

WHEN ECONOMIC INTELLIGENCE IS STRUGGLING IN SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA (SSA): THE USE AND APPROPRIATION OF INFORMATION SYSTEMS IN CAMEROON'S ECONOMY

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Abstract: This paper deals with the implementation of Information Systems in the management and the functioning of enterprises in Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA). Through the case study of Cameroon, it emphasizes on the factors that impede the implementation of Economic Intelligence in Sub-Saharan Africa. The study postulates that the implementation of Economic Intelligence in Cameroon is faced with three challenges: the marginal use of ICTs by enterprises, the absence of professionals capable of using information systems for the handling of economic information and the apathy of the State. Due to these difficulties, Cameroonian enterprises and industries cannot easily fit into the scheme of competitiveness and security with the aim of ensuring their lifespan in the global market where exchanges have been profoundly altered by the influence of ICTs. Given the important role that information plays in the economy on a worldwide scale, Cameroonian businesses should renegotiate their use of ICTs while the State should implement public policies with the view of fostering the national economy to the new economy. Methodologically, this study is the result of a field research work involving about 20 Cameroonian businesses and on the Internet. The research approach is systemic and analytic.

Key Words: Economic Intelligence, ICT, Appropriation, Enterprises, Cameroon

Résumé: *Le présent article aborde la problématique de l'implémentation des systèmes d'information dans la gestion et le fonctionnement des entreprises en Afrique sub-saharienne. En se focalisant sur le cas du Cameroun, il questionne*

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les facteurs qui entravent la mise en œuvre de l'Intelligence Economique en Afrique subsaharienne. L'étude postule que l'Intelligence Economique au Cameroun est confrontée à trois défis au Cameroun: l'utilisation marginale des TIC par les entreprises, l'absence de professionnels capables d'utiliser des systèmes d'information pour le traitement de l'information économique et l'apathie de l'État. En raison de ces difficultés, les entreprises et les industries camerounaises ne peuvent pas s'arrimer aux logiques de compétitivité et de sécurité nécessaires pour garantir leur survie sur le marché mondial. Compte tenu du rôle important que joue l'information dans l'économie à l'échelle mondiale, les entreprises camerounaises devraient renégocier leur utilisation des TIC, tandis que l'État devrait mettre en œuvre des politiques publiques visant à promouvoir l'économie nationale dans la nouvelle économie. Méthodologiquement, cette étude qui se veut systémique et analytique repose sur les résultats d'enquêtes effectuées auprès d'entreprises camerounaises et aussi sur Internet. Cette enquête a impliquée une vingtaines d'entreprises appartenant à différents secteurs de la vie économique.

Mots clés : *Intelligence Economique, TIC, Appropriation, Entreprises, Cameroun*

Introduction

Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) have undoubtedly redefined the way people produce, consume and work. They have also profoundly altered the pricing and circulation of information (Greenan and L'Horty, 2000). Moreover, these technologies provide invaluable opportunities for the rapid development of emerging countries, and as paradoxical as it may seem, their impact is more likely to be felt in these countries than in their countries of origin as formulated by Chettab (2004). Damiano (2008) contends that Economic Intelligence helps businesses to be more reactive to their rivals by taking into account the improvements of technologies, markets, regulation and competition. This proves that the implementation of ICTs in economic activities is determinant in the development process of emerging countries in a context of globalization. Competition no longer consists only in the development of specific skills recognized by the local market. It henceforth integrates a relational dimension based on Economic Intelligence which has emerged as “the use of intelligence sources in the economic sector”¹ (Arenas, 2014:11). Economic Intelligence can be important for African countries faced with wars and development failures. It

¹ The next section of this paper proposes a more elaborated definition of the concept of Economic intelligence.

can contribute to their economies by “identifying key facets of the economy which relate to political outcomes and by preparing for economic disaster or reconstruction” (Herzog, 2008:310). Unfortunately, many Sub-Saharan African countries are yet to adopt and implement Economic Intelligence activities (Ibid).

Then, the question must arise now in terms of applicability and implementation of Economic Intelligence in developing countries such as Cameroon. Considering the fact that Economic Intelligence has many activities and facets, and sometimes deals with espionage and national security, this paper does not pretend to address all those aspects. Rather, it looks at Intelligence Economy exclusively from the perspective of the use of Information Systems for information management. In other words, the study intends to capture the use of Information systems by Cameroonian enterprises in order to unveil the challenges limiting the implementation of Economic Intelligence in Cameroon. To that prospect, the study relies on the following research questions: What are the trends of the use of Information and Information Systems in Cameroonian economy? What are the factors hindering the implementation of Economic Intelligence in Cameroon? To what extent does the practice of Economic Intelligence require specific modes of public policy for the support and management of electronic exchanges?

The paper does not intend to amply address all of these questions. It is only aiming at initiating a reflection on the creation of a socio-economic environment favorable to the breakthrough of Economic Intelligence in Cameroon. This environment should encompass both the State and enterprises in a dynamic partnership conducive for economic development. Through a survey of Cameroonian businesses, the paper tackles the use of ICTs in economic pursuits. In addition to field surveys involving companies and other small- and medium-sized enterprises, the data collection also gave priority to Internet. The research on the Internet has consisted in verifying the presence and visibility of Cameroonian enterprises and other businesses online. I initially made a list of 20 enterprises selected from different economic fields such as: agroindustry, microfinance, and telecommunication. These enterprises were chosen according to their importance and influence in Cameroon. This has helped in assessing the rate of representation of Cameroonian businesses on the web and collect general information on the Cameroonian economy. These two elements are indeed the key indicators that I used to analyze the challenges of Economic Intelligence in Cameroon.

Thus, through the case study of Cameroon, the study analyzes the trajectories and modalities of the implementation of Economic Intelligence in

SSA. It seeks to unveil the factors preventing local enterprises to be competitive in an economic environment characterized by the pervasiveness of technology and the superpower of information. The work then gives an overview of the Economic Intelligence in Cameroon before proposing possible solutions that could facilitate the implementation of this economic trend in that country. It starts by a conceptual framework consisting in defining Economic Intelligence. In the second part, it analyzes the constraints and forms of ICTs' ownership by Cameroonian businesses before proposing some solution to facilitate the stowing of Cameroon's economy to Economic Intelligence.

Economic Intelligence: A Definition

By definition, Economic Intelligence is globally conceived as “a set of coordinated actions for the treatment, distribution and operations of information that is useful for business.”² However, this definition proposed by the Martre's³ report is fairly simplistic regarding the degrees and areas of intervention of Economic Intelligence. The said report considers Economic Intelligence only under the prism of economic activity. It would be very simplistic to analyze Economic Intelligence solely in terms of economic activity because it involves other variables that do not necessarily depend on economic action and which are crucial for its implementation. Territorial Intelligence which refers to the control and the management of the national territory and its boundaries is one of those variables. Territorial Intelligence serves the interests of Economic Intelligence even if it depends on the political realm. Thus it would be unrealistic to speak of Competitive Intelligence in a country with porous borders and where fraud and smuggling are dominant as it is the case in Cameroon (Flipo, 2007). In this regard, It should be noticed with Masson (2001) that Economic Intelligence sounds like a call for national unity in a period characterized by an awareness of the importance of external influences on the national framework (Masson, 2001:24). It has a political significance since one of its aims is to attain security objectives in a context where the implementation of globalization and the new

² Commissariat Général du Plan, « Intelligence économique et stratégies des entreprises », Martre's Report available on-line : <http://lesrapports.ladocumentationfrancaise.fr/BRP/074000410/0000.pdf> consulté en octobre 2009.

³ From 1993 to 1994, the french government created a commission for the study of the issue of information society. The chairman of this commission was Henri Martre. At the end of its work, the commission published a final report entitled: « *Intelligence économique et stratégie des entreprises* ».

trends of the world political environment have “generated an increasing correlation between security and economic issues” (Herzog, 2008). In fact, Economic Intelligence and Territorial intelligence have a common denominator which is information.

By way of definition, information is the name of the content of our exchange with the outside world while we adjust to it (Wiener, 1952:161). It is part of a process of communication and exchange based on media. It is precisely at this level that Information Systems (IS) come into play. Information System means an organized set of human, material and immaterial resources to acquire, store and communicate information in organizations. There are two categories of information systems divided according to their purpose: information systems for operations and information systems used for management purposes. These information systems play a vital role in the process of Economic Intelligence whose main goal is to enable businesses to take appropriate decisions at the appropriate time (Vercellis, 2009:5).

As regards to Information Systems Technology, they challenge existing organizations by guiding them on new developmental trajectories (Benghozi, Flichy and D'Iribarne, 2000: 32). In the current global economic environment characterized by competition and the power of information, companies which are reluctant to implement information systems in their management policy, will not be able to bind themselves to Economic Intelligence in operation. Thus, these companies might be purely and simply blotted out from the economic scene.

Economic Intelligence was really conceptualized in the United States during the 1960s. In his book entitled *Organizational Intelligence: Knowledge and Policy in Government and Industry*, Harold Wilensky, one of the precursors of Economic Intelligence, raises the issue of "information" (knowledge) as a strategic engine for economic development. He thus opens room for a new school of thought that considers information as a strategic input for decision making. The access and control of information have become the main factors of success in the new economic organization known as "new economy" or "knowledge economy". Then, knowledge, rather than physical assets, becomes the critical resource for competitiveness (Chettab, 2004:19). Discussing the correlation between Economic Intelligence and Knowledge management, Antoine Saïd and Daniel Bretonès (2009) indicate that the “organisation’s capacity to remain efficient and competitive in a constantly changing environment rests on its ability to develop new scientific, technological and organizational information” (p.2). In the same vein, Valeriu Ivan (2013) stresses on the strategic role of Economic intelligence.

He argues that: “In an age when the supply of information has significantly increased, the power belongs to the one who, at adequate time, succeeds to collect, analyze and synthesize the fastest the data and information available in the competitive environment” (p.187). Therefore, it is no more the products or services that allow the preservation of competitiveness of companies, but rather information.

It emerges from the above development that Economic intelligence was conceptualized in the Western world that is to say in a specific sociopolitical and economic environments where access to information is facilitated by the affordability of technological tools. Those environments differ from what is observed in Sub-Saharan Africa in general and Cameroon in particular. This can explain the difficulties faced by African economies in developing activities related to Economic Intelligence. Saharan.

Economic Intelligence: a recipe almost indigestible in Cameroon

This section tries to assess the degree of involvement of ICTs in the functioning of Cameroonian enterprises in order to understand their efforts make to cope with Economic Intelligence. Survey conducted among Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (SMEs) and Small and Medium-sized Industries (SMIs) as well as from state enterprises, led to a very sobering observation. In most cases, the functioning of Cameroonian enterprises cannot facilitate the implementation of Economic Intelligence. This observation is based on a set of findings related to the use of ICTs by Cameroonian enterprises, the lack of human capital that could help those enterprises to dock to Economic Intelligence, the absence of a political will and the state of ICTs which is deplorable in this country.

An appraisal of the use of ICTs by Cameroonian enterprises

The concept of Economic Intelligence is virtually unknown within the Cameroonian context. A survey of some promoters of SMEs reveals their ignorance of Economic Intelligence. Only some officials of State corporations gave the impression of being familiar with the concept that is unfortunately confused with marketing. Investigations made it clear that most promoters of enterprises have included ICTs in their activities. From the chosen SMIs and SMEs, it appears that in most cases, two computers are available: one for the director of the enterprise and another for his secretary.

In order to evaluate the degree of ICT usage in Cameroonian enterprises and industries a statistical survey was conducted among 20 structures involved in various economic sectors (microfinance, livestock, energy, food, agriculture, telecommunications, textiles, brewing, and milling). The survey aims at identifying firstly enterprises that use computers and / or mobile phone in their activities, and secondly, those that have a website or a simple web page. The table above summarizes the results of this investigation.

TABLE 1: USE OF ICTS BY CAMEROONIAN ENTERPRISES AND INDUSTRIES

Enterprises/Industries	Sector	Hardware	Mobile phone	Website	Web page	Neither website nor webpage
Maïscam	Agriculture		*			*
Sodecoton	Agriculture	*	*			*
Socapalm	Agriculture		*	*		
Cicam	Textile industry		*			*
Pilcam	Energy	*	*		*	
Camlait	Dairy	*	*	*		
Alucam	Aluminium	*	*	*		
Camtel	Télécom- munication	*	*	*		
Brasseries du Cameroun	Brewing industry	*	*	*		
Express Union	Micro finance	*	*	*		
Crédit Mutuel	Micro finance	*	*		*	
CCA	Micro finance	*	*	*		
La Régionale	Micro finance	*	*	*		
Mufa	Micro finance	*	*			*
Mistral Plus	Joinery	*	*			*
Le Crédit du Sahel	Micro finance	*	*			*
Vitashop	Corporal aesthetic	*	*	*		
Veto Prestation Sarl	Livestock farming		*			*
Société des Moulins du Nord Cameroun (SMNC)	Flour milling					*
Solaire énergie	Solar energy	*	*			*
TOTAL	20 enter -prises and industries	15	19	09	02	07
%		75%	95%	45%	10%	35%

Internet based data collection by the author, November 2018

These data were represented in the following diagram that gives an outline of the differences that exist at the level of operating technological facilities in Cameroonian enterprises.

Fig. 1: The use of ICTs by Cameroonian enterprises and industries

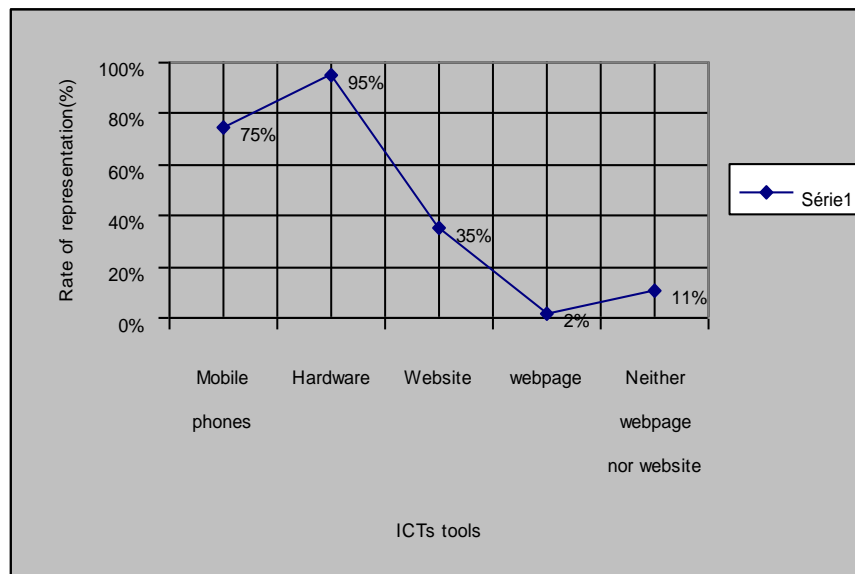


Figure realized by the author

Results of the survey

The data gathered through investigations led to five observations:

- First observation: Mobile phone, which made its appearance in Cameroon in the early 1990s⁴, occupies a vital position in business operations in Cameroon. 95% of enterprises surveyed use the mobile phone. The mobile phone of the director of a SME or SMI can afford to have a stack of information on the business in terms of customers, orders etc. Mobile phone is more and more used by enterprises to communicate with markets (customers) and even suppliers of the company. This reinforces the idea that the real information revolution in Africa concerns not Internet, but mobile phone which presence can be noticed everywhere and which intervenes in all spheres of life.⁵

- Second observation: all SMEs specialized in microfinance (transfer of funds and savings) are highly equipped in hardware. Some of them also have an intranet

⁴ Read A., Chéneau-Loquay, 2001, « Les territoires de la téléphonie mobile en Afrique », *NETCOM*, Vol.15, n°1-2.

⁵ See A., Chéneau-Loquay, 2002, « Modes d'accès et d'utilisation d'Internet en Afrique : les grandes tendances », in, *Africa e Mediterraneo, dossier Africa e il Digital Divide*, n° 41, décembre pp. 12-15.

system that allows them controlling the operations of their various agencies from a central server.

- **Third observation:** most SMEs involved in farming and agriculture (Veto service, Socaplam, Maïscam) are not really interested in hardware. In those farming enterprises, the computer intervenes neither in the management of the inventory nor in the management of the employees. On the basis of this observation, it is possible to infer that the introduction of computers in the operation of SMEs depends on the economic activities in which it is involved.

- **Fourth observation:** Very few enterprises and industries in Cameroon have a website or a simple web page. Only 35% (7 enterprises over 20) firms considered in the context of this survey have a website as shown in following table:

Table 2: Enterprises having a website

Name of the enterprise	Sector	Website link
CAMLAIT	Dairy	www.camlait.com
Les Brasseries du Cameroun	Brewing industry	www.lesbrasseriesducameroun.com
CAMTEL	Telecommunication	http://www.camtel.cm
Express union	Micro finance	www.expressunion.com
Crédit Communautaire d'Afrique (CCA)	Micro finance	www.ccabank.com
La Régionale	Micro finance	www.laregionale.org
Vitashop	Corporeal aesthetic	www.vitashop-cm.com

Synthesis by the author

As regards web pages, only 10% (2 Companies out of 20) possess one. These companies are PILCAM and CIMENCAM. By the time of this research, the website of the former was not updated. It was showing an old photo of the building of the company. Some figures related to its staff were also posted. As far as the latter company is concerned, its web page appears on the website of *Annuaire Afrique Cameroun*.

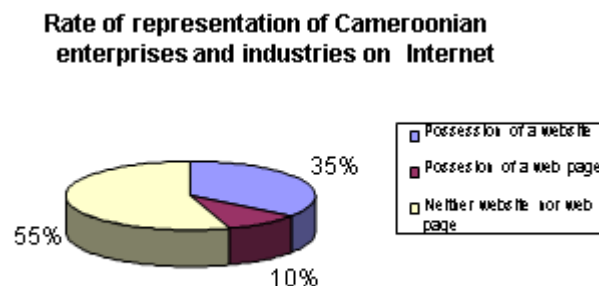
These two web pages are simply made for advertisement. This means that PILCAM and CIMENCAM are just interested in cyber marketing.

- **Fifth observation:** just 5% (1 over 20) of the enterprises studied do not use the cell phone, 25% of them (5 over 20) do not use computer and 55% (11 over 20) are not represented on the Internet.

Analysis and interpretation of data

It follows from these observations that mobile phone and hardware (computer) are the main ICTs that integrate information systems used by Cameroonian enterprises. However, these gadgets are most often used just for administrative tasks. In this vein, the computer is primarily used to keep the books and manage customers, orders and, production. It is thus evident that ICTs are not used for the collection and the control of economic information. SMEs and SMIs use ICTs essentially for the management of good production at a microeconomic level. That is why in recent years, these SMEs and SMIs hosted computer science students for their internship at the end of their academic training. During their internships, students are asked to computerize the operations of the enterprises through the creation of databases and software tailored to the company. By so doing, enterprises are more concerned about the maximization of their production capacities.

This view is reinforced by the fact that very few companies in Cameroon use the web (internet). Indeed, research conducted on Internet enables led to the conclusion the conclusion that in Cameroon, enterprises -both public and private- do not find it necessary to use the Internet. The following diagram illustrates this reality.



Realized by the author

The limited interest of enterprises to Internet in Cameroon conveys either an ignorance of benefits this tool provides or just bad faith from the entrepreneurs. This situation clearly attests the lack of "web culture" in these enterprises. Consequently, the strategic decision-making through the practice of Economic Intelligence is still far from the concerns of Cameroonian businesses.

Indeed, Economic Intelligence requires both information retrieval and its sharing through the media, the non-media and the multimedia such as Internet. At this level our comment is developed on the theory that Economic Intelligence involves communication, that is to say, the dissemination and reception of information through the media. For a business the communication generally refers to all the methods and techniques used [...] to promote the best image of its moral personality, its products and services (Adediha, 2008:15). An enterprise that does not use a medium to share information can hardly use the same medium to seek and control information. As regards precisely Internet, results of investigations conducted led to believe that in Cameroon, enterprises are not sufficiently aware of the possibilities that the Internet offers in terms of Economic Intelligence, competitive intelligence, organizational intelligence, technical intelligence, financial intelligence and political intelligence that allow the enterprise to avoid visual flying and gain competitive advantage (Hassid, Jacques-Gustave and Moinet, 1997).

Moreover, it is clear from this survey that these enterprises are still having an "archaic" use of ICTs. Mobile phones and hardware are capitalized only to manage customers, of production and for administrative tasks. This use of ICTs is considered as "archaic" since it does not allow the enterprises to enter the global marketplace and thereby the economy based on knowledge that requires a quest and control of information. It is an impediment to the takeoff of Economic Intelligence in the Cameroonian context. And the absence of specialized staff that could enable enterprises to exploit information to penetrate the market reinforces this state of affairs.

The scarcity of professional and experienced human capital

One of the factors that cripple Economic Intelligence in Cameroon takes root in the unsuitability of human resources. Cameroonian firms do not have appropriate personnel that could afford the implementation of Economic Intelligence. Several reasons may explain this.

At first glance, and as mentioned above, most of SMEs and SMIs promoters are not aware of Economic Intelligence. Such an ignorance can justify why they do not feel the need to employ professionals of Economic Intelligence related activities. This situation is reinforced by the scarcity of trained personnel. A survey was undertaken in four of the seven state universities of the country where there are faculties of economics and management: the University of Ngaoundere, the University of Yaounde II, the University of Douala and the

University of Buea. The analysis of the curricular and courses offered in these faculties, led to the conclusion that Economic Intelligence has a poor relation to academic training and research in Cameroon. It is absent from curricular programs, although very few indicated that some of their lectures mentioned the concept furtively. This is also evident in private academic institutions where Economic Intelligence is absent from the syllabus. Consequently the few specialists in Economic Intelligence to be found in Cameroon have been trained in foreign Universities. For this reason, they offer their services at prices that owners of SMEs and SMIs can hardly bear.

It thus raises a real problem of the training of human capital that may allow Cameroonian firms to catch up the train of Economic Intelligence. And this training must be done or facilitated by the state. As a matter of fact, the responsibility of the State is engaged with regard to the challenges of Economic Intelligence in Cameroon.

The absence of a political will from the State

As postulated in the introduction to this paper, it would be unrealistic to speak of Economic Intelligence without mentioning the responsibility of the State. While taking into account the experiences of developed countries such as France one can say that the State must be at the heart of the process to include enterprises in the new vision of the economy based on knowledge. The Cameroonian reality is quite different.

Indeed, the Cameroonian context is characterized by a lack of political will through the apparent resignation of the State from its missions. Reference is made here to the creation of an economic framework conducive to the emergence and prosperity of entrepreneurship. There is no "Economic Intelligence Service" in Cameroon. The State has done little about integrating its economy in the global market. The economic security of Cameroon is not guaranteed. The State, which is nevertheless an important economic player, has not undertaken the redeployment of industrial space based on territorial Economic Intelligence.

Moreover, very few initiatives are implemented to improve enterprises access to ICTs. It should be noticed that the situation of ICTs, and specifically the Internet, is not enviable in Cameroon. As in most SSA countries, Internet remains an urban phenomenon in Cameroon. It would even be an exaggeration to talk about urban phenomenon in the sense that cyber cafes⁶ which are the main

⁶ A Cyber Café is a is a type of business where computers are provided for accessing Internet, or doing other computer-related

gateway to the Internet in the cities are more often located in city centers and malls where there is a strong concentration of the population. Peripheral areas, where industrial sites are located are often deprived of Internet network. In these environment, enterprises cannot access the information through this network which is yet the most effective tool in managing and controlling information.

Implementing Economic Intelligence in Cameroon: some approaches in terms of solutions

The implementation of Economic Intelligence in Cameroon requires a redefinition of the use of ICTs by Cameroonian enterprises and the formulation of public policies for Economic Intelligence by policy makers.

Solutions in terms of managerial policies at the level of enterprises

From the outset, enterprises must be aware of challenges relating to Economic Intelligence. Business leaders must imperatively be familiarized to Economic Intelligence which is a new phenomenon in Cameroon. This awareness of business leaders must be followed by a restructuring of the enterprises both in terms of human resources and the level of the use of ICTs.

Regarding the restructuring of human resources, Cameroonian enterprises and industries must recruit people who can track down and use economic information. This restructuring of the employees will have to be accompanied by the restructuring of the functioning of the enterprise. In addition to the marketing manager who focuses mainly on sales promotion, the company must have a head of communication. For Adediha (2008) this head of communication should be a communicator which, thanks to his mastery of media and communication technologies, can think and polish the image of the enterprise, its leaders, its products and services.⁷ This communicator should be able to exploit ICTs both for the research and the diffusion of strategic information. It may use the information for lobbying through manipulation, disinformation to discredit the competitor. The "Elf affair" of the late 1990s, is a conclusive example that proves that information can be used in the strategic destabilization of an enterprise (Lucas and Tiffreau, 2001).

In the same vein, people in charge of business communication and whose mission consists in preventing the company from any form of crisis, can effectively achieve that goal through Economic Intelligence. This action, which

⁷ Read D., Adediha, 2008.

inevitably passes through the use of ICTs requires a reassessment of the operating environment of information system in enterprise. As pointed out previously the use of ICTs for economic purposes in Cameroon presents aspects that differ from realities observed in developed countries. ICTs are used not for the management of economic information but only for the production of economic goods at a microeconomic level. To be well used for Economic Intelligence, ICTs should get through its "marginal utility" to truly integrate the functioning of the enterprise.

Thus, to ensure their representativeness in the world market characterized by competition, enterprises need to work with business communicators who can appropriately make the information useful by transforming it in an economic input. . This new input must complete raw materials to make the economy more competitive. Cameroonian based enterprises enterprises need to redefine their relationship to ICTs in order to capitalize information and become competitive. This could fill some delays and facilitate the economic development of SSA as demonstrated by Cheneau-Loquay (2004) and Thioune (2003). However, these reforms would be insufficient without the contribution of the State which has an important role to play.

The share of the State

The role of the State is crucial in the effective implementation of public policies for Economic Intelligence in Cameroon. The state must create an environment adequately conducive for enterprises to implement Economic Intelligence. This will require the following measures:

- Adopt policies to ensure the country's territorial intelligence in order to protect the national economy and therefore, domestic firms and enterprises from unfair competition often imposed by the products of smuggling.
- Invest in the training of specialists in Economic Intelligence through the creation of training centers and institutes in academic institutions. This training is crucial. That is why many Western countries have created institutes and research centers for Economic Intelligence specialists. Some of those center are: The Center of research on societal intelligence created in 1960 within the University of Lund under the leadership of Stephen Dediye, Since 1976, specific education on Economic Intelligence is organized for the benefit of doctoral students from the same university. The INTELCO (*Institut d'étude et de stratégie de l'intelligence économique*) founded in France in 1991 is another perfect illustration of the role of training center in the implementation of Economic Intelligence. These few

examples demonstrate that the training of a skilled personnel qualified in Economic Intelligence is determinant for its implementation. .

- At the national level, the State must adopt a real economic policy. It should define specialized industrial areas on the basis of available resources.
- In addition to the small media centers that are already established and that do not meet the actual needs of communities in terms of communication, the State must work towards the establishment of real town centers on research and advanced technology. All the above could facilitate access to ICTs and the better use of economic information by enterprises.

Without claiming to have been comprehensive on the reforms to be undertaken both by business promoters and the State, this study has identified a few tracks which can guide the reflection about the implementation of Economic Intelligence in Cameroon. The proposals set out above are fundamental for the adaptation of enterprises and Cameroon's economy to the use of information for economic purposes.

Conclusion

Finally, while recognizing that ICTs and economic activity correlate in Cameroon, this work shows that the orientation of this correlation does not encourage the development of Economic Intelligence activities. Several obstacles prevent Economic Intelligence being implemented in Cameroon. But this should not constitute a disincentive to efforts of enterprises. The state should accompany these efforts by finding ways to adapt the national economy to the economy of knowledge, failing which Cameroonian enterprises will never resist the "diktat" of globalization. One of the innovations of globalization is the superpower of information. Then, in order to survive and be competitive in this context, Cameroonian enterprises and industries must communicate that is to say, have access to information, diffuse and control information for their positioning on local and global markets. Information has become the major input which an enterprise or industry needs to create value in a context of intensive competition. The SSA countries in general and Cameroon in particular need to integrate this new economic standards and seize the opportunity offered by ICTs to boost their economies and impose their businesses in the world market.

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