

# Economic Degradation: The Dangers of a Depleting Economy Resulting from Rural Exodus Due to War - Case of Southwest Region of Cameroon

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**Abstract:** The rampant movement of the people of the South West Region of Cameroon to that of the French speaking regions in search of peace, security, education, greener pastures, etc. has hashed a dangerous breed of vultures that are eating the fabrics of the economic system of the region and the country in general. Rural exodus in any developing or underdeveloped country is a deterrent to the economy and a weightier venture that challenges the management and leadership skills of the power that be to make intelligent decisions for future success. In this qualitative research with a purposive sample, data were collected from 30 participants in the age range of 18-65 years old and analyzed to help safeguard the economic and financial stability of the Southwest Region of Cameroon. The result shows that peace and education are the solutions to prevent businesses from leaving or moving out of the State or Region to areas of calmness and security. There are still rampant killing and kidnapping of innocent citizens for ransom who have no power to change the country's laws. The leadership must stop playing politics and strive to maintain peace and seek solutions quickly to stabilize the economic condition of the people.

**Keywords:** Strategic Management, Strategic Leadership, APEX Thinkers, Decision Making

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## 1. Introduction

The South West Region of Cameroon has been economically vibrant for decades in spite the degree of marginalization and poor treatment meted by the power that be. Businesses have been surviving under the cruel hand of the tax system. However, for the past five years it has not been the same with the web of political dilemmas as those of the Southwest Region who happens to be those of the English-speaking State are forced to make swift decisions to leave the State in safety. The hardship and dangerous moves by those of the region in protest against their lack of freedom and decentralization caresses the old, aged wounds of maltreatment from the French rulers that has led to what is commonly known as the "Amazonians forces" causing many to run and relocate to other States in fear of their lives and those of their love ones. Rural exodus: The rampant movement of the people of the South West Region of Cameroon to that of the French speaking regions in search of peace, security, education, greener pastures, etc. has hashed a

dangerous breed of canker worms that are eating the fabrics of the economic system of the region and the country in general. Rural exodus in any developing or underdeveloped country is a deterrent to the economy and a weightier venture that challenges the management and leadership skills of the power that be to make intelligent decisions for future success. There is no more respect for God as pastors are being kidnapped, and some has reportedly joined the Amazonian separatist as contributing partners as well as benefactors to the extent of luring their members to become supporters.

### 1.1. Objectives of the Study

Societies marginalized by war and conflict should be giving hope and promising future free from terrorist and dictators. Cameroon's macroeconomic performance has been mixed against the backdrop of slower economic activity and rising security concerns. The objective of this study is to safeguard the economic and financial stability of the Southwest Region of Cameroon during such a period of economic instability.

## 1.2. Research Questions

*RQ1:* How has this war crisis affected your family, loved ones, and businesses?

*RQ2:* What do you think the educational standard of those affected by war will be after so many years of no schooling?

*RQ3:* Why has the government representatives and the Ambazonian fighters or separatist not come to a compromise to stop the war and killing of innocent citizens?

*RQ4:* Would you advise others to leave the English Region due to war?

*RQ5:* Will you return to the English Regions after the war with your businesses?

## 2. Literature Review

It is common knowledge that warfare always damages the environment. Reuveny et al. [8] summarized that warfare significantly affects the environment, but the signs and sizes of these effects depend on the environmental attribute (whether the fighting is at home or abroad) and development (whether the fighting country is developed or less developed). The Syrian Civil War forced more than five million of Syrians into asylum in neighboring countries, there were loss of relatives due to conflict, experiencing injury witnessing explosions, experiencing kidnappings and threats to relatives by conflict parties, experience of change in family economic status with poverty skyrocket (Tabur et al., [10]. Analyzing the effect of military expenditure on economic growth in the US and the empirical account of the Korean War, the Vietnam War, and the Wars in the Middle East, Lee [6] explained that it was hard to expect a positive economic outcome from military spending during this time. Irrespective of the nature of war, the economy of the countries involve will be affected negatively. Analyzing trade war on investment, Guest [3] demonstrated that economic uncertainty will likely have a cascading effect on private capital markets, including venture capital. An important economic consequence of disease or injury at the microeconomic level of households, firms and government is that, through its impact on functioning during war, individuals are unable to perform their usual day-to-day activities.



**Figure 1.** Cameroon's Anglophone Crisis at the Crossroads.



**Figure 2.** People moving out of the State on foot in search of safety, peace, food, etc.



**Figure 3.** Kids and students out of school for years as classrooms are destroyed and burned.



**Figure 4.** Properties destroyed and burned due to the crisis.

According to the International Monetary Fund [5], Adrain posed that a prolonged period of dislocation in financial markets could trigger distress among financial institutions, which, in turn, could lead to a credit crunch for non-financial borrowers, further exacerbating the economic downturn. U.S. Ambassador to Cameroon has criticized Cameroon's actions and expressed his concerns about the government's use of disproportionate force. The increased tempo of government repression is fueling secessionist sentiment leading to instability in the country (United States. Congress et al., [12]. There has been too much blood shared stemming from the frustration of Anglophones teachers and lawyers to the closing down of schools and torturing of citizens from the English-speaking Regions (Southwest and Northwest). Here has been kidnapping to



whisking people in demand for ransom to killing. The Southwest Region of Cameroon has been suffering from financial draining due to people moving to other State in search of peace. School children killed, government officials killed, hospitals burned, prisons invaded, and prisoners set free to join the Amazonians forces under duress. Wars and civil wars as shown below helped to cripple the country economically. Except the power that be in the Republic of Cameroon will put a stop to the crises on the anglophone regions or the Amazonian crises the country will suffer from economic hardship as unemployment rate has skyrocketed. As of 2017, Caparos et al. [1] noted that the number of wars and ongoing political and religious conflicts is dramatically high around the world. There are high tensions in Cameroon, Burundi, Nigeria, Mali, Central African Republic, The Democratic Republic of Congo, Iraq, Libya, Mali, Nigeria, etc.



**Figure 5.** Notable Wars and Conflicts in Africa: Query Results on Word Frequency.

The cost of governance is making it difficult for governments to implement development plans and projects. Mismanagement and waste appear to be the order of day as high recurrent expenditure, corruption, budget deficit. African leaders can succeed if they embrace ethical rebirth, the rule of law and constitutionalism, international best practice in management of resources and good governance, among other remedial steps (Igbokwe-Ibeto, [4]. For over four years there has been no school in the English-speaking Cameroon had not been going to school due to the war. The educational system is dropping as schools are being burned, people are relocating, those that cannot afford to relocate stay indoors due to fear of being killed. War had always affected many African countries by increasing the illiteracy rate.

Studying the conflict-affected children in Burundi due to war, Tol et al. [11] evaluated the effectiveness of a school-based intervention aimed at reducing symptoms of post-traumatic stress disorder, depression, and anxiety (treatment aim); and improving a sense of hope and functioning (preventive aim) and uncovered that 329 children in war-affected Burundi (aged 8 to 17) were highly affected by the stressor leading to poor mental health conditions. Detailed pre-intervention assessments seem crucial to identify who the particularly socially vulnerable children may be. The comparative analysis of the education situation prior to, during and after the conflicts in Rwanda and Burundi, Obura

and bird [7] explained the Ministry of Education was brought to a standstill. The walls of the ministry were shelled, with all windows blown out, and doors broken; furniture smashed and looted; and documents pillaged and scattered. They concluded that 80% of Rwandan children experienced death in their immediate family; 90% saw dead bodies of victims or body parts; 70% witnessed atrocities, etc.

### 3. Methodology and Research Design

#### 3.1. Participant Selection

This study is qualitative in nature. Survey monkey was used to collect data in this phenomenological research with a purposive sample. Participants were given the opportunity to participate at will.

#### 3.2. Sample Demographics

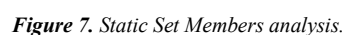
A survey was conducted with a sample population 100 participants but 30 responded. The participants were made up of male and female with the age group of 18-65 years old. The participants were people from Africa, less develop or under develop countries who had in some way experienced war, especially the people of the Southwest Region of Cameroon.



**Figure 6.** Query Results on Project Properties: Word Frequency.

Studying the archives of wars in Africa from 1967 to 1998 it suffices to state that countries like Nigeria, Uganda, Rwanda, Ethiopia and Eritrea had experiences the devastating effects of war killing, millions of people. The wars and genocides brought about the effects of violence, killing, sicknesses, no education, diseases, sex slavery, abduction, death, famine, even to the recruiting children as soldiers and forced as sex slaves, etc. According to the detailed information on 159 mutinies in Africa from 1950 to 2018, Schiel et al. [9] revealed several interesting trends and noted that most African countries have experienced mutinies. Some of which has translated into what is being experienced

Estelle [2] explained, the popular unrest that dislodged Sudanese President Omar Hassan Ahmed Bashir and Algerian President Abdelaziz Bouteflika is part of a wave of conflict engulfing northern Africa and posing grave risks to stability in the region and beyond.



are in desperate need of help for food, security, education, peace, etc. the rate illiteracy is growing, and the separatist fighters do not want any child to go to school. This will reduce the academic standard of the children in competition with their counterparts in the French regions of Cameroon,

Going through the participants responses, it is paramount to conclude that the people of the South Region of Cameroon

Africa, and the world at large. It is time for the government of Cameroon to take a bold step to solve the issues and grand peace to the people who have been crying for too long. A lot of businesspeople have moved to the French zone in fear of their lives and their businesses, families have relocated to places where children can go to school and escape from the human torture in search of safety. Taxes are going up while business are going down and the economy is dwindling. People has lost their homes, love ones, businesses, education, etc. due to the constant fighting and killing of innocent citizens who are not qualified to change the laws of the land. The Amazonian fighters are using every means possible to get the attention of the Cameroon government for years now to no avail. They have and still use means such as burning down schools, businesses, and hospitals, killing of family members, kidnapping of people for ransom, taxing individuals for personal contributions to buy guns and bullets, etc. If the situation is not resolve as quickly as possible, live will become difficult to the people who are constantly crying for help.

## 5. Recommendations

### 5.1. Recommendations for Action

- 1) The government of Cameroon must seek ways to solve and settle the fighting amicably.
- 2) The Amazonian fighters should stop kidnapping, raping, and killing the people they claim to love and protect. Killing the people of the South Region or Anglophones in general will not solve the problem and if they are granted the separation who will they govern after killing all.
- 3) The Amazonians separatist or fighters should allow their children to go to school. They are the future leaders and illiteracy, or poor education will not help them to compete with others in the future, as such they might still be govern by the French.
- 4) The government of Cameroon should stop making promises but take action to satisfy her citizens. Everyone should put their differences aside and strive for a unified success that will bless the people of the English-speaking region and land of Cameroon in general.

### 5.2. Recommendations for Future Research

Further research could be done in areas such as:

- 1) Finding the root course of the virus plaguing the region of the Southwest of Cameroon that is causing such a division and killing of people.
- 2) How potential businesses could be attracted to establish in the Southwest region and create mor employment for the people and eradicate poverty.
- 3) Do a comparative analysis on how other countries in Africa and the world has been suffering due to war and the devastating effect to their people at the current times.

## 6. Conclusion

War is bad and killing should not be tolerated irrespective of the situation. The people of the Republic of Cameroon and that of the Southwest Region has suffered for too long in the hands of the Amazonian fighters due to their disagreement with the government. Any region or country that does not have respect for education is a dying nation and poverty will soon ravage the population due to their inability to make money and succeed. The leaders of the Amazonian separatist must stop the killing, raping, kidnapping, etc. of their fighters while the leaders of the government of Cameroon dialogue to solve the problem at hand as quickly as possible to preserve lives and not take lives.

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