	Port Louis (Mauritius)	Trade and Investment: Tool for Growth and Development
2004 (the 3rd)	Washington, D.C. (USA)	---
2005 (the 4th)	Dakar (Senegal)	Expanding and Diversifying Trade to Promote Growth and Competitiveness
2006 (the 5th)	Washington, D.C. (USA)	---
2007 (the 6th)	Accra (Ghana)	As Trade Grows, Africa Prospers: Optimizing Benefits Under AGOA

¹⁰⁶ *Ibid.*

¹⁰⁷ Official AGOA website, <https://agoa.info/forum/about.html>, consulted Saturday 9 October 2021 at 12:14pm.

¹⁰⁸ --- Denotes years with AGOA Main Themes unknown

2008 (the 7th)	Washington, D.C. (USA)	Mobilizing Private Investment for Trade and Growth in Africa
2009 (the 8th)	Nairobi (Kenya)	Realizing the Full Trade and Investment Potential of AGOA Through Expansion of
2010 (the 9th)	Washington, D.C. / Kansas City (USA)	New Strategies for a Changing World
2011 (the 10th)	Lusaka (Zambia)	Enhanced Trade Through Increased Competitiveness, Value Addition, and Deeper Regional Integration
2012 (the 11th)	Washington, D.C. (USA)	Enhancing Africa's Infrastructure for Trade
2013 (the 12th)	Addis Ababa (Ethiopia)	Sustainable Transformation through Trade and Technology
2014 (the 13th)	Washington, D.C. (USA)	Investing in the Next Generation
2015 (the 14th)	Libreville (Gabon)	Charting a course for a sustainable U.S. Africa Trade and Investment Partnership
2016 (the 15th)	Washington, D.C. (USA)	Maximizing U.S.-Africa Trade and Investment; AGOA and Beyond
2017 (the 16th)	Lomé (Togo)	The U.S. and Africa: Partnering for Prosperity Trade
2018 (the 17 th)	Washington, D.C. (USA)	Forging new strategies for U.S.-Africa trade and Investment
2019 (the 18 th)	Abidjan (Ivory Coast)	AGOA and the Future: Developing a new trade paradigm to guide U.S.-Africa trade and Investment

Source: Adapted from Akiko YANAI, "Current Issues on the African Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA)", *Institute of Developing Economies (IDE Discussion Paper)*, n° 661, Chiba-Shi, Japan, 2017, p. 8.

2.2.3. Relevance of the AGOA forum

The AGOA Forum is important for the U.S. and SSA countries in particular because it gives both stakeholders the opportunity for their governments, NGOs, private sector and individuals to table and exchange their opinions and ideas for enhancing stronger U.S.-Africa economic ties while finding clues that indicate current trends and future perspective of the African Growth and Opportunity Act. It is thanks to this forum that the trade minister of Lesotho Joshua Setipa declared that "Africa still needs more time before it is exposed to competition by

the good from America. Any agreement with the U.S. must reflect the realities in Africa's economy." It is in the AGOA Forum that discussion was made on how to strengthen small and medium enterprise financing in Africa, infrastructural development, initiatives to end hunger, and transportation security. Just three years after its creation, AGOA was able to have produced direct benefits which included the creation of about 190,000 jobs and the attraction of about 340 million U.S. dollars as new investment in SSA. The picture below depicts an AGOA Forum meeting held in Addis Ababa.

Picture 2: 12th annual African Growth and opportunity Act (AGOA) Forum in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia (attended by 39 Trade Ministers from SSA and several U.S. Governments Officials)



Source: Grace Wanene, "Les Etats-Unis lancent une évaluation de l'AGOA", *Jeune Afrique Economie*, 5 Août, 2013.

While addressing the Forum, the Chairperson of the African Union Commission (AUC) Eraastus Mwencha made it clear that AGOA has increased trade to about 340%, generated about 350,000 direct jobs and over one million indirect jobs in the Continent. Nevertheless, not all countries were benefiting from this program and there was therefore need to bring strategies to exploit AGOA opportunities. It was against this backdrop that this meeting negotiated and gave birth to the formulation and publication of National AGOA Strategy by SSA countries which became visible in the subsequent years. (See chapter 3, 3.4.1)

2.3. Cameroon's Foreign Trade Policy

According to Samuelson Paul, Foreign trade or International Trade is the exchange of capital, goods, and services across international borders or territories.¹⁰⁹ Cameroon is a member of the World Trade Organization (WTO) and has the treatment of most favorable nations.¹¹⁰ Its political and commercial practices are largely defined at the sub-regional level, *La Communauté Economique et Monétaire d'Afrique Centrale (CEMAC)*. Cameroon's Gross Domestic Product had largely been influenced by agricultural products. Between 2002 and 2004, top foreign exports included oil 31%, timber 23%, cocoa 9%, coffee 8%, aluminium 5%, cotton 5%, banana 4%, and natural rubber 2%.¹¹¹ Its imports include (hydrocarbons, vehicles, machines and electronic equipment, pharmaceutical products, mechanical equipment, aluminium oxide, rice, refined sugar, and many others. These products come from main trading partners like the European Union (EU), the United States, Italy, China, Brazil, Japan, South Korea and many others. Cameroon's foreign trade is manifested through the signing of Accords which are guided and supervised by national institutions.¹¹²

2.3.1. Commercial Accords signed by Cameroon to foster Foreign Trade

In order for Cameroon to effectively managed its foreign trade, many accords have been signed which range from bilateral accords, regional accords to multilateral conventions. Cameroon has signed commercial accords with many countries and these accords are prepared in relation to the evolution of its economy. These accords specified the mode of payment of transactions, the type of treatment reserved to goods, and mechanisms of resolving differences. Examples of such accords include: Commercial Accord with Senegal signed on 10 June 1974,¹¹³ The Bilateral Investment Treaty with the United States signed in 1986,¹¹⁴ Agreement with Canada for the Promotion and Protection of Investments signed 03 March 2014, Memorandum of Understanding and Technical Assistance to Cameroon with China signed 31

¹⁰⁹S. Paul, "A Ricardo-Sraffa Paradigm Comparing the Gains from Trade in Inputs and Finished Goods", in *Journal of Economic Literature*, Vol39, 1204-1214.

¹¹⁰ Bikai, *Guide du Commerce...* p. 60

¹¹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 61.

¹¹² *Ibid.*

¹¹³This is the only agreement signed between Cameroon and Senegal within the framework of the African and Malagasy Organisation for Economic Cooperation, which contains a preferential clause. Its first article provides for exemption from customs duties and taxes of equivalent effect for all goods originating in and coming from the two countries.

¹¹⁴ United States Congress, "Cameroon Bilateral Investment Treaty", 99th U.S. Congress 2nd Session, U.S. Government Printing Office Washington, 1986.

August 2018,¹¹⁵ Bilateral Economic Partnership Agreement with the United Kingdom signed on 9 March 2021.

Cameroon has signed many regional and sub-regional accords on commerce, they include; *Organisation Africaine de la Propriété Intellectuelle (OAPI)* signed on 8 February 1982. With headquarters in Yaoundé, one of its objectives is to implement and apply administrative procedures deriving from a uniform system for the protection of industrial property as well as the international agreements in the field to which the member states of the organisation have accepted and providing services related to industrial property.¹¹⁶ The Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS), the Economic and Monetary Community of Central Africa (CEMAC) 1966, The African Export-Import Bank (AFREXIMBANK) which is a Pan-African multilateral trade finance institution created in 1993 under the auspices of the African Development Bank, *La Conférence Internationale des Contrôles d'Assurance (CICA)* which Cameroon signed on 27 July 1962, *La Conférence Interafricaine des Marchés d'Assurance (CIMA)* created on 10 July 1992 and entered into force 15 February 1995.¹¹⁷

Apart from bilateral, sub-regional and regional accords, Cameroon has also signed many multilateral conventions in order to maximise enormous benefits from foreign trade. Amongst these conventions, the most prominent ones include; on 15 April 1994 in Marrakech, Cameroon signed the accord establishing World Trade Organisation. This convention was ratified by Cameroon by decree n° 95/194 of 26 September 1995.¹¹⁸ It was in this same vein that Cameroon engaged in respecting the accords on the General Agreement on Tariff and Trade signed in Geneva on 30 October 1947, the General Agreement on Trade in Services which entered into force in January 1995, the Agreement on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS) signed on 15 April 1995. Cameroon also signed a multilateral convention with the United Nations Commission on International Trade Law (UNCITRAL) and ratified the Acts of these treaty which include; the 1978 Convention on the Carriage of Goods by Sea (Hamburg rules); the International Cocoa Agreement (1994); the Convention on the Limitation Period in

¹¹⁵K. Richard, "Sino-Cameroon Ties: Key Agreements Signed in Beijing", in *Cameroon Tribune*, 2018.

¹¹⁶ Bikai, *Guide du Commerce...*, p. 74.

¹¹⁷ *Ibid.*

¹¹⁸ *Ibid.*

the International Sale of Goods, amended by the protocol adopted in Vienna in 1980; and the United Nations Convention on Contracts for International Sale of Goods (Vienna 1980).¹¹⁹

For the promotion of basic products, Cameroon signed many accords under the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTD). For instance; the Agreement establishing the Common Fund for Commodities on 30 June 1981 and ratified this treaty on the first of February 1983, International Tropical Timber Agreement (ITTA)¹²⁰, *l'Accord International sur le Caoutchouc Naturel 1987*, *l'Accord International sur le Cacao 1994*, *l'Accord International sur le Café 1994*, *l'Accord sur la diversification des produits de base*. Apart from Commercial benefits from World Trade Organisation, Cameroon benefits from other aspects like the maintenance of peace, WTO treats differences in a constructive manner, reduction in the cost of living through the exchange of products, the system of WTO is built on rules and not forces, stimulation of economic growth, democracy in the system of WTO, decisions are taken by consensus and accords ratified by the parliament of member states and above all the system of WTO encourages the practice of good governance. It is in this same line that Philippe Bikai stated that;

*En tant que pays en développement, il applique une période de transition pour l'exécution d'un certain nombre d'engagements pris dans le cadre de divers accords de l'OMC. Une assistance technique accrue de la part des membres de l'OMC et du secrétariat pourrait faciliter considérablement une intégration plus poussée du Cameroun dans le système multilatéral.*¹²¹

Also, Cameroon is a member of the agreement that relate the member states of the European Union to the countries of the African, Caribbean and Pacific Group of States (ACP). This accord has led to the signing of many conventions with objectives to combine aid, trade and political aspects. These conventions include; Lomé I, II, III, IV, and the Cotonou accord in Benin which instituted a new commercial framework characterised by the suppression of barriers to effective exchange between both parties, in conformity with the rules of WTO and the reinforcement of cooperation in all domains related to commerce.¹²² Cameroon is equally a member of The Organisation for the Harmonization of Business Law in Africa (*Organization*

¹¹⁹ Archives of MINCOMMERCE, *Statistical Yearbook on Trade*, CELSTAT, 2017 edition, p. 34.

¹²⁰ITTA is an agreement to provide effective framework for cooperation between tropical timber producers and consumers and to encourage the development of national policies aimed at sustainable utilization and conservation of tropical forest and their genetic resources. It was established under the agreement which first opened for signature on November 18, 1983, then entered into force on April 1, 1985. Fifty-eight parties including Cameroon signed the agreement in 1983 and sixty -two parties including Cameroon ultimately ratified it 1994. There were 74 parties as of October 2018.

¹²¹ Bikai, *Guide du Commerce...*, p. 60

¹²² *Ibid.*, p. 80.

pour l'Harmonization en Afrique du droits des affaires-OHADA) which aims at facilitating and encouraging both domestic and foreign investment in the member states. The management and supervision of the aforementioned accords and conventions are carried under national institutions for the promotion of foreign trade.

2.3.2. Cameroon National Institutions for the Promotion of Foreign Trade

The promotion of foreign trade in Cameroon is first and foremost a public affair. It is masterminded through ministries like, the Ministry of Trade (MINCOMMERCE), the Ministry of Finance, the Ministry Agriculture and Rural Development, the Ministry of Transport, The Ministry of Posts and Telecommunications, the Ministry of External Relations, the Ministry of Tourism, the Ministry of Industry Mines and Technological Development. It is in this same light that many laws and decrees have been put in place to define the functioning of national and international trade.¹²³ The most prominent amongst these laws and decrees are:

-Law n° 98/012 of 14 July 1998 on dumping and marketing of subsidised imports; Law n° 2004/025 of December 2004 that amended certain provisions of law n° 95/11 of 27 July 1995 for the organisation of trade in cocoa and coffee.

- Law n° 2015/018 of 21 December 2005 governing Commercial Activities in Cameroon; Law n° 2016/004 of 18 April 2016 governing External Trade.
- Decree n° O9/671 of 12 April 1989 establishing a National Technical Committee on Trade Balance.
- Decree n° 2005/1212/PM of April 2005 to regulate the packaging and marketing cocoa.
- Decree n° 2005/1213/PM of 27 April 2005 that regulated the packaging and marketing of unroasted coffee.
- Decree n° 2008/0820 of 29 April 2008 to amend and supplement certain provisions of Decree n° 90/1476 of 9 November 1990 laying down price approval procedures.
- Decree n° 2016/367 of 3 August 2016 which set the rules of origin and methods of administrative cooperation applicable to goods from the European Union under the Interim agreement towards economic partnership agreements.¹²⁴

Other than Laws and Decree, there also exist orders like:

¹²³ Archives of MINCOMMERCE, *Statistical Yearbook on...*, p. 38.

¹²⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 40.

- Order n° CF002/MINDIC/CAB of 6 January 2001 which made compulsory the implementation of the standard of bread throughout the National Territory
- Order n° 0014/MINCOMMERCE/CAB of 13 June 2006 that laid down procedures for technical inspection of quality and compliance with the standards of products intended for local consumption export.
- Order n° 0000006/MINCOMMERCE/DCE/SDEC/SOC of 17 February 2009 laying down the detailed arrangements for the entry in the register of importers and exporters.
- Order n° 0000031/MINCOMMERCE/CAB of 09 August 2012 aimed at setting cocoa and coffee taxes for the National Cocoa and Coffee Board, the Cocoa and Coffee Inter-professional Cocoa and Coffee Organizations.¹²⁵

Created following Decree n° 2004/320 of 8 December 2004, the Ministry of Trade (MINCOMMERCE) is the governmental structure in charge of political affairs in relation to home and foreign trade.¹²⁶ With the aim of defining and evaluating national politics on commerce, it is responsible for; the elaboration, implementation and the strategies of promoting Cameroonian products; it promotes and defend the quality level of Cameroonian products to be exported; it searches new markets for Cameroonian products, it monitors Cameroon's agricultural products in foreign trade; it controls and ensures the application of norms of exportation in relation with the Ministry of Finance; it monitors inflation; promotes and controls clean competition, organisation and supervision of trade fairs, creation of rules on quality product and its application; it negotiates and monitors the implementation of commercial accords; follow up the relations with international organisations working in the domain of international trade; it elaborates measures of presentation; preservation and distribution channels of products; it applies administrative sanctions against fraud or non-respect of norms; monitoring the application of importation standards in contribution with relevant administrations; it monitors the approval or development of shelf line-up, preservation and distribution standards for consumers products and ensuring that these standards are respected by economic operators, in conjunction with the relevant administrations;¹²⁷ and it promotes the competition of Cameroonian products in foreign markets.

For the achievement and implementation of its programs, MINCOMMERCE works with organs under its supervision like the National Cocoa and Coffee Board (NCCB) which with the

¹²⁵ Archives of MINCOMMERCE, *Statistical Yearbook on...*, p. 40.

¹²⁶ Bikai, *Guide du Commerce...*, p. 94.

¹²⁷ MINCOMMERCE, *Statistical Yearbook on...*, p. 33.

goal of promoting quality, coordinates the activities and ensures for the sectors concerned, the supervision of producers, mill owners, forwarders and exporters; the Consumer Product Supply Regulatory Authority (MIRAP)¹²⁸ which is in charge of building up consumer product buffer stocks and managing the street markets and control stores for selling the said products; the Cocoa and Coffee Sector Development Fund (FODDEC) which ensures the funding and payment of services related to inter alia and the support of and revival of cocoa and coffee sectors; the Hydrocarbon Prices Stabilization Fund (HPSF)¹²⁹ which contributes to making petroleum products accessible to consumers and at harmonised prices nationwide.¹³⁰

According to Decree n° 2005/D89 of 29 March 2005, MINCOMMERCE created a Direction on Foreign Trade in charge of monitoring exports and imports, coordinating the activities of the National Technical Committee on Balance of Trade, coordination of the activities of the National Technical Committee in relation to the accords of Marrakech creating WTO, monitoring the activities regional and international organisations on commerce, monitoring the commercialisation of basic products, and monitoring commercial representative activities of Cameroon abroad.¹³¹

Other than ministries, there also exist public institutions and organisations that govern the functioning of Cameroon's external trade. *Le Guichet Unique des Opérations du Commerce Extérieur (GUCE-GIE)* is a partnership program between the Cameroon Government and the private sector created in 2000 with the ultimate aim of reducing costs and delay of product passage by simplifying procedures of external trade. It is equally a member to facilitate the organs of *le Comité National de Facilitation des Echanges (CONAFE)* and it is a co-author of the guide of the *Guichets Uniques en Afrique*. Its objectives are centered on electronic procedures, custom duties and taxes stimulator, container tracking, stopover forecast, and electronic payment of customs duties and taxes.¹³² The Chamber of Commerce, Industry, Mines and Crafts (CCIMA) is an advisory body which represents Cameroon's business community in the field of trade, industry, mining handicrafts which was created in 2001. It acts as a bridge between the private business sector and the public business sector, it supervises the promotion of industrial and commercial enterprises through: the collection, treatment and diffusion of

¹²⁸MIRAP is the French abbreviation which signifies « la Mission de Régulation des Approvisionnements des Produits de Grande Consommation ».

¹²⁹CSPH is the French abbreviation which signifies « la Caisse de Stabilisation des Prix des Hydrocarbures ».

¹³⁰ Archives of MINCOMMERCE, *Statistical Yearbook on...* p. 33.

¹³¹ Bikai, *Guide du Commerce...*, p. 95.

¹³² Bikai, *Guide du Commerce...*, p. 96.

economic and commercial information; the production of publications; the support for business creation, international exchanges; the promotion of exports through participation in trade fairs and exhibition; assistance in finding partners; and maintain good relations with international organizations interested in activities of the private sector.¹³³

The National Cocoa and Coffee Board (NCCB)¹³⁴ is another instrument of Cameroon's International Trade. With the vision of fighting against poverty in rural areas, it has as missions to control and guarantee the quality of cocoa and coffee, follow up of campaigns of commercialization of cocoa and coffee, follow up of exporting activities, installation of organisms in charge of quality control, defend and promote the brand image of Cameroon origin, follow up of international accords on cocoa and coffee and the representation of Cameroon in international cocoa and coffee organization. Moreover, the *Port Autonome de Douala (PAD)* is an important element in execution of Cameroon's foreign trade. Created in June 15, 1999 by Law n° 98/021 of 24 December 1998 it is a public enterprise of the state of Cameroon which constitute over 95% of Cameroon's port traffic and at the same time is the leading port in the CEMAC region. It helps in the importation and exportation of the landlocked countries of Chad and the Republic of Central Africa. Its obligations involve the general coordination of port activities, assistance and reception of ships, management, maintenance and renewal of equipment, security of port operation and project management of works entrusted to specialized companies. The National Ports Authority (APN)¹³⁵ and *Les Aéroports du Cameroun (ADC)*¹³⁶ The table below clearly shows the nature of Cameroon's foreign trade with accent put on main imported and exported products.

¹³³ *Ibid.*

¹³⁴NCCB was created in 1991 by Decree N° 91/274 of 12 June 1991 and amended by Decree N° 97/142 of 25 August 1997.

¹³⁵L'autorité Portuaire National (APN) was created by Law N° 98/126 of 15th June 1999 and amended by Decree N° 2019/172 of 5th April 2019. It is an Administrative and Technical Public Institution with legal personality and financial autonomy which plays an important role in the implementation of the Cameroon National Port Policy and the coordination and monitoring of port activities.

¹³⁶*ADC est une entreprise Camerounaise qui aménage exploite des plats-formes et les services aéroportuaires incluent l'exploitation des aéroports et notamment de terminaux aéroportuaires, les activités des consignateurs aériens, les services d'entretien-maintenance des avions et le control de l'espace aérien au voisinage des aéroports.*

Table 12: Nature of Cameroon's Foreign Trade 1998-2000 (Quantity Q in tons, wood in cubic meters and Value V in millions of Francs CFA)

EXPORTS							
Main Products		1998		1999		2000	
		Q	V	Q	V	Q	V
Crude petroleum		5,775,280	300,107	5,955,548	343,006	5,279,545	581,021
Timber		1,531,669	269,083	1,176,427	234,617	951,388	236,274
Cocoa and nibs		95,890	86,073	104,402	78,121	77,381	51,910
Cotton		61,022	51,299	73,139	49,865	73,064	48,741
Total	Main exports	7,463,861	94,8192	7,929,416	953,650	6,955,214	1,157,392
	General exports	-	985,827	7,992,234	985,492	6,996,374	1,178,597
IMPORTS							
Main product		1998		1999		2000	
		Q	V	Q	V	Q	V
Mineral products		2,091,929	126,923	2,133,789	149,882	2,196,130	286,125
Chemical products		317,615	132,432	367,456	114,764	389,450	135,580
Metallic products		102,172	64,864	83,668	44,999	105,935	54,422
Food products		91,126	38,678	86,498	42,808	95,576	57,309
Machinery transport		35,575	156,765	31,802	134,020	31,280	142,728
Total	Main imports	2,638,417	519662	2,703,213	486,473	642,567	676,164
	General imports	3,342,193	881,782	3,466,891	811,226	3,693,704	1,052,203

Source: Realized by the Author with data from INS "Cameroon Statistical Yearbook 2000".¹³⁷

The above table shows the principal goods exported and imported by Cameroon between 1998 and 2000. Amongst main exports, are petroleum, timber, cocoa, coffee and agricultural products which occupied about 95% of total exports. Concerning imports, chemical, mineral,

¹³⁷ See Appendix 5

metallic, food and machinery products consisted of Cameroon's main imports during this period which represented over 90% of total imports between 1998 and 2000.¹³⁸ This table is important as it indicates Cameroon's potentials in the world market as most of the products exported and imported at this time still constitute her main products recently with the world in general and with the United States in particular. The United States has always been the first trading partner of Cameroon in the American continent and still fall amongst the first ten worldwide. In a general perspective, exchanges between Cameroon and the whole world have been increasing since 1992. Exports increased from 487 billion in 1992 to 1085 billion in 1997 equivalent to 120% increase. It is important to note that the evolution of the growth of external commerce during this period was influenced by the devaluation of Franc CFA in January 1994.¹³⁹

From the above knowledge on the foreign trade policy of Cameroon, what then is the nature of the United States foreign policy towards Sub-Saharan Africa? Do the policies influence the nature of trade relations between Cameroon and the United States of America?

2.4. The United States Foreign Policy Towards Sub-Saharan Africa

Relationship between the U.S. and SSA countries dates back since the era of the transatlantic slave trade and was characterised with pessimism.¹⁴⁰ As a result of the pessimistic nature of this relationship, SSA has been at the bottom list of priority for U.S. policymakers until the win of change that blew across Africa in the 1960s and brought many of these countries to independence and consequently actors of international relations. The United States of America became interested in Africa only after the Second World War, independence and during the cold war, as she looked up to African leaders during the cold war as a measure to counter communism as stipulated by the Truman Doctrine. This led to continuous U.S. support to SSA countries like the Democratic Republic of Congo's pro-west leader Mobutu Sese Seko despite the corruption and human rights violations that characterised his regime.

According to Peter Sakwe Masumba, the U.S. foreign policy towards SSA targets issues concerning democracy, security and development. For him, most people consider "the U.S. to be the world's greatest liberal democracy, adorned with exceptional human emancipation, incarnated by highly resonating human and material resources, epitomised by all sorts of

¹³⁸National Institute of Statistics "Cameroon Statistical Yearbook 2000", p. 277.

¹³⁹*Ibid.*, p. 16.

¹⁴⁰ During the Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade era, many Africans were captured and sold to European slave dealers who shipped them to the Americas. This was a devastating relationship that existed between SSA and the United States as it involved the violation of human abuses and freedoms.

imaginable opportunities.”¹⁴¹ According to Witney Schneidman,¹⁴² It was only after the fall of the Soviet Union in 1991 that the United States foreign policy toward Africa changed from countering communism to promoting new trade investments, democracy, security, respect for human rights, and stability through humanitarian efforts in Africa.¹⁴³ The U.S. Foreign policy towards SSA is manifested through the following actors.

2.4.1. States actors of the U.S. Foreign policy towards SSA

As underlined by Section 2 and 3 of article II of the U.S. constitution, it is the president of the United States who is in charge of U.S. external relations by nominating ambassadors and consuls who are answerable to him. However, the appointed ambassadors assume duty only after the approval of the United States Congress.¹⁴⁴ This is why most U.S. presidents were actively involved in the independence of African territories during the decolonisation process as they preached democracy. In order to achieve this goal, the then Senator John F. Kennedy outlined in 1951 stated that “The fires of Nationalism ...now ablaze...Colonialism is not a topic for tea-talk discussion; it is the daily fare of millions of men”. He was one of the force individuals in the White House calling for the aspirations of the colonised people. He added that “Call it nationalism, call it anti-colonialism, call it what you will...Africa is going through a revolution”. With the 1960 presidential campaign, he told his opponent Richard Nixon that “We have lost ground in Africa because we have neglected and ignored the needs and aspirations of the African people”. Thus when he won the elections, many African leaders like Kwame Nkrumah, Sekou Touré and Ahmadou Ahidjo concluded that they had a friend in the White House.¹⁴⁵ The U.S. President equally works hand in gloves with the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA),¹⁴⁶ which is responsible for collecting political, economic and scientific information necessary for decision making, the National Security Council (NSC) which gives advises concerning integration between the domestic policy and the foreign policy.¹⁴⁷ It is also in charge of the international centre and manages all processes in the name of the president.

¹⁴¹ P. S. Masumba. “U.S. Foreign Policy Towards Sub-Saharan African Countries: What Challenges Democracy, Security, and Human Development?” in *Burt S., Anorve D.A. (eds) Global Perspectives on U.S. Foreign Policy*, Palgrave Macmillan, New York, pp. 127-141.

¹⁴² Interview with Witney Schneidman, about 65 years, U.S. Senior International Advisor for Africa, USA, 3 August 2022.

¹⁴³ U.S. Council on Foreign Relations, Sub-Saharan Africa; U.S. Foreign Policy.

¹⁴⁴ Interview with Witney Schneidman, about 65 years, U.S. Senior International Advisor for Africa, USA, 3 August 2022.

¹⁴⁵ Anim, “Cameroon’s Foreign Policy...”, pp. 20-21.

¹⁴⁶ J. A. Amin, “Equality, Non-interference, and Sovereignty: President Ahmadou Ahidjo and the Making of Cameroon-U.S. Relations”, in *African Studies Review*, University of Dayton, 2021, P. 18.

¹⁴⁷ Bunduku-Latha, *L’administration Clinton et l’Afrique*, L’Harmattan, Paris, 1999, p. 34.

This committee is very important because it is where many presidents turn to in order to ask pertinent questions concerning diplomacy.¹⁴⁸ The NSC is the speaker of the president and keeps secret information that could be leaked by the Department of States and it assists him to achieve his goals on the international scene thus becoming the pillar of the U.S. foreign policy.¹⁴⁹ Diplomats and Consuls also constitute part of the U.S. foreign policymakers. Their place is very vital as they are the ones representing the United States across international borders with governments and even international organisations of different countries and regions. Jean Yves Julien Nzadiba in his dissertation made it clear that these diplomats and consuls are made up of both professionals (career diplomats and consuls) and non-professionals (appointed by the president). He went further to tell us that Cameroon occupies an important place in the U.S. foreign policy that is why he stated that:

La plupart des ambassadeurs américains nommés en Afrique Centrale et notamment au Cameroun sont généralement les diplomates de carrière.¹⁵⁰ C'est dire que l'Afrique Centrale, et donc le Cameroun, occupe une place capitale dans les affaires extérieures des Etats-Unis. Il est donc utile d'y envoyer des diplomates dont l'expérience n'est plus à démontrer. D'ailleurs, la présentation diplomatique des Etats-Unis montre à suffisance la place du Cameroun dans la diplomatie américaine. Car elle sert aussi d'ambassade pour la Guinée-Equatoriale, également grand pays exportateur de pétrole.¹⁵¹

The U.S. Congress is another important governmental actor in the foreign diplomacy of the United States of America. The power bestowed on the congress in relation to international affairs is found in the Case-Zablocki Act of 1972.¹⁵² The congress is authorized to regulate immigration, finance the activities carried out by the president, determine the use of force by the president or by the army, confirm the various ambassadors nominated by the president. This implies that the congress has the authority to denounce any ambassador appointed by the president who does not have political orientations. The congress also has the right to ratify international treaties and advise the president when it comes to negotiation which makes the

¹⁴⁸ V. Anger, "The National Security Council System after the Cold War", in *James Lindsay (ed), U.S. Foreign Policy after the Cold War*, Pittsburgh (Pa.) University of Pittsburgh Press, 1997, pp. 46-48.

¹⁴⁹M. De Saint Paul, *La politique africaine des Etats-Unis : mécanismes et conduite*, Paris, Nouveaux Horizons, 1989, p. 297-298, 307.

¹⁵⁰R. Zoelilick, "Les objectifs de la politique étrangère des Etats-Unis" in *Revue électronique du département d'Etat des Etats-Unis*, n°1, Août 2003.

¹⁵¹ Nzadiba, "Les Enjeux de la...", p. 23.

¹⁵²The law which was named after Clifford P. Case a Republican Senator of New Jersey and Clement Zablocki a Democratic Congressman of Wisconsin ensured that the congress should be informed about the international commitments made by executive agreements. The law was passed in reaction to the ongoing war in Vietnam which Congress rarely had a say. It expected all classified executive agreements to be transmitted to the House Foreign Affairs Committee and to the Senate Foreign Relations Committee within 60 days.

U.S. foreign policy democratic. U.S. foreign policy is not only orchestrated by states men as non-governmental actors play non indispensable roles.¹⁵³

2.4.2. Non-state actors of U.S. Foreign policy towards SSA

Non-state actors have become key figures in the management and expansion of U.S. external policy abroad; they include Multinational Corporations (MNC), businessmen, non-governmental organizations and individuals. The United Nations Organization (UNO) defines MNC as enterprises which own or control the production of goods and services outside the country in which they are based (home country).¹⁵⁴ The activities they carry out have many implications on the policy of their home government and thus they strive to extend the diplomatic ideas or aims of their countries wherever they find themselves.¹⁵⁵ U.S.-MNC promotes international cooperation through increased trade, regional economic integration and by bringing together firms and nations to promote their respective interests. MNC can contribute to the formulation of the U.S. foreign policy directly or indirectly by influencing public opinion.¹⁵⁶ The United States do not use these firms to implement her foreign policy rules but rather prevent them from frustrating the U.S. laws and regulations through the subsidiaries. Examples of U.S.-MNCs in SSA include Cummins,¹⁵⁷ Ford, an auto-manufacturer involved in Africa since the 1920s established a production plant in Nigeria with hopes of spreading over SSA. Ford has been working with a number of African initiatives to improve access to education and health care as commented by its President and CEO:

As much as we are a car company, Ford is also a people company. Our investment in the community across Africa-through various health, education and mobility projects is a fundamental to our business as producing vehicles, as this is key to unleashing the potential of the African continent.¹⁵⁸

The picture below shows the personal relationship that existed between President J. F. Kennedy and President Ahmadou Ahidjo.

¹⁵³ Interview with Witney Schneidman, about 65 years, U.S. Senior International Advisor for Africa, USA, 3 August 2022.

¹⁵⁴ *Idem.*

¹⁵⁵ *Idem.*

¹⁵⁶ *Idem.*

¹⁵⁷ A global designer and manufacturer of diesel engines present in Africa since 1946 in 51 of the 54 countries. They operate in selling and servicing products like power generators for homes and businesses. For more information visit <https://borgenproject.org/american-companies-investing-in-africa/>

¹⁵⁸ Jeff Nemeth, president and CEO of Ford Motor Company of the Sub-Saharan Africa region.

Picture 3: Cameroonian president visits the White House in 1962



Source: J. A. Amin, “Equality, Non-Interference, and Sovereignty: President Ahmadou Ahidjo and the Making of Cameroon-U.S.”, in *African Studies Review*, University of Dayton, 2021, p. 6.

The picture above was taken during an official visit by President Ahidjo to the United States in 1962, during the reign of President J. F. Kennedy. He congratulated President Ahidjo for the leadership he had shown “in uniting a country with different languages which had not known a sense of nationhood and community until recent years.”¹⁵⁹ Kennedy was interested in ending colonialism through his speech in the 1950s against colonialists. Many African Presidents were invited to the White House to enforce diplomatic relations with them and above all, to counter balance communist activities on the continent. This was because the newly independent states were financially lacking and vulnerable to communist help if assist was not given to them. That is why many programs like the USAID did not fold their arms when it concerned Africa.¹⁶⁰

Conclusion

This chapter highlighted details on the AGOA program, it shows the eligibility criteria to be admitted as an AGOA beneficiary country and eligible products that can be exported under this program. It equally looked at the AGOA Forum and its important in the AGOA

¹⁵⁹ J. A. Amin, “Equality, Non-Interference, and Sovereignty: President Ahmadou Ahidjo and the Making of Cameroon-U.S. Relations”, Cambridge University Press, 2021, p. 6.

¹⁶⁰ Interview with Witney Schneidman, about 65 years, U.S. Senior International Advisor for Africa, USA, 3 August 2022.

process. This chapter ends by analyzing the foreign trade policy of Cameroon and the United States foreign policy towards SSA. It is important to note that, trade engagement between both countries are shaped by these two policies. The comprehension of this chapter plays an important role in the understanding of the subsequent chapter which have tackled commercial exchanges and related investment through AGOA in Cameroon. It has therefore been concluded that AGOA has enhanced and increased the quantity of exports from SSA to the United States as indicated in the tables and graphs in chapter one. Thus, what was the nature and impact of trade relations between Cameroon and the United States through AGOA on the economy of Cameroon?

CHAPTER THREE

TRADE AND INVESTMENT RELATIONS BETWEEN CAMEROON AND THE UNITED STATES DURING THE AGOA REGIME

Introduction

One of the principal objectives of AGOA is to encourage increase in trade and investment between the United States and Sub-Saharan Africa by reducing tariff and non-tariff barriers and other obstacles hindering smooth trade between both partners.¹ Nineteen years of partial exportation under AGOA, Cameroon's exports to the United States took another dimension especially during the years of the first decade. To effectively analyse commercial exchanges between both parties during this program, it was important to first of all make a presentation on bilateral cooperation between both countries. Thus, this chapter shall outline the impact of AGOA on the economy of Cameroon, while examining the problems faced by Cameroon to effectively maximize the opportunities provided by AGOA. Trade between Cameroon and the outside world in the later years of the second half of the 20th century was highly influenced by the economic crisis that hit Africa in the 1980s² and the devaluation of Franc CFA in 1994³ whereas trade from 2001 with the United States has been influenced by AGOA. It is important to note that, exportation under AGOA has been analysed alongside GSP provisions beginning from 2001 given that, first U.S. import under AGOA entered the United States in January 2001.⁴

3.1. Bilateral Cooperation Between Cameroon and The USA

Generally, diplomatic agreements often yield to cooperation between signatories. Without constituting an exception, the relationship that exists between Cameroon and the United States

¹ U.S. Congress, "Public Law 106-200", May 2000, p. 253.

² A. Geda, *The Historical Origin of the African Economic Crisis: From Colonialism to China*, Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2019, p. 5.

³ INS, « Annuaire Statistique du Cameroun 2000 », Ministère de l'Economie et des Finances, Direction de la Statistique et de la Comptabilité Nationale (DSCN), p. 16.

⁴USITC, "U.S. Trade and Investment with Sub-Saharan Africa", Third Annual Report, 2002, p. 23.

has led to cooperation between both parties with each of them preserving her foreign policy principles and maximizing her national interest too. In due regards to this, Cameroon and the United States have been cooperating in economic, political, socio-cultural and military domains.

1.3.1. Economic cooperation

Economic cooperation between Cameroon and the USA started earlier before the signing of formal treaties of relations and cooperation in 1960. Early American aid to Cameroon was manifested through Operation Crossroads Africa (OCA)⁵ which helped small communities in meeting socio-economic problems. This program gave assistance to the construction of projects in Batibo and Guzang in the Northwest Region of Cameroon. The U.S. economic aid to Cameroon started vividly in 1963 with the signing of an accord of financial lending to Cameroon for the construction of the Trans-Cameroon Railway. In the same year Cameroon received 9.200.000 million USD for the first phase of construction, 10.000.000 USD in 1969 for the second phase, and received 12.000.000 million USD for the third phase of construction in 1970. In order to balance things for the state of West Cameroon, the United States lend the sum of 3.000.000 USD for the amelioration of the Kumba-Mamfe road in March 1965.

This construction project was to be carried out by Frederic R. Harris Inc an American engineering company.⁶ The generous nature of the U.S. made them to contribute over 75% of the total amount needed for the project as they donated 931 million francs CFA out of the 1.2255.000.000 francs CFA needed and the Cameroon government contributed barely 374 million francs CFA which represented roughly 25% of the total amount. With regards to the findings of Christian Théophile Obama Belinga, he argued that, many Nigerians (Ibos) profited from this project as they migrated and dominated the socio-economic life of British Cameroon immediately after the construction of the Kumba-Mamfe road.⁷

Official economic cooperation started roughly immediately after the signing of diplomatic relations. Two economic accords were signed; Economic Cooperation and Technical

⁵ OCA was established in 1958 by Dr. James H. Robinson in which young North Americans were to work progressively with African in building of bridges of friendship to Africa. The motto of the organisation is “make a difference for others, see the difference in yourself.” The programs of OCA are designed to promote understanding of Africa and the African Diaspora based on the belief that one can truly enter another culture only by living and working in it. President John F. Kennedy called it the “progenitor of the Peace Corps” OCA has sent over 14.000 persons to more than 40 African countries in pursuit of its goals.

⁶ « L'aide américaine au Cameroun en 1965 », *ACAP n° 62 du 16 Mars 1965*, p.3.

⁷ V. J. Ngoh, *Cameroon, 1884-1985: A hundred years of history*, Navi Group Publishers, Yaoundé, First Edition, 1987, p. 201.

Assistance signed on 26 May 1961, and Economic Cooperation of Investment Guarantee signed on 7 March 1967.⁸ The first accord made up of seven clauses, had as objectives the disposition of U.S. funds, technical assistance and gifts in products and services. This help was to be given to Cameroon under conditions of the U.S. rules and regulations of international development aid and Cameroon had to permit U.S. representatives to make sure the aids given realised the projects in question and no form of mismanagement should be recorded, and lastly the realised project should be publicly advertised to Cameroonians with precision on the fact that it was financed by the United States.⁹ With what concerns Investment Guarantee Cooperation, it involved the implantation of the U.S. private investors. Here, the U.S. government had to grant valid any American investors if Cameroon validates it through the signing of agreement with the investors.¹⁰

Cameroon and the United States signed an agreement in 1986 known as the Bilateral Investment Treaty (BIT), which came in force in 1989. This treaty was designed to foster and preserve U.S.-investments in developing countries and help embolden Cameroon to adopt policies that would help raise economic growth and development. The U.S.A through this treaty had to invest in Cameroon via multinational companies, mortgages, pledges, shares of stocks, industrial properties (trademarks, trade names, copyrights, patents, trade secrets and know-how, industrial designs), license for the exploitation of natural resources, and returns (dividends, interest, capital gains, royalty payment, management, technical assistance). According to section 4 of this treaty, investment had to operate under applicable national and international law.¹¹

By 1984, economic aid from the United States of America to Cameroon in the agricultural, construction and investment sectors had reached 279.6 billion USD. In that same year, about 58 completed and uncompleted U.S. projects were on-going in Cameroon. Towards the end of the 1980s, economic relations between Cameroon and the USA had improved as there was a record of about 50 firms engaged in business and trading actives in Cameroon. The political stability enjoyed by Cameroon at that time played an important role in her economy. Cameroon was able to have a favourable balance of trade with the USA in 1988 and 1989 with

⁸ G. Noula, "Relations Economiques entre le Cameroun et les Etats-Unis d'Amérique (1960-1977), mémoire de troisième cycle, IRIC, 1978, p. 57.

⁹ G. Noula, "Relations Economiques entre ..." p. 59.

¹⁰ J. A. Amin, "Equality, Non-interference, and Sovereignty: President Ahmadou Ahidjo and the Making of Cameroon-U.S. Relations", in *African Studies Review*, University of Dayton, 2021, p. 20.

¹¹The United States Congress, "Cameroon Bilateral Investment Treaty", U.S. Government Printing Office Washington D.C, 1986.

187.8 million USD and 378.9 million USD respectively.^{12 13} In 2003, SSA represented 6.3% of total U.S. investment in developing countries and received 8.5 billion USD in terms of foreign and direct investment. Cameroon received the highest sum (73 million USD) which accounted for the highest U.S. investment in non-oil exporting African countries.

1.3.2. Cooperation between Cameroon and USA under the United States Agency for International Development (USAID)

Created under the reign of President John F. Kennedy on the 3rd of November 1961, the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) has been supporting Cameroon in many domains which range from assisting economic growth and trade, addressing health problems to fighting against violent extremism. The activities of the USAID in Cameroon are coordinated under the African branch, the Bureau for Africa and the Bureau for Central Africa. The USAID works to undermine the activities of Boko Haram in Northern Cameroon, improving economic growth and trade in Cameroon by investing and training experts on the domains of farming, business association and export, just to name a few. They assist victims of crises and conflicts by improving sanitation, hygiene, water, health, and nutrition.¹⁴

The USAID also helps Cameroon through the Young African Leaders Initiative (YALI) by offering free training to individuals from Cameroon. YALI has currently produced over 405 Cameroonian graduates in the fields of Business and Entrepreneurship, Civic Leaders and Public Management. In the domain of health, it has helped to reduce the spread of HIV/AIDS and Malaria in Cameroon through the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR), and the President's Malaria Initiative (PMI). The USAID has worked to combat HIV and malaria and improved Cameroon's health sector by ameliorating laboratories, surveillance, emergency management and workforce capacity to prevent, detect and respond to disease outbreak. The United States has provided close to 500 million USD to the health sector in Cameroon and part of it was used to fund the construction of the Public Health Emergency Centre in Yaoundé and the center was inaugurated in 2018.¹⁵

¹² Harold D. Nelson, *Area Handbook for the United Republic of Cameroon*, Washington D.C, U.S. Government Printing Office, 1973, pp. 111, 170, 254, 262-3.

¹³ United States Department of Commerce, International Trade Administration, "Foreign Economic Trends and the Implications for the United States, Cameroon", May 1990, United States Department of State, Cameroon, Background Notes, June 1992.

¹⁴ J. A. Amin, "Equality, Non-interference, and Sovereignty: President Ahmadou Ahidjo and the Making of Cameroon-U.S. Relations", in *African Studies Review*, University of Dayton, 2021, p. 9.

¹⁵E. Bey, "Cameroon-USA: Great Health, Security Partners" in *Cameroon Tribune*, 15th July 2020.

The USAID has also been very active in the domain of agriculture in Cameroon since its creation. Before the advent of the USAID in Cameroon the agricultural sector was challenged with data and statistics collection which was to be used for the planning and implementation of economic policies. It is against this problem that a statistic department was introduced in the Ministry of Agriculture which was in charge of collecting, monitoring, analyzing, identifying, planning, designing and evaluating programs in the agricultural sector from 1979-1993.¹⁶ The USAID activities in the late 1980s and early 1990s helped to open up the fertilizer importation and distribution sector that was monopolized by the government and increased the import of fertilizer from 28.000 tons in 1969 to 153.602 tons in 1975. This fertilizer improved Cameroon's output in food crops, coffee, cocoa, rubber, tea, banana, cotton, tobacco and many other products.¹⁷ USAID funds were used to create the National Cereals Research and Extension Project in Cameroon. Research was carried on projects like maize, sorghum, millet, and rice especially in North Cameroon as this part was frequently attacked by the Saharan Sahel Drought. The USAID activities were mostly focused on agricultural activities, like the support of the North Cameroon Seed Multiplication Project; in the Northwest Region, it supported the TaduDiary Cooperative Society (TDCS). In 1984 the USAID granted 39 million USD to continue research on agricultural products through the National Cereals Research and Extension project.

From 1990 to 1994, the USAID also extended its aid to the North West Co-operative Association (NWCA) which started as the Southern Cameroon's Marketing Board in 1954 before getting its actual name in 1961 due to the political evolution of the country. Technical aid was transferred from the USAID to the NWCA on how to market internationally the products of its farmers, which was formerly done by the National Produce Marketing Board (NPMB) from 1978(date of creation) to 1989(date of closure). In order to assist the NWCA the United States signed a Program Grant Agreement and Project Grant Agreement with the government of Cameroon which was to be executed via the USAID. The USAID then assisted the NWCA with 22,000,000 USD through The Program for the Reform of the Agricultural Sector, Phase 1 (PRAMS 1).¹⁸

The USAID's presence in Cameroon has faced many challenges especially in the early years of the 1990s as Cameroon (1993) was one of the nine Sub-Saharan African countries who

¹⁶ Frii-Manyi, "The United States Agency...", pp. 82, 102.

¹⁷ Frii-Manyi, "The United States Agency...", pp. 82, 102.

¹⁸ Republic of Cameroon and United States Agency for International Development, "Programme Grant Agreement AID Grant N° 631-T-603 and AID Program N° 631-0068" Yaoundé, August 30, 1990, pp. 1-2.

underwent sanctions when the American Administrator Brain Atwood announced the close up of the USAID missions in Botswana, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Cape Verde, Chad, Ivory Coast, Lesotho and Togo.¹⁹ This sanction was because the above nations were deemed undemocratic by the U.S. as they were engaged in human rights violations. Bad governance, poor macro-economic policies, lack of accountability and transparency, economic crises, inflation, and devaluation. Political instability in Cameroon caused the USAID to close down the American Cultural Centre in Douala in 1993 and only resumed in 2002 from its African headquarters in Ghana.²⁰ It is also important to note that the USAID has been funding trade capacity building projects related to AGOA in Africa since 2001 which worth about 1.6 billion USD. Cooperation between Cameroon and the United States in the economic domain as well as under the USAID could be well understood in regard to the table below.

Table 13: Table showing economic cooperation between Cameroon and USA (1963-1984)

Sector and Subsector	Value in millions of USD (000000)
AID projects and programs	213.8
Agriculture	85.2
Input supply	13.5
Research	6.2
Extension	5.5
Education and training	36.0
Irrigation	7.2
Livestock	8.3
Fisheries	0.8
Rural Development	90.7
Infrastructure	78.4

¹⁹ J. A. Amin, "Equality, Non-interference, and Sovereignty: President Ahmadou Ahidjo and the Making of Cameroon-U.S. Relations", in *African Studies Review*, University of Dayton, 2021, p. 22.

²⁰ USAID, *Aid Washington, Aid Organization Hand Book*, Washington D.C., 1980.

Health and Population	4,5
Education	6.5
Water Supply	0.8
Community Development	0.4

Source: Adapted from Julius A. Anim, “Cameroon’s Foreign Policy towards the United States”, *Revue d’Histoire Outre-Mers*, Persée, 1999.

1.3.3. Socio-cultural and Military cooperation

Cultural exchanges are also important for both countries. These exchanges are manifested through the American Cultural Centers of Yaoundé and Douala. These centers have been giving lectures opportunity, research assistant to Cameroon and also, American Artists-aid to Cameroon. Since the establishment of diplomatic relations, over 2000 Cameroonians have been awarded scholarship to study in the United States. An average of 550,000 Cameroonians has settled in the United States with about 50% with American Nationality.²¹ Cameroon has received social aid from the U.S. Governmental Organizations (GO) and Non-Governmental Organizations (NGO) in the domain of education, health, agriculture, sport, democracy, protection of the environment, development of small and medium size enterprises, and humanitarian actions.²² An example of humanitarian action includes the American aide during the Lake NYOS disaster, whereby the United States assisted the victims with materials items and the crash of Kenya Airways in 2007.²³

Like any other developing African Nation, Cameroon understood the importance of education in its development process and thus sought for educational aid in order to guarantee a better future. Given the fact that Cameroon’s educational system was deteriorating especially that of the West Cameroonian States because of the departure of British educational staff, Cameroon under Agustin Ngum Jua, the West Cameroon Minister of Social Service requested help from the United States Peace Corps Volunteers (US-PCV) in 1961 and the following year, Cameroon witnessed the arrival of the first US-PCV.²⁴ This team was beneficial to Cameroon in the sense that it provided teachers to assist in secondary, mission and vocational schools, and

²¹H. Awal, “L’impact de l’AGOA sur les Exportations des pays Eligibles en Direction des Etats-Unis : le cas du Cameroun”, mémoire de Relations Internationales, IRIC, 2009-2010, pp. 20-21.

²²*Ibid.*

²³*Ibid.*

²⁴ Anim, “Cameroon’s Foreign Policy...”, p. 230.

it helped the government of Cameroon to orientate her educational system to be more responsive to the practical needs of the society. At the level of schools, they drew new timetables, made schedules for classes and opened many libraries and new schools; they did not limit themselves to educational aid as they worked in community development in rural areas by building bridges, health centers, agricultural development, cooperatives organizations and sanitary gestures amongst others. By 1978, there were about one hundred and forty-five (145) U.S. Volunteers in Cameroon.²⁵ Their glorious help to Cameroon caused John Ngu Foncha to comment in the following words:

I cannot recount the benefits we have derived by the presence of the Peace Corps in West Cameroon. After independence, we had nearly closed all our higher educational institutions but this was avoided by the timely arrival of the Peace Corps, without which it would have been almost impossible to continue those institutions. There are other things which the Peace Corps Volunteers have done apart from their normal duties, within the year they have assisted in various activities-planning and surveying of new roads and helping in community development efforts, rural water supply, etc.²⁶

In collaboration with the members of G8 countries, the United States took decisions to maintain peace and promote security in some vulnerable countries of the world including Cameroon, Kenya, India, Kazakhstan, Senegal and many others. In regards to Cameroon, the USA got engaged in security activities because of the susceptibility to insecurity and threat around the Gulf of Guinea. It was due to this engagement that Cameroon has been receiving military material support from the U.S. in the training of forces for the peace maintenance and intervention when necessary. In order to counter maritime insecurity, piracy, illegal fishing, smuggling, human trafficking and terrorism along the Gulf of Guinea, U.S.-Cameroon cooperation became established in relation to the *Bataillon d'Intervention Rapide (BIR)*. This was significant when Harry Jr Harris, the commander of the American fleet of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) visited Cameroon in March 2010. Cooperation between the United States and Cameroon and with other countries is strictly guided by the U.S. Foreign Policy toward that region.

3.2. Bilateral Trade Flow Between Cameroon and The USA During AGOA

Trade between Cameroon and the United States under AGOA was one-way trade, which implies that only Cameroon exported to the USA. Cameroon was able to export under AGOA

²⁵ J. A. Amin, "Equality, Non-interference, and Sovereignty: President Ahmadou Ahidjo and the Making of Cameroon-U.S. Relations", in *African Studies Review*, University of Dayton, 2021, P. 18.

²⁶ Anim, "Cameroon's Foreign Policy...", p. 233.

for a period of nineteen years (2001-2019). During this period, the principal export of Cameroon under AGOA was on the energy sector²⁷ which despite the fall in oil prices accounted for about 40% of total AGOA exports. Other products comprised of textile and apparel, forest products, agricultural products, footwear amongst others. The participation of Cameroon under AGOA recorded a great impact on its exports to the USA and on Balance of Trade.

3.2.1. The Nature of Cameroon's Exports to the United States under AGOA

In 2001 and 2002, Cameroon's duty-free exports under AGOA and GSP valued at 37.2 and 116 million USD respectively. A greater portion of the exports was on the energy sector and represented 51% of total exports to the U.S. Products exported by Cameroon under AGOA in 2003 valued at 147 million USD, representing 76% of total export. U.S. investments were visible during this year given the fact that a U.S. firm was awarded permit to extract Cobalt in April 2003 and the Chad-Cameroon Pipeline project began by June same year.²⁸ It is important to note that, while granting duty free access of goods to the U.S. markets, the United States had their investments and interest secured in Cameroon. In 2005, Cameroon exported under AGOA and GSP provisions goods worth 101 million USD. This value represented 64% of total export to the USA and the most products comprised of energy related-products.²⁹ Cameroon's exports under AGOA in 2006 recorded a value of 153 million USD; almost all of the products were energy-related products and represented 56% of Cameroon's total export to the United States.³⁰ In 2007 and 2008, Cameroon's exports under AGOA were a bit different as compared to the other years. This was because of the slight increase in the export of cocoa paste, kola nuts, rubber products, and plywood.

Cameroon's exports under AGOA started falling as from 2009 because of the Global Financial Crisis and the worse record was in 2017 whereby Cameroon exported products worth barely 36 million USD under AGOA and the utilization ration was as low as 30%. Even though Cameroon tried recovering under AGOA by exporting products valued up to 106 million USD in 2019, the recovery was short live as Cameroon was suspended the following year, January 2020 on the pretext of human rights violation, torture and imprisonment of political protesters.

²⁷ USTR, "African Growth and Opportunity Act Competitiveness Report", 2005, p. 37.

²⁸ USTR, "2004 Comprehensive Report on U.S. Trade and Investment policy toward Sub-Saharan African and Implementation of the African Growth and Opportunity Act", The Sixth of Eight Annual Reports, 2004, p. 67.

²⁹ USTR, "2006 Comprehensive Report on U.S. Trade and Investment policy toward Sub-Saharan African and Implementation of the African Growth and Opportunity Act", The Sixth of Eight Annual Reports, 2006, p. 78.

³⁰ USTR, "2007 Comprehensive Report on U.S. Trade and Investment policy toward Sub-Saharan African and Implementation of the African Growth and Opportunity Act", 2007, p. 57.

An overall presentation of two-way trade between Cameroon and USA including AGOA is well presented in the table below.

Table 14: Bilateral trade statistics between Cameroon and USA from 2001 to 2019 (Figures in millions of USD)

Year	Exports	AGOA+GSP	% of AGOA	Imports	BOT	x –AGOA
2001	101.1	37.2	36.9	184	-82.3	63.9
2002	172.2	116	67	155.9	16.3	56.2
2003	214	147	76	90.7	123.2	67
2004	308.2	243	74	99.6	208.7	74.2
2005	158.2	101	64	117.3	40.8	57.2
2006	273.3	153	56	120	153.3	120.3
2007	297.3	173	58	132.9	164.3	124.3
2008	614	441	71	125.1	489	173
2009	249.7	97	38	153.5	96.2	152.7
2010	297.1	113	38	132.3	164.8	184.1
2011	330.4	137.7	41	220.6	109.8	192.7
2012	308.3	116	30	253.0	55.2	192.3
2013	367	165	44	335.7	31.2	202
2014	186.4	78	41	301.1	-114.7	108.4
2015	123.1	43	35	224.9	-92.8	80.1
2016	150.8	63.3	42	189.8	-39	87.5
2017	118.3	36	30	158.9	-40.6	82.3
2018	219.5	63	28.7	193.3	26.3	156.5
2019	291.9	106	36	200	91.8	185.9

SOURCE: Realized by the author with data compiled from “Comprehensive Report on U.S. Trade and Investment Policy towards Sub-Saharan Africa and Implementation of the African Growth and Opportunity Act 2000-2008”, “African Growth and Opportunity Act Competitiveness Report 2005”, “2016 Biennial Report on the Implementation of the African Growth and Opportunity Act” and the United States Census Bureau.

As indicated earlier, even though AGOA was signed in 2000, the program became practical as from January 2001. This explains why the statistics in the table above have been analyzed beginning from 2001. From the table above, there is a cross section of data showing Cameroon’s total exports to the United States, the portion of exports under AGOA, percentage

of AGOA exports, goods imported from the United States and a colon for balance of trade between both parties. It is clear from the table that 2008 was the year that Cameroon exported the highest quantity of products to the U.S. (total exports and AGOA exports).

The same way total exports were highly valued at 614 million USD in 2008, AGOA exports were also high up to the monetary value of 441 million USD. Despite the fact that a lot was exported under AGOA that year, the greatest percentage export under AGOA was 76 % in 2003. The subsequent years especially 2009 and 2017 were the dark ages of Cameroon under AGOA because of the poor or low value of exportation. It should be noted that this was the general nature of total U.S. imports from all AGOA countries (refer to table 6 and graph 2). The main cause of the decline in total exports in general and AGOA exports in particular was “The Great Recession”³¹ also known as the 2008-2009 Global Financial Crisis. The crisis affected many Financial Institutions of the world and especially those of the United States. This was thus bound to cause a slowdown in U.S. imports under AGOA.

3.2.2. Impact of AGOA on Cameroon’s exports

The United States of America has been over time, a big trading partner of Cameroon and the principal partner in the American Continent. This is because of the position occupied in terms of ranking.³² According to World Trade classification, from 2010-2016 the U.S. was the eighth principal trading partner of Cameroon, among other principal partners like China, Germany, Nigeria, France, Britain and others. During this same period, the U.S. also occupied the eighth position as far as importers from Cameroon were concern. Among the first twenty importers from Cameroon, the United States occupied 3.2% of total imports.³³ After haven studied a cross section of statistical yearbooks on trade at the National Institute of Statistics, our research made us to understand that before the signing of AGOA, Cameroon’s total exports to the United States were very low (see table 1 of chapter 3). Before AGOA, the highest export to the States was in 1985. The total quantity exported in that year was 398,732 tons which

³¹ The Global Financial Crisis of 2008-2009 refers to the massive financial crisis the world faced from 2008 to 2009. The crisis was visible across the world with millions of U.S. financial institutions being greatly impacted. This crisis was cause by many factors like The Housing Market Bubble whereby banks offered low interest rates on loans thereby causing many homeowners to take loans they could not afford, increase availability of credit and large inflow of foreign funds into the U.S., wrong banking model, financial innovation, and many others. (See the journal “The Financial and Economic Crisis of 2008: A Systematic Crisis of Neoliberal Capitalism” by David M. Kotz in 2009)

³² G. E. Ngameni, “Le Commerce Extérieur...”, p. 208.

³³ MINCOMMERCE, « Annuaire Statistique sur... », p. 11.

valued 110,543 million FCFA. The situation even went worse in 1997 when Cameroon's total exports to the United States dropped to 90,734 tons equivalent to 8,022 million FCFA.

The coming of AGOA had a great effect on Cameroon's export. According to an article published in 2014 by Besso C. R. et al, the export of agricultural products increased from 32,759 in 2011 to 36,204 dollars in 2012.³⁴ We see as from 2001 an increase in the value of exports to the United States. This increase was as a result of the exportation under AGOA. The first exports under AGOA were as high as 37.3 million dollars and caused total exports to increase from 77.6 million dollars in 1999 to 101.7 million dollars. AGOA continued increasing Cameroon's total exports right up to 614 million dollars in 2008, the year which Cameroon exported goods worth 441 million dollars under AGOA.

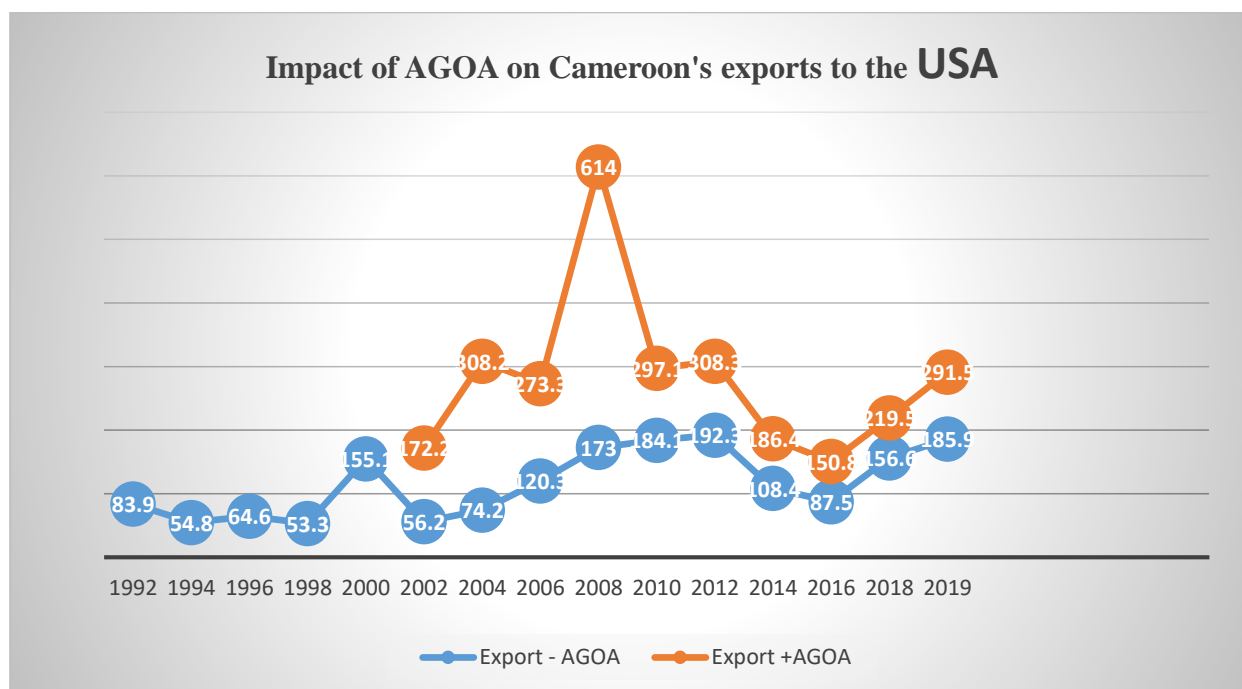
In 2001, Cameroon's export of energy-related products under AGOA were valued at 36,731,102 dollars almost 90% of total exports under AGOA, minerals and metals under AGOA and GSP provisions were 23,453 dollars, forest products accounted for 159,748 dollars, agricultural products were 163,596 dollars, chemical and related products were 47,959 dollars and miscellaneous manufactures were valued at 48,000 dollars. All these exportations under AGOA accounted for the increase in Cameroon's total exports to the United States in 2001.³⁵

As per the last years of exportation under AGOA without GSP provisions, the export of agricultural reduced from 2,294 dollars in 2018 to 413 dollars in 2019. No energy-related products were exported under AGOA in 2018 and barely of 8,069 dollars of these products were recorded in 2019. The last years especially 2017 and 2018 denoted poor participation as few products were exported and these products were also small in quantity. It is thus clear that, AGOA had an impact on Cameroon's exports to the United States. This is because years in which Cameroon exported much under AGOA led to increased total export and vice versa. This has been illustrated in the graph below.

³⁴ Besso, "African Growth and...", p. 3.

³⁵ Interview with Olivier Dimala, about 45 years, Economist/President of AGOA Resource Center, Douala, 18 July 2022.

Graph 5: Impact of AGOA on Cameroon's exports to the United States (Figures in millions of US dollars)



Source: Realised by the Author.

It is clear from the graph that there was an increase in the total number of goods exported to the United States between 2001 and 2019. The blue curve indicates total export without AGOA and the orange curve represents total export including AGOA. Before Cameroon started exporting under AGOA, the total value of exports has always been less than 200 million US dollars. With the advantage to export under AGOA without trade barriers, Cameroon's exports to the United States increased from 172.2 million US dollars in 2002 to 614 million US dollars in 2008. What then was the impact of AGOA on Cameroon's balance of trade with the United States?

3.2.3. Impact of AGOA on Cameroon's Balance of trade with the USA

If there was a positive impact on Cameroon's exports to the United States instigated by AGOA, then it is obvious that AGOA's impact on Cameroon's balance of trade was positive.³⁶ Prior to the signing of AGOA as a law by President Bill Clinton in 2000, Cameroon had been enjoying a favourable balance of trade or trade surplus (see 5 table and graph 1 of chapter 3). The highest surplus was recorded in 1989 which worth a sum of about 87 USD and the least

³⁶ Interview with Olivier Dimala, about 45 years, Economist/President of AGOA Resource Center, Douala, 18 July 2022.

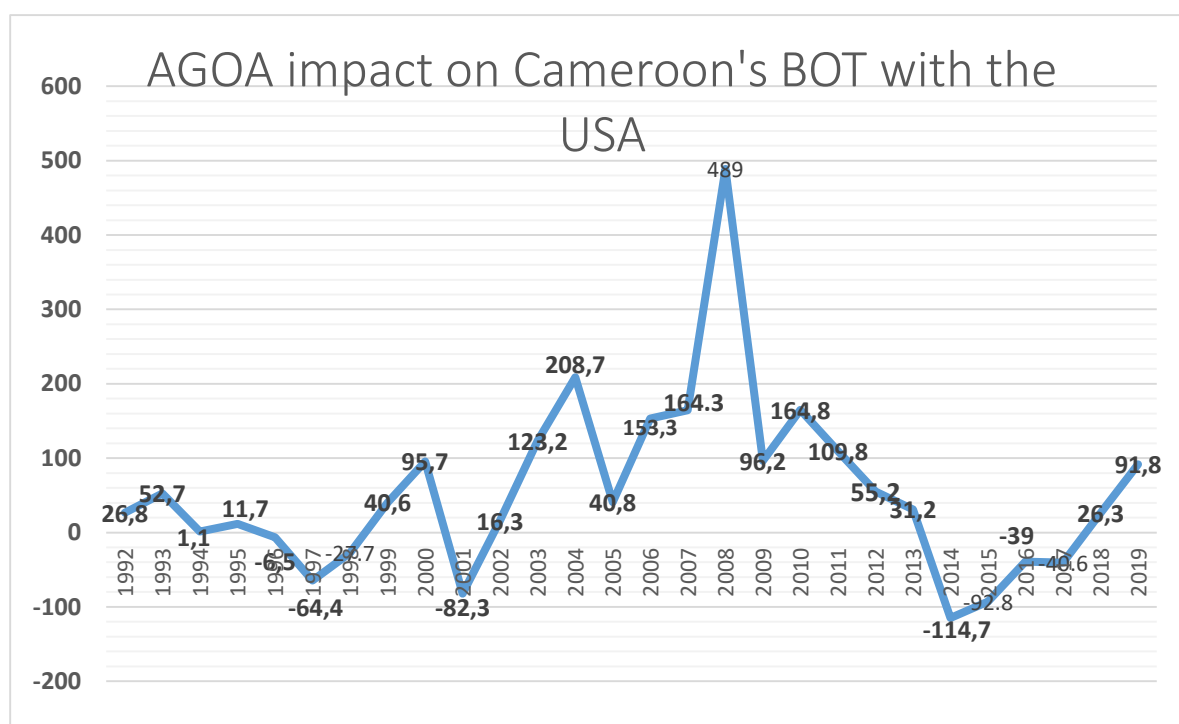
surplus was in 1993 which was barely some hundred thousands of dollars. It is important to note that among all the countries in the world, the United States is one those countries that is fond of recording a trade deficit or unfavourable balance of trade in most fiscal years³⁷.

However, the U.S. was able to witness trade surpluses for some years while trading with Cameroon. As earlier indicated above, the devaluation of Franc CFA helped recover the economy of Cameroon in the late 1990s, but it led to an unfavourable balance of trade in Cameroon not only with the United States but with other trading partners too. The deficit started in 1994 with about 19 million dollars and rose up to about 60 million dollars in 1998 before falling to about 14 million dollars the following year.

With the coming of AGOA, the story on trade balance took another turn (see table 6 of this chapter)³⁸. During the first year of AGOA, one could be disappointed on the figures representing balance of trade. This is because despite the numerous tons of varied products exported duty-freely under AGOA by Cameroon, Cameroon still recorded a trade deficit as high as 82.3 million dollars. Notwithstanding the fact that the balance of trade was unfavourable to Cameroon in 2001, it however changed positively for a period of twelve years, which is to say from 2002 to 2013. During this period of positive change, the deficit of 82.3 million dollars in 2001 ceded to a surplus of 16.3 million dollars in 2002. The surplus kept on increasing from 123.2 million in 2003 to 489 million dollars in 2008. Even during the Great Recession, Cameroon's balance of trade with the United States still recorded surpluses.

It was only in 2014 that Cameroon began witnessing deficits. During this year, there was a deficit of 114.7 million dollars but it fell down to 39 million dollars in 2016 and again there was a surplus of 91.8 million dollars in 2019. It should be noted that after nineteen years of partial exportation under AGOA, Cameroon recorded just five deficits and had fourteen years of surpluses. It is as well important to recall that; all these surpluses came as a result of AGOA. The graph below shows an illustration of what has been analyzed on balance of trade.

³⁷ A fiscal year is a one-year period that companies and governments use for financial reporting and budgeting. It does not necessary start at the beginning of a calendar year. According to the Internal Review Service (IRS), a fiscal year consists of 12 consecutive months ending on the last day of any month except December. The U.S. Federal Government's fiscal year starts from October 1 to September 30.

Graph 6: Impact of AGOA on Cameroon's BOT (figures in millions of US dollars)

Source: Realised by the Author.

From the illustration above, the greatest trade surplus witnessed by Cameroon was in 2008 which was equivalent to 489 million US dollars. It is worth noting that 2008 has been the most effective year in the history of exportation under AGOA by SSA in general and Cameroon in particular. According to economists, when a country enjoys trade surplus, it is set to experience a certain degree of economic growth and development.³⁹ Thus, it will be judicious to discuss on AGOA related investment in Cameroon that has led to economic growth in one way or another.

3.3. Related AGOA Investment in Cameroon and Impact On Economic Growth

Through out the nineteen years of commercial relations between Cameroon and the USA under AGOA, there has been a certain degree of investment in Cameroon as it is with other beneficiary SSA. AGOA helped or contributed to the boosting of production in the handicraft and food processing sectors through the improvement of product quality and package to meet

³⁹ Interview with Olivier Dimala, about 45 years, Economist/President of AGOA Resource Center, Douala, 18 July 2022.

up AGOA export regulations.⁴⁰ Despite the fact that some important investments projects were never realized, however some successes were recorded in some domains. For instance, the Complex GACATIC-Textile company whose foundation stone was laid in the West Region November 2003 but was never realized.⁴¹ Apart from this, other investments were realized like the creation of the AGOA Resource Center and technical support to Beutec broderie Sarl (BEUTEC), CAWER, Ken Atlantic and the Northwest Cooperative Association (NWCA)⁴². These gestures were influential in ameliorating trade relations between Cameroon and the United States especially on Cameroon's exports. Even though with the signing of Bilateral Investment Treaty with Cameroon which ensures national treatment for U.S. Investors, some of the U.S. companies laid complaints on the fact that the government of Cameroon was highly involved in corruption and in tax harassment and the freezing of company bank accounts. This has gone a long way to discourage AGOA-related Foreign Direct Investment from the U.S. private sector. Also, these foreign investors cry out loud saying that the banking sector of Cameroon operates without adequate supervision and thus is bound to chaos.⁴³

3.3.1. The AGOA Resource Centre at the Chamber of Commerce, Industries Mines and Crafts (CCIMA)

Inaugurated on 7 June 2010 by the U.S. Ambassador during the period of H.E Janet Garvey, the center is based in the Cameroon CCIMA. This center was opened in the presence of the Cameroon Minister of Trade, Luc Magloire Mbarga Atangana and many other economic personnel during which it was stated that trade between Cameroon and the United States had increased over 25% between 2008 and 2009 with Cameroon exporting more than twice its imports and this was as a result of AGOA. According the Cameroon minister of trade, the center was a cornerstone that had to help Cameroon maximize the potentials provided by AGOA. That is why he stated that: *Ma conviction est que les choses changeront du tout au tout à l'installation*

⁴⁰ Interview with Olivier Dimala, about 45 years, Economist/President of AGOA Resource Center, Douala, 18 July 2022.

⁴¹ The Complex GICATIC-Textile Company was the first Cameroonian venture to take advantage of AGOA, the foundation stone was laid by the Minister of Industries and Commercial Development Maigari Bello Bouba in negotiation with an American firm AF-AM knitting Inc headed by Hon. Clementine Tiako. This structure was to be comprised of a knitting mill, a dyeing and finishing section, a garment component producing section, a garment sewing facility, and an embroidery section. This project was estimated to cost about 2 billion FCFA and to create approximately 1000 jobs after completion (See Lukong P. N., "Cameroon: New Textile Firm Commissioned", in *Cameroon Tribune*, 21 November 2003). Nonetheless, this investment project was never a reality as underlined by the AGOA president.

⁴² Interview with Olivier Dimala, about 45 years, Economist/President of AGOA Resource Center, Douala, 18 July 2022.

⁴³ USTR, "2018 Biennial Report...", p. 25.

*de ce centre.*⁴⁴ It should be noted that in order to enhance trade under AGOA, the United States has created many AGOA Resource centers like the U.S.-BOI AGOA Resource Center in Nigeria created in June 2009, the AGOA Trade Resource Center Ghana launched in March 2015, and many others. In Cameroon, three sectors were identified with high potentials in relation to exportation under AGOA. These sectors include; *Filière objets artisanaux et de décoration, Filière textile et vêtements, et Filière aliments spécialisés et ethniques.*⁴⁵ The objectives of this center as stipulated by Olivier Dimala include the diffusion of commercial and technical information on the specificities of the American market to Cameroon business men (particularly exporters).⁴⁶

So far, the center has been beneficial in the domain of job creation. Even though not large in number, the AGOA center has been able to create over twenty direct jobs to Cameroonians.⁴⁷ Apart from job creation, the center has been able to provide suitable information for market access thereby giving abilities to exporters and exporting companies to sell freely under AGOA. It is in this same light that, AGOA orientates exporters on the procedure of exportation. A clear example can be seen with a letter addressed to the President of AGOA by the *Coopération des Producteurs d'Ananas d'Awae (SCOPAA)* soliciting that;

*Dans le cadre de la mise en œuvre des actions visant à dynamiser la Loi Américaine sur la Croissance et les Opportunités Economiques en Afrique (AGOA), le Gouvernement entreprend à travers la Comité Technique AGOA, l'encadrement des petits producteurs des fruits de renforcer leurs productivités et leur capacité à l'exportation vers le marché américain, réunis au sein de la Coopération des Producteurs d'Ananas d'Awae (SOCOPAA)....*⁴⁸

With this, the center was able to orientate these pineapple producers on the commercialization of their products thereby leading to increase production and capacity building. This stipulates that the AGOA center acted as the Technical Committee by supervising and mentoring the engagements made by small and medium size enterprises towards exportation under AGOA.

⁴⁴ Journal du Cameroun, « Le Cameroun bénéficiera d'un centre de ressources AGOA », publié le 12 Août 2014.

⁴⁵ Archive du MINCOMMERCE, Département Economique, Brochure AGOA I.

⁴⁶ Interview with Olivier Dimala, about 45 years, Economist/President of AGOA Resource Center, Douala, 18 July 2022.

⁴⁷ *Idem.*

⁴⁸ Archive du MINCOMMERCE, Département Economique, Brochure AGOA I.

Also, the center also acted as an information center for capacity building⁴⁹ and export promotion⁵⁰ assistance to those sectors identified with high AGOA export potentials. Among the top Cameroon exporters or exporting companies under AGOA, are the Cameroon Development Cooperation (CDC), Ken Atlantic, BUETEC, CAWER, and NWCA. Others include Marcus Paulo Investment (timer, rubber, arts and crafts exporter), Sone Company Ltd (specialized in the sale of cash crops), *Cotonnière industrielle du Cameroun CICAM* specialized in textile and apparel.⁵¹ With this, AGOA helped a cross section of exporting companies to improve their technologies, product quality and research development studies. This is because the U.S. market is a competitive market and thus there was need to protect these exporters and prepare them for competition with rivals from other parts of the world. An anonymous employee from BUETEC in the Douala-Bonamousadi neighborhood made it clear that the technical aid provided to the textile industry was very useful in the production and commercialization of its products. The employee added that, at the time when the industry was about to make great use of the AGOA strategy through the resource center, it was to their greatest surprise to hear that Cameroon had been suspended from the AGOA program. However, according to the employee AGOA is a great program through its opportunities and wishes Cameroon could regain her eligibility.⁵²

3.3.2. AGOA in Collaboration with the North West Cooperative Association (NWCA) and BUETEC broderie Sarl

As mentioned earlier above, AGOA was instrumental and collaborative with some industries in Cameroon specialized in exportation to United States. To begin with, we have BUETEC which is a textile company founded in 1998. The company produces textile supports of all kinds and the most common include; t-shirts, polo shirts, work wear, medical outfits, barrier masks, bags, shirts, blouses, caps and others. In 1999, it was the pioneered industrial embroidery in Central Africa and in 2008, it was the pioneered industrial manufacturing. Other than the production of the above textile supports, the company also practices graphic designs, tailoring technics, marking technics, and silk-screening.⁵³

⁴⁹ Capacity building is the improvement in an individual's or organization's facility to produce, perform or deploy. It improves the measurement of outcome institutions.

⁵⁰ Export promotion assistance refers to the AGOA policy measures put in place to potentially enhance exporting activities to companies and industries involved in AGOA exportation.

⁵¹ Anonymous.

⁵² Anonymous.

⁵³ Interview with Jeanpierre Amougou, 30 years, employee BUETEC, Douala, 19 July 2022.

Even though BUETEC had been the dominant textile industry in Cameroon and Central Africa, it was lacking in the domain of innovation and commercialization. Thanks to AGOA and the implementation of the resource center, this production unit was able to integrate and make good use of the research technics to bring about innovation. Concerning exportation to the United States, prior to AGOA, the company was lacking behind thus exporting less. The advent of AGOA gave the opportunity to this structure to export a greater portion of its products without undergoing any trade barrier such as tariff or quota.⁵⁴ The overall participation of BUETEC under AGOA led to increase export to the United States of about 20%. This also enhanced and influenced the creation of employment in this company. Before AGOA, the company had slightly about 30 employees but by 2017, the number of workers increased above 50.

NWCA was also another exporting institution targeted by AGOA to stimulate exports to the United States. A peasant farmer organization founded as far back in 1950, NWCA is an association that covers over seven coffee and cocoa unions in the North West region and supports approximately thirty-five thousand farmers in the production and exportation of coffee and cocoa. As the largest union in the domain of coffee in Cameroon, the main objective of NWCA is the collection, procession and exportation of coffee. It also engages in the allocation of suitable prices for its products and organizes innovational and training session for all farmers. The vision of this society is the production of “Prosperous coffee and cocoa farming communities; a vibrant, competitive and sustainable coffee and cocoa industry” in the North West Region of Cameroon. Also, the mission of NWCA is to:

Increase productivity, production and market access for female and male coffee and cocoa farmers and others along the value chains, with motivated, competent and continuously learning actors. These tie with motivated, competent and continuously learning actors. These tie with its motto of ‘Each for all and all for each’.⁵⁵

Looking at the mission and goals or objectives of both AGOA and NWCA, we see that both parties have similar purposes at the level of their aims. That is to say they all strive towards the enhancement of exports to the United States. Among the three sectors created at the AGOA Resource Center, we have the sector of aliment or nourishment, this is in line with the collaboration made by AGOA with NWCA to promote the exportation of coffee and cocoa which are the most common products in all the parts of the region. In relation to the secondary

⁵⁴ Interview with Jeanpierre Amougou, 30 years, employee BUETEC, Douala, 19 July 2022.

⁵⁵ NWC official website, www.nwcaltd.org, consulted on Monday 25 July 2022 at 6:03 am.

aims, it is clear that both parties have the purpose of reducing poverty through the promotion of socio-economic gestures like construction of schools, hospitals, bridges, and basic necessities to better up the living standard of the concerned. The taking off of trade barriers under AGOA export is in line with the desire of NWCA to increase export market demand of its coffee and cocoa and reduce exportation price.⁵⁶ This is because when trade barriers are removed, the products turned to be relatively cheaper and export level increases.

3.4. Reasons why Cameroon did not Maximize the Opportunities Provided by AGOA

In 2003, the report prepared by the Office of the United States Trade Representative (USTR) stated that Cameroon qualified for AGOA Textile and Apparel benefits in March 2002, the government of Cameroon also established an AGOA Implementation Committee⁵⁷ of high level government representatives⁵⁸, yet, no AGOA-related investment had been recorded till that year.⁵⁹ In 2010 the Minister of Small and Medium-sized Enterprises, Social Economy and Handicrafts, Laurent Serge Etoundi Ngoa made it clear that ten years after the U.S. Congress approved AGOA, AGOA fruits were not quite visible in the country.⁶⁰ This implies that Cameroon's participation under AGOA was poor and it was because of the following reasons.

3.4.1. Un-adapted National AGOA Strategy (NAS)

After eleven years of implementation of AGOA, it was concluded with substantial evidence that AGOA had increased export from Cameroon to the United States and AGOA had also resulted in significant U.S. Investment in SSA countries.⁶¹ However, it was noticed that these impressive statistics were visible in few countries and in order to remedy this problem, a guideline was published for the implementation of an AGOA strategy to form a structural framework at the national level in responding to AGOA. The subsequent years after the production of this guide by the African Union Commission, the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa and the Africa Trade Policy Centre, many AGOA beneficiary countries published their National AGOA Strategies and their utilization rate of AGOA increased. These strategies are prepared by governments of beneficiary countries in SSA as part of their planning to enhance the use of AGOA. During the development of such strategy, the country indicates

⁵⁶ NWC official website, www.nwcaltd.org, consulted on Monday 25 July 2022 at 6:03 am.

⁵⁷ Archives of MINCOMMERCE, Arrêté N° 101/PM du 23 Mai 2011, Département Economique.

⁵⁸ Archives of MLINCOMMERCE, Décret n° 2001/874/PM du 1er Octobre 2001, Département Economique.

⁵⁹ USTR, "2003 Comprehensive Report on...."

⁶⁰ Cameroon Tribune, "Cameroon: Government assesses AGOA adhesion", 2010, consulted on 30/07/2022 at 8:38 am.

⁶¹ Africa Trade Policy Centre, "Guidelines on developing national AGOA strategy", p. 1, 15 June 2012.

how its comparative advantage can enhance its competitiveness. The idea behind this was that the strategy would position the beneficiary country to take maximum advantage of AGOA. An interview with Dimila Olivier made it clear that despite the enormous benefits withdrawn from this strategy, Cameroon did not implement or did not put in place a National AGOA Strategy.⁶²

An assessment of those countries with a NAS proved to be satisfactory as far as their participation under AGOA is concerned. Actually, among the 39 present beneficiaries under AGOA, only 18 of them have developed a NAS. These countries include: Botswana, Eswatini, Ethiopia, Ghana, Kenya, Lesotho, Madagascar, Malawi, Mali, Mauritius, Mozambique, Namibia, Rwanda, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Tanzania, Togo, and Zambia. Among these 18 countries, 16 of them have been reporting data since the publication of their NAS. Countries that had very low utilization rate like Mali, Mozambique, Togo and Zambia have experienced an increase in export due the establishment of a NAS⁶³.

From the above analysis, it is clear from the examples highlighted that the putting in place of a National AGOA Strategy is very instrumental in enhancing the exports of a SSA beneficiary country to the United States under AGOA. This thus stands as the most important reason why Cameroon was lacking under AGOA or why many economic analysts say AGOA has failed as a whole and precisely in Cameroon.⁶⁴ A clear example to support this statement is that fact the utilization ration of Cameroon under was as low as 19 percent; also, no great investment was realized in Cameroon as a result of AGOA.⁶⁵

3.4.2. Inadequate Government Assistance to Exporters and Export Capacity

Before talking on government assistance and export capacity, it is important to state the fact that the government of Cameroon should be greatly charged for the poor AGOA performance. For Instance, the Prime Minister set up in 2012 an Inter-Ministerial AGOA committee (as per Decree No. 2012/0159/PM of 30 January 2012), which identified itself with the technical assistance of a Consultant and the AGOA Resource Unit of the Cameroon CCIMA. The committee identified three industry sectors to be supported by the government. These sectors included (a) the food industry; (b) textiles and apparel; and (c) handicrafts and

⁶² Interview with Olivier Dimala, about 45 years, Economist/President of AGOA Resource Center, Douala, 18 July 2022.

⁶³ W. Schneidman et al, "How the Biden Administration Can Make AGOA More Effective" in *Public Policy and Government affairs, Trade Controls and Policy*, 2021.

⁶⁴ See Appendix 3

⁶⁵ Interview with Olivier Dimala, about 45 years, Economist/President of AGOA Resource Center, Douala, 18 July 2022.

related items. Also, twenty-six local enterprises were selected basing on their existing and export potentials. The committee was to support these local enterprises in boosting export under AGOA. With the putting in place of this committee in place, we expected an increase in Cameroon's exports to the United States. Rather, Cameroon's exports to the USA declined from 367 million USD in 2014 to 123.1 million USD in 2016. This decrease was equally visible under AGOA exports as they declined from 165 million USD in 2013 to 43 million USD in 2015. Even the AGOA Ministerial Forum that was to be hosted in 2015 by Cameroon was finally hosted instead by Gabon. All these show the laxity that fills up the functioning of the government.⁶⁶

Several States and local government agencies do offer assisting programs to exporters to boost their exporting activities. Some of these assistances include the granting of loans to exporters, guarantee programs that require the participation of approved lender, the reduction of taxes, and government financed international advertising. When loans are granted to exporters, their costs of production are reduced thereby increasing output and employment. The government of Cameroon pays little or no attention to support exporters notwithstanding the fact that exportation plays an important role in the economy.⁶⁷ An Interview with an anonymous exporter made us to understand that the export procedure in Cameroon is very difficult and filled with many formalities to undertake. The individual added that, before exporting many forms have to be filled and these forms consume money, also the judicial sector does not make the process easy, rather it makes it lengthy and this discourages some people who are interested in exportation.⁶⁸ This point is a justification to the poor participation recorded by Cameroon under AGOA. Had it been the government of Cameroon was highly engaged in supporting exporters, many exporting organizations would have engaged in exportation thereby improving or increasing Cameroon's exports to the United States under AGOA. For instance, in South Africa the International Trade Institute of Southern Africa (ITRISA) awarded the South African exporters of the year of 2021. Technical Systems (Pty) Ltd received the South African AGOA exporter of the year award for large enterprises because the company was able to make excellence and innovation by reaching U.S. markets through AGOA. Another company known as Two Greens Lemons received the awards for medium enterprises while Veldskoen Shoes

⁶⁶ Lukong Pius Nyuylime, "New Textile Firm Commissioned," in *Cameroon Tribune*, Yaoundé, Nov. 21, 2016.

⁶⁷ Interview with Olivier Dimala, about 45 years, Economist/President of AGOA Resource Center, Douala, 18 July 2022.

⁶⁸ Interview with Peter Ndikum, 55 years, Importer, Douala, 19 July 2022.

(Pty) Ltd took the award for the category of small enterprises, other awards were given to NOMU Brands Ltd as the Top Woman Owned Business Exporter and to Asha Eleven, Jim Green Ltd, and ONEOF EACH Ltd that jointly received an award for Top Young Entrepreneur. This gesture by the South African Government was a great boost to exporting companies as it gave others the morale to win similar awards and benefit from the award bonuses.⁶⁹

Export capacity was another barrier that did not permit Cameroon to maximize the opportunities of AGOA. When we talk of export capacity here, allusion is made to the quality of products exported under AGOA. The U.S. market is one of the most competitive markets in the world because of the numerous foreign exporters to the United States not forgetting the domestic business men.⁷⁰ This implies that before goods are being exported to the U.S. markets, they must be up to standard while meeting up sanitary provisions. Cameroon could only meet up to export capacity in the domain of energy products, that is why a greater share of quantity exported under AGOA was in the energy sector.⁷¹

3.4.3. Challenges Related to the Criteria of AGOA

Exporting to the United States without trade barriers under AGOA sounds good, but the criteria to export play an important role in the entire process. First and foremost, the main challenge faced by Cameroon was that of meeting supply. AGOA demanded products in large quantities which made it difficult for Cameroon to meet such demand. For instance, AGOA could demand about 20 tons of apparel products from Cameroon every year. Even the famous Cameroon Development Cooperation⁷² was unable to meet up with the demands of AGOA. This constituted a great problematic to Cameroon thereby causing her not to maximise full benefits from AGOA.⁷³ Notwithstanding the fact that one of the principal objectives of AGOA is to diversify the exports of beneficiary SSA countries to the United States, the AGOA program failed to achieve this goal in Cameroon. This is because prior to AGOA, Cameroon exports to the USA were mostly on the energy sector and with the coming of AGOA Cameroon's export were still dominated by energy products which represented about 75%. Exports in other sectors did not realise any big increase despite the putting in place of AGOA. Agriculture is the sector

⁶⁹ Global Africa Network "South African AGOA Exporter of the Year Award winners announced", November 2021, AGOA official website www.agoa.info, Consulted on Tuesday 9 August 2022 at 4:29 pm.

⁷⁰ Interview with Noutcha Parfait, about 46 years, Secretary General of CCIMA, Yaoundé, 28th February 2022.

⁷¹ See Appendix 2

⁷² CDC is one of Cameroon's major exporters and employers. It was created in 1947 with the purpose of developing and running plantations of tropical crops in Cameroon. Its principal products include rubber, oil palm, bananas, coconuts, tea and many others.

⁷³ Interview with Noutcha Parfait, about 46 years, Secretary General of CCIMA, Yaoundé, 28th February 2022.

with the highest potentials of job creation and employment in many developing economies of the world. But AGOA's impact on Cameroon's agricultural sector was very limited notwithstanding the fact that this sector employs about 60% of the population. This is because a greater share of Cameroon's exports under this program was made up of energy related products.

Also, U.S. subsidies to U.S. farmers made agricultural products less competitive because the subsidies made local products relatively cheaper; there equally existed other non-tariff barriers like sanitary standards and time consumption which made some of the products (especially agricultural products) bad because of their perishable nature. Some products were unable to enter the US market because of sanitary standard⁷⁴. Even when SSA exports agricultural products under AGOA, they are in their unprocessed form. The AGOA policy is responsible for this challenge because it permits duty-free export of primary products and charge duties on it by-products. For instance, cocoa can be exported freely whereas its secondary products like chocolate are exported under taxes. This explains why between 2005 and 2009, U.S. imported cocoa and by-products registered 90 million U.S. dollars and chocolate accounted just 17,000 U.S. dollars equivalent to 0.019%.⁷⁵

Conclusion

This chapter began by showing how Cameroon and the United States of America have been cooperating in the economic, political, and socio-cultural domains. The chapter equally made an analysis on trade exchange between both partners which permitted the conclusion that AGOA led to an increase in Cameroon's exports to the United States as from 2001, and it also improved the BOT of Cameroon. Further study in this chapter proved that AGOA related investment in Cameroon was very tiny as compared to other countries and the reason for the poor participation of Cameroon under as due to the fact that the Cameroon government did not put in place a NAS, the government sector does not support exporters. In addition, certain AGOA criteria also acted as a barrier to effective exportation under this trade program. Therefore, it will be judicious in the subsequent chapter to evaluate AGOA as a whole while bringing out its problems, and also look at the problems affecting Cameroon's trade in general.

⁷⁴ Archive of MINCOMMERCE, "AGOA at 10 Challenges and prospects for U.S.-Africa trade and Investment Relations" in *Africa Growth Initiative*, Brookings, July 2010, pp. 12-14, Economic department, brochure AGOA II.

⁷⁵ Archive of MINCOMMERCE, "Improving AGOA: Toward a New Framework for U.S.-Africa Commercial Engagement" *Africa Growth Initiative*, Brookings, May 2011, Economic Department, Brochure AGOA I.

CHAPTER FOUR

A GENERAL ASSESSMENT OF THE AFRICAN GROWTH AND OPPORTUNITY ACT, PROBLEMS FACED BY CAMEROON'S TRADING SECTOR AND THE WAY FORWARD

Introduction

The success or failure of any trade program can only be determined through its assessment or evaluation. After having analysed trade and investment activities between Cameroon and the USA following the AGOA program, it is important to give an assessment on trade relations between both countries. This chapter also shows Cameroon's survival without AGOA, it highlights the various problems faced by Cameroon's trading sector over time and how the problems have evolved over time. The challenges faced by AGOA have equally been underlined in this part of the work and finally, provisions have been made for the way forward to the problems challenging trade in Cameroon and AGOA.

4.1. Assessment of the African Growth and Opportunity Act

Given the numerous opportunities and objectives of AGOA, it is necessary to evaluate this trade program and see how effective it has been in Cameroon in particular and in SSA in general. Here, an AGOA assessment has been made on two sides. First, AGOA has been assessed on the context of SSA, and secondly on the Cameroonian context. The evaluation has been based on its objectives which are; increased trade, export diversification, job creation, amongst others. The main reason for the creation of AGOA was to free trade barriers for SSA countries to become competitive with other sub regions by increasing the volume of their exports to U.S. markets.¹ That is why beneficiary SSA countries are exempted from limitations

¹ AGOA, Title 1 of the Trade and Development Act of 2000, Pub. L. 106-200.

for the preservation of competitiveness which gives a certain percentage limit to the exportation of a given product.²

4.1.1. Assessment of AGOA on Sub-Saharan Africa

AGOA is a multilateral trade program that involves many SSA countries and thus, there is need for a general assessment or evaluation. It should not be surprising that the result of the assessment here is quite different from the result in the assessment made on Cameroon. As already seen in chapter two (2.4), the total exports of SSA to the United States has increased progressively due to the participation or exportation under AGOA. AGOA has enhanced exports in many sectors and in many beneficiary countries.

According to Schneidman and Zenia, the total products imported by the United States from SSA have been dominated by AGOA+GSP products.³ In their article published at Brookings, they made it clear that the first ten years of AGOA constituted more than 70 percent of total SSA export to the United States. It is clear in this article that petroleum products represented roughly 89 percent of the total exports of SSA. However, it was not due to AGOA because these products are already duty free under the GSP.⁴ The non-energy sector has also flourished in SSA as a result of AGOA.

This impact has been heavily felt mostly in the countries of Lesotho, Mauritius, Swaziland and Kenya. Just half a decade of AGOA on the move, some U.S. companies (Levi's, Wal-Mart, Gap, Old Navy, Victoria's Secret, Vanity Fair and Land's End) imported from SSA apparel and textiles products worth more than 5.5 billion USD between 2001 and 2005.⁵ The exportation of these textile and apparel products started falling in 2011 because of the expiration on the restrictions imposed by the U.S. to China and other Asian producers.⁶ The graph below shows the weight of AGOA exports without oil.

² AGOA, Title 1 of the Trade and Development Act of 2000, Pub. L. 106-200.

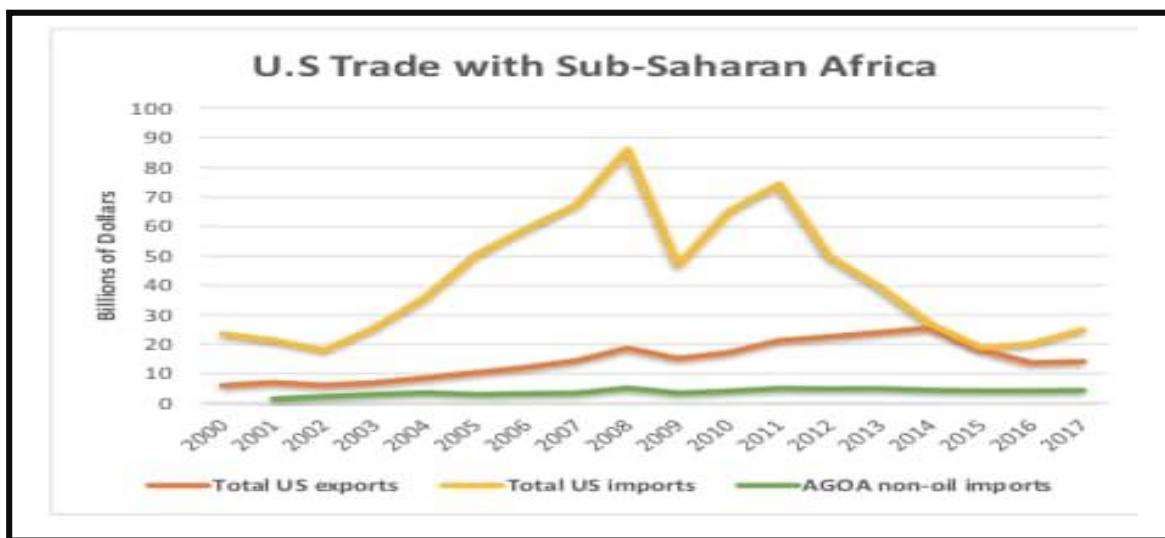
³ W. Schneidman et A. Zenia, "The African Growth and Opportunity Act: Looking Back, Looking Forward", Africa Growth Initiative, Brookings, June 2012, p. 6.

⁴ Schneidman et Zenia, "The African Growth and ...", p.7.

⁵ *Ibid*, p. 8.

⁶ Interview with Witney Schneidman, about 65 years, U.S. Senior International Advisor for Africa, USA, 3 August 2022.

Graph 7: Two-way trade between the USA and SSA showing AGOA non-oil exports (figures in billions of UDS)



SOURCE: Adapted from the AGOA official website, www.agoa.info, consulted on Monday 8 August 2022 at 3:48 pm.

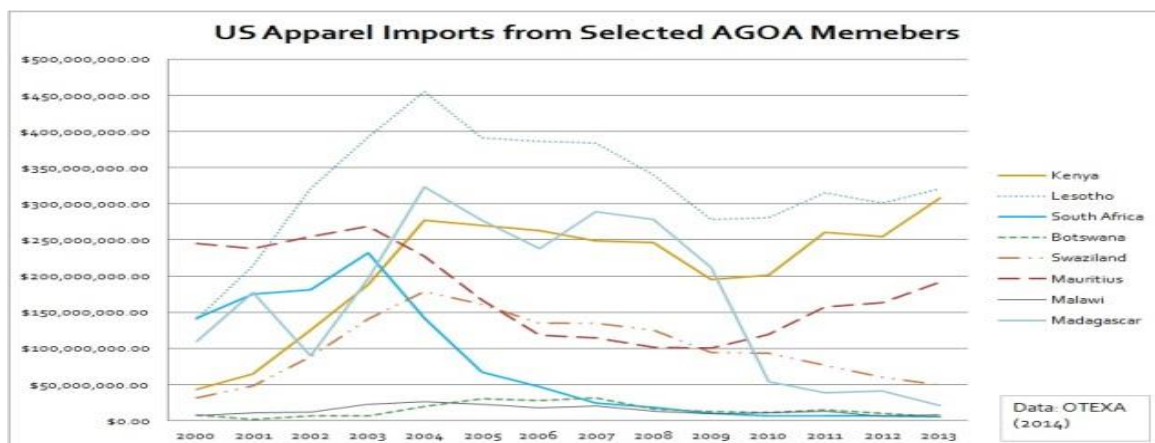
This graph illustrates trends in two-way trade between the United States and SSA from 2000 to 2017. It is clearly indicated by the yellow curve that SSA has been exporting more than they import from the United States. Just like Cameroon exported the highest quantity under AGOA in 2008, it was the same with SSA as they witnessed the greatest exports to the USA under AGOA worth the sum of about 88.5 billion USD. However, the volume of these exports started reducing the following year and fell right down below 20 billion USD in 2015. While SSA exported up to about 88.5 billion USD in 2008, the United States only exported goods worth barely 19 billion USD in the same year. Thus, SSA has been enjoying a favorable BOT since the enactment of AGOA in 2000 until 2019 all thanks to AGOA (see chapter two 2.4.2). This is evident by the great portion of goods exported to the United States under AGOA. As it has been the trading culture between the United States and SSA, the greatest portion of exports has always been on the energy sector. That is why the green curve showing AGOA export without oil is at the bottom of the graph. Basing from the curve, non-oil exports under AGOA have never gone above 10 billion USD since AGOA has been in existence, the greatest monetary value of non-oil export was barely about 6 billion USD in 2008.

At the level of job creation in SSA, AGOA influenced or created approximately 300,000 direct jobs and over 1.2 million indirect jobs before 2012. The jobs created as a result of AGOA were not visible in every beneficiary SSA country, rather they were common in those countries

that made huge advantage of apparel and textile exports to the United States. Schneidman and Zenia stated that the Kenyan National Economic Survey testified of the growth of direct investment in the apparel sector to about 27,500 job opportunities, similar testimonies were made by the Central Bank of Lesotho in 2011 that AGOA increased job opportunities in the economy under the textile and garment sector from 19,000 in 1999 to about 45,700 jobs in 2011. It is important to note that general exports under AGOA were hindered as from 2014 because of the general fall in prices for world products.⁷

As for regional integration, the AGOA program has encouraged cooperative production through its special ROO. This allows beneficiary members to enjoy an extensive regional supply of raw materials in the production of certain commodities exported under AGOA.⁸ For instance, the increases in the apparel sector in Madagascar have been because of regional flow of raw materials from neighboring countries. She imported zippers from Swaziland, denim from Lesotho, and cotton yarn from Zambia and South Africa. This was successful in the sector as the value of apparel export increased from 53 million USD in 1999 to 469 million USD in 2004. The graph below shows the weight of AGOA on apparel.

Graph 8: The weight of AGOA on Apparels from selected AGOA members



Source: Adapted from the AGOA official website www.agoa.info, consulted on Monday 8 August 2022 at 3:40 pm.

As indicated in the preceding paragraphs, not every AGOA member has been able to benefit enormously under the apparel and textile sector. Also, in chapter three (3.4.1) those countries that published a NAS made great maximisation of AGOA in the preceding years. It is similar with the above graph as those who have made greater gains in textile and apparel

⁷ W. Schneidman et A. Zenia, “The African Growth and...”, p. 12.

⁸ *Ibid.*

under AGOA includes Lesotho, Kenya and Mauritius. From the graph we notice that the curves are unlike the general curve that shows total export under AGOA, that is to say the peak of apparel exportation under AGOA by the selected countries was not 2008 but in different years. For instance, the peak for Lesotho was in 2004 whereby she exported apparel worth above 450,000,000 million USD. The peak for Madagascar was in the same year with apparel exports worth about 350,000,000 million USD. The peak for Kenya was rather in 2013 and this was because of the implementation of the NAS she published in 2012. The peaks for South Africa and Mauritius were in 2003 and their apparel export started falling, but Mauritius was able to rise again with the establishment of a NAS while South Africa who did not establish such NAS kept on witnessing a fall in apparel export right down to less than 20,000,000 million USD in 2013. The reason why apparel and textile exports from the selected countries were famous in 2004 was because of the ROO (see chapter two, 2.3.1). The ROO gave special provisions to Lesser Developed Countries (LDCs)⁹ to export apparel and textile products with a certain degree of advantage on non-originating fabric for a four-year period. Even though this provision was extended by AGOA III and AGOA IV (see chapter two, 2.1.3) till 2007 and 2015 respectively, some concerned parties had already maximised their opportunities during the first phase while others did so in the second and third phases.¹⁰

4.1.2. Assessment of AGOA on the Economy of Cameroon

Much has already been said on the impact of AGOA on Cameroon's exports to the United States, on Cameroon's BOT, and on related investments in Cameroon. Nevertheless, it is important to analyse AGOA on the diversification of exports in Cameroon. As indicated in the previous chapter (3.1), the tables and graphs showed the products exported most to the United States before 2000 (energy-related products). With the signing of AGOA in 2000 and its aim to diversify the exports of SSA countries, we expected to see an increase in exports in other products other than energy related products. It is important to note that agriculture, including livestock, fishing and forestry is the most important sector of Cameroon's economy.

This is because they support about 70% of the total population and employs over half of the country's workforce, thereby accounting for 27% of the nation's total GDP.¹¹

⁹ Here, LDCs are considered based on the World Bank measure of 1998. Such countries are determined by their Gross National Product (GNP) per capita being less than 1,500 USD.

¹⁰ "AGOA Apparel Rules of Origin", AGOA, www.agoa.info, consulted on Tuesday 9 August 2022 at 2:02 pm.

¹¹ USITC, "Export Opportunities and Barriers in African Growth and Opportunity Act-Eligible Countries", October 2005, p. 14.

Agriculture alone is the sector with the highest potentials of job creation and employment in many developing economies of the world. But AGOA's impact on Cameroon's agricultural sector was very limited not with-standing the fact that this sector employs about 60% of the population.¹² This is because a greater share of Cameroon's exports under this program was made up of energy related products.¹³ However, the products of the aforementioned domains were not diversified. The non-diversification of Cameroon's exports to the U.S. under AGOA indicates that, the United States were more interested in acquiring minerals that were vital for their economy. This is clearly illustrated in the table below.

Table 15: Sectorial exports by Cameroon to the United States (Figures in thousands of USDs)

Products	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2018	2019	Total
Agricultural products	8,389	5,628	7,319	8,354	3,881	20,438	23,430	77,439
Chemical products	11,603	5,335	7,026	3,028	2,199	16,749	9,742	55,682
Energy related	26,174	28,884	48,906	188,415	83,031	125,534	206,281	707,225
Footwear	962	418	1,401	141	14	149	140	3,225
Forest products	3,991	3,978	5,169	10,020	8,015	25,960	32,919	90,052
Minerals and metals	416	211	724	71	201	1,626	538	3,787
Miscellaneous manufactures	1,929	1,299	1,473	1,048	800	6,481	2,913	28,493
Textiles and apparel	2,223	5,096	3,097	2,740	1,842	1,170	590	16,755

Source: Realized by the author with data from the U.S. Department of Commerce, and the official website of AGOA.

The table above shows Cameroon's exports (particular products) in some selected years in order to analyze the impact of AGOA on the diversification of Cameroon's exports to the

¹² Interview with Noutcha Parfait, about 46 years, Secretary General of CCIMA, Yaoundé, 28th February 2022.

¹³ *Idem*.

United States. It should be noted that, these years have been selected in accordance to the data available. The first four years (1997-2000) show exports without AGOA provisions and the last three years (2001, 2018, and 2019) show exports with AGOA provisions.¹⁴

Within the first years of exportation without AGOA provisions, the product that topped the list of Cameroon's exports to the United States was energy-related products. This sector recorded the highest imports in all the four years with export values worth at 26,174, 28,884, 48,906, 188,415 thousand USD. The next set of highly exported products was chemical, agricultural, and forest products. The least product exported consisted of minerals and metals which were equivalent to 416, 211, 724, and 71 thousand USD respectively.¹⁵

As from 2001 Cameroon started exporting under AGOA which aims at diversifying the exports of its beneficiary countries. From 2001, we expected exports to divert from the energy-related sector to another sector. Rather, energy-related products were still the most exported products by Cameroon to the United States in 2001.¹⁶ This sector exported products worth 83,031 thousand USD whereas other sectors were lacking as low as 14 thousand USD in footwear products.¹⁷

Moving forward to 2018, we still realize that energy related products were the most exported to the United States recording a sum of 125,534 thousand USD. The case was not different for the year 2019 as the latter product was exported highest at the sum of 206,281 thousand USD.¹⁸ Among the other sectors, no product was even exported up to 25% worth of energy-related products. This shows the failure of AGOA to diversify Cameroon's exports from energy-related to other sectors. This is evident in the sense that, even when all the other products are joined together, they do not still meet up with the quantity exported by the energy sector.¹⁹ The table below shows how AGOA failed to diversify Cameroon's exports.

¹⁴ USITC, "Export Opportunities and Barriers...", p. 16.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*

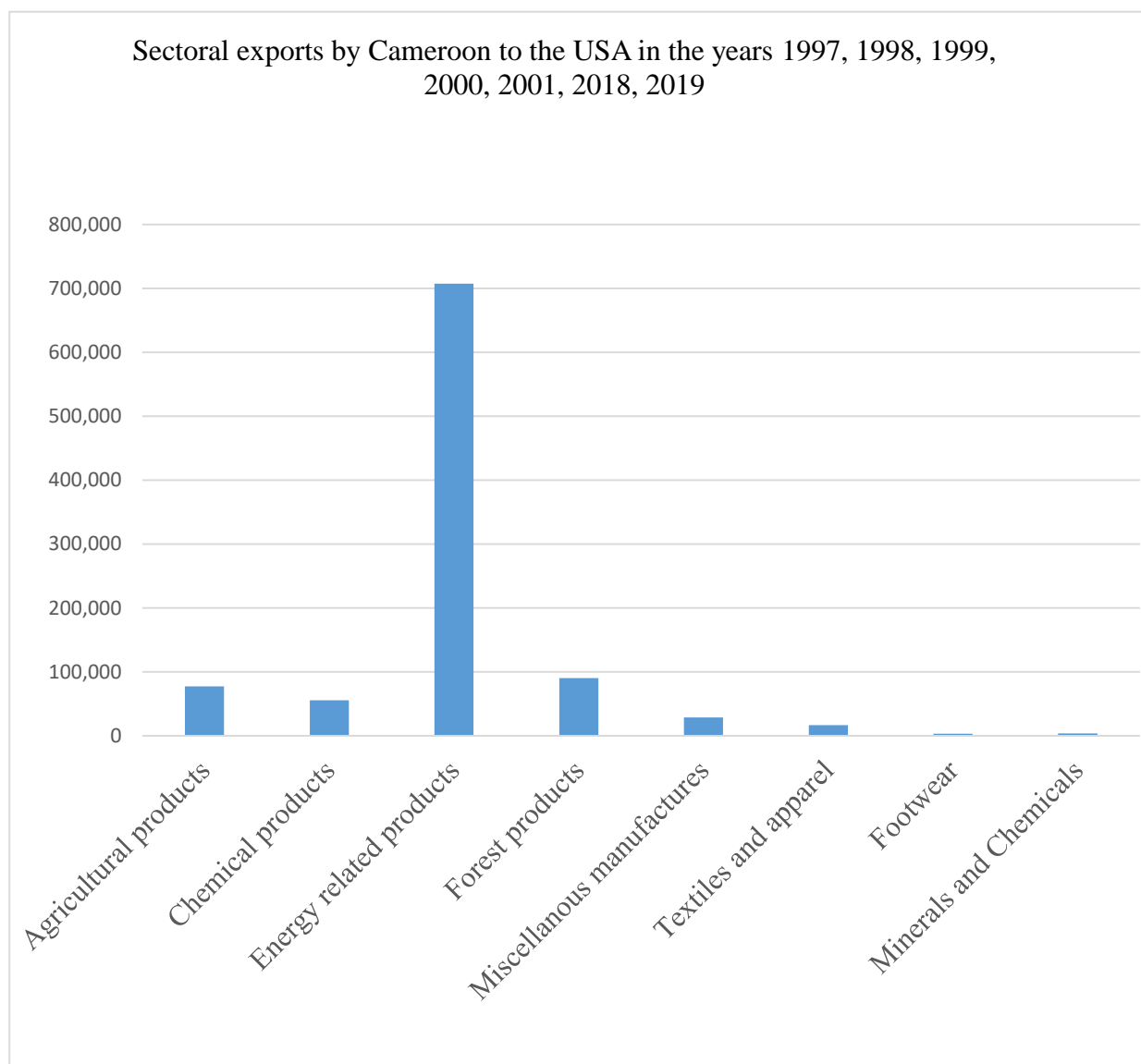
¹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 18.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 21-22.

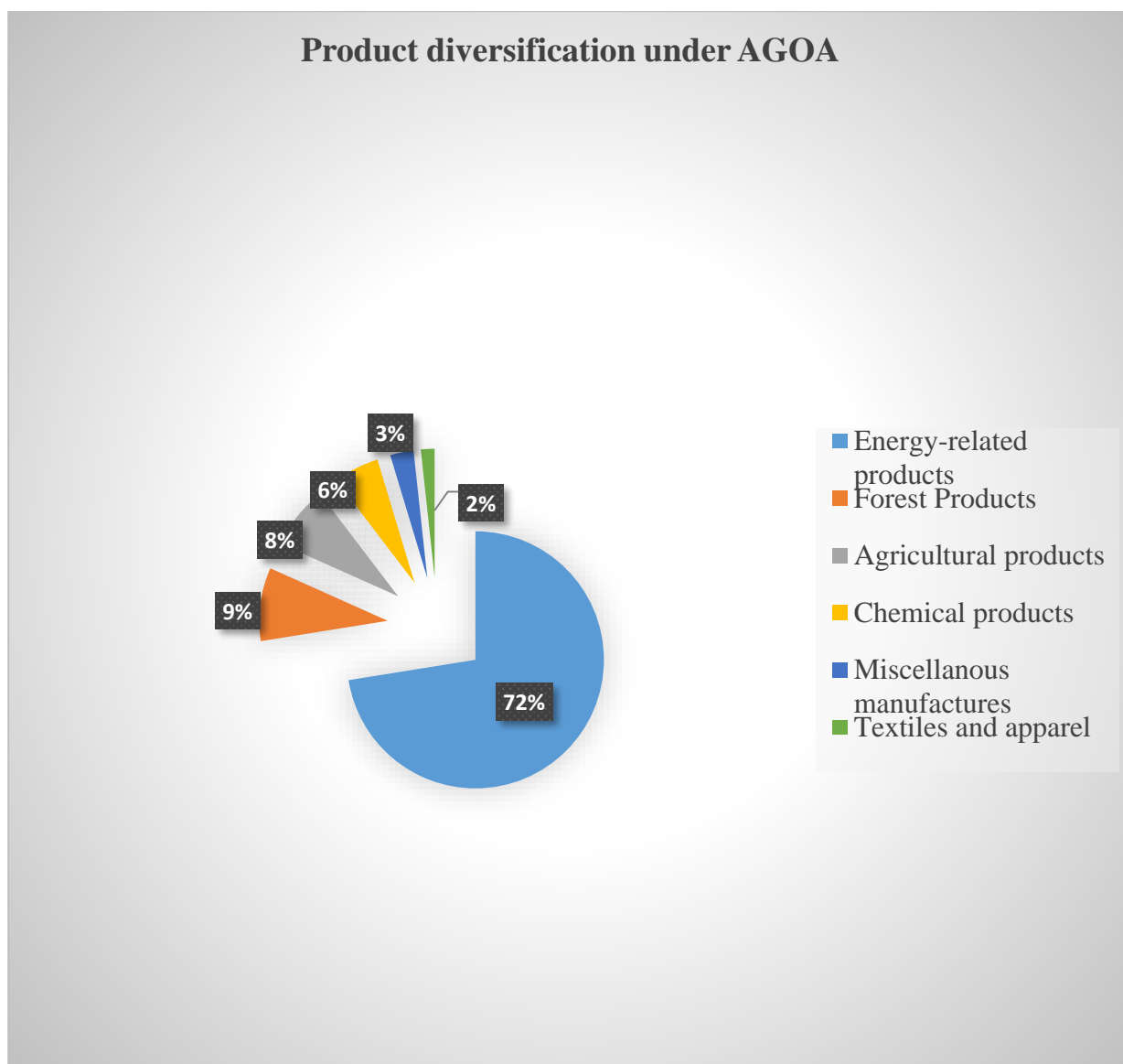
¹⁹ *Ibid.*

Chart 3: Sectorial exports from Cameroon the United States and impact on product diversification (figures in USD)



Source: Realized by the author with data from the U.S. Department of Commerce.

This chart is designed to easily demonstrate the failure of product diversification in Cameroon under AGOA. This is evident from the wide gap between energy-related products and others products. From the chart, some products are almost non-visible because of their low weight of exportation to the United States despite the availability of AGOA. However, energy-related products are at the top representing about 70% amongst the top six products. This is clearly illustrated in the chart below.

Chart 4: Percentage of Prominent products exported by Cameroon under AGOA

Source: Realized by the Author with data from the U.S. Department of Commerce.

This chart clearly shows that, despite the existence of AGOA, energy-related products still constituted Cameroon's prominent export to the United States. It is important to note that, this is the same trend with SSA and this has posed problems as far as the efficiency of AGOA is concerned.

Howsoever, energy-related products (oil) play a great role in the industrial sector and economic activities of the United States that is while their priority to improve SSA's exports to the U.S. under AGOA was influential mostly on oil products. Energy products did not benefit from any special treatment under the GSP but the reverse became true with the putting in place of AGOA, and thus we notice an improvement in the total number of energetic products

exported by Cameroon to the States since 2001.²⁰ After all, the increase export in this sector has led to an improvement in Cameroon's BOT with the United States from 2001 to 2019 as illustrated in the preceding chapter (3.2.3). The improvement in the balance of trade has equally favored Cameroon's balance of payment. At the level of job creation and investment in Cameroon under AGOA, these two economic aspects were very inadequate or almost invisible.²¹

4.1.3. Cameroon's Reaction to its exclusion from AGOA.

It is important to recall that, as from 1st January 2020, Cameroon was no longer a member of AGOA. As a reminder, the suspension was announced in October 2019 by the then-U.S. President Donald Trump, who blamed Cameroon of persistent gross violations of internationally recognized human rights. According to the Government of Cameroon, the United States did not have enough information about the actual situation in the NorthWest and SouthWest Regions of Cameroon.²² In November that same year, the Cameroon Minister of Communication, Rene Emmanuel Sadi stated that:

The Cameroonian Government acknowledges that as Cameroon's eligibility for AGOA was a sovereign decision of the U.S. Government, the decisions to cut the benefits of this vehicle to Cameroon also remains an act of sovereignty that no one can oppose. However, we do not agree with the reasons put forward by the U.S. Government to explain or justify the decision.²³

According to the Finance Minister of Cameroon, Alamine Ousmane Mey, AGOA was a mutual beneficial trade program to both Cameroon and the United States. This is because; statistics from the U.S. Department of Commerce showed that, Cameroon's withdrawal from AGOA has been bearable to the Country. The table below shows export statistics of Cameroon to the United States since its suspension.

Table 16: Cameroon's Export to the United States outside AGOA, 2020-2023 (figures in thousands of USD)

Sector	2020	2021	2022
Energy-related products	368,906	160,689	-

²⁰ Nzadiba, "Les Enjeux de...", p. 108.

²¹ Interview with Olivier Dimala, about 45 years, Economist/President of AGOA Resource Center, Douala, 18 July 2022.

²² Jeuneafrique Economie, « Cameroun : Yaoundé dénonce sa suspension de l'AGOA par Washington », 2019.

²³ B. R. Mbodiam, "Cameroon Wants to Rejoin AGOA, 3 Years after its Suspension" in *Business in Cameroon*, 2023.

Agricultural products	40,232	35,580	35,529
Minerals and metals	21,324	241	530
Forest Products	20,535	25,621	39,088
Chemical products	13,541	16,755	13,954
Miscellaneous manufactures	1,809	2,284	6,806
Electric products	1,645	2,170	2,877
Special provisions	1,725	4,092	3,740
Machinery	388	342	638
Textile and apparel	202	294	280
Transportation equipment	118	459	250
Footwear	32	147	156
All Sectors	470,456	248,674	103,847

Source: The United States Department of Commerce, “Bilateral Trade by Sector: United States- Cameroon”.

From the table above, it is evident that exports from Cameroon to the United States outside AGOA increased in some sectors, while other sectors recorded a decrease. In 2019, Cameroon exported to the United States, energy-related products worth 206,281,000 USD and barely 8,069,000 USD was exported under AGOA. Even though suspended from AGOA, Cameroon’s exportation of energy-related products to the U.S. increased to 368,906,000 USD in 2020 and fell to 160,689,000 in 2021. Chemical products increased from 9,742,000 USD in 2019 to 13,541 00 USD and 16,755,000 USD in 2020 and 2021 respectively. Similar increases were recorded in other sectors such as the agricultural sector. Other sectors witnessed decreases such as the forest, textile and apparel, and footwear sectors. For instance, textile and apparel products dropped from 590,000 USD in 2019 to 202,000 USD and 280,000 USD in 2020 and 2022 respectively.

This implies that, out of AGOA, Cameroon’s export to the United States has been low in many sectors like textile and apparel, whereas export has been bearable in other sectors like the energy-related sector. Notwithstanding the fact that export to the United States has been bearable to Cameroon outside AGOA, Cameroon has been working to address the reason why

she was suspended from AGOA. According to the former Cameroon Minister of Finance, Alamine Ousmane Mey, the International Monetary Fund's recent classification of Cameroon as being at risk of debt distress in May 2023 at Washington, was very vital on Cameroon's debt service courage. That is why Ousmane Mey stated that "We are working to address, in a very transparent and open manner, all the relevant issues that have been raised".²⁴ This referred to talks with U.S. Officials to rejoin AGOA.

4.2. Difficulties and Challenges of AGOA

Despite the enormous advantages and impact of AGOA on the economy of Cameroon and those of SSA countries, this trade program has been hindered to effectively achieve its aims because of certain setbacks. It is evident that amongst all the unilateral U.S. Preference Trade Agreements (PTAs)²⁵, it is only AGOA that provides more liberal access to U.S. market with approximately 1,800 tariff lines added to the 4,800 duty-free products under the GSP program for AGOA eligible SSA countries including the exportation of textile and apparel products to the U.S. with free quotas. As outlined by Article XXIV of the Generalised Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT)²⁶, AGOA is not a Regional Trade Agreement (RTA) but it is non-generalised and non-reciprocal in terms of preferential treatment between developing countries unlike other preferential trade arrangements of the world. It is not also justified by the Enabling Clause of the World Trade Organisation (WTO) legal system as a generalised preferential scheme. The main challenges faced by AGOA are at the level of eligibility criteria (admission) and stability. Nevertheless, there also exist some less alarming problems like export capacity.²⁷

4.2.1. Problems related to eligibility criteria and admission

Even though the goals of AGOA were generally positive, the program however faced criticisms especially at the admission level (Eligibility Criteria). Many intellectuals and economic analysts based their criticism on the fact that AGOA is geographically limited only

²⁴ B. R. Mbodiam, "Cameroon Wants to Rejoin AGOA, 3 Years after its Suspension" in *Business in Cameroon*, 2023.

²⁵ Preferential Trade Agreements (PTAs) are treaties that remove barriers to trade and set rules for international commerce between two countries or among a small group of countries. As of August 2016, the United States has established 14 PTAs with 20 of its trading partners. For more information on PTAs read "How Preferential Trade Agreements Affect the U.S. Economy", a report published the U.S. Congressional Budget Office, September 29, 2016. Or visit <https://www.cbo.gov/publication/51924>.

²⁶ GATT is a legal agreement (Multilateral Treaty signed 30 October 1947) between many countries whose main aim is to promote international trade by deducting or terminating trade barriers such as tariffs and quotas with the slogan "Substantial of tariffs and other trade barriers and the elimination of preferences on a reciprocal and mutually advantageous basis." For more information on GATT.

²⁷ Interview with Olivier Dimala, about 45 years, Economist/President of AGOA Resource Center, Douala, 18 July 2022.

to SSA countries and this has caused the number of beneficiary countries to be as low as forty-nine (49). Apart from the geographical problem, many SSA countries find difficulties in making continual progress towards meeting the conditions set forth by the U.S. president in the AGOA legislation and in Section 104(a) of the Trade Act of 1974.²⁸ The European Union (EU) claimed in the WTO trade policy review of the United States in 2004 that “The eligibility to AGOA is not only dependent on objective criteria related to the development status of individual countries.” It is in due effect to this that many beneficiary countries have been terminated and other re-instated within the few years of AGOA’s existence.²⁹ An important example is the case of Cameroon whereby the U.S. President, Donald Trump declared in 2019 that:

I am providing notice of my intent to terminate the designation of the Republic of Cameroon as a beneficiary Sub-Saharan African country under the African Growth and Opportunity Act, I am taking this step because I have determined that the government of Cameroon currently engages in gross violations of internationally recognised human rights, contravening the eligibility requirements of section 104 of the AGOA. Despite intensive engagement between the United States and the Government of Cameroon, Cameroon has failed to address concerns regarding persistent human rights violations being committed by Cameroonian security forces. These violations include extrajudicial killings, arbitrary and unlawful detention, and torture. Accordingly, I intend to terminate the designation of Cameroon as a beneficiary Sub-Saharan African country under AGOA as of January 1, 2020....³⁰

The intentions of Trump became manifested in January 2020 as Cameroon was suspended as a beneficiary SSA country under AGOA. Another instance of admission as a problem under AGOA is seen with the case of Burundi 2016 when the U.S. president Barrack Obama declared that:

... I have determined that the Government of Burundi has not established or is not making continual progress towards establishing the rule of law and political pluralism, as required by the AGOA eligibility requirements.... In particular, the continuing crackdown on opposition members, which has included assassinations, extra-judicial killings, arbitrary arrests, and torture, have worsen significantly during the election campaign that returned president Nkurunziza to power earlier this year. In addition, the Government of Burundi has blocked opposing parties from holding organisational meetings and campaigning throughout the electoral process. Police and armed youth militias with links to the ruling party have intimidated the opposition, contributing to nearly 200,000 refugees fleeing the country since April 2015. Accordingly, I intend to terminate the designation of Burundi as a beneficiary Sub-Saharan African country under AGOA as of January 1, 2016.³¹

Unlike the EU’s non-reciprocal PTAs towards African countries that is governed by the international law, changes cannot take place uniquely by the EU without involving other parties,

²⁸ Akiko, “Current Issues on...”, p. 3.

²⁹ See Appendix 1

³⁰ T. Azohnwi, “Cameroon-Anglophone Crisis: Donald Trump To Terminate Trade Ties With Cameroon Over Perceived Human Rights Violations”, in *Cameroon-info.net*, October 2019, www.cameroon-info.net/article/cameroon-anglophone-crisis, Consulted on Tuesday 9 August 2022 at 3:10 pm.

³¹ The United States Trade Representative (USTR 2016b).

AGOA is not governed under the international law and thus the U.S. government can take decisions which cannot be counter-argued by SSA countries.³² The table below shows the instability of AGOA eligibility.

Table 17: Disqualification of AGOA Eligible countries

Year	Country	Reason for exclusion from the eligible list
2004	Central African Republic	Following a coup, January
	Eritrea	For human right abuses, January
2005	Ivory Coast	Due to political unrest and armed conflict, January
2006	Mauritania	Following a coup, January
2009	Mauritania	Following a coup, January
2010	Guinea	Following a coup, January
	Madagascar	Following a coup, January
	Niger	Due to concerns with rule of law, January
2011	DRC	For human right abuses, January
2013	Mali	Following a coup, January
	Guinea-Bissau	Following a coup, January
2015	Gambia	For human right abuses, January
	South Sudan	Due to political violence and armed conflict, January
	Swaziland	For failure to recognised internationally recognised labour rights, January
2016	Burundi	Due to concerns with human rights, governance, and rule of law, January
2017	Seychelles	Graduated due to gaining developed country status, January
2020	Cameroon	Due to human rights violations, January

Source: Realised by the author with information from the official website of AGOA www.agoa.info, Consulted on Tuesday 9 august 2022 at 3:25 pm.

³² The United States Trade Representative (USTR 2016b).

Between 2000 and 2020, sixteen countries have been eliminated from AGOA because of one reason or the other.³³ Nonetheless, some have been reinstated again. This implies that if Cameroon meets up to eligibility requirements, she could be reinstated once again. It is important for us to note that Mauritania was excluded from AGOA eligible list in January 2006 following a coup, and was restored in June the following year. Her eligibility was terminated once more in January, 2009 following a coup and restored again in December the same year. The table above has been represented in the map below for a better comprehension.

Map 1: AGOA Eligibility Status as of 2021. (Cameroon currently suspended since January 1, 2020)



SOURCE: ago info.

³³ Interview with Witney Schneidman, about 65 years, U.S. Senior International Advisor for Africa, USA, 3 August 2022.

4.2.2. The problem of instability

Another challenge faced by AGOA is that of legal instability. The fact that AGOA was enacted under the U.S. Federal Law implies that the scheme can easily be revised at any moment, the United States has the power to amend or even terminate it and this has caused most of the beneficiary SSA countries to worry about the future of AGOA. It is in this line that Brock R. Williams tells us that, since the enactment of AGOA in 2002, it has been amended five times by the U.S. Congress, making some technical changes and renewing the trade preferences.³⁴ At the creation of AGOA, it was set to last for eight years (2008) but due to the reciprocal benefits from it, the U.S. Congress passed the AGOA Acceleration Act of 2004 which extended the program to 2015. The Act signed by President Bush on July 12, 2004 is commonly known as “AGOA III” (see chapter two 2.1.3). It was further extended in General Section 506B of the Trade Act of 1974 (19 U.S.C. 2466b) by striking “September 30, 2015” and inserting “September 30, 2025”.³⁵

According to Mentah, even though AGOA sounds like a benevolent mutuality trade agreement, it is however a sort of colonial scheme intended to economically exploit Africa given that, the profits made from the scheme are not for SSA countries.³⁶ South Africa is a good example of this colonial domination act given that, South Africa imposed anti-dumping duty on U.S. chicken, pork and beef exports in 2000 because of the risk of the bird flu infection. This caused President Obama to express his intentions of suspending duty-free treatment for all AGOA eligible agricultural products from South Africa on November 5, 2015 declaring that:

I am taking this step because South Africa continues to impose several longstanding barriers to U.S. trade... I have determined that such suspension of benefits would be more effective in promoting compliance by South Africa with the eligibility requirements listed in Section 104 of AGOA... as it would better promote continuing efforts between the United States and South Africa to resolve these outstanding issues.³⁷

This led to serious negotiations between both parties that arrived at a compromise in March 2016, as U.S. poultry imports were restored in South Africa. This gesture has been highly criticised on the grounds that, the sovereignty exercising domestic policies of SSA countries

³⁴ Brock, “African Growth and Opportunity...”, p. 1.

³⁵Authenticated U.S. Government Information, One Hundred Fourteenth Congress of the United States of America, SEC. 103. Extension of African Growth and Opportunity Act, Washington D.C., 2015, p.4.

³⁶ Tatah Mentan, “Africa in the Colonial Ages of Empire”, 2018, p. 453.

³⁷ Akiko, “Current Issues on...”, p. 17.

are influenced by U.S. threats. Kevin Lovell, the CEO of South African Poultry Association added that:

The renewal of AGOA is a perfect example of subliminal racism and colonial domination. U.S. poultry producers were stopped from dumping their chicken waste in South Africa for 17 years with anti-dumping duties that were never challenged in court or at the World Trade Organisation. Instead, by threatening AGOA's renewal, South Africa was effectively blackmailed into accepting their products, as well as reducing our food safety standards to accommodate their unwillingness to produce products compliant with South African standards.³⁸

Some observers like Michael Mann claim that the clauses of AGOA compel beneficiary SSA countries not to oppose U.S. foreign policy, taking into consideration the fact that, Africans have no right of involvement in the preparation, amendment, and extension of the act. Also, AGOA has been criticised on the basis that its sole concern is the acquisition of oil and raw materials from SSA. Andualem Sisay tells us that, SSA's exports to the United States under AGOA have increased over 500% from 8.2 billion U.S. dollars to 54 billion U.S. dollars in 2011 and about 90% of the increase was noticed on natural resources mainly oil. However, it is important to note that without AGOA oil will still be exported under the GSP, unless the GSP will also be termed as an economic exploitation scheme.

Export capacity is also another AGOA problem, this problem was faced with Cameroon as she was unable to meet the high demand under AGOA.³⁹ Also agricultural products were less competitive because of U.S. subsidies to U.S. farmers which make its local products relatively cheaper; there equally existed other non-tariff barriers like sanitary standards and time consumption that made some of the products bad because of their perishable nature; the lack of supportive environment, poor infrastructure and low quality/quantity of inputs account for this backdrop.⁴⁰ Even when SSA exports agricultural products under AGOA, they are in their unprocessed form. The AGOA policy is responsible for this challenge because it permits duty-free export of primary products and charge duties on its by-products. For instance, cocoa can be exported freely whereas its secondary products like chocolate are exported under taxes. This

³⁸ Business Report, "Poultry imports not helping South Africa", Opinion, June 17, 2016.

³⁹ Interview with Noutcha Parfait, about 46 years, Secretary General of CCIMA, Yaoundé, 28th February 2022.

⁴⁰ Archive of MINCOMMERCE, "AGOA at 10 Challenges and prospects for U.S.-Africa trade and Investment Relations" in *Africa Growth Initiative*, Brookings, July 2010, Economic Department, Brochure AGOA II, pp. 12-14.

explains why between 2005 and 2009, the U.S. import of cocoa and by-products registered 90 million U.S. dollars and chocolate accounted just 17,000 U.S. dollars equivalent to 0.019%.⁴¹

4.2.3. The Way Forward

AGOA has been successful in enhancing the exports of Cameroon in particular and those of SSA in general, but AGOA has failed to diversify exports which are one of its principal goals. In order for this aim to be achieved, the U.S. government should increase investment in agricultural sector through the New Partnership for Africa's development's Comprehensive African Agriculture Development Program (CAAD).⁴² This should be done through the granting of incentives to farmers and the creation of technical committees to oversee agricultural activities. This will go a long way to improve production and eventually exports under AGOA.⁴³ The AGOA regime should also review its eligible product coverage. This is because certain agricultural products like sugar and peanuts are not eligible under AGOA.

Unlike the EU's PTAs for Africa which is governed under the International law, AGOA is not governed under the International and limits the concerns of the eligible countries. In order for the U.S. government to include SSA in the AGOA process, the Congress could transform AGOA from a public law to a trade program where the United States and SSA would have differentiated rights. Many SSA beneficiary countries have remained worried on their statuses under AGOA because of the eligibility criteria that cause constant dismissal of SSA countries. The U.S. Congress could make SSA countries more stable under AGOA by reviewing its eligibility criteria.

Through AGOA I to AGOA IV, no provision has been made for trade assistance. Trade assistance should be accorded by AGOA to Small and Medium Size Enterprises by identifying the specific needs of firms and allocation of assistance to integration of regional trade hubs. For AGOA-related investment to be visible in SSA, the U.S. Government should extend AGOA on a longer time frame. This is because some investors are sceptical of the length of time it takes to set up investment, and if AGOA operates on a short-term, it would be impractical for such investments to take place.⁴⁴

⁴¹ Archive of MINCOMMERCE, "Improving AGOA: Toward a New Framework for U.S.-Africa Commercial Engagement" *Africa Growth Initiative*, Brookings, May 2011, Economic Department, Brochure AGOA III.

⁴² Archives of MINCOMMERCE, "AGOA at 10...", pp. 12-14.

⁴³ C. Ahiadeke et al., "Improving AGOA: Towards a New Framework for U.S.-Africa Commercial Engagement", Brookings, May 2011, p. 22.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 11.

4.3. Problems Faced by Cameroon's Trading Sector

External trade whether bilateral or multilateral has always been affected by a cross section of problems that vary from one country to the other and from one region to another. The disparity is as a result of long distances, differences in languages, distinguished import and export restrictions, cultural differences, and many others.⁴⁵ These disparities alongside other factors have been the reasons while many countries find difficulties making great gains from external trade. Here, it is necessary to analysis these problems on two aspects, that is, problems affecting the sectors of importation and exportation.

4.3.1. Problems affecting Exportation in Cameroon

As already indicated in the previous chapter (3.4), apart from the problems that hindered Cameroon from maximising exports under AGOA, there are other problems that affect general exportation in Cameroon notwithstanding the area of destination. These problems have been classified under domestic and international barriers. With that which concerns domestic hindrances, government and judicial transparency plays an important role in exportation. It includes the problem of corruption, which has been over time a cankerworm in the economy in general and in trade in particular.⁴⁶ This tie with the ideas of Muhammed Tariq who made it clear that there exist a negative relationship between corruption and trade.⁴⁷ According to the Corruption Perceptions Index of Transparency International, Cameroon was ranked as the thirty-sixth most corrupt country out of 180 in 2021.⁴⁸ Also, poor infrastructural development is another problem to exporters in Cameroon.⁴⁹

It has been relatively difficult for many businessmen to transport their goods or products smoothly to external markets. This is because of poor roads from the production centre to export destinations and it is also difficult and costly to export goods by air, and when done by water, it involves high marine risks.⁵⁰ The country's banking sector is also another problem to export capacity. There are no investment banks that grant long-term loans on low interest.

⁴⁵ Interview with Ibrahim Abdou, about 45 years, Chargé du Bureau documentaire MINCOMMERCE, Yaoundé, 04 March 2022.

⁴⁶ Interview with Peter Tifang, about 45 years, President of the Organisation of Consumer Sovereignty, Yaounde, 01 March 2022.

⁴⁷ M. Tariq, "Corruption and Trade", in *Journal of Economic Integration*, Quaid-i-Azam University, Pakistan, p. 5.

⁴⁸ Transparency International, "Corruption Perceptions Index 2021 for Cameroon", www.transparency.org, consulted on Wednesday 10 August 2022 at 11:47 am.

⁴⁹ Interview with Julius Teke Nwachan, 55 years, Exporter, Yaoundé, 19 August 2022.

⁵⁰ Interview with Ivan Koumetiou, 42 years, Exporter, Douala, 19 July 2022.

There are commercial banks that provide short-term loan on high interest and this has limited the development of export industries.⁵¹ The nature of goods exported by Cameroon is generally primary products, which have little or no value on the international market and more to that, the prices of these products are always fluctuating. At the international level, exporters face the problem of tariff and quota barriers (export duties) which hinder their capacity to export on a large scale.⁵² This is why AGOA was implemented in order to permit export by SSA without these trade duties. For a better understanding of Cameroon's trading sector and exportation challenges, the table below has been considered.

Table 18: Sectorial Exports and barriers faced by Cameroon

Leading Exports Sectors	Agriculture, forestry, fisheries, agro-processing, hard wood lumber and logs, bananas, cocoa and cotton, energy related including crude petroleum
Sectors with greatest growth potential	Agriculture, forestry, fisheries, and agro-processing including hardwood lumber and wood products, bananas, cocoa, cotton, coffee, and processed fruits and vegetables, energy-related including downstream petroleum products, manufacturing including light industrial products, minerals and metals including aluminium, services including Tourism.
Reported Domestic Barriers and Impediments	Governance including lack of government and judicial transparency. Infrastructure, including inadequate rural roads, lack of electricity, and fixed-line telecommunications network, and lack of efficient deep water-port. Labor including inadequate skilled labor necessary to diversify into more skill-intensive sectors, uncertain business environment including high cost of capital, low volume capacity and lack of global business management knowledge.
Reported International Barriers and Impediments	Non-tariff measures including standards and developed-country agriculture support programs. Tariffs including tariff peak and tariff escalation. Geographic trade-related barriers including certification necessary for direct flight to potential markets and few direct flights.

Source: USITC, "Export Opportunities and Barriers in African Growth and Opportunity Act-Eligible Countries, October 2005.

⁵¹ USTR, "African Growth and...", p. 39.

⁵² Interview with Godwin Ekema, 60 years, Exporter, Buea, 11 August 2022.

Considering the export problems highlighted in the paragraphs and table above, it is apparent that most of the problems faced by the exporting sector are local or domestic problems. Among the internal problems, a majority of them is related to the government and this implies that, trade governing institutions are lacking behind as far as external trade is concerned.

4.3.2. Problems affecting Importation in Cameroon

Importation is an important activity in the economy because, a country does not possess all the necessary materials needed for survival and even if she does, the resources cannot be able to meet up to the population. This is why it is impossible for a country to live in solitude. Because of the relevance of imports, many measures have been implemented by the government to encourage its activities. These measures include: the cancellation of Value Added Tax (VAT) on certain products, simplification of export procedures, establishment of incentives and many other gestures.⁵³ On the other hand, interviews with many importers support the fact that, there still exist many challenges faced by importers in Cameroon. A greater portion of these challenges are related to the functioning of the public sector.⁵⁴

First and foremost, the procedure involved in getting the status of an importer is not simple. There exist three main steps in this process which are; registration in the trade and furniture credit register; obtaining a merchant card; and obtaining the importer card which is accompanied by registration in the import register.⁵⁵ The centralisation of export process is also another problem. All import procedures are organised under the Single Window of Foreign Trade Operation (*Guichet Unique des Operations du Commerce Extérieur-e-Guce*). This implies that any technical fault or problem faced by the imported has to be done at the Single Window of Foreign Trade Operation, which is time and money consuming for businessmen.⁵⁶

Equally, import procedures in Cameroon are tedious with many formalities to fill. The importer has to undergo five main steps which are; the prior declaration of importation; obtaining the certificate of origin; pre-boarding control; technical formalities; and the

⁵³ Interview with Ibrahim Abdou, about 45 years, Chargé du Bureau documentaire MINCOMMERCE, 04 March 2022.

⁵⁴ Interview with Timothy Bisong Eyong, about 35 years, Importer, 11 August, 2022.

⁵⁵ *Idem*.

⁵⁶ Interview with John Ayuk Agbor, about 50 years, Trader, Buea, 12 August 2022.

domiciliation of imports.⁵⁷ Many importers suffer the problem of time wastage at the port. Goods which ought to be cleared in few days can even take up to months if care is not taken.⁵⁸

4.3.3. The Way Forward

Trade does not only involve the act of exchanging goods and services. In a broader prospect, it includes investment. When trade barriers are limited or non-wild in a country, the business environment is set to be conducive and attracts both domestic and foreign investors. That is why in order to encourage foreign investors in general and U.S. public and private investors to be engaged in business activities in Cameroon without taxation problems, the government of Cameroon revised the Financial Law, particularly the tax code in 2007 with aims of further improvements to the investment climate.⁵⁹ Given the fact that most investment projects are realised through the construction of infrastructures, it has always been necessary for importation to realise the construction of these structures. A tough import system has always acted as delay to the importation of the necessary materials and this has hindered investment. Thus, the public sector should keep on revising trade codes (taxes), purposely to ease importation processes for this will go a long way to encourage investors in Cameroon.⁶⁰ Also, increase in importation creates certain job opportunities to those involved in the process and the probability of these jobs to increase is inversely related to the taxation system.

Exportation has a direct relationship with employment. This is to say that when exportation increases, there is increase in employment opportunities in the exporting sectors. In order for the government of Cameroon to witness an increase in job opportunities in the trading sector, it is necessary to consider solving problems relating to exportation in the country. The Government should strive to implement transparency in the judicial sector, for this will ease both public and private sectors exportation. Attention should also be given to the betterment of farm roads, since most exports are agricultural and forest products, and these products must be transported to the port for shipment. Emphasis should be laid on professional and vocational training for farmers or producers. They should be assisted with subsidies and incentives for this will reduce their cost of production and increase output. Measures should be taken to promote export activities through the organisation of workshops and conferences to educate and support

⁵⁷ Interview with Peter Tifang, about 45 years, President of the Organisation of Consumer Sovereignty, Yaounde, 01 March 2022.

⁵⁸ Interview with Paul Fotso, about 50, Trader, Yaoundé, 20 August 2022.

⁵⁹ USTR, "2018 Biennial Report on...", p. 25.

⁶⁰ Interview with Samuel Ngu, about 57 years, Trader, Bamenda, 25 August 2022.

exporters.⁶¹ When all these measures are put in practice, the total value of exports will increase via increase in production which implies the demand for work force and thus employment. Equally, AGOA was able to increase Cameroon's exports and BOT, Cameroon should seek for many trade programs that will go a long way to bring about economic growth through huge trade surpluses since the surpluses achieved under AGOA were minimal and unable to sustain economic growth.

Conclusion

It was necessary in this chapter to make an evaluation or assessment of AGOA on the economy of Cameroon and on SSA in general. In SSA AGOA has been the corner stone of trade relations with the USA as the program caused over a double increase in total exports. Also, many SSA countries developed new sectors like apparel and textile which have led to over hundreds of thousands of job opportunities. Despite these successes, the framework of AGOA is also a cankerworm to the full utilization of the trade program. In Cameroon, AGOA was able to increase exports which led to many years of favorable trade balances. The rate of AGOA-related investment was low because of the problems discussed in the preceding chapter (see chapter 3.4). AGOA was unable to diversify the exports of Cameroon from energy-related products to other products and this has been the same with SSA. Equally, many problems (domestic and foreign) have been affecting trade in Cameroon but the trading sector could be rescued through the implementation of the recommendations made.

⁶¹ Interview with Lawrence Tifang, about 62 years, Trader, Bamenda, 24 August 2022.

GENERAL CONCLUSION

In a general manner, this present study entitled “Trade Relations between Cameroon and the United States during the African Growth and Opportunity Act Regime, 2000-2019” aimed at evaluating the participation of Cameroon under the AGOA regime. It permitted the investigation of the reasons why Cameroon did not fully utilize the potentials related to this program, given the fact that her utilization ratio was barely about 19%. The study also allowed findings on the impact of AGOA on the Cameroonian society in the domains of export enhancement, export diversification, AGOA related investment, job creativity and trade balance.

To arrive at the evaluation and investigation, we carried out a qualitative study, whereby, resource persons were interviewed. The information got permitted us to arrive at a conclusion. After independence, Cameroon signed bilateral agreements with the United States. Cameroon has a trade policy which aims at promoting foreign trade through the special institutions put in place to supervise both domestic and foreign trade. This accounts for one of the reasons that influenced Cameroon to signed bilateral agreements with the United States in order to achieve the goals of its foreign trade policy. These relations were established based on a cross section of reasons which run from political, through economic and socio-cultural. This relationship has been mutually beneficial through cooperation in the domains of security, health, transport, infrastructure, education, just to name a few. Whatsoever, trade relations between both parties were not encouraging despite the signing of a Bilateral Investment treaty in 1986. This was one of the reasons that inspired the United States Congress to bring up a trade program with more liberal trade relations under the banner of AGOA.

After four decades of their establishment, the manifestation of the relations between SSA and the USA were dominantly political and diplomatic, and the USA had realized that SSA

represented just about one percent of total U.S. imports. In order to promote trade between both actors, AGOA was launched by the U.S. Congress in 2000 and this unilateral trade program gave the opportunity for SSA countries to access U.S. markets freely with certain eligible products. The eligibility criteria put in place by the U.S. Congress permitted the U.S. president to designate or admit SSA countries into AGOA. Many SSA countries including Cameroon were admitted following different dates. After two decades of AGOA on the move, SSA in general witnessed over eighty percent increase in exports to the U.S.A, there was a rise in employment initiated by AGOA especially in countries that developed new sectors like the apparel and textile sector, and many beneficiary countries already made great economic achievements from this program unlike Cameroon who was lacking behind and did not achieve something big. The program is a mutual beneficial program as both parties stand to achieve under AGOA. The beneficiary countries on one hand benefit from increased exports, product diversification, trade surpluses, job opportunities, and regional integration. The United States on the other hand, uses AGOA to; obtain minerals and raw materials from Africa, achieve foreign policy objectives, and eliminate trade barriers against the U.S.

Before Cameroon started exporting under AGOA in 2001, energy-related products constituted her prominent exports to the United States. In order to determine the impact of AGOA on Cameroon's exports and BOT, it was necessary for a through back to be done on trade before 2001. This gave provisions that exports increased from 184.3 million USD in 2000 to 614 million USD in 2008 and BOT increased from 95.7 million USD to 489 million USD in the same years respectively. AGOA-related investment in Cameroon was very low as compared to other countries. The investment was at the level of the AGOA Resource Center and the technical assistance to some exporting companies like BEUTEC and NWCA. This weak investment ratio was because of the un-conducive business environment in Cameroon which sacred away AGOA-related investors. Also, the government of Cameroon did not put in place a NAS and did not give assistance to boost the export capacity of exporters. The AGOA Law and its criteria also influenced the poor participation of Cameroon under AGOA because of eligibility status of products and sanitary measures.

With that which concerned the diversification of exports, AGOA failed in diversifying Cameroon's exports from energy-related products to other sectors. About 89% of the total products exported each year under AGOA were made up of energy-related products. In SSA AGOA has increased export and job opportunities have been enable through the creation of



specific companies in the apparel and textile sectors in charged in exportation under AGOA. Regional integration was fostered through the ROO which permits a country to acquire raw materials from another country to produce eligible products. Many challenges are faced by Cameroon's trading sector by both importers and exporters. These challenges to a greater extent are caused by the government. AGOA on its part suffers from eligibility and admission criteria and the problem of instability.

The results of the different analyses demonstrate that Cameroon's foreign trade policy has shaped trade relations with the United States through the signing of trade agreements that are negotiated through Cameroon's national institutions for the promotion of foreign trade. Also, the policy has led to the signing of many decrees and laws which aim at protecting domestic industries. AGOA was very influential in the enhancement of trade relations between the United States and Cameroon. As such, the program was a mutual beneficial trade program through the opportunities it provided to its beneficiary countries and the advantages that the United States stands to benefit from the program. AGOA was able to increase Cameroon's exports to the United States from 2000 to 2019, also, the increase in exports led to a favourable balance of trade for Cameroon which helped to improve Cameroon's balance of payment. Cameroon was greatly responsible for not maximizing AGOA opportunities because of the laxity of the government.

Product diversification under AGOA was not achieved in Cameroon and this keeps the floor open for other scholarly research on the reasons for this failure. Given the fact that this present study is limited to Cameroon, the field remains open for further research which could be cited on the following aspects; the impact of AGOA on the CEMAC sub region, the finding of reasons why AGOA has not been able to diversify the exports of SSA since 2000, reasons why despite the ratification of treaties on many intellectual property organizations by Cameroon, her business environment has not been conducive for investment.

APPENDIXES

Appendix 1: Research Testimonials

UNIVERSITE DE YAOUNDE I ***** FACULTE DES ARTS, LETTRES ET SCIENCES HUMAINES ***** DEPARTEMENT DE HISTOIRE		UNIVERSITY OF YAOUNDE I ***** FACULTY OF ARTS, LETTERS AND SOCIAL SCIENCES ***** DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY
<h3><u>ATTESTATION DE RECHERCHE</u></h3>		
<p>Je soussigné, Professeur BOKAGNE BETOBO EDOUARD, chef de Département d'histoire de la Faculté des Arts, Lettres et Sciences Humaines de l'Université de Yaoundé I, atteste que l'étudiant AZONG Emmanuel TEBEI matricule 17E315 est inscrit en Master II dans le dit département, option Histoire des Relations Internationales. Elle mène, sous la direction du Pr WILLIBROAD DZE-NGWA (Maitre de Conférences), une recherche universitaire sur le thème : « Trade Relations between Cameroon and USA under the AGOA Regime (2000-2019) ».</p>		
<p>Nous le recommandons aux responsables des administrations, des centres de documentations, d'archives et toutes autres institutions nationales ou internationales, en vue de lui faciliter la recherche.</p>		
<p>En foi de quoi, la présente autorisation lui est délivrée pour servir et valoir ce que de droit.</p>		
Fait à Yaoundé le 10 DEC 2021		
 <i>Betobo Edouard</i> Maître de Conférences		

AZONG Emmanuel
 072 08 94 37
 moncler7@gmail.com

Yaoundé le 21 Février 2022



A Monsieur le Président de la
 Chambre de Commerce

Objet
Demande de l'autorisation pour
la consultation des documents

Monsieur,

J'ai l'honneur de venir auprès de votre haute bienveillance étant étudiant de Master II en Histoire des Relations Internationales de l'Université de Yaoundé I, solliciter l'autorisation pour consulter les archives dans la Chambre de Commerce qui m'aideront à réaliser une recherche scientifique menée sur le sujet « Trade Relations between Cameroon and USA under the AGOA Regime (2000-2019). Attaché à cette demande:

Une photocopie de mon Attestation de Recherche
 Une photocopie de ma carte Nationale d'identité

Tout en espérant que ma demande connaitre un avis favorable, veuillez agréer Monsieur le Président l'expression renouvelée de ma parfaite considération.

AZONG Emmanuel

AZONG Emmanuel
 672 089 437
 monjunior7@gmail.com

Yaoundé le 17 Janvier 2022

A Monsieur le Ministre du
 Commerce

Demande de l'autorisation pour
 consulter les



Monsieur,

J'ai l'honneur de venir de votre haute bienveillance étant étudiant de Master II en Histoire des Relations Internationales de l'Université de Yaoundé I, solliciter l'autorisation pour consulter les archives dans votre ministère qui m'aideront à réaliser une recherche scientifique menée sur le sujet « Trade Relations between Cameroon and USA under the AGOA Regime (200-2019) ». Attaché à cette demande :

- une photocopie de mon Attestation de Recherche
- une photocopie de ma Carte Nationale d'Identité

Tout en espérant que ma demande connaitre un avis favorable, veuillez agréer monsieur le ministre l'expression renouvelée de ma parfaite considération.

AZONG Emmanuel

Appendix 2: Interview Question Guide

REPUBLIQUE DU CAMEROUN
Paix – Travail – Patrie

 UNIVERSITE DE YAOUNDE I

 FACULTE DES ARTS, LETTRES ET
 SCIENCES HUMAINES

 DEPARTEMENT D’HISTOIRE



REPUBLIC OF CAMEROON
Peace – Work – Fatherland

 UNIVERSITY OF YAOUNDE I

 FACULTY OF ARTS, LETTERS AND
 SOCIAL SCIENCES

DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY

I am AZONG EMMANUEL, a Master’s student in the University of Yaoundé I carrying out research to know the impact of trade between Cameroon and USA under the African Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA) on the society of Cameroon, and the reasons why AGOA was not successful in Cameroon. This interview is aimed at gathering information in order to evaluate the participation of Cameroon under AGOA from 2000 to 2019 and bring solutions to related problems. This is purposely for academic and professional objectives, so be rest assured that your information will be treated objectively. This will take barely 10 minutes of your time. Thank you!

AGOA and Cameroon

1. How has AGOA improved job creation and employment opportunities in Cameroon?
2. What are the impacts of AGOA on the agricultural sector in Cameroon?
3. What are the impacts of AGOA on Cameroon’s textile and apparel industries?
4. What are the impacts of AGOA on Cameroon’s energy sector?
5. What AGOA impacts were recorded on Small and Medium Size Enterprises in Cameroon?
6. What challenges were faced by Cameroon as an AGOA beneficiary country?
7. What could be the reason behind the suspension of Cameroon from AGOA since January 2020?
8. Is AGOA beneficial to both the eligible countries and the United States or not?
9. Is it necessary for Cameroon to regain its eligibility in AGOA?

Give your opinion on the following statements

1. “In Cameroon, there is lack of government and judicial transparency; uncertain business environment including high cost of capital, long procedures of signing investment contracts, setting up of enterprises, firms, industries and companies; and high taxes on foreign investors. All these setbacks hindered related AGOA investment in Cameroon and still continue to hinder investment in other domains” **How did this affect AGOA related investment in Cameroon and what can or should be done to solve this problem?**

2. “The Complex GICATIC-Textile Company was the first Cameroonian venture to take advantage of AGOA, the foundation stone was laid by the Minister of Industries and Commercial Development Maigari Bello Bouba in negotiation with an American firm AF-AM knitting Inc headed by Hon. Clementine Tiako. This structure was to be comprised of a knitting mill, a dyeing and finishing section, a garment component producing section, a garment sewing facility, and an embroidery section. This project was estimated to cost about 2 billion FCFA and to create approximately 1000 jobs after completion Nonetheless; this investment project was never a reality as underlined by the AGOA president”. **What could be the cause of the failure of the project?**

3. “The AGOA Resource Centre was created in 2010 in Douala under the Chamber of Commerce to foster exportation of artisanal and decoration objects, textile and apparel objects and alimentary products” **What benefits have been recorded from this centre?**

4. “Those countries that published a National AGOA Strategy witnessed over 50% increase in the utilisation of AGOA opportunities” **Why did Cameroon not put in place a National AGOA Strategy?**

5. “Cameroon did not utilise up to 50% of the opportunities provided by AGOA as compared to other countries like Kenya, Lesotho and Nigeria. Cameroon’s utilisation rate of AGOA was barely about 19%.” **What could be the reason behind Cameroon’s poor participation under AGOA?**

6. What are the problems faced by Cameroon’s trading sector and AGOA?

7. From the above problems that affected Cameroon’s trade under AGOA, **what are your propositions to bring lasting solutions to these barriers so as to ameliorate Cameroon’s trade in other trade programs?**

Cameroon-U.S. Bilateral Relations

1. Why does Cameroon adhere to diplomatic relations with the United States of America?
2. What are the benefits enjoyed by Cameroon from the above relationship?
3. What disadvantages accrue to Cameroon from this relationship?

Appendix 3: The Creation and extension of AGOA (AGOA Law)

I



114TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 1891

To extend the African Growth and Opportunity Act, the Generalized System of Preferences, the preferential duty treatment program for Haiti, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

APRIL 17, 2015

Mr. RYAN of Wisconsin (for himself, Mr. TIBERI, Mr. LEVIN, Mr. RANGEL, Mr. ROYCE, Mr. ENGEL, Mr. SMITH of New Jersey, Ms. BASS, Mr. YOUNG of Indiana, and Mr. McDERMOTT) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Ways and Means

A BILL

To extend the African Growth and Opportunity Act, the Generalized System of Preferences, the preferential duty treatment program for Haiti, and for other purposes.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **TITLE I—EXTENSION OF AFRI-**
4 **CAN GROWTH AND OPPOR-**
5 **TUNITY ACT**

6 **SEC. 101. SHORT TITLE.**

7 This title may be cited as the “AGOA Extension and
8 Enhancement Act of 2015”.

1 **SEC. 103. EXTENSION OF AFRICAN GROWTH AND OPPOR-**
2 **TUNITY ACT.**

3 (a) **IN GENERAL.**—Section 506B of the Trade Act
4 of 1974 (19 U.S.C. 2466b) is amended by striking “Sep-
5 tember 30, 2015” and inserting “September 30, 2025”.

6 (b) **AFRICAN GROWTH AND OPPORTUNITY ACT.**—

7 (1) **IN GENERAL.**—Section 112(g) of the Afri-
8 can Growth and Opportunity Act (19 U.S.C.
9 3721(g)) is amended by striking “September 30,
10 2015” and inserting “September 30, 2025”.

11 (2) **EXTENSION OF REGIONAL APPAREL ARTI-**
12 **CLE PROGRAM.**—Section 112(b)(3)(A) of the African
13 Growth and Opportunity Act (19 U.S.C.
14 3721(b)(3)(A)) is amended—

15 (A) in clause (i), by striking “11 suc-
16 ceeding” and inserting “21 succeeding”; and

17 (B) in clause (ii)(II), by striking “Sep-
18 tember 30, 2015” and inserting “September 30,
19 2025”.

20 (3) **EXTENSION OF THIRD-COUNTRY FABRIC**
21 **PROGRAM.**—Section 112(c)(1) of the African Growth
22 and Opportunity Act (19 U.S.C. 3721(c)(1)) is
23 amended—

24 (A) in the paragraph heading, by striking
25 “SEPTEMBER 30, 2015” and inserting “SEP-
26 TEMBER 30, 2025”;

•HR 1891 IH

Appendix 4: Cameroon's trade profile under AGOA

Table B-2-Continued
Cameroon: U.S. exports, imports, and GSP/AGOA imports, by major commodity sectors, 1999-2003

Sector	1999	2000	1,000 dollars			Change 2002-03 Percent
			2001	2002	2003	
<i>Agricultural products</i>						
Exports	8,033	5,596	1,600	4,044	10,512	160.0
Imports	7,319	8,354	3,881	15,880	19,301	21.5
GSP/AGOA imports	424	2,646	164	8	38	359.1
<i>Forest products</i>						
Exports	970	2,281	1,369	472	429	-9.0
Imports	5,169	10,020	8,015	8,270	9,476	14.6
GSP/AGOA imports	64	71	160	168	194	15.3
<i>Chemicals and related products</i>						
Exports	1,830	8,288	6,772	7,236	11,451	58.3
Imports	7,026	3,028	2,199	3,127	5,219	66.9
GSP/AGOA imports	0	25	48	0	0	na
<i>Energy-related products</i>						
Exports	8,308	6,011	5,635	7,817	4,720	-39.6
Imports	48,906	118,415	83,031	138,811	146,746	5.7
GSP/AGOA imports	0	0	36,731	115,542	146,746	27.0
<i>Textiles and apparel</i>						
Exports	813	434	645	833	881	5.8
Imports	3,097	2,740	1,842	1,133	346	-69.5
GSP/AGOA imports	0	0	0	1	0	-100.0
<i>Footwear</i>						
Exports	104	888	635	499	386	-22.7
Imports	1,401	141	14	192	123	-35.9
GSP/AGOA imports	0	0	0	0	0	na
<i>Minerals and metals</i>						
Exports	563	1,100	3,835	4,053	4,701	16.0
Imports	724	71	201	242	233	-3.8
GSP/AGOA imports	0	9	23	5	4	-20.0
<i>Machinery</i>						
Exports	4,331	5,851	8,880	25,688	12,459	-51.5
Imports	19	202	117	295	243	-17.7
GSP/AGOA imports	7	0	0	0	0	na
<i>Transportation equipment</i>						
Exports	7,418	21,483	143,917	94,984	27,866	-70.7
Imports	69	15	18	2	33	1,515.2
GSP/AGOA imports	0	0	0	0	0	na
<i>Electronic products</i>						
Exports	2,861	5,559	6,842	6,349	11,172	76.0
Imports	1,159	968	268	1,225	3,684	200.7
GSP/AGOA imports	15	0	0	0	0	na
<i>Miscellaneous manufactures</i>						
Exports	267	276	2,878	1,563	453	-71.0
Imports	1,473	1,048	800	1,484	2,637	77.7
GSP/AGOA imports	64	52	48	79	29	-63.8
<i>Special provisions</i>						
Exports	1,226	1,197	1,046	1,733	4,312	148.8
Imports	211	815	1,240	1,395	5,280	278.4
GSP/AGOA imports	0	0	0	0	0	na
<i>All sectors</i>						
Exports	36,724	58,963	184,054	155,270	89,342	-42.5
Imports	76,573	145,820	101,627	172,057	193,319	12.4
GSP/AGOA imports	574	2,804	37,174	115,804	147,011	26.9

See footnote at end of table.

Table B-4—Continued
U.S. Imports under AGOA¹ and GSP, 2002, 2003, Jan.–June 2003, and Jan.–June 2004

Sector/Country	2002		2003		Jan.–June 2003		Jan.–June 2004	
	AGOA	GSP	AGOA	GSP	AGOA	GSP	AGOA	GSP
<i>Dollars</i>								
Minerals and metals-cont.								
Congo (ROC)	13,740	13,740	15,076	15,076	15,076	15,076	0	0
Guinea	0	0	11,628	11,628	11,628	11,628	0	0
Mali	208,000	208,000	11,269	11,269	6,274	6,274	0	0
Tanzania	105,271	105,271	9,500	9,500	0	0	0	0
Cameroon	5,405	5,405	4,324	4,324	4,324	4,324	2,247	2,247
Uganda	0	0	3,000	3,000	0	0	13,057	0
Botswana	97,778	97,778	0	0	0	0	0	0
Sierra Leone	6,006	6,006	0	0	0	0	60,567	60,567
Niger	0	0	0	0	0	0	3,249	3,249
Angola	NAE	NAE	NAE	NAE	NAE	NAE	6,198	6,198
Total	372,960,706	234,428,818	412,518,978	293,363,742	185,889,681	118,874,647	274,699,056	231,841,224
Miscellaneous manufactures								
South Africa	36,755,871	35,892,077	52,210,175	50,432,512	20,013,586	19,313,438	25,981,965	24,651,733
Mauritius	795,401	795,401	4,914,206	4,914,206	372,073	372,073	930,190	930,190
Kenya	698,272	692,590	774,185	744,154	405,477	386,247	545,601	405,629
Ghana	814,703	813,191	425,110	423,050	215,311	213,251	235,998	233,428
Madagascar	217,149	217,149	345,259	345,259	215,288	215,288	587,870	587,870
Mali	63,298	61,827	184,274	183,924	62,786	62,436	0	0
Guinea	23,700	23,700	57,490	57,490	31,860	31,860	17,439	17,439
Côte d'Ivoire	90,306	90,306	49,115	49,115	9,504	9,504	9,604	9,604
Central African Republic	191,774	191,774	43,097	43,097	0	0	NAE	NAE
Congo (DROC)	0	0	42,312	42,312	28,177	28,177	15,624	15,624
Cameroon	79,276	79,276	28,706	28,706	21,834	21,834	36,479	36,479
Senegal	49,746	49,746	26,666	22,653	12,753	10,683	4,755	4,755
Niger	15,404	15,004	25,672	23,872	23,872	23,872	13,770	13,770
Nigeria	9,834	7,462	16,486	16,486	5,943	5,943	2,900	2,900
Congo (ROC)	25,549	25,549	14,848	14,848	4,823	4,823	7,000	7,000
Tanzania	7,838	6,348	9,029	9,029	2,024	2,024	9,903	9,903
Namibia	3,953	0	7,237	7,237	7,237	7,237	12,300	12,300
Gambia	0	0	6,783	6,783	0	0	0	0
Uganda	5,759	5,759	3,820	3,820	3,820	3,820	4,644	4,644
Ethiopia	0	0	3,095	3,095	3,095	3,095	0	0
Botswana	734,987	734,987	0	0	0	0	0	0
Sierra Leone	7,810	7,810	0	0	0	0	0	0
Zambia	2,209	2,209	0	0	0	0	0	0
Seychelles	0	0	0	0	0	0	2,750	2,750
Total	40,592,839	39,712,165	59,187,565	57,371,648	21,439,463	20,715,605	28,418,792	26,946,018
Transportation								
South Africa	544,706,434	61,353,875	731,346,848	96,960,977	326,138,713	40,076,543	287,707,790	53,522,045
Nigeria	0	0	204,584	204,584	204,584	204,584	0	0
Mauritius	0	0	48,916	48,916	48,916	48,916	0	0
Côte d'Ivoire	4,303	4,303	16,016	16,016	0	0	0	0
Ethiopia	0	0	12,000	12,000	12,000	12,000	0	0
Gabon	0	0	8,047	8,047	8,047	8,047	0	0
Sierra Leone	0	0	0	0	0	0	44,667	44,667
Tanzania	0	0	0	0	0	0	6,615	6,615
Total	544,710,737	61,358,178	731,636,411	97,250,540	326,412,260	40,350,090	287,759,072	53,573,327

See footnote at end of table.

Table B-4
U.S. Imports under AGOA¹ and GSP, 2002, 2003, Jan.-June 2003, and Jan.-June 2004

Sector/Country	2002		2003		Jan.-June 2003		Jan.-June 2004	
	AGOA	GSP	AGOA	GSP	AGOA	GSP	AGOA	GSP
<i>Dollars</i>								
Agricultural products								
South Africa ..	123,722,536	47,160,024	132,655,151	29,322,997	43,190,667	8,587,384	50,769,548	12,977,404
Côte d'Ivoire ..	21,688,834	21,681,834	41,265,664	41,251,664	19,761,150	19,747,150	19,817,076	19,799,176
Malawi	35,499,271	5,583,659	36,858,262	23,411,165	8,715,457	4,624,029	19,459,529	13,020,829
Swaziland	6,779,206	6,573,302	6,995,610	6,746,023	152,166	0	122,981	0
Mozambique ..	5,713,206	5,713,206	5,384,711	5,384,711	0	0	0	0
Kenya	2,860,074	1,247,514	5,309,129	1,032,977	1,447,629	682,221	4,339,381	1,328,790
Ghana	3,368,470	3,355,642	4,695,699	4,666,569	1,815,625	1,815,625	2,710,307	2,694,467
Congo (ROC) ..	2,785,829	2,785,829	2,812,979	2,812,979	2,812,979	2,812,979	2,305,165	2,305,165
Nigeria	464,454	464,454	1,767,052	1,767,052	1,341,846	1,341,846	133,746	133,746
Mauritius	5,061,297	5,061,297	1,301,974	1,301,974	492,807	492,807	837,811	837,811
Ethiopia	1,004,377	982,656	917,767	896,473	471,925	467,275	903,850	763,570
Tanzania	811,319	300,653	474,274	215,195	344,815	97,736	564,395	101,597
Congo (DROC) ..	0	0	93,750	93,750	93,750	93,750	22,000	22,000
Madagascar ..	2,360,377	2,360,377	75,698	75,698	35,164	35,164	64,912	64,912
Guinea	9,850	9,850	63,340	63,340	34,431	34,431	4,190	4,190
Cape Verde ..	50,599	50,599	59,608	12,500	45,608	12,500	0	0
Zambia	60,328	8,678	53,140	53,140	11,000	11,000	0	0
Cameroon	8,324	8,324	38,213	38,213	8,851	8,851	7,974	6,924
Uganda	12,506	0	29,512	21,144	4,888	0	1,007,766	1,007,766
Djibouti	23,035	23,035	26,779	26,779	8,616	8,616	33,208	33,208
Senegal	50,376	50,376	26,539	21,979	13,929	9,369	38,809	38,809
Sierra Leone ..	47,826	47,826	21,549	21,549	0	0	60,855	60,855
Namibia	0	0	4,744	4,744	2,923	2,923	5,992	5,992
Botswana	38,250	38,250	0	0	0	0	0	0
Mali	15,700	15,700	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	212,436,044	103,523,085	240,931,144	119,242,615	80,806,226	40,885,656	103,209,495	55,207,211
Chemical and related products								
South Africa ..	134,334,265	130,446,977	175,347,572	166,189,264	90,314,565	86,337,427	106,561,962	96,666,384
Senegal	376,332	376,332	608,020	608,020	417,220	417,220	207,800	207,800
Swaziland	282,582	95,713	477,565	169,005	135,131	135,131	232,120	232,120
Kenya	734,224	103,555	152,919	152,919	105,382	105,382	370,136	370,136
Lesotho	226,014	226,014	73,836	73,836	42,160	42,160	91,144	91,144
Sierra Leone ..	145,232	145,232	47,620	47,620	0	0	0	0
Niger	0	0	36,445	36,445	36,445	36,445	0	0
Ethiopia	3,800	3,800	25,331	25,331	1,651	1,651	0	0
Mauritius	37,369	37,369	12,355	12,355	9,839	9,839	968	968
Ghana	1,503	1,503	4,371	4,371	0	0	0	0
Côte d'Ivoire ..	2,080	2,080	0	0	0	0	2,440	2,440
Eritrea	11,250	11,250	0	0	0	0	NAE	NAE
Madagascar ..	3,267	3,267	0	0	0	0	68,868	68,868
Mali	6,048	6,048	0	0	0	0	1,200	1,200
Malawi	0	0	0	0	0	0	750	750
Rwanda	0	0	0	0	0	0	4,164	4,164
Uganda	0	0	0	0	0	0	600	600
Total	136,163,966	131,459,140	176,786,034	167,319,166	91,062,393	87,085,255	107,542,152	97,646,574

See footnote at end of table.

Source: United States International Trade Commission (USITC)

Appendix 5: AGOA Related Investments in SSA

Table 2-5
Selected examples of recent AGOA-related investment and events, 2003 to mid-2004

Country	Examples
Cameroon	<p>"The major AGOA related investment has been in the mining sector. A U.S. firm, Geovic Ltd., has obtained a mining permit to extract nickel and cobalt in the eastern part of the country. Once this project gets underway in 2007, Geovic expects exports in the range of 8,000 tons of minerals a year. ... Of equal importance to Cameroon's overall trade ability is the new operations by two shipping companies [with direct links to New York,] which reduces costs and delivery time to the United States."¹</p> <p>"The first Cameroonian venture to take advantage of the [AGOA] provisions is about to be realized. The foundation stone of a textile industrial complex was laid in the little locality of Balevonli near Dschang in the Menoua Division.... The complex, GICATIC-Textile... represents a veritable breakthrough for Cameroon in the AGOA project. ... GICATIC-Textile comprises a knitting mill, a dyeing and finishing section, a garment component producing section, a garment sewing factory and an embroidery section. The project when completed is estimated to cost 10 billion frs and will create 36,000 jobs."²</p>
Côte d'Ivoire	A Chinese/Ivoirian joint venture has invested \$9 million in a textile factory to export under AGOA. ³
Ethiopia	<p>"Ethiopia's textile sector has benefitted from easier access to US markets under the terms of the Africa Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA), passed in the US in 2001. The government is encouraging investment in export-oriented textile plants at the Addis Industrial Village, and in 2003 gave the go-ahead to nine local investors to establish enterprises on the site."⁴</p> <p>Menbere Alemayehu is one of several women taking advantage of AGOA to export traditional woven fabrics to the United States. She has also established a partnership with an American entrepreneur, and they "now have their products in about 35 stores throughout the united states (sic)."⁵</p>
Ghana	<p>"Impact Clothing Ghana Ltd has acquired 20 acres of land within the Presidential Special Initiative (PSI) Garment Village for the construction of a garment factory. A lease agreement was signed...for the project aimed at taking advantage of the Africa Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA). ...An estimate of over three billion cedis is to be generated in export revenue over 5 years [from the Garment Village]. The [Impact Clothing] project is estimated to bring into the economy an investment capital of US\$3-4 million and also bring export revenue of US\$20 million. The company, expected to start operations from July 2004 would bring employment opportunities for over 1000 people."⁶</p> <p>Belin Textiles International, a Ghana-Mauritius partnership company established to export products to the United States under the AGOA program, opened its first factory in July 2004. The Ghanaian President added that, "another company from Mauritius had expressed the desire to invest about \$100 million in sugar production in the Northern part of Ghana."⁷</p>
Kenya	<p>AGOA has stimulated approximately \$12.8 million in FDI in Kenya.⁸</p> <p>According to government officials, Kenya is expected to start exporting coffee to the United States under AGOA. As a result of the agreement signed between Kenya and the United States, "plans were underway to give the Kenya Planters Cooperative Union the capacity to roast, grade and pack coffee for export" in order to get the higher returns associated with processed coffee.⁹</p>

See footnotes at end of table.

Source: United States International Trade Commission (USITC)

Chapter III. Central African Country Reports

CAMEROON

Export Profile

Petroleum products and hardwood lumber and logs comprise the bulk of Cameroon's exports. Other significant exports include bananas, unprocessed cocoa beans, cotton, and rubber. Aluminum is the only significant industrial export. EU markets receive the majority of the country's exports. Cameroon also exports to other sub-Saharan African countries and to China.

Cameroon's 2004 exports under AGOA and its GSP provisions were valued at \$243 million – almost all of which was oil or energy-related products – representing 74 percent of its total exports to the United States.

Economic Strengths and Potential Growth Sectors

- Greatest comparative advantages appear to be in bananas, cocoa, coffee, cotton, rubber, lumber, and other articles of wood. Most of these sectors are operating well below capacity and have potential for expansion.
- *Cocoa*: Cameroon's cocoa beans are highly valued in the international market, though output has stagnated for several decades because of lack of investment. The government recently invested \$73 million to provide technological and extension support to farmers, improve infrastructure, renew the aging plant-stock, improve pest control, and diversify plant varieties. Additional funding will support increased domestic processing of cocoa beans for export.
- *Coffee*: Potential in this area depends on improving the quality of robusta bean production and increasing the cultivation of high-quality arabica beans. There may be opportunities in certified organic and "rainforest-friendly products" that tend to command higher market prices. The key to increased coffee exports is farmers receiving prices that will provide incentives to continue to produce quality beans. There is great interest domestically in increasing exports of processed coffee products. The industry already roasts, grinds, and packages coffee, primarily for the domestic and regional markets.
- *Other Agricultural Commodities*: Bananas hold growth potential given the recent privatization of the national banana company and new investment to increase mechanization and to upgrade plantation. Other potential agricultural exports identified by domestic industry representatives include cotton, soybeans, natural rubber, mangoes, papaya, beef, lamb, pork, fresh and saltwater fish, and rattan.
- *Processed Agricultural Goods*: Processed products are particularly promising because they are less perishable and are generally subject to less restrictive SPS requirements than fresh products. The greatest potential for these products exists in developing niche markets. For example, fruit juices, including pineapple and mango, were identified as

CAMEROON

Status: AGOA eligible, including for textile and apparel benefits.

AGOA Trade and Investment: Cameroon's 2005 exports under AGOA and its GSP provisions were valued at \$101 million – almost all of which was oil or energy-related products – representing 64 percent of its total exports to the United States.

Market Economy/Economic Reform/Elimination of Trade Barriers: Cameroon is implementing macroeconomic and fiscal reforms and privatization of state-owned companies, in consultation with the World Bank and IMF. The government has published tenders for the privatization of Cameroon Airlines and Cameroon Telecommunications. Difficulties in resolving commercial disputes, particularly the enforcement of contractual rights, remain a serious obstacle to investment. American claimants are often frustrated with the slow pace of the Cameroon legal system. The government has harmonized tariffs with other members of the Economic and Monetary Community of the Central African States. Price controls are minimal and decreasing.

Political Pluralism/Rule of Law/Anti-Corruption: Cameroon is a multi-party democracy controlled by a strong presidency. Four major opposition parties are represented in the National Assembly. In October 2004, Paul Biya was re-elected as President in an election where primary opposition parties were able to field candidates. While the election had some irregularities, it was considered to represent the will of the people. In early March 2006, a working group led by Commonwealth experts started working on a project to create a fully independent electoral commission that will control the whole electoral process. The new commission should be operational before the municipal and legislative elections of June 2007. The government has taken steps to improve the public procurement system and modernize its taxation system, both of which have suffered from widespread corruption. In October 2005, the President appointed the

Source: United States International Trade Commission (USITC)

Chapter 6: Selected AGOA Strategies and Recent Development in SSA Regional Integration

enterprises.¹¹²⁰ Table 6.1 contains a list of countries that have completed national AGOA strategies, as well as the key industries and products highlighted in these plans.

Some other SSA countries' governments have released information about their AGOA strategies, which are reportedly in various stages of development. Côte d'Ivoire and Sierra Leone have both announced their AGOA strategies, but have not yet made them available online.¹¹²¹ In 2016, Uganda reported that its national AGOA response strategy was in draft form with consultations ongoing.¹¹²² Kenya is reportedly in the process of developing a second national AGOA strategy to increase countrywide awareness of the AGOA program.¹¹²³

Table 6.1 Countries that have completed national AGOA strategies in high-priority industries and products

AGOA beneficiary country	Agricultural and food processing	Textile, apparel, footwear and leather products	Jewelry and mining	Handicrafts	Other light manufacturing
Botswana	•	•	•	•	•
Burundi	•	•	•		•
Ethiopia	•	•			
Ghana	•	•	•	•	
Kenya	•	•			•
Lesotho	•	•	•	•	•
Madagascar	•	•	•	•	•
Malawi	•	•	•		
Mali	•	•	•	•	
Mauritius	•	•	•		•
Mozambique	•	•	•		•
Rwanda	•	•			•
Senegal	•	•		•	•
Tanzania	•	•		•	
Togo	•	•	•	•	
Zambia	•		•		

Source: Compiled from national AGOA strategy documents; Government of Togo, *Operational Action Plan for the Short and Medium Term Use of AGOA*, August 1, 2017; Government of Malawi, *Strategic Plan 2011–2016*, September 2011, 10.

Note: While not specifically an AGOA strategy, Malawi has a national export strategy dated 2011–16. "Other light manufacturing" includes categories such as headgear, toys, sporting goods, plastic, glass, and other ceramic products.

¹¹²⁰ AUC-UNECA-ATPC, *Guidelines on Developing a National AGOA Strategy*, June 15, 2012, 23–25, 34.

¹¹²¹ Côte d'Ivoire announced its AGOA strategy on October 30, 2017 in Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire. Sierra Leone announced the launch of its AGOA strategy on October 24, 2017 in Freetown, Sierra Leone. USAID, "Ivorian Ministry of Commerce Launches AGOA National Strategy," November 13, 2017; SLIEPA, "SLIEPA and MTI Wraps Up," November 27, 2018.

¹¹²² Republic of Uganda, Ministry of Trade, Industry and Cooperatives, "New National AGOA Strategy," accessed January 25, 2018.

¹¹²³ TRALAC, "Kenya Develops New AGOA Strategy," January 19, 2018.

Appendix 6: Cameroon Statistical Yearbooks

TABLEAU III.8.5. — ORIENTATION GEOGRAPHIQUE DES ECHANGES
UNITE: MILLIONS DE F.CFA (suite).

RUBRIQUES	1979		1980		1981		1982		1983		1984	
Gabon	4 513	9 675	5 713	12 310	11 918	6 277	2 517	7 128	9 229	8 851	7 001	
Congo	1 835	794	4 042	712	537	5 225	733	5 195	1 878	6 739	392	
R.C.A.	2 683	101	3 404	137	106	4 122	138	4 930	107	4 551	62	
Guinée Equatoriale	1 416	1 139	2 464	2 132	4 791	6 039	3 259	6 402	397	9 401	2 298	
Autres pays C.E.E.A.C. dont:												
Zaire	27	25	37	46	15	13	7	36	1	24	—	
Autres pays d'Afrique noire dont:	1 038	3 517	1 192	5 195	10 723	3 680	6 314	6 240	14 937	8 316	15 724	
Guinée (République)	434	2 706	179	4 174	9 687	235	5 410	57	13 649	62	14 874	
Nigeria	604	811	1 013	1 021	1 387	3 445	904	6 183	1 288	8 284	850	
TOTAL Amérique	50 696	24 409	84 129	31 047	46 704	136 001	34 211	94 655	42 666	54 968	58 810	
TOTAL Amérique-Nord	50 094	17 181	83 761	18 583	31 686	135 166	33 076	94 622	39 108	54 921	54 653	
Etats-Unis	50 075	15 325	83 675	17 785	24 804	135 166	29 890	94 557	37 614	54 699	49 619	
Canada	19	1 856	86	798	6 882	—	3 186	65	1 494	222	5 034	
TOTAL Amérique Latine dont:	602	7 228	368	12 464	15 018	835	1 135	33	3 558	47	4 157	
Mexique	259	6	248	—	68	156	4	—	—	—	6	
Panama	—	—	—	542	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	
Trinidad et Tobago	—	2 349	—	3 132	3 636	—	461	—	166	—	111	

Source: Documentaries of INS

TABLEAU III.12.10: COMPOSITION DES EXPORTATIONS A DESTINATION DES PRINCIPAUX PAYS CLIENTS (SUITE)

(Quantité en tonnes, bois en mètres cube ; V: valeur en million de Francs CFA)

Libellés	1999		Poids produit en 99 (%)
	Q	V	
Taiwan			
Huiles brutes de pétrole	73 507	1 036	99,04
Bois brut	1 448	10	0,91
Coton ,non cardé	337	0,5	0,05
<i>Produits retenus</i>	75 292	1 046	100,00
Total	75 322	1 046	100,00
Etats-Unis d'Amérique			
Huiles brutes de pétrole	21 775	275	95,93
Bois sciés	1 366	4,2	1,48
Latex de caoutchouc ; Balata, gutta-percha, guayule, chicle et gommes naturelles	1 418	3,8	1,32
Pâtes de Cacao	966	1,7	0,59
Café	718	0,8	0,28
Feuilles de placages	485	0,6	0,20
<i>Produits retenus</i>	26 730	286	99,80
Total	27 949	286	100,00
Chine			
Huiles brutes de pétrole	13 470	253	69,56
Bois brut	12 205	106	29,02
Bois sciés	1 293	4,6	1,28
Coton ,non cardé	387	0,5	0,14
<i>Produits retenus</i>	27 356	364	99,99
Total	27 370	364	100,00
Portugal			
Bois brut	10 088	73	72,29
Bois sciés	4 959	15	15,34
Coton ,non cardé	6 368	8,5	8,45
Café	2 873	3,4	3,32
<i>Produits retenus</i>	24 289	100	99,40
Total	24 732	101	100,00
Belgique Luxembourg			
Bois sciés	8 290	24	35,07
Bananes y compris les Plantains	2 926	22	32,42
Café	6 340	7,5	10,93
Latex de caoutchouc ,Balata, gutta-ha, guayule, chicle et gommes naturelles	1 646	5,7	8,31
Bois brut	697	4,4	6,46
Pâtes de Cacao	2 426	2,5	3,59
Coton ,non cardé	709	1,1	1,53
<i>Produits retenus</i>	23 034	68	98,31
Total	23 723	69	100,00

Source: DSCN, D.D.- MINEFI

Source: Documentaries of INS

TABLE 23.10: COMPOSITION OF EXPORTS TO MAJOR CUSTOMER COUNTRIES (CONT. AND END)

(Q: quantity in tonnes, V: value in millions of CFAF, Wood in cubic meters)

Headings	1998		1999		2000		Value of product weight in % in 2000
	Q	V	Q	V	in % in 2000	V	
China							
Crude petroleum oils			253 420	13 470	543 879	69 603	86.1
Undressed timber (logs)	198 842	15 626	163 275	12 205	820 197	9 351	11.6
Dressed timber (logs)	684	180	5 505	1 293	6 431	1 818	2.2
Retained products	119 650	15 806	363 806	26 968	621 771	80 772	99.9
Total China	122 891	18 599	364 327	26 681	621 828	80 819	100.0
United States of America							
Crude petroleum oils	110 978	6 049	274 595	21 775	107 079	9 764	50.0
Cocoa paste	1 948	654	1 680	966	3 896	4 082	20.9
Dressed timber (logs)	5 629	1 298	5 167	1 366	10 821	2 839	14.5
Crude rubber (rubber latex)	4 245	1 969	3 790	1 419	2 392	1 151	5.9
Coffee (arabica + robusta)	54	59	812	718	915	1 128	5.8
Retained products	122 513	10 029	285 115	26 245	122 783	18 964	97.1
Total USA	124 259	11 038	286 251	24 806	124 323	19 533	100.0
Belgium							
Dressed timber (logs)	20 542	6 303	28 509	8 290	36 082	10 595	37.9
Coffee (arabica + robusta)	2 325	2 389	7 519	6 340	11 195	8 152	29.2
Fresh bananas	2 854	385	22 307	2 926	24 045	3 200	11.4
Crude cotton	460	425	1 054	709	4 051	2 903	10.4
Crude rubber	9 027	3 569	5 721	1 646	3 507	1 463	5.2
Cocoa nibs	1 379	1 265	301	202	1 254	841	3.0
Wooden veneer sheets	166	129	150	124	171	130	0.5
Retained products	33 688	14 465	61 182	20 237	75 595	27 284	97.6
Total Belgium	46 145	17 923	68 806	23 794	77 548	27 945	100.0
Federal Republic of Germany							
Coffee (arabica + robusta)	6 555	7 386	9 808	10 192	6 792	6 884	35.6
Crude cotton							

Source: Documentaries of INS

CHAPITRE 12 COMMERCE EXTERIEUR

L'IMPACT DE LA DEVALUATION DU FRANC CFA

Les échanges entre le Cameroun et le reste du monde ont connu depuis 1992 une forte évolution en valeur. Ainsi le niveau des exportations est passé de 487 milliards à 1085 milliards de 1992 à 1997, soit une augmentation de plus de 120 %. Dans le même temps le niveau des importations était multiplié par 2,6 et le flux réel (en volume) des échanges n'affichait qu'une légère variation.

L'évolution croissante du commerce extérieur est consécutive aux effets mécaniques de la dévaluation du franc CFA de janvier 94.

En ce qui concerne les orientations géographiques des échanges du Cameroun, plus de 75 % des exportations sont destinées aux pays de l'Union Européenne contre seulement 9 % aux pays africains. Par ailleurs, 56 % des importations viennent des pays européens, l'Afrique fournissant 16 % des importations camerounaises.

Evolution du commerce extérieur 1992-1997
(en valeur)

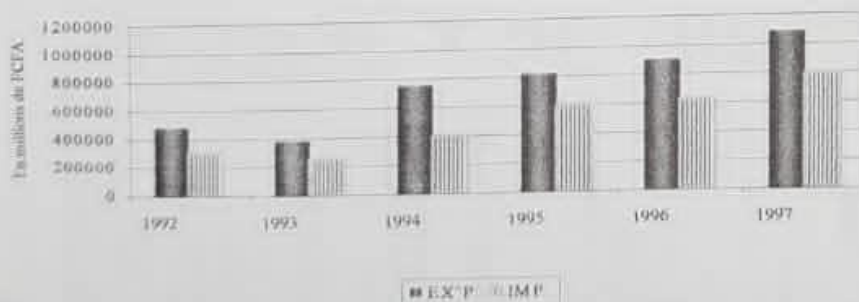


TABLE 23.03: THE FIRST EXPORT AND IMPORT ARTICLES

Years	THE FIRST 5 ARTICLES				THE FIRST 5 IMPORT ARTICLES			
	Articles	Q	V	Weight in % of total exports	Articles	Q	V	Weight in % of total imports
2000	Crude petroleum oils	5 279 545	581 021	49,3	Mineral products	2 196 130	286 125	27,2
	Wood and wooden articles	951 388	236 274	20,1	Hydrocarbons	1 490 880	245 705	23,4
	Coffee	88 870	67 307	5,7	Mech. or electric machines and appliances	31 280	142 728	13,6
	Crude cocoa nibs	77 381	51 910	4,4	Chemical industrial products	389 450	135 580	12,9
	Fresh Bananas	238 161	34 607	2,9	Transport equipment	44 697	100 348	9,5
	Overall	6 635 346	971 118	82,4	Overall	4 152 438	910 486	86,5
	Total Exports	6 996 374	1 178 597	100,0	Total Imports	3 693 704	1 052 203	100,0
	Crude petroleum oils	5 955 309	341 253	34,8	Mineral products	2 132 102	149 642	18,4
	Wood and wooden articles	994 776	234 639	23,9	Mech. or electric machines and appliances	31 919	133 366	16,4
	Crude cocoa nibs	104 402	78 121	7,9	Hydrocarbons	1 534 314	127 724	15,7
Coffee	85 671	74 769	7,6	Hydrocarbons	373 259	114 879	14,1	
Crude aluminium	71 998	53 802	5,4	Chemical industrial products	1 429 097	110 206	13,6	
Overall	7 212 156	782 584	79,7	Crude petroleum oils	5 500 691	635 819	78,2	
Total Exports	7 952 474	981 294	100,0	Overall	3 473 308	812 693	100,0	

Source: MINEFI / DC and DSNIA

Source: Documentaries of INS

Appendix 7: AGOA Highlights



1 QU'EST CE QUE L'AGOA?

L'AGOA est l'acronyme pour African Growth and Opportunity Act. Il s'agit d'une loi américaine instituant un régime de préférences commerciales qui ouvre l'accès au marché américain en franchise de douane et sans quotas, à environ 6 400 produits des pays de l'Afrique subsaharienne.

Des préférences particulières sont accordées aux vêtements et textiles en provenance des pays africains éligibles.

8 Y'A-T-IL DES CAMEROUNAIS QUI ONT DÉJÀ EXPORTÉ AUX ETATS-UNIS SOUS AGOA ?

Depuis 2000, de nombreux camerounais apportent effectivement aux Etats-Unis divers produits agricoles, artisanaux et forestiers notamment.

Avec la fin de cette guerre, une entreprise camerounaise de textiles exportait environ 200 vêtements par semaine mais vers les Etats-Unis, environ 80.000 vêtements médicaux. D'autres entreprises et associations de producteurs se sont mises à pied à cause pour l'instant des commandes en plus et plus nombreuses et régulières, dans le caser 2006.

9 QUEL EST LE ROLE DE L'ETAT DANS L'AGOA?

L'Etat assure les dépenses nécessaires au maintien de l'équilibre économique :

- le paiement de l'Etat de droit
- la suppression des obstacles au commerce et à l'investissement
- le lutte contre le corruption
- le respect du droit de travail

Soyez sûr de le mise en œuvre de AGOA. Il est un enjeu une stratégie nationale d'importation de l'AGOA avec un le développement des exportations, et ainsi le rôle de l'industrie et l'investissement.

A ce titre, le Cameroun a obtenu le US Trade Mission en représentations de affaires et toutes internationalement jadis.

10 POUR DE PLUS AMPLES INFORMATIONS SUR L'AGOA, PRENDRE CONTACT AVEC :

- le Centre des Ressources AGOA, (CIRA) à Washington
- le Ministère du Commerce, P.O. Box 1479, Yaoundé
- le Service Commercial de l'ambassade des Etats-Unis à Yaoundé
- le site internet : www.agoa.gov
- le site internet : www.agoa.gov
- le site internet : www.agoa.gov
- le site internet : www.agoa.gov



1 WHAT YOU SHOULD KNOW ABOUT AGOA


The African Growth and Opportunity Act has shown the power of free markets to improve the lives of people in both the United States and Africa. By reducing barriers to trade, this law has increased exports, created jobs, and expanded opportunity for Africans and Americans alike.

1 What is AGOA?


AGOA is the acronym for African Growth Opportunity Act. This is an American law that set up a preferential trade arrangement that provides duty free and quota free access to the American market for about 6 400 products from sub-Saharan Africa.

Special preferences are granted to clothes and textiles from eligible African countries.

Source: MINCOMMERCE



FORUM DE L'AGOA
AGOA FORUM



Dakar 18 - 20 July 2005 U.S. - Sub-Saharan Africa trade and Economic Cooperation Forum

2 **What does AGOA comprise of ?**

AGOA is the pathway for African Growth Opportunity Act. This is an American law that set up a preferential trade arrangement that provides duty free and quota free access to the American market for about 6 400 products from sub-Saharan Africa. Special preferences are granted to clothes and textiles from eligible African countries.

3 **What are the characteristics of the American market ?**

The American market is an open one with very strict standards and rules. You can have access to it by seeking information from West Africa Trade Hub (WATH), which has programmes on:

- The development of exports under AGOA;
- AGOA support services;
- The development of trading capacities;
- The publication, follow up and evaluation of information.

4 **What can one sell in America under AGOA ?**

All Cameroonian products today can have access to the American market. However, it would be better to target products for which we have competitive advantages (Cameroon will be competing with 37 other eligible countries) and ensure that there is a solid marketing potential for such products in America.

5 **Who can sell in the United States**

Any person who can satisfy the American client's demand, both in terms of quantity and quality. Also, everybody can produce and everybody can supply. To get to the American buyers, one must pass through Agents, intermediaries and the Trade Promotion Agency.

6 **How can one get information and how can one get training on ways to access the American market**

- Commercial Section of the US Embassy, P.O. Box 817, Yaounde, Tel: (237) 223 48 14, web site: www.yeusaad.com/ambassy-ger
- WATH, CP, USAID, P.O. Box 1620, Accra, Ghana, Tel: 233 21782231, www.wathinfohub.com

7 **Are there any financing mechanisms specific to AGOA ?**

There is no AGOA development fund as of now. However, AGOA recommends that all American trade and investment financing institutions should increase the volume of their loans, technical assistance and support to projects from eligible countries. A list of sources of financing is available in MINCOMMERCE, office door N° 242

8 **Have any cameroonians been able to export to the United states under AGOA ?**

In the USA, since 2000, many Cameroonians have been effectively exporting agricultural, mineral and forestry products to the United States. By the end of this year, a Cameroonian textile company with a workforce of 250 persons will export about 80 000 medical scrubs per month to the United States. Other companies and associations are also preparing to export many products to this market.

9 **What is the role of the state in the AGOA programme ?**

The state carries out the reforms necessary to maintain the country's eligibility

- Promotion of the rule of law;
- Lifting of all obstacles to trade and investment;
- Fight against corruption
- Respect of labour laws

As concerns the implementation of AGOA, the State is in the process of setting up a national strategy to optimise the diversification of exports under AGOA. The state acts as facilitator and provides support services

In this regard, Cameroon obtained the Textile YISA needed for the exportation of industrially produced apparel and textiles.

10 **For more informations on AGOA, contact :**

- The AGOA Resource Centre, CCIMA, Douala
- The Ministry of Trade, Room Number 845, 849 and 242, Yaounde
- The Commercial Section of the US Embassy
- The official web site: www.agoa.gov ; www.spsafrica.com; www.agoa.info

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5. INFORMANTS

Number	Names	Age/Years	Profession	Date and place of interview
1	Godwin Ekema	60	Exporter of apparel products	11 August 2022 Buea
2	Ibrahim Abdou	About 45	Chargé de bureau MINCOMMERCE	04 March 2022 Yaoundé
3	Ivan Koumetiou	42	Exporter of apparel products	19 July 2022 Douala
4	Jeanpierre Amougou	30	Employee BUETEC	19 July 2022 Douala
5	John Ayuk Agbor	About 50	Importer of electronics	12 August 2022 Buea

6	Julius Teke Nwachan	55	Exporter of miscellaneous manufactures	19 August 2022 Yaoundé
7	Lawrence Tifang	About 62	Trader in foot wear	24 August 2022 Bamenda
8	Olivier Dimala	About 45	Economist/President AGOA Resource Centre	18 July 2022 Douala
9	Peter Tifang	About 45	President of the Organization of Consumer Sovereignty (OCOSO)	01 March 2022 Yaoundé
10	Parfait Noutcha	46	Secretary of Cameroon CCIMA Yaoundé	28 February 2022 Yaoundé
11	Paul Fotso	About 50	Importer of mobile phones	20 August 2022 Yaoundé
12	Peter Ndikum	55	Importer of mobile phones	19 July 2022 Douala
13	Samuel Ngu	About 57	Trader in furniture	25 August 2022 Bamenda
14	Timothy Bisong Eyong	About 35	Importer of electronics	11 August 202 Buea
15	Witney Schneidman	60	Senior U.S. Advisor for Africa	03 August 2022 USA