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The Institutional Logics Perspective on Public–Private Partnerships (PPPs) as Hybrids: Case Studies from West and Central Africa

THESE

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Foreword

This Ph.D. dissertation, titled "The Institutional Logics Perspective on Public–Private Partnerships (PPPs) as Hybrids: Case Studies from West and Central Africa," comprises two case studies. The first is a multiple-case study that focuses on PPPs as hybrids at an organizational field level, and the second examines the special purpose vehicle (SPV) as a hybrid organization at the organizational and individual levels. The General Introduction (Chapter I) outlines the contextual and theoretical research background, research questions addressed in the case studies, as well as the overview of methodology, findings, and contributions. It is followed by the Literature Review (Chapter II) that discusses the various definitions of PPPs and explains the theoretical framework of the institutional logics perspective and organizational responses. The chapters on the multiple-case study (Chapter III) and the single-case study (Chapter IV) discuss the methodologies, results, and implications for management research and practitioners of the two studies separately. The Conclusion (Chapter V) provides a summary of the research findings and their implications for research in management.

Abstract

This thesis is an empirical study that investigates public–private partnerships (PPPs) as an ideal type of hybrids within the transportation sector in West and Central Africa. Through the lens of institutional logics perspective, this dissertation aims to understand how to create a common logic for collaborations between public and private entities. This research is based on qualitative methodologies, including interviews and ethnographic observations. The data collected is analyzed using the qualitative software NVivo 14. Two case studies are conducted for this research, offering an in-depth examination of the common logic in PPPs as hybrids in the transportation sector within this region.

The first part of the research involves a multiple-case study consisting of 11 PPPs involving Western and non-Western private enterprises across nine countries in West and Central Africa. Based on 59 interviews, including nine exploratory interviews and 50 semi-structured interviews, this study reveals the presence of the multiple inter-institutional logics in PPP organizational field, including state, market, bureaucratic, professional, and community logics. These logics contribute to the institutional complexity of PPPs due to their conflicting interactions. This complexity is further exacerbated by a complex and uncertain environment, as well as imbalances in the core roles and capabilities between public and private partners. Consequently, these factors impede unified approaches among partners, emphasizing the importance of strategies such as public–private compromise and coopetition of private actors to establish a common logic. This study serves as a preliminary step towards understanding the institutional complexity of PPPs and creating a common logic in these hybrid organizations.

The second study delves into the special purpose vehicle (SPV) as an ideal hybrid organization within the PPP organizational field. It aims to deepen our understanding of how actors respond to intra-institutional complexity at both organizational and individual levels. This in-depth case study of an SPV, composed of a Chinese state-owned enterprise (SOE), a French private company, and the government of an African country, revealed multiple intra-institutional logics. These include corporate logics, public service- and profit-oriented logics, private shareholder value logics, and political logics, all existing within one institutional order: the SPV. This study scrutinizes the

SPV's experiences and strategies in managing competing institutional demands, individuals' relationships with the multiple intra-institutional logics, and their responses to intra-institutional complexity. The findings accentuate the fragmented and moderately centralized organizational field that the SPV and its managers navigate. SPV face intra-institutional complexity due to competing institutional logics and varied individual experiences related to these logics. The external actors attempt to manipulate the SPV by exercising control or influence through political connections or professional networks. The SPV can resist or avoid these pressures for its own survival, but it can also compromise and cooperate when goals align. By bridging these different logics, SPV managers can establish a new common logic, thereby enhancing strategic responses at the individual levels.

This research contributes to the debate on the institutional logics perspective and hybrid organizations by considering PPPs as an ideal form of hybridity. This approach integrates multiple logics at the level of the PPP organizational field and at the organizational level. Furthermore, this study enriches our understanding of organizational strategic responses to institutional complexity, underlining the importance of more in-depth empirical studies focused on multi-level analysis to comprehend these multiple logics. This research responds to the demand for a deeper comprehension of how institutional complexity is experienced at both the organizational and individual levels. It emphasizes the need for research that bridges the field level, the organizational level, and individual level of analyses in PPPs. By doing so, we can comprehensively understand how to create a common logic in the dynamics and complexities involved in these PPPs as hybrid organizations and develop effective strategies to manage them.

Keywords: Public–private partnerships (PPPs), multiple institutional logics, hybrids, institutional complexity, case study, strategic responses, West and Central Africa

Résumé

Cette recherche est une étude de terrain qui examine les partenariats public-privé (PPP) comme une forme d'hybridité dans le secteur des transports en Afrique de l'Ouest et du centre. A travers la perspective théorique des logiques institutionnelles, cette étude vise à comprendre comment créer une logique commune pour le partenariat entre des entités relevant à la fois du service public et du domaine privé. La recherche repose sur des méthodologies qualitatives, incluant des entretiens et des observations ethnographiques. L'analyse des données collectées est effectuée à l'aide du logiciel qualitatif NVivo et comprend deux études de cas détaillées pour enrichir notre compréhension de logique commune dans les PPP en tant qu'hybridité dans le secteur des transports de la région.

La première étude explore des cas multiples incluant onze cas de PPP impliquant des entreprises privées occidentales et non occidentales dans neuf pays de l'Afrique de l'Ouest et du centre. Elle repose sur 59 entretiens, répartis en 9 entretiens exploratoires et 50 entretiens semi-structurés. L'étude révèle les multiples logiques interinstitutionnelles qui interagissent dans le domaine des PPP : celle de l'État, du marché, bureaucratique, professionnelle et communautaire. Du fait de leur interactions parfois contradictoires, ces logiques engendrent une complexité institutionnelle difficile à gérer. L'environnement institutionnel des PPP se caractérise par sa complexité et son incertitude, ainsi que par des déséquilibres dans les rôles et compétences de chacun des partenaires publics et privés. Par conséquent, ces facteurs intensifient la complexité institutionnelle et entravent l'établissement d'approches unifiées, soulignant l'importance de stratégies telles que le compromis entre les secteurs public-privé et la coopétition entre acteurs privés pour établir une logique commune. Cette étude constitue une étape préliminaire vers la compréhension de la complexité institutionnelle des PPP et la création des intérêts communs au sein de ces organisations hybrides.

La deuxième étude se concentre sur un véhicule à usage spécifique (special purpose vehicle, « SPV » en anglais) comme exemple d'organisation hybride au sein du domaine des PPP. L'étude a pour objectif d'approfondir notre compréhension des réponses des acteurs face à la complexité intra-institutionnelle, tant au niveau organisationnel et qu'individuel. Au travers d'une étude de

cas approfondie d'un SPV, composé d'une entreprise d'État chinoise, d'une société privée française et du gouvernement d'un pays africain. Nous avons identifié les multiples logiques qui interagissent au sein d'une même structure : celles des services publics et de leurs objectifs de profits, celles des actionnaires privés, celles à visée politique. Cette étude a exploré les expériences et stratégies du SPV dans la gestion des demandes institutionnelles concurrentes, des relations des individus avec les multiples logiques intra-institutionnelles, et leurs réponses à la complexité intra-institutionnelle. Les résultats mettent en évidence le contexte fragmenté et modérément centralisé des PPP auxquels le SPV et ses gestionnaires sont confrontés. Cette situation est caractérisée par une complexité intra-institutionnelle accrue par des logiques contradictoires et des expériences individuelles diversifiées. Ces acteurs externes tentent de manipuler le SPV en exerçant un contrôle ou une influence via leurs connexions politiques ou réseau professionnel. Le SPV peut alors résister ou éviter ces pressions pour sa propre survie, mais il peut également opter pour le compromis et la coopération lorsque les objectifs s'alignent. En réconciliant ces différentes logiques, les gestionnaires du SPV peuvent établir une nouvelle logique commune, améliorant ainsi les réponses stratégiques au niveau individuel et organisationnel.

Notre recherche est une contribution au débat sur les logiques institutionnelles et les organisations hybrides en considérant les PPP comme une forme d'hybridité. Cette approche prend en compte les logiques multiples à la fois au niveau du champ des PPP et au niveau organisationnel d'une société de projet. En outre, notre étude apporte un éclairage significatif à la compréhension des réponses stratégiques organisationnelles face à la complexité institutionnelle. Elle souligne l'importance d'études empiriques approfondies axées sur une analyse à multi-niveaux pour créer une logique commune. Elle répond à l'appel pour une meilleure compréhension de la manière dont la complexité institutionnelle est expérimentée à la fois au niveau organisationnel et individuel. Elle met en exergue le besoin de recherches qui établissent un lien entre le niveau des partenariats public-privé, le niveau organisationnel des sociétés de projet et le niveau individuel. Ce faisant, nous pouvons améliorer notre compréhension de ce domaine afin envisager de nouvelles options en ce qui concerne la création d'une logique commune. Il s'agit, en définitive de mieux appréhender les dynamiques et la complexité de ce type de structure hybride dans un objectif de développement de stratégies efficaces de gestion.

Mots clés : Partenariats public-privé (PPP), logiques institutionnelles multiples, hybridité, complexité institutionnelle, réponses stratégiques, étude de cas, Afrique de l'Ouest et Afrique Centrale

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Chapter I General Introduction

1.1 Contextual Background

1.1.1 Infrastructure Deficit in Africa and the Need for More Private Investments

The development of infrastructure drives productivity and sustainable economic growth in Africa. For instance, roads which account for the transportation of at least 80% of goods and 90% of passengers, play an indispensable role in Africa's transportation landscape (African Development Bank, 2025). Despite its undeniable importance, the existing infrastructure in most African economies significantly falls short of what is needed to support their required levels of economic growth. The transport infrastructure—consisting of road, railways, air transport, and ports—presents a considerable bottleneck for development across much of Africa, particularly landlocked countries (Cilliers & Chipanda, 2025). The investment on the goods infrastructures and transport networks system, including road and rail links and airports that connect the countries to seaports can stimulate economy growth, particularly in landlocked countries like Chad and the Central African Republic (Frederic et al., 2021).

However, Africa is contending with a substantial infrastructure deficit. The infrastructure gap in Sub-Saharan Africa curtails national economic growth by two percentage points annually and reduces productivity rates by as much as 40% (Cilliers & Chipanda, 2025). For example, an alarming statistic reveals that only 53% of the roads are paved, leaving more than 50% of the population isolated from an all-season road. UNCTAD (2022) asserts that the high transport costs are not only attributed to factors including the poor condition of roads, a lack of bridges, and disjointed rail networks, but also to geographical isolation particularly affecting landlocked countries. These landlocked developing countries face a unique predicament as they rely on their transit neighbors to access the sea to transport their goods.

The infrastructure in Africa faces not only a significant deficit but also critical challenges associated with the maintenance of existing structures, leading to elevated costs and delays (Cilliers & Chipanda, 2025). For example, the maintenance of road networks often proves to be inadequate and, when undertaken, inefficient. The outdated infrastructure and limited maintenance

have significantly undermined the efficacy of railway systems across the continent. Despite spanning over an area of approximately 30 million square kilometers, Africa possesses only 84,000 kilometers of rail track, predominantly situated in Southern and Northern Africa (African Development Bank, 2025). Additionally, there is a significant shortage of deep-water ports capable of handling large vessels, which increases transport costs. Africa is home to 64 ports, many of which are ill-equipped and inefficient. Delays are frequently incurred due to extended processing times and poor shipment handling rates, resulting in handling costs that average 50% higher than in other global regions (African Development Bank, 2025).

The infrastructure deficit and maintenance, as outlined by Cilliers and Chipanda (2025), underscores investment opportunity and needs. A considerable upsurge in infrastructure investment is critically needed in numerous developing countries and regions to support their economic growth (de Brux & Saussier, 2018), with Africa being a case in point. The African Development Bank (2018; 2020) estimates that the annual financing requirement for Africa's infrastructure financing needs could lie between USD 130 and 170 billion, thereby leaving a significant financing deficit of USD 68 to 108 billion.

Many African countries have limited financial resources, which makes it difficult for them to finance the necessary infrastructure development, with only 42.2% of infrastructure investment by national government in 2020 (Cilliers & Chipanda, 2025). Furthermore, a sharp upswing in public debt has been observed in numerous African nations since 2010, thus restricting the scope for governmental spending and diverting resources away from infrastructure investment (African Development Bank, 2024). The COVID-19 pandemic has further intensified the debt situation, necessitating augmented public financing to counter the pandemic's negative socioeconomic consequences (United Nations Economic Commission for Africa, 2024). Furthermore, Africa's economic growth has been destabilized by a host of factors including global uncertainty, escalating geopolitical tensions, persistent inflationary pressures, protracted standoffs in global trade and investment, high commodity prices, increased regional conflicts, and political instability. Further exacerbation of these issues could potentially jeopardize Africa's economic growth (African Development Bank, 2024).

Due to its projected demographic expansion, Africa necessitates an increase in the development of infrastructure (Cilliers & Chipanda, 2025). The Quality Infrastructure in 21st Century Africa report (OECD/ACET, 2020) projects that by 2050, Africa is set to account for a quarter of the global population, reaching 2.4 billion, with an anticipated 40% surge in the working-age populace between 2018 and 2030. Additionally, the continent's urban population is expected to rise to 1.3 billion, accommodating 120 cities each with over a million inhabitants. Despite these projections, the availability and quality of African transport infrastructure present a considerable challenge to economic growth (Arodoye et al., 2022).

To address the challenges of infrastructure deficit, maintenance issues, and financial constraints, greater private involvement in infrastructure development, such as through public–private partnerships (PPPs), is essential (de Brux & Saussier, 2018). In a PPP, the private entity is involved in financing a project for a public authority and operating it for a period of years, retaining earnings to recover capital and operating expenses and achieve a return on investment (Hodge et al., 2010).

PPPs have become widely used for the development of public infrastructures projects worldwide (de Brux & Saussier, 2018; Fabre & Straub, 2023) to increase investments, optimize production efficiency, and deliver high-quality services. This approach facilitates the development of essential infrastructure, such as roads, tunnels, and bridges, to support economic goals (Cui et al., 2018). Outsourcing the provision of public services to private partners offers various benefits to both public and private parties, such as expertise, incentive, and economies of scale, experience, and scope as well as risk sharing, public organizations management, and reduce political interferences (Beuve, Saussier, & de Brux, 2018; Porcher & Saussier, 2019).

According to de Brux and Saussier (2018), there are three primary ways for public authorities to invest in infrastructures: traditional public procurement, availability contracts, and concessions. Traditional public procurement is the most widely used delivery option for public projects, usually involving a short-term contract where a public legal entity entrusts construction or a service to a public or a private entity for an immediate payment.

Meanwhile, availability contracts, often equated with PPPs in many studies, emerged from the introduction of the Private Finance Initiative (PFI) in the UK in 1992. The PFI aims to increase private sector involvement through the provision of public services (HM Treasury, 2003). In such contracts, the public entity remains responsible for the public service, while the private sector takes charge of the project management and is remunerated over time through tax. Thus, availability contracts are sometimes called "public budget pay PPPs." These contracts are used for both economic infrastructures, such as transport infrastructures like train stations and urban roads, and social infrastructures like educational establishments, sports and cultural facilities, and prisons. In developed countries, mainly anglophone economies such as the UK, Australia, and Canada, PFIs have been the main instrument of private participation in transport infrastructure (Estache & Serebrisky, 2004). Since the 1990s, PPPs based on availability contracts have also emerged as an alternative form of service delivery in Africa across various sectors (Obosi, 2021).

While traditional public procurement and availability contracts are important aspects of infrastructure investment, they fall outside the scope of this research. Instead, the primary focus of this research is concession PPPs within the African region.

Concessions, also called "user-pay PPPs," represent the oldest historical form of public service outsourcing. They involve the transfer of a comprehensive mission, which may include the financing of investment, construction of the project, and its operation and maintenance to the private entity (de Brux & Saussier, 2018). An example of this is the construction of a large water pump during the reign of Henry IV of France. This project was under private management, and the water pump was built and financed by its operator authorized by the king to supply water for the Parisians and charge them for the service. Concession PPPs are commonly used and mostly employed for transportation infrastructures (Beuve, Saussier, & de Brux, 2018).

Outsourcing the provision of public services to a private partner offers various benefits to the public sector (Beuve, Saussier, & de Brux, 2018). This approach facilitates the development of infrastructure, particularly economic infrastructure projects, like roads, tunnels, and bridges, to support economic goals (Cui et al., 2018). The public sector can benefit from a private partners' expertise and economies of scale, experience, and scope (Beuve, Saussier, & de Brux, 2018).

In sum, Africa faces a significant infrastructure deficit, maintenance issues, financial constraints, and a lack of private investment, which together pose substantial challenges to the region's development. The infrastructure gap is particularly evident in Sub-Saharan Africa which receives little private financial participation. Coupled with maintenance issues and financial constraints, this has led to a marked decrease in investment levels. Such a scenario underscores a pressing need to foster shared logic between the public and private sectors, with the aim of effectively attracting more private Western and non-Western companies' investment and thereby filling the region's infrastructure gaps.

1.1.2 Western and non-Western Companies' Presence in West and Central Africa

The systems of African governments, particularly in West and Central Africa, were largely influenced by European colonial powers, notably Britain and France (Nwaukwa, 2024). These European countries exported their legal frameworks during the 19th and 20th centuries, leading to countries colonized by Britain typically following English common law, while those colonized by France subscribing to French civil law (Chang et al., 2025). This legacy impacts PPPs, with common law countries often using policy statements, guidance materials, and contract law and distinguishing between PFI and concessions through a common definition of PPPs, while civil law countries being more inclined to develop distinct arrangements under different PPP laws (African Legal Support Facility, 2024). Except for the Gambia and Equatorial Guinea, all countries in West and Central Africa have enacted specific PPP laws which may coexist alongside public procurement laws. To implement these PPP laws, most African countries have dedicated PPP Units, affiliated with various governmental entities such as the Ministry of Finance, designated PPP agencies, office of the prime ministers or president, or other technical ministries (African Legal Support Facility, 2024).

Both Britain and France had similar motivations for territorial acquisition in these regions, primarily driven by the quest for raw natural resources to fuel their industrial revolution (Cilliers & Chipanda, 2025; Nwaukwa, 2024). The infrastructure development implemented by colonizers, particularly the construction of transportation and logistical networks, was primarily designed to facilitate access to mineral resources and connect agriculturally fertile regions to coastal ports for

efficient resource exportation (Kehinde, 2024). However, the built infrastructure often failed to align with the developmental needs and aspirations of the local African population. For instance, many railway systems fell into disuse because they were often not suited to new development agenda owing to conflict, mismanagement, and changes in national priorities (Cilliers & Chipanda, 2025).

However, Britain employed different strategies in its colonies, fostering environments conducive for their colonies, while France pursued a policy of assimilation, embedding French culture and practices into the colonies. The French colony policy was characterized by comprehensive cultural imposition on their colonies, encompassing political, economic, cultural, and social assimilation. This assimilation strategy facilitated the adoption of uniform cultural practices and social norms across all French colonies, reinforcing the perceived superiority of French culture and civilization.

Despite gaining independence and transforming into sovereign states, many African nations continue to be influenced by their former colonizers (Obeng-Odoom, 2024). The historical policies persistently shape the economic dynamics, administrative structures, and relationships between former colonies and their previous colonizers. The complexities of such enduring colonial or neocolonial relationships between Africa and the West pose considerable challenges for understanding and addressing Africa's current and future development needs. Moreover, in the post-colonial Africa, infrastructure development has lacked a holistic, systematic approach, with initiatives typically being driven by local politicians and global investors on a per-project basis.

Global investors, such as Chinese enterprises, are challenging the existing Western influence in Africa. In recent years, Chinese interest in Sub-Saharan Africa has significantly fueled infrastructure development, most notably through initiatives such as the Forum on China–Africa Cooperation (FOCAC) and the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) (Cilliers & Chipanda, 2025; Züfle et al., 2024). Infrastructure has remained the predominant sector in the FOCAC since its inception in 2000. Chinese companies have been instrumental in constructing or modernizing various infrastructure, including power stations, transmission lines, railways, roads, or seaports (Züfle et al., 2024). For instance, between 2010 and 2019, Chinese investment in Africa was predominantly

directed towards the energy (USD 97 billion) and transport (USD 86 billion) sectors, accounting for nearly two-thirds of the total investment. In 2019, Chinese contractors held a commanding 60% market share in Africa's engineering, procurement, and construction (EPC) businesses.

The significant reduction in "non-specific infrastructure" investment after 2012 indicates a more focused approach by Chinese entities towards specific sectors within infrastructure development. This strategic shift aligns with the launch of the BRI in 2013 which prioritized cross-border infrastructure development to decrease transportation costs and enhance connectivity with China (Wang et al., 2024). Consequently, China has emerged as Africa's leading trade partner, investor, and lender, driving the expansion of trade-facilitating transport infrastructure (Cilliers & Chipanda, 2025). Recognizing the vital role of private capital and expertise in supplementing public funds for infrastructure projects, China has emphasized the importance of PPPs within the BRI framework.

Despite the importance of increasing investments, optimizing production efficiency, and delivering high-quality services (de Brux & Saussier, 2018), PPPs are found to have fallen short in meeting the expectations of countries in Sub-Saharan Africa. Indeed, there is a relatively low level of interest in private financial participation in Africa, particularly in Sub-Saharan Africa. As an example, in 2023, Sub-Saharan Africa witnessed 66 projects totaling USD 3.5 billion, which accounted for only 4.2% of global Private Participation in Infrastructure investment (World Bank, 2024). This represented a 24% decrease from the previous year's investment levels and a 46% decrease from the average of the preceding five years. In the same year, West and Central Africa saw investment commitments amounting to USD 1.2 billion across 21 projects. Notably, four out of these five projects were in the energy sector, with no projects reported in the transportation sector.

Divergent goals and differing organizational cultures in the private and public sectors can lead to coordination challenges, especially given the involvement of various actors in cross-sector relationships between these domains (Quélin et al., 2017). These challenges are further compounded by institutional complexities, such as the lengthy and unpredictable bureaucratic processes in the procurement and approval stages, weak political and legal frameworks, and

inadequate institutional environment and support. Taking the institutional logics perspective, this study aims to understand how to create a common logic between the public and private sectors, encompassing both Western and non-Western entities at the organizational field[1] level and the organizational and individual levels to effectively enhance and strengthen these partnerships, thus filling the infrastructure gaps in this region.

1.2 Problem Definition and Research Gaps

PPP is defined as a long-term contract between a private party and a government entity for the provision of a public asset or service. The private party bears significant risk and management responsibility, and remuneration adheres to a performance-based timeframe (Beuve, Saussier, & de Brux, 2018; Maatala et al., 2017). From this definition, PPPs exhibit three prominent characteristics. First, PPPs are project-oriented entities involving diverse stakeholders, including public and private partners and third parties (Villani et al., 2017). Second, they feature extended contracts wherein the private partner is responsible for achieving specified outcomes. Third, PPPs are inherently hybrid, integrating multiple logics within a special purpose vehicle (SPV), a unique structure created for PPP contracts (Jay, 2013; Kivleniece & Quélin, 2012; Pache & Thornton, 2021; Villani et al., 2017; York et al., 2016). Drawing from these characteristics, this study conceptualizes PPPs as hybrid forms that integrate governmental and business forms along with multiple organizational logics. These logics coexist within the same domain, thus concurrently influencing organizations in that field (Battilana & Lee, 2014).

However, despite their hybrid nature, PPPs as hybrid entities have garnered limited attention (Quélin et al., 2017). While the concept of organizational hybridity has been extensively discussed, it is often in the context of social enterprises (Battilana & Dorado, 2010; Pache & Santos, 2010) and largely overlooks PPPs (Pache & Thornton, 2021). As such, most recent articles at the

[1] There is a nuance between "field" and "organizational field." A field is defined as a group of organizations sharing a common meaning system, where members interact more closely with each other than with those outside the field (Scott, 1995). The concept of an organizational field goes beyond just a list of members, including the interrelationships among members and the field level logics shaped by the material practices, cultural norms, and cognitive processes that influence their behavior (Wooten & Hoffman, 2017). To avoid the confusion, this study will use "organizational field" because our study focuses on the interrelationships and logics within the actors in the field of PPPs.

intersection of hybrid organizations and institutional logics exclusively focus on social enterprises (Sharma et al., 2018; Smith & Besharov, 2019; York et al., 2016; Zhao & Lounsbury, 2016).

This study considers PPPs as hybrid by nature. Examining the definitions of PPPs reveal that, in a broad interpretation, PPPs encompass all public–private contracts, including concessions, and are defined as "long-term collaborative relationships between one or more firms and public bodies" (Kivleniece & Quélin, 2012). PPP contracts are generally characterized by a long yet limited duration, depending on the depreciation period of the infrastructure and the financing modalities (Maatala et al., 2017). Over this period, the public entity entrusts a comprehensive mission to the private partner, who commits to deploying the necessary resources to achieve specified results and the performance objectives. From this perspective, this study argues that PPPs can be seen as hybrid forms that merge government and business structures and incorporate multiple organizational logics that influence entities within the same domain simultaneously but in different ways (Battilana & Lee, 2014; Jay, 2013).

Research on institutional logics perspective have highlighted that the combination of different logics can lead to organizational hybridity (Pache & Thornton, 2021; Thornton et al., 2012), and this framework has been widely applied to foster innovative and empirical research on hybrid organizations (Pache & Thornton, 2021). However, research has focused on field level logics, causing a significant gap in understanding the logics at hybrid organizational-level and how members within the organization experience and respond strategically to the multiple institutional logics (Greenwood et al., 2011). This dissertation thus aims to bridge these gaps, integrating these distinct research streams to explore the creation of a common logic through strategic responses at the organizational field, organizational, and individual levels.

While there has been increasing interest in PPPs as hybrid organizations, research in this area remains relatively limited. Only a handful of studies have utilized multiple institutional logics to investigate the phenomenon of cross-sector partnerships as hybrids (Pache & Thornton, 2021). Notable exceptions include works by Jay (2013), Quélin et al. (2017), Villani et al. (2017), and York et al. (2016). For instance, Jay (2013) conducted an ethnographic field study of the Cambridge Energy Alliance (CEA), a public–private hybrid organization that combines multiple

institutional logics of government bureaucracies, business firms, and non-profit logics to tackle the complex challenges of climate change. Quélin et al. (2017) analyzed the conceptual forms of hybridity embedded in novel inter-organizational arrangements, focusing on the public–private and cross-sector collaborations. Villani et al. (2017) used a comparative case study of two PPPs in the Italian healthcare sector to draw on ideas from business model design and organizational hybridity. York et al. (2016) undertook an inductive study of the wind energy field in Colorado to examine the process of hybridization within an organizational field where economizing and ecologizing logics were incompatible.

Despite these contributions, there is still limited research on how a common logic can be crafted through the strategic responses of both public and private sectors, despite the significance of multiple logics and their relationships in institutional research (Besharov & Smith, 2014; Greenwood et al., 2011). Scholars have presented diverse perspectives on the relationships of logic multiplicity. Some emphasize the presence of incompatible logics (Battilana & Dorado, 2010; Besharov & Smith, 2014; Friedland & Alford, 1991; Lounsbury, 2007; Pache & Santos, 2013a; Thornton & Ocasio, 1999), while others describe scenarios of logic coexistence (Thornton & Ocasio, 2008), logic hybridization (York et al., 2016), or logic complementarity (Smets et al., 2015). Despite these varied views, few studies explore how a common logic can be established through the strategic responses of both public and private sectors. Exploring this aspect can offer valuable insights into the functioning and success of PPPs as hybrids.

Moreover, more in-depth studies are needed to examine the complexities and dynamics of PPPs as hybrids, particularly in different geographical and sectoral contexts involving both Western and non-Western private enterprises. Past studies on PPPs have largely ignored non-Western economies (Biygautane, 2022), particularly those in Sub-Saharan Africa. Analyses of PPPs predominantly focus on Anglo-Saxon countries, with a growing interest in Europe and some emerging economies such as China and with a particular focus on infrastructure development (Wang et al., 2018). To date, however, Sub-Saharan African regions have received scarce attention from PPP scholars. Especially when PPPs are situated in the African context, where private partners from Western or other emerging economies cooperate with African public entities, an analytic focus on logics and the inherent hybridity of PPPs is promising particularly in unpacking

the power differences between the partners and the dynamics of collaboration. Furthermore, at organizational level, SPV as a joint project company dedicated to PPP contracts (Marty, 2018) has also attracted little attention in the literature. Therefore, the existing literature concerning PPPs as hybrids remains underdeveloped, presenting a compelling opportunity for research in this area to enrich our understanding of PPPs, hybridity, and their functioning within the realm of institutional logics.

Inter-institutional complexity, which stems from incompatible prescriptions arising from different logics, namely, the logics of different institutional orders—for instance, state, bureaucracy, family, or religion—has been a primary focus of institutional scholars (Friedland & Alford, 1991; Thornton et al., 2012). In contrast, intra-institutional complexity, which focuses on incompatible prescriptions coming from the same logic domain (Meyer & Höllerer, 2016), has received less attention.

Institutional logics scholars have also focused on field level competing logics in various domains, including banking (Lounsbury, 2007), higher education publishing (Thornton, 2004; Thornton & Ocasio, 1999), cuisine (Rao et al., 2003), and social enterprises (Pache & Santos, 2013a), among others. However, there is a missing attempt to gain a holistic account of organizational-level analysis, for instance, how organizations are structured and managed (Greenwood et al., 2014). There is a need for institutional theory to refocus from the organization field level to an organizational-level of analysis, viewing organizations as actors. This is because different interactions and organizational practices within organizations can be guided by different logics, and even the same social actors may be guided by different logics when interacting with different social actors (Thornton et al., 2012). Therefore, the multiplicity of institutional logics enabling different forms of interaction and organizational practices in organization leads to institutional complexity (Greenwood & Miller, 2010).

The institutional context, composed of structures and logics, is enacted in working practices of the organizational members (Smets et al., 2012). Context influences the strengths of logics in any given environment (Pache & Santos, 2013b), and prior socialization with each logic shapes the availability of the logics to each actor (Thornton et al., 2012). Consequently, individual actors may

experience different degrees of pressure and internalize the co-existing logics to varying extents. The repertoire of logics available to individuals within organizations determines what they do and how they do it within an organization. Work practices increasingly show fragmented associations with multiple logics, arguably resulting from individuals' attempts to link their work to the organization and its external reality (Smets et al., 2012). While scholars have studied organizational responses to such conflicting logics (Greenwood & Miller, 2010; Greenwood et al., 2011; Pache & Santos, 2010, 2013b), they have paid scant attention to how organizational members experience and respond to these logics (with a few exceptions: Pache & Santos, 2013a; Smets et al., 2012).

In sum, the institutional logics perspective proves to be an appropriate theoretical framework for this study (Pache & Thornton, 2021). PPPs are seen as a new hybrid organizational form integrating with multiple logics (Jay, 2013, Kivleniece & Quélin, 2012; Pache & Thornton, 2021; York et al., 2016), bringing together a multitude of actors who carry different institutional logics (Villani et al., 2017). The SPV brings these different actors and multiple institutional logics into a single entity, keeping private actors together and interacting with the public local authority (Villani et al., 2017). This dissertation seeks to fill these research gaps by adopting the institutional logics perspective on hybrid organizations, through the examination of two case studies situated in Africa. The first involves a multiple-case study of PPPs as a form of hybrid organizing, while the second provides an in-depth exploration of an SPV as a hybrid organization.

1.3 Objectives, Research Question, and Scope

This dissertation aims to explore how to create a common logic within the complex interplay of multiple logics inherent in PPPs as hybrids and in an SPV as a hybrid organization through strategic responses to the multiple institutional logics. The research objectives of this thesis consist of theoretical, empirical, and managerial ones.

The dissertation consists of two parts. The first part tackles the multiple logics manifest at organizational field level. It aims to explore the multiple institutional logics, the factors and strategies that influence creating the common logic in PPPs as hybrids. This part seeks to expand the research scope by addressing three key research questions:

1) *What is the organizational field level context of PPPs that poses complexity in creating a common logic?*
2) *What are the multiple logics in the organizational field of PPPs, and how do they interact?*
3) *How do PPPs succeed (or fail) in establishing a common logic in their collaborations?*

The second part focuses on the SPV as a hybrid organization at organizational level. This part aims to investigate how actors in an SPV respond to conflicting institutional demands and intra-institutional complexity at both organizational and individual levels. Specifically, it is interested in answering the following questions:

1) What is the organizational field that the SPV engages in?
2) How do organizations experience the competing institutional logics reflected in organizational attributes? And how does the SPV strategically respond to the institutional demands of external actors?
3) How do SPV managers experience the intra-institutional logics? And how do they respond to these multiple logics?

The two parts will discuss the findings and contributions in two separate chapters.

This dissertation focuses on the public and private collaborations in the transportation sector in West and Central Africa. West and Central Africa promotes the private sector participation for the provision of public services. As public actors do not have the financial power to build transport infrastructure such as roads and bridges, the private sector is solicited through concession contracts. Since the 1990s, increasing public debt and infrastructure deficit in Africa drove the trend toward outsourcing such public services to the private sector. However, the partnering with the local African public authorities and multi-national Western and non-Western enterprises, in particular the French and Chinese state-owned enterprises (SOEs) is an arduous task. The different partners bring together multiple logics and various cultures, causing institutional complexity and making the partnerships challenging. For the private participation, the institutional environment in the African host countries pose challenges for the PPP organizational field. In public utilities, private

sector participation has been recognized as necessary to support access and service continuity. However, it raises several issues such as the corporate logics may be incompatible with other logics and cultures, making it challenging to create a common logic within the different actors.

The transportation infrastructure in West and Central Africa presents an ideal empirical study subject for examining PPPs as hybrid entities and SPVs as hybrid organizations for several reasons. First, the pivotal role of the transport sector in African economic development cannot be understated. Züfle et al. (2024) highlight underdeveloped infrastructure as a key obstacle to economic development in this region, adversely affecting the business environment.

Second, the development of transport infrastructures involves the participation of foreign multinational corporations, notably French and Chinese enterprises as local African companies often lack both financial and technical capabilities for such infrastructure projects. An interesting characteristic of private non-Western entities operating in transport infrastructure is the Chinese SOEs as "private" companies overseas. The Chinese SOE-established SPV, a French private company, and the host country's government face the competing demands from the organizational field, including the various private actors and the public sector. These factors, combined with the organizational attributes and individual actors' experiences to the multiple institutional logics, lead to further institutional complexity. Therefore, this SPV provides an ideal organizational setting for addressing this study's research questions.

Third, this sector lends itself well for empirical research with qualitative research approach through interviews and observations to investigate the "ongoing" PPPs due to the absence of an updated and representative dataset. Finally, the most compelling reason to investigate this sector lies in the recent surge of policy focus on PPPs, with local public authorities championing PPPs over traditional EPC public contracts.

From the management perspective, the public sector retains ownership of capital assets of infrastructures such as roads, ports, airports, and railways in the framework of PPPs. Only the management of public service is delegated to the private sector. This delegation, however, does not compromise the public sector's role as a supervisor and regulator. This hybrid arrangement

combining market-like autonomy with government supervision raises interesting questions about how various actors within this hybrid create a common logic in the face of multiple institutional logics and how SPV as hybrid organization respond to the institutional complexity at organizational and individual levels. The exploration of how these actors respond strategically to these multiple logics can offer valuable insights into the operational dynamics of PPPs and SPV as a hybrid organization. This understanding can further assist in identifying best practices and strategies for fostering cooperation and creating a common logic in such settings. It can also provide a framework for how actors can effectively balance the often-competing demands from its organizational field.

Even if the institutional backgrounds and the inherent research questions are closely linked to transport infrastructure in West and Central Africa, the benefits of the main findings of the thesis can be extended to PPP management, multiple logics management, hybrid organizations management, as well as policy makers and practitioners. Concession PPPs by nature involve multiple actors, thus bringing multiple institutional logics inside of one organizational roof: the SPV. The field level logics in PPPs as well the SPV organizational levels logics inside the SPV go beyond two logics, leading to institutional complexity. The institutional environment such as the informal and the formal institutional systems, as well as the various organizational and individual actors' roles and their experiences to multiple logics, lead to further institutional complexity. Only by strategic responses to the institutional complexity can organizational and individual actors create a common logic among them. We discuss in detail the implications, contributions, and possible extensions in the general conclusion of the dissertation.

1.4 Methodology Overview

Research philosophy refers to a comprehensive framework of beliefs and assumptions guiding the development of knowledge (Saunders et al., 2019). All research is grounded in a set of either implicit or explicit philosophical assumptions (Bell et al., 2022). These assumptions can either be ontological or epistemological. Ontological assumptions refer to our beliefs about the nature of reality encountered in our research, while epistemological assumptions refer to our understanding of how humans acquire knowledge (Bell et al., 2022). A carefully considered and internally consistent set of assumptions forms the basis of a credible research philosophy. These assumptions

significantly influence our comprehension of research questions, the methods employed, the chosen research strategy, and the manner in which research findings are analyzed and interpreted (Saunders et al., 2019).

Ontological assumptions encompass two key perspectives: 1) objectivism, suggesting that social phenomena and their meanings exist independently of social actors, and 2) constructivism, which asserts that social phenomena and categories are generated through ongoing social interactions where individuals collectively shape and continually redefine shared meanings and realities. This research chose to adopt a constructivist approach, which highlights that reality is developed intersubjectively (Saunders et al., 2019). This approach strives to gather knowledge through diverse means based on empirical evidence and entails a multifaceted strategy for gathering information, encompassing various sources and methods, which includes engaging expert interviews, conducting observations, and referring to academic literature. This approach allows for nuanced dimensions of the subject under investigation and present a comprehensive perspective.

As for the epistemological assumptions, a dual perspective incorporating both positivism and interpretivism is embraced. Yin (2018) identifies two distinct epistemological orientations: 1) realist orientation often associated with positivism, and 2) relativist orientation linked with interpretivism. The realist perspective, aligned with positivism, presupposes the existence of a singular reality that exists independently of any observer. Positivism emphasizes the significance of empirical evidence in understanding the social world, relying on observable and measurable phenomena to achieve objectivity and replicability in research. Thus, this research draws from existing literature to explain and predict behaviors and events in organizations, emphasizing objectivity and empirical evidence.

Conversely, the relativist orientation, underpinned by interpretivism, recognizes the presence of multiple realities and the existence of diverse meanings, with research findings being inherently dependent on the perspective of the observer. Interpretivism aligns with the constructivist approach, emphasizing the diverse perspectives of interviewees and focusing on their individual meanings and interpretations to illuminate the topics of this research. Embracing interpretivism enables exploration and comprehension of the complexities of the social world through the lens of those

directly involved. In essence, interpretivism represents a contrasting epistemology to positivism, as it posits that reality is constructed through human actions and the process of meaning-making, rather than being an objective, external entity (Bell et al., 2022).

1.4.1 Abductive Reasoning Approach

This research employs an abductive reasoning approach in the methodology. An abductive reasoning approach to data collection seeks to explore phenomena, identify themes, and explain patterns with the goal of generating or modifying theories, which are then tested through further data collection (Bell et al., 2022). This approach involves a unique interplay between data and theory, departing from the more conventional paths of deduction (theory to data) or induction (data to theory) (Bell et al., 2022; Saunders et al., 2019). It entails a dynamic back-and-forth engagement with the empirical world as a source for developing theoretical ideas, while simultaneously engaging with existing literature. This method is considered valuable because it offers a way to address the limitations associated with the deductive and inductive approaches (Bell et al., 2022).

In the deductive approach, researchers start with established theory and hypotheses, which guide the process of data collection. This method can be problematic for its perceived linearity, where one step strictly follows the other in a logical sequence of theory-testing and hypothesis falsification (Bell et al., 2022). In contrast, the inductive approach involves drawing generalized conclusions from observation, with the challenge being that empirical data alone may not necessarily lead to theory development. The abductive reasoning approach represents a compelling alternative, offering a middle ground to overcome these limitations and allowing for a more flexible and iterative process that balances the exploration of empirical data and the development of theoretical insights. This approach helps in navigating the complexities of the research subject effectively and generate valuable contributions to knowledge.

The abductive reasoning approach employed in this study served to remain receptive to the potential of data to unveil unexpected insights, rather than being constrained by an intent to validate initial beliefs. The research questions are designed to shed light on how to create common logic in PPPs as hybrids. Exploratory research involves commencing with a broad focus and progressively narrowing it down as the research progresses. In this study, the process was initiated

with the fieldwork to gather data on the African context of PPPs, conducting semi-structured interviews concurrently, allowing an open mindset and enabling concepts and theories to organically emerge from the data—a hallmark of an inductive approach to theorizing and conceptualization. Although the chosen research methodology is exploratory in nature, the semi-structured interviews serve as a valuable method for posing open-ended questions to uncover insights about a specific area of interest. Meanwhile, primary literature review was also conducted. The practice of continually oscillating between the examination of empirical evidence and theoretical engagement is crucial as it facilitates the development of theories in qualitative studies (Bell et al., 2022).

1.4.2 Qualitative Method

The dissertation is based on a qualitative method approach by conducting a multiple-case study and an in-depth single-case study (Yin, 2018) and reflects multiple levels of analyses (organizational field, organizational, and individual levels), that allow for triangulation on the predictive validity of the proposed frameworks. The use of qualitative research is seen as the appropriate methodological approach in this study as this approach is aligned with fundamental philosophical assumptions, research methodologies, and strategies (Saunders et al., 2019).

First, qualitative research is intrinsically linked with an interpretive philosophy, signifying researcher's imperative to interpret and make sense of the subjective and socially constructed meanings conveyed regarding the phenomenon under scrutiny. This philosophical underpinning resonates with our aim to delve into the intricate and context-dependent perspectives of our research participants. Secondly, many qualitative research endeavors adopt an abductive approach which melds inductive reasoning and deductive elements in an iterative fashion throughout the research process. This approach enables us to navigate the dynamic interplay between empirical data and theoretical development, an essential facet of our research design. Thirdly, qualitative research encompasses a diverse array of research strategies, including action research, case study research, ethnography, grounded theory and narrative research. In our study, we have chosen the case study research strategy because it is well-suited to our objective of examining the creation of common logic within the partners.

This selection aligns coherently with our research and provides a robust framework for our data collection techniques, such as interviews and observations. Furthermore, as highlighted by Saunders et al. (2019), the success of a qualitative researcher relies heavily on their capacity to establish access to research participants and cultivate rapport. Demonstrating sensitivity and adept rapport-building skills is pivotal for gaining cognitive access to the data contributed by participants, which is fundamental to the depth and quality of our research. Consequently, qualitative research emerges as a judicious and fitting methodological choice for our study, not only in terms of its philosophical alignment but also in its harmony with our chosen research approaches and strategies. Additionally, it underscores the significance of building rapport and establishing connections with research participants for robust data collection.

1.4.3 Research Design

A research design serves as the methodological bridge between the research philosophy and the selection of data collection and analysis methods necessary to answer the research question (Yin, 2018). Our research strategy involves two case studies: a multiple-case study and a single-case study. Case studies heavily rely on two primary sources of evidence: interviews with individuals who may still be involved in those events and the direct observation of the events under study (Wolcott, 1992; Yin, 2018). This research utilized a qualitative research method combining both semi-structured interviews and ethnographic observations in the two studies.

The multiple-case study focuses on organizational field level analysis and provides an idea study as they are important concession-based PPPs in the same empirical field study: the transportation sector in formerly colonized countries in the West and Central African region. Specifically, this research examines 11 cases of concession PPPs in transportation, covering roads, airports, ports, and railways. These partnerships entail collaboration between African public entities and either/both Western private companies or/and non-Western enterprises. A total of 59 semi-structured interviews were conducted, and the transcripts were analyzed via NVivo 14, a computer-based qualitative analysis software. Participants work in the public sector, private companies, or international organizations. For seven of the 11 projects, we have at least one representative from both public and private parties involved in the PPP project. The interviewees are of 14 different nationalities. Interviews were conducted in French, English, or Chinese. A snowball method was

applied to increase the list of contacts: each interviewee was asked to suggest potential participants that would be contacted later. In addition, the potential participants were contacted by email or via LinkedIn.

The in-depth case study investigated the research questions at an organizational and individual level within an SPV in an African context. In particular, the case study involves the participation of French and Chinese SOEs in the PPPs. Observations and non-structured interviews were conducted for six months, and notes were analyzed via NVivo 14. The observations and interviews were conducted in French and Chinese then translated in English. A single-case study is commonly employed when the case is critical, extreme, or unique, offering a chance to observe and analyze a phenomenon that has received little attention (Yin, 2018). This method is valuable for examining SPV as a hybrid organization and understanding the strategies adopted by the organizational and individual actors to respond to the conflicting institutional demands and intra-institutional complexity. Delving deeply into a single-case study fosters a comprehensive and real-world perspective (Yin, 2018), making it suitable for this study. An SPV with multiple international partners working in collaboration with local government provides rich data sources for such a case study.

1.4.4 Triangulation

To ensure reliability and validity, this study employed multiple evidence sources, including interviews, observations, and constant discussions with supervisors as well as adherence to ethical guidelines. Triangulation, encompassing various data collection techniques aligned with research objectives, underscores the significance of data convergence for validity. Yin (2018) highlights the reliance of case study research on multiple evidence sources, emphasizing the importance of data convergence in the triangulation process. In the multiple-case study, interviews served as the primary method, followed by direct observation that took precedence in our single-case study. This multifaceted approach aimed to enhance understanding and enrich the depth of the study's findings.

Additionally, maintaining an open dialogue with supervisors was instrumental. For instance, to mitigate confusion or ambiguity in defining the selected cases, consistent communication with the study's supervisors was practiced, following the guidance offered by Yin (2018). These

discussions involved detailing the research questions and justifying project selection. Collaborating in this manner was pivotal in preventing any misidentification of cases.

1.4.5 Reliability and Validity

Four tests are commonly used to assess the quality of case study research: construct validity, internal validity, external validity, and reliability (Yin, 2018). This study specifically addresses these tests within the research design. Construct validity refers to the identification of the accurate measures for the concepts under investigation, a criterion typically associated with positivist and quantitative research methodologies (Saunders et al., 2019). This criterion may be less directly applicable to the present study. To mitigate subjective judgments, this study utilized multiple sources of evidence during data collection and ongoing discussions with supervisors who also regularly reviewed the research design (Saunders et al., 2019; Yin, 2018).

Internal validity refers to the confidence in how accurate the research methods and collected data reflect the underlying problem. In this research, ensuring internal validity meant proactively identifying and addressing potential issues that could distort the findings. This involved ensuring that both interviews and observations gathered were reliable and valid. Conducting the data collection process with an extensive review of relevant literature further bolstered internal validity. Additionally, the ongoing dialogues with the study's supervisors and other researchers ensured a strong, academically sound approach to this research.

Conversely, external validity is concerned with the degree to which the findings of a study can be generalized or applied outside the immediate research context. This research applied an institutional logics perspective to delve into the realm of PPPs in West and Central Africa. However, the study's findings could have broader implications for non-Western economies in general, given the shared institutional contexts. In doing so, this research contributes to the existing literature on PPPs, with a particular emphasis on the importance of the institutional context. The findings have consequential implications for PPP management and hybrid organizations, delivering valuable insights for practical managers working across the public and private sectors and equipping them with a deeper understanding of creating a common logic in PPPs.

To address validity concern, Yin (2018) suggests that aligning the original research question with the case study assists in seeking generalizability, thus contributing to external validity. By exploring how the multiple institutional logics interact and how PPPs respond to such multiplicity, this study lays the groundwork for potentially replicating the study to generalize the findings. This replication could yield valuable insights into the role of institutional logics in the development and implementation of PPPs in a developing country or region with the participation of Western and non-Western private enterprises.

Reliability in research refers to the consistency of findings when replicated by subsequent researchers following the same procedures as described in an earlier study (Yin, 2018). However, findings derived from semi-structured interviews may not always be intended for strict repeatability, as they can be subject to change over time from when they were initially collected. To mitigate potential errors and biases in this study, the case studies were implemented with interview protocol as a comprehensive guideline for conducting similar research. The procedures were made as explicit as possible, providing a framework for other researchers to comprehend the processes used and potentially reanalyze the collected data. This approach aims to enhance transparency and facilitate a deeper understanding of the study's methodology for future research endeavors.

The study's involvement across multiple countries and engagement with private investors from diverse cultural backgrounds bolster the validity and reliability of this research. Attentiveness to potential cultural differences was maintained within the research design. Given that the interviewees originate from various nations and cultures, understanding these cultural nuances has been crucial for effective communication and gathering accurate information from participants with varied cultural backgrounds. This understanding has been instrumental in conducting effective interviews and observations. This approach significantly contributes to enhancing the quality and credibility of the research findings.

1.5 Main Findings and Contributions

1.5.1 Multiple-Case Study

The findings of the multiple-case study underscore that there are more than two dominant logics in the field of PPPs, particularly in the context of Western and non-Western private entities partnering with the local African public authorities. The multiple inter-institutional logics exist at the field level, including state logic, market logic, bureaucratic logic, professional logic, and community logic. Apart from state and market logics in PPPs, they involve a bureaucratic logic and a professional logic that lie at the intersection between the public and private sectors as well as the civil society of the respective African country. This makes developing a common logic among partners challenging. The market logic's conflicting interactions with state, bureaucratic, professional, and community logics further create institutional complexity. This complexity is further evident on concession PPPs related to large-scale projects such as roads, airports, bridges, and ports in the transport sector and with the participation of both Western and non-Western companies.

Institutional complexity arises from these coexisting and sometimes conflicting multiple logics, as well as the confluence of informal elements and formal factors of the institutional environment that govern PPPs. On the one hand, the informal institutional context of PPPs is shaped by cultural influences and historical colonial ties with Western enterprises. On the other hand, the formal institutional context of PPPs is characterized by immature and moderately concentrated organizational fields and a politically uncertain environment in this region. The significant discrepancy in core skills between the public and private sectors leads to "substituted effects," where one sector's role replaces the other, rather than the expected "complementary effect" in their distinctive roles within PPPs. In the private sector, the multiple multinational enterprises cooperate and compete, creating "coopetitive effect" in the PPPs. This complex interplay of factors underscores the need for nuanced understanding and strategies they employ to cope with the institutional complexity in PPPs.

Public and private partners combine multiple strategic responses, such as compromising, coopeting, defying, and manipulating strategies to address the complexities of their collaboration. These

strategies underscore the diverse interactions and tactics within PPPs. By combining compromising approaches between public and private sectors and coopetitive strategies within both Western and non-Western enterprises, they can effectively manage multiple logics and establish a common logic in PPPs.

This study addresses the need for a more context-specific approach to logics by broadening the scope of the institutional logics perspective to African contexts (Lounsbury & Wang, 2023). Furthermore, this research seeks to build upon existing studies which have focused primarily on two competing logics, with little research on how multiple logics converge to form a new "common logic." This study pioneers new research paths within the realms of institutional logic perspectives on PPPs as an ideal type of hybrids, by investigating their hybrid strategies for managing their institutional complexity to create a common logic.

1.5.2 Single-Case Study

The results of the single-case study indicate that the multiple intra-institutional logics coexist at the SPV organizational level. The primary corporate logics within the SPV encompass public service and market logic, which are influenced by corporate shareholder value logic and corporate political logic derived from its French and Chinese shareholders.

The organization's internal attributes, characterized by conflicting institutional logics, further contribute to an increase in institutional complexity. These attributes include the hybrid form of the SPV, its structure, ownership and hierarchical governance, and organizational identity. Furthermore, the organizational structure is shaped by the governance of its shareholder private companies.

Dealing with this complexity is challenging, particularly when operating within a fragmented and moderately centralized PPP field and facing uncoordinated external demands from various actors in its institutional environment. Depending on the nature of external demands, the SPV employs a combination of organizational strategies. It strategically responds to external field-level actors' manipulative strategies—compromising when goals align with external demands and resisting when they diverge.

This study further uncovers a spectrum of relationships between individuals and multiple intra-institutional logics, ranging from being novice to familiar and identified. Additionally, individual experiences, informed by the cultural context, managers' hybrid professional identities within the SPV, and their varying relationships with different logics, contribute to the intra-institutional complexity. These experiences lead to a variety of individual responses to the inherent complexity within the organization. At the individual level, managers can only create new hybrid logic through bridging strategies, underscoring the importance of innovative and adaptive leadership in managing organizational complexity.

The present study responds to the calls by Pache and Santos (2013a) and Greenwood et al. (2011) for more empirical studies focusing on organizational and individual-level perspectives in understanding multiple logics. Doing so responds to calls for a deeper understanding of how institutional complexity is experienced at both organizational and individual levels (Thornton et al., 2012). Overall, this study is a response to calls for research bridging the field, intraorganizational, and individual levels of analysis.

Moreover, this research advances understanding of strategic organizational responses by addressing intra-institutional complexity, which refers to conflicting institutional demands arising within the same institutional order and which has been, to date, rather neglected in the literature. Specifically, examining the case of an SPV operating as a private corporation with multiple logics embedded inside of the organization is a response to Greenwood et al.'s (2014) call for institutional scholarship to delve deeper into organizational inner workings, including how organizations are structured, managed, and coordinated. This study further advances from Oliver's (1991) general prediction that organizations tend to resist conflicting institutional demands and expands on Pache and Santos's (2010, 2013a) theoretical model by incorporating empirical case study research.

1.6 Structure of the Dissertation

The present chapter introduces the contextual background, research gaps, research questions, methodology, main findings, and contributions of the study (**Table 1**), as well as the structure of organization of dissertation. Chapter II offers a comprehensive literature review on PPPs and

theoretical framework on institutional logics and institutional complexity, focusing on how PPPs as hybrids and SPV as a hybrid organization respond strategically to both inter- and intra-institutional complexities. Chapters III and IV present the research methodology, results, and discussions of the multiple-case study and the single-case study, respectively. Chapter V summarizes the methodology and the main findings, discusses the theoretical and empirical implications, acknowledges the stud's limitations, and proposes directions for future research.

Table 1. Summary of General Introduction

Research questions	Multiple-case study 1) What is the organizational field level context of PPPs that poses complexity in creating a common logic? 2) What are the multiple logics in the organizational field of PPPs, and how do they interact? 3) How do PPPs succeed (or fail) in establishing a common logic in their collaborations?	Single-case study 1) What is the organizational field that the SPV engages in? 2) How do organizations experience the competing institutional logics reflected in organizational attributes? And how does the SPV strategically respond to the institutional demands of external actors? 3) How do SPV managers experience the intra-institutional logics? And how do they respond to these multiple logics?
Theoretical background	The theoretical framework, centered on the institutional logics perspective and organizational responses, aims to address the several research gaps in the current research: • Existing definitions of PPPs vary widely, resulting in inconsistencies across public institutions, international organizations, and economic literature. To address this, this study considers PPPs as, by nature, an ideal type of hybrid organization (Jay, 2013; Kivleniece & Quélin, 2012; Pache & Thornton, 2021; Villani et al., 2017; York et al., 2016), drawing upon their definitions and inherent characteristics (Beuve, Saussier, & de Brux, 2018; Kivleniece & Quélin, 2012; Maatala et al., 2017). • While recent studies on hybrid organizations and institutional logics have primarily focused on social enterprises (Battilana & Dorado, 2010; Pache & Santos, 2010), the hybrid nature of PPPs has received limited attention (Pache & Thornton, 2021; Quélin et al., 2017). This study employs institutional logics perspective to analyze PPPs as hybrids at three levels: the organizational field, the organization itself, and the individual level.	

	• There is a recognized need for more in-depth research that investigates the intricacies and dynamics of PPPs as hybrids, especially within different geographical and sectoral contexts that involve both Western and non-Western private enterprises. This study aims to illuminate the factors that potentially challenge the creation of a common logic, emphasizing the role of institutional context. • PPP research has largely ignored non-Western economies, particularly those in Sub-Saharan Africa (Biygautane, 2022). This study presents two case studies from the transport sector in West and Central Africa. • Although the institutional logics perspective focuses on the organizational field level analysis, there has been a lack of comprehensive examination at the organizational-level (Greenwood et al., 2011). This research not only undertakes a field-level analysis through a multiple-case study but also delves into organizational and individual levels via a single-case study. • Intra-institutional complexity focusing on incompatible prescriptions originating from the same logic domain has received insufficient attention (Meyer & Höllerer, 2016). This research conducts an in-depth case study of an SPV (Marty, 2018), a type of hybrid organization, to explore the internal corporate logics. • While studies have examined organizational responses to conflicting logics (Greenwood & Miller, 2010; Greenwood et al., 2011; Pache & Santos, 2010, 2013b), they have largely ignored how individual members within these organizations experience and respond to these logics. To fill this gap, this research conducts an in-depth case study of an SPV to investigate members' experiences of and responses to multiple logics.
Methods	Research philosophy: Objectivism for ontological assumptions (Saunders et al., 2019) Positivism and interpretivism for epistemological assumptions (Yin, 2018) Abductive reasoning approach (Bell et al., 2022)

	Qualitative research method (Yin, 2018) Triangulation (Yin, 2018) Reliability and validity (Saunders et al., 2019; Yin, 2018)	
Research design	Multiple-case study • Private sector: Multiple Western and non-Western private enterprises in former French and British colonized countries in West and Central Africa • Analysis at the organizational field level in PPPs • 59 online semi-structured interviews	Single-case study • Private sector: one French enterprise and one Chinese SOE in one country in the West and Central African region • Analysis at organizational and individual levels in one SPV and its managers • Six months of onsite of ethnographic observations and non-structured interviews
Main results	Inter-institutional context • Informal and formal institutional context of PPP, together with the disparities in core roles and capabilities between the public and private sectors further increase the institutional complexity. Multiple inter-institutional logics • Exist at the field level, including state, market, bureaucratic, professional, and community logics.	Organizational fields • SPV operates in a fragmented and moderately concentrated organizational field. SPV hybrid responses are based on the nature of conflicting demands (goals and means) from the organizational field. Compromise is when goals align; resistance when goals diverge. Multiple intra-institutional logics • Coexist at the organizational level. Corporate logics include public service and market logic and are influenced by corporate

	Logics relationships • The market logic's interactions conflict with state, bureaucratic, professional, and community logics, making the common logic challenging to create. Core roles and capabilities • Between public and private sectors: "substituted effects," where one sector's role replaces the other rather than the expected "complementary effect" • Between public and private sectors: "coopetitive effect" Strategies at the organizational field level • Compromising strategy between public and private sectors and coopetition strategy among private entities to create a common logic	shareholder value logic and corporate political logic of its private shareholder companies. SPV experiences to institutional complexity • SPV organizational experiences related to various intra-institutional logics are influenced by its shareholders' private companies and reflected on its hybrid organizational structure. Individual level experience to intra-institutional logics • Individual experiences to intra-institutional complexity (considering cultural context, SPV managers' hybrid professional identities, and their relationship to multiple intra-institutional logics, ranging from novice to familiar and identified) Bridging strategies to create new hybrid and common logic • Combining organizational strategies • Bridging individual strategies

Chapter II Literature Review

2.1 PPP Literature

2.1.1 Definitions of PPPs

Definitions of public–private partnerships (PPPs) tend to vary and lack consistency across public institutions, international organizations, and economic literature (Beuve, Saussier, & de Brux, 2018; Kwak et al., 2009). This displays diversity in the understanding and interpretation of PPPs in different contexts. Different definitions of PPPs have been used by French and British laws as there is no consensus among French and Anglo-Saxon conception of PPPs. In French law, the ordinance of June 17, 2004 defines a PPP contract as an administrative agreement where the State or a public institution entrusts a third party with a comprehensive mission. This mission revolves around the construction, transformation, maintenance, operation, or management of works, equipment, or essential goods related to public service and may involve all or part of the financing, excluding any capital participation (Légifrance, 2016). Unlike public contracts, PPP contracts can be long-term and include services from the design to the maintenance as well as the legal and financial arrangement. This law excludes public service delegation from PPP contracts (Brahier, 2017). In contrast, the British Private Finance Initiative (PFI), conceived by John Major's Conservative government in 1992, aims to foster public and private sector partnerships and increase the private sector participation in public services. This conception includes public service delegation, contrasting French law definition.

International organizations provide varying definitions of PPPs (Kwak et al., 2009). De la Motte and Hall (2003) characterize PPPs as the transfer to the private sector of investment projects that traditionally have been executed or financed by the public sector. Besides the private sector's execution and financing of public investment, the World Bank adds two critical elements to the definition of PPPs: long-term contract and the transfer of risk from public to private. In this context, PPP is defined as a long-term contract between a private party and a government entity for the provision of a public asset or service. The private party bears significant risk and management responsibility, and remuneration is performance-based.

Definitions of PPP are not uniform in the economic literature (de Brux & Saussier, 2018). Two primary approaches exist: on the one hand, a broad sense approach, where PPPs bring together all public–private contracts, including public contracts and concessions, thus reducing the partnership aspect to an administrative contractual relationship. On the other hand, in the narrow sense, the definition remains more restrictive, reserved only for certain types of cooperation.

Three categories further classify these definitions. First, the contractual perspective focuses mainly on the formal and legal dimensions of the relationship (Yong, 2010). Second, the partnership perspective emphasizes the social dimension of the relationship, characterized by commitment and mutual trust. As such, Kivleniece and Quélin (2012) define PPPs as long-term collaborative relationships between one or more firms and public bodies. Lastly, the functional perspective (Grimsey & Lewis, 2004) centers on PPP tasks, viewing PPPs as an integration of all working roles throughout the project cycle. The roles of financing, designing, constructing, and operating are all transitioned from the government to the private partner.

Although there is no unanimous definition of PPPs, such PPP contracts are generally characterized by their long yet limited duration, dependent on the infrastructure depreciation period and financing modalities (Auriol & Saussier, 2025; Maatala et al., 2017). Throughout this period, the public entity entrusts the private partner with a comprehensive mission to implement the means to achieve imposed results and performance objectives. Upon contract conclusion, the executed works primary reverts to the contracting authority. Risk is shared between the public and private partners. The private entity bears responsibility for the financing, design, construction, operation, and maintenance in exchange for compensation—either through direct payments, service fees, or user charges (Auriol & Saussier, 2025). Therefore, the private partner predominantly shoulders the risks of design, construction, finances, infrastructure or equipment operation, availability, and unforeseen circumstances, such as force majeure. These risks are transferred from the public to the private sector. By outsourcing the public service, public authorities reduce the difficulty of controlling and managing public organizations, as well as the risk of political interferences that characterizes them (Beuve, Saussier, & de Brux, 2018).

The public and private interactions range from public work contracts to full privatization (Fabre & Straub, 2023). PPPs are defined as global contracts in which the public sector gives the mission to the private sector to deliver infrastructure or public services traditionally managed by the public sector, including financing, design, operation, and maintenance in one unique contract with delayed payment (Auriol & Saussier, 2025). Thus, PPPs exclude pure public work contracts and full privatization.

Public authorities dispose three main tools for investing in public infrastructure: traditional public procurement, availability contracts, and concessions (de Brux & Saussier, 2018). According to de Brux and Saussier (2018), traditional public procurement involves short-term contracts where a public legal entity entrusts construction or service needs to a public or a private entity in exchange for immediate payment. Availability contracts and concessions are two types of PPPs (Auriol & Saussier, 2025).

Availability contracts, originating from UK PFIs since 1992, involve a public entity assigning a contractor a long-term contract in exchange for remuneration paid by the public entity, often in the form of rent, spread over time (Marty, 2024). These contracts, known as government-paid PPPs, are typically used for social infrastructure projects like hospitals and prisons, with funding coming solely from the public budget. In contrast, concession agreements, known as user-paid PPPs, involve private entities financing projects and receiving payment based on the usage of infrastructure. These PPPs can take various forms such as Build-Operate-Transfer (BOT), Design-Build-Finance-Operate (DBFO), and Build-Own-Operate-Transfer (BOOT) (Auriol & Saussier, 2025). Transport infrastructure projects usually use concession contracts, while social infrastructure projects in health and education sectors commonly use availability contracts (Auriol & Saussier, 2025; Fabre & Straub, 2023).

The present research centers on concession contracts, which are generally characterized by long-term, global, and administrative involvement in economic infrastructure (Bensaïd & Marty, 2014). Traditional public procurement, availability contracts, and privatization are out of the research scope. In concession arrangements, the public entity delegates the design, construction, financing, operation, and maintenance of infrastructure or the provision of a public service to the

concessionaire (Bensaïd & Marty, 2014). The concessionary takes on the demand risk, specifically the traffic risk, as the project's economic and financial balance heavily relies on predicting infrastructure usage rates (Bensaïd & Marty, 2014). User payments fund the project, but the traffic risk affecting income makes it riskier for financial backers, lenders, and shareholders (Bensaïd & Marty, 2014). The concessionaire is responsible for the necessary works, with financing and remuneration related to service performance (de Brux & Saussier, 2018).

2.1.2 Concession PPPs in Transport Monopoly Infrastructure

Concession contracts are the oldest and most common type of PPPs. France has a long history of using public–private arrangements for infrastructure services (Bensaïd & Marty, 2014). Infrastructure concessions date back to ancient times and resurfaced during the Middle Ages (Bensaïd & Marty, 2014). Medieval rulers granted concessions for maintaining and operating essential infrastructure like roads and bridges (Auriol & Saussier, 2025). The concept of PPPs gained momentum in the 16th century with concessions being granted for complex public work projects (Auriol & Saussier, 2025; Fabre & Straub, 2023).

Public–private contracts for public works and services saw a significant increase in the 19th century during the Industrial Revolution. This expansion aimed to modernize transportation and communication networks, particularly for the interurban infrastructure like railways and trams (Auriol & Saussier, 2025; Fabre & Straub, 2023). Due to limited financial resources, governments granted concessions to the private sector for the construction and operation of railways. This practice extended during the colonial era, spreading from Europe to support the extraction and transportation of natural resources in overseas territories including Africa (Auriol & Saussier, 2025). In the 20th century, concessions for highways, airports, and utilities became prevalent on a global scale.

Empirical research on the impacts of PPPs have primarily focused on three key sectors on a large scale since the 1980s: infrastructure, education, and health (Fabre & Straub, 2023). Infrastructure encompasses long lasting and irreversible investments that support public services in areas such as energy, transport, water and sanitation, and telecommunications (Dinthilac & Wei, 2016). Economic infrastructure investments play a crucial role in the development and prosperity of

societies worldwide. They stimulate economic growth by generating employment opportunities, boosting productivity, and attracting foreign investments. For example, well-established transportation networks can lower shipping costs and transit times, ultimately enhancing the competitiveness of businesses and improving the overall efficiency of economies (Auriol & Saussier, 2025).

Private sector involvement in infrastructure experienced a significant surge in the 1990s (Guasch et al., 2005). The transport sector necessitates substantial investments in infrastructure upgrades, modernization, and expansion to meet growing demands (Auriol & Saussier, 2025). PPPs have become an appealing option for bridging the infrastructure gap, given the pressing need for investment and public financial constraints. PPPs are commonly used in various transport subsectors such as roads, railways, ports, and airports, making transport projects reasonable candidates for PPP initiatives (Fabre & Straub, 2023). While specific considerations and design requirements may vary by subsector, they all face exposure to high demand risks throughout the project's lifespan.

Infrastructure concession contracts involve an investor who finances infrastructure in exchange for a monopoly right to exploit it (Auriol & Saussier, 2025). Experience shows that competition in concession PPPs can be low especially in middle and large infrastructure sectors, which have significant entry barriers due to high transaction costs. Competitive procedures often have high transaction costs. Transaction costs in PPPs can be categorized into ex ante, ex post, and additional costs. Ex ante costs involve search costs related to the competitive dialogue process and the "ink costs" of writing the contracts. Ex post costs include supervision expenses. For example, a consortium is established for the execution of the PPP contract by the companies selected at the end of the bidding process. To manage the partnership contract, additional ex post transaction costs go beyond accounting and financial elements because it relies on specific internal competencies of follow-ups, constant cooperation, and information exchange (Marty & Voisin, 2016).

Extra costs in private finance projects stem from the operator's profit margin, follow-up expenses, equity capital remuneration, or higher additional financial costs (Bensaïd & Marty, 2014). Furthermore, bid processes may be compromised by corruption or underbidding, leading to firms

failing to deliver on their promises in hopes of gaining ex post rents through contract adjustments or renegotiations (Fabre & Straub, 2023). Bilateral negotiations may result on repeated relationships and a lock-in effect with key players, benefiting from entrenched positions, thus weaking competition (Fabre & Straub, 2023).

Infrastructure concession PPP contracts are known for their complexity and length, offering more flexibility than traditional public procurement contracts and often leading to favorable renegotiations (Auriol & Saussier, 2025). These long-term incomplete contracts require adjustments due to various factors like changing needs, technological advancements, macroeconomic shocks, institutional weaknesses, and political instability (Auriol & Saussier, 2025; Fabre & Straub, 2023). Moreover, concessionaires may encounter political risks such as policy reversals and government interference in contract termination. Empirical research indicates that renegotiations are common in transportation contracts.

For example, in Latin American and Caribbean countries between the mid-1980s and 2000, 55% of transportation contracts were renegotiated (Guasch, 2004). Guasch et al. (2017) built on Guasch's (2004) empirical work, focusing on the evolution of PPP contracts in Latin America over 25 years. They found that transport concession contracts are frequently renegotiated, typically within a year of being signed. Renegotiations are more likely to occur in environments with lower institutional quality Guasch et al., 2008). This trend is not limited to developing countries but also observed in advanced economies (Auriol & Saussier, 2025). Therefore, PPP contracts often include review clauses to maintain economic equilibrium throughout their duration, with renegotiations sometimes necessary to ensure contract viability and adapt to changing user needs (Bensaïd & Marty, 2014).

In conclusion, the historical development of PPPs demonstrates that concession PPPs have been the preferred option for private sector involvement in the transport sector. Concession PPPs in the middle and large transport sectors are characterized by low competition, high transaction costs, and long-term and incomplete flexible contracts. PPPs have contributed to both macroeconomic development and microeconomic benefits. PPPs support macroeconomic development by directing savings towards long-term investments and financing the real economy, thereby

accelerating the implementation of public investment programs. They enable the public sector to avoid debt constraint by distributing the budgetary burden across specific investment projects and initiating multiple projects simultaneously. Additionally, PPPs offer microeconomic advantages such as efficiency gains and risk-sharing between the public and private partners (Bensaïd & Marty, 2014). They allow public authorities to leverage economies of scale and scope, tap into private sector capabilities, enhance quality standards, and reduce costs and delays (Beuve, Saussier, & de Brux, 2018; Saussier et al., 2009). Nevertheless, the choice to utilize PPPs has also important political and social motivations (Fabre & Straub, 2023).

2.1.3 Social and Political Acceptance of Concession PPPs

PPPs are beneficial for boosting investment in high-quality infrastructure amidst the growing financial limitations faced by public decision makers. However, it is not a miracle solution either in terms of investment scale or expenses (Auriol & Saussier, 2025; Bensaïd & Marty, 2014). PPPs encounter obstacles like intricate contractual arrangements, extended financial commitments, and the possibility of facing public opposition (Auriol & Saussier, 2025). Government may opt for PPPs to achieve political objectives and circumvent budget restrictions (Saussier et al., 2009). Additionally, PPPs have been subject to criticism for various reasons like high transaction costs, lack of transparency and corruption, frequent renegotiations, and governance failures (Bensaïd & Marty, 2014).

First, PPP projects have been criticized for their higher transaction costs compared to public projects (Blanc-Brude et al., 2009). In addition to ex ante and ex post costs, private finance projects incur extra expenses such as the operator's profit margin, follow-up costs, equity capital remuneration, and higher financial costs (Bensaïd & Marty, 2014). Bensaïd and Marty (2014) argue that these additional costs may be justified by the benefits of ensuring service quality, covering cost overruns and delays, and acting as an insurance premium. Moreover, the additional transaction costs in PPPs can be lower than the higher financing costs faced by private borrowers compared to public borrowers (Bensaïd & Marty, 2014).

Furthermore, the simple comparison between the private and public costs of debt may not be relevant (Fabre & Straub, 2023). The private sector finances public projects but does not directly

fund them (Dinthilac & Wei, 2016; Engel et al., 2013). Financing involves determining who raises the debt for the operation's structure (Marty, 2016). Private financing can lead to a more efficient financing structure and better choices during the construction phase, as the private sector may be more adept at monitoring projects and resolving key information asymmetries (Fabre & Straub, 2023). Funding involves understanding the resources that will be generated directly or indirectly by the project to enable debt repayment and cover costs (Marty, 2016). In concession PPPs, users and taxpayers pay for building and operating the facilities. Moreover, many PPPs may rely on significant shares of public financing, making private management and finance not entirely equivalent. Hidden social costs may also arise when comparing the cost of private versus public finance (Fabre & Straub, 2023).

Second, transparency and corruption are significant concerns in PPPs. These issues are not unique to Africa but are also prevalent in other regions. Research by Guasch et al. (2005) on 307 water and transport projects across five Latin American countries between 1989 and 2000 highlighted that reduced corruption and efficient bureaucracy, supported by regulatory bodies and institutions, can encourage investment. Studies have shown that corruption rates do not significantly differ between PPPs and traditional procurement methods, as seen in the Odebrecht corruption case in Latin America (Campos et al., 2021). While transparency and corruption are global issues, they are not the main focus of our research in Africa.

Third, much of the research on PPPs' performance view frequent renegotiations as a sign of failure. When renegotiations are significant in scope, public authorities often perceive them negatively, considering them a reflection of weak public governance. Renegotiations can generate additional risks for both the public entity and the contract (Marty, 2017). Renegotiating a contract may face social acceptance challenges, potentially leading to criticism from stakeholders and political costs. Moreover, there is a litigation risk involving third parties like political opponents or the firms that were excluded during the contract award process (Kirat & Marty, 2017). This risk may hinder mutually beneficial renegotiations or the continuation of the contractual relationship (Marty, 2017).

However, theoretical perspectives suggest that renegotiations in PPPs are not always negative and solely due to governance failure but rather stem from the inherent complexities of PPPs and the

sectors in which they operate (Auriol & Saussier, 2025; Marty, 2017). Renegotiations allow contracts to be adjusted to unforeseen conditions, facilitating proper execution (Marty, 2017). Empirical research by scholars confirm that renegotiations are crucial for adapting long-term contracts to unforeseen contingencies, such as the response to the COVID-19 pandemic. The negative perceptions surrounding contract adjustments indicate that infrastructure concessions can offer flexibility and benefits (Auriol & Saussier, 2025).

In summary, PPPs can help increase investment in quality infrastructure. However, they are not a fix-all solution and come with their own challenges, such as complicated contracts, potential public opposition and political acceptance. Moreover, PPPs have been criticized for their high costs, lack of transparency and corruption, and frequent renegotiations. While these renegotiations are often seen as a sign of poor governance, they can also be due to the inherent complexities of PPPs and do not always signal failure.

2.1.4 PPPs as Hybrids

The present research utilizes the term "hybrids" to redefine PPPs. Battilana and Dorado (2010) and Pache and Santos (2010) reintroduced this term to describe social enterprises that blend commercial and non-commercial logics. Hybrids are (inter-)organizational arrangements that pursue social and economic objectives through formal and informal relationships among public, for profit, and non-profit private entities (Quélin et al., 2017). This concept involves balancing tradeoffs between economic and social goals, combining state logic and market logic at a macro level (Friedland & Alford, 1991). The definition of hybrids suggests that entities amalgamate aspects of multiple organizational forms (Battilana & Lee, 2014, Besharov & Smith, 2014; Pache & Thornton, 2021), such as PPPs. PPPs brings a combination of high hybridity both in logics and governance.

2.1.4.1 PPPs Combining Hybrid Logics

There are three key characteristics of concession PPPs as hybrids. First, PPPs function as project-based entities involving multiple stakeholders encompassing both public and private partners (Villani et al., 2017) and third parties. For example, the involvement of numerous third parties may

exert pressure on politicians and governments, prompting the renegotiation of contractual terms (Kivleniece & Quélin, 2012).

Second, PPP contracts typically encompass a lengthy but bounded duration (Maatala et al., 2017). Within this specified timeframe, the public entity delegates a comprehensive mission to the private partner, who in turn commits to deploying the necessary resources to achieve the stipulated results and performance objectives (de Brux & Saussier, 2018). In the context of PPPs, hybrids can be conceptualized as having both market-like autonomy and public-like supervision (Williamson, 1999). Public actors play dual roles as both institutional "role-setters" by representing regulators and legislators and direct partners of private organizations (Quélin et al., 2019). For example, the government may assume dual roles as both a regulator and a partner in collaborations between the public and private sectors (Quélin et al., 2017). The distinct roles and objectives of the public and private sectors may engender divergent logics within PPPs.

Third, organizations increasingly adopt hybrid forms that draw from and try to integrate competing logics (Pache & Santos, 2010). Therefore, a special purpose vehicle (SPV), a project company created for PPP contracts represent a novel hybrid structure that integrates diverse logics under a single organizational roof (Jay, 2013; Kivleniece & Quélin, 2012; Pache & Thornton, 2021; Villani et al., 2017; York et al., 2016). The dual roles of public actors have a direct effect on the contracting and coordination mechanisms in PPPs. Coupled with the need to conciliate the competing goals of the wide array of both internal and external stakeholders, public–private hybrids render PPPs complex entities (Jay, 2013).

Based on the above definitions, PPPs exemplify such hybrids (Jay, 2013). PPPs bring together public, private, and sometimes non-governmental actors to create value beyond traditional firm–customer relationships, addressing broader stakeholder needs and addressing public service challenges (Kivleniece & Quélin, 2012). The collaboration represents a strategic shift towards leveraging diverse organizational capabilities to meet complex societal objectives. PPPs have become a well-established organizational form of procurement method, leveraging the complementary resources and expertise of the private sector to deliver public services and infrastructure.

Therefore, we define PPPs as hybrids combining both government and business form and multiple organizational logics where logics coexist in the same field, thus simultaneously influencing organizations in that field (Battilana & Lee, 2014). Diverse actors introduce divergent institutional logics into the equation, enriching the complexity in the partnerships. The integration of actors from both sectors forms a hybrid entity: the SPV. SPV is a hybrid entity that combines various actors and their associated logics in the context of PPPs. As a hybrid organization, it is exposed to multiple institutional expectations and pressures simultaneously (Meyer & Höllerer, 2016). As complex entities, they are influenced by a diverse range of internal and external stakeholders (Jay, 2013), with distinct decision-making and legal boundaries, as well as a more complex multi-stakeholder set of relationship with mixed economic and social demands. These institutional demands are characterized by increasing institutional plurality, which turns into complexity when they become incompatible and/or contradictory (Greenwood et al., 2011; Pache & Santos, 2013b). This incompatibility refers to inconsistent and competing logics within the organizations, thus generating tensions and conflicts. Multiple third parties can put pressures on politicians and governments to renegotiate contractual terms (Kivleniece & Quélin, 2012). Therefore, SPV integrates both public and private actors with hybrid governance and multiple logics under a single organizational roof to face institutional demands and pressures.

2.1.4.2 PPPs as Hybrid Governance Forms

Hybrid forms of collaboration, blending economic and social interests, have gained increasing attention in management studies (Kivleniece & Quélin, 2012; Quélin et al., 2017). From a public management perspective, involving the private sector in infrastructure represents a shift from the value for money focus of the new public management approach to a "collaborative governance" model (Auriol & Saussier, 2025). This collaborative governance enhances the public sector's ability to address new challenges. PPPs leverage the synergies between public authorities and private companies by adopting collaborative governance approaches (Gottlieb et al., 2018). Therefore, hybrids in governance can be seen as a blend of market-like autonomy and public-like supervision (Williamson, 1999). The government can play dual roles as partners and regulators in public and private collaborations (Quélin et al., 2017).

However, the mixed type of governance control presents challenges in the field due to the nature of contracts in any organizational form, in particular, the unpredictability from the incomplete and long-term nature of concession PPP contracts (Da Silveira, 2018). The institutional environment also impacts the governance structure of a PPP emphasizing the importance of the context in which transactions occur. A strong legal framework ensures proper enforcement and fulfillment of contracts, reducing uncertainty for the public sector (Fleta-Asín et al., 2024). In contexts with weak governance and political opportunism, a good regulatory framework is crucial (Guasch et al., 2005). Conversely, a weak legal framework increases the influence of uncertainty on the governance choice for PPPs.

PPPs face risks from environmental and behavioral uncertainties. External uncertainty stems from economic instability and deficient productive conditions, which are more common in developing countries. In environments with insufficient regulatory frameworks to address or reduce the risk of contract breaches, the investing party may face unresolved conflicts due to underdeveloped legal systems (Fleta-Asín et al., 2024). Consequently, the higher the project's specificity and uncertainty, the more control the private party in the PPP should have. Behavioral uncertainty, known also as opportunistic behavior, can come from the public contractor, the contracted private company, or third parties (de Brux & Saussier, 2018).

Furthermore, PPPs are also vulnerable to risks stemming from incomplete and asymmetric information (Marty, 2017). In PPPs, various and sometimes conflicting expectations, complex accountability relationships, and limited access to information due to stakeholder constraints must be considered (Marty & Voisin, 2016). Mitigating information asymmetry can be achieved through ex ante measures in award procedures and contract selection. For instance, competitive bidding helps reduce informational disparities.

Marty (2017) suggests that employing fixed-price contracts is a best practice to minimize the risk of adverse selection, especially for less productive companies. This approach allows the public entity to address the risks associated with adverse selection. Furthermore, the bidding process can require all competition participants to pay an entry fee for their proposals to be evaluated. This fee will be distributed to the firms selected for the second phase as compensation for their future

negotiation costs. This approach highlights the benefits of the competitive dialogue process over traditional competitive tendering in reducing risks for the public sector due to information imbalances. In terms of financing, private financing serves as a tool for reducing and managing risks related to existing information asymmetries in favor of the private contractor. Additionally, the public buyer can leverage accumulated experience to reduce information asymmetries. Ex post, the use of regulatory mechanisms is crucial for contract enforcement (Marty, 2017).

Public authorities have an interest in being informed by the nature and terms of contractual relationships established by the project company within the private sphere to ensure their mission (Marty & Voisin, 2016). This includes subcontractors of the project company, such as the contracts subcontracted to small- and medium-sized enterprises or social economy actors and contracts awarded to financiers and their affiliated companies. The goal is to strengthen transparency regarding the structure and profitability of PPPs. However, increased transparency on the financial dimensions of contracts can increase the risk of legal action. For example, revealing the exact risk distribution between parties could result in lawsuits alleging misuse of public funds or competitor claims based on differences between the initial competition terms and the actual contract signed. These factors highlight the complexity of PPP arrangements, the diverse stakeholders involved, and the interplay of management, financial, and public aspects (Marty & Voisin, 2016)

In sum, PPPs can be described as a hybrid governance structure that involves network governance, a contractual framework, recognition of interdependencies, negotiation capabilities, and trust. The role of regulation is salient in airport PPPs due to the complex interaction among airport ownership, management, and regulation. When the public party has limited administrative capacity, they may face challenges during renegotiation or contract renewal (Fabre & Straub, 2023). To address these issues, transparency, reporting mechanisms, and effective management tools are essential for maintaining the contractual relationship (Marty & Voisin, 2016).

2.2 Theories on Hybridity

Various theories have been used to study hybridity (Battilana et al., 2017; Pache & Thornton, 2021). Battilana et al. (2017) identify eight distinctive perspectives on hybrids including organizational identity, transaction cost economics, network forms, categories, organizational

archetypes, institutional logics, culture, and transitioning economic regimes. They classify these eight perspectives into three broad approaches: hybrids as organizational identities, hybrids as distinct organizational forms, and hybrids as the combination of multiple institutional logics. These different approaches enrich the hybrid organization research (Pache & Thornton, 2021). Organizational identity answers the question "Who are we?" (Larçon & Reitter, 1979); it therefore defines the "heart" of the organization (Szostak Tapon, 2006). The organizational forms perspectives contribute to considerations of hybrid structures, such as the transaction cost theory (Coase, 1937; Williamson, 1985). A second set of theoretical perspectives, such as resource dependence theory (Pfeffer & Salancik, 1978), social network perspectives (Powell, 1990), and institutional theory (Thornton & Ocasio, 2008), traces hybrid governance structures back to the dependence of organizations on and the interaction with a broader social structure. As we are interested in creating a common logic within PPPs, this research focuses on the PPPs as hybrids as the combination of multiple institutional logics.

2.2.1 Transaction Cost Theory

The organizational forms perspectives focus on the hybrid governance structures through institutional economic theories, particularly transaction cost theory (TCT). Building on the work of Coase (1937) and Williamson (1985), TCT has been applied to various organizational phenomena such as PPPs. TCT explains hybrid governance structures mainly based on the cost efficiency considerations (Ebers & Oerlemans, 2016). Firms employ hybrid governance structure, a mix of market and hierarchical governance mechanisms, when it is more cost-effective compared to governing their transactions solely through market or hierarchical structures.

The fundamental concepts of TCT are specific asset, uncertainty, and frequency. These transaction characteristics are linked to governance mechanisms (market, hierarchies, hybrids) to minimize transaction costs (Cuypers et a., 2021). Asset specificity refers to the level of specific investment involved in a transaction, which is considered as the most important determinant of governance (Cuypers et al., 2021). Williamson (1985) proposed four types of asset specificity, namely, site specificity, physical asset specificity, human asset specificity, and dedicated assets. However, a significant gap exists in TCT studies as they often focus on the asset-specific investments by one

exchange partner without considering the investments made by the other partner. It would be more advantageous to consider asset specificity of both partners (Cuypers et al., 2021).

TCT has been one of the predominant theoretical lenses to understanding the uncertainty inherent in PPPs (Quélin et al., 2017). This uncertainty may arise from the environment (Beuve, Saussier, & de Brux, 2018) and/or behavior (Cuypers et al., 2021). Environmental uncertainty refers to the unpredictability of future world conditions, encompassing economic and regulatory contexts (Beuve, Saussier, & de Brux, 2018). Governance modes are influenced by environmental conditions, adapting to external changes like regulatory shifts (Cuypers et al., 2021).

The behavior uncertainty refers to the challenge of predicting the opportunistic actions of others (Cuypers et al., 2021). This uncertainty stems from environmental uncertainty, which can heighten the risk of opportunistic behavior. In addition to asset specificity, factors like cultural and linguistic differences between exchange partners contribute to information asymmetry and, consequently, behavioral uncertainty (Cuypers et al., 2015).

TCT aligns with institutional perspectives by emphasizing the institutional environment's role in analyzing hybrid arrangements, where factors such as political stability affect PPPs (Quélin et al., 2017). The present research underscores the impact of uncertainty in the institutional environment on the governance of logics. The institutional environment of PPPs encompasses the social and normative context that surrounds the actors, including external influences that shape socially acceptable economic behavior. Understanding the environmental context is essential as it reveals where organizational pressures occur and can influence how organizations respond to institutional influences (Oliver, 1991).

However, TCT faces a challenge in not considering the impact of social relations within the wider social structure (Ebers & Oerlemans, 2016), including interconnectedness. Interconnectedness refers to the density of inter-organizational relations among entities in an organizational field (Pfeffer & Salancik, 1978). In the face of environmental uncertainty, interconnectedness is seen as a contextual factor influencing organizations' compliance or resistance to institutional demands and expectation (Oliver, 1991). It is crucial to focus on how governance arrangements are

embedded in particular social relations and the overall institutional context to understand fully the governance of transaction relationship.

2.2.2 Resource Dependence Theory

The resource dependence theory provides insight into how organizations manage relations with other entities and analyze power dynamics in inter-organizational relations (Pfeffer & Salancik, 1978). This theory is considered a comprehensive approach to understanding organizations, emphasizing the social context to explain behavior (Pfeffer, 1987). Organizations are interconnected and are constrained by a network of interdependencies with other organizations. These interdependencies create power dynamics that impact inter-organizational and intra-organizational behavior.

The resource dependence perspective also focuses on the power-dependent nature of conflict and action, helping to identify the content of such action and the conditions in which it is likely to occur (Pfeffer, 1987). Power within organizations involves controlling the flow of resources, including money, physical assets, capital, and human resources (Pfeffer & Salancik, 1978). Resources dependence serves as the foundation of inter-organizational control. Power is a relational concept that arises from social interactions. Power is described as a characteristic of relationships where one actor's beliefs or behaviors are influenced by another actor or system (Lawrence & Buchanan, 2017). Resources dependence emphasizes power as domination through ownership and control of production means and the role of power as an alternative to formal authority in organizations through routines and ongoing practices that benefit specific groups without those groups necessarily establishing or maintaining those practices.

The relationship between power and institutions has gained new interest in institutional research as the focus has shifted from isomorphism, legitimacy, and institutionalization to change, interests, and conflict in the evolution of organizational fields (Lawrence & Buchanan, 2017). This relationship is bidirectional (Lawrence & Buchanan, 2017). Institutions control the behaviors, beliefs and opportunities of individuals, groups, organizations, and societies, while individual and collective actors influence the institutional context in which they operate. Together, these dynamics shape the power dynamics within organizational fields, significantly impacting the

networks that structure the experiences of actors. In the institutional analysis, institutional control encompasses coercive and resource-based forms of control, as well as social and professional norms and taken-for-granted assumptions (Lawrence & Buchanan, 2017). Institutional theory focuses on guiding actors' behavior in a field through social and cultural systems. Research on institutional control has evolved to acknowledge the power dynamics of conflicting logics and institutional change (Thornton & Ocasio, 1999). While both approaches address resource-based institutional control, they also cover distinct areas of interest.

The emergence of institutional complexity as a key area of institutional research has led to an increase in resistance to institutional control (Greenwood et al., 2011). This area of study suggests that organizational actors may need to engage in strategic and creative resistance to navigate amongst different sources of institutional control (Pache & Santos, 2010; Smets et al., 2012). Since Oliver's (1991) exposition of strategic responses to institutional pressures, it has been acknowledged that organizational actors respond in diverse ways, including various forms of resistance. Organizations take actions to manage external interdependencies, enabling them to maintain their autonomy and pursue their interests (Pfeffer, 1987).

Our research focuses on the strategic responses to institutional pressures, ranging from conformance to resistance, from powerless to influential, and from habitual to opportunistic (Oliver, 1991). There is a noticeable scarcity of research on intermediate strategies such as compromise, avoidance, and defiance (Lawrence & Buchanan, 2017). We delve into the resistance from individuals and organizations to field-level rules, norms, and beliefs, with the objective of investigating the establishment of a common logic within public and private partners.

2.2.3 Social Network Perspectives

The social network perspective further provides valuable insights into how organizations, with their governance structure, can effectively navigate the constraints and opportunities arising from their relations with other organizations or stakeholders (Powell & Oberg, 2017). All organizations are embedded in both rational and institutionalized contexts. This perspective is instrumental in visualizing the emergence of a field and its evolution over time. The interconnections between networks and fields are significant and warrant closer examination (Powell & Oberg, 2017).

Networks, being relational, exist as long as the relationships persist, whereas the organizational fields are founded on studies of inter-organizational networks (Powell & Oberg, 2017). The four steps process of field formation are fundamentally relational, namely, 1) increased interaction among participants as dictated by societal rules, 2) the emergence of well-defined status orders from vertical relationships and coalitions formed by horizontal relationships, 3) enhanced information sharing within existing relationships, and 4) mutual awareness and responsiveness, characterized by bidirectional ties of recognition and observation (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983). PPPs aim to form coalitions through collaborative partnerships and relationships among partners. The social network perspective enhances our understanding of the embeddedness of individuals and organizations within larger networks.

However, explaining the impact of social relationships on the behavior of organizations and individuals is challenging without considering institutional logics (Friedland & Alford, 1991). Logics uphold the rules and conventions within a specific organizational field, making the networks meaningful (Powell & Oberg, 2017). The cultural sphere of different fields might lead to different understandings of the same type of relationship. Networks shape fields by influencing relationship formation and their outcomes. The resources and connections within these networks, along with the meanings attributed by participants and observers, depend upon prevailing logics. Organizational structure and strategic responses are guided by institutional logics.

Contrary to the research of Battilana et al. (2017), the institutional logics perspective is not parallel to concepts like culture or transitioning economic regimes, despite the fact that a significant portion of the scholarship on hybrid organizations and hybridity utilizes the "institutional logics perspective" as both a method and meta-theory (Pache & Thornton, 2021). It is important to distinguish between a meta-theory, a theory, and a concept. A meta-theory is a theory about a theory, serving as a tool for theory development by specifying the concepts, mechanisms, and conditions of other theories (Pache & Thornton, 2021; Thornton et al., 2012). Meanwhile, a theory aims to explain and predict behavior in particular contexts and is subject to direct or indirect testing (Thornton et al., 2012).

The institutional logics perspective has been employed as a meta-theory in research on hybrid organization and hybridity to analyze the institutional contexts in which hybridity takes place, as well as the conflicts and compromises between heterogeneous logics in PPPs as hybrids. To fully understand the concept of institutional logics, it is necessary to situate it within the broader framework of institutional theory and institutional analysis (Thornton & Ocasio, 2008).

2.2.4 Institutional Theory

Institutional theory covers a broad body of literature that has grown in popularity in the organizational studies (Greenwood et al., 2017). It synthesizes the approaches and theories of other disciplines such as management, economies, sociology, and social psychology (Wang, 2019). The main themes of institutional theory include legitimacy, isomorphism and decoupling, organizational fields, institutional logics, and hybrid organization. The following presents a brief review of the main themes of institutional theory.

Legitimacy, together with isomorphism and decoupling are the core ideas in institutional theory. Legitimacy is considered as a fundamental concept of organizational institutionalism, which has spread widely in social sciences (Deephouse et al., 2017). The concept of legitimacy is defined by Suchman (1995, p. 574) as "a generalized perception or assumption that the actions of an entity are desirable, proper, or appropriate within some socially constructed system of norms, values, beliefs, and definitions." He considers legitimacy from both institutional and strategic perspectives to emphasize how social beliefs are embedded in organizations and how to manage legitimacy to achieve organizational goals. An enumerative definition by Bitektine (2011) summarizes legitimacy research and considers organizational legitimacy as a perception of organizations by stakeholders. As this study focuses on institutional logics and hybrid organizations, legitimacy is less relevant to the present study.

Isomorphism and decoupling are two central theoretical concepts in institutional theory. Organizations are continuously exposed to the coexistence of multiple and sometimes divergent environmental pressures caused by new regulations, heterogeneous stakeholder expectations, and technical and operational intricacy. DiMaggio and Powell (1983) define isomorphism as the process in which institutionalized ideas pressure organizations to adopt similar structures and

forms, because the organizations' practice embodies similar social norms and values and are operating under similar task environment. Three kinds of pressures are outlined by DiMaggio and Powell (1983) to explain why organizations become increasingly similar: coercive pressures from power relationship and politics (e.g., the states), mimetic pressures arising primarily from uncertainty, and normative pressures from what is widely considered a proper course of action or a moral duty. Mimetic and normative pressures often stem from peer organizations or groupings.

Decoupling is defined by Meyer and Rowan (1977) as a deliberate disconnection between organizational structures that enhance legitimacy and organizational practices that are believed within the organization to be technically efficient. It means that organizations may adopt new structures without necessarily implementing the related practice when facing institutional pressures (Greenwood et al., 2017). It can be a rational response to demands to organizations by achieving legitimacy through their structure and remaining efficient or consistent through their actual actions. Greenwood et al. (2017) argue that decoupling was considered as a deliberate effort to safeguard organizational efficiency by the early studies, whereas it is a result of heterogenous organizational fields with multiple and often contradictory pressures on the organization and with the aim to survive. It can be a useful strategy to decouple structure from action but organizations that decouple also set an internal precedence that might be harmful to its other operations, which pose questions about whether coupling or not decoupling is sustainable over time and what its ultimate institutional consequences may be, particularly in the PPP for a long term.

The organizational field is another key theme in institutional theory, and it has been the central construct of neo-institutional theory (Scott, 1991). The field refers to any constituent such as the government, critical exchange partners, sources of funding, professional and trade associations, special interest groups, and the public that imposes a coercive, normative, or mimetic influence on the organization (Scott, 1991). DiMaggio and Powell (1983, p. 148) define the field as those organizations that in the aggregate represent a recognized area of institutional life, thus the organizational fields refer to "key suppliers, resources, product consumers, regulatory agencies, and other organizations that produce similar services or products." By focusing on structural dynamics of organizational fields, DiMaggio and Powell (1983) extends the emphasis on isomorphism from societal level to organizational fields, leading to increase in isomorphism in

organizational forms and practices, such as the competitive isomorphism among the organizations for resources and customers and the institutional isomorphism for political power and institutional legitimacy. For instance, in the 1970s, from the societal/macro level, Meyer and Rowan (1977) focusing on three central concepts—institutional rules, legitimacy, and isomorphism—highlighted the role of culture conformity to the institutional rules in the environment, leading to isomorphism in the formal structures of organizations. The organizational forms look similar, but the structuration differs depending on the alignment of field activities with the institutional sectors; the professions, the state and the market (Thornton et al., 2012). They are considered as the precursors of institutional logic.

2.2.5 Institutional Logics Perspective as Theoretical Framework

The institutional logics perspective is well suited for the present study which aims to identify the multiple logics within PPPs at both the organizational field and organizational levels and understand their conflicts leading to institutional complexity and the strategic responses to successfully achieve the common logic between the public and private sectors.

The evolution of PPPs indicates a preference for concession PPPs for integrating the private sector into the transport sector. These types of PPPs, common in the middle and large transport sectors, typically exhibit low competition, high transaction costs, and long-term, flexible yet incomplete contracts. PPPs have stimulated macroeconomic growth and provided microeconomic benefits. They facilitate long-term investments, accelerate public programs, and allow the public sector to manage debt constraints (de Brux & Saussier, 2018; Saussier et al., 2009). Additionally, they offer efficiency gains and risk sharing and allow access to private sectors resources (Bensaïd & Marty, 2014).

However, political and social motivations significantly influence the decision to use PPPs (Fabre & Straub, 2023). Furthermore, they are not a universal solution and present their own challenges, including complex contracts, possible public resistance, and political approval. Additionally, PPPs have faced criticism for high expenses, lack of transparency, corruption, and frequent renegotiations in transport. The simple comparison between the private and public costs of debt may not be relevant (Fabre & Straub, 2023). The higher costs can be reasonable acting as an

insurance premium (Bensaïd & Marty, 2014). The additional transaction costs in PPPs can be lower than the higher financing costs faced by private borrowers compared to public borrowers (Bensaïd & Marty, 2014). Corruption issues are universal and out of our research scope. While renegotiations are typically viewed as a reflection of inadequate governance, they can also be attributed to the intricate nature of PPPs and do not necessarily indicate failure.

PPPs in transportation is an emblematic sector where the tensions between market logic and public service are prominently displayed. These partnerships exemplify hybrid organizations by nature, bringing together public and private sectors, blending government and business forms, and incorporating multiple organizational logics that coexist within the same field, thereby influencing organizations within that field (Battilana & Lee, 2014). The involvement of diverse actors introduces divergent institutional logics into the partnerships, adding complexity.

Furthermore, PPPs can be viewed as a hybrid form of governance, shifting the private sector in infrastructure from the value-for-money focus of new public management approach towards a "collaborative governance" model with public authorities (Auriol & Saussier, 2025). This model combines market-like autonomy and public-like supervision, allowing governments to be partners and regulators in public and private collaborations (Quélin et al., 2017; Williamson, 1999).

This collaborative governance poses new challenges for governments in terms of regulations, network governance, a contractual framework, recognition of interdependences, negotiation capabilities, and trust. Limited administrative capability on the part of the public sector may pose challenges during renegotiations or contract renewals (Fabre & Straub, 2023). This raises questions about the hybrid nature of PPPs, which mix public service objectives with private practices, often contradictory in terms of indicators and regulations.

In conclusion, this study finds that the institutional logics perspective is effective in identifying the multiple institutional logics within PPPs in transportation and exploring the complexities arising from conflicts between these logics. Concession PPPs have been favored in the transport sector, stimulating macroeconomic and microeconomic benefits despite their high transaction costs and complex, long-term contracts. The adoption of PPPs is often influenced by political and

social considerations and face criticisms. However, PPPs in transport represent a shift towards a collaborative hybrid governance model.

2.2.5.1 Institutional Logics Definitions

The concept of institutional logic emerged as part of the development of institutional theory since 1970 (Greenwood et al., 2017). By focusing on the effects of differentiated institutional logics on individuals and organizations, instead of isomorphism, Friedland and Alford (1991) as well as Thornton and Ocasio (2008) created a new approach to institutional analysis. While the early scholars of institutional study focused on isomorphism at the societal level and on the organizational fields, Thornton and Ocasio (2008) placed institutional logics within the context of institutional theory and institutional analysis.

Institutional logics perspective was first introduced by (Alford & Friedland, 1985). They described capitalism, state bureaucracy, and political democracy as three contending institutional orders which have different practices and beliefs that shape how individuals engage in political struggles. Friedland and Alford (1991, p. 243) further developed the concept and defined institutional logics as "symbolic systems, ways of ordering reality, and thereby rendering experience of time and space meaningful." Therefore, institutions are conceived as "both supraorganizational patterns of activity through which humans conduct their material life in time and space, and symbolic systems through which they categorize that activity and infuse it with meaning" (Friedland & Alford, 1991, p. 242). The central institutions of contemporary capitalist West include the capitalist market, bureaucratic state, democracy, nuclear family, and Christian religion (Friedland & Alford, 1991), while logics comprise both symbolic elements such as shared beliefs, interests, and goals, and material means such as practices, governance arrangements, and organizational forms (Thornton & Ocasio, 2008; York et al., 2016). Logics can significantly shape actors' behaviors within organizational fields, as they represent broader cultural beliefs and rules that structure cognition and guide decision-making processes within a particular field (Lounsbury, 2007; York et al., 2016).

Basing on Friedland and Alford's (1991) concept, Thornton and Ocasio (1999, p. 804) defined institutional logics as "the socially constructed, historical patterns of material practices, assumptions, values, beliefs, and rules by which individuals produce and reproduce their material

subsistence, organize time and space, and provide meaning to their social reality." This definition outlines what is seen as legitimate and meaningful across different social and economic contexts. This logic not only guides decision-making within a specific field but also plays a fundamental role in shaping how organizations and individuals create and understand their material and social reality. Essentially, the logics represent shared beliefs, interests, goals, practices, and organizational forms (Thornton & Ocasio, 2008; Thornton et al., 2012; York et al., 2016). Practices are patterns of activities that are given thematic coherence by shared meanings and understandings which are informed by broader cultural framework and are considered the material enactment of institutional logics (Smets et al., 2012). Individuals and organizations utilize the symbolic system, and the material practices make their experiences meaningful (Thornton & Ocasio, 2008).

Institutional logics provide organizations and individuals with the symbolic systems with principles and rules. Meanwhile, the logics interact and compete to influence organizational behaviors (Pache & Santos, 2010). From this perspective, institutional logics are either a set of rule-like structures that constrain organizations or a set of cultural toolkits that provide avenues for change in existing structures and practices (Thornton et al., 2012). Central to this perspective, which emphasizes assumptions, values, beliefs, and rules, is the emphasis on culture as the core of institutional analysis (Thornton et al., 2015). Culture is defined as social systems of beliefs, values, norms, and symbols. It encompasses informal institutions, including morals, conventions, traditions, codes of conduct, habits, attitudes, and beliefs (Dobler, 2011). It comprises a holistic blend of learned and shared beliefs, values, and practices that foster cohesion within a group. More importantly, culture is not static; it evolves to cater to the shifting needs of its members and through interactions with other cultures.

In PPPs, cultural differences across countries influence adoption. In countries like France or the UK, collaboration between public administrations and private firms is deeply embedded in the institutional culture. In contrast, African countries traditionally view their role to receive, authorize, or reject proposals, with little emphasis in collaboration with the private side. This confrontational dynamic undermines the development of joint public–private initiatives. Furthermore, the private multinational enterprises are subject to constraints imposed by social structures and pressures originating from various cross-country institutions (Friedland & Alford, 1991). This is particularly

relevant when PPPs involve the participation of Western and non-Western private multinational enterprises within the context of the host African public institutions. The different actors both from public and private sectors distinguish one from another partly by histories and cultural traits such as language, religion, value system, political, and economic organizations. For example, in international and Western context, the second "P" in the term "public–private partnership" signifies purely private companies. However, in the Chinese context, it includes state-owned enterprises. As a result, Chinese state-owned companies often operate as private partners in PPPs abroad (Wang, 2017). This distinction is vital to the present study because it highlights the complexity and diversity of this context where Western and non-Western private actors are involved in PPPs. It also highlights the need to consider the specific characteristics of these actors in this study.

The context shapes the institutional logics (Lounsbury & Wang, 2023), and the relationships of multiple logics within PPPs may vary based on the context (Besharov & Smith, 2014; Thornton et al., 2012). The examinations of the relationship between logics play a crucial role in institutional research (Besharov & Smith, 2014; Greenwood et al., 2011). Scholars present diverse perspectives on the relationships of logic multiplicity. Some highlight the existence of incompatible logics (Battilana & Dorado, 2010; Besharov & Smith, 2014; Friedland & Alford, 1991; Lounsbury, 2007; Pache & Santos, 2013a; Thornton & Ocasio, 1999), whereas others emphasize logic coexistence (Thornton & Ocasio, 2008), logic hybridization (York et al., 2016), or logic complementarity (Smets et al., 2015).

Given the multiplicity of logics in PPPs, it becomes crucial to analyze the cultural elements and their institutional context (Lounsbury & Wang, 2023). Understanding how these logics interact, coexist, or conflict within a specific context can yield valuable insights into the challenges of creating a common logic in PPPs as hybrids. This nuanced understanding can provide valuable insights for an organization's core mission and strategies (Pache & Santos, 2013a, 2013b). It can offer meaning guidance for their strategic response to manage these challenges and enhance the functionality and success of these partnerships.

2.2.5.2 Institutional Logics at Different Levels

The institutional logics perspective, as advanced by scholars such as Thornton and Ocasio (2008) and Pache and Thornton (2021), posits that institutional logics may develop at various levels, including organizations, markets, industries, inter-organizational networks, geographic communities, and organizational fields. Additionally, these logics manifest at multiple strata, including the societal level, organizational field level, organizational level, and individual level (Besharov & Smith, 2014; Friedland & Alford, 1991; Thornton & Ocasio, 2008).

Friedland and Alford (1991) identified six primary institutional logics at the societal level: family, religion, state, market, profession, and corporation, each carrying both material and cultural characteristics. Later, Thornton et al. (2012) added the community as another institutional logic. These institutional logics represent the symbolic systems and ways of ordering reality that render time and space meaningful for individual actors and organizations (Friedland & Alford, 1991). These societal-level logics, influenced by geographic, historical, and cultural contexts, manifest within organizational fields and organizations in various ways, impacting their norms, practices, and behaviors (Greenwood et al., 2010).

Institutional logics emerge and evolve within institutional fields, acting as a blend of societal-level logics and being embedded within them (Thornton et al., 2012). Various scholars have delved into field-level logics in different areas, such as higher education publishing (Thornton, 2001, 2002; Thornton & Ocasio, 1999), cuisine (Rao et al., 2003), and energy (Jay, 2013). For instance, Thornton and Ocasio (1999) and Thornton (2001, 2002) scrutinized the shift of the institutional logics from editorial to the market logics in higher education publishing. Similarly, Rao et al. (2003) explored how the nouvelle cuisine movement in France led elite chefs to move away from classical cuisine logic from 1970 to 1997, showcasing a shift in professional logic. Jay (2013) analyzed how the competing field-level logics in a field study of the public–private Cambridge Energy Alliance led to different interpretative schemes and contradictory outcomes. The multiple-case study in Chapter III of the present thesis specifically focuses on PPP as hybrids at the field-level practices, with an aim to explore multiple logics, identify challenges in creating a common logic, and examine how PPPs succeed or fail in establishing the common logic in their collaborations.

At the organizational level, enterprises are subject to constraints imposed by social structures and pressures originating from various institutions, rather than being beholden to a singular and monolithic social structure (Friedland & Alford, 1991). As they navigate these complexities, organizations operate in environments characterized by the coexistence of multiple logics in the same organizational sphere. These diverse logics are reflected in their structures and practices, which are shaped by influences from geographical, historical, and cultural contexts (Greenwood et al., 2011). The single-case study in Chapter IV of the present thesis concentrates on multiple logics within the same institutional order, i.e., the corporate, specifically the SPV.

At the individual level, individual behaviors are "nested" within organizations and institutions. Individual actors represent and bring the meanings and norms of these logics into the organization. Logics can impact how actors behave within organizational fields (York et al., 2016). Thus, individual actors act as "carriers" and therefore "represent" and give voice to institutional logics (Greenwood et al., 2011; Pache & Santos, 2010). Individual actors in different structural positions interpret, give meaning, and represent their own beliefs and normative standards. They can influence the relationship between these logics, that is, affecting their compatibility, by selectively utilizing, interpreting, and applying them (Besharov & Smith, 2014).

In sum, institutional logics develop and manifest at societal, field, organizational, and individual levels. Societal-level logics influence both individuals and organizations significantly (Friedland & Alford, 1991). The logics within fields, organizations, and individuals draw from the societal-level logics (Besharov & Smith, 2014). These layers of logics are interrelated and exert influence both within and across levels, affecting individuals, organizations, and fields (Besharov & Mitzinneck, 2020). This highlights the complex interplay of institutional logics across multiple levels of their institutional environment.

2.2.6 Institutional Complexity in PPPs

Greenwood et al. (2010) developed the term "institutional complexity" to describe situations where organizations encounter various pressures stemming from multiple institutional logics. This definition is similar to institutional pluralism, which involves actors confronting with various institutional logics that may either compete or complement each other, fostering cooperation or

competition (Ocasio et al., 2017). However, institutional complexity specifically focuses on how organizations manage and respond to conflicting demands arising from different logics (Greenwood et al., 2011). There are two facets of institutional complexity: the number of logics and the degree of incompatibility between them (Greenwood et al., 2011). The higher the number of logics, the greater will be the complexity facing an organization, and the complexity is amplified by the divergence between prescribed goals and means (Greenwood et al., 2011).

2.2.6.1 Logics Multiplicity

Most organizations embody multiple logics (Besharov & Smith, 2014). Central institutions in contemporary capitalism are potentially contradictory, thus making multiple logics available to individuals and organizations (Friedland & Alford, 1991). However, when studying logics multiplicity, the majority of studies consider only two logics (Greenwood et al., 2011). Pache and Thornton (2021) claim that research on organizational hybridity involving social and market logics have predominantly focused on social enterprises. For instance, empirical papers study different forms of social enterprises including micro-finance banks (Battilana & Dorado, 2010) and work integration social enterprises (Pache & Santos, 2013a; Tracey et al., 2011). However, if the attention is restricted to two logics, the focus has been on the issue of how larger numbers of logics might create institutional complexity and complicate the adoption of appropriate organizational responses (Greenwood et al., 2011), particularly in PPPs.

Multiple institutional logics have been widely applied to a variety of fields including higher education (Thornton, 2001, 2002, 2004; Thornton & Ocasio, 1999), mutual funds (Lounsbury, 2007), cuisine (Rao et al., 2003), and social enterprises (Battilana & Dorado, 2010; Pache and Santos 2013b; Smith & Besharov, 2019; Tracey et al., 2011). As Pache and Thronton (2021) highlight, the number of studies employing multiple institutional logics to explore the phenomenon of cross-sector partnerships is relatively small, in particular with goals to contribute to theory on hybridity. A few exceptions to these are studies by Jay (2013), Quélin et al. (2017), Villani et al. (2017), and York et al. (2016).

For instance, Jay (2013) conducted an ethnographic field study of the Cambridge Energy Alliance, a public–private hybrid organization that combines multiple institutional logics of government

bureaucracies, business firms, and non-profit organizations to tackle the complex challenges of climate change. The study developed a process model of change, revealing that navigating these different logics can create ambiguity about what constitutes success or failure within the organization.

Quélin et al. (2017) examined the conceptual forms of hybridity embedded in new inter-organizational arrangements, specifically focusing on the public–private and cross-sector collaborations. Drawing from existing literature in economics, such as transaction cost economics and incomplete contract theory, as well as management scholarship, the authors introduce a conceptual typology on two theoretically complementary yet distinct dimensions: hybridity in governance and hybridity in organizational logics. Hybridity in governance involves a blend of market-like autonomy and public-like supervision in PPPs, while hybridity in logics refers to the mixed and divergent institutional patterns influencing beliefs and norms of action within organizations.

York et al. (2016) undertook an inductive study of the wind energy field in Colorado to explore how hybridization occurs in an organizational field where economizing and ecologizing logics were incompatible. They found that logic hybridization results in social movement organizations, incumbent firms, and policy makers responding differently to these incompatible logics. The study demonstrated that hybridization processes can transform the relationship between these incompatible logics, ultimately leading to a new hybridized logic. This new hybrid logic emerges when it is incorporated into organizational forms, material practices, and governance arrangement within the field (York et al., 2016).

Villani et al. (2017) conducted a comparative case study of two PPPs in the Italian healthcare sector. They integrated concepts from business model design and organizational hybridity to investigate how complexity is managed within PPPs and how it contributes to value creation for stakeholders. The study connects the literature on hybrid organizations and business models by examining the organizational mechanisms and processes utilized in PPP project governance, assets, and processes. The authors present a theoretical model demonstrating how effective business

model design can facilitate the integration of different logics and create value for stakeholders in the establishment and functioning of PPPs.

Despite these significant contributions, there is a clear need for more in-depth studies that examine the multiple institutional logics inherent within PPPs as cross-sector partnerships and hybrids in the transport sector, particularly in diverse geographical contexts. The transport sector is ideal for studying PPPs in terms of hybridity both in governance and institutional logics. This is because the sector involves a complex interplay of public entities and private enterprises, including those from both Western and non-Western private companies. This thesis explores the dynamics of PPPs as hybrids in the transport sector in Africa. The context shapes these logics (Zhao & Lounsbury, 2016). By delving deeper into these contexts, we can gain more nuanced insights into how multiple logics interact and shape the strategies of PPPs in the transport sector to create a common logic.

2.2.6.2 Logics Incompatibility

Organizations face multiple logics that may be mutually incompatible (Friedland & Alford, 1991). Incompatible logics using words such as contested, conflicting, and competing, contradict compatibility which is defined as the extent to which the instantiations of logics imply consistent and reinforcing organizational actions (Besharov & Smith, 2014). Therefore, incompatibility refers to inconsistent and competing logics within the organizations, thus creating tensions and conflicts. From the field-level perspective, the competing logics coexist within the field (Thornton & Ocasio, 2008). The coexistence of different logics may generate challenges and tensions for the organizations exposed to them.

Studies have emphasized the conflicts between two logics (Smets et al., 2015). In Friedland and Alford's (1991) study, the institutional logics of state and religion are often considered in conflict in the modern Western world. Thornton and Ocasio (1999) and Thornton (2004) examined the competing logics between the editorial logic and the market logic in higher education publishing. Lounsbury (2007) investigated how competing logics between the trustee and professional logic rooted in different location in the mutual fund industry led to different patterns of organizational change in how mutual funds establish contracts with independent professional money management

firms. Based on an inductive comparative case study of four work integration social enterprises, Pache and Santos (2013b) examined how commercial and social welfare logics can be incompatible and create tensions within social enterprises.

Logics incompatibility can be a result of differences between both the goals and the means associated with distinct logics (Pache & Santos, 2010). Goals reflecting core values and beliefs are evaluated based on a logic of appropriateness, making them hard to challenge or modify (Besharov & Smith, 2014). Therefore, logic incompatibility may persist when actors perceive that the realization of the goals of one logic undermines the realization of the goals of another (Pache & Santos, 2010). In contrast, means are evaluated based on a logic of consequence and are more malleable (Besharov & Smith, 2014). To give a more specific description of the incompatibility of logics, the differences in goals and means can be explored (Pache & Santos, 2010).

Multiple institutional logics do not necessarily compete, contradict, or conflict continuously. Organizations can also create paradox (Jay, 2013), embodying two or more logics in a relatively compatible way (Besharov & Smith, 2014). Logics may reinforce each other (Greenwood et al., 2011) or can be combined, which are also called hybrid logic (Pache & Santos, 2010). Pache and Santos (2010) observed that hybrid logics combining social institution and industry logics are at play in US public research universities. Through a case study of the wind energy field in Colorado, York et al. (2016) explored the hybridization of field-level logics, a process that integrates previously incompatible economizing and ecologizing logics within an organizational field. Organizations may maintain conflicting yet complementary as mutual dependence between different logics by using balancing mechanisms and becoming institutionalized routines within an organization (Smets et al., 2015).

In concession PPPs, public delegation contracts align interests by outsourcing support functions to the private sector, transferring its financing and competencies to missions that may not be suitable for delegation, such as regulatory tasks (Marty, 2016). However, a good contract alone is not enough for an effective PPP. Success comes from daily relationship management rather than just reacting to incidents (Marty & Voisin, 2016). PPPs make public sector a service co-producer, requiring investment in managing the partnership. Effective supervision and partnership success

rely on implementing an audit approach (Marty & Voisin, 2016). Oversight by compliance control bodies should provide recommendations for improving contract management and risk control in a forward-looking manner (Marty & Voisin, 2016).

Most importantly, the success of complex and long-term contracts relies on the parties' ability to implement a cooperative relationship based on mutual understanding of each other's constraints and on the awareness of a common interest. This cooperation can stem from the emergence of a common relational logic (Beuve & Desrieux, 2011). Demonstrating good faith in fulfilling contractual obligations or striving for contract success enhances a contractor's reputation. By showing a cooperative attitude towards the public partner and a commitment to service quality, the private contractor can foster trust. Efficiency gains in a complex public contract hinge on effective relationship management, which requires mutual understanding and trust between the partners (Marty, 2017, 2024). Therefore, adopting a cooperative approach towards the public contractor can lead to a blend of self-regulation and contract-based regulation, serving long-term interests (Marty, 2017).

2.2.6.3 Inter-institutional Complexity in PPPs

The inter-institutional system, encompassing entities like the capitalist market, bureaucratic state, democracy, nuclear family, and Christian religion (Friedland & Alford, 1991), is associated with a distinctive institutional logic. In this context, multiple logics coexist and can interact or influence across all societal domains, conflicting and competing due to their inconsistent and conflicting demands (Greenwood et al., 2011). Institutional demands refer to the various pressures for conformity exerted by institutional referents—such as regulatory bodies, professional associations, cultural norms, or societal expectations—on organizations in a given field (Pache & Santos, 2010). Therefore, conflicting institutional demands represent the antagonisms in the organizational arrangements caused by these institutional referents.

PPPs face greater institutional complexity when operating in emerging or fragmented compared to mature ones. Conflicting institutional demands are particularly likely to emerge in fragmented fields, where organizational or social actors are not coordinated, as highlighted by Pache and Santos (2010). Thus, fragmentation is defined as the lack of coordinated constituents upon which

an organization depends for legitimacy or material resources (Greenwood et al., 2011). Emerging fields stand in contrast to mature fields, where identifiable patterns of interaction among inter-organizations in the field are combined with an articulated institutional framework. In such mature fields, organizations can navigate the established institutional norms and rules more effectively, reducing the complexity and potential conflicts of multiple logics inherent in PPPs.

The moderately centralized fields also pose challenges for organizations to navigate due to various competing influence of multiple and misaligned actors (Pache & Santos, 2010). While these influences may not be individually dominant, collectively they can impact significantly organizations. Conversely, highly centralized fields are characterized by the dominance of key actors, such as regulatory authorities, with legal power to dictate organizational behavior and resolve potential disagreement between disparate players (Pache & Santos, 2010). This results in more coherent demands imposed on organizations. In contrast, the decentralized fields lack formalization and are characterized by the absence of dominant actors, allowing for greater flexibility in the private sector but posing challenges in coordination and alignment within public authorities in PPPs.

PPPs face uncertainty that may arise from the environment and/or behavior (Beuve, Saussier, & de Brux, 2018). Environment refers to both the economic context and the regulatory environment (Beuve, Saussier, & de Brux, 2018), which is similar to institutional context. Institutional logics perspective emphasizes the role of the institutional environment as a host of institutional features in the analysis of hybrid arrangements, for example, the way political stability can influence transaction costs in economy (Quélin et al., 2017). It is also crucial to understand the environmental context as it answers where the organizational pressures occur (Oliver, 1991), as it can be a determinant of organizations' responses to institutional influence.

Furthermore, environmental uncertainty and interconnectedness are seen as two dimensions of context that affect organizations' conformity or resistance to situational demands and expectations (Oliver, 1991). Environmental uncertainty is defined as the degree to which future states of the world cannot be anticipated and accurately predicted, while interconnectedness refers to the

density of inter-organizational relations among occupants of an organizational field (Pfeffer & Salancik, 1978).

Behavior uncertainty relates to the inability to predict the opportunistic actions of others (Cuypers et al., 2021). The background of behavioral uncertainty is environmental uncertainty which can increase the likelihood of opportunistic behavior. Other than asset specificity, other important factors, such as the cultural distance and levels of linguistic distance between exchange partners and the level of English proficiency (Cuypers et al., 2015), create information asymmetry and thereby behavior uncertainty.

The multiple-case study of this research explores the presence of multiple logics and the complex and uncertain nature of the organizational field in which PPPs operate. A thorough understanding of these dynamics is vital for PPPs as it allows both public and private partners to strategically respond to the complexity, enabling them to create a "common logic" that can guide their collaborations and operations more effectively.

2.2.6.4 Intra-institutional Complexity at Organizational Level

Organizations may encounter multiple pressures from various institutional spheres, some of which may not be necessarily incompatible but arise within the same logic domain (Greenwood et al., 2010; Vermeulen et al., 2016). This contrasts with the typical inter-institutional complexity where incompatible prescriptions arise from different logics (Meyer & Höllerer, 2016; Vermeulen et al., 2016). This specific type of institutional complexity implies the conflicting institutional demands arising within the same institutional setting, such as a corporation. In a corporate setting, for instance, intra-institutional complexity arises when actors carry different intra-institutional logics that come into conflict within the SPV.

An SPV faces institutional pressures which are fundamentally shaped by the structure of the organizational field within which it operates. This includes various entities such as professional associations, local governments, consultants, and more. Functioning as a hybrid organization, an SPV interacts with a diverse range of entities, including private international enterprises, multinational financial institutions, and local authorities (Villani et al., 2017). Representatives

from these multiple organizations contribute distinct needs and perspectives to the SPV, influencing its operations and decision-making processes. This blend of inputs from various sectors enhances the complexity and dynamism of the SPV's functioning.

Institutional pressures or demands do not just "enter" an organization, but rather interpreted, given meaning and "represented" by individuals in different roles, guided by institutional logics. These logics are shaped by various aspects of the organization, including structures and practices (Greenwood et al., 2011), such as organizational structures, goals, ownership and governance, and identity (Greenwood et al., 2011).

The examination of organizational structure and practices can be used as a different approach to studying organizational responses to institutional complexity, because multiple institutional logics are reflected in the organizations' structures and practices (Greenwood et al., 2011). Greenwood et al. (2011) argue that two types of structures have been noted from the literature: blended hybrid (Jay, 2013; Pache & Santos, 2010; Quélin et al., 2017) and structural differentiation. Blended hybrid refers to integrating structure and practices from different logics into a single organizational unit (Binder, 2007; Pache & Santos, 2011; Rao et al., 2003). Meanwhile, structural differentiated hybrid involves different subunits of an organization dealing with particular logics (Vermeulen et al., 2016). Organizations such as universities and hospitals tend to have a hybrid structure as they need to blend professional and commercial logics (Greenwood et al., 2011). In the present study, the SPV represents a blended hybrid organizing approach (Battilana & Dorado, 2010; Battilana & Lee, 2014).

Logic incompatibility can be understood by considering whether the differences pertain to goals or means (Besharov & Smith, 2014; Pache & Santos, 2010). Resolving conflicts or disagreements over goals is especially challenging and generates tensions, as it requires organizational actors to openly acknowledge the incompatibility of goal demands, potentially putting institutional support at risk (Greenwood et al., 2011).

Ownership and governance within an SPV both influence organizational decisions. The impact of ownership on organizational responses to institutional complexity lies not only in who owns the

organization but also in the ownership structure itself (Greenwood et al., 2011). Thus, ownership also encompasses who are involved in decision-making processes (e.g., board members and partners).

The decision-making process in organizations involves more than mere participant involvement; it also depends on the relative influence of different groups within the organization (Greenwood et al., 2011). Power hierarchies are intrinsic, resulting in some groups having more influence than others. Consequently, how organizations respond to diverse institutional logics often mirrors the interests of the most influential groups. Essentially, those in power are typically the ones shaping the organization's responses to multiple institutional logics in ways that benefit them. This implies that the acknowledgment, assessment, and prioritization of different logics, as well as the strategies employed to do so, are typically determined by those in positions of power (Greenwood et al., 2011).

One way to interpret, translate, and, in some instances, transform the institutional rules is through organizational identities, guided by logics as they provide the cultural elements that members use to express essential identity components (Battilana et al., 2017). Identity distinguishes an organization from others by defining its attributes (Greenwood et al., 2011). This level of identity has been found to affect how expectations and pressures are prioritized. More importantly, it also influences which possible responses are assessed and chosen (Greenwood et al., 2011). For example, Battilana and Dorado (2010) studied how organizations can combine distinct logics and developed a shared "hybrid" organizational identity to manage conflicting logics, using different human resource practices for employees to manage the tensions they experience.

The single-case study of this research concentrates on this particular type of institutional complexity: intra-institutional complexity. The aim is to identify the different institutional logics and how they are reflected in attributes such as organizational goals, structure, ownership and governance, and identity (Greenwood et al., 2011).

2.2.6.5 Individual Experience to Institutional Complexity

Individuals experience the multiple contrasting and contradictory intra-institutional logics during social interactions and socialization experiences (Thornton et al., 2012). They encounter societal institutional logics through direct or mediated interactions with the key institutional orders like family, religion, state, market, profession, and corporation (Friedland & Alford, 1991). Besides, individuals gain exposure to institutional logics through their educations, work experience, and the context of the organizational fields and organizations that share similar goals, values, and practices (Pache & Santos, 2013a).

Individual actors' experiences in multiple logics depend on the availability, accessibility, and activation of these logics (Thornton et al., 2012). Availability relates to the knowledge and information individuals can use for social sensemaking, problem-solving, decision-making, and coordination; accessibility refers to the knowledge and information that individuals can readily bring to mind; and activation refers to the actual use of available and accessible knowledge and information in social interaction (Thornton et al., 2012). Based on the work of Thornton et al. (2012), Pache and Santos (2013a) suggest that the influence of different logics relies on the availability, accessibility, and activation levels, ranging from being a novice to being familiar or identified with a specific logic. Pache and Santos (2013a) explain that person who is a novice in a particular logic has no (or very little) knowledge or information available about it, while someone familiar with a logic possesses the necessary understanding. The activation of a logic is not automatic, even for those familiar with it. However, for an individual identified with a given logic, it is readily available, highly accessible, and is therefore likely to influence their social interactions (Pache & Santos, 2013a).

Individuals from different cultures or backgrounds will activate different identities, when confronted with the same situation as long as the accessible identity aligns with the prominent aspects of the situation (Thornton et al., 2012). The concept of identity is divided into three types: 1) personal identity, which relates to the self-awareness and self-representation; 2) social identity, which includes group affiliations like industry, occupation, profession, employer, race, gender, ethnicity, nationality, and geography, and identification with particular social roles, such as CEO, investor, manager, leader in organizations, or parent (Thornton et al., 2012). Conflicts in identities

serve as barriers to cooperation and lead to conflict and power struggles in social interactions; 3) cultural identity involves the shared values within a community (Karjalainen, 2020). Being part of specific cultural contexts influence the shared collective understandings of economic strategies and provides a framework for individuals to make sense of and interact with their environments (Thornton et al., 2012).

The use of logics by individuals is shaped in part by both intra-organizational and extra-organizational relationships. Additionally, the relationships among individuals in a group and their level of interdependence can impact the intra-institutional complexity. Close relationships among individuals or greater dependence can motivate the development of more harmonious approaches to implementing multiple logics (Besharov & Smith, 2014), thus enhancing group cohesion and reducing organizational complexity.

The single-case study of this thesis explores the individual relationship to and experience in multiple logics by taking into account the individual actors' professional social identity and organizational culture in a host country. Individuals' identities are culturally and socially embedded in institutional logics and influenced by organizational practices subject to exogenous and endogenous change (Thornton et al., 2012). As a result, predicting their responses becomes challenging when individuals operate in environments embedded in conflicting demands (Pache & Santos, 2013a).

2.2.7 Organizational Strategic Responses

2.2.7.1 Organizational-Level Strategies

In attempting to reconcile competing demands, organizational actors adopt different strategies to adhere to different institutional logics. Early work outlined a framework consisting of five strategies that organizations typically adopt to face institutional pressures: acquiesce, compromise, avoid, defy, and manipulate (Oliver, 1991). With three different forms of habit, imitation, and compliance, acquiescence is the most passive response (Pache & Santos, 2010). When organizations face multiple pressures, they are less likely to only acquiesce and are rather more likely to choose compromise, avoidance, defiance, or manipulation (Oliver, 1991).

Compromising tactics involve organizations trying to balance, pacify, or bargain with external parties (Oliver, 1991; Pache & Santos, 2013b). While compromising enables partial compliance with conflicting demands from institutional influences and aims to find a balance between them, it has limitations (Pache & Santos, 2010, 2013b). One major drawback of compromise is the risk of failing to secure long-term support from key institutional referents. The resulting agreement may not meet these referents' lasting expectations, potentially leading to internal conflicts. Furthermore, compromise may not be feasible when conflicting institutional logics endorse incompatible goals or difficult-to-alter practices (Pache & Santos, 2010, 2013b).

Avoidance in organizations is the attempt to prevent conformity by concealing nonconformity, distancing themselves from institutional pressures, or escaping from institutional rules or expectations (Oliver, 1991). However, avoidance may not be viable over the long term since it may affect the organization's legitimacy (Pache & Santos, 2010). In response, organizations may choose to defy the conflicting demands and influence external stakeholder's views in order to align with their own. This defiance, involving dismissal, challenge, and attack, is a proactive way to resist institutional prescriptions (Pache & Santos, 2010).

Manipulation is the most active response to institutional pressure, where attempts are made to co-opt the sources of institutional pressures to neutralize institutional divergences, influence the definition of the norms through active lobbying, or control the source of pressure (Oliver, 1991; Pache & Santos, 2010). When dominant groups are the actors, power imbalances allow them to co-opt, influence, or control less powerful groups to enforce their views and goals, increasing their chances of successful manipulation.

However, scholars have subsequently critiqued the model for inadequately addressing the responses to conflicting institutional demands under a high degree of hybridity (Pache & Santos, 2010). Pache and Santos (2010) build and extend Oliver's (1991) model by differentiating the institutional conflicts over organizational nature of demands: means and goals. Their core argument is that the nature of institutional conflict (means versus goals) interacts with the degree

of internal representation (absence, single, or multiple) to shape the experience of conflicting demands and influence the strategies mobilized by organizations in response.

Depending on the nature of the demands, hybrid organizations may utilize hybrid strategies to cope with conflicting institutional demands (Greenwood et al., 2011). Organizations may combine multiple, often incompatible logics through hybrid organizing, defined as "the activities, structures, processes and meanings by which organizations make sense of and combine multiple organization forms" (Battilana & Lee, 2014, p. 397). They can also combine distinct logics by creating a common "hybrid" organizational identity using different human resource practices for employees to manage the tensions they experience when impacted by different logics (Battilana & Dorado, 2010). They use various strategies to manage the tension between logics, including hybrid organizing (York et al., 2016). Multiple logics can shape the organizational decision to downsize (Greenwood et al. (2010).

As we are investigating PPPs across geographical contexts that are marked by a high degree of heterogeneity and potentially stark power differences, we expect these issues to be exacerbated. PPPs, by their nature, involving both multinational Western and non-Western entities and multiple logics, face a high degree of hybridity and institutional complexity. Furthermore, the characteristics of PPP fields and their institutional environment can significantly influence their strategic responses to external demands. The institutional complexity necessitates PPP actors to adopt more adaptable strategies to manage the multi-faceted institutional pressures they encounter. SPV internal organizational attributes influence how organizations perceive and develop responses to institutional demands. When faced with conflicting demands and the intra-institutional complexity, organization adopt diverse strategies to navigate multiple pressures for organizational survival (Pache & Santos, 2013b). Given a relatively predictable and consistent set of competing institutional demands, organizations can enhance their ability to manage complexity by establishing suitable internal structures and practices. Predictable complexity allows organizations to learn how to manage and respond to the challenges, whereas unpredictability limits their options in responding to complexities. Our study aims to better understand the strategies undertaken by the organizational actors within PPPs where multiple institutional logics coexist among different actors and where they may undermine the emergence of a common logic.

2.2.7.2 Individual-Level Strategies

The literature has so far primarily focused on organizational responses to institutional complexity (Greenwood, Diaz, et al., 2010; Greenwood, Raynard, et al., 2011; Pache & Santos, 2010, 2013b). To gain understanding of the real-world dynamics of hybrid organizations, it is essential to heed calls to investigate the intricate patterns of complexity more closely (Greenwood et al., 2011). Individual actors, by being part of social and occupational groups, play a role in organizations and operate across multiple intra-institutional logics that influence their perception of the appropriate goals and means of achieving them (Pache & Santos, 2010). Therefore, it is important to delve into the everyday through which individuals actively manage intra-institutional complexity. Examining how individuals relate to the intra-institutional logics reveals the specific strategies they employ at micro-level to handle such complexity (Battilana & Dorado, 2010; Ocasio et al., 2017).

When individuals encounter multiple intra-institutional logics, they respond in various ways aimed at managing this complexity (Pache & Santos, 2013a; Smets et al., 2015). Pache and Santos (2013a) identified five types of responses: ignoring, complying, defying, compartmentalizing, and combing strategies. Ignoring involves unconsciously not reacting to a logic, while complying entails fully adopting the values, norms, and practices by a specific logic. Defying is the explicit rejection of practices from one logic. Compartmentalization serves to enact all logics separately based on the audience, time, and place. Combining is when an individual attempts to blend values, norms, and practices from conflicting yet complementary logics.

In their study, Smets et al. (2015) explore strategies such as segmenting, demarcating, and bridging. Segmenting allows managers to uphold distinct logics by assigning them to different situations and locations. Demarcating involves favoring one logic over another. Bridging enables managers to merge practices governed by competing logics to benefit from their complementarities. Segmenting is akin to compartmentalization, while bridging involves combining strategies.

The present study seeks to answer the question of how organizational and individual actors respond to conflicting institutional demands and intra-institutional complexity within an SPV as hybrid organization. Key areas of investigation include:

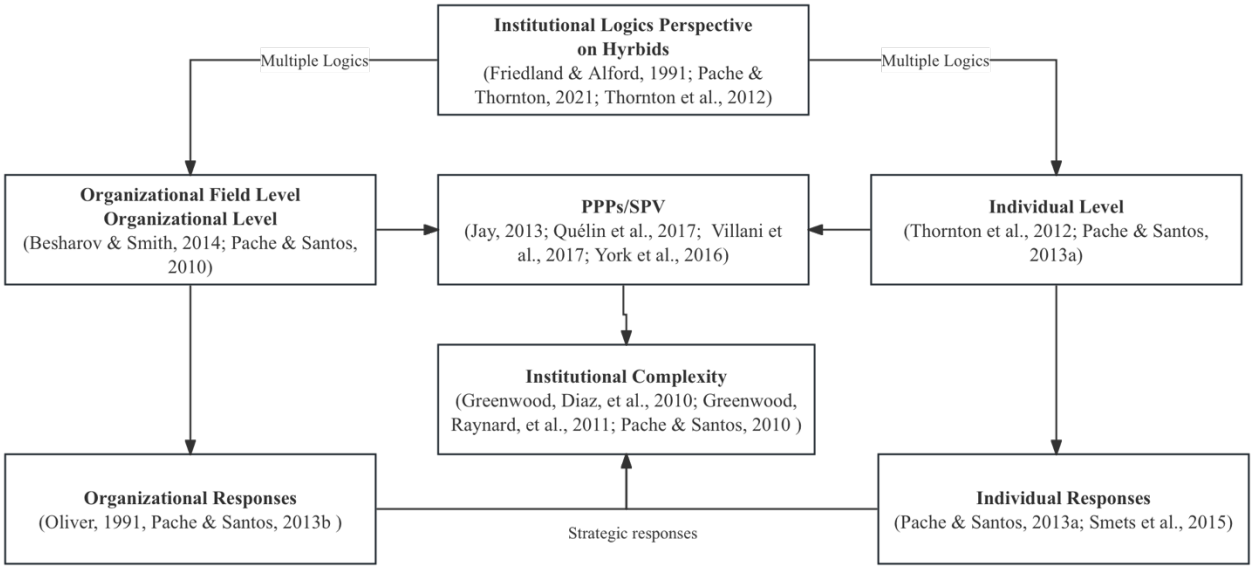
1) What is the organizational field that the SPV engages in?
2) How do organizations experience the competing institutional logics reflected in organizational attributes? And how does the SPV strategically respond to the institutional demands of external actors?
3) How do SPV managers experience the intra-institutional logics? And how do they respond to these multiple logics?

By doing so, the present research focuses on the organizational and individual levels of analysis to understand how actors respond through a detailed single-case study.

2.3 Summary of Theoretical Framework

Our investigation is anchored in the core theoretical framework of institutional logics perspective as a meta-theory to analyze PPPs as hybrids (**Figure 1**): 1) the coexistence of various conflicting institutional logics manifesting at both organizational field level, organizational level, and individual level, and the potential lack of a common logic, leading to both inter-institutional complexity in PPPs and intra-institutional complexity at organizational level. This is especially pronounced when partners differ not only in their private or public character but also in their geographic provenance, presenting challenges for fostering a "common logic"; and 2) organizational and individual responses to diverse logics and the fact that they may not align neatly from the start. Both frameworks are deeply rooted in questions surrounding the dynamics of institutions and the consequences for organizational functioning. The present study examines institutional demands in the organizational field of PPPs, as well as the complexity at the intra-institutional level and individual experiences with this complexity. It aims to explore how organizations and individuals manage conflicting institutional demands and intra-institutional complexity to create a common logic.

Figure 1. Theoretical Framework



The present empirical research involves two case studies: a multiple-case study and a single-case study. The multiple-case study focuses on organizational-level of PPPs by addressing three key research questions:

1) What is the organizational field level context of PPPs that poses complexity in creating a common logic?
2) What are the multiple logics in the organizational field of PPPs, and how do they interact?
3) How do PPPs succeed (or fail) in establishing a common logic in their collaborations?

The single-case study focuses on SPV as a hybrid organization at both organizational and individual levels. Specifically, it is interested in answering the following questions:

1) What is the organizational field that the SPV engages in?
2) How do organizations experience the competing institutional logics reflected in organizational attributes? And how does the SPV strategically respond to the institutional demands of external actors?

3) How do SPV managers experience the intra-institutional logics? And how do they respond to these multiple logics?

The two parts will discuss the findings and contributions in two separate chapters: the multiple-case study in Chapter III and the single-case study in Chapter IV.

Chapter III Multiple-Case Study

This chapter aims to discuss the methodology and findings of an exploratory 11-case study focusing on concession-based public–private partnerships (PPPs) within the transportation sector across West and Central Africa (**Table 2**). Encompassing all transport subsectors, these cases span nine countries in West and Central Africa that are former French and British colonial countries: Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Democratic Republic of Congo, Gabon, Ghana, Ivory Coast, Nigeria, Republic of Congo, and Senegal. The chosen projects exhibit the first instances of PPPs in the host countries and most of the projects in the active management phase. Most notably, all the cases involve partnerships between local government entities and international private companies, making them ideal subjects for the study of hybrid organizations as outlined by Jay (2013). Because the selected PPPs involve collaborations between local public entities and multinational private partners, which can lead to the emergence of distinct logics (Jay, 2013; Quélin et al., 2017; Villani et al., 2017), this composition is ideal for the exploration of the various logics within the partnerships.

Table 2. List of Projects

Case	Country	Sector	Project	Principal Private Shareholders	Nationality of Private Principal Shareholder
1	Senegal	Road	Dakar–Diamniadio–AIBD toll highway	Eiffage	French
2	Ghana	Road	Accra–Kumasi toll road	N/A	N/A
3	Nigeria	Road	Lekki–Epe toll road	N/A	N/A
4	Republic of Congo	Road	Concession of National Road No. 1 (Brazzaville–Point-Noire)	Egis	French
				CSCEC	Chinese
5	Ivory Coast	Bridge-Road	Henri Konan Bédié toll highway bridge	Bouygues Travaux Publics	French
6	Democratic Republic of Congo and Republic of Congo	Bridge-Road-Railway	Road-rail bridge between Democratic Republic of Congo and Republic of Congo	N/A	N/A
7	Cameroon	Port	Port of Kribi	Kribi Holding Terminal (Bolloré Africa Logistics, CMA/CGM; CHEC)	French, Chinese
8	Nigeria	Port	Lekki Deep Water Port	CHEC	Chinese
				Tolaram	Singapore
9	Gabon	Airport	Libreville International Airport in Gabon	Olam International Ltd.	Singapore
10	Ivory Coast	Airport	FHB Abidjan International Airport	Egis	French
11	Ivory Coast/Burkina Faso	Railway	Abidjan–Ouagadougou Railway	Bolloré Railways	French

All the cases are currently undergoing contractual management phases, except Cases 2 and 6 (**Table 3**). For instance, the Port of Kribi (Case 7), a deep-water port in Cameroon, is currently in the concessionary services phase (Phase III). The Lekki Deep Water Port (Case 8) entered concession in 2023. Cases 1, 4, 5, and 10 are already in the operation and maintenance phase. The Lekki–Epe toll road (Case 3) transitioned from state control in 2014, while the Libreville International Airport (Case 9) initiated a new concession partnership between a non-Western enterprise and the Gabonese government in 2018. However, it came as a surprise to discover that the Accra–Kumasi toll road in Ghana (Case 2) is currently in the project identification and preparation phase. The unsolicited proposals from multiple Western enterprises all failed. Meanwhile, the road-rail bridge connecting the Democratic Republic of Congo and the Republic of Congo (Case 6) is in the tender phase. The prequalification tender selected a list of Chinese enterprises and a special purpose vehicle (SPV) of a French and a Chinese enterprise. Through the chosen projects, we gain a comprehensive view of why some projects are still in the preparation or tender phase after years of initiation.

Table 3. Selected Projects in PPPs' Life Cycle Phase

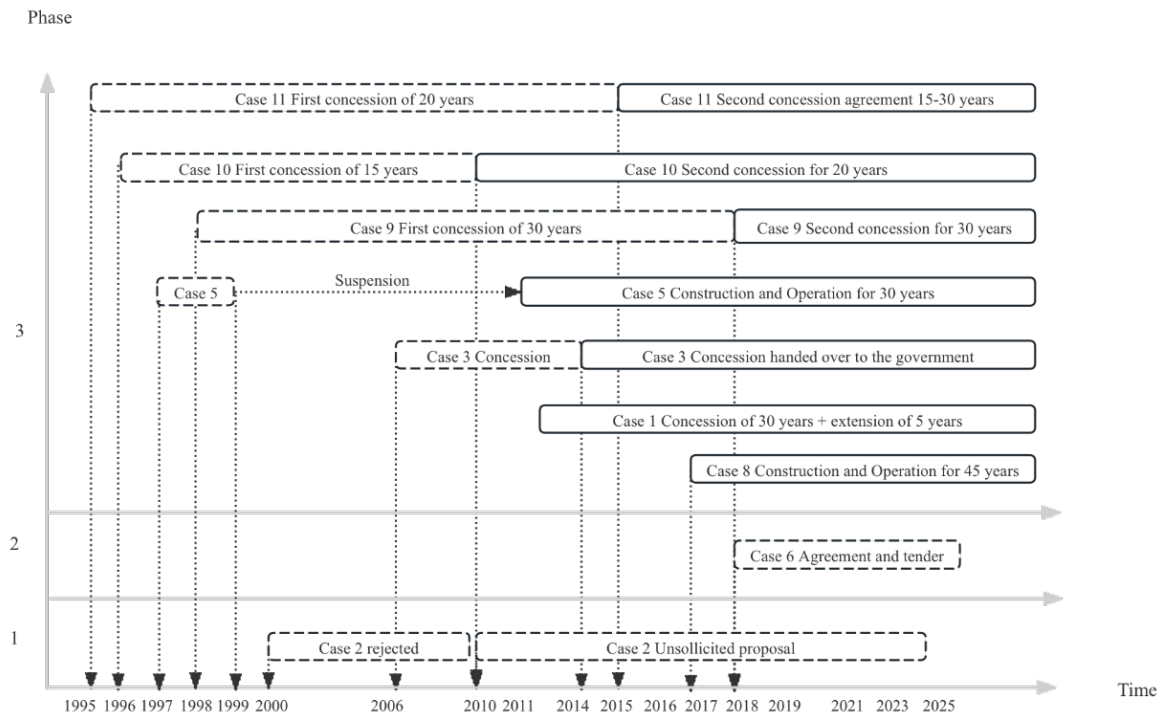
Phase	Process Cycle of a PPP		Selected Projects
1	Project identification and preparation	1.1 Project identification, framing, assessing and reviewing as a potential PPP 1.2 Project preparation (the structuring and drafting of Project contract)	Case 2: Accra–Kumasi toll road, Ghana
2	Tender phase	2.1 Launch of call for tenders, qualifying bidders, dialogue, negotiations of proposals	Case 6: Road-rail bridge between Democratic Republic of Congo and Republic of Congo

		2.2 Award and call for contract signature, financial closing	
3	Contractual management phase	3.1 Construction phase 3.2 Operation phase (to finalization and hand-back)	Case 7: Port of Kribi, Cameroon (Phase II) Case 1: Dakar–Diamniadio–AIBD toll highway, Senegal Case 3: Lekki–Epe toll road, Nigeria Case 4: Concession of National Road No. 1, Republic of Congo Case 5: Henri Konan Bédié toll highway bridge, Ivory Coast Case 7: Port of Kribi, Cameroon (Phase I) Case 8: Lekki Deep Water Port, Nigeria Case 9: Libreville International Airport, Gabon (Second concession) Case 10: FHB Abidjan International Airport, Ivory Coast Case 11: Abidjan–Ouagadougou Railway, Ivory Coast/Burkina Faso (Second concession)

The selected PPPs are significant projects in their respective countries, involving first PPPs in their subsector and aligning with the early-stage development of PPPs in Africa. This alignment mirrors their development in various dimensions, effectively reflecting the historical context of PPPs in this region. Projects in the transportation sector—i.e., the Abidjan–Ouagadougou railway (Case 11) and airports such as FHB Abidjan International Airport (Case 10) and Libreville International Airport in Gabon (Case 9)—started their first concessions in the 1990s. Projects in the road sector—i.e., Accra–Kumasi toll road (Case 2), Lekki–Epe toll road (Case 3), and Henri Konan

Bédié toll highway bridge (Case 5)—were initiated after 2000s and incurred a lot of delays and changes due to various factors. The road and port sectors started to develop after 2010s with projects such as Dakar–Diamniadio–AIBD toll highway (Case 1), Concession of National Road No. 1 (Brazzaville–Point-Noire) (Case 4), Henri Konan Bédié toll highway bridge (Case 5), Port of Kribi (Case 7), Lekki Deep Water Port (Case 8), and the road-rail bridge between Democratic Republic of Congo and Republic of Congo (Case 6). This historical context enriches the depth of this research and underscores its relevance for both current ongoing PPPs initiatives in this region.

Figure 2. PPPs' Pipelines



Notes:
Case 1 Dakar–Diamniadio–AIBD toll highway
Case 2 Accra–Kumasi toll road
Case 3 Lekki–Epe toll road
Case 4 Concession of National Road No. 1
Case 5 Henri Konan Bédié toll highway bridge
Case 6 Road-rail bridge between Democratic Republic of Congo and Republic of Congo
Case 7 Port of Kribi
Case 8 Lekki Deep Water Port
Case 9 Libreville International Airport in Gabon
Case 10 FHB Abidjan International Airport
Case 11 Abidjan–Ouagadougou Railway

The selected cases emphasize on projects involving multinational corporations, particularly French and Chinese multinational corporations, with emerging potential Asian contenders as private partners (**Table 4**). It is important to highlight that the interpretation of PPPs varies across different contexts, with distinctions like the concept of the "second private." For instance, the second "P" on international scale signifies purely private companies. However, it includes state-owned companies in the Chinese context despite the call for private owned companies' participation in PPPs in China since November 2023 (State Council, 2023). Hence, Chinese state-owned companies often operate as private partners in PPPs abroad (Yang & Wang, 2023). This distinction is vital to the present study because it highlights the complexity and diversity of the actors involved in PPPs and the need to consider the specific characteristics of these cases.

However, it is important to highlight three exemplary cases. In Case 2, the Accra–Kumasi toll road in Ghana remains in the preparation phase despite many years of unsolicited proposals from various private investors, all of which failed. In Case 3, concerning the Lekki–Epe toll road in Nigeria, the government assumed control of the project company after compensating the private investors. Case 6, involving the road-rail bridge between the Democratic Republic of Congo and the Republic of Congo, is currently in the tender phase and does not involve any private investors at this stage.

Table 4. Projects by Main Private Investors

Involved Private Investors	Company Name	Involved Cases
Involved French companies	Eiffage	Case 1: Dakar–Diamniadio–AIBD toll highway in Senegal
	Bouygues	Case 5: Henri Konan Bédié toll highway bridge in Ivory Coast
	Egis	Case 10: FHB Abidjan International Airport in Ivory Coast
	Bolloré	Case 11: Abidjan–Ouagadougou Railway in Ivory Coast/Burkina Faso

Involved non-Western companies	CSCEC & Egis	Case 4: Concession of National Road No. 1 (Brazzaville–Point-Noire) in Republic of Congo
	CHEC & Bolloré Africa Logistics, CMA/CGM	Case 7: Port of Kribi in Cameroon
	Arise	Case 9: Libreville International Airport in Gabon
	CHEC, Tolaram	Case 8: Lekki Deep Water Port in Nigeria
No private companies	N/A	Case 2: Accra–Kumasi toll road in Ghana
	N/A	Case 3: Lekki–Epe toll road in Nigeria
	N/A	Case 6: Road-rail bridge between Democratic Republic of Congo and Republic of Congo

The exploration of various logics within these partnerships between both public and private partners is a fundamental aspect of our study because it raises questions about how these different partners navigate these logics. Understanding how these logics interact and influence decision-making processes is crucial for comprehending the dynamics of hybrid organizations within the context of PPPs.

The focus of the analysis is at the level of the organizational field. The results are delineated into four subsections: 1) the complexity and uncertainty in the institutional environment, 2) the dominant multiple logics and their interactions, 3) the core roles and capabilities in the public and private sectors, 4) and strategic organizational responses. These sections delve into the coexistence of the multiple dominant logics at play, resulting in institutional complexity, the challenges posed by the institutional environment, the distinct roles and capabilities that both public and private sectors bring to bear, and how organizations respond to the institutional complexity. The chapter concludes by encapsulating these insights, offering a conceptual model illustrating the creation of a common logic, providing managerial implications, and outlining limitations as well as directions for future research.

3.1 Methodology

The research design adopts Yin's (2018) framework including four stages: Stage 1, the primary research stage aims to gain a comprehensive understanding of the study's context and the associated research challenges; Stage 2, which is Fieldwork I, formulates research questions and determines the appropriate methodology by identifying the relevant cases and potential interviewees; Stage 3, which is Fieldwork II, seeks to gather data and address research questions, conduct semi-structured interviews; Stage 4 involves the data analysis by using NVivo 14, structuring and categorizing interview data through coding, employing thematic analysis to discover recurring patterns and themes, and presenting the research results and findings (**Table 5**).

Table 5. Exploratory Case Study Stage

Research Stage	Methods	Objectives
Primary research	• Initial literature review • Exploratory review	• To gain a comprehensive understanding of the study's context and the associated research challenges
Fieldwork I	• Multiple-case identification	• Formulating research questions and determining the appropriate methodology • Identifying the relevant cases and potential interviewees
Fieldwork II	• Data collection: Conducting semi-structured interviews • Conducting an in-depth literature review	• Gathering data and addressing research questions • Preparing for data analysis
Data analysis	• In-depth data analysis using NVivo 14	• Structuring and categorizing interview data through coding

- Connecting research data with relevant literature
- Employing thematic analysis to discover recurring patterns and themes
- Communicating the research results and findings

3.1.1 Primary Research

During this stage**,** in collaboration with my supervisor, Simon Porcher, I engaged in a year-long research project with my former employer, focused on market research in the field of PPPs in West and Central Africa. The research project is structured into two main parts. In the first part, we employed analytical tools such as Porter's (2008) five forces as well as PESTEL and SWOT analyses to examine both the external macro-environment of PPPs, identifying the potential countries for PPP development, and the internal conditions for entering new PPP markets.

The second part of the research was based on case studies across various sectors including transportation, energy, mining, water, and sanitation sectors, spanning a total of 13 countries (Angola, Benin, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Cape Verde, Democratic Republic of Congo, Gabon, Ghana, Ivory Coast, Niger Nigeria, Senegal, and Togo). The primary objective was to uncover the financing models, risks, and key success factors of these projects. This extensive project provided me with a comprehensive overview of the PPP landscape in West and Central Africa. However, as fieldwork in such dynamic environments continually evolves, it presented the challenge of discerning where to direct my research focus effectively.

To overcome this challenge, we initiated the process with preliminary literature review and engaged in-depth interviews with experts knowledgeable about PPPs in Africa. We found it particularly beneficial to conduct exploratory, qualitative interviews as they served as a primary data source during this phase, offering valuable background and contextual information for our study. Meanwhile, we began by gathering information about PPP projects in the West and Central African region to develop a clear understanding of the phenomenon before embarking on data collection. In the realm of exploratory research, gaining a precise understanding of projects and its context is crucial.

During this phase, the preliminary literature review served the purpose of refining the focus of my research, aligning with Yin's (2018) approach. Simultaneously, I delved into a select few pivotal key studies related to my area of interest to identify the potential new questions or areas that require further exploration. As an example, Pache and Thornton (2021) emphasized the need to expand attention beyond social enterprise as hybrid organizations and explore diverse research settings. This literature review not only enhanced our understanding of PPPs as hybrid entities but also reinforced the relevance of our research question. My research questions originate from the interest of the PPP projects involving multiple international private investors operating with the local public authorities within the host country. I am particularly intrigued by the exploration of creating the common logic among the multiple logics within these projects, where public and private partners coexist. I am still in the process of grasping the nuances of their relationships, navigate the complexities arising from the coexistence of multiple logics and how they respond to logic multiplicity.

The choice of a particular research method is contingent on the nature of research question at hand, as stipulated by Yin (2018). For instance, a basic categorization scheme for research questions includes "who," "what," "where," "how," and "why" questions. Case studies are particularly well-suited for questions starting with "how" and "why." As Yin (2018, p. 29) points out, "the more your questions aim to explain a contemporary circumstance, such as 'how' or 'why' a social phenomenon functions, the more relevant a case study becomes." Here, "contemporary" denotes an adaptable representation of the recent and the present, not solely the immediate present (Yin, 2018). To address our research questions, we have chosen a multiple-case study as most appropriate for this study.

A case study is an approach that delves deeply into a contemporary phenomenon (the "case") within its real-world context, particularly when the boundaries between the phenomenon and its context may not be distinctly evident (Yin, 2018). This method is relevant for our research because we aim to gain a comprehensive understanding of real-world cases: specifically, the ongoing PPPs projects. We assume that such an understanding is likely to involve crucial contextual conditions pertinent that are relevant to our case.

3.1.2 Fieldwork I: Cases Identification

In the second stage of our research, we focused on the identification of specific cases to be studied. To achieve this, two essential steps were considered: defining the cases and establishing the boundaries of the cases, which are critical steps in the research process. This process becomes essential for specifying the number of projects and establishing the time boundaries that define the beginning of each case.

The first step is defining the cases and the selection process. To conduct our research, we selected a multiple-case study by focusing on concession PPPs in the transportation sector in the region of West and Central Africa. The projects are suitable when involving transportation sector (Yang & Wang, 2023). We chose to compile a list of PPP projects from the World Bank's Private Participation in Infrastructure (PPI) database (World Bank, 2023), whose purpose is to identify and disseminate information on private participation in infrastructure projects in low- and middle-income countries including those in West and Central Africa. According to Yin (2018), a multiple-case study provides an in-depth investigation of a contemporary phenomenon (the "case") within its real-world context, which suits our research objectives, as we aim to gain a comprehensive understanding of how to create a common logic on PPPs as hybrids within the African region. This understanding necessitates context insights that are specific to these cases.

The second step is establishing the boundaries of the cases. After establishing the cases, it became crucial to define their boundaries effectively. Determining how many projects to cover in each subsector is vital for ensuring the diversity and comprehensiveness of our cases. The selected cases including road, bridge, port, airport, and railway projects reflect the relevance of PPPs in the transportation sector in the region. The involved cases cover mainly former French and British colonial countries in West and Central Africa. The cases represent the first instance of PPPs in these host counties. Most of the projects are in the management phase. Most notably, all the cases involve partnerships between local public entities and multinational private companies, making them ideal subjects for the study of hybrid organizations.

In summary, defining the cases and establishing their boundaries is a pivotal step that allowed us to precisely delineate the scope of our data collection. By drawing a clear distinction between data

pertaining to the project itself and data concerning the broader context in which these projects operate, we enhanced the clarity and focus of our analysis. This differentiation was paramount for maintaining a well-structured and insightful study. Our approach to defining the cases and establishing the boundaries of the cases is guided by the close alignment between our research questions and the specific aspects of the cases we intend to explore (Yin, 2018). This alignment ensures that our cases remain directly pertinent to our research objectives and that the data we collect will be instrumental in effectively addressing our research questions. The process of defining the cases and establishing the boundaries of the cases represents a strategy that significantly shapes the depth and focus of our research. It serves as a critical orientation for our Fieldwork II, enabling us to gather data with precision and relevance.

3.1.3 Fieldwork II: Data Collection

Interviews are commonly utilized in qualitative research to gain insights into the perspectives and beliefs of organizational members (Saunders et al., 2019). Interviews in general can be categorized into three types: structured, semi-structured, and unstructured (Yin, 2018). Structured interviews are highly formalized and involve standardized questions for each participant, often resembling interviewer-administered questionnaires. Unstructured interviews, also known as "non-directive" interviews, are informal and designed to explore general areas of interest. Semi-structured interviews are a commonly used technique in management field research. The interviewer follows a guide that includes a list of topics and key questions to cover, which may vary from one interview to another (Gilbert & Raulet-Croset, 2023).

We found the semi-structured interview approach to be highly advantageous for our research. The interviews were utilized in both exploratory and multiple-case study phases. During the initial two years of my fieldwork, that is, the exploratory and multiple-case study stage, field observations were not possible. The landscape changed dramatically with the outbreak of the first case of coronavirus in Wuhan, China, which subsequently led to a global surge in COVID-19 cases (Orden-Mejía, et al., 2022). At the outset of my thesis study, the World Health Organization declared the coronavirus an international public health emergency on January 31, 2020. Throughout the pandemic, government-imposed travel restrictions and bans, making it difficult to access field sites. Even as some countries gradually eased these restrictions, the risks associated

with conducting fieldwork remained high due to the continued threat of COVID-19 infection. To address this limitation, we primarily conducted the interviews through various online channels.

Many of our questions were open-ended and we had a substantial number of questions to address. Additionally, the specific project context and project life cycle may lead to the omission of certain questions, and the order of questions needed to be flexible based on the flow of the conversation. Consequently, we employed semi-structured interviews, which involved having a list of themes and key questions to cover. We captured these interviews by both audio-recording the conversations and taking notes. In addition to the list of themes and questions, we also incorporated comments to open and close the discussions, as well as a list of prompts to stimulate conversation. As a result, our interviews comprised both structured sections, for instance, focusing on key questions related to the project context and project characteristics, and unstructured sections, such as exploring the participants' visions of PPPs. These open-ended questions were instrumental in developing a deeper understanding of the participants' experiences, perceptions, opinions, feelings, and knowledge.

3.1.3.1 Exploratory Interviews

In the initial stages of the project, when conducting the first set of interviews, I posed fewer, more abstract concepts. However, I continuously refined the interview protocol and the questions themselves as the interviews advanced and with extensive literature review. As an example, when I initially embarked on the PPP projects in the African context, my first round of interview questions was rather diverse, reflecting the multiple theoretical lenses from existing theories that I was considering. As my understanding of the concepts deepened through extensive literature review, I transitioned to asking more detailed questions. Despite having a limited set of concepts in the early stages of my project, this evolution in question design allowed for a more comprehensive exploration of the research topic.

We initially conducted nine exploratory interviews with acknowledged PPP experts who were employed in public institutions, national or international financial institutions, as well as private companies (**Table 6**). These interviews had varying durations, ranging from 30 minutes to two hours. The primary aim of these exploratory interviews was to gain insights into the significant

issues and challenges of PPPs in Africa. These interviews were carried out during the months of April and May 2021 and were conducted either in English or French. Indeed, we adjusted the language of communication to align with the interviewees' mother tongue and the language in which they felt most comfortable. This approach aimed to enhance the accessibility and effectiveness of our interactions with each respective interviewee. We reached out to the participants via email, and the interviews themselves were conducted using Zoom. In this phase, it was not feasible to plan any travel within the area at that time as the specific country and sector within the region of our research field still remained unclear.

Table 6. Exploratory Interview Samples

No.	Position	Institution	Date	Duration	Country	Language
1	Economist in transports	World Bank	April 29, 2021	1h12m	France	French
2	General Director	Club PPP	April 30, 2021	1h11m	France	French
3	Deputy director of research	Acuris (financial services)	May 5, 2021	40m	UK	English
4	Researcher CNRS	Côte d'Azur University	May 7, 2021	1h2m	France	French
5	Research Analyst	Acuris (financial services)	May 11, 2021	54min	UK	English
6	Investment Analyst	IFC	May 12, 2021	1h52m	US	English
7	Senior Investment Officer	Proparco	May 17, 2021	46m	France	French
8	General Director	WAPPP	May 13, 2021	30m	Switzerland	English
9	Methods Director	CNED Ministry of Finance	May 19, 2021	30m	Algeria	French

3.1.3.2 Semi-structured Interviews

To gather our data, we employed semi-structured interviews as our primary data source for exploring the various logics within the field of West and Central Africa, their interrelationships, and the organizational responses to logic multiplicity to create a common logic between the partners (York et al., 2016). Comprehensive preparation for interviews holds significant importance in addressing data quality concerns, including issues related to reliability, potential bias, and generalizability (Saunders et al., 2019). To mitigate any bias that would jeopardize data reliability and validity and to ensure that the interviews conducted for this research yield pertinent and valuable insights for subsequent data analysis and findings development, I initiated the process with a thoughtful and reflective approach to interview design. The foundation of this design was laid upon my primary literature review and research questions, serving as guiding principles. In shaping the interview structure, I followed Arsel's (2017) four-step iterative guide (**Table 7**):

Table 7. Interview Design

Steps	Approaches	Objectives
1	Adopting a constructivist approach	Establishing an epistemological stance
2	Preparing an interview protocol	Serving as an outline of the interview
3	Conducting interviews	Gathering data
4	Iterate	Optimizing the interview process

The first step in the interview design process is adopting a constructivist approach, which involves establishing an epistemological tradition. As noted by Arsel (2017), having a coherent epistemological stance shapes the way the researcher approaches the research questions, structures the study, collects data, and analyzes the interview data. As the interviewer, I am conscious of my own expectations for the interviews and the theoretical lenses through which I interpret the responses. I also consider the potential for the interviewee or response bias, which can result from participants choosing not to disclose or discuss certain aspects of the topic being explored. This bias can be influenced by concerns that the questions may touch on sensitive information that interviewees prefer not to reveal or by factors like their institutional role, limited access to

information, past experiences, expectations regarding the project, and the extent of their interaction with project partners.

To address this bias in designing the interviews, I carefully selected individuals who are actively involved in the PPP project or have prior experience with the case, holding positions of significant responsibility. These include titles such as "General Manager," "Financial Director," "Department Director," "Advisor to the President," "Director of the PPP Unit," "Project Manager for the Public Authority," and the like. Interviewing individuals with this level of experience ensures that they possess a deep understanding of the subject matter and the project. They have been involved in or are knowledgeable about the various phases of the project's life cycle through their roles, making them valuable sources of insight and information.

The second step in the interview design process is the preparation of an interview protocol. An interview protocol serves as a comprehensive outline of the interview, encompassing key themes of exploration, interview questions, planned probes, and transitions (Arsel, 2017). Arsel (2017) identifies three essential components of interview protocol which the present research adopts (Appendix 1). First, the interview protocol begins with a concise introduction that outlines the research project's objectives, explains the interview procedures, which encompass interview language, mode, duration, location, recording, and appointments details. For instance, the location was arranged by those whom I interviewed. They chose the location at their convenience, that is, where they feel comfortable and when they are available. From my side, I chose a place that is quiet so that outside noise will not reduce my concentration and the quality of my audio recording. Furthermore, contact information was provided to enable the interviewee to seek clarification about the study's procedures and facilitate their participation.

We were committed to respecting the interviewee's willingness and confidentiality during the conversation, and the participant was duly informed about this. We orally requested the consent of each participant before recording and provided an explanation of our intention to use the data solely within the research context. However, to ensure clarity and eliminate ambiguities, a signed written document detailing the procedure is preferred (Arsel, 2017). This approach aims to foster transparency and build trust with the interviewees throughout the research process.

We then had a set of provisional interview questions that served as a guide for our interviews. Prior to the interview, we supplied participants with a list of interview themes or key questions, when relevant. This practice enhances the validity and reliability of the data collection process because it informs the interviewees about the information we are interested in and allows them to prepare for the interview. When formulating the interview questions, as per Arsel's (2017) guide, I encountered a challenge regarding the use of warm-up questions to establish rapport, given that our primary purpose was to familiarize ourselves with the participants and their involvement in the PPP case, rather than their personal lives. To address this challenge, we paid special attention to the warm-up questions in our interview process. I commenced each interview by providing a brief introduction of myself and my undergoing research project. Subsequently, we asked participants for their self-introduction, with a particular focus on their engagement in the identified PPP case.

The third step is conducting the interview. My interviews spanned six months from September 2021 to March 2022. During this interview process, I entered the discussion with well-prepared interview questions or a set of themes as a guiding framework to initiate dialogues and explore new directions with participants. To establish rapport and cultivate a trustworthy relationship, I commenced by providing a clear explanation of the interview procedure and what I expect from my participant before turning on the recorder. For example, I shared my personal story with them by introducing myself and explained why I am interested in this project. I constantly revisited my interview questions when it came to the actual interview. Throughout the interview, I maintained an awareness of the power dynamics that existed between researchers and participants, as well as any potential bias and preconceptions, as highlighted by Saunders et al. (2019). This awareness is crucial because, despite the presence of interview questions, participants retain control over what they choose to share and how they express themselves. When selecting participants and before conducting the interviews, I considered the potential influences of power relations on the interview process. This approach helps ensure that the interviews are conducted in a respectful and equitable manner.

The fourth step involves iteration and entails reflecting on my willingness to complete each interview before proceeding to the next one. As an example, following each interview, I documented my impressions of the interview process and analyzed the gathered information. The aim was to enhance our interview process before conducting subsequent ones. I placed each interview within the broader context of my entire dataset and evaluated the new data in relation to the pre-existing dataset. Alongside a thorough review of the relevant literature, I repeated this process until I crafted a narrative that is analytically robust, empirically rich, and offers a novel theoretical perspective.

3.1.3.3 Interview Access: Internet-Mediated Access

When requesting for access, there are three types of organizational concerns (Saunders et al., 2019). First, it involves the amount of time or resources. The less time and resources we ask for, the more likely the request will be accepted. To overcome this concern, we always indicated that our interview would last around 45 minutes in our introductory email or messages. When conducting the interviews, the time was kept to a minimum to cover all the interview questions to avoid exceeding the time limit. The second concern is related to sensitivity about the topic because organizations are less likely to cooperate where the topic of research has negative implications (Saunders et al., 2019). Therefore, we highlighted a positive approach and framed our research topic in a way that does not appear to be sensitive. Specifically, we clarified that our interviews do not involve any sensitive figures from the related project. Meanwhile, we emphasized that one of our research objectives is to explore the relationship between different partners with the objective to better understand and cooperate with both public and private sectors. The third organizational concern is the data confidentiality and the anonymity of the organization or individual participants. For our request to access, it was highlighted that data will remain confidential. The strategies outlined effectively tackled these organizational concerns, facilitating successful conduct of interviews.

In the context of data collection, two methods for gaining access to information are typically employed: traditional access, which involves in-person interactions and internet-mediated access, which utilizes various digital technologies, including email, social media platforms, Zoom, and Microsoft Teams, to conduct interviews, archival research, or discussions (Saunders et al., 2019).

We predominantly relied on internet-mediated access for two primary reasons. First, this approach was necessitated by the travel restrictions and bans imposed by some governments during 2020 and 2021, largely due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The second reason relates to practical considerations, including time and cost. As we transitioned into the multiple-case study phase, our research encompassed cases in nine countries: Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Democratic Republic of Congo, Gabon, Ghana, Ivory Coast, Nigeria, Republic of Congo, and Senegal. However, the practicality of traveling to all these locations was constrained by significant time and costs. Furthermore, concerns related to the susceptibility to the elevated security risks in certain countries, notably the Democratic Republic of Congo and Nigeria, made in-person fieldwork impractical. As a result, we made the strategic decision to conduct all our interviews remotely, using communication platforms like Microsoft Teams, WeChat, WhatsApp, or Zoom. Nevertheless, this approach came with its own set of challenges, including recurrent connection issues during interviews. There were instances where we had to reconnect to ensure seamless continuation of our discussions.

3.1.3.4 Interview Samples

As an external researcher, I encountered challenges in obtaining access to both the organizations and the participants from whom I aimed to collect data. One of the key hurdles I faced was negotiating permissions with a gatekeeper within the organization, as these individuals held the authority to grant or deny access to organizational members. This gatekeeper, often a figure like the General Director in private enterprises, had the ultimate say in whether I could proceed with my research. Several factors contributed to the challenges in securing access. Some organizations were not inclined to grant access due to a perceived lack of perceived value in relation to the work of the organization. However, the most significant barriers often related to the potential sensitivity of the research topic and concerns about the confidentiality of the information that would be required for the study (Saunders et al., 2019). For example, we reached out to 280 experts, most of whom were currently involved in the related project. Only one person had retired, and nine individuals had transitioned to new careers after their involvement in the project. In one instance, we interviewed a single individual twice who served as a board member for both the airport projects in Gabon and Ivory Coast, allowing us to discuss each project separately. Out of the 280

experts contacted, 89 experts, or approximately 31.8%, agreed to participate in the interviews. In the end, 50 interviews were completed successfully **(Table 8**).

Table 8. Semi-structured Interviews Samples

Case	Name of Project	Numbers of Experts Contacted	Number of Experts Who Agreed	Number of Interviews Conducted
1	Dakar–Diamniadio–AIBD toll highway	40	15	7
2	Accra–Kumasi toll road	21	6	4
3	Lekki–Epe toll road	15	5	3
4	Concession of National Road No. 1 (Brazzaville–Point-Noire)	18	8	6
5	Henri Konan Bédié toll highway bridge	46	9	5
6	Road-rail bridge between Democratic Republic of Congo and Republic of Congo	6	2	1
7	Port of Kribi	29	8	5
8	Lekki Deep Water Port	39	7	4
9	Libreville International Airport	32	17	6
10	FHB Abidjan International Airport	15	4	4
11	Abidjan–Ouagadougou Railway	23	8	5
	Total	282	89	50
	%		32%	18%

To gain access to the appropriate data, we employed several strategies aimed at facilitating virtual access and establishing new contacts. Firstly, we utilized snowball techniques to forge connections with new participants. This approach involved seeking access through existing contacts to develop new ones (Saunders et al., 2019). We began by reaching out to individuals whom we considered professional colleagues and who were already familiar with us through our networks. Their prior knowledge of us provided a foundation for trust in our research intentions. Additionally, at the conclusion of each interview, we asked the interviewee if they could recommend any colleagues

or other experts who might be interested in participating. This practice allowed us to tap into the existing contacts of our interviewees and gain access to new contacts or organizations where I did not have pre-established connections. As an example, in one of our selected cases, we conducted research within an organization where I had previously completed a successful work placement. As a result, I had established a network of contacts within the organization who proved to be immensely helpful in cooperating with me and granting access to the necessary data.

The second strategy we employed involved directly reaching out to local government branches, such as PPP units, the Ministry of Finance within the public sector, or the primary shareholders and investors of the project company. We sought their assistance in identifying the appropriate person to contact within the target organizations. Each contact was initiated with great care, whether through email or LinkedIn requests, ensuring that the correspondence was thoughtfully drafted and conveyed.

In addition to expressing a general interest in my proposed research, I found that offering a summary report of my findings to those who granted access and expressed interest was a valuable approach when requesting access. This step not only conveyed the potential benefits of the research to the participants but also demonstrated a commitment to sharing the results with them. I also recognized the importance of tailoring my language and communication style to the type of person being contacted. Adjusting the tone and content of my messages to suit the preferences and expectations of the recipient proved to be an effective way to engage with them. Furthermore, in my written requests for access, I included multiple contact methods, such as email, LinkedIn, WeChat, and WhatsApp, to facilitate a convenient and timely response from the individuals I was reaching out to. These strategies collectively resulted in the successful conduct of 50 interviews, comprising 36 private experts and 14 public interviewees from 14 nationalities for our final interviews (**Table 9**).

Table 9. Interviewee Profiles

No.	Project	Number of Interviews		Total
		Public Experts	Private Experts	
1	Dakar–Diamniadio–AIBD toll highway	2	5	7
2	Accra–Kumasi toll road	2	2	4
3	Lekki–Epe toll road	0	3	3
4	Concession of National Road No. 1 (Brazzaville–Point-Noire)	0	6	6
5	Henri Konan Bédié toll highway bridge	1	4	5
6	Road-rail bridge between Democratic Republic of Congo and Republic of Congo	1	0	1
7	Port of Kribi	3	2	5
8	Lekki Deep Water Port	2	2	4
9	Libreville International Airport	0	6	6
10	FHB Abidjan International Airport	2	2	4
11	Abidjan–Ouagadougou Railway	1	4	5
	Total	14	36	50
	%	28%	72%	

3.1.3.5 Interview Recording

All our interviews were undertaken in real time online, a practical approach considering that the experts we needed to interview were scattered across various geographical locations, such as Cameroon, China, France, Gabon, Ghana, Ivory Coast, Nigeria, Republic of Congo, Senegal, United States, and more. We both adopted a dual method approach for capturing the interviews, utilizing audio recording as well as taking notes as the conversation progressed, in accordance with the guidelines provided by Saunders et al. (2019). For interviews conducted via software or apps like Zoom or Microsoft Teams, we sought permission to record the conversation. Zoom and Microsoft Teams are video conferencing platforms that allow us to engage online for video conference and record the discussion. In instances where participants were unfamiliar with the

software, faced compatibility issues with their hardware or operating system, or encountered internet problems, we used alternative communication platforms such as WhatsApp and WeChat to facilitate real-time interviews.

Before each interview, we obtained the interviewee's consent to record our conversation, offering a justification for the benefits of recording. We also provided assurances regarding their rights over the recorded data and the confidentiality of their responses. Taking notes during the interviews offered several advantages. It served as a backup in case the audio recording failed, helped maintain our concentration during the conversation, and demonstrated the significance of the interviewee's responses. Additionally, it enabled us to commit the key points of specific interviews to memory when those interviews could not be recorded due to technical issues as well as clarify certain aspects of transcripts when the recording quality was compromised by poor internet quality. Furthermore, our projects covered both English- and French-speaking countries, with diverse accents in both languages. However, the notes we took during the interviews proved invaluable in addressing this issue when reviewing the recordings for transcription. In total, all our interviews were recorded.

3.1.3.6 Interview Transcriptions

The transcription process plays a pivotal role in guaranteeing the accuracy and reliability of the recorded information, a critical aspect for the credibility of our study. One step within this process involves transferring the transcribed data into computer software designed for qualitative data analysis (Bell et al., 2022). The present study opted to utilize NVivo 14 for the purpose of transcription analysis, helping us delve deeper into the qualitative data we had collected. Upholding high data integrity, we ensured that all the transcriptions have been carefully read and verified before undertaking coding exercise. This was imperative because the inaccuracies or discrepancies in transcriptions might result in misinterpretations or misrepresentations of the collected data.

To fortify our dataset, we engaged in double check system by listening to each recording at least twice, with some sections necessitating additional care. This allowed us to capture nuances in speech intonation, revealing potential meanings that might have been missed through mere

transcriptions. Furthermore, we double checked the very specific details, minimizing transcription errors in transcription and ensuring that the final documents reflected the actual conversation as closely as possible. For instance, some transcriptions may require six to ten hours for every hour of audio recording (Saunders et al., 2019). Through rigorous data quality control measures, we upheld the accuracy of the interview data, fostering confidence in its reliability and credibility of the collected data. This approach enhanced the value of our collected data for thorough analysis.

3.1.3.7 Translations

The translation process subsequent to transcription involves converting the transcribed text from one language to another. In our case, we translated the transcribed content from French and Chinese into English by maintaining the original message's essence, context, and intended meaning. All the transcribed texts were carefully reviewed before translation to understand the context, nuances, and specific meanings. Our goal was not only to capture the exact verbatim content but also to preserve its contextual information, enabling us to anchor the interview within its relevant context.

My proficiency in three languages—English, Chinese, and French—significantly contributes to ensuring the accuracy verification of translation quality. When cultural references, idioms, or expressions in languages like French and Chinese might not have direct equivalents in English, I adjusted the content to resonate with the English cultural context. This proficiency underscores the importance of my comprehensive understanding of these languages and their cultural nuances, which is crucial for a successful translation process. Moreover, to ascertain the quality of the translated material, I employed rigorous quality checks. These checks aimed to meet the required standards in terms of accuracy to the intended meaning of the source texts. I leveraged AI tools such as ChatGPT and sought validation from fellow academic colleagues to verify the accuracy of the translation. This meticulous approach ensured that the content was accurately conveyed, maintaining coherence and readability in English.

In summary, we conducted a total of 50 semi-structured interviews with experts who had a vested interest in the projects we were studying. These interviews varied in duration, ranging from 30 minutes and two hours and were conducted using virtual platforms such as Zoom, Microsoft Teams,

or WhatsApp. The interviewees represented both public and private sectors, including the local governments and international private companies. For seven out of the 11 selected projects, we successfully interviewed at least one representative from both public and private entities involved in the PPP projects. Our participants came from 14 different nationalities, reflecting the international nature of the projects. The interviews were conducted in various languages, including French, English, and Chinese. We initiated contact with interviewees mainly via email or LinkedIn. To expand our network of contacts, we employed a combination of the snowball method and direct outreach. Specifically, we asked each interviewee for additional contacts to help us broaden our list of potential experts on the subject.

3.1.3.8 Ethical Considerations

Ethical considerations in research encompass a range of principles and practices designed to safeguard the protection, respect, and well-being of individuals and organizations involved in the research process. These considerations span multiple aspects including obtaining informed consent, preventing harm, ensuring fair treatment, complying with regulations, maintaining confidentiality and anonymity, and employing secure data storage practices. It is important for the research design to consider whether data should be collected when the subjects of the research are unaware that they are the subject of study and have not provided consent (Saunders et al., 2019). In our multiple-case study, the potential participants were provided with comprehensive information about the research, its purpose, and the request to obtain their voluntary agreement to participate. To reach our interviewees, our introductory email or message requesting access included a concise self-introduction, an overview of the research purpose, an explanation of why the individual was being contacted, and a brief description of what participation would entail, including the expected duration of the interview. Upon request, an interview guideline was also provided. During the actual interviews, we consistently began with a brief self-introduction and an overview of the research topic. I encouraged the interviewees to ask questions before commencing the interview. This approach was designed to ensure transparency and fully informed consent from the participants.

When requesting interview access, a common concern is the data confidentiality and the anonymity of the organization or individual participants (Saunders et al., 2019). For our request to

access, we emphasized that the data will be collected, stored properly to prevent any unauthorized access or breaches of confidentiality. The data will be presented at a sufficient level of generalization that identification is not possible. Moreover, the participants remained anonymous which ensured that no one will know who participated in our research and that no one is able to identify the source of any response, to protect its real participants.

In our approach to the multiple-case study, we have concluded that ensuring the anonymity of individuals suffices, enabling accurate identification of each case. Opting for complete anonymity across multiple cases was not deemed favorable as it eliminates crucial contextual details and complicates the process of composing and analyzing the case (Yin, 2018). Substituting real identities with fictional ones for 11 projects would require considerable effort to manage the details accurately. In contrast, for the single-case study, preserving anonymity by concealing the company name and individuals involved was deemed sufficient.

3.1.4 Data Analysis

We found the explanation building method and cross-case synthesis are appropriate analytical approach to keep in view that the research nature, domain, and time frame. Yin (2018) mentions five analytic approaches for case study analysis: pattern matching, explanation building, time-series analysis, logic models, and cross-case synthesis. The pattern matching approach refers to the logic which compares an empirically based pattern, that is, one based on the findings from the case study, with a predicted one made before collecting the data (Yin, 2018). Logic models including individual-, organizational-, and program-level logic models are used to examine a theory of change or to access an intervention. The time-series design involves only one single relevant measure, that is, time-series that needs to be tracked over time. We find that methods like pattern matching, time-series approach, and logic models may not align well with our research objectives. As the goal of explanation building is to analyze the case study data by building an explanation about the case, this approach was deemed relevant for this study's exploratory case. Meanwhile, cross-case synthesis, a method that involves synthesizing or combining findings and insights obtained from various cases under examination, was deemed applicable to the multiple-case study given that the study is cross-sectional.

We used a cross-case synthesis methodology to compare different PPPs, enabling a comprehensive exploration of our research questions by integrating diverse perspectives and contexts. The cross-case synthesis methodology, a case-based approach, prioritizes maintaining the integrity and entirety of each individual case. This method emphasizes a comprehensive understanding of each case before discerning, contrasting, or comparing patterns and similarities across cases. This approach is well-aligned with our data aggregation strategy, which seeks to draw conclusions regarding variables across multiple cases. As a result, cross-case synthesis proved highly relevant to our research methodology by enabling the synthesis and comparison of patterns or insights extracted from different cases. It allowed for a comprehensive examination of the research question by integrating diverse perspectives and contexts. This methodology allowed for a holistic exploration that considers a wide array of viewpoints and contexts, enhancing the depth and breadth of our analysis.

3.1.4.1 Data Analytical Process

Our data analytical process encompasses three key phases: description, analysis, and interpretation (Wolcott, 1994). These phases facilitate a systematic exploration of our collected data, enabling me to derive valuable insights. The description strategy involves presenting factual data which can "speak for themselves." This phase demands maintaining proximity to the originally recorded data. Description entails structuring and presenting raw data in a detailed manner. In handling multiple cases within a qualitative study, I employed the progressive focusing method (Wolcott, 1994) to organize and present the descriptive aspects. Progressive focusing refers to slowly zooming in direction from broad context to the specific details of the case. For example, we outlined the broader national and sector-specific factors pertinent to each project. This involves detailing the overarching institutional environment of the country where the project is situated, as well as delving into the project-specific dynamics that could influence or impact the project's context. These three descriptive approaches provided varied perspectives and depth in presenting the descriptive aspects of the multiple cases studied, offering comprehensive insights into each case's details, contexts, and critical elements.

Moving beyond mere description, the next step involves data analysis. The aim is to expand and extend beyond a purely description by identifying pivotal features and interconnections within the

data. The analysis phase entails a meticulous examination of the data through coding and labeling. This process aims to identify patterns, relationships, and underlying meanings embedded within the dataset. Moving beyond simple description, this phase delves into exploring the intricate connections between different data. By employing systematic coding and labeling methods, this analytical process allows for the identification of significant correlations and deeper insights that surpass a mere surface-level depiction of the data.

Furthermore, interpretation goes beyond mere factual data and careful analysis. It involves making sense of the patterns and findings discovered during the analysis process. Interpretation guided by theory involves analyzing and comprehensive data through the lens of established theoretical frameworks and concepts as a guiding framework. This approach entails interpreting findings considering existing theories or conceptual models, enabling a deeper understanding of the studied phenomena within the context of established theoretical paradigms. These three approaches are not mutually exclusive but interconnected, emphasizing that they do not follow a linear sequence. This approach proves beneficial for a multiple-case study, allowing for a comprehensive understanding and meaningful interpretation of the gathered information.

Throughout our analysis, we adopted the strategies by integrating them into a broader analytical framework (Wolcott, 1994). This involved aligning our study with established theories in the field, primarily guided by the initial and comprehensive literature review. The literature review played a pivotal role in guiding our coding process, from its inception to the visualization of data. Additionally, we embraced the concept of "thinking display," employing visual tools like tables, charts, diagrams, and figures. These visual aids not only served as alternative means to convey information but also served to highlight specific facets of our study, catering to an audience keen on comprehensive findings. Moreover, our presentation of findings was shaped by the chosen descriptive foundation, enabling us to spotlight previously shared information selectively or delve into finer details, ultimately deepening the analysis's precision and breadth.

In our study, we implemented a three-tiered analytical approach consisting of individual cases scrutiny, focused case comparisons, and aggregated case examinations (Druckman, 2005). First, we analyzed and coded data from each individual case. Subsequently, we engaged in comparative

assessments among focused cases, utilizing theories or concepts to guide our case selection and description, thereby facilitating control over our analysis (Wolcott, 1994). This comparative framework prioritized aligning cases and exploring causal factors. Finally, we conducted an analysis of aggregated cases to derive broader insights. These aggregated studies involved comparing multiple cases, often across diverse dimensions, providing a cross-sectional perspective (Yin, 2018). The subsequent sections detail our coding employed in our case study.

3.1.4.2 Data Coding

The coding procedures involves assigning different codes to the data, with each code representing a distinct concept or abstract idea that holds potential interest (Yin, 2018). This process leads to the generation of numerous conceptual labels that relate to a more detailed and focused level of analysis, offering a structured framework for understanding the data. Our data coding followed a methodical and interpretative process, encompassing careful reading, coding, elaborating emerging themes, and revisiting extensive literature (Strauss & Corbin, 1998).

We meticulously managed all our interview transcripts and observation notes using the qualitative analysis software NVivo 14. We imported an extensive volume of materials, totaling over 1,000 pages into the NVivo database. This platform facilitated the coding of specific passages within these documents, allowed for queries, and visualized relationships between different codes. Simultaneously, NVivo served as a repository for regular memos, providing a space for ongoing data analysis throughout the entire duration of the study (Saunders et al., 2019). Our coding process followed two phases according to Strauss and Corbin (1998): initial explorative coding and axial coding (**Table 10**). Throughout this process, we consistently reviewed the code coherence, boundaries, and interrelationships among categories.

Table 10. Coding Phase

Stage	Coding Process	Methodology	Objectives	Results
Stage 1	Initial explorative coding	Data-driven category-open coding	To assign various kinds of codes to data and each code representing a	Creation of a multitude initial

		Preliminary literature review	concept or abstraction of potential interest	codes: over 140 codes
Stage 2	Axial coding	Concept-driven category Extensive literature review Data display	To summarize and simplify the data collected and/or selectively focus on some parts of this data To organize and assemble the data into summary diagrammatic or visual displays	Reduced codes: nine second-order themes four aggregated dimensions

The initial coding process involved open coding, which was achieved by closely reading all the data, including the transcripts and interview notes. We utilized line-by-line analysis (Strauss & Corbin, 1998). First-order codes were derived from participants' keywords by unitizing data within each interview transcript. A unit of data for coding can encompass various textual components such as a specific number of words, a line within a transcript, a single sentence, an entire paragraph, or other similar textual data (Saunders et al., 2019). Employing an open coding method, we deconstructed the data into segments and assigned codes to these parts, resulting in more than 140 codes in the initial round. This process focused on extracting key conversation topics from each interview, although some codes lacked clear conceptual boundaries at this stage.

The initial coding process involved coding the transcripts separately for each project to reduce the chances of missing or mislabeling themes. We thoroughly read all the transcripts repeatedly until we achieved a comprehensive understanding of the data. Subsequently, we analyzed the initial codes to ensure coherence and consistency, leading to a re-analysis aimed at identifying second-order codes and finalizing the coding analysis. This analysis resulted in organizing themes from all interviews into a hierarchical structure, creating several higher-level codes that contained corresponding lower-level codes, offering a structured framework to understand the data comprehensively. This phase was instrumental in exploring emerging patterns and the potential relationships within the themes (Strauss & Corbin, 1998) and identifying in vivo codes.

Building upon our initial coding, we advanced the data analysis with general axial coding (Strauss & Corbin, 1998). This process involved extending the relationships among our codes to second-order themes, with the objective of giving the same codes to events, acts, or happenings that share the same characteristics as well as categorizing our data by breaking them down into conceptual units and assigning appropriate labels. This involved exploring relationships among our codes to group them into second-order themes. Our identification of these categories was guided by the research objectives embedded in the research question. These categories stemmed from both the collected data evident in the NVivo first-round coding and insights drawn from the literature illustrated in the NVivo second-round coding (Saunders et al., 2019). For instance, the concept of "multiple logics" surfaced early in our data, yet its precise relationships remained unclear at this stage. We recognized the need for ongoing review of literature to have a theoretical orientation towards comprehending diverse logics and their interrelationship, as well as organizational responses to these diverse logics. This exploration continued to refine and shape the evolving theory during our analysis. This approach allowed us to unite the data from interview transcripts by categorizing them based on the established codes (Bell et al., 2022; Saunders et al., 2019).

We streamlined our initial codes by consolidating them into nine second-order themes. Data reduction encompasses the process of condensing and streamlining collected data, either by summarizing it or by selectively concentrating on specific parts (Saunders et al., 2019). As the analysis progressed, the categories changed: some categories ceased to exist independently, merging into broader, overarching titles. Others emerged from previous categories that had grown too varied or extensive in their scope. Consequently, we streamlined our initial first-order codes, consolidating them into nine themes. This process aimed to clarify the data structure.

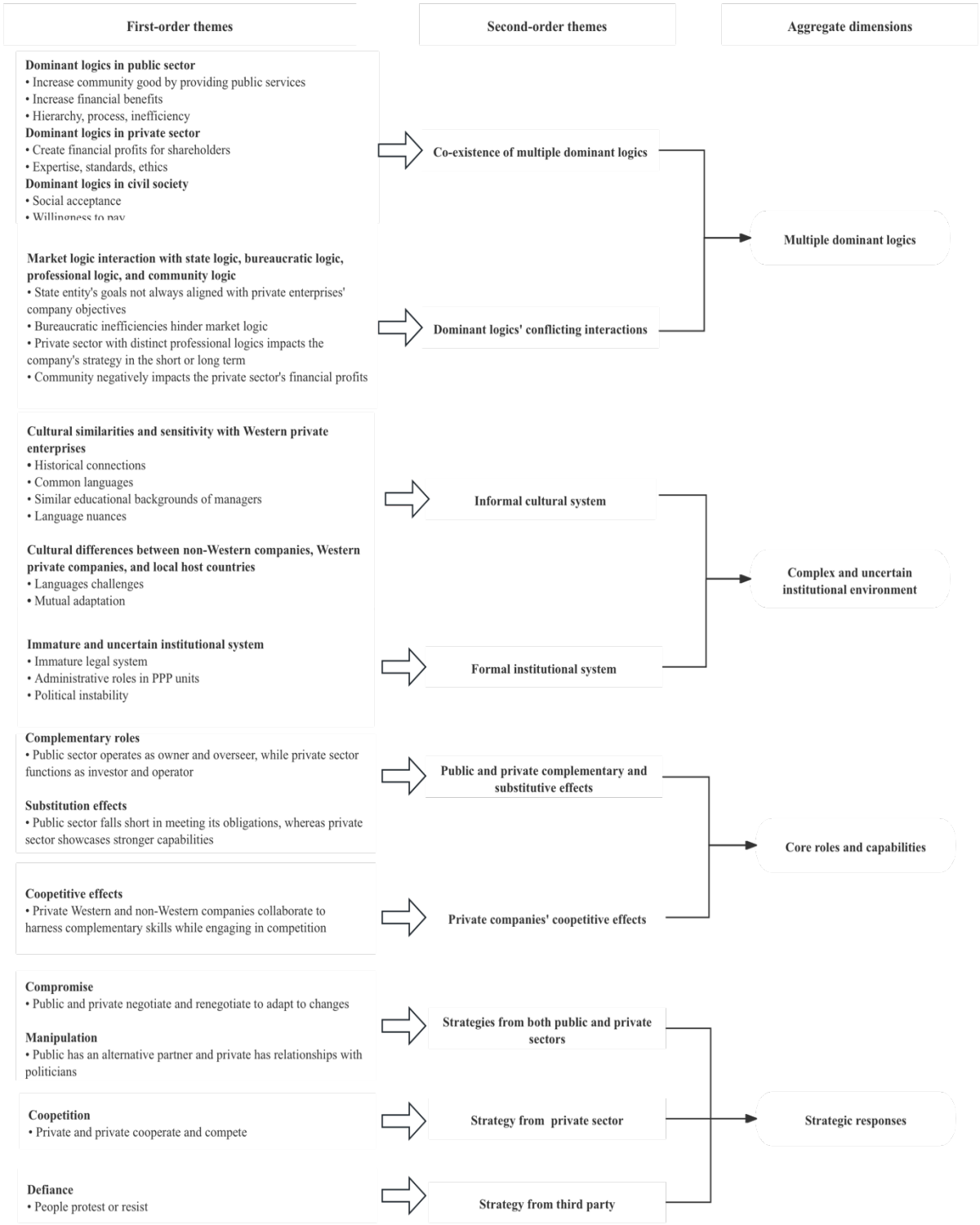
The interactive aspect of coding analysis empowered me to actively seek essential themes, patterns, and relationships among our codes, ultimately leading to the organization of second-order data. We explored recurring sequences of coded text within and across cases, striving to unveil interconnections between diverse codes. Addressing ambiguous boundaries within certain concepts, we engaged with pertinent academic literature, fine-tuning nuances, and reorganizing passages when necessary. This process enabled the creation of aggregate theoretical dimensions

into four overarching theoretical dimensions, facilitating a deeper interpretation of subsequent findings.

By leveraging the concept of "thinking display," we structured and compiled the data into summarized diagrammatic or visual displays, particularly utilizing networks (Saunders et al., 2019). These aids facilitate the recognition of relationships and patterns within the data, allowing for the drawing of conclusions and their subsequent verification. By iteratively working through various visual forms, data display helps develop analytical thinking by effectively representing the data. To enhance this clarification process, we developed some visual networks of codes, establishing conceptual links between them to elucidate distinctions and relationships.

In sum, we initiated the coding and categorization of all interviews according to their respective projects. Employing open coding for each case, we aimed to identify recurring topics, while theory-driven coding aimed to assign similar codes to elements sharing common characteristics. Our effort was to conceptualize higher-level themes guided by research questions. Subsequently, we advanced to cross-case analysis. Our process persisted until further analysis failed to reveal new categories or illuminate relationships between existing categories, signifying data saturation. In essence, we continued until additional analysis ceased to offer fresh insights or uncover new connections among the identified categories. The final data structure summarizes the first-order codes, second-order themes, and aggregated theoretical dimensions (**Figure 3**).

Figure 3. Data Structure of Multiple-Case Study

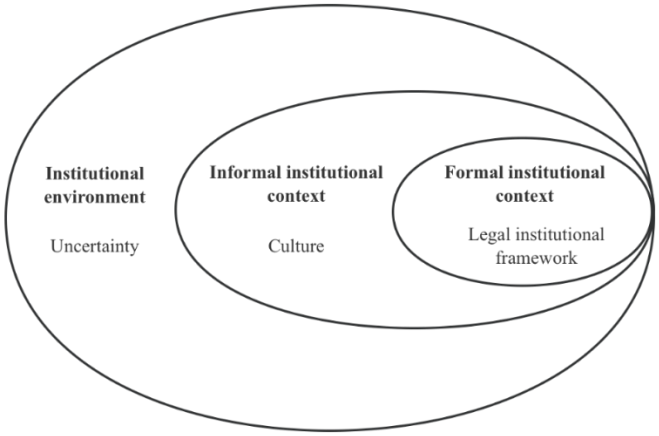


3.2 Findings

3.2.1 Complex and Uncertain Institutional Environment

Our results highlight the complexity and uncertainty of the institutional environment for PPPs in West and Central Africa. This environment is shaped by a combination of informal elements, such as morals, conventions, traditions, codes of conduct, habits, attitudes, and beliefs (Dobler, 2011) as well as formal factors, such as regulations and rules. Consequently, the institutional context encompasses both informal cultural system and formal institutional system, contributing to the complexities and uncertainties prevalent in this region (**Figure 4**).

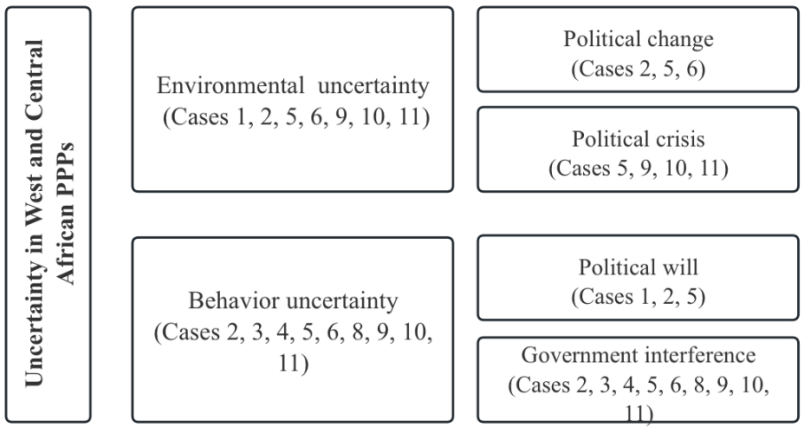
Figure 4. Institutional Environment



3.2.1.1 Uncertainty in West and Central African PPPs

PPPs inherently carry uncertainties owing to their long-term nature, encompassing a range of unknowns and evolving factors such as economic fluctuations, regulatory alterations, and shifts in public needs or preferences. In addition to these macroeconomic and project-specific risks assumed by private investors, our findings highlight the environmental uncertainty linked to political crisis and instability, particularly concerning potential government changes and government interference. Such changes could lead to project halts or delays, influencing a project's trajectory. Moreover, our results underscore the fundamental role of behavior uncertainty including the political will in transportation PPP projects and the government intervention which may prioritize political agendas over technical considerations, introducing additional complexities and uncertainties (**Figure 5**).

Figure 5. Uncertainty in West and Central African PPPs



3.2.1.1.1 Environmental Uncertainty

Our findings underscore the profound impact of the erratic and frequent governmental changes within the host continent, significantly disrupting PPPs. These uncertainties pose substantial challenges to project continuity, often leading to complications and hindrances in their initiation, execution and success. Consequently, political stability plays a crucial role in mitigating risk, especially in West and Central Africa where changes in government are often unpredictable and frequent. A stable government cultivates a favorable business environment by ensuring policy continuity and minimizing disruptions. Conversely, in politically unstable areas, a condition often observed in West and Central Africa, the unpredictability of government stability can be a significant concern. These issues can significantly impact project implementation, government efficiency, and the credibility of the local government. Consequently, political uncertainty breeds skepticism among stakeholders, hindering trust and confidence in PPPs. Furthermore, such uncertainties can lead to failure of the project such as project cancellation or restarts, resulting in delays. As one expert highlighted:

> *During our time over there, it went through several elections and one or the other party ended up prevailing both in parliament and the presidential election. It was a setback and having to start from scratch again with the new group (Case 2, Interview 28).*

Political crises, like coups or civil unrest, potentially damage prior investments in projects as in the case of Cases 5, 10, and 11. These events can cause a sharp decline in traffic and extensive damage to domestic airports, presenting considerable risks for investors involved in these ventures. In Case 5, a civil war in Ivory Coast between 2000 and 2010 halted a project despite a signed contract in 1997, leading to its dormancy for a decade due to the hostile local context. Similarly, this crisis has resulted in significant disruptions in airports within the country. According to one expert:

> *For example, the coup d'état of 1999 for example, with the situation of the country. Let's say that the traffic has dropped sharply… If I take the airports of the domestic interior, there are many airports where they have been practically vandalized, demolished with the crisis. This is a big risk for those who invest. (Case 10, Interview 48).*

3.2.1.1.2 Behavior Uncertainty

Political will is crucial throughout the life cycle of PPPs. Strong political will can facilitate the initiation and implementation of PPPs, as demonstrated in Cases 1, 2, and 5. For instance, Case 1 exemplifies a project in Senegal that held significant political sway, guided and monitored by political leaders at the highest levels. According to one expert:

> *It was a project that was by its nature, which is carried at the highest level. So with a strong presence already critical, initiated by the political authorities of us of the time […] it is a project followed at the time by the prime minister and supervised by the minister. There was a part followed by the president himself. (Case 1, Interview 27)*

However, the political will should be alongside the economic and financial viability of projects to attract investor interest. Government intervention has the potential to prioritize political agendas over technical considerations, observed across almost all cases, specifically Cases 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 8, 9, 10, and 11. In site selection, political preferences might override technically sound choices, impacting project outcomes. Similarly, government initiatives to initiate parallel projects, like constructing additional roads near existing ones, diminishing project revenue and creating

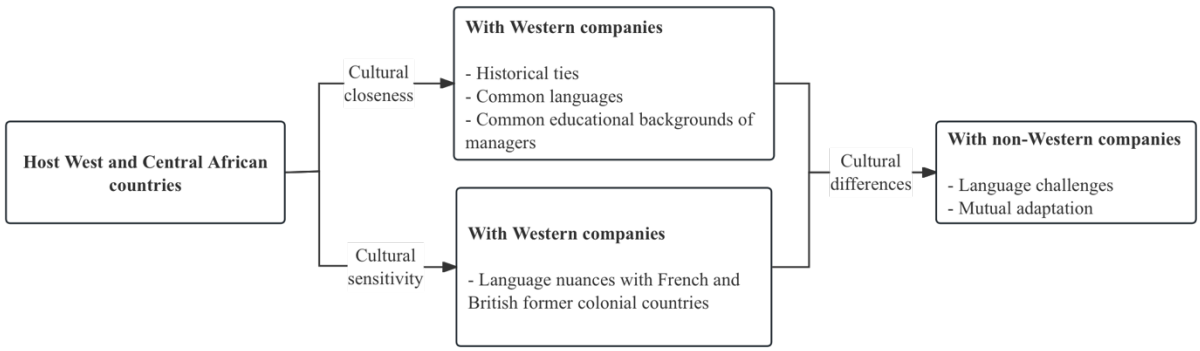
challenges for ongoing ventures. During election periods, this interference might prioritize electoral agendas over project interests.

To conclude, instances of political crises, coupled with unpredictable and frequent changes in government, pose substantial risks to the continuity and timelines of PPPs. The multifaceted role of politics is evident within PPPs in this region. Political will is seen as a factor for successful PPPs initiation and implementation. Government interference further introduces risks of opportunism, influencing decisions that can deviate from technical and economic viability, impacting project sustainability and efficiency. These complexities underscore the significant challenges arising from political involvement in PPPs across West and Central Africa.

3.2.1.2 Informal Institutional Context

With respect to the informal institutional context, our results show that it is linked to the colonization between the host African countries and the Western private enterprises, as highlighted in Cases 1, 5, 6, 9, 10, and 11 (**Figure 6**).

Figure 6. Informal Cultural Context



3.2.1.2.1 Cultural Closeness

Cultural closeness arising between Western companies, in particular, francophone and anglophone companies, and former French and British colonial countries in West and Central Africa stem from historical connections, shared languages, and the educational backgrounds of managers. In our cases, cultural closeness is observable through the historical connections between France and its

former colonies like Burkina Faso, Gabon, Ivory Coast, Republic of Congo, and Senegal, serving as a foundation for mutual exchanges. The experts articulated the historical, political, and military links between the host former colonial countries and France, underscoring the strong connections that facilitate exchanges and collaborations. As one expert said:

> *And history carries a strong link between the two countries, political links, military links. So, there are links, there are strong links between the two countries, so that also facilitates a lot of things and exchanges. (Case 10, Interview 45)*

The prevalence of shared languages, particularly in French-speaking countries, streamlines communication and simplifies negotiations for Western enterprises. Additionally, the educational backgrounds of managers, who were often trained in both their home countries and France, contribute to a cultural closeness within French-speaking Africa. The educational trajectories of senior officials, spanning institutions in Ivory Coast and France, significantly contribute to the cultural proximity observed in French-speaking countries. For instance, in Case 5, many of these leaders received training in esteemed institutions within Ivory Coast and furthered their education in France, fostering a cultural closeness within French-speaking Africa. One expert said:

> *We have many senior officials who were trained in good schools in Côte d'Ivoire, but also who came to France for training. So culturally, we are much close in French-speaking West Africa. (Case 5, Interview 31)*

The cultural closeness between Western companies and their African ventures plays a crucial role in shaping investment strategies and operational approaches. For instance, the Eiffage Group places a strong emphasis on cultural considerations within its operations. Despite the inherent limitations in the availability of international executives, the company addresses this by promoting international mobility. This strategy includes welcoming younger talents to refresh and diversify resources. Moreover, a key aspect emphasized is the need for a mindset attuned to Africa, indicating the importance of an “Africanized will” within their workforce. The seamless integration and minimal cultural differences experienced by French entities operating within the local landscape, further underscoring the strength of this cultural closeness.

3.2.1.2.2 Cultural Sensitivity

Our results highlight the importance of cultural sensitivity, which is particularly rooted in colonial ties. Emphasizing the cultural sensitivity between France, the UK, and their former colonial countries remains crucial. For instance, cultural sensitivity stemming from colonial connections, particularly noticeable in French and English former African colonial nations like Ivory Coast, Senegal, and Nigeria. The emergence of anti-French sentiment highlighted a deeper cultural conflict between the French and former colonies. An illustration of cultural sensitivity toward Ivorian people is evident in Case 5. Nuances in language and expressions reveal marked differences in politeness and the gravity of certain words between France and Ivory Coast. This example showed a seemingly innocuous phrase in France could hold significant offense when translated directly to Ivorian context, highlighting the need for cultural awareness and sensitivity. One expert explained:

> *They have their terms. They are much more polite than we are. There are expressions, words that are easily said in France, it's crazy, what's wrong? If you say that to an Ivorian, it's serious…it is something very violent.* (*Case 5, Interview 19)*

The lingering linguistic effects from British colonial history pose significant challenges in comprehending cultural nuances, as observed in the interviews. One speaker pointed out the inclusion of unfamiliar or unusual words in their language. These expressions, less familiar to those unaccustomed to them, present challenges in comprehension due to their unconventional nature. This distinction underscores the necessity for precise and unambiguous communication within Nigerian contexts. One expert said:

> *British colony before, and then in his language, there are a lot of words, rather out-of-the-way words that we may not be used to, that we are not used to hear, or that we have not heard before. They will use these words, so it will lead to some difficulty in understanding. (Case 8, Interview 46)*

In conclusion, the findings highlight the impact of historical ties, educational background, and shared language on fostering cultural similarities between French, the UK, and their former

colonies. These connections play a pivotal role in shaping investment strategies and facilitating smoother operations within these contexts. However, the interplay of cultural disparities, evident in contrasting perceptions and approaches showcased in case studies, illuminates the intricate and profound nature of conflicts rooted in colonial legacies, emphasizing the pivotal need for cultural awareness and sensitivity in fostering mutual understanding and harmonious interactions between the French and its former colonial nations.

3.2.1.2.3 Cultural Differences

Our results highlight that, with non-Western private actors, such as Asian enterprises like Chinese companies, do not have the same historical colonial link and therefore experience less impact on their partnerships. Within the West and Central African context, the multinational private participation introduces diverse international cultures into local public services. The cultural distinctions significantly influence the dynamics of PPP relationships involving European and Asian private entities, as evidenced in Cases 2, 4, 8, 9, and 11. These instances highlight the profound impact that cultural variations have on the interactions and collaborations between local and international stakeholders within the realm of PPPs in Africa.

PPP projects involve diverse nationalities introducing varied cultures that can sometimes cause cultural friction among partners. Our study highlights the presence of numerous nationalities in transportation sector. For instance, the multiple private companies of different nationalities, including multinational entities like Bolloré, incorporating a wide array of cultural backgrounds, contribute to the complexities. This diverse mix of investors and companies might lead to cultural and linguistic tensions stemming from differences in religious beliefs and other factors.

Achieving proficiency in English language and honing effective communication skills is crucial for successful management and problem-solving within diverse, multicultural environments for Chinese enterprises. The reliance on translation can complicate communication. Ultimately, the shared linguistic foundation emerges as a pivotal facilitator in fostering smoother and more direct communication channels. The ability to navigate both French and English proves instrumental in enabling effective communication. Chinese individuals face communication challenges in effective management, due to language nuances in English, such as imprecise wording or

inappropriate tone, often result in misunderstanding and hinder problem-solving, underscoring the significance of effective understanding and communication for conflict resolution.

Different cultural norms contribute to a contrast between individualistic Western practices, which often prioritize swift and autonomous decision-making, and the more consensus-driven approaches rooted in Chinese culture, where group decisions hold greater significance. One interviewee pointed out the differences:

> *It's that in Europe, in the West… it's still very individualistic. While the Chinese culture is consensual, it is always the group that decides on a solution. I found it very almost shocking that the general manager of the company, he was obliged either to go to Beijing or to talk to everybody before making a decision. Even a decision that didn't have much impact. (Case 4, Interview 3)*

These challenges underscore the recurring impact of cultural differences on work methodologies and professional interactions within PPPs, both within multinational entities and concerning local contexts. In navigating these differences, experts stress the imperative need for mutual adaptation and reciprocal learning, as evidenced across Cases 4, 7, and 8. Mutual adjustment is needed when collaborating with partners from diverse cultural backgrounds. The mutual adaptation emphasizes the value in managing cultural divergence between the multinational private and local public authorities. For instance, a local public agent acknowledges the distinctive working methods of Chinese companies, emphasizing adaptation within the framework of local regulations. Meanwhile, multinational investors stress the significance of comprehending the local situation. An expert emphasizes the need to grasp the unique dynamics of Nigerian relationships:

> S*ome of the international people don't understand how the Nigerian relationship works. So, I mean, you have to give some people advice on how they talk, especially to the ministers in this country. It's a key aspect of doing business here is understanding that relationship. (Case 8, Interview 43)*

Effective face-to-face communication plays an important role in both public and private collaborations. Amidst the COVID-19 pandemic, the landscape of communication saw a significant shift, with a heightened reliance on online platforms like Zoom for addressing PPP contractual matters. However, in various case studies, face-to-face interactions are highlighted as preferred for building relationships. Continual efforts toward open dialogue and correspondence helped build good relationship between the local government and private entities.

In summary, cultural closeness, often stemming from historical connections with countries like France and the UK, educational background, and common languages contribute to shared characteristics. However, sensitive cultural aspects and differences present challenges. Our results highlight the importance of mutual learning and multilingual capabilities for effective communication to bridge these cultural gaps between local authorities, Western, and non-Western companies.

3.2.1.3 Formal Institutional System

Formal institutional systems within PPPs comprise legislative frameworks, including specific regulations or laws governing PPPs, dedicated PPP units or committees, and oversight bodies responsible for ensuring transparency, efficiency, and compliance within the PPPs, as illustrated in Cases 2, 3, 6, and 8. However, this formal institutional setup encounters challenges due to issues of regulatory maturity, notable differences in the legal institutional frameworks between former British and French colonies, constrained decision power, and implementation complexities within PPP units.

The disparities in legal frameworks across African states are stark, shaped by historical influences of common law and civil law systems in former British and French colonies, respectively. This dual legal tradition remains a persistent challenge in African countries. Specifically, the prevalence of common law in former British colonies like Nigeria and Ghana allows for flexible, tailor-made contracts than in francophone nations, where the system in the French context complicates legal matters in these regions. For instance, Ghana, as a former British colony, enacted the PPP Act of 2020. The act led to the establishment of the Public–Private Partnership Committee, which serves as an inter-ministerial institution dedicated to supervising PPP projects. Notably, this new

framework presents a more structured and transparent process for unsolicited proposal compared to the previous one defined by the national policy of 2010. Conversely, the impact of the French Civil Code in former French colonies establishes a shared legal reference system, contributing to a more unified cultural perspective within French-speaking West Africa compared to the diversity found in Anglo-Saxon countries.

This shared system poses challenges in the legal framework, especially in the complexity of PPP projects. It frequently leads to a less mature legal institutional framework. While certain countries within this context are showing progress, the majority are still trailing behind in terms of legal institutional development. These challenges require legislative adjustments and impacting ministerial coordination and project timelines, particularly when the changes involve engaging not only ministries but also legislative bodies such as Congress or Parliament, thus causing project delays, particularly for first PPPs.

Moreover, a lack of consideration for the specific requirements of sectors adds another layer of difficulty, making it harder to tailor regulations to the unique demands of PPPs in the region. In the context of the port sector, the existing texts have faced challenges in actual implementation. This difficulty stems from the coexistence of various laws. Furthermore, the execution of PPP regulations or laws in this region encounters hurdles that impede their effectiveness, posing challenges. These complexities underscore the need for a nuanced approach to navigating the legal landscape in francophone nations, especially in PPP initiatives.

PPP units in this area operate with restricted decision-making authority, typically assume administrative roles rather than become pivotal decision-makers shaping PPP outcomes. Decision-making power is centralized within technical ministries such as finance or public works or higher authorities such as prime ministers or presidents. This arrangement restricts the influence of PPP units on the outcomes of PPPs. Exploratory interviews in Cases 1, 2, 4, 5, and 7 indicate that across multiple countries, these units often operate in a more supportive capacity without substantial decision-making powers, significantly limiting their responsibilities. Consequently, PPP units in this area typically hold administrative functions rather than possessing significant decision-making authority. Instead, the authority to make decisions within PPP units tends to be restricted but often

resides within technical ministries like those in finance or public works, leaving PPP with constrained influence over PPP initiatives. As one expert outlined:

> *So we often work in these cases with several countries that have set up PPP agencies, but which, we can see very clearly, often play a very transversal role and are not really decision makers. In fact, often the decision remains in the technical ministries such as the Ministry of Finance or the Ministry of Public Works. (Exploratory interviews, Case 1)*

In summary, the factors issuing from informal cultural systems and formal institutional system in PPPs within this region shape a complex environment. Adding to these challenges are uncertainties arising from political crises, frequent turnover in government leadership, and instances of government interference. These complexities and uncertainties from institutional environment, notably the political uncertainty and interventions, encourage a range of multiple logics and pose challenges to the creation of a common logic.

3.2.2 Dominant Multiple Logics and Their Interactions

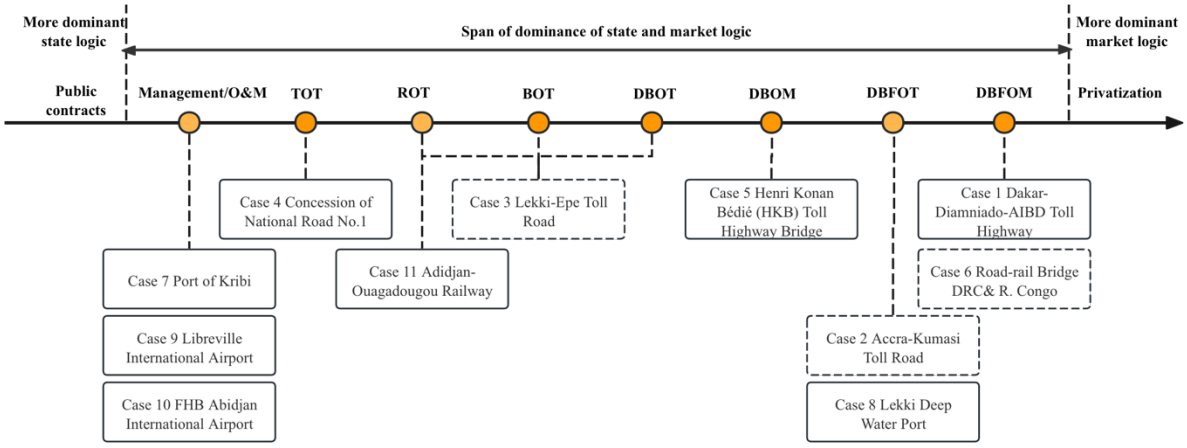
3.2.2.1 Coexistence of Multiple Conflicting Logics

As hybrid organizing, PPPs bring both public and private multinational actors who carry different institutional logics. PPPs include various kinds of concessional forms combining a continuum of state and market logics.

Some PPP models are by nature more adhered to the state logic and the others more toward market logic, according to the degree of government–private participation. **Figure 7** follows the model of Matinheikki et al. (2021) by showing different forms of concession PPPs and illustrates the projects in a continuum of procurement models spanning from dominant state logic (on the left side) to dominant market logic (on the right side) with the varying degrees of concessional models with multiple logics in the middle. Various concessional forms, such as management and Operation and Maintenance (O&M) contracts, Transfer-Operate-Transfer (TOT), Rehabilitate-Operate-Transfer (ROT), Design-Build-Operate-Transfer (DBOT), Design-Build-Operate-Maintain (DBOM), Design-Build-Finance-Operate-Transfer (DBFOT), and Design-Build-

Finance-Operate-Maintain (DBFOM), represent different cases that span the dominance of state and market logics. The Lekki–Epe toll road case (Case 3) shifted towards a more dominant state logic later on. The full privatization which represents the highest dominance of the market logic is out of our scope of study.

Figure 7. Span of Dominance of State and Market Logic

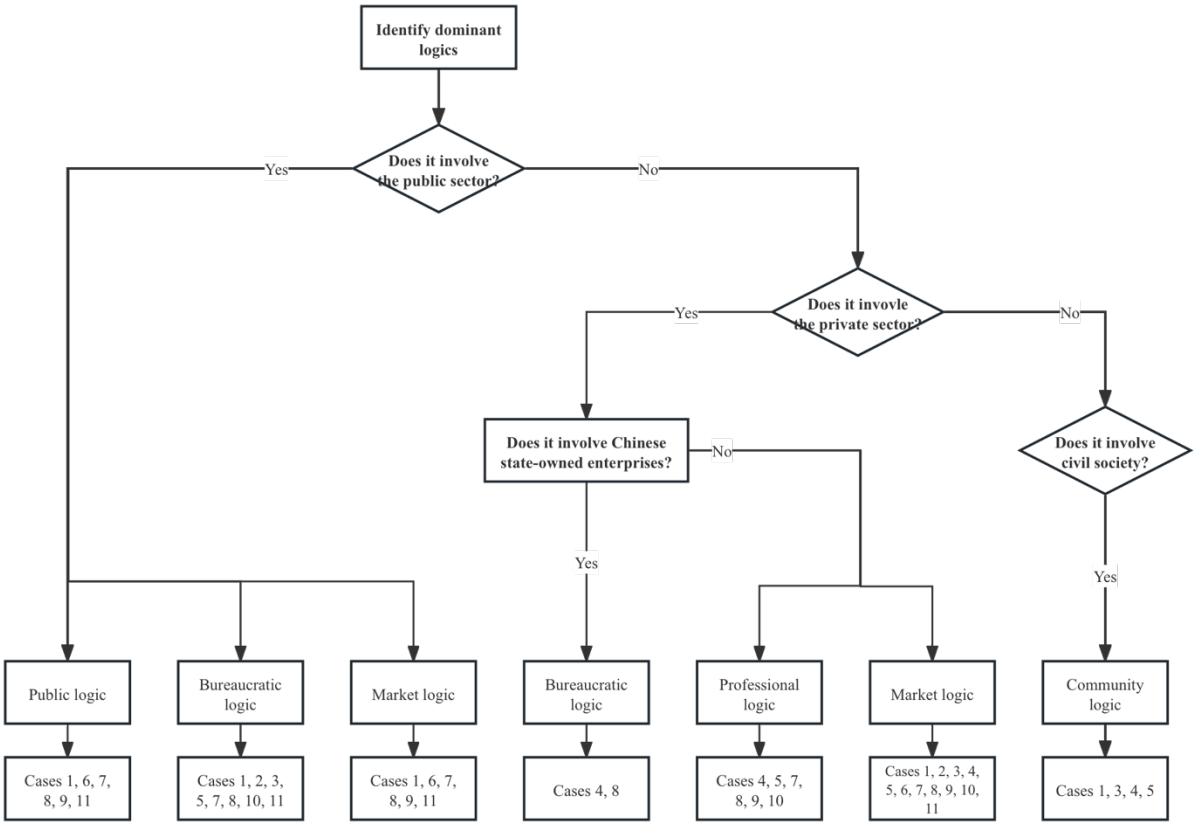


From the above concession PPPs, the public authority engages the private sector to manage a range of task-specific outputs for a limited period from 25 to 45 years. Despite the connotation of mutual consensus embodied in the PPP paradigm, the public sector organizations (e.g., government agencies, political decision makers) and private sector partners and service providers may inherently pursue divergent and often conflicting logics. However, logic multiplicity and potential frictions increase beyond the dichotomy between state and market logics in the PPPs' organizational field.

Our results find the state logic, bureaucratic logic, professional logic, and community logic that lie at the intersection between the public and private sectors as well as the civil society of the respective African country. The state logic of PPPs' strategy involves engaging the private sector to provide public services. The market logic is profit-oriented, while the hierarchical logic emphasizes formality, hierarchy, and procedure. Professional logic pertains to investment, construction, and operation professions, as well as industry certification. The community logic

involves social acceptance and willingness to pay. The dominant multiple logics make it difficult for a common logic to evolve between partners as simultaneous multiple logics are present in PPPs (**Figure 8**).

Figure 8. Dominant Multiple Logics in PPPs



3.2.2.1.1 Logics in the Public Sector

Our findings highlight that the public sector involve multiple dominant logics, including state logic, market logic, and bureaucratic logic. Within the PPP hybrid framework, the public sector adopts a more inclusive approach by integrating profit-focused private entities in public service. The public's infrastructure investments strategies are meant primarily to increase community good and serve public interests, notably by improving public service such as the transportation infrastructure aiming to enhance services and generate socioeconomic benefits. It focuses on improving transportation, facilitating mobility fostering economic growth, and addressing social needs such

as jobs creation. This underscores the multifaceted aims of public sector investments in infrastructure, reflecting a broader commitment to the overall welfare and development of the country. This perspective is articulated by one interviewee in Case 1:

> *The state has [...] public service objectives [...]. It is in the case of public service that it invests in infrastructure thinking that people will move faster, easier, it will make the country more attractive, strengthen the investments and reduce the production costs. (Case 1, Interview 11)*

Mobility emerged as a significant challenge, notably impacting daily commutes and intercity travel such as the capitals Dakar (Senegal), Abidjan (Ivory Coast), Brazzaville (Republic of Congo), Libreville (Gabon), and some important economic cities like Pointe-Noire (Republic of Congo). The issue primarily centered around severe traffic congestion and infrastructure conditions, becoming a bottleneck that hinders smooth movement within and outside these cities. Improving mobility through PPPs to address this issue had noticeable positive impacts. For instance, the implementation of freeways through PPPs has substantially reduced travel times in cities like Dakar, as observed in the experiences of commuters. This newfound ease of travel allows for more efficient scheduling, enabling individuals to attend meetings that are 80 kilometers away from Dakar within a reasonable timeframe—an achievement that was previously inconceivable. This convenience highlights the tangible impact of PPPs on enhancing travel efficiency and enabling smoother, more productive experiences for users. Similarly, in Abidjan, initiatives like constructing bridges with low toll rates not only eased traffic but also led to tangible benefits. Reduced congestion meant less pollution, cost-effective toll rates, decreased fuel consumption, and an overall positive impact on traffic flow.

These projects are rooted in addressing societal needs, recognizing their pivotal role in transforming communities. Notably, they have generated substantial employment opportunities, creating over a thousand jobs during construction and maintaining hundreds more during ongoing operations, fostering economic stability within local communities. Collaborative training programs, sometimes abroad, empower individuals, enabling their progression to higher positions, fostering expertise and local leadership. Moreover, these endeavors significantly enhance locals'

quality of life through improved infrastructure, resettlements, and better access to resources, elevating societal well-being. Beyond infrastructure, the projects engage in social responsibilities, supporting health facilities, community interventions, educational initiatives, and aiding marginalized groups, highlighting commitment beyond profit-making. Demonstrating inclusivity, these initiatives prioritize community involvement, preserving jobs, and exemplifying exemplary social responsibility practices.

Surprisingly, financial gains also hold significant importance for the public sector's participation. The revenues generated through PPPs play a central role across a spectrum of transportation sectors encompassing road, airport, port, and railway PPP projects. As traffic fluctuations influence revenue, concessions often involve revenue-sharing mechanisms, with the private company obligated to refurbish infrastructure upon recovery of initial investments. The state can leverage these revenues for social development or reinvest them to reduce user costs, maintaining a balance between profitability and public service enhancement in a pendulum effect. In road concessions, revenue sharing occurs as per contractual agreements. Private companies operate and maintain these facilities, generating revenue. The state benefits financially, using funds for social development or to reduce user costs, balancing profitability and public service enhancement. In ports, increased customs revenues and infrastructure development contribute to the public sector. Similarly, airport ventures yield shared revenue, supporting national taxes. Railway projects increase state revenues through increased customs tariffs. Across these sectors, private involvement in public service ensures revenue generation that benefits state interests, reflecting a semblance of market logic from the public sector's perspective.

The bureaucratic challenges are significant within the public sector across different infrastructure projects, as observed in the interviews across various case studies (Cases 1, 2, 3, 5, 7, 8, 10, and 11). Bureaucratic hurdles, such as delays, coordination issues within and across ministries, and complexities in multinational projects, add complexity to decision-making and project execution. These challenges are particularly evident in transportation sectors necessitating structured efforts and time for effective implementation. The civil aviation sector, for example, grapples with slow and demanding processes, requiring persistent engagement and on-site presence to secure timely

approvals. These bureaucratic challenges underscore the need for proactive approaches, especially in regions where administrative processes may be protracted and demand close attention.

Moreover, coordination problems within ministries hinder effective implementation and decision-making. This issue is notably evident in PPP units within ministries, leading to inefficiencies and inadequate project oversight, as different ministries lack the necessary capabilities to monitor projects. Interministerial coordination issues further exacerbate the situation, causing delays and misunderstandings in agreements. For instance, negotiating tax agreements becomes challenging due to conflicts between ministries' interests and perceptions. As stated by an expert:

> *The country has set up a PPP unit that is supposed to have skills and support the different ministries that are the contracting parties of this project. The disadvantage is that each ministry has its own PPP within it… Once these projects are executed, the ministries themselves who monitor the execution of these projects and the ministries are not well equipped to do so. (Case 5, Interview 21)*

Additionally, complexities in multinational projects, especially those involving multiple governments, add another layer of bureaucratic challenge. Decisions in such projects must be jointly agreed upon, increasing the intricacies in governance and decision-making processes. In the public sector, decision-making operates within a structured framework, limiting the autonomy of top-level authorities. Their choices are bound by budgetary constraints, requiring alignment with available budget lines. Once approved, an accountant executes these decisions, ensuring compliance with the allocated budget. These bureaucratic hurdles significantly impede project execution and overall effectiveness. The need for streamlined coordination and efficient decision-making processes within and between ministries for successful project outcomes is evident.

3.2.2.1.2 Logics in the Private Sector

Both the Western and non-Western enterprises from the private sector involvement in PPPs are profit-centric, prioritizing revenue generation and shareholder value, as illustrated in Cases 1, 4, 5, and 11. Surprisingly, the Chinese multinational companies involved in these projects are all state-owned enterprises (SOEs) and are also market logics-oriented when they operate abroad. The

interviews underscore the unequivocal commitment of these entities to the maximization of returns for their shareholders, as explicitly articulated by a private manager:

> *It's a for-profit company. The most important reason for its existence is to make money for its shareholders [...] This is also very important, because it's not a socially beneficial company, it's a pure for-profit company. (Case 5, Interview 1)*

This statement reinforces the stark contrast between profit-oriented enterprises and those primarily geared toward public service benefits. Financial modeling assumes a critical role in this profit-driven approach, ensuring a delicate balance between revenue inputs, operating costs, and expenses. Rigorous sensitivity analyses and multiple proposal iterations further reinforce the private sector's commitment to risk control. This profit-focused orientation prompts ongoing discussions about the delicate equilibrium between financial gains and the delivery of socially beneficial services, sparking debates about the broader societal implications of such privatization endeavors.

Professional logics play a crucial role in shaping the dynamics of private actors within the realm of investment, construction, and operation in the infrastructure industry, as seen in Cases 4, 5, 7, 8, 9, and 10. Notably, these logics exhibit variations between companies focused primarily on construction and operation. The Chinese construction firms, which are accustomed to short-term projects, struggle with the challenge of embracing the concept of long-term projects, such as the Chinese partner in Case 5:

> *It's a construction company, and it does not have the same objectives and the same ways of working. Since they work on projects and a project has a start date and an end date which generally lasts between one and five years. But there, we are talking about 30 years, so they have not the same conception of a project and a long-term project. (Case 5, Interview 4)*

However, Western companies such as Egis, Eiffage, Bolloré, and Bouygues strategically focus on long-term concessions. Some companies, like Bouygues, operate with a vision primarily centered

on executing works rather than solely operating concessions, diverging from competitors like Vinci or Egis, which emphasize operations and technical expertise alongside construction projects. For investors in the airport sector, returns might not be immediate or significant, but they offer consistent, long-term returns in what can be seen as a quasi-monopoly business. In the aviation sector, international airports must adhere to strict certification standards set by the Civil Aviation Agency and undergo audits to ensure compliance with international regulations and the country's laws. Certification is achieved upon rectifying identified gaps, enabling airports to enhance operational capabilities and meet international standards. This shift underscores the evolving landscape of professional logics within the infrastructure sector, where adaptability and a comprehensive understanding of the demands of long-term projects become pivotal.

3.2.2.1.3 Civil Society

Our data emphasize the private sector's focus on maximizing returns, which may clash with the priorities of distinct, socially oriented entities that are directly or indirectly involved in PPPs, including the local African population, whom the PPPs are foremost meant to serve. Civil society faces challenges, including limited participation and lack of decision-making power. When it comes to the first PPPs, particularly in toll road projects, both public and private partners encounter social acceptance challenges. For instance, the introduction of tolls on roads in Africa has faced resistance, as cited by one participant in Case 5:

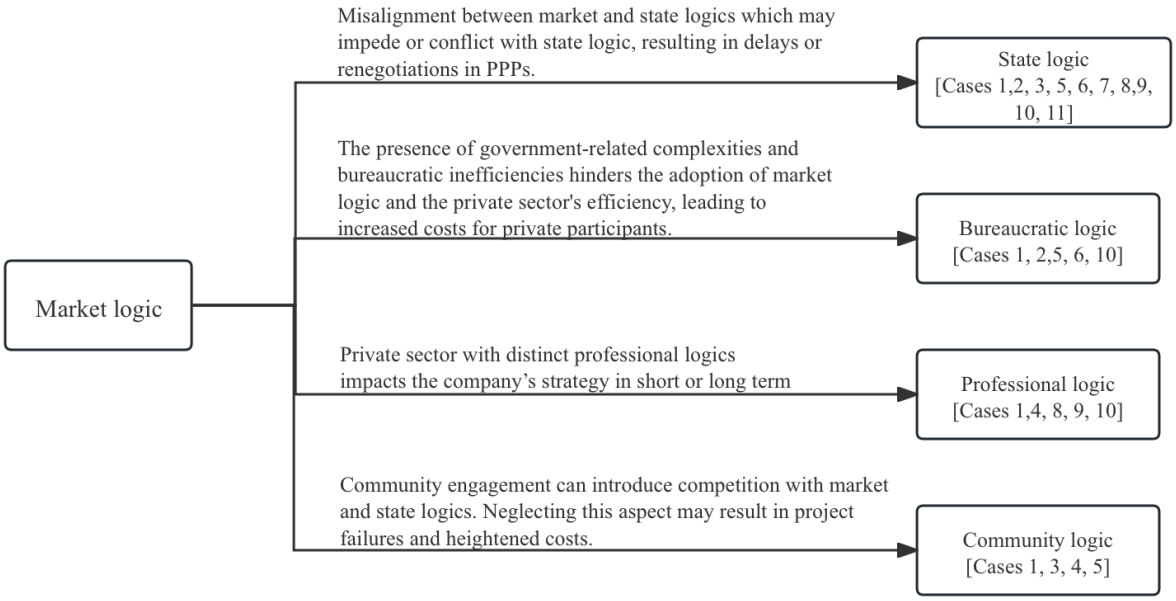
> *The cost of their enterprises has increased, so they certainly put pressure on the government. We were indeed very difficult... We had the pressure from the government and from all sides. No one was willing to take money out of their pockets. (Case 5, Interview 9)*

Similarly, the concept of paying to use a roadway was challenging for people, being a new and unfamiliar practice in places like Senegal and Ivory Coast, where roads were traditionally state-provided without user fees. This resistance was seen during the implementation of toll systems, causing skepticism and uncertainty. Overcoming this resistance require adjusting, managing skepticism, and navigating stakeholder pressures. Gradual acceptance represented a shift from traditional norms regarding road usage and payments.

3.2.2.2 Interactions of Dominant Logics

This points not only to the coexistence of hybrid logics within PPPs but also to the intricate interplay among diverse sets of principles. **Figure 9** indicates the interaction of market logic with other dominant logics including state logic, bureaucratic logic, professional logic, and community logic.

Figure 9. Logics Conflicting Interactions



3.2.2.2.1 Market Logic and State Logic

The state entity's goals are not always aligned with private enterprises' company objectives. The discord between market and state logics signifies the challenges arising from divergent goals and approaches (Cases 1, 2, 3, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, and 11). Case 1, exemplified by Eiffage in Senegal, illustrates this discord, highlighting the difficulty in aligning goals between private entities and governmental objectives. The challenge lies in harmonizing these conflicting interests to address public concerns effectively and ensure the successful execution of infrastructure projects. Case 3 sheds light on the differing priorities between the state and the market in terms of infrastructure development. Collectively, the cases emphasize the persistent complexity of harmonizing state and market interests for collective benefit, illustrating the ongoing challenge of coordinating disparate

motivations to serve public interests. Similarly, in Case 7, there was a stark contrast between Arise's alignment with governmental objectives and Egis's profit-driven focus. This disparity reveals the potential oversight of other visions while private entities prioritize profitability over the fulfillment of governmental goals. The tension between private profit motives and public welfare considerations remains a critical aspect that may result in delays or renegotiations, which necessitates alignment for successful and sustainable partnerships between private entities and the state.

The challenge lies in aligning these divergent interests to ensure that public concerns and the country's needs are adequately addressed, as seen in disagreements over investments in transportation infrastructure. This mismatch highlights the difficulty in finding common ground to synchronize the interests of the state and private entities for mutual benefit and the advancement of public interests. Case 10 delves into the divergence between state and market interests, specifically illustrated through the discord regarding airport development in Ivory Coast. While the state advocates for a new, larger airport to enhance efficiency and safety, entities like AERIA prioritize the development of the existing airport, opting to upgrade it to meet modern standards rather than investing in a new site. As one expert stated:

> *In Côte d'Ivoire, we have only one international airport, that of Abidjan. The state, in its concern for efficiency and safety, said why not build a second airport more modern, larger to deal with this problem, but AERIA seemed not to be interested, they prefer to develop the one that is there, try to bring it to standards. (Case 3, Interview 44)*

3.2.2.2.2 Market Logic and Bureaucratic Logic

The interplay between market and bureaucratic logics encounters hurdles due to governmental complexities, thus hindering the private sectors' efficiency, leading to increased costs for private participants (Cases 1, 2, 5, 6, and 10). These complexities create obstacles to the adoption of market logic, as private entities face difficulties in dealing with governmental intricacies, payment delays, and the uphill battle of penetrating markets dominated by major corporations. Moreover, bureaucratic inefficiencies pose a significant challenge, requiring the convergence of various stakeholders with conflicting interests. One participant voiced this concern:

Sometimes the most difficult thing is to have a single point of entry on the administration side, because there are many people who are concerned by this. Sometimes interests are not the same, it is necessary to manage to make all this small world converge on the realization of the common goal. (Case 5, Interview 31)

Consequently, private entities must contend with bureaucratic intricacies and the challenge of aligning diverse stakeholder interests to uphold commitments made to the governing state. In essence, the success of PPPs hinges on navigating this complex web of interactions and finding common ground among stakeholders with divergent priorities.

3.2.2.2.3 Market Logic and Professional Logic

The private sector with distinct professional logics may impact their financial goal and corporate strategy in long or short term. The Chinese companies involved in short-term public construction contracts may replicate the same strategy when they are involved in the PPP concession projects. However, incorporating professional logic enhances trust and contributes to PPP success through the utilization of support from external advisers. The collaboration with diverse teams that amalgamate technical, financial, and legal expertise on both the private sides exemplify a tangible manifestation of trust in professional logic. The collaboration enhances technical, financial, and legal professional assistance, fostering trust for the potential success of these partnerships between public and private entities. As highlighted by experts, reliance on external advisors becomes indispensable due to the complex nature of the contract. As one expert elucidated:

We cooperate with private financial advisors [...] private law lawyers for project finance. But there are also lawyers of public law, as you negotiate with a State, with a concession, a big project. It is still necessary that things match with public law, especially in Senegal. (Case 1, Interview 10)

3.2.2.2.4 Market Logic and Community Logic

The influence of community logic on market dynamics is apparent, demonstrating how community sentiments shape the operation and outcomes of these partnerships. In Case 1, a prevalent distrust

toward French involvement created a pressing need to address perceptions of exploitation and to ease tensions within the community. This sentiment posed a challenge, highlighting the importance of navigating community perceptions for effective resolution. As one expert highlighted:

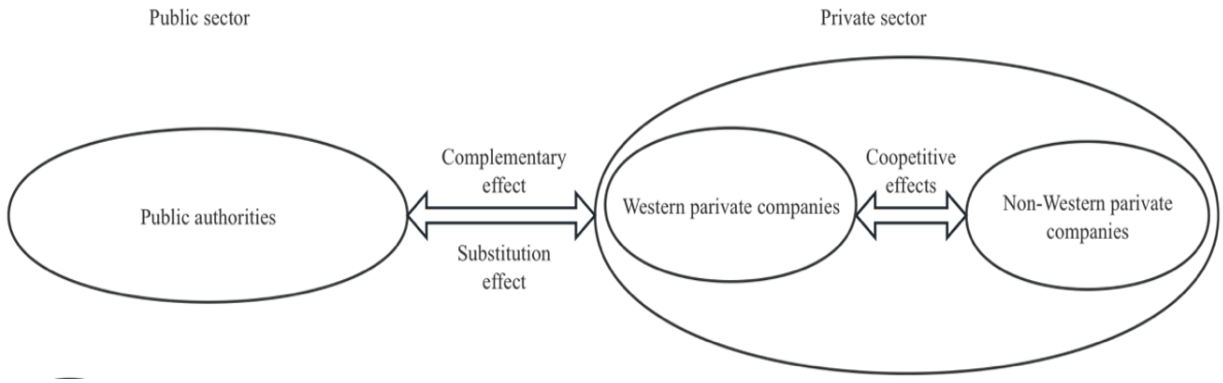
> *People will certainly be unhappy, for these companies. Their profits were high, now all of a sudden, it's shrunk. They will certainly be unhappy. They are going to spill it on whom? Us. (Case 5, Interview 1)*

Similarly, in Case 5, community pressure directly impacted market logic, specifically affecting companies' profitability. The imperative to balance payments and adapt to altered financial structures became crucial in managing these market pressures driven by community expectations. In both cases, the profound impact of community sentiments on market behavior became evident, necessitating a proactive and strategic approach to ensure the successful navigation of community-related pressures. Acknowledging and addressing these sentiments are crucial for fostering positive relationships and sustaining the overall success of PPPs.

3.2.3 Core Roles and Capabilities

Our analysis reveals one second-order code within this theme: core roles and capabilities. Capabilities are defined as a set of well-established abilities of organizational actors, either public or private, to originate, develop, structure, govern, and execute public–private collaboration (Quélin et al., 2019). Although various partners are expected to fulfill their roles according to partnership conventions and to contribute distinct core competencies, our data suggest that this is not consistently evident across all PPPs, contributing to the complexity within these partnerships (**Figure 10**).

Figure 10. Core Roles and Capabilities



3.2.3.1 Complementary Effects

Private entities, in their core roles and capabilities, serve as valuable complements to the public sector in PPPs, as demonstrated across multiple cases (Cases 1, 5, 7, 8, 9, 10, and 11). A primary motivation for public authorities to engage in PPPs is to overcome financial constraints, as governments often lack the financial means to independently finance large-scale infrastructure projects. This financial gap prompts public authorities to resort to PPPs, leveraging private financing to build or rehabilitate necessary infrastructure, thereby benefiting public interests.

The public sector takes on key roles as the owner, regulator, supervisor, and shareholder, while the private sector functions as financer and operator. This is seen in the transportation sector where the government owns the infrastructure, such as ports, airports, and railways, and regulates their operations by setting rules and ensuring compliance. The regulatory bodies like the Nigerian Port Authority and ANAC were responsible for enforcing regulations. The government also acts as a supervisor, overseeing infrastructure compliance, proactive maintenance, and adherence to Key Performance Indicators (KPIs), as shown in Cases 7, 8, 9, 10, and 11. Furthermore, in Cases 4 and 10, the government acts as a shareholder in concession companies, showcasing its involvement in the financial aspects of projects. These roles highlight the shared responsibilities and intricate dynamics within PPPs.

The private sector functions as a service financier and operator within PPPs, as seen in Cases 1, 8, 9, 10, and 11. Private entities handle the operation, maintenance of the infrastructure and

invest in network infrastructure, leveraging their expertise in financing, management, and operational experiences. For instance, the specialized and technical nature of port management, particularly in handling terminals, a capacity predominantly held by the private sector. Private management often offers greater autonomy and flexibility compared to the public sector, enabling quicker and more proactive decision-making, particularly crucial in fields requiring rapid responsiveness like airports and ports. As one expert noted:

> *You know that private management is easier, you have more autonomy than when you are on the public side, in terms of flexibility in management. Because it is a field that requires a lot of reactivity, even proactivity above all, so you see, for that you need some flexibility. (Case 10, Interview 47)*

However, in the public sector, maintaining a high level of flexibility can be challenging. When working in the public sector and relying on a ministry for support, there can be obstacles when trying to carry out urgent projects. This flexibility in management is seen as an advantage in the private sector, allowing for more agile and efficient project execution. Moreover, the French international companies, such as Bolloré, Bouygues, Eiffage, Egis, bring their experiences in managing ports, railways, airports, and road sectors to these partnerships, further enriching the PPP framework.

The shared responsibilities within the PPP framework underscore the significant interactions and cooperation between public entities and private partners. The public sector engages with private partners in delivering public services, leveraging their complementary capabilities. Simultaneously, the experiences and expertise of international private enterprises in PPPs are crucial in overcoming the limitations of the public sector, bringing in much-needed flexibility, technical knowledge, financial resources, and operational efficiency.

Consequently, the government assumes a diverse array of roles as an owner, a regulator, a supervisor, and a shareholder. This multifaceted involvement is exemplified in our data, where the state actively participates in PPPs, enforces stringent contracts, monitors performance, and ensures adherence to standards. In contrast, the private sector, functioning as a service financier and

operator, contributes its financial resources and technical expertise. This collaborative approach aptly illustrates the intricate dynamics and shared responsibilities between the public and private sectors in the PPPs, underlining the value of such partnerships in the effective delivery of public services.

3.2.3.2 Substitution Effects

Surprisingly, our findings indicate that the complementarity in the core capabilities of different partners is not obvious in all PPPs. In cases where the government's capabilities and local agent skills are underdeveloped relative to those of private multinational enterprises, the partnership may lead to substitution effects rather than complementarity effects. This disparity often results in the misunderstanding of PPPs as compared to traditional public contracts, a lack of necessary experience, information imbalances, a lack of financial resources and access to experts for project preparation, including planning, procurement, and contract management.

Traditionally, governments were accustomed to Engineering, Procurement, and Construction (EPC) contracts, where governments pay for delivery based on agreed-upon terms. However, PPPs operate differently, demanding a nuanced understanding of the shared responsibilities, deliverables, outputs, and outcomes between the public and private sectors. For instance, in PPPs, unlike EPC contracts, the government's involvement in the day-to-day functioning of the concession company is often absent. This can lead to a lack of detailed information and data regarding the project's operation, particularly if proper supervisory tools are not in place, indicating the challenge in managing and monitoring PPPs.

The lack of proper preparation on the public side may lead to significant challenges in implementing PPPs, as observed in Case 2. There was a rush to complete road construction due to political agenda without adequate time for comprehensive project preparation. This resulted in the government struggling to fulfill critical obligations, such as relocating utilities and affected populations along the project routes, particularly in densely populated areas. These unforeseen obligations were supposed to be covered by the government but were not fully anticipated.

Indeed, there is a noticeable shortage of expertise within the public sector. African countries, such as Ivory Coast and the Republic of Congo, face significant challenges due to limited centralization of expertise in PPPs. This lack of expertise exacerbates the complexities of managing such collaborations.

Worsening the situation, the financial constraints from the government limited the engagement with an external consultant company for project analysis and the financial engagement as a shareholder. The payment issues can lead to the company's withdrawal in their engagement as consultant companies. Consequently, this withdrawal created an imbalance compared to the private collaboration, which is equipped with robust internal teams and external expert consultants. Another significant issue that arose, as highlighted in our data, was the failure to fulfill its commitment, such as the payment of a part of the shareholder loan, despite having agreed to contribute capital. This situation underlines a discrepancy in the project's initial agreements where the government's non-payment impacted the partnerships. These issues raised concerns for the public sector's credibility and trust in the partnerships with private sector.

The lack of expertise may lead the local government to propose KPIs for the PPP contract, as showcased in Case 4. As a result, the responsibility for suggesting performance levels fell upon the private sector. Despite the government's assurance to provide these indicators, they did not deliver as promised, which led to the private sector assuming this responsibility due to the government's failure to fulfill their commitment. While the negotiations did not delve deeply into these specifics, the government did not extensively contest the proposed KPIs, allowing them to pass without much interference. However, the KPIs proposed by the private sector were accepted by the government, yet these indicators were notably low in terms of their threshold and depth. As one expert mentioned:

> *They contracted it, but it wasn't defined in the first place. So, we helped them to define the KPIs. There are performance indicators for the maintenance part and performance indicators for the operation part. (Case 4, Interview 4)*

Furthermore, the public sector's lack of experience in PPPs is evident, particularly as they are unprecedented endeavors, described as the very first of their kind by experts involved. Their unfamiliarity with PPPs resulted in renegotiations, hindering progress, leading the private sector to invest substantial time, money, and effort in thorough preparation. This gap in expertise becomes even more pronounced when compared to private operators' extensive experience and teams in legal and financial aspects of PPPs. For instance, French multinational companies like Bouygues possess extensive competencies and specialized experts, notably in legal and financial domains, a significant contrast to the expertise gap observed on the public sector. The State of Ivory Coast, despite being advised by international firms, faces challenges in fully comprehending and engaging with the complexities presented, leading to gaps in decision-making when confronted with technical advisory issues.

Implementing PPPs necessitates a fundamental shift in the government's understanding and approach towards public service management. The unfamiliarity with the dynamics of PPPs, lack of preparatory measures, limited access to PPPs expertise, and lack of experience have all contributed to challenges in leveraging PPPs for infrastructure development. The engagement of private entities in PPPs further demands a thorough understanding of the modes of cooperation and competition that exist within private enterprises.

3.2.3.3 Coopetitive Effects

Private entities often enter into "coopetitive" dynamics, a blend of cooperation and competition. Our results highlight that when there was collaboration between Chinese and French entities, as in Cases 4, 6, 7, 8, and 9, this generated a complementary advantage, resulting in a cooperation effect that leveraged the combined competencies of both parties. As exemplified by the collaboration in Case 7, a partnership between the Chinese SOE China Harbor Engineering Company (CHEC) and French companies such as Bolloré Africa Logistics and CMA/CGM formed a joint holding company to oversee the concession of the port terminal. In this strategic alliance, CHEC contributed its extensive expertise in port construction, complemented by French firms' operational know-how experience, creating a robust foundation for managing and developing the Kribi port terminal concession.

Similarly, China Sate Construction Engineering Company (CSCEC) and Egis, bring distinctive expertise to their collaboration in the concession of National Road No. 1, with CSCEC specializing in maintenance and overhaul, leveraging their in-depth knowledge gained from building the road. Meanwhile, Egis holds expertise in road operations. Moreover, despite CSCEC's lack of operational experience, learning from Egis proves beneficial, especially in negotiations and managing local employees. Egis, with extensive negotiation experience and skilled internal experts, guides CSCEC in crucial aspects such as risk evaluations, negotiation, consultant usage, and localization management. This complementary skill set ensured the seamless execution of tasks, enabling the Congolese state to rely on both partners for essential project components. As one expert highlighted:

> *CSCEC did not have the competence to operate tolls, and Egis did not necessarily have the competence to have staff to carry out maintenance work. In this case, each partner has its advantages. CSCEC, which knows how to do maintenance work, and Egis, which has operated on the road, and the Congolese State, which can rely on its two partners to carry out these tasks. (Case 5, Interview 3)*

This collaborative approach leveraged the strengths of each partner to enhance the overall effectiveness of the project, demonstrating a strategic alignment of expertise for comprehensive project success. Their collaboration showcases the importance of leveraging respective strengths, benefiting both sides by expanding international cooperation experiences. The quick implementation and decentralizing project operations and maintenance adds further value to this collaborative effort, laying a significant foundation for future cooperation opportunities between Western and non-Western companies.

In contrast, coopetitive challenges were encountered by well-established French transportation firms, contending with emerging Asian multinational players, as in Case 9. They compete for the new market while collaborating with each other for technical know-how, causing coopetition effect within each other. In a dynamic environment, Egis and Olam engaged in both competition and collaboration, creating a coopetition effect. Olam's bold approach to the new airport involved a unique business model, anticipating revenue from peripheral activities to finance the project. Egis,

initially facing obstacles in securing the airport concession, was later invited to collaborate due to its recognized expertise in airport management. This collaboration exemplified the strategic recognition of each party's strengths and the realization of mutual benefits in a competitive landscape.

Compared to Western and Asian multinational entities, local African companies often fall short in competencies such as technical expertise, the capability to pre-finance and effective execution of projects. The local companies' lack of technical expertise and the capability to pre-finance and execute projects effectively. Consequently, local companies often only participate in PPP projects as subcontractors. These instances collectively underline the critical need for capacity building, transfer of skills, and financial support for local companies to leverage their potential in PPPs and contribute meaningfully to sustainable infrastructure development.

In sum, to bridge the gaps between multiple logics within the public and private sector with multiple roles and diverse capabilities, the coopetitive partnership within the private Western and non-Western companies in a complex and uncertain PPP local institutional environment, a range of organizational strategies had to be engaged in to overcome divides and create common logic between partners.

3.2.4 Strategic Responses

PPPs function as hybrid organizing, navigating and employing diverse strategies that underscore the multifaceted nature of interactions within this domain. The compromising strategy involves continual negotiations between the public and private sectors to establish mutually beneficial agreements. Conversely, the coopetition strategy integrates cooperative and competitive tactics to foster collaboration. In contrast, the defying strategy involves third parties, often the public or general population, expressing opposition to PPP initiatives. Finally, the manipulating strategy illustrates how, within PPPs, public entities employ manipulation to align outcomes with their interests. Each strategy represents a distinctive approach to navigating the complex dynamics of partnerships between the public and private sectors (**Table 11**).

Table 11. Strategic Responses

Available strategies	Definitions	Case Evidence
Compromise	Involving continual negotiations and renegotiations	Cases 1, 4, 7, 8, 9
Coopetition	Involving both cooperative and competitive tactics	Cases 4, 7, 8, 9
Defiance	Involving third parties, often the civil society, expressing opposition to PPP initiatives	Cases 1, 4, 5
Manipulation	Involving influence, control within public and private sector	Case 7

The compromise strategy involves both public and private entities reaching consensus through negotiations and renegotiations, which were involved in all our cases and represent a common approach to PPP management. Case 1 exemplifies compromise, highlighting the importance of contract renegotiation to address changing circumstances. As articulated by a participant:

> *There is a revision of the contract, to revise the rates, [...] because there was a higher traffic, according to the financial model. (Case 1, Interview 18)*

This case explores how parties reconvened to adjust rates, extend contracts, incorporate additional infrastructure, and allow the state to join the company's capital. Such renegotiations illustrate the necessity of adapting terms to evolving needs and unforeseen developments, highlighting the collaboration between the private and public sectors for mutual benefit. This approach is consistently reflected in other cases, emphasizing the flexibility crucial for managing the evolving conditions in PPPs. The result of employing compromise tactics include achieving mutually win-win beneficial outcomes, harmonizing the interests of the public and private sectors, as well as fostering collaboration among private entities.

Less well known and a direct consequence of the engagement between multinational partners is the coopetition strategy, which embodies a blend of cooperation and competition where private

entities collaborate among themselves and with the public sector when their interests align, especially in shared market segments (e.g., Cases 4, 7, 8, and 9). In Case 7, a noteworthy example of coopetition is evident, as Egis collaborated with competitors in airport projects. One participant explained:

> *On the airport site, they have obtained the management, and Egis is still in discussion with them. GSEZ airport is still one of our clients. We continue to provide them with technical assistance services. (Case 7, Interview 15).*

This case highlights the effectiveness of private entities working together, adapting, and complementing each other's strengths to achieve competitive edges and mutual gains in diverse business environments. Simultaneously, they work against each other to secure new PPP projects and operational contracts within existing PPPs. This can create not only a dynamic balance between collaboration and competitiveness but also significant frictions in PPPs. Managing these tensions becomes crucial to harness the benefits of coopetition while maintaining the stability and success of ongoing PPPs.

Coopetition is a combination of cooperation and competition. In this context, private entities compete with each other for new PPP projects and for the operations of existing PPPs. However, they may still cooperate when it aligns with their interests, particularly when they share the same market logic. This strategy highlights the balance between competition and collaboration among private actors.

The defiance strategy involves the public or general population taking a stand against PPP projects when they perceive neglect from either the state or private entities. This resistance can manifest itself through protests, leading to renegotiations over, for example, reduced fees. Cases 1 and 4 highlight the impact of civil society associations and local communities expressing grievances through the media, thereby influencing public debates. Notably, both Cases 4 and 5 demonstrate how public pressure led to half price or reduced toll fees before a project's inauguration. For example, one participant highlighted:

> *They [EGIS] are very decisive and sensible that we first cut to half [...]. Then, we slowly bring up after they have adapted to this payment situation and environment. (Case 5, Interview 1)*

This showcases how societal resistance and activism play pivotal roles in influencing project outcomes and policies. When social concerns are vocalized, they lead to reevaluation and adjustments in PPPs, emphasizing the importance of considering people's sentiments in such initiatives, which is of particular concern when the power differences among the collaborating partners and countries are pronounced.

The manipulation strategy in PPP initiatives involves public entities using manipulation tactics to serve their interests, potentially altering the terms of PPP agreements or employing opportunistic methods to advance their agendas, for example, choosing to provide a second concession to a different partner. Case 7 provides a vivid illustration of this strategy. In this case, Egis sought a second concession, presenting studies to emphasize its suitability for the project, while Olam proposed a new airport project. Opting for direct negotiation, the government ultimately chose Olam for the second airport concession, revealing potential manipulating strategies. An expert explained:

> *Olam had a pre-existing relationship with the state. it worked very well. It was made of audacity, of proximity with the political powers and authorities. (Case 7, Interview 15)*

Consequently, employing manipulating strategies can lead governments to choose alternative private partners in PPPs, as evidenced by Olam's involvement in the airport concession. While involving some potential for creating or exacerbating conflict, this strategy can help public entities safeguard their interests and lower frictions in the long run.

In summary, actors in PPPs employ various strategies, such as compromise, coopetition, defiance, and manipulation, to navigate the complex dynamics inherent in the collaboration. Overall, the compromise and coopetition approaches highlight the importance of adaptability and strategic decision-making as crucial elements in achieving a common logic within their collaborative

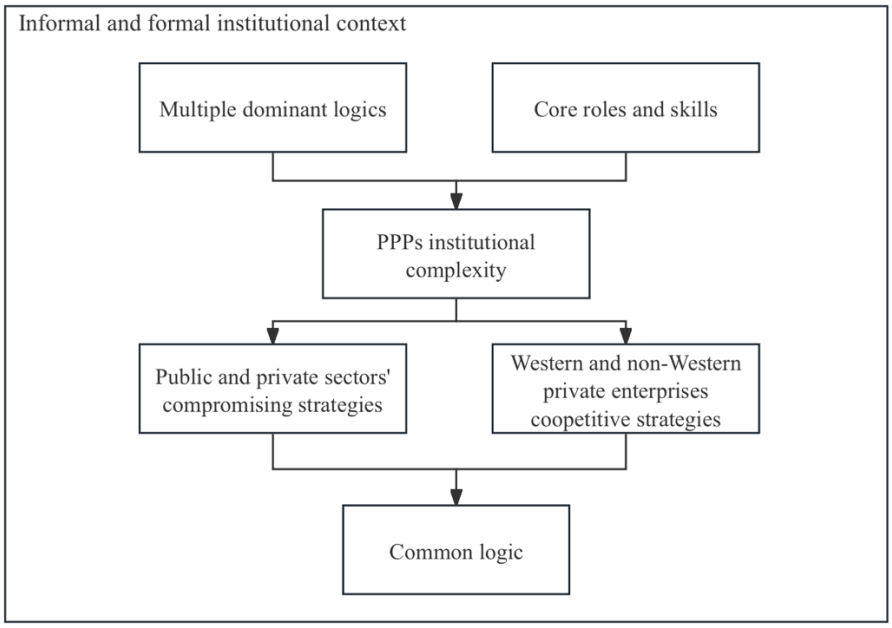
frameworks. While potentially leading to compromise and the realization of benefits, the defying strategy introduces an element of resistance or opposition within the partnership. This strategy requires careful consideration, as it can impact the overall effectiveness of PPPs. The manipulating strategy, which is employed for the pursuit of opportunism, introduces a dimension of strategic maneuvering within PPPs. However, it also raises concerns about transparency and credibility, as manipulative actions may undermine trust and cooperation among partners. The success in PPPs depends on an intricate orchestration or selection between the strategies that we presented, which can enable the evolution of a common logic. Otherwise, PPPs risk failing, particularly when they fail to operate in favor of public sector partners from African countries and fail to serve the needs of the African population.

3.3 Discussion

Our study examined how to create a common logic in PPPs as hybrids. Through our empirical analysis of multiple cases of concession PPPs in West and Central Africa, we found that the complexity and uncertainty of institutional environment, the unbalances in core roles and skills between public and private sectors, and the coexistence of multiple logics and their interactions contribute to institutional complexity in PPPs. By compromising between public and private sectors with coopetition among Western and non-Western companies, partners can better manage multiple logics and work towards establishing a common logic in PPPs.

Our contribution is threefold. First, our research contributes to PPP literature by empirically examining the complexity and uncertainty of African institutional environment in the partnerships between the local public sector and Western and non-Western enterprises. Second, PPPs as hybrids involve multiple institutional logics and potential conflicts that go beyond the traditional state–market divide. Third, our analysis of organizational strategic responses aligns broadly with prior institutional logics literature, highlighting compromise and coopetition approaches that manifest in distinctive ways that are not previously described. Additionally, whereas prior work has often assumed a single collective hybrid response, our evidence points to combing both compromise and coopetition simultaneously as a strategy to establish a common logic within the partnerships. We have encapsulated our findings in a conceptual model illustrating the creation of a common logic (**Figure 11**).

Figure 11. Creating a "Common Logic" Model



3.3.1 Informal and Formal Institutional Context in West and Central African PPPs

First, our results suggest that the institutional environment of PPPs, encompassing both formal and informal contexts, introduces complexity and uncertainty. This, in turn, creates institutional pressures for the actors participating in PPPs. The informal context specifically relates to the broader cultural context of the host country, particularly when involving multinational Western and non-Western private enterprises.

Cultural roles and the diversity of cultural interpretations are key to institutional analysis (Thornton et al., 2015). Culture can broaden and augment neo-institutional and economic perspectives by shifting researchers' attention to the idea that there are not any objective or universal incentives that can be understood independently of actors' understandings and these understandings are contingent on the institutional context (Thornton et al., 2015). Taken together, these factors indicate that cultural and historical ties significantly influence the functioning and effectiveness of PPPs within this environment, where the French enterprise participate in the PPP fields in francophone countries. The historical colonial ties, common languages, and the educational backgrounds of managers, who were often trained in both their home countries and France,

contribute to a cultural closeness between French-speaking Africa and companies like Egis, Eiffage, Bolloré, and Bouygues. This cultural affinity is absent with Asian enterprises, such as the Chinese SOEs.

However, even with historical ties and cultural affinity with the Western companies and the host francophone region, cultural differentiation and pluralism are also quite prevalent (Friedland & Alford, 1991). The literature on hybrid organizing offers new insight into how organizations deal with logics incompatibility internally through their culture (Battilana & Lee, 2014; York et al., 2016). Public sector cultures are increasingly framed and managed in ways that aligns with new public management (Waring, 2015). Cultural hybridity involves social practices of acculturation (learning, or the imitation of another cultural elements), adaptation (modification, or the fusion of cultural elements), and appropriation (borrowing, or the movement of cultural attributes to new contexts) (Waring, 2015). This complexity of cultural influences presents both challenges and opportunities for both Western and non-Western private companies engaged in the management of the multiple logics present in PPPs and the creation of a common logic.

Our study highlights the importance of considering the certainty of institutional political environment (Quélin et al., 2019). According to Quélin et al. (2019), PPPs are primarily designed to achieve non-market, public objectives and are subject to significant political influence. Factors such as frequent government changes, political interventions in public bureaucracy, and excessive formal requirements for private actors can hinder the effective deployment of these accumulated skills. Compared to mature fields, institutional demands in emerging fields, such as African PPPs, tend to be less predictable and more uncoordinated. As the number of institutional demands on PPP actors increase, there is a higher probability of multiple pressures and conflicts (Friedland & Alford, 1991). Consequently, PPP actors face a high degree of institutional uncertainty and complexity due to the lack of consistent and predictable institutional demands (Greenwood et al., 2011).

PPPs currently lack maturity within Africa's broader institutional environment. Compared to mature fields, institutional demands in emerging fields tend to be less predictable and uncoordinated in such African PPP fields. As the number of institutional influences on PPPs actors

increase, there is a higher probability of multiple pressures and conflicts (Friedland & Alford, 1991). This results in higher degree of institutional complexity (Greenwood et al., 2011). Interestingly, our study shows that specialized institutions such as PPP units do not function as safeguard institutions independently. Rather, they play a marginal role, instead of a dominant role, compared to other public authorities, contradicting the results reported by Quélin et al. (2019). As a result, the organizational field in this region represents a moderately centralized space where PPPs are influenced by a variety of external actors.

In the moderately centralized fields, PPPs involve conflicting, competing influences and misaligned external demands that are uncoordinated and lack dominance (Pache & Santos, 2010). These conflicting pressures imposed on PPPs originate from various sources, including public authorities and third-party entities like political opponents of decision-makers (Beuve, Saussier, & de Brux, 2018). For instance, the third parties such as the local communities who matter in important ways for the study of institutions have significant impact on organizational behavior in a variety of instance (Greenwood et al., 2011; Marquis & Battilana, 2007; Marquis & Lounsbury, 2007). Communities can impact the evolution of organizations but can also be threating alternatives to organizations, making it difficult for organizations to do business or even terminating their operations (O'Mahony & Lakhani, 2011), as in the case of the Lekki–Epe tollway in Nigeria (Case 3). The social movement interrupted the operations of the tolls. Marquis and Lounsbury (2007) found also that communities represent threats in that they have the ability to encourage the founding of new organizations with countervailing values. These demands may lead to opportunistic behaviors, where actors act in their own self-interest (Williamson, 1985). Such opportunistic behavior may end up benefiting one party at the expense of others (Williamson, 1985). Thus, moderate centralization is believed to increase the complexity PPPs face.

Institutional environment is crucial for facilitating private participation in PPPs by mitigating the risks of opportunistic behaviors by governments (Quélin et al., 2019; Williamson, 1996). While earlier studies predominantly explored private participation in PPPs through the lens of transaction cost economics and incomplete contract theory (Brousseau & Saussier, 2009), our contribution is in examining and emphasizing how the institutional environment enables or restricts the extent of PPPs with empirical cases as illustrative examples.

In sum, we emphasize the importance of the role of institutional environment (Quélin et al., 2019), including the informal and formal institutional context. The informal institutions interact with formal institutions by complementing or substituting each other. Complementarity is observed when informal institutions strengthen incentives to comply with formal rules. Meanwhile, substitution appears when informal institution's structure incentives of individuals, incompatible with formal laws. These assumptions led to the conclusions that both formal and informal institutions impact the creation of a common logic in PPPs.

3.3.2 Multiple Logics in the Organizational Field of PPPs

In our study, we identified multiple institutional logics within the organizational field of PPPs. These include state logic, bureaucracy logic, market logic, professional logic, and community logic, contributing to the multifaceted nature of these partnerships, leading to institutional complexity. According to Greenwood et al. (2011), the higher the number of logics involved, the greater the complexity a PPP has to navigate.

To analyze this, we applied the seven ideal types of institutional logics which are family, religion, state, market, profession, corporation, and community presented by Friedland and Alford (1991) and Thornton et al. (2012). These societal-level logics are reflected at the PPPs' organizational field level. PPPs, recognized as a distinctive hybrid organizational form, are characterized by the involvement of multiple actors from both public and private sectors. The interplay between them often introduces complexities due to their diverse and sometimes competing interests (Kivleniece & Quélin, 2012; Villani et al., 2017), thus creating multiple logics.

Our study draws attention to the critical roles of bureaucratic, professional, and community logics. While most hybrid organization studies often focus on state and market logics (Greenwood et al., 2011), research on hybridity using an institutional logics lens has focused predominantly on social enterprises as ideal type of hybrid organizations that combine social and market logics (Battilana & Lee, 2014; Pache & Thornton, 2021). Furthermore, the literature on PPPs and institutional logics has not extensively examined logics such as bureaucratic, professional, and community logics. Our

study underscores the importance of these logics and how their context shapes them (Lounsbury et al., 2021).

For example, bureaucratic logic has not garnered enough attention, but this logic is notably prevalent in this region. Professional logic also emerges as a dominant force in PPPs, with multinational Western and non-Western companies, notably French firms along with other emerging private Asian enterprises, introducing diverse professional logics to African public entities, which are characterized by differing strategies, perceptions of time, ways of working, and cultural norms. This dynamic further compounds institutional complexity (Matinheikki, Aaltonen, &Walker, 2019; Matinheikki et al., 2021), underscoring the significance of professional logics in PPPs.

Our study sheds light on the role played by community logic, particularly within the transportation sector of PPPs. Geographically concentrated communities, often with high visibility and national importance (Greenwood et al., 2010; Lounsbury, 2007), exert a tangible effect on organizational decision-making processes within these partnerships. For instance, the interplay between community logic and market logic prompted both public and private entities to make the decision to reduce fees, underscoring the growing recognition of community influences and emphasizing the importance of the historical context (Greenwood et al., 2010).

Our research underscores the need for a broader and more explicit consideration of non-market logics in future studies of hybridity. Recognizing and integrating these diverse logics can enhance our understanding of the operational dynamics and challenges faced by PPPs, thereby enriching the theoretical framework of institutional logics in hybrid organizational contexts and institutional complexity.

We contribute to the institutional logics literature by responding to the call for a more comprehensive examination of settings in which more than two competing logics can be found (Greenwood et al., 2011) in PPPs as hybrids. Literature on institutional logics has focused primarily on competing logics (Pache & Thornton, 2021), such as the coexistence of competing logics (Battilana & Dorado, 2010; Besharov & Smith, 2014; Friedland & Alford, 1991; Lounsbury,

2007; Pache & Santos, 2013a; Thornton & Ocasio, 1999), and it has already theorized that competing logics are rarely stable where one logic can dominate or replace the other logic (Rao et al., 2003). However, there is limited research on the convergence of logics to form a new common logic.

Moreover, our work extends beyond the simple presentation of the inherent tension between state and market logics in PPP concessional contracts for infrastructure provision (Matinheikki et al., 2021) and the available responses to institutional complexity by generic hybrids. Instead, we analyze PPPs as very special types of hybrids that are distinct from social enterprises. This contributes to a richer understanding of the institutional complexity within PPPs.

3.3.3 Core Roles Capabilities in PPPs

Our findings highlight the importance of considering the diverse capabilities of both the public and private sectors to determine the level of private involvement in PPPs (Quélin et al., 2019). This is crucial, as the determinants based on capabilities contribute to institutional complexity, which in turn affects the extent of the private scope in PPPs (Quélin et al., 2019). As hybrids, PPPs bring together both the public and private sectors, with their distinct capabilities and expertise. Seeking private expertise is an alternative to integrating a partner or developing capabilities, which presents advantages in outsourcing the provision of public services (Beuve, Saussier, & de Brux, 2018). Involvement of the private sector can also allow the public sector to reap benefits such as economies of scale, experience, and scope. Additionally, risk sharing becomes a possibility through private sector involvement, bringing about more balanced partnerships (Beuve, Saussier, & de Brux, 2018).

However, our data indicate that the involvement of the private sector may result in a "substitution effect" on the roles of the public sector, such as elaborating the KPIs during contract negotiations in the tender phase. This phenomenon is accentuated in situations where public entities exhibit deficiencies in expertise and access to specialized knowledge due to financial constraints in PPPs' tender phase and contract execution phase. In PPPs, public actors can function as direct partners of private firms, shareholders, as well as regulators and legislators with a unique ability to alter the underlying "rules of the game" or renegotiate contractual terms. Therefore, although it delegates

the management of public service to the private sector, the public entities still require their internal expertise to maintain their monitoring and control power in PPPs (Beuve, Saussier, & de Brux, 2018).

Furthermore, our study extends the previous PPP literature by shedding light on the coopetitive effect observed among Western and non-Western private entities, a factor not previously explored in the field. This coopetition can influence the PPPs' market dynamics and the complexity of PPPs' collaborations in ways that warrant further exploration and understanding.

To summarize, our study contributes to the understanding of institutional logic, institutional complexity, and hybridity (Greenwood et al., 2011; Jay, 2013) by pinpointing factors that shape a common logic in PPPs as hybrids in West and Central Africa. We found that organizational fields are characterized by the presence of multiple, often conflicting, institutional logics in PPPs. Furthermore, we noted that the institutional environment is characterized by complexity and uncertainty, with an imbalance in the core roles and capabilities between public and private partners. This intricate interplay of factors increases the institutional complexity inherent in these partnerships. Given these findings, understanding how to manage these multifaceted elements to optimize the functioning of PPPs and facilitate the creation of a common logic becomes a crucial area of focus.

3.3.4 PPP Actors' Strategic Responses

When considering a broader array of logics, the complexity of adopting appropriate organizational responses becomes apparent (Greenwood et al., 2011). Organizational strategic responses involve five strategies that organizations typically adopt under institutional pressures (Oliver, 1991) including acquiescence, compromise, avoidance, defiance, and manipulation (Oliver, 1991; Pache & Santos, 2010). When PPP actors face multiple institutional pressures, they are less likely to choose acquiescence, which is the most passive response, and are more likely to opt for compromise, avoidance, defiance, or manipulation (Oliver, 1991).

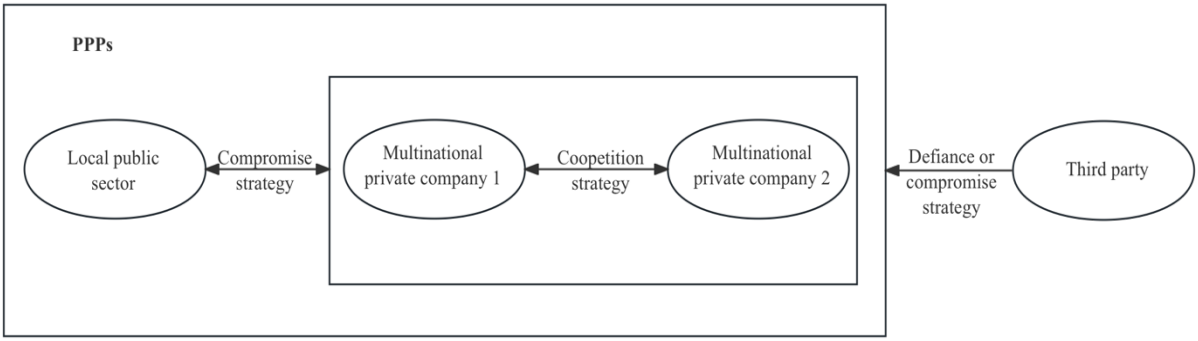
However, antagonist strategies such as defiance, avoidance, and manipulation are not effective in the presence of institutional complexity, particularly when the nature of external demand is

considered (Pache & Santos, 2010). In instances where PPPs encounter resistance from a wider audience, public authorities favoring one logic over another or defying may lead to challenges (Matinheikki et al., 2021).

Avoidance may help the actors to distance themselves from institutional pressures or escape from institutional rules or expectations in the short term. However, it may not be viable in the long run since it may affect the PPP's legitimacy (Pache & Santos, 2010). The manipulation strategies from both public and private sectors may cause opportunist behaviors and transparency issues in PPPs field.

Instead, a compromise strategy between public and private sectors may be more effective. In the realm of state and market logic, there is a tendency toward a compromise strategy to balance the demands of conflicting institutional logics, thus leading to create a common logic in PPPs. The compromise strategy aligns with the research by Auriol and Saussier (2025), which highlights the importance of renegotiations in long-term contracts to address unforeseen contingencies, such as the impact of events like COVID-19. This approach enables contracting authorities to adjust agreements in response to exogenous shocks, leading to a decrease in the risk premium demanded by concessionaires and ultimately lowering the overall cost of the contract. Therefore, in practice, renegotiations add flexibility to what is cumbersome and highly complex process, allowing a balance to be struck between predictability and flexibility for long-term concessional contracts. Furthermore, a coopetition strategy within private partners could also lead to a common logic, highlighting the importance of both collaboration and competition in navigating the complexities of PPPs. Lastly, the third party may seek to find a middle ground between the public and private sectors to address their interests, promoting shared understanding. Otherwise, they may resist, contributing to the challenges of public and private partnerships (**Figure 12**).

Figure 12. Strategic Responses



3.4 Conclusions

Understanding and implementing PPPs can be challenging due to the unconventional nature of the approach. It involves departure from traditional methods, which governments are accustomed to. Convincing the government about the roles and responsibilities of each party and complexities of PPPs is a prolonged process for project proponents. Moreover, PPP contracts are usually less rigid than traditional public procurement contracts and are more likely to be renegotiated favorably. Auriol and Saussier (2025) find that when renegotiations do take place, they are often extensive in scope and viewed negatively by public authorities. Infrastructure concessions involve more intricate agreements compared to traditional contracts, requiring governments to embrace and comprehend these differences. Overall, there was a learning curve for governments to understand and adapt to the distinctive nature of PPPs, highlighting the necessity for clarity and mutual agreement on roles and responsibilities within these partnerships.

3.4.1 Practical Implications

Our results have also important implications for the literature on PPPs within developing economies to ensure an enabling environment for PPPs. Notably, the informal institutions of PPPs ensure a form of non-material or social stability, whereas formal institutions secure material stability (Dobler, 2011). By examining the context of West and Central Africa as an empirical setting for PPPs, we emphasize the cultural foundation of institutions as a fundamental aspect of meta-theory (Thornton & Ocasio, 2008). With respect to the formal institutional system, there is a low level of institutionalization of PPPs as a legitimate model in this region (Matinheikki et al.,

2021), indicating a lack of an enabling PPP environment, while the PPPs require legislative adjustments, particularly when it involves the first PPPs in transportation sector.

Achieving the institutionalization of a single PPP project requires long-term development of the entire PPP, necessitating enabling measures such as regulations and competent supportive agencies to facilitate PPP implementation. This support must be internally reframed by agents to govern institutional logics. Within a PPP, institutional logics can be framed based on contextual norms and beliefs to integrate the project within its society, potentially leading to further changes in the external environment that facilitate institutional change (Matinheikki et al., 2021). Thus, fostering a high-quality institutional environment can be complemented with several other factors to increase the private scope (Quélin et al., 2019). Renegotiations tend to be higher in countries with weak institutions, in particular, those that are highly corrupt and/or lack technical expertise (Auriol & Saussier, 2025).

Furthermore, our findings highlight the critical need for capacity building in the public sector for the successful implementation and management of PPPs. The local national governments should promote the enhancement of relevant public capabilities in PPPs to support "hybrid" and "public–private" organizations, to enhance the capabilities of public authorities to manage the whole PPP life cycle. For instance, the specialized PPP agencies should be equipped to distinguish the renegotiations driven by exogenous shocks or unforeseen contingencies and arising from moral hazard or hold-up problems.

Our findings implicate the importance of the contract design in case of outsourcing plays an important role in PPPs (Beuve, Saussier, & de Brux, 2018) in order to define the roles and risk sharing. PPP contracts are incomplete as they are long-term arrangements relating to complex projects concluded between a public and a private party (Beuve, Le Lannier, & Le Squeren, 2018). The contract provisions favor the integrated relationship of hybrid organizational forms and manage the potential conflicts through some safeguard clauses and periodic review clauses. The incomplete contracts cannot anticipate every risk, under the effect of the complex environment and the bounded rationality of economic actors. Therefore, the contracts must be renegotiated in order to adapt the terms of the initial agreement to the unforeseen events. However, the renegotiations

become challenging due to opportunistic behaviors from the private partners, public authorities, and the third parties who can possibly influence the public party or the contract to their own advantage. To efficiently adapt to changing circumstances during PPP contract renegotiations and prevent opportunism, a flexible contract is a better solution than a rigid one.

Understanding the institutional environment of PPPs and the demands of these diverse actors are crucial for managers, given PPPs are hybrid arrangements that entail intricate collaborations shaped by multiple internal and external stakeholders, each with varying interests (Jay, 2013). Attention should be paid to the quality of the relationships, including elements such as trust, communication, commitment, openness, and reciprocity at both inter-organizational and inter-personal levels (Warsen, 2023). These relational aspects are particularly important in managing conflicting objectives and securing steadfast commitment from all parties involved in long-term PPPs. Relational aspects also provide the necessary flexibility to handle complexity and unexpected circumstances, allowing for contractual adaptations to economic, financial, and statutory changes during the implementation phase (Beuve, Saussier, & de Brux, 2018). Therefore, maintaining strong relationships and clear communication among all stakeholders is essential for the successful implementation and management of PPPs.

Multinational Western and non-Western corporations engage in coopetition to forge cooperations and competitions within PPPs, seamlessly blending profit goals with the commitment of delivering quality service. These multinational companies collaborate by leveraging their complementary resources and capabilities, while also competing to drive market dynamics. Prominent French companies such as Bouygues, Eiffage, Egis, and Bolloré, alongside emerging Asian players in the continent, including Chinese SOEs, leverage extensive knowledge and expertise. These multinational enterprises should display a long-term commitment to prioritizing the transfer of skills to local companies for sustainable growth and to fostering African infrastructure development, therefore benefiting users with improved mobility and time efficiency. Moreover, these endeavors address societal needs by contributing to employment opportunities, facilitating training programs, and bolstering overall societal well-being. In doing so, it explores the potential of PPPs to serve as catalysts for societal development alongside their economic objectives.

3.4.2 Limitations and Future Research

In terms of limitations, it is important to acknowledge that the logics within PPPs are subject to frequent changes due to their long life cycle. Our research employs a cross-sectional study approach, essentially providing a "snapshot" of the situation at a specific point in time, based on a qualitative research strategy. The multiple-case study we conducted primarily hinge on interviews conducted within a specific timeframe. We chose not to opt for a longitudinal study for two primary reasons. First, the nature of our cases, which involve different life cycle stages, renders it difficult to identify patterns of change or development over time across various countries. Second, due to the time constraints of my Ph.D. study, longitudinal study was impractical.

However, it is worth highlighting that longitudinal studies could provide valuable insights into the evolution of PPPs as hybrid organizational entities. Therefore, they remain a promising area for future research within this field. Future research could also put greater emphasis on understanding the timing of various strategic responses in the face of these changes (Matinheikki et al., 2021). Apart from the internal transformations within a specific PPPs, the broader PPPs landscape, encompassing the entire national context, remains complex and uncertain. Specific logics may become prioritized at the field level, thereby offering a resolution to institutional complexity. Hence, it is crucial for future research to explore these long-term temporal effects on both the organizational and field levels.

An additional consideration is that our investigation has focused primarily on the responses of various actors to institutional complexity. However, a complementary aspect that remains unexplored is how an individual actor in a PPP, functioning as a hybrid entity, navigates multiple logics and institutional complexity. Specifically, we have not delved into the internal dynamics of the SPV to understand how it comprehends and manages conflicting institutional pressures. Therefore, it would be valuable for future research to conduct an in-depth case study within a specific country, focusing on how a common logic emerges through organizational hybridization—a blended SPV structure that serves as a potential approach to cope with multiple logics and address institutional complexity.

Chapter IV Single-Case Study

This chapter seeks to present and discuss the methodology and findings of a single-case study conducted in a country in West and Central Africa. A single-case study is chosen as an appropriate research method to address research questions that typically start with "how" (Yin, 2018). It is commonly employed when the case is critical, extreme, or unique, offering a chance to observe and analyze a phenomenon that has received little attention. This method is valuable for examining a special purpose vehicle (SPV) as a hybrid organization and understanding the strategies adopted by the organizational and individual actors to respond to conflicting institutional demands and intra-institutional complexity. Delving deeply into a single-case study enables us to maintain a comprehensive and real-world perspective, making it suitable for exploring the institutional demands and intra-institutional complexity at both organizational and individual levels (Yin, 2018).

Our single-case study involves an SPV with a French private international company and a Chinese state-owned enterprise (SOE) working in collaboration with an African local government, providing rich data sources for such a case study. This SPV is the joint enterprise formed by the French and Chinese companies who won the tender phase and who finalized the contract with the public body for a 30-year delegation of public service contract. An SPV was established to provide public service while serving users. It focuses on maintaining roads through toll fee collections and is a mission-driven organization. The SPV is a project company involving the local government of the host country with 15% of shares, a French firm holding 15% of shares, and a Chinese SOE as a major shareholder representing 70% of the shares.

In the initial concession contract, the project company is created to collect toll fees in order to maintain national roads, including National Road No. 1 and 1bis with 11 tolls and National Road No. 2. Currently, only National Road No. 1 with 7 tolls is operational. National Roads 1bis and 2 have not yet met the operational conditions according to the mutually signed contract. In terms of tariff, the initial tariff was regulated by a decree which decreased the toll fees of certain classes of vehicle, in particular vehicles transporting materials.

In terms of the tax regime, the concession contract defines that during the concession period, the Concessionaire and all its major subcontractors shall be exempt from Value-Added Tax (VAT) and Additional Tax for the procurement of equipment and materials, supply of goods, construction works, and execution of services required for the project and the operation of the concession roads. For investments made by the Concessionaire, as well as the operation and routine/periodic maintenance services of the concession, the Concessionaire and its subcontractors specializing in project implementation shall enjoy full exemption from the following taxes and fees for the first six years, including but not limited to the Corporate Income Tax, Special Company Tax; Land Tax on built and unbuilt properties; Building Occupancy Tax, Property Tax, and Real Estate Tax; Business Tax and License Tax, etc. Additionally, during the concession period, toll fees, and weighing fees shall be subject to VAT and Additional Tax which were regulated by a decree published before the concession started. The current toll fees are exempt from VAT and Additional Tax, and there are no weighing fees.

The mission of the SPV involve mainly operating multiple national roads under a concession to collect toll fees for infrastructure maintenance. To fulfill its core missions, the SPV has two main subcontractors, which are subsidiaries of the SPV private shareholders. The maintenance subcontractor, which is the subsidiary of the Chinese state-owned company, specialized the engineering and built National Road No. 1 as the constructor under the public contract. The maintenance subcontractor is responsible for road maintenance, including regular upkeep, non-routine maintenance, and major repairs. Meanwhile, the operation subcontractor is the subsidiary of the French private company specialized in engineering consulting, operation, and maintenance services and served for the construction supervision for the construction of National Road No. 1. The operation subcontractor's mission is to collect toll fees and provide related road services. This arrangement means that the subcontractors represent the subsidiaries of their shareholders.

Additionally, all the key positions of the SPV are provided by shareholders from the beginning of the concession. In this single-case study, the managers of this hybrid organization as individual actors who "represent" different logics. They interact with other members of the organization and constantly deal with the institutional demands and intra-institutional complexities they encounter (Pache & Santos, 2013b). In the context of SPV, it receives support from both public and private

entities, indicating that its hybrid nature was maintained throughout the observation period. Therefore, this case served as a valid site for studying hybrid organizations (Jay, 2013).

4.1 Methodology

We conducted a six-month ethnographic study within this SPV and collected the data by observations and non-structured interviews. By utilizing the qualitative analysis software NVivo 14, our analysis focuses on both the organizational and individual levels, providing a multifaceted perspective on the dynamics at play.

4.1.1 Data Collection

To study how actors experience and respond to institutional complexity, we conducted a six-month ethnographic study within an SPV. In the present research, my preexistent role inside the SPV was internship in the general management department of the SPV from the period of January to June 2024. Wolcott (1992) identified three major modes for data collection: participant observation, interviewing, and analyzing existing materials. In our research, we mainly employed participant observation and interviewing techniques. We conducted observations by shadowing and participating in meetings as note-taker and engaged in numerous informal conversations that served as unstructured interviews.

Observation is a valuable method for our research. Observation is a data collection method recognized for its unique enriching quality (Bardon et al., 2020). It involves selecting, recording, and encoding behaviors and settings of organisms in their natural environment, aligning with empirical goals (Weick, 1968). Observation can serve as the main method of data collection for research strategies like ethnography (Bardon et al., 2020). Observation involves micro-institutional research as it focuses on individual actors' behaviors patterns, subjective experiences of organizational reality, and social interactions among members and subgroups (Smets et al., 2012). This approach allows for studying the concrete, socially and corporeally embedded everyday life, rather than relying on "distant data" (Courpasson, 2020). It also enables researchers to observe individuals in their daily organizational activities without adopting an imposing position over the person who is being observed (Raulet-Croset et al., 2020), thus collecting data on aspects they may be unaware of and avoiding biases (Weick, 1968). By providing insights into the real

activities and practices, observation is considered as one most effective way to understand both individual and collective practices within an organization (Raulet-Croset et al., 2020).

Our observation employed a partially covert approach, wherein the senior members of the SPV composed of the general manager and the two Deputy Directors were aware of my identity as a researcher (Roulet et al., 2017). The Deputy Managers were fully briefed about my research, and they got complete and formal consent, while the general manager was informed with simple conceptualizations of consent. However, the employees did not give any informed consent to participate in the study due to the complexity of the organization and the managers' concerns about their reactions to an unfamiliar observer. Consequently, informed consent was collected at the organizational level.

The covert research offers several benefits, such as gaining access to institutions or organizations that would might otherwise be inaccessible to researchers, enabling the researchers to collect data from an insider's perspective, minimizing the likelihood of the subjects altering their behaviors, and allowing the researchers to experience first-hand the phenomena under study in the same way that the participants experience it (Roulet et al., 2017). The data collected includes ethnographic observations, non-structured interviews, and experiential data-diaries (**Table 12**).

Table 12. Data Collection

Data Type	Content		Numbers of Notes
Ethnographic observations	Participant observation	Formal meetings	26
		Informal meetings	11
		Conversation participant	23
	Shadowing-observation	Formal meetings	72
		Informal meetings	42
		Conversation-shadowing	27
Interviews	Non-structured interviews		27
Experiential data	Diary		103

4.1.1.1 Ethnographic Observations

Our ethnographic research includes participant observations and shadowing. Depending on whether the researcher reveals their identity and engages in activities, different forms of participant observation can occur from being either a complete participant, complete observer, observer-as-participant, or participant-as-observer. In our study, we engaged in participant observation where we already have a role in the organization but do not disclose the real researcher role. This is unlike passive participation without interaction and complete participation where the researcher's role is unclear or not predefined. The approach is supported by feedback from the observed individuals (Gilbert & Raulet-Croset, 2023; Raulet-Croset et al., 2020; Yin, 2018).

The shadowing observation method involves a researcher physically the organization's actors, closely observing their every move discreetly like a shadow. This approach entails blending into the environment and adopting a non-participating observational approach (Raulet-Croset et al., 2020; Théron, 2020). By focusing on the individuals and their interactions while they engage in organizing activities, shadowing prioritizes the verbal and behavioral cues of the participants over direct observation of processes (Raulet-Croset et al., 2020). The effectiveness of shadowing in studying organizational dynamics, including capturing temporal and spatial aspects of interactions among members, has been emphasized, making it ideal for empirical research (Raulet-Croset et al., 2020).

In our case study, we also used shadowing-type observation. Multi-shadowing involves simultaneously observing different actors who are typically part of the same organization action but are in different locations. During the six-month observation period, there were many such opportunities for spontaneous participant observation and shadowing, in contexts where we could observe and take notes. My focus was the everyday work of the General Director and the Deputy Directors of the SPV. We chose them as individual actors because of my access to their daily works including the internal and external meetings and conversations. The Deputy Directors would either invite me to join their meetings or accept my request to participate. Whenever more than two people were conversing, they would include me or accept my request to join. Through shadowing, we tracked dynamics at their work (**Table 13**).

Table 13. Observation Group

Observation group	Shadowing-type Observations	Participant Observations	Non-structured Interviews
Chinese General Director	27	19	0
Chinese Deputy Director	117	24	9
French Deputy Manager 1	33	4	0
French Deputy Director 2	38	21	3
Others	1	18	15
Total	216	86	27

All observations are documented using field notes, which help researchers maintain objectivity as it ensures research validity. There are two primary methods for organizing and presenting the descriptions of observations, as outlined by Wolcott (1994). One way is the researcher or narrator order which involves the deliberate creation of alternative ways to depict events by employing narrative strategies developed by the researcher or narrator themselves. The other approach swiftly transports the reader directly to the scene of action, providing an immediate and vivid depiction. In our research, note-taking during observations allows observers to record not just what is seen and heard, but also what is felt, thought, and done (Royer, 2020). Wolcott (1992) underscored the importance of making extensive notes in the initial stages of research to ensure sufficient data for reconstructing full days or sequences of events, as well as the significance of capturing first impressions early on. We handwrote all the notes and then transcribed them onto the computer for analysis.

The meetings we observed varied in form, including both formal and informal meetings held inside or outside the SPV. The formal meetings, conducted by the SPV's directors, consisted of planned monthly meetings. Some formal meetings were internal, involving directors and internal team members, and were therefore held within the SPV. Some were external, involving external partners and public authorities, in which case such formal meetings were held in the SPV meeting room or at the partners' locations. Meanwhile, informal meetings usually took place within teams in deputy directors' offices, focusing on specific topics.

In addition to observations, our focused individual actors also participated in informal conversations during the ethnographic field research. These brief exchanges between the observer and those being observed are essential for gaining insights. The informal conversations comprised participant interactions, where we intervened, and shadowing conversations, where we observed without intervening. It is suggested that starting a conversation with the person being shadowed can provide a deeper understanding of the motives behind their actions (Théron, 2020).

4.1.1.2 Non-structured Interviews

Our partially covert participant observations are consequently triangulated and validated using other approaches such as interviews. In a non-directive interview, there is no predetermined list of questions to guide the conversation (Gilbert & Raulet-Croset, 2023). The interviewee is encouraged to freely express themselves, and the interviewer only intervenes to encourage the interviewee only to help clarify responses or prompt further discussion when needed. Being non-directive entails valuing the interviewee's contributions as they occur, allowing the interviewee's perceptions to shape the flow of the conversation (Gilbert & Raulet-Croset, 2023). The goal of non-directive interview is to foster a comprehensive and interactive environment where the interviewee is supported in exploring their experiences autonomously.

We conducted non-structured interviews with the Deputy Managers and other members of SPV by engaging in open conversations to gather information. We took notes during these discussions. Over a six-month observation period, interviewees openly shared insights about the company's internal and external relationships, activities, and outcomes. We believe their willingness to be candid was influenced by their interest in documenting ongoing activities and our role as a new internal collaborator.

4.1.1.3. Experiential Data

Experiential data include phenomena, events, attitudes, and relationships documented in my personal diaries. They capture my perceptions, emotions ideas, reflections, and intentions (Gilbert & Raulet-Croset, 2023), guiding our research direction in this case study and serving as memory aids. We adopted a chronological format in our notes to follow the development of concepts like

data categories and analysis methods. This approach aligns with our thought process, providing a framework that matches our cognitive style.

Over a period of six months, we kept handwritten journals documenting our observations and reflective interpretations. Maintaining these journals helped us track the evolution of our concepts throughout our research (Strauss & Corbin, 1998). They captured our learning experiences and how we applied this knowledge as our research progressed. We analyzed our responses to the subject of our research, analyzing our interactions with those involved. This includes assessing our reactions, understanding the dynamics of our relationships with research participants, and evaluating the way we derive insights from the data.

Ethnographic observations cover a set of methods that are characterized by a particular relationship to the field. The ethnographic data is based on the researcher's direct experiences in specific social settings, involving seeing, hearing, and experiencing through specific lenses (Van Maanen, 1979). The goal is to assimilate into the setting without disclosing the true research intent to its members. This lived experience provided an in-depth comprehension of organizational internal dynamics.

Saturation is related to the duration the researcher spent observing in the field and the number and diversity of situations or actors observed (Raulet-Croset et al., 2020). According to Corbin and Strauss (1990), saturation occurs when adding new observations no longer contribute new insights to the research problem. Over time, we observed significant repetition in conversation themes and identified certain meetings that were particularly valuable as they combined discussions from multiple various conversations.

4.1.2 Analytic Methods

Our analytic approach was iterative and abductive, aiming to enhance theory through an in-depth case study (Eisenhardt, 1989). Explanation building represents an iterative process (Yin, 2018), characterized by repeating process between comparing the data from the single-case study with the literature. An essential aspect of this method is the consideration of alternative or rival explanations (Yin, 2018). Yin (2018) stresses the importance of analyzing all feasible rival interpretations for the findings, regardless of the chosen analytic strategies or techniques employed.

Should an alternative interpretation arise for any of our findings, it's crucial to treat it as a rival hypothesis, providing evidence to address and explore its validity. Conversely, if no evidence supports an alternative interpretation, it remains an open area for future investigation (Yin, 2018). This strategy serves as a criterion for assessing the robustness of the research results. As part of the research design process for a case study, it is essential to proactively anticipate and enumerate potentially important rivals.

Explanation building approach aligns with our research objectives and a template methodology, which combines both deductive and inductive approaches for analyzing qualitative data. Our goal is to construct a comprehensive explanation that not only captures commonalities among the cases but also accommodates the unique nuances present within each individual case. It involves the development of categories and their attachment to specific units of data, enabling a hierarchical representation of codes and categories. This analytical process aids in the exploration of themes, patterns, and relationships extracted from the collected data. A template is a curated list of codes used to identify and explore the emerging themes, patterns, and relationships evident within the collected data (Saunders et al., 2019). Similarly, this process allows for the refinement and evolution of a set of ideas (Yin, 2018). By employing this method, we aim to create a detailed and inclusive explanation that reflects both the shared patterns and the diverse intricacies observed across our case study.

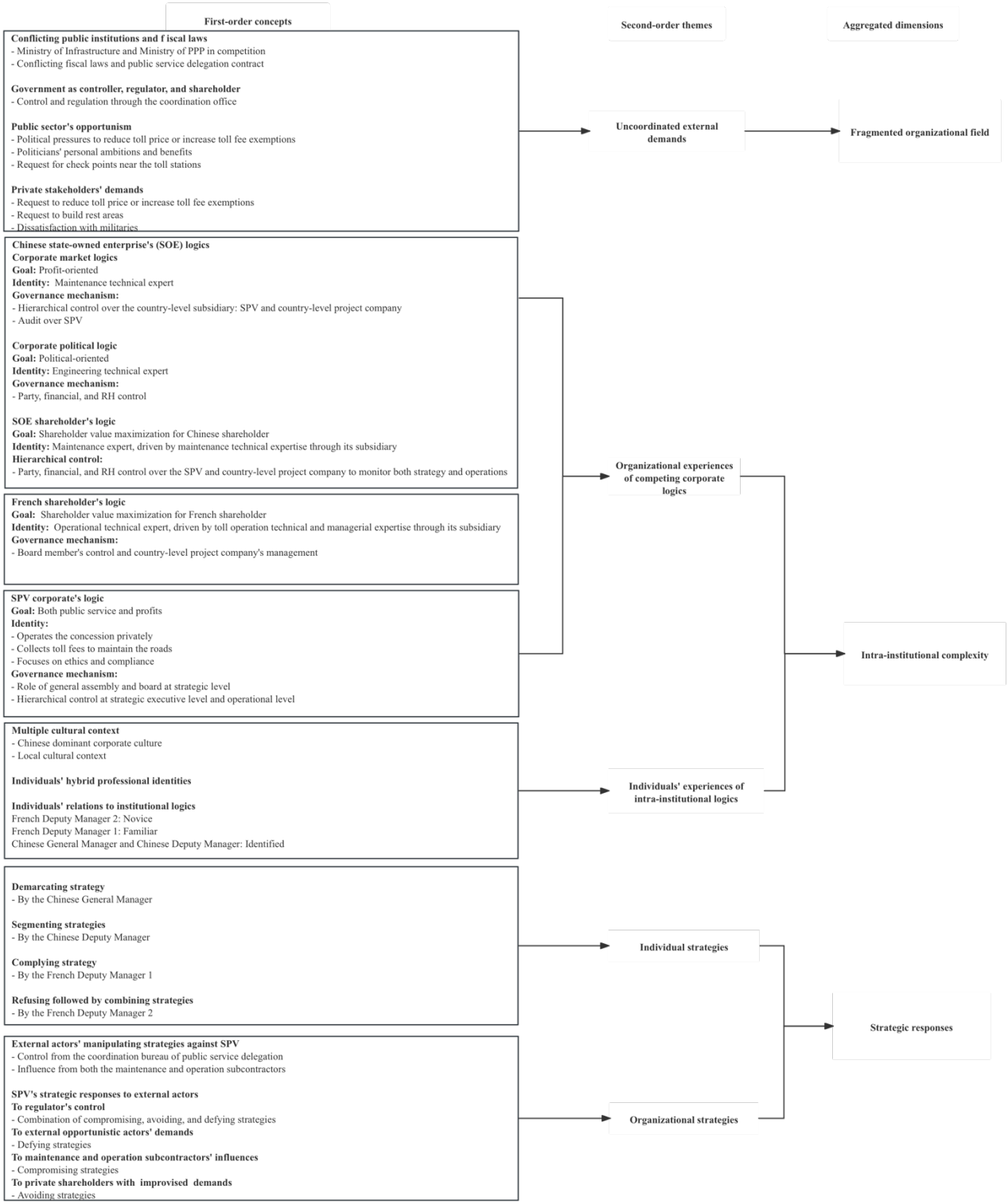
We moved between data, literature, and theory in a continuous process that included three main stages: open coding, theming, and theorizing. These activities occurred sequentially; they also ran concurrently throughout the analysis. We started by categorizing our field notes based on interaction type: formal meetings, informal meetings, informal conversations, and non-structured interviews occurring spontaneously during the study. Our data was then meticulously organized using NVivo 14, a qualitative analysis software. Using NVivo 14 allowed us to code text segments and visual maps to show relationships between codes. It also acted as a storage for our study memos, helping us monitor our analysis progress over time. We conducted open coding in NVivo 14, initially generating first-order codes based on our informants' language. Regularly revisiting our field notes helped us enhance our analysis and pinpoint certain features, to see whether patterns emerge during observational fieldwork days (Théron, 2020). Both open coding procedures resulted

in over 1,000 initial codes. From the first-order coding we detailed the events outlined in our observations, although the exact relationships were not yet clear. Then, we began identifying broader themes within the data, referred to as the "theming" phase. Subsequently, we initiated the process of theorizing to establish a clear conceptual boundary between them. Exploration also involved a thorough review of the literature on institutional logics perspective and hybrid organizations in PPPs, which contributed valuable insights to our analysis. The coding process was driven by our research questions:

1) What is the organizational field that the SPV engages in?
2) How do organizations experience the competing institutional logics reflected in organizational attributes? And how does the SPV strategically respond to the institutional demands of external actors?
3) How do SPV managers experience the intra-institutional logics? And how do they respond to these multiple logics?

To address our research questions, we sought to validate the assumption that SPV faces external institutional pressures by examining PPPs' institutional factors within the host country as well as organizational-level and individual level factors. At the field level, we examined the institutional environment by analyzing the conflicting institutional demands from both private stakeholders and public sectors. We focused on SPV as a hybrid organization and identified the competing logics within the organization, which are reflected in the organizational attributes such as goals, organizational structure, ownership and governance, and identity (Greenwood et al., 2011; Pache & Santos, 2013b). We further analyzed how external organizational actors manifest their institutional demands and how the SPV responds to these demands. This analysis allowed us to find out whether a given organization fully complied with a demand and, if so, which one, or whether it altered the prescribed behaviors. At the individual level, we analyzed the organizational and local cultural context, the social identities of the individuals, their relationships, and their experiences with various institutional logics. We further attempted to identify how individuals respond to intra-institutional complexity. We also explored how individuals navigate intra-institutional complexity, focusing on SPV directors and their associated strategies (**Figure 13**).

Figure 13. Data Structure of Single-Case Study



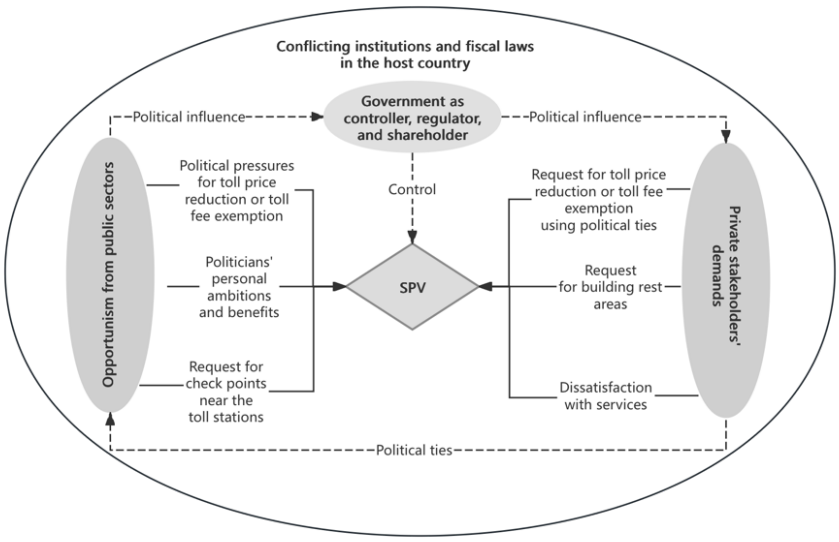
4.2 Findings

The findings are organized into five subsections: 1) the fragmented organizational field, 2) organizational experiences to multiple intra-institutional logics, 3) individual actors' experiences of competing intra-institutional logics, 4) individual actors' responses to intra-institutional logics, and 5) organizational actors' strategic responses. The findings will be followed by a discussion on the results, offering managerial implications, an outline of the study's limitations, and suggestions for future research.

4.2.1 Fragmented Organizational Field

Our findings show that the complex institutional environment is exacerbated by uncoordinated external demands. These elements include the interplay of conflicting ministries and fiscal laws; the government's multiple roles as controller, regulator, and shareholder; the opportunism from the public sector; and the diverse demands of private stakeholders. Private stakeholders often maintain political ties with the public sector, which in turn exercises its political influence on the private sector and political pressure on the SPV. All these external elements come together and interact within the framework of the SPV. These diverse influences have effects on the SPV's organizational complexity (**Figure 14**).

Figure 14. Uncoordinated External Organizational Attributes



4.2.1.1 Conflicting Institutions and Fiscal Laws

The SPV faces conflicting pressures from different ministries involved in the concession. The Ministry of Infrastructure, which initiated the project from the construction phase through to the operation phase in 2019, is one key player. However, in 2021, the Ministry of International Cooperation and Promotion of Public–Private Partnerships was established, led by the son of the president of the host country. As observed in a meeting, the Chinese Deputy Director explained:

> *The Minister of International Cooperation and PPPs [...] strategy has been to try and reduce our prices, essentially by half, as he seeks to curry favor with voters for election purposes. This PPP department has been attempting to draw us into their jurisdiction, an action we view as detrimental. (Chinese Deputy Director, Formal meeting 10)*

In response to the challenge of being faced with the influence of this powerful new ministry, the Ministry of Infrastructure, led by the Minister of State, created a regulatory body to oversee all public service delegation contracts. This move is aimed at maintaining control over the concession and ensuring its completion amid the shifting political landscape.

The SPV finds itself contending with multifaceted challenges, primarily originating from the diverging ministries and the fiscal discrepancies between the terms of the public service delegation contract and the host country's fiscal laws and regulations. Navigating these complexities requires intricate maneuvering, a task that is somewhat alleviated by the support extended by the Ministry of Infrastructure. However, a significant challenge persists in the form of a delay in the signing of the tax exemption agreement. This delay is primarily attributable to the restrictions imposed by the International Monetary Fund (IMF), which are linked to the host country's ongoing debt issues.

While the public service delegation contract signed with the president allows the company certain tax exemptions under the pressure from the IMF, these clauses conflict with existing fiscal laws and regulations. As the Chinese Deputy Director explained in a non-structured interview:

On the one hand, foreign-funded enterprises, including ours, require tax exemption, with the belief that such an exemption is not only justified but necessary for improving the business environment. On the other hand, the host country has been grappling with debt issues in recent years. The IMF has extended loans to the country but with stringent conditions - enhanced financial management and a stronger tax system. (Chinese Deputy Director, Non-structured interview 5)

The SPV finds itself operating in an environment fraught with conflicting institutional and regulatory demands, adding to the challenges and complexities it must navigate. Particularly, interactions with the financial ministry and the need to maneuver through intricate fiscal and political landscapes present significant complications.

4.2.1.2 Government's Multiple Roles

Under the traditional state logic, the public sector's primary role is to provide public services. Interestingly, our results indicate that governmental objectives also include the pursuit of financial gains, like dividends and loyalty. As the Coordinator of public service delegation stated in a formal meeting:

Concerning the concessional fee, it does pose a challenge. As per the current model, the government doesn't see any financial benefits. The treasury is yet to receive any penny. We await the signing of the tax exemption agreement to understand the outcome. (Coordinator of public service delegation, Formal meeting 11)

To ensure the SPV's public service mission while also generating financial benefits, the government, represented by the General Delegation of Works Committee of the Ministry of Infrastructure, has established a public service delegation coordination office for supervision. Indeed, the construction of National Road No. 1 was launched by the Ministry of Infrastructure, followed by General Delegation of Works Committee since the beginning of the project. To compete with the Ministry of International Cooperation, the Minister of State, who is in charge of the Ministry of Infrastructure, created a regulatory office for the following up the concession. Therefore, their mission is derived from monitoring the performance of the public service

delegation contract conducted by the SPV. Moreover, the government also holds the position of the president of the board, exercising control via the board members.

The control by the state is to ensure both public service but also financial benefits. There is a desire to control financial aspects and quantities through supervision to identify profit points and secure a share of the benefits, especially when there is an issue of unbalanced profit distribution. To control the concession, the regulatory office threatens the expulsion of external players. However, maintaining the limit of the supervisory role can be challenging, especially when political opportunism might be involved. As analyzed in a non-structured interview with a regional Deputy Director:

> *This political risk, which can stem from either the current or future government, is a significant factor that cannot be overlooked. Even though we have a contract that provides a foundation and protection, in this region, governmental intervention is common. (Regional Deputy Director of the Chinese SOE, Non-structured interview 16)*

The pursuit of short-term financial gains by both the public and private sectors may be at the expense of public service, and the profits for the public sector may become opportunistic if driven by short-term political interests.

4.2.1.3 External Public and Private Sectors' Opportunistic Demands

The SPV persistently navigates a web of organizational pressures, predominantly originating from the opportunism of the public sector and the diverse opportunistic demands of private stakeholders. These demands from both sectors can exert mutual influence, pressuring the SPV to fulfill their opportunistic interests. A significant point of contention lies in the toll fees, a key revenue source for SPVs. Any request for toll exemptions or reductions directly impacts this income. While such actions may satisfy the political ambitions of certain politicians, they invariably compromise the interests of the shareholders. As the Chinese Deputy Director noted in a non-structured interview:

> *A reduction in price, which directly translates to a reduction in toll rate, would directly hurt the interests of shareholders and should not be permitted. According to the agreement*

of the contract, we can adjust and raise prices annually in accordance with inflation. However, we are now being asked to lower them. (Chinese Deputy Director, Non-structured interview 3)

Private entities, leveraging their political connections, have sought to fulfill their opportunistic demands. For instance, companies like garbage disposal company A and farm company B, to petition local public authorities, including the primary minister and the president, for toll exemptions from the SPV. Another example is evident in the case of transporter C, who successfully lobbied the primary minister to sign a tripartite mechanism reducing toll fees on exported cement by 50%. Despite the agreement that the government would reimburse the SPV after it compensates the cement companies, the government has consistently failed to fulfill this promise. This has led to dissatisfaction among the cement companies and escalating tensions among private companies. These challenges were evident in a meeting I observed between the SPV and transporter C:

General Director of transporter C: So what should we do in the current situation? Do we need to stop this part of the export business or what?

Chinese Deputy Director: We have communicated with the Ministry of Finance last year. At that time, we were promised to communicate with the Budget Department to compensate us, but so far we have not received any further news. (Notes from formal meeting 32)

Indeed, political influence exerted on private sectors often catalyzes the push for certain projects. Requests aimed at the SPV, originating either from government authorities or private partners, frequently serve political interests. A specific example of this dynamic is a demand from the president with personal ambitions that motivated a private company to explore the construction of bus stations along the concessional road and the two cities that it connects. This road strategically connects two major cities, and the proposed addition of rest areas is a clear indication of the political underpinnings driving such requests. This situation further underscores the interplay of various public and private interests within the operational landscape of the SPV.

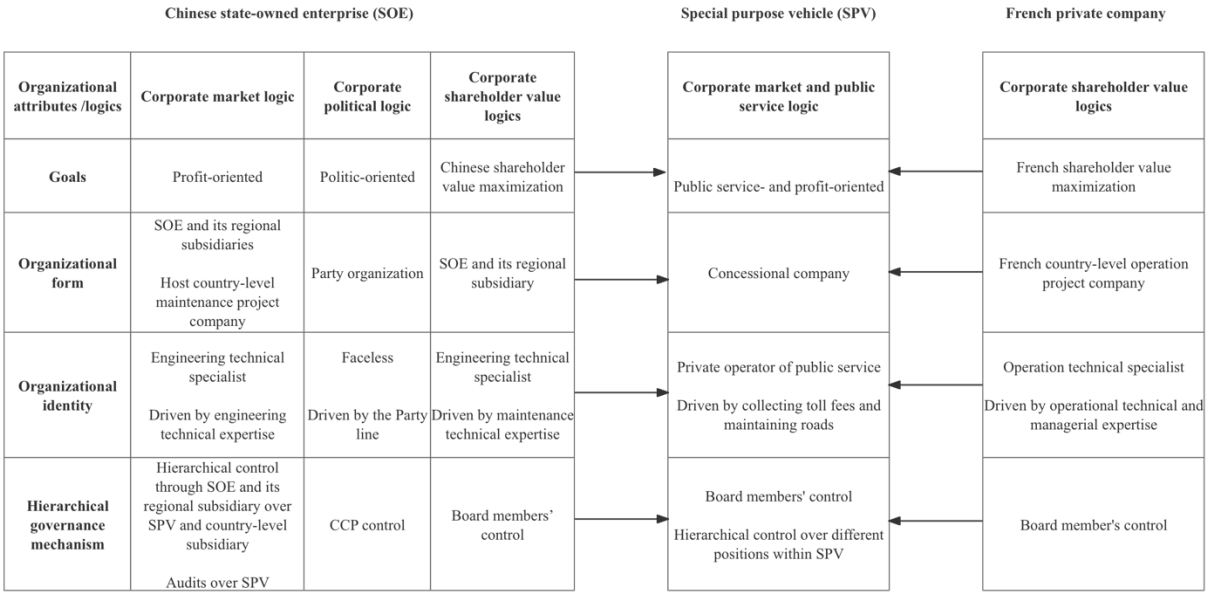
Furthermore, discontent among road users, including politicians, may give rise to opportunistic requests from the government authorities to the SPV. Particularly sensitive are complaints from influential figures, such as ministers, about issues like the conduct of military personnel at toll stations or illegal checks by the militaries along the road. Consequently, efforts to cancel illegal checkpoints have resulted in the state seeking to move inspection points near toll stations to take advantage of the facilities.

In sum, the external demands from private sectors, leveraged through political ties with the public sector, coupled with the public sector's influence on the private sectors, significantly increases the complexity of the institutional environment for the SPV. This complexity is further exacerbated when these demands align with political ambitions or personal interests.

4.2.2 Organizational Experiences of Multiple Intra-institutional Logics

The following sections shall characterize the intra-institutional competing logics including the corporate market and public service logics, influenced by its shareholder companies such as the Chinese SOE and the French private company. The multiple logics are manifested in the organizational goals, structures, identity, and ownership and governance mechanism within the organizations. These competing logics arise from the divergent corporate logics brought by private shareholder companies such as the SOE and the private company into the SPV, leading to intra-institutional complexity within the SPV (**Figure 15**).

Figure 15. Competing Corporate Logics and Their Characteristics



4.2.2.1 Chinese State-Owned Enterprise's Logics

Our findings indicate that Chinese SOEs operate based on three corporate logics: market, political, and shareholder value. These logics are evident in their organizational goals, structure, identity, and hierarchical governance. They play a significant role in shaping the SPV through the organization's structure.

4.2.2.1.1 Corporate Market Logic

The SOE, being the main shareholder of the SPV, align their core objectives and hierarchical control mechanisms with its corporate logics. Interestingly, the SOE's primary goal for its international operations overseas is to be profit-driven in a host country, resembling that of a private company. This profit-focused approach sharply contrasts with the company's domestic missions which are mainly centered on public service. In other words, the SOE's overseas operations seemingly prioritize profitability, diverging from its domestic emphasis on public service. This contrast offers an interesting example of how organizational goals may change based on geographical and contextual factors.

To ensure profitability, the SOE and its West and Central African subsidiary employs a hierarchical organizational form. This management structure serves as a monitoring mechanism for both the strategy and operations of its maintenance subcontractors at the host country level. The Chinese SOE's country level project company generates revenue through regular maintenance, non-regular maintenance, and overhaul work for the SPV. Overhaul work, in particular, is perceived as a profitable venture for the maintenance subcontractor and the Chinese shareholder. This approach, prioritizing short-term gains over long-term sustainability, may damage the trusting relationship with the French company and the local government. This was evidenced during a formal meeting we observed:

> *The budget for the major works is estimated to not exceed 6.7 billion FCFA at most. However, why has it escalated to more than 11 billion? Moreover, according to our experts' assessment this year, the overhaul project sits at around 1.3 billion. How can this discrepancy be explained? (Chinese Deputy Director, Formal meeting 17)*

The Chinese SOE, as an engineering technical specialist, specializes in road construction and maintenance. This expertise is maintained and promoted through its subsidiaries operating at regional and host country levels. Its country level project company is recognized as road maintenance technical expert. This technical expertise developed within the company at country level forms the backbone of their pursuit for public service. This proficiency directly influences the SPV's reputation and credibility when undertaking their assigned public service delegated missions. Demonstrating advanced technical skills not only elevates the company's professional reputation but also enhances the SPV's standing, fostering trust and confidence with partners. Conversely, a lack of skills or low-level technical expertise could potentially damage these partnerships, highlighting the importance of maintaining and improving technical competencies for professional legitimacy and successful collaborations. The maintenance subcontractor earns revenue by performing regular, non-regular, and major maintenance works. Concurrently, they safeguard the interests of the SOE and its regional company's interests by keeping maintenance service pricing consistent.

The SPV maintenance subcontractor collaborates with three other SOE subsidiaries to perform various maintenance tasks, such as regular, non-regular, and major road maintenance. They receive commission fees in return, contributing to the profits of their regional company and, consequently, its parent company SOE. This arrangement, however, is not without its challenges, as it is predominantly geared towards short-term benefits. In contrast, the SPV encourages subcontractors to enhance their maintenance expertise to ensure efficiency, leading to improved public service performance. Achieving this goal requires establishing strong performance indicators to evaluate maintenance task efficiency, which differs from the subcontractors' profit-driven, short-term approach.

The SPV typically has authority to select from among the subcontractors or other external partners to outsource various maintenance tasks. This flexibility allows the SPV to meet the needs of maintenance contracts, striking a balance between the imperative of the public service and the practicalities of operational efficiency and cost-effectiveness. However, the SPV, being subject to the control of the SOE and its regional subsidiary, is restricted in its ability to change its maintenance subcontractor and its three other subcontractors from the same SOE. The subcontractors not only carry out maintenance tasks but also represent the interests of the shareholders, thereby adding within the SPV. This complexity accentuates the intricate dynamics between the pursuit of public service excellence, shareholder interests, and operational efficiency within the SPV. To manage these complexities effectively, a strong and adaptable management framework is essential to address the divergent interests and operational requirements.

4.2.2.1.2 Corporate Political Logic

The corporate political logic is politic-oriented through the Chinese Communist Party (CCP)'s control inside of the enterprise. The operation of the Chinese SOE differs significantly from the typical corporate governance structures. The decision-making process for important matters related to SOEs involves dual governance structures: the corporate structure and the Party organization, also known as the Party Group (*dangzu*), Party Committee (*dangwei*), or Party Subgroup (*dangzhibu*).

The CCP controls SOE through three primary mechanisms: 1) Party members must adhere to the Party's the CCP's fundamental disciplines. Members are required to convene meetings for significant decisions, ensuring that these decisions and subsequent operations align with the Party's guidelines. 2) The CCP controls financial resources, thereby influencing the financial decisions and strategic directions of the SOE and the SPV. 3) The CCP has authority over appointing and promoting key positions within the organization, such as the General Director and Chinese board members of the SPV. These mechanisms illustrate the interplay between corporate and Party structures in governing the SOE, showcasing the unique blend of political and business operations within this context.

The fundamental discipline of the CCP requires all party members to comply with the party line. Party committee officers within the SOE hold meetings to make crucial decisions for the company and ensure its operations is consistent with the Party directives. Meetings typically start with the central ideologies of the Chinese President, who also serves as the General Secretary of the Communist Party. This is followed by the key principles of the CCP from the company's headquarters. The meetings conclude by outlining the work requirements of the regional company.

As observed in Formal Meeting 24, the General Director of the regional company elaborates on the essence of the 20th National Congress of the Communist Party of China. The company is dedicated to implementing General Secretary Xi Jinping's core ideas on Party building, in alignment with the Party Constitution. Emphasizing the importance of high-quality development, strategic planning, legal compliance, and self-renewal practices, the Regional Director also stressed the importance of upholding the integrity and discipline within the party. This includes adhering to strict discipline management regulations, combating corruption, and promoting ethical behavior. The focus is on the Party Committee under Xi Jinping's leadership, aiming to deepen the understanding of his key thoughts, ensure task completion, and enhance capacity building throughout the year. This observation highlights the essential role of the Party's principles and Xi Jinping's ideologies in the management strategy of the SOE.

CCP controls the SOE and the SPV by overseeing their financial resources. The SPV is regularly monitored by the investment office of the SOE in Beijing on a monthly and quarterly basis.

Additionally, the financial department closely monitors all of the SPV's expenditures through its comprehensive financial system. The SPV is also held accountable to financial performance indicators established by the Chinese SOE, which is supervised by its West and Central African division. This accountability requires personnel to meet performance metrics from both the SPV and the Chinese regional company. Monthly high-level management meetings are conducted at the regional level to ensure compliance with established guidelines and objectives. This detailed monitoring highlights the complex financial responsibilities towards its shareholder company. Surprisingly, the SOE headquarters raised concerns during an audit: the regional company lacks insufficient oversight of SPV. As a result, the regional company intervened at both strategic and operational levels. The Manager of the Finance Department of the Regional Company explained this situation:

> *Thus, the requirement was to itemize decision-making matters and submit them to the regional General Director and the regional general direction department meeting for resolution. This rectification process began in October of the previous year…We are left with no choice but to fulfill this requirement. (Manager of Finance Department of the Regional Company, Non-structured interview 26)*

The CCP oversees the personnel system and has authority over the appointment and promotion of key positions within the SOE and the SPV, including the General Director and Chinese board members of the SPV. The CCP nominates the General Director as a board member. It is noteworthy that a significant proportion, if not all, of the top executives, along with middle managers within the SOE, are members of the CCP. They are responsible for studying, comprehending, and taking the lead in implementing the Party's line, principles, and policies. For example, the General Director of the SPV, a Party member, is nominated by the Party and gives lectures on Party's disciplines. This dual governance system combines the distinctive amalgamation of private enterprise structures with the CCP's control in SOE and SPV operations.

In conclusion, the divergent corporate logics give rise to intra-institutional complexity that emphasizes the complex relationship between the public service goals, profit motives, and

operational realities in SPV operations. This complexity is also influenced by the diverse interests of shareholders, each pursuing their financial goals and expectations on the SPV.

4.2.2.1.3 Corporate Shareholder Value Logic

The SOE holds a dominant 70% of the shares in the SPV. The prevailing shareholder value logic, centered on generating profits, is driven by the need to ensure value for these shareholders. Our findings indicate that the private shareholders aim to achieve financial gains highlighting differing interests among shareholders. The SPV manages the challenge of balancing public service delivery and financial performance in its operations. To secure the profitability of the SOE operating internationally, the firm adopts a hierarchical approach to monitor both the strategic direction and operations of the SPV. This monitoring is managed by the company's headquarters and its regional division, ensuring alignment with overall corporate goals.

The SPV and its maintenance subcontractor jointly safeguard the interests of major shareholder by aligning their strategies with those of the mutual shareholder company. For example, strategic decisions made by SPV should be in accordance with the interests of the Chinese shareholder and the maintenance project company. An instance of this is the proposal to expand the scope of concessional of National Road No. 2. The SPV faces political pressure from the government. The SPV's decisions should remain in line with the Chinese shareholder company's long-term strategic vision and short-term financial interests, ensuring that the benefits of the extension are considered for the Chinese maintenance project from the feasibility phase onwards. Nevertheless, this expansion is perceived as more advantageous for the French operational project company rather than the Chinese maintenance project company.

Similar to the maintenance project company, the SPV shares a mutual commitment to ensuring a positive financial return for the SOE. The SPV is responsible for generating dividends for the SOE based on an annual financial benchmark. However, it is essential that earnings are retained for future maintenance and address unforeseeable geotechnical risks in mountainous areas for long-term goals. Therefore, the annual dividends should be viewed as symbolic rather than substantial financial returns. This strategy creates a conflict between the immediate financial returns expected by the Chinese shareholder and the necessity for sustained operational stability and risk mitigation

in the long run.

In conclusion, the SPV's approach focuses on safeguarding the interests of its majority shareholder. Strategic decisions are made in alignment with the shareholder's interests. However, a focus on short-term gains may jeopardize long-term sustainability and strain trustful relationships with public and private partners.

4.2.2.2 French Corporate Logic

The main goal of the French shareholder company, as a private entity, is to generate profits through its country level operation project company. To ensure profitability, the French firm utilizes a hierarchical approach to oversee both the strategic direction and the operations of both the SPV and the operational project company.

The French shareholder company's identity is defined by its technical and managerial expertise in toll operations. These skills are demonstrated through its operation project company, which provides technical expertise, and its managerial role in the SPV. The technical expertise is handled by the SPV subcontractor, while the deputy director in the SPV shoulders the managerial expertise. Leveraging their expertise in toll operation and concession management, they aim for profitable operations to strengthen their position in the concession.

The French firm oversees the SPV from its headquarters in France, with the board member ensuring alignment with the company's financial and strategic goals. The main objective is to maximize profits and provide a return on investment for shareholders. Profitability comes from dividends generated by the SPV, and decisions regarding these dividends are made in coordination with the Chinese shareholder to symbolically align financial interests.

For the operational project company, revenues primarily come from the monthly fixed operational fees and non-regular maintenance fees. To increase profits, the project company minimizes fixed costs by employing more national and regional staff rather than expatriates (only seven out of 340 employees). They negotiate with the SPV to broaden the maintenance scope of the toll stations using local services. Additionally, they propose opening a new toll station to further reduce the

fixed costs, which are not aligned with the interests of the SPV. The suggestion to open a new M toll plaza station was rejected because it would cause the SPV to lose annual fees from the toll station operation. However, expanding the toll station maintenance scope remains an option pending a thorough analysis and proposal. This situation highlights the different interests of French shareholder in these partnerships. As the General Director expressed in an informal meeting:

> *They seem to primarily consider their own interests without considering our concession. They frequently discuss fixed costs, yet, from our perspective, their profits appear to be substantial. During the previous contract, their costs were assessed, and they were found to be considerably high. (General Director of the SPV, Informal meeting 12)*

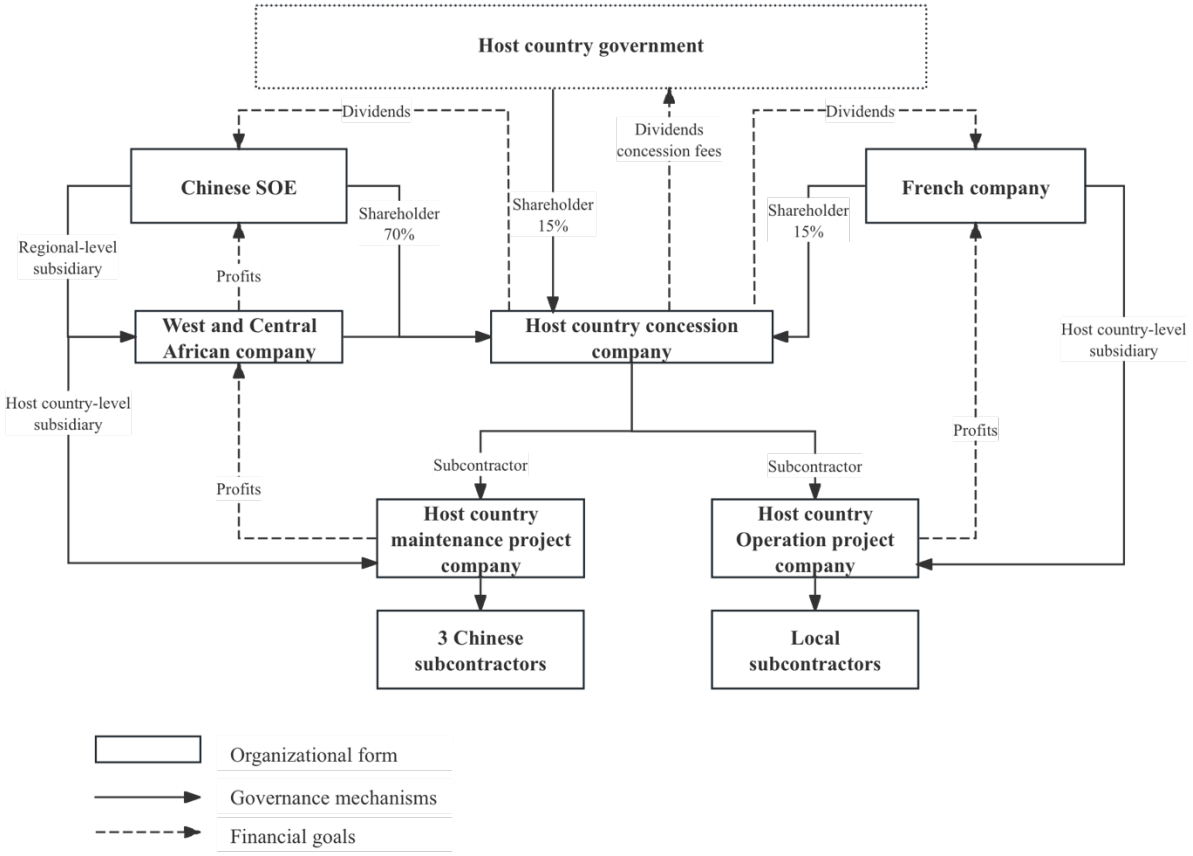
In conclusion, the corporate strategies of Chinese SOEs and French shareholder companies consistently impact the operations of the SPV and are evident in its organizational structure.

4.2.2.3 SPV Corporate Logics

As a hybrid organization, the SPV aims to generate profits and provide public services. It consists of both public and private shareholders, including the local host government, the French private company, and the Chinese SOE. The control system of the SPV is overseen by board members from its shareholder companies including the Chinese SOE, the French company, and the government. The SPV is controlled by its regional company under both hierarchical structures and the CCP's control.

The SPV has subcontracted its toll operations and road maintenance to two separate entities, both subsidiaries of the private shareholder's company. One specializes in toll operations and is a subsidiary of a French company, while the other focuses on maintenance and is a subsidiary of an SOE. Notably, the Chinese SOE, through its headquarters and regional subsidiary, directly controls the SPV and its maintenance subcontractor. **Figure 16** illustrates the organizational structure of the SPV.

Figure 16. Goals, Organizational Forms, and Governance Mechanisms



4.2.2.3.1 Corporate Goals

In the context of PPPs, the SPV functions as a hybrid entity that combines public service objectives to benefit users and operates with a profit-driven approach aimed at generating revenue for the organization and profits. To fulfill its concessional missions, the SPV is responsible for collecting toll fees and maintaining roads through expertise subcontractors. On one hand, the main goal of the SPV is to generate profits. Collecting toll fees is essential for the organization to meet its financial goals. The SPV depends on toll revenue to ensure financial stability. On the other hand, however, the company also incurs extra costs by investing in user services, such as rest areas and other related services, which hinder challenges to achieving financial sustainability. The Chinese Deputy Director emphasized that the primary goal is profit generation:

The principle of the company has always been to make money. We are a commercial company, and we are not engaged in charity. (Chinese Deputy Director, Non-structured interviews 5)

To fulfill its public service goal, the SPV's missions involve collecting toll fees to maintain the road and provide service for users. The company's management practices are centered on public service concepts with objectives focused on user satisfaction. The SPV prioritizes maintaining relationships with users, particularly major transportation and logistics companies. The company organizes annual meetings with transporters and is a member of a local association that represents them. The company prioritizes user experience by actively addressing complaints and investing in a new toll system to improve user experience.

Furthermore, the company seeks to safeguard its interests by promoting users through a prepaid card payment system to deter users from taking alternative routes to evade tolls, thereby ensuring consistent revenues. The SPV ensures asset protection and road safety by addressing issues such as theft of signs by residents along the road and at toll stations. Since the construction phase began, approximately one-third of the signs have been stolen. The SPV provides patrols and a call center for reporting emergencies or any anomalies related to the road by its operational subcontractors. The company views the preservation of the road asset as a crucial task that shareholders and local government officials prioritize due to its visibility.

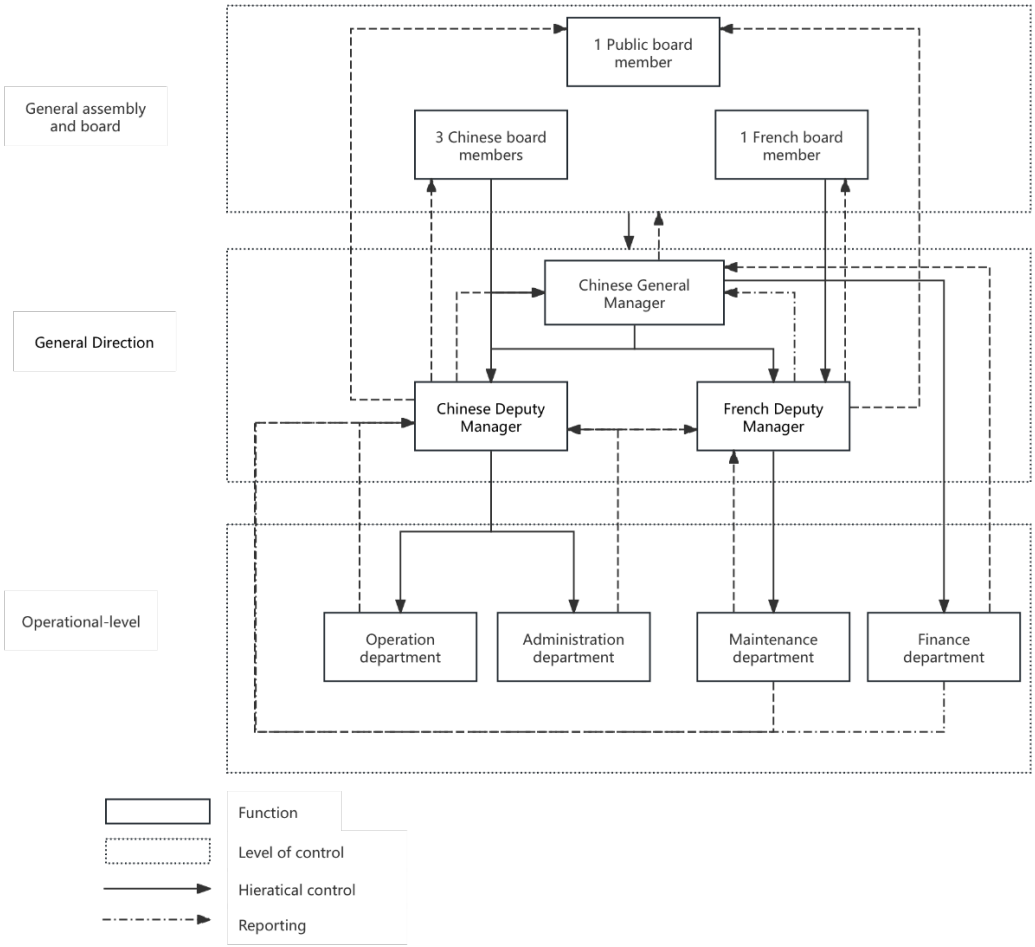
However, concentrating on public service may expose the SPV to risks as the additional activities required to make an impact do not generate revenue, potentially impacting profits negatively. As the Chinese Deputy Director mentioned:

We are required to work in the service area, but we haven't done this for several years, because there is no profit and the price is relatively low, so we can't do it. Therefore, some commercial models can be promoted to remove some safety and health hazards. (Chinese Deputy Director, Non-structured interviews 3)

4.2.2.3.2 Governance Mechanism

The SPV operates on a business model that focuses on providing public service to its users by collecting toll fees as its primary source of revenue. This revenue is strategically allocated to road maintenance and other user-centric services to address user needs. The SPV's governance mechanism involves a board of directors who oversees at the strategic level as well as managers who exercise hierarchical control at the executive and operational levels (**Figure 17**).

Figure 17. Governance Mechanisms



The corporate governance structure consists of three levels of control: 1) the shareholders' general assembly, also known as the general meeting; 2) a board system comprising a board of directors; and 3) a General Director. The general assembly, with the board, determines the SPV's strategies, business operations, and investment plans. It has the authority to review reports from the board of

directors and decide whether to approve them. It also holds similar authority over matters such as the company's financial budget, profit distribution, loss recovery, and fundamental changes.

Interestingly, in the case of the SPV, there are only two levels of control: one from the general assembly and board level, as the representatives of both remain the same, and another in the general management structure. Aside from the General Director, there are two Deputy Directors.

The board members oversee the strategies and monitor the quality and efficiency of the concessional company. The board is composed of members with a mix of business and public service expertise, including one or two advocates of the public service mission. It includes representatives from both private and public sectors. The Chinese SOE, as the major shareholder, holds three key positions on the board, along with a representative from the French company and a government official. Members from private companies mainly support the business mission, while government representative safeguards public service interests. The board has the authority to establish the internal management structure of the company and appoint or dismiss key management personnel, such as the General Director and the two Deputy Managers.

The General Director is responsible for implementing the company's operations and reports to the board. They have both the power and duty to implement the board's decisions. Surprisingly, they are also responsible for drafting reports or plans that the board is supposed to prepare and present for approval at the general assembly meeting. For example, the General Director of the SPV holds the responsibility for organizing board meetings and the annual general meeting. However, they often face challenges in reaching agreements prior to these meetings. The General Director also presents the annual report, while board members have the right to vote on various matters such as budget proposals, reserves for major repairs, feasibility studies, and proposals for price increases for operation and maintenance subcontractors. If there is a lack of communication before meetings or if consensus is not reached, board members may challenge the General Director's proposals. An exemplification of this dynamic was observed during a board meeting, where members approved the feasibility study for National Road No. 2, albeit with reservations, as can be gleaned from the notes from an internal meeting:

The Chinese board members continued in Chinese, using harsh words and an unsatisfied tone. The General Director wiped his brow as they criticized him sternly. Subsequently, the Chinese board member requested that this part not be translated and be discussed further in private. (Formal meeting 44)

During the board meeting, the General Director experienced substantial pressure and resistance, predominantly from Chinese board members who held considerable influence due to their majority. Additionally, the Chinese board composition had recently changed, with one member retiring and two others taking on new regional responsibilities. Chinese shareholders had proposed promoting the General Director to a board member, indicating a possible change in the board's structure.

The French board member plays a supportive yet minority role, offering recommendations and insights to assist the Chinese board members in making decisions that serve their interests. An example of this occurred when the General Director was proposed to also serve as a board member. The French shareholder expressed concerns, explicitly opposing the idea of the General Director holding multiple roles. They cited potential conflicts of interest and compliance issues that could arise for the French company in such a scenario. Moreover, this arrangement could potentially weaken the influence of the Chinese board members, impacting the company's long-term development.

The local government plays a crucial role on the board, with the president acting as the guardian of public service interests. The president has proposed various initiatives, such as establishing a new toll station, concession expansion, creation of rest areas, and increased public road safety communication, adherence to Environmental, Social, Governance (ESG) standards. Emphasizing compliance with ESG standards is also a priority. For example, the president has proposed opening a new toll station to mitigate issues of truck overloading and ensure the maintenance of road quality. Furthermore, the government has requested the SPV to expand its operations from National Road No. 1 to National Road No. 2 in response to user dissatisfaction with the conditions of the latter. The introduction of rest areas in mountainous regions is seen as a measure to discourage drivers from parking along the road, improving safety. Effective communication is essential for enhancing public safety awareness and reducing accident occurrences on the concessional road.

Thus, the Chinese board members occupy a position of significant influence, holding a majority stake while the French board member plays a supportive and advisory role. At the helm of the board, the president, a representative from the public sector, emphasizes the need to address a variety of public services. This emphasis includes truck overloading, environmental sustainability, and road safety. Additionally, there is a focus on prioritizing road safety and enhancing user satisfaction. These measures are not only critical for the users but also play a pivotal role in optimizing operational efficiency and elevating the quality of service provided.

The corporate structure of the SPV also advocates hierarchical control as an appropriate way to monitor strategy and operations. The General Director and Deputy Directors are appointed by the board members. The Chinese board directors directly instruct both the General Director and the Chinese Deputy Director, while the French board director communicates with the French Deputy Directors. This setup indicates that board directors do not have direct interactions.

The hierarchical structure ensures a streamlined flow of communication, with the Deputy Directors reporting to the General Director. The General Director provides directives to the Deputy Directors. The execution of these strategies, which encompass a broad range of initiatives, is subsequently reported by both French and Chinese Deputy Directors to the General Director. These strategic initiatives encompass a diverse array of tasks, such as monitoring the progress of the feasibility study for National Road No. 2, coordinating the visits of delegations from the European Union and Central African delegations, preparing inspections initiated by the coordination office of National Road No. 1, addressing dividend matters, and implementing economic regulations plan. This structured communication and reporting system ensures that these strategic initiatives are monitored and effectively executed to achieve the organization's goals.

Disagreements or misunderstandings between Deputy Directors and the General Director introduce complexities into the relationships within the executive level. For example, the Chinese Deputy Director encounters resistance from the General Director, leading to considerable internal political conflict between the Chinese General Director and the Regional General Director of the SOE. Simultaneously, the French Deputy Director 1 is sometimes surprised by unexpected

decisions or changes made by the General Director. This includes alterations to General Director's tax exemption agreement, without prior discussion with the French Deputy Director 1, as well as the decision to inaugurate a new toll station for a trial period. These instances highlight the challenges for effective communication and consensus-building at the executive level.

At the executive level, the Deputy Directors engage in dynamic collaborations through daily discussions. The Chinese Deputy Director and French Deputy Director 1 have distinct personalities that influence their interactions. French Deputy Director 1, noted for his congenial demeanor, inadvertently raises concerns of trust for the Chinese Deputy Director, particularly in instances related to compliance issues. This highlights the potential challenges that may arise from divergent personality traits and communication styles within the executive team.

Recognizing and addressing these differences is crucial, as they greatly impact decision-making processes, team dynamics, and overall effectiveness at operational level. The data also reveals conflicting responsibilities between the Chinese and French Deputy Directors, causing confusion at the operational level. As per the organizational structure, the Chinese Deputy Director oversees both the Administrative Department, which includes human resources and communication functions, and the Operations Department. In contrast, the French Deputy Director 1 is in charge of the Engineering Department, while the Finance Department is directly under the responsibility of the General Director. However, employee reports seem to contradict this structure. It seems that not only the Administrative and Operations Departments but also the Engineering and Finance Departments report directly to the Chinese Deputy Director. This inconsistency has been observed in the field:

> *Hello, Deputy Director. I'll update you on the progress, but it's just for your information, as usual […] We're currently optimizing our engineering process, with ongoing improvements, including the reception form. Additionally, there are issues concerning the road section near the toll station, particularly our unclear interface with the garbage disposal company. The Engineering Director reported. (Conversation between the Engineering Director and the Chinese Deputy Director)*

The intervention of French Deputy Director 2 in operations and administration has created a situation where employees in various departments report to two superiors. This dual reporting system has caused issues with incomplete information reaching the Chinese Deputy, as employees provide overlapping and duplicated reports. Consequently, this situation has precipitated inefficiencies, leading to ambiguity in processes and confusion concerning the responsibilities at both executive and operational levels. This lack of clarity can potentially hinder the decision-making process of the executive level and disrupt operational functions.

4.2.2.3.3 Identity

The technical knowledge within the SOE and its subsidiary serves as a vital metric in establishing the SPV's ability to provide high-quality maintenance services. Similarly for the French company and its subsidiary for the operation techniques, this professional credibility is essential in guiding the SPV's strategic decisions and shaping its reputation. As the public service operator of the national roads, the SPV is driven not only by collecting toll fees and maintaining roads, but also by the ethical standards and compliance to anti-corruption measures. As the Chinese Deputy Director stated:

> *Our principle has always been to handle every cent with utmost seriousness and caution. We have strict anti-corruption policies in place and make it clear that we cannot offer any favors. We are collecting the money of the people. Every expenditure must be very clean and transparent. (Chinese Deputy Director, Non-structured interview 6)*

This approach highlights the importance of ethical behavior and compliance with anti-corruption policies in building and sustaining the organization's credibility and long-term growth. In addition to these organizational features, the internal social identities and experiences of individuals contribute to the competing logics, further complicating the dynamics within hybrid organizations.

4.2.3 Individual Actors' Experiences of Competing Intra-institutional Logics

Individuals act as carriers of institutional logics and within the SPV, where they are exposed in a multicultural setting. Although the dominant corporate culture is Chinese, it is shaped by the local culture of the host country. Our research shows that all participants in our study group demonstrate

a hybrid professional identity, and the variety of connections to institutional logics influence their individual responses.

4.2.3.1 Chinese Dominant Corporate Culture in the Local Context

The SPV operates in a diverse cultural environment dominated by Chinese corporate culture, which strongly influences the organization's internal dynamics. Culture within an organization is vital in deciding which norms are acceptable, prompting the SPV to adapt its structures and practices to incorporate various societal perspectives. The SOE, a major shareholder, exerts a significant influence on the sub-culture of the SPV. This corporation operates on a hierarchical system where employees are encouraged to express their ideas or disagreements in an indirect or euphemistic manner. Women within this traditional construction company often encounter a "glass ceiling," typically being limited to roles like interpreters, cashiers, or administrative positions. This hierarchical structure also influences social contexts, such as dinner gatherings, where seating arrangements, speech patterns, and behaviors are strictly regulated.

The SPV emphasizes on promoting cultural exchange between China and Africa, which greatly influences its organizational culture. As part of the SPV's cultural exchange approach, traditional Chinese festivals like Chinese New Year, Lantern Festival, Dragon Boat Festival, and Mid-Autumn Festival are promoted and celebrated. These festivals are fundamental to Chinese culture and are observed within the organization through communal gatherings focused on sharing food and engaging in collective activities. These celebrations facilitate cultural exchange and understanding, strengthening connections among employees from diverse backgrounds. They also help create a multicultural and inclusive workplace environment that not only recognizes but also celebrates cultural differences. This, in turn, fosters a unique organizational culture within the SPV, characterized by mutual respect for cultural diversity.

The organization faces challenges in its institutional environment due to the broader local cultural context. These challenges include a lack of awareness about road boundaries, an incomplete legal system, opportunism from public sectors, and adherence to traditional customs. Moreover, the high cost of living and poor living conditions of the local population contribute to asset loss along the

concession roads. For example, residents have been known to steal signages to sell or repurpose as aluminum pots. As the Project Manager outlined:

> *The rate of loss is alarmingly rapid because, from the perspective of residents, the signboards represent a source of income. A local resident with no income might take a signboard, convert it into one or two thousand FCFA to fulfill their most basic needs, such as buying a beer or some other necessity. (Project Manager of the maintenance subcontractor, Informal meeting 28).*

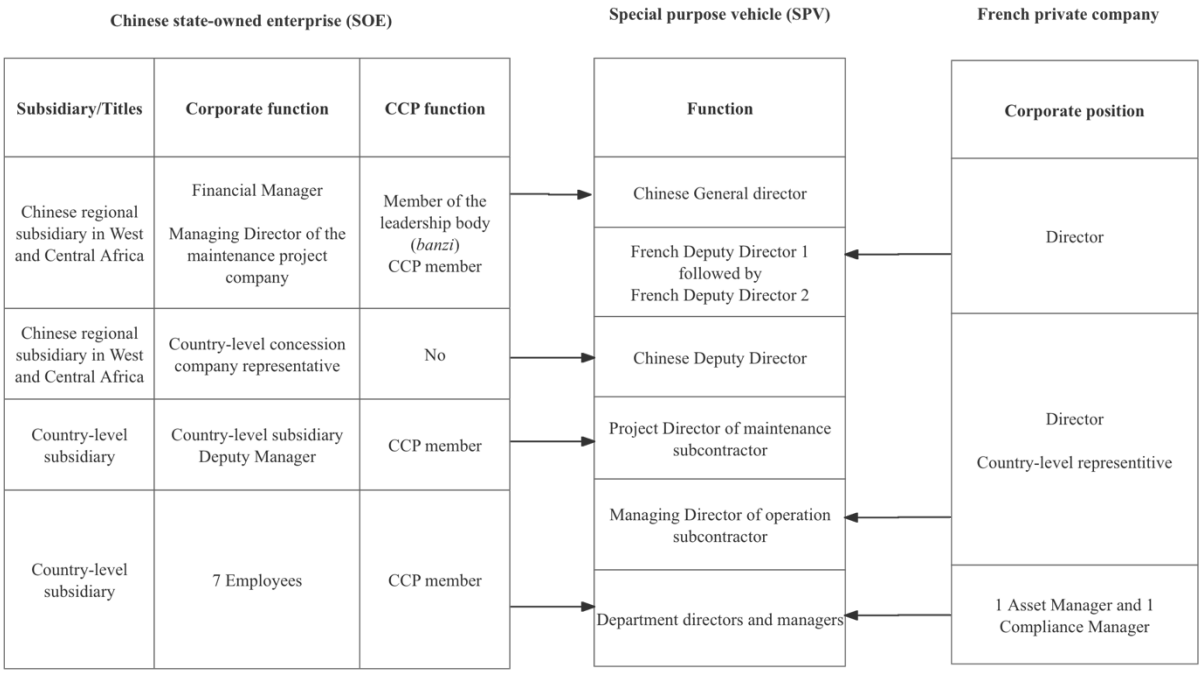
Thus, the SPV operates in a complex institutional environment shaped by Chinese and French cultural influences in the African host country. Furthermore, the individuals within the SPV have hybrid identities that add complexity to the setting.

4.2.3.2 Individual Actors' Hybrid Professional Identities

The SPV's key members possess hybrid professional identities (**Figure 18**). The SOE mainly occupies key positions in the SPV, including the General Director, Deputy Directors, and department managers, who are appointed by the SOE through its country level subsidiary in the host country, which also serves as the maintenance subcontractor of the SPV. The French shareholder, through its local subsidiary, appoints a deputy manager, a compliance manager, and an asset manager.

These managers with hybrid identities lead to potential confusion of their varied roles. The General Director of the SPV also holds the role of the Financial Director of the SOE's regional company in West and Central Africa as well as Managing Director at the maintenance subcontractor in the host country. Additionally, he is a CCP member and part of the leadership body (*banzi*) of the Chinese regional subsidiary in West and Central Africa, actively involved in key decision-making processes.

Figure 18. Individual Managers' Hybrid Professional Identity



Having multiple roles can cause external confusion and conflicting interests and compliance issues for the French partner. Their reluctance to appoint the current General Director as a board member of the SPV stems from worries about conflicts of interest and compliance issues, as noted in a formal meeting. The General Director's dual position in the SPV and in the maintenance subcontractor raises important questions about his ability to impartially fulfill his responsibilities. This concern is articulated in an internal meeting:

> *Even if he can distinguish his role, from the perspective of our small shareholders, we will still suspect that he favors the interests of major shareholders, or the interests of the maintenance company, even if it is not intentional, which is something we are more worried about. (Managing Director of operation subcontractor, Formal meeting 33)*

The complexities within the SPV are not limited to the dual roles or positions held by the General Director in the SPV. They also involve Deputy Directors, the Project Manager of the maintenance subcontractor, and the General Director of the operation subcontractor, who have additional roles at the country level. For example, the Chinese Project Manager of the maintenance subcontractor

is also the Deputy Manager of the country level subsidiary. Similarly, the General Director of the operation subcontractor acts as the country representative. These overlapping roles create a complex organizational structure within the SPV, leading to potential conflicts of interest and confusion over responsibilities, and challenges in decision-making, communication, and operations with subcontractors and shareholders

4.2.3.3 Individual Actors' Relations to Intra-institutional Logics

We examined various internal logics within the organization, including the SPV's public service and corporate market logic, SOE corporate logic, and French company logic. The management team comprises the Chinese General Director, Chinese Deputy Director, and two French Deputy Directors. The Chinese General Director and Deputy Directors adhere to SPV and SOE corporate logics. In contrast, French Deputy Director 2, who replaced former French Deputy Director 1, is new to the organization and a novice to the corporate logics in place. Our analysis focused on the relationship between SPV directors' experience and these logics (**Table 14**).

Table 14. Managers' Relations to the Intra-institutional Logics

Focus Group	SPV Corporate Logic	Chinese SOE Corporate Logic	French Corporate Logic
French Deputy Director 2	Novice	Novice	Novice
French Deputy Manager 1	Familiar	Novice	Familiar
Chinese General Director	Identified	Identified	Novice
Chinese Deputy Director	Identified	Identified	Familiar
Chinese Project Manager of Maintenance Subcontractor	Familiar	Identified	Novice
French General Director of Operation Subcontractor	Familiar	Novice	Identified

Both the Chinese General Director and the Chinese Deputy Director adhere to the SPV corporate logics and SOE corporate logics. For instance, they take for granted the two systems' operational management, including financial control, communication channels, and personnel assessment. As

a member of the CCP and part of the leadership team of the SOE regional subsidiary, the General Director upholds communist discipline in management and conducts lectures within the SOE. The Chinese Deputy Director, who is not a CCP member, is novice to the political dynamics of the SOE.

French Deputy Manager 1 demonstrates a comprehensive understanding of the SPV corporate logic and adheres to the French corporate logic. He comprehends that the SPV's core missions are centered around toll collection, user service provision, and road maintenance. However, French Deputy Manager 1 has limited knowledge about the SOE's corporate and politic logics, causing confusions. Meanwhile, the newly recruited French Deputy Director 2 is a novice to all logics and faces various tensions within the organization. Additionally, French Deputy Director 2 lacks experience in engineering expertise and struggles with the reporting process and understanding the hierarchical relationships between the maintenance department and its subcontractor. This lack of familiarity has resulted in complaints from team members, such as the Administration Director and Engineering Director. For example, the Engineering Director expressed frustration over the Deputy Director's lack of engineering knowledge, which led to time-consuming efforts to explain technical matters. Other complaints highlighted French Deputy Director 2's unfamiliarity with existing procedures, causing further complications. The Engineering Director described one such instance, saying:

> *Though I also agree with him to pay attention to employees' satisfaction, but it is not in line with the company's procedures. This is his first business trip. I can understand that he will do this, but he will not do it next time. (Engineering Director, Non-structured interview 14)*

The Chinese Project Manager of the maintenance subcontractor and the French General Director of the operation company are both familiar with SPV logics and adhere to their respective corporate logics but have limited knowledge about each other's perspectives.

In conclusion, individuals have hybrid professional identities that are shaped and continuously reshaped by a mix of cultural influences and intra-institutional logics within the SPV. These

identities and their connections to internal institutional dynamics affect how individuals navigate the SPV in the PPP's organizational field.

4.2.4 Individual Actors' Responses to Intra-institutional Logics

The relationship between SPV managers and institutional logics varies, resulting in a range of individual responses to the complexity (**Table 15**). It is noteworthy that while both the Chinese General Director and Chinese Deputy Director align with the SPV and SOE corporate logics, their responses to this complexity differ significantly.

Table 15. Managers' Responses

Observation Group	Individual Level Responses
Chinese General Director	Demarcating strategy
Chinese Deputy Director	Segmenting strategy
French Deputy Director 1	Complying strategy
French Deputy Director 2	Defying strategy Combining strategy

4.2.4.1 Demarcating Strategy

The Chinese General Director demonstrates alignment with SPV corporate logics by emphasizing that toll fees are necessary not only for surface repairs, but for the overall maintenance of the road structure to ensure its continuous functionality. He partially follows the SOE's corporate guidelines. To meet the SOE's financial goals, the General Director sets demarcating strategy that aligns with the Chinese SOE, vigorously protecting the interests of both the maintenance subcontractor and the SOE as a shareholder while reducing the focus on the interests of the French and state shareholders. He expresses this dedication in an internal meeting:

> *The focus ought not to be solely on the interests of the SPV, but also on the profits generated by the maintenance subcontractor for the Chinese shareholder, like the income derived from additional project maintenance and the overhaul of Road No. 2. (Chinese General Director, Informal meeting 23)*

The Chinese General Director recognizes the dual financial control system established by the Chinese SOE and the SPV. He promotes communist discipline in the organization, emphasizing financial compliance. However, he frequently relies on informal negotiations to obtain approval for specific documents for the Chinese corporate subsidiary. His management approach is mainly hierarchical, and his interactions with employees are primarily transactional.

The SOE General Director seeks greater autonomy and requests to be removed from the management of the regional subsidiary. The dual control system impacts efficiency, and in order to improve performance, the General Director aims to have necessary authority to operate and manage the company in line with local practices. For example, the Chinese employees are provided by the shareholder group company and overseen by the group's subsidiary. The General Director has raised concerns regarding human resource, including issues related to staff promotions and assessments that fail to motivate the employees within the SPV.

The case of the Chinese General Director offers valuable insights into organizational management dynamics in a context characterized by diverse and sometimes conflicting intra-institutional logics. The General Director distinctly displays his alignment with the major shareholder's interests and complete compliance with the SPV corporate logic. At the same time, he partially adheres to SOE logics by managing a dual management system, advocating for more autonomy and addressing crucial human resource concerns.

4.2.4.2 Segmenting Strategy

The Chinese Deputy Director fully embraces and adheres to the SPV corporate logics. She emphasizes the significance of internationalizing talent, promoting cultural diversity and integration, achieving international management standards, and focusing on long-term development to proactively adapt to changes. The Deputy Director fosters a culture of zero tolerance policy towards favoritism, theft, collusion with subcontractors, and illegal activities within the organization. The company's core values, centered around user service and satisfaction, are upheld by the staff. Resource management is in accordance with local labor laws, emphasizing compliance and anti-corruption as the organization's core principles.

The Chinese Deputy Director collaborates closely with the French Deputy Director 2. They engage in regular dialogue, considering the interests of all relevant parties during strategic decisions, as exemplified by the decision-making process regarding the opening of toll station M in an informal meeting between French and Chinese Deputy Directors:

> *Opening toll station M would likely result in a loss for SPV, while this decision may be beneficial for operating subcontractors due to amortization and lower costs. Furthermore, for Chinese shareholders, the implementation does not offer significant benefits and would reduce the amount of maintenance. (Chinese Deputy Director, Informal meeting 27).*

The Chinese Deputy Director partially complies with the SOE's guidelines. On one hand, she ensures that all expenses are reasonable and well-documented to align with the company's internal audit. Regarding the strategic decision of National Road No. 2, the plan must align with the strategy of the Chinese SOE. On the other hand, however, she believes that the current personal assessment system is not suitable for the SPV, similar to the General Director's opinion. She argues that the current personal assessment system is not fit for the SPV. An example is the issue with the Engineering Director, whose category does not match his actual higher position. His salary is based on his category, which, given his experience and education, is relatively low, leading to reduced motivation. Additionally, he is simultaneously handling dual responsibilities in the maintenance subcontractor and the SPV.

4.2.4.3 Complying Strategy

Although French Deputy Director 1 has limited familiarity with the Chinese SOE corporate logics, he demonstrates a strong compliance with SPV corporate logics and French corporate logic. In his role, he negotiated to protect the interests of the French company and its operation subcontractor. This included issues like implementing price adjustments for maintenance subcontracted asphalt and the change for the investment in the overhaul. When confronted with issues related to price increases for subcontractors, French Deputy Director 1 advocated for an equal rate for both the operation contractor and the maintenance subcontractor, a stance aimed at safeguarding the interests of the French shareholders. This understanding highlights the importance of managers navigating these logics to align with the interests of different shareholders.

However, it is challenging to compromise as it may involve incompatible interests with relevant parties. For example, to address the toll evasion concerns, French Deputy Director 1 suggested setting up designated checkpoints and even directly and personally interacted with local armed forces and individuals engaged in illegal activities near toll station N to reduce instances of toll evasion. During an internal formal meeting with the French Deputy Director 1, he emphasized:

> *The objective isn't to crack down on these unauthorized organizations, nor is it to close these intersections and obstruct their passage, as this is a matter that can be tackled at the national level. (French Deputy Director 1, Formal meeting 1)*

His actions showed a commitment to safeguarding the interests of external stakeholders. However, they were not consolidated with the other SPV directors and did not align with the SPV's long-term goals, which might create security concerns for the host country.

4.2.4.4 Refusing and Combining Strategies

As a new member to the SPV, French Deputy Director 2 is unfamiliar with its various logics and tends to disregard the existing institutional logics. He acts relatively independent of the institutional context, minimizing the influence of his predecessor and rejecting the established way of working. His initial step involves conducting a thorough assessment of the company, examining its hierarchy, the interests of internal and external stakeholders, and its financial status. For example, he reviews the internal financial situation and identifies unfavorable financial statements for the SPV, indicating potential risks. These risks include unauthorized payments made to the insurance company without a contractual agreement between the SPV and the insurance company or another subsidiary of the SOE shareholder company, resulting in compliance issues. He assesses the company's structure and the competencies of key managers, discovering that most of the current employees do not meet the SPV's requirements. For example, the Engineering Director was deemed too inexperienced and lacking the needed expertise to be qualified. Following the Operational Manager's departure, it was essential to enhance two key positions to improve the SPV's position and effectively manage both the operational and maintenance subcontractors.

French Deputy Director 2 rejected the current corporate practices and introduced a new approach. He prioritized setting the SPV's long-term goals. Initially tasked with supervising the Chinese SOE subsidiary (the maintenance subcontractor), his strategy aimed to tackle the issues of trust and transparency within the subsidiary. His goal was to enhance overall operational efficiency rather than just focusing on control. For instance, French Deputy Director 2 prioritized the long-term operational sustainability of the SPV over short-term financial gains like annual dividends, showing consideration for the SPV. He clarified:

> *Concerning dividends, given this year's negative cash flow, the dividend amount should be the same or relatively less than last year […] Our current financial statements do not accurately reflect our situation, but we may revisit some previous issues by year-end. I do not recommend a dividend. (French Deputy Director 2, Non-structured interview 25)*

To improve internal performance and transform the organization, French Deputy Director 2 decided to hire external human resources. This would require adjusting internal governance processes and creating a cohesive organizational identity. Establishing a trust mechanism is crucial for enabling these organizational changes.

French Deputy Director 2 aimed to establish mutually beneficial goals with external partners and the coordination office to secure a long-term concession. He collaborated with partners, including transporter C, to find solutions in response to the government's failure to fulfill certain obligations. Additionally, French Deputy Director 2 focused on building trust with the coordinating office, demonstrating a commitment to quality improvement and meeting government expectations. In a meeting with the coordination bureau of public service delegation, he said:

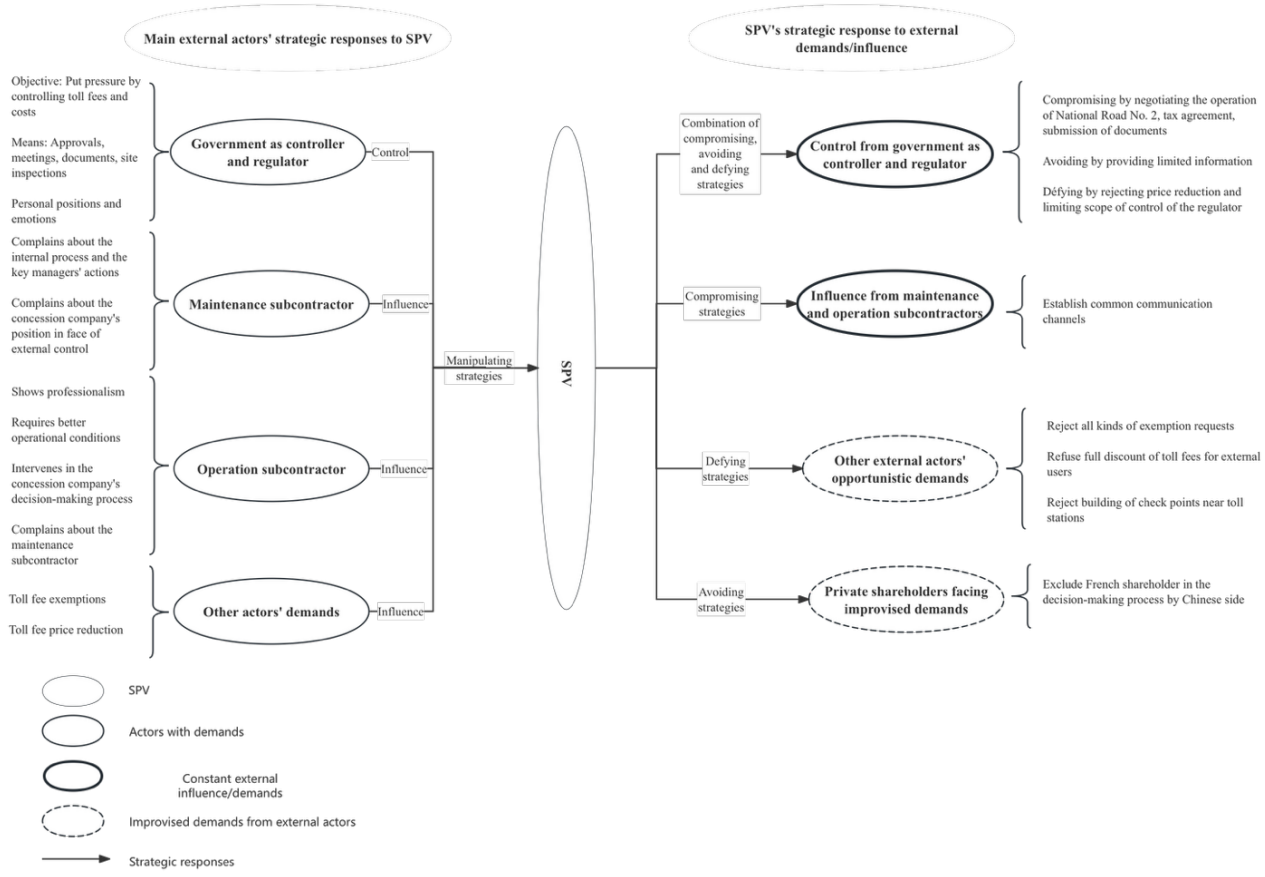
> *We need to clarify some issues for you, such as communication problems. But I can assure you that there is no ill intent. We are all pulling together, working towards a common goal. However, issues like reporting methods can sometimes result in low-quality documents […] We will do our utmost to improve the quality to meet your expectations. (French Deputy Director 2, Formal meeting 64)*

Navigating this complex intra-institutional environment requires a strategic approach and a deep understanding of the various interests involved, especially for the newcomer like French Deputy Director 2. He took a distinctive approach by rejecting conflicting logics and instead focusing on creating new logics and practices, setting shared long-term objectives, and cultivating trust among all stakeholders, both internally and externally.

4.2.5 Organizational Actors' Strategic Responses

The SPV faces organizational pressures from both the public sector's opportunism and various internal and external demands. External actors, including the government coordination office, control the SPV, while two subcontractors also have influence. To address these external demands and manipulative actions of actors like subcontractors and the coordination bureau of public service delegation, the SPV adopts a mix of organizational strategies (**Figure 19**).

Figure 19. Organizational Actors' Strategic Responses



4.2.5.1 External Actors' Manipulating Strategies against the SPV

Our findings indicate that external factors, such as the coordination office of public service delegation and the two main subcontractors, exercise control and influence over the SPV to promote their own interests. The coordination office controls the SPV by asserting power and pressure. Meanwhile, the subcontractors, driven by their institutional values, beliefs, and standards of acceptable practices, influence the SPV's strategic decisions to benefit themselves.

4.2.5.1.1 Control from the Coordination Bureau of Public Service Delegation

The SPV is under pressure from the coordination bureau of public service delegation, which controls the concession by exerting authority and applying political pressure. For example, the government prioritizes National Road No. 2, aiming to enhance road conditions for users. However, financial challenges hinder repairs and improvements according to the public service delegation contract. Despite budget allocation, payment process can be lengthy. As a result, the government requires the SPV to finance feasibility studies, build toll and weighing stations, and find funding solutions for operation.

The coordination office controls the concession by regulating toll rates and operation and maintenance costs to secure concessional fees for the government. There are differing opinions among government ministers regarding reducing toll rates, particularly after an oil price hike. While the public service delegation contract allows for a 3% annual toll rate increase, the regulatory department mandates the SPV to adjust its business plan based on the current macro-economic and political conditions in the host country. The government finds the maintenance costs excessive compared to the national budget. The director of the coordination bureau emphasized:

> *Do you know that the maintenance cost alone is 10 billion francs? Are you aware that the Congolese government is very poor? These 10 billion francs might be a one-year budget for one ministry; some can't even reach it. And you have 10 billion available for immediate maintenance. (Director of the coordination bureau, Formal meeting 64)*

The coordination bureau oversees the costs of the concession to ensure that the SPV must obtain their approval. This involves attending formal and informal meetings and submitting reports and

documents. In terms of approval, the SPV's maintenance works should receive the approval of the coordination bureau in advance. This includes non-regular maintenance work for incidents and major periodic road maintenance works not covered in the contract. The coordination bureau asks to be part of the SPV's internal approval process for the non-regular maintenance works. The SPV should also seek approval before entering into contracts with external parties for work within the concession's scope.

The coordination bureau organizes both formal and informal meetings. Formal meetings are scheduled through official letters from the General Delegation of Works Committee of the Ministry of Infrastructure. Sometimes, these notices are sent shortly before the meeting, which can pressure the SPV to attend. Additionally, the Coordinator may request the presence of the SPV General Directors or the Directors of the subcontractors to be present at these meetings. Informal meetings, in contrast, are arranged by the coordination department, which may contact Deputy Directors via telephone or WhatsApp to discuss ongoing topics, as directed by the Coordinator:

> *We also need to organize some relatively informal meetings with you, that is, we have not sent some formal letters to invite you to attend the meeting. These are mainly some discussions. This meeting was initiated by the head of my department, involving for example the monthly data report of toll stations and weighing stations. (Coordinator, Formal meeting 58)*

The coordination office requires the SPV to submit updated documents to synchronize information. They emphasize transparency by requesting technical documents, such as daily maintenance processes, overhaul plans, monthly traffic and revenue data, and updated contract lists. Reports should be detailed, timely updated to prevent information asymmetry, and any inconsistencies should be corrected promptly.

Regular annual inspections are mandated for ongoing maintenance tasks, such as regular maintenance, non-regular maintenance, and overhaul works. These inspections address issues like unauthorized connections to the drainage system by a public university along the route or market encroachment within the road boundaries. The coordination bureau works closely with the SPV

and government authorities to find solutions that protect the road. This collaboration emphasizes the importance of preserving road assets while addressing the SPV's operational needs and challenges.

In addition to supervisory methods, the personal position and emotions of the Coordinator can amplify the pressure on the organization. For example, the Coordinator of public service delegation publicly expressed dissatisfaction with the SPV's maintenance and service. Consequently, the Coordinator's personality adds to the organizational pressure and complicates the partnership between the public and private sectors.

In summary, the coordination bureau of the public service delegation oversees the concession by applying pressure on the SPV and enforcing the existing institutional framework on the organization. Simultaneously, the government sets the toll rate, monitors operational costs, and maintenance through methods such as document approval, formal and informal meetings, reports, and on-site inspections. The individual traits and emotions of the Coordinator further manipulate the relationship between the public coordination office and the SPV.

4.2.5.1.2 Influence from both the Maintenance and Operation Subcontractors

The two main subcontractors influence the SPV through their institutionalized values and beliefs. The maintenance subcontractor expresses concerns about the SPV's position, internal procedures, perceived lack of support from the General Director, and the management approach of the Deputy Manager. Feeling overshadowed by SPV, the maintenance subcontractor believes their technical knowledge is disregarded, resulting in construction issues. Additionally, the SPV's internal process, particularly under the supervision of the new French Deputy Director 2 managing the maintenance contract, is seen as inefficient and possibly unprofessional due to both internal and external pressures.

In response to government control, the maintenance subcontractor highlights the role of both the SPV and the coordination bureau of public service delegation. The increased government supervision is causing concerns and mounting pressure on the maintenance subcontractor. The subcontractor stresses the need for distinct boundaries between the SPV and the government. They

maintain that the SPV should not permit government interference to diminish its role of SPV or be used by the government to hinder Chinese contracting. Additionally, the subcontractor contends that the SPV should shield maintenance costs from government exposure. As the Project Manager expressed:

> *Given the strong position of your concessional company, we also quantified the maintenance works. However, doing so completely exposes our profit to the General Delegation of Works Committee. I think this is an issue for your concessional company. Therefore, I need to report this to the General Director. (Project Director of maintenance subcontractor, Non-structured interview 17)*

Meanwhile, the operation subcontractor employs various manipulating strategies to influence the SPV. These include increasing their professionalism by introducing their teams and providing monthly reports. They demand improved operational conditions under the concessions, intervene in the SPV's strategic decisions, and raise concerns about the maintenance subcontracting services. The General Director of the operation subcontractor introduces team members provided by the French shareholder company and presents monthly income, traffic flow, and weighting data along with their internal audit processes.

The operation subcontractor requests the SPV to invest in improving operational conditions and reducing fixed costs. This involves upgrading safety measures, such as installing protective fences at weighing stop windows to prevent threats from drivers and adding window guardrails to the building to mitigate theft risks. Due to limited storage space, the subcontractor emphasizes the necessity of destroying receipts and joint tickets. The subcontractor also suggests opening M toll station to lower fixed costs. In an informal meeting between operation and concession companies, the General Director of the operation subcontractor articulated:

> *The opening of the M station is also a crucial component of our strategy to reduce fixed costs. This is a matter that we need to have heard. I am confident that our French board member will also discuss this with the Chinese board members. (General Director of the operation subcontractor, Informal meeting 11)*

The operation subcontractor intends to influence the concession's decision-making by engaging in persuasive dialogue and offering suggestions. For example, regarding the tax exemption issue, they advise the SPV to negotiate with the government, as some of their suppliers do not offer VAT exemptions. They propose that obtaining tax exemption could eliminate the need to seek reduced concession fees. They recommend that the subsidy fee of transporter C could be offset against the concession fees. Another example of the operation subcontractor's influence is their suggestion that the SPV should consider implementing special preferential policies for its users. This could potentially enhance user satisfaction and loyalty, contributing positively to the company's reputation and financial performance. These examples illustrate how the operation subcontractor actively seeks to influence the SPV's strategic decisions, advocating for policies that they believe will optimize operational efficiency, financial performance, and stakeholder satisfaction.

The operation subcontractor has expressed dissatisfaction with the maintenance subcontractor to the SPV, stating that the latter is not fulfilling their contractual obligations. They propose decreasing the maintenance subcontracting budget, demonstrating their concern over cost efficiency. Furthermore, they express opposition to any single price increase for the maintenance subcontract of the SPV, essentially refusing to accommodate higher costs without justification. These actions suggest that the operation subcontractor shows strong focus on cost control within the SPV. Both subcontractors, acting on behalf of their shareholder company and their subsidiaries, influence the SPV by persuading to prioritize their interests. This may involve securing profits or cutting fixed costs.

4.2.5.2 SPV's Strategic Responses to External Actors

In response to manipulative strategies from external actors, the SPV uses a mix of compromising, avoiding, and defying strategies to manage diverse pressures and demands. The choice of strategy depends on the frequency and nature of the demands. When facing constant demands, the company combines strategies to maintain a cooperative relationship with the coordination office and compromises with subcontractors through regular dialogues and negotiations to reach mutual agreements that serve the interests of all parties involved. For occasional demands, like toll fee exemptions, the company takes a defiant stance to protect its financial stability. For example, the

Chinese partner may choose to avoid involving the French partner and government in the decision-making process, particularly when dealing with sensitive or controversial issues or dealing with conflicting ministry control. As the Chinese Deputy Director cited:

> *We cannot fall under the control of their ministry […] Consequently, our company has consistently avoided dealings with them. We have always been under the aegis of the Ministry of Infrastructure, which has been our sole support. (Chinese Deputy Director, Formal meeting 10)*

4.2.5.2.1 Combining Strategies in Response to the Coordination Office's Control

When managing the coordination bureau of public service delegation, the SPV employs a variety of strategies tailored to the nature of the demand and overall context. The objective is to handle external pressures effectively while protecting the SPV's operational and financial interests.

The SPV employs compromising strategies for tasks that require collective effort, such as the operation of National Road No. 2. The company engages the government in decision-making and negotiation processes. For example, the SPV involves the General Delegation of Works Committee in feasibility studies and negotiates for toll stations' inclusion in construction contracts. This approach encourages collaboration and ensures all stakeholders have a voice in the decision-making process. The SPV also invites a Coordinator to join the decision-making process, enhancing communication and efficiency. Ultimately, this strategy improves coordination.

Negotiations with the government for tax exemptions are a lengthy and ongoing process. The SPV agrees to pay certain taxes that are not initially part of the public service delegation contract and requests a reduction in concessional fees rates from the government. Developing a business plan that meets the requirements of all parties is complicated due to existing traffic conditions and macro-economic factors. Despite these obstacles, the SPV remains committed to finding solutions that address the needs and interests of all stakeholders.

Regarding subcontractor pricing, the SPV follows a defiant strategy. They steadfastly uphold the established price and limit the control the coordination office of public service delegation can enforce, as mentioned by the Chinese Deputy Director:

> *The principle is that the price for the two subcontracts, maintenance and operation, is non-negotiable, while any services outside the contract can be outsourced […] The coordinator must advocate based on reason, but he cannot touch its price, which is the bottom line. (Chinese Deputy Director, Non-structured interview 3)*

Similarly, when demands exceed contractual obligations, the SPV clearly rejects them. For instance, while the coordination bureau of public service delegation can provide suggestions, they lack the authority to dictate how the maintenance subcontractor uses the grass-cutting equipment. Moreover, the SPV may use avoidance strategies, especially in terms of disclosing information to the government. Specific information, like tax risk fees in geological risk funds is hidden in documents without explicit explanations, which keeps the government unaware. This approach is utilized to handle delicate matters, safeguard the company's interests, and uphold operational autonomy.

Thus, the SPV utilizes a strategic combination of compromising, defying, and avoiding tactics to navigate the complex demands of the coordination office of public service delegation. This approach aligns with the company's agile and nuanced approach in managing external pressures, ensuring the fulfillment of its public service contractual obligations.

4.2.5.2.2 Compromising Strategies with the Two Subcontractors

The SPV creates a collaborative environment by promoting a shared vision focused on mutual success essential for establishing trust with subcontractors and fostering long-term cooperation. By nurturing these relationships, the company cultivates a productive work environment to achieve common goals.

To achieve mutual goals, the company employs compromising strategies by implementing a common communication mechanism to maintain harmony and encourage cooperation. This

includes regular dialogues and face-to-face discussions with operation and maintenance subcontractors, as well as other relevant parties. The French Deputy Director 2 emphasized in an external informal meeting with the Project Manager of the maintenance subcontractor:

> *Maintaining communication is crucial. Your issues are our concerns, and ultimately, the problems of our shipping company are interconnected with yours. Therefore, we aim to uphold communication. If any issues arise, we are ready to offer support from SPV's perspective, the French deputy manager responds. (French Deputy Director 2, Informal meeting 28)*

This interaction helps the company ensure that the two main subcontractors are aligned in their efforts and objectives, fostering mutual consensus. This strengthens the SPV's dedication to collaboration and shared success.

4.2.5.2.3 Defying Strategies in Response to External Opportunistic Demands

The SPV has a strict policy regarding requests for toll fee reductions or exemptions based on personal interests. They strictly follow the public service delegation contract, which specifies that certain vehicles, such as national public security official vehicles (including police and the Congolese national army, except for vehicles and convoys without immunity) and first-aid vehicles (fire trucks, ambulances, and civil protection vehicles), are exempt from tolls. However, the government covers 50% of the amount due and deducts it from the concession fee.

The company is under pressure from private enterprises that have strong political connections and aim to use these relationships to their advantage. For example, major transporter C managed to successfully set up a tripartite mechanism among itself, the government, and the SPV to obtain a 50% discount on toll fees for exporting cement. The Minister of Infrastructure informed the SPV of this two-year agreement. However, the government failed to reimburse the SPV for its payment to the carrier, causing the latter to refuse to refund any amount to transporter C. With the mechanism's expiration, no additional discounts will be provided, as noted in an internal meeting:

Our position is very clear. If the government doesn't pay us, it's useless for anyone to come, and we won't pay them again. (General Director, Formal meeting 33)

4.2.5.2.4 Avoiding Strategies

Compliance is a crucial element for the SPV company, but there are certain strategic decisions taken by senior management that might not align with the French shareholder company's perspective. These decisions are made without the knowledge of the other shareholders' representatives, as pointed out by the Chinese Deputy Director:

We won't tolerate any actions that involve our company's life and death situations. In such cases, we will handle it privately in the name of Chinese shareholder company, and the French shareholder doesn't need to know about it. (Chinese Deputy Director, Non-structured interview 6)

Another example involves a subsidiary of the Chinese shareholder company handling insurance payments for the SPV. There is no documentation to verify the transactions between the SPV, the shareholder subsidiary, and the reinsurance enterprise.

In conclusion, the complex institutional context in which the SPV operates necessitates a combination of different strategies. These include avoidance to protect sensitive information, defiance to strengthen the organization's position, and compromise to manage the diverse and conflicting interests of the SPV and other stakeholders. These tactics enable the SPV to handle its operating environment and meet its obligations to all stakeholders.

4.3 Discussions

We consider the SPV as a "central" organization compared to a peripheral one. SPVs managing concessional roads play a vital role in connecting key economic and political hubs, gaining visibility and attracting various levels of public and media attention. Their size and status lead to increased institutional demands at the operational level, resulting in a high level of complexity (Greenwood et al., 2011). In contrast, peripheral organizations may experience lower levels of complexity due to their limited connections with other entities. This lack of interconnectivity limits

the exchange of appropriate behaviors and awareness of institutional expectations. To comprehend the institutional complexity, we examined the external conflicting demands in the organizational field.

4.3.1 SPV Organizational Field

As a hybrid entity, the SPV is subject to the competing influences by various stakeholders including partners, shareholders, professionals, and regulators, leading to conflicting institutional demands. For example, the SPV faces conflicting pressures from different ministries regarding control over concessions. One ministry pushes for lowering prices, while another ministry, responsible for infrastructure, does not allow price increases as signed in the public service delegation contract. Additionally, the SPV is under fiscal pressures from the Ministry of Finance to pay taxes according to fiscal laws, despite being exempted from this obligation in the contract with the country's president and government. This complexity arises due to inconsistent, uncoordinated, and unpredictable institutional demands (Beuve, Saussier, & de Brux, 2018; Greenwood et al., 2011), particularly within an emerging or fragmented field, characterized by the coexistence of uncoordinated actors, with each actor endorsing different institutional prescriptions (Pache & Santos, 2010).

A weak, unstable political and institutional framework increases the risk of opportunistic behavior from public authorities (Beuve, Saussier, & de Brux, 2018). When faced with conflicting institutions, different ministries may unilaterally alter the established "ground rule" based on their political position. For example, the SPV consistently deals with threats of price reductions from various ministries. The public regulatory authority prohibits any price increases and demands lower end-user prices, despite clauses in the public service delegation contract with the private operator. Additionally, the primary ministry imposes an illegal contractual mechanism on the SPV in response to transporter C's risks. To guard against opportunistic behaviors, the private operator requested financial compensation before implementing the mechanism, but the government failed to compensate as agreed. This led to tensions between the SPV, which refused to pay back 50% to transporter C, and the carrier, which refused the necessary investments in their business. Sometimes, opportunistic or corrupt behaviors (nepotism, clientelism, bribery, etc.) stem from the regulatory authority itself, susceptible as they are to personal or political motives.

As the SPV's primary shareholder, the Chinese SOE, is under political control by the CCP and Chinese government. One key feature of the SOEs is their multiple objectives (Wang, 2014). SOEs are responsible for promoting the common prosperity of the Chinese people through profit transfers. Additionally, they are tasked with implementing the Party's policies and the state's strategic plans. The Party, acting as both the controller, shareholder and the regulator of SOE, exercises direct and tight control over them. This control includes general policy compliance requirements and specific powers such as participation in decision making, managing the financial and non-financial resources, and appointing key personnel appointment like the SPV's General Director and board directors. For example, the SOE, as the major shareholder, oversees financial online approval system for all expenses and monthly budget approvals on the SPV to manage costs, consequently reducing managerial autonomy. French managers find these processes inappropriate as they are excluded from them and feel that they are too restrictive in terms of their budget.

The SPV operates in a fragmented environment in which multiple independent private groups and organizations such as the transport companies make uncoordinated demands. The public regulatory authority struggles to mediate disagreements between these groups and the SPV, leading to inconsistent demands on organizations (Pache & Santos, 2010). Interest groups may obstruct the operation of the concessional PPPs by prioritizing their self-interest instead of the general ones (Beuve, Saussier, & de Brux, 2018). For example, private transport companies aim to lower toll fees by seeking exemptions, such as garbage transporters and cement companies. This kind of self-serving conduct could have lasting negative effects on the financial model of the concession.

These institutions are interdependent and in contradiction (Thornton et al., 2012). Within the organizational field, private stakeholders and the public sector have interdependent relationships. While private stakeholders have political connections with the public sector, the public sector also wields political influence on entities like the SPV and their private stakeholders. Contradictory institutional orders such as the "capitalist market, bureaucratic state, democracy, family, and Christian region" (Friedland & Alford, 1991) constitute modern societies, making the multiple logics available to individuals and organizations, and thus having conflicting expectations.

Consequently, the organizational field represents a moderately centralized space where SPVs are influenced by diverse actors whose interests may not always align. These conflicting pressures imposed upon the SPV stem from various sources such as public authorities, private shareholders, and third-party entities like interest groups, including associations, lobbyists, political opponents of decision-makers, and citizens (Beuve, Saussier, & de Brux, 2018). For instance, transporter C leverages its political connections with the primary minister to impact the SPV's toll rates for its exported cement. While no single actor holds a dominant position, the combined influence of these different actors can significantly shape the decisions and activities of the SPV (Pache & Santos, 2010).

4.3.2 Organizational Experience to Intra-institutional Complexity

The structure of the blending hybrid organizations serves both public service users and shareholders for benefits (Santos et al., 2015). The SPV merges various investors from different professions, such as French private investors and the Chinese SOE, each socialized within different cognitive and normative orders. Our focus is on how multiple logics are reflected in the SPV's organizational structures and practices and their experiences managing incompatible expectations (Battilana & Dorado, 2010; Pache & Santos, 2010).

Organizational structure chosen by managers of blending hybrid organizations is influenced by the nature and complexity of any additional interventions needed (Santos et al., 2015). They can select either an integrated structure, where the same organizational members handle commercial activities and social interventions separately or a differentiated structure, where different members perform distinct interventions. The SPV serves both public service and profit for the company and shareholders (Santos et al., 2015), functioning as a blending hybrid organization. The SPV has chosen an integrated structure where the same members perform both the commercial activities as well as the social interventions with separate metrics for each, combining multiple logics inside the SPV. However, mixing multiple institutional logics in the same institutional sphere can create intra-institutional complexity.

Complexity within an institution involves two main aspects: the number of intra-institutional logics and the level of incompatibility among them (Greenwood et al., 2011). A higher number of

logics typically implies greater incompatibility. In this study, we focused on one intra-institutional order and explored the multiple intra-institutional logics experience by the SPV. Within the same institutional order, the SPV embodies multiple corporate logics. The influence of multiple logics within the Chinese SOE as the major shareholder and the French corporate introduces dynamics to the SPV's logics. The corporate logics of the Chinese SOE include not only the corporate market logic but also the political logic, representing the unique characteristic of Chinese SOEs (Wang, 2014). Additionally, our analysis focused on the incompatibility among these logics within the SPV, which is reflected in its organizational goals, ownership and governance, and identity (Greenwood et al., 2011).

4.3.2.1 Organizational Goals

Inconsistency in logic suggests that complexity increases due divergent goals and means (Pache & Santos, 2010). Notably, the SPV pursues both public service objectives and profit-oriented goals. These goals are complementary in the sense that the SPV invests more in road maintenance. Increased investment by the SPV leads to higher revenues generated for its maintenance subcontractor, ultimately increasing profits for their mutual shareholder, i.e., the Chinese SOE. However, the goals clash because the public service objective entails maintaining roads and providing road-related services such as enforcing road security and providing rest areas and assistance for accident vehicles. The profit goal drives the SPV to prioritize financial stability by limiting investment in rest areas and other user services.

The Chinese SOE appears to prioritize short-term profitability over its domestic responsibilities in China, such as ensuring economic security and handling special tasks like disaster relief and major international events (Wang, 2014). This profit-oriented approach may cause its subsidiaries to focus on generating revenues than on maintenance and investments, which could impede contractual fulfillment. Furthermore, the SOE intervenes in the SPV's decisions to increase revenues by expanding the maintenance subcontractor overhaul and non-regular works. This conflicts with the long-term strategies established by the Chinese board of directors for the concession.

The shareholder value logics institute shareholder value maximization as another legitimate goal for firms (Pache & Santos, 2013a). Different competing shareholder value logics promote the need to consider the financial interests of their respective shareholder, particularly for the private shareholders. The shareholder value orientation highlights the prioritization of private shareholders' interests over public ones (Pache & Santos, 2010). To ensure financial returns for shareholders, the SPV increases prices for subcontractors, as dividends remain symbolic. Furthermore, the SPV advocates price increases in revised business regulations, neglecting concession fees for the public sector in the decision-making process.

4.3.2.2 Ownership and Governance Structure

SPVs comprise various private groups with different goals and interests. These groups are essential in interpreting and implementing external institutional demands and multiple intra-institutional logics, as well as in making decisions within these institutional constraints. The level of influence of a group in the SPV is crucial for grasping power dynamics and institutional complexity (Greenwood et al., 2011). The primary power in the SPV is held by the CCP-controlled Chinese SOE (Wang, 2014). The CCP's control over the SOE and its subsidiaries directly affects the SPV through corporate governance structure and power distribution across different positions.

The corporate governance structure is hierarchical. The SPV General Director may receive constant pressures from the Chinese board directors. The two Deputy Directors as well as the operation employees report to the General Director. However, the relationships are complex due to their organizational structure. At the strategic level, the two Deputy Directors may have misunderstandings or disagreements with the General Director. One Deputy Director is responsible for operations and administration and the other handles maintenance, while the General Director oversees finance. This disjointed structure leads to management scope issues and dual reporting at the operational level. Not surprisingly, the Deputy Directors hold the main power, emerging as the most influential group within the SPV. Their interactions with various logics will not only increase the SPV's experience of intra-institutional complexity but also influence its responses (Greenwood et al., 2011). Therefore, the organizational responses are likely to align with the interests of the most influential group.

The CCP controls the SOE through political influence, which in turn indirectly influences the SPV. SOEs are required to implement and comply with the Party's line and fundamental principles (Wang, 2014). The political interference in the SPV's decision-making weakens the authority of Chinese board members. For instance, during audits of the Chinese SOE, there is increased oversight from the subregional company. All major decisions must be pre-approved by the regional "leadership group" led by the Party Committee, causing tensions with the French partner, especially at strategic and operational levels. Similarly, in the validation of the SOE's financial systems, the SOE headquarters mandates approval of monthly budgets, without involving the French partner, raising transparency concerns.

The CCP exercises control not only through the financial system, but also by appointing senior executive and middle managers, imposing sanctions and rewards. The CCP nominates the board directors, the Chinese General Director and Deputy Director of the SPV. The Chinese SOE provides these directors and other key functions. Managers seek approval and status from those they are accountable to, aiming for symbolic and material rewards while avoiding punishments. Individual adherence to institutional logics' goals can be explained by regulative and normative pressures (Thornton et al., 2012). Managers' motivations are guided by a system of normative sanctions and rewards (Thornton et al., 2012). For example, the financial KPIs set by the Chinese SOE largely influence managerial behaviors. The General Director, focusing on profit and annual financial indicators, aligns with corporate financial goals and upholds ethical and compliance standards.

4.3.2.3 Organizational Identity

Institutional logics provide a fundamental basis for the identities of organizations, groups, and individuals, shaping collective identities. They guide how to act in a particular situation, while the concept of identity focuses more on the question of who we are (Thornton et al., 2012). Organizational identities help both internal and external audiences differentiate between types of organizations (Thornton et al., 2012).

Interestingly, the CCP within the SOE and the SPV remains hidden from external audience. This means that from an external viewpoint, the SOE appears like a private company with a standard

corporate governance structure. The Chinese SOE is recognized for their expertise in engineering, while the French company is known for the operation capabilities. By leveraging their respective strengths, both entities collaborate within the SPV, which manages toll fee collection and road maintenance. Internally, organizational decisions must align with the Party directives, and employees are expected to adhere to the Party's fundamental principles. For instance, middle managers and senior executives demonstrate their allegiance to the CCP's ideology.

The SPV promotes its hybrid identity by connecting it to public service principals and operational methods, which also seeks to attract new followers. Internally, the SPV emphasizes operational excellence through a combination of long-run public service principles and short-term engineering, procurement, and construction expertise. This dual strategy is essential for understanding the intra-institutional complexity and its potential influence on organizational responses.

4.3.3 Organizational Responses

External organizational actors utilize manipulative strategies towards the SPV in a fragmented organizational field, where there are multiple uncoordinated demands from private stakeholders and the public sector. These institutional demands are uncoordinated, and institutional constituents hold roughly similar levels of power (Greenwood et al., 2011). This results in a moderately centralized organizational field where the combined influence of these actors significantly affects the SPV (Pache & Santos, 2010). Key external organizational actors include the coordination bureau of the public service delegation, SPV maintenance and operation subcontractors, and other public and private stakeholders.

The public coordination office has legal authority to oversee the concession by applying political pressures on the SPV, regulating toll fees, approving strategic decision-making in maintenance works, holding various formal and informal meetings, conducting regular inspections and reports, and utilizing personal emotions for oversight. Maintenance and operational subcontractors with specialized knowledge influence SPV practices and decisions by advocating for better conditions. The Chinese SOE maintains hierarchical control over the SPV through its headquarters and regional subsidiaries. Other stakeholders may engage in manipulative tactics, such as seeking toll exemptions or reductions.

The SPV faces institutional complexity due to its centralized organizational position and is significantly influenced by pressures for compliance from its institutional referents. It is challenging to fully comply with the conflicting demands of the institutional environment (Pache & Santos, 2010), as meeting with one demand may mean going against others. To navigate this complexity effectively, negotiations, distinctive capabilities, and careful balance are necessary to secure legitimacy from various sources, while ensuring organizational performance and survival (Vermeulen et al., 2016). Instead of achieving full compliance, the SPV is more likely to compromise, avoid, defy, manipulate (Pache & Santos, 2010), or hybridize (Greenwood et al., 2011), depending on the nature of the institutional demands and the level of intra-institutional complexity (Pache & Santos, 2010).

The nature of institutional demands determines the degree to which these demands are negotiable. Conflicting improvised demands arise from disagreements over organizational goals. In such cases, compromise may not be chosen as a response strategy; instead, defiance is preferred (Pache & Santos, 2010). The SPV, operating as a profit-oriented private enterprise, resembles French firms or Chinese SOEs. The SPV rejects demands such as toll fee reduction or full toll exemptions that could impact its revenues. Similarly, it opposes price regulations by coordination offices on fixed-price contracts and outsourcing non-regular works to external subcontractors. Any interventions that can affect revenue or operations are also turned down. For example, the SPV refuses the military demands to construct check points near toll stations.

When faced with improvised demands, the SOE tends to sidestep its French partner to avoid confrontation, as reflected in the results. This avoidance strategy is considered a subtle way to resist institutional demands from the partners without jeopardizing legitimacy (Thornton et al., 2012). By masking nonconformity, avoidance enables organizational members to navigate institutional conflicts with minimal repercussions (Thornton et al., 2012). For instance, the Chinese shareholder compromised in the name of its subsidiary with the transporter's association to appease social protests, a move that the French shareholder disapproved of.

To manage two subcontractors with operational and maintenance expertise, the SPV aligns goals by establishing shared communication channels and negotiating organizational decisions, taking into account the interests of their shareholders. When the operator proposed a 2% price increase, a compromise was reached for a 1% increase for both the operator and the maintenance subcontractors.

The coordination authority in the host country lacks expertise, especially since this is the country's first PPP road concession and the authority was created three years after concession began. This knowledge and skills gap is exacerbated by the fact that the public authority withdraws from its daily management, leading to limited information availability (Beuve, Le Lannier, & Le Squeren, 2018). The local public authority depends on the private operator for regular reports, meetings, and inspections to gather information. Additionally, the public authority has fewer substantial resources compared to the SPV, supported by major French and Chinese groups. As a result, the triple asymmetry in expertise, information, and resources favors the private party, giving the SPV stronger bargaining power over the public authority due to its superior expertise, control over information, and greater resources (Beuve, Le Lannier et al., 2018).

In summary, organizational strategies are shaped by the nature of external demands and internal complexity. The SPV faces conflicting demands, such as those related to organizational goals, whether it is from the coordination office or opportunistic demands, the SPV opposes them for its organizational survival (Pache & Santos, 2010). To align with common goals, the SPV combines a mix of compromising strategies. When faced with non-conformity or information imbalances, the SPV uses avoidance strategies to reduce tensions and uphold its dual nature as an organization with both profit and public service objectives.

4.3.4 Individual Actors' Experiences to the Intra-institutional Logics

According to the institutional logics perspective, each societal institutional order has both material and cultural characteristics (Friedland & Alford, 1991). The perspective emphasizes the role of culture and the heterogeneity of cultural meanings as central to institutional analysis (Thornton et al., 2015). Culture encompasses social systems of beliefs, values, norms, and symbols (Thornton et al., 2015), serving as a cohesive force through shared beliefs, values, and practices.

In an organization, individual actors engage in activities and interact with their environment, leading to the development of shared values and behavior norms that constitute the organizational culture (Battilana & Lee, 2014). The SPV's organizational culture is mainly influenced by Chinese culture, as many key positions are held by Chinese employees. However, the culture of the host country also affects daily operations. As a result, the SPV's culture is a mix of various influences that shape how individuals view themselves and their identity.

The presence of multiple identities influences the experiences of members within organizations, shaping their understanding of logics and behaviors. These identities can be shared across the entire organization or carried by subgroups within it (Battilana & Lee, 2014). In the case of SPV members, their diverse cultural and professional identities are not shared organization-wide but are instead held by distinct subgroups, such as Chinese, French, and local employees. The symbolic significance of these multiple identities is fragmented.

Establishing a common sense of hybrid identity among organizational actors is challenging (Battilana & Dorado, 2010) in cases where organizations blend charitable and business elements. The SPV combines the profit-oriented and public service logics, influenced by the Chinese SOE and French corporate logics. For instance, SPV members may prioritize their parent company's identity, resulting in heightened expectations that may trigger identity challenges and escalate underlying disagreements into interpersonal conflicts.

Identity conflicts hinder cooperation and lead to conflict and power struggles in social interactions (Thornton et al., 2012). In the SPV, organizational members hold hybrid identities, with all directors, notably the General Director, playing multiple roles. The General Director not only oversees the SPV but also acts as the financial manager of the Chinese SOE regional company and the managing director of the maintenance project company as well as holds positions within the political CCP structure as a member of the leadership body (*banzi*) and a CCP member. The dual roles of the General Director and managing director of maintenance subcontractor create conflicting interests, posing ethic issues for their French partner.

Adherence to intra-institutional logics varies among individual members (Besharov & Smith, 2014). Strong connections to both intra- and extra-organizational actors linked to these logics can enhance their influence on behavior. Conversely, weak ties allow individuals to stray from the logics they have been socialized into. Newcomers to the SPV, lacking strong ties to internal and external actors, may clash with established logics, causing tensions, as seen with French Deputy Director 2. Both internal and external actors criticized him for his unfamiliarity with existing procedures or his ways of working.

Familiarity manifests in an individual actor who has been acquainted with the logic and its associated prescribed goals and means (Pache & Santos, 2010) but lacks emotional or ideological commitment to it. The individual actor understands the requirements of the logic and can comply with them to gain legitimacy. Being familiar with specific logics influences the ability to develop distinct practices and justifications (Greenwood et al., 2011).

Individuals identified with corporate logics are those who have established strong connections to these logics due to their previous experiences or have broad experience across sectors (Besharov & Smith, 2014; Pache & Santos, 2013a), such as the Chinese General Director and the Deputy Director. Those who have been socialized or trained in a specific institutional logic are likely to be committed to defending it when challenged (Pache & Santos, 2010).

Adhering to a given logic may lead individual actors to resist alternative influences, resulting in conflicts that can be detrimental to organizations by internalizing field-level institutional conflicts. Managers can mitigate conflicts arising from methods through micro-level strategies. However, conflicts related to goals, if unavoidable, can harm the organization. Therefore, the SPV may need to employ various responses to effectively manage internal conflict and competing external demands (Pache & Santos, 2010).

In conclusion, individuals interact with organizational culture, navigate dual identities, and adjust to evolving institutional norms. Their connection with institutional logics remains intricate, as they may follow, resist, be indifferent to, or conform to a logic without fully embracing all its core

principles (Pache & Santos, 2013a). SPV managers create strategies and practices at the micro level to address intra-institutional complexity (Pache & Santos, 2013a).

4.3.5 Individual Actors' Micro-level Strategic Responses

Institutional logics require individuals to decide which logic to follow, alter, disregard, or reject to align with their identity, organizational goal, and legitimacy needs (Pache & Santos, 2013a). For example, French Deputy Manager 1 balances different intra-institutional logics by combining profit and public service orientations. However, by fully embracing the values, norms, and practices prescribed by the given logics, they may unconsciously overlook that the micro-level strategies may not always reflect the organizational responses to external demands.

Individuals are often strongly attached to particular logics, which can make it challenging for them to switch between different logics (Battilana & Dorado, 2010), as they cannot therefore, unproblematically shift from one logic to another. They tend to defend the logic they value. In this case, the Chinese General Director adheres to the SPV corporate logic, while also prioritizing the SOE corporate logics over others, leading to conflicts among shareholders. Conversely, the Chinese Deputy Director, exposed to different logics, navigates various logics to manage tensions and maintain balance. By segmenting these logics, individuals are protected from tension, frustration, and lost faith that can arise while different logics clash. She combines strategies to manage divergent multiple logics and balance them, aiming for sustainability.

In contrast, French Deputy Director 2, who is novice to these multiple logics strongly resist the existing intra-institutional logics and tends to create a new hybrid logic. Working alongside the Chinese Deputy Director, they are well-positioned to integrate both public and private interests in a sustainable way (Pache & Santos, 2013a). Their combining strategies represent the Deputy Managers' most advanced efforts in balancing logics, echoing the concept of bridging strategies as discussed by Smets et al. (2015). Acting as "hybridizers" (Pache & Santos, 2013a), they can transform the current institutional framework to establish new hybrid institutional arrangements that align with their cultures and identities.

4.3.6 Individual Actors' Responses and Organizational Strategies

Individual actors embody various institutional logics and are influenced by organizations' meaning and norms (Greenwood et al., 2011). These influences affect how organizations navigate intra-institutional complexity. For instance, in our study, the General Director, following Chinese SOE corporate logics, uses annual financial indicators to determine shareholder dividends. Conversely, French Deputy Director 2 challenges these logics. Through dialogue, they reach a compromise that shapes the dividend policy of the SPV, illustrating how individual responses contribute to organizational responses. This decision-making process allows us to analyze actions and behaviors that extend beyond the immediate social interactions influencing organizational decisions (Thornton et al., 2012).

Individual-level responses differ from organizational-level responses. Organizational responses focus on satisfying institutional referents for survival (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983), while individual micro-level responses are mainly driven by concerns such as social acceptance, status, and identity (Pache & Santos, 2013a). For example, French Deputy Director 2 joined the SPV as a newcomer without prior attachment. He embodies the role of "ingenuous member" termed by Pache and Santos (2013a), providing valuable insights to the complex hybrid organization by challenging institutional constraints. He identifies aspects overlooked by others due to cognitive limitations imposed by institutions, poses questions that others may not be due to the taken-for-granted nature of institutionalized norms and practices, and suggests alternative actions not cognitively constrained by institutional rules. Working in an SPV characterized by high hybridity in a fragmented organizational field, he encounters significant internal and external tensions. In such a setting, he refuses existing logics and behaves independently to create a new logic within the institutional context.

In summary, we suggest that SPVs in PPPs can be seen as an ideal type of hybrid organization that integrates both public and private actors within the same entity. This perspective provides valuable insights into the intra-institutional complexity of hybrid organizations (Jay, 2013; York et al., 2016). Previous studies have primarily centered on social enterprises as idea type of hybrid organizations (Battilana & Dorado, 2010; Battilana & Lee, 2014; Besharov & Smith, 2014). While research on hybrid organizing is expanding, researchers are increasingly examining hybrid

dynamics as idiosyncratic to organizations or sectors, such as PPPs. PPPs as hybrids blend the business and public service, introducing competing inter-institutional logics (Jay, 2013; Quélin et al., 2017; Villani et al., 2017; York et al., 2016). Moreover, the SPV faces pressures from conflicting institutional demands within the organizational field, contributing to complexity within the institution order. The institutional logics perspective emphasizes that organizational responses are influenced by various constraining and enabling logics, shaping actors' abilities to navigate complexity within their fields (Thornton et al., 2012). By examining individual actors within the SPV and their responses to the competing intra-institutional logics, we aim to address Pache and Santos's (2013a) call for more empirical research focusing on individual-level perspectives in the realm of multiple logics.

4.4 Conclusions

Our research, centered on an in-depth analysis of a single-case study, has brought forth findings that bear substantial practical implications. Our research suggest that cultural hybridity and a shared collective identity can promote unity and reduce conflicts within the SPV. To enhance cohesion in the hybrid organizational setting, the SPV should prioritize hiring bicultural or multicultural individuals over those with a monocultural background. Embracing cultural diversity and a common identity can help mitigate tensions arising from the complex nature of the SPV. However, the dual governance structure of the SOE, which combines political and legal governance, needs to be further clarified to prevent potential issues such as weakening board authority, overlooking minority shareholders' interests, and ethical dilemmas observed in the SPV's operations.

4.4.1 Practical Implications

4.4.1.1 Cultural Hybridity and Collective Identity Building

The institutional logics perspective highlights the importance of culture and the heterogeneity of cultural interpretations in institutional analysis (Thornton et al., 2015). Culture encompasses social belief systems, values, norms, and symbols (Thornton et al., 2015). Informal institutions, reflecting the broader societal value system, encompass morals, values, conventions, norms, traditions, codes of conduct, habits, attitudes, and beliefs (Dobler, 2011). Fostering a homogenous culture within a

hybrid organization where members share similar logics and behavioral norms can mitigate internal tensions and potential conflicts (Santos et al., 2015).

The social practices of acculturation involve learning and imitating other cultural elements, adapting by modifying and fusing them, and appropriating by borrowing and relocating attributes to new contexts. Individual actors promote cultural hybridity within the SPV, facilitating the development of a common collective identity. The growing impact of digital platforms like the Internet and social media is crucial for organizational development that has contributed to building new relationships. In the management of multicultural teams, mutual agreements can establish a shared culture that embraces cultural differences and manifests as a collective identity.

Collective identity involves groups of individuals united by a shared purpose and similar goals. Institutional fields can include multiple collective identities associated with different logics. According to Thornton and Ocasio (2008), collective identity is defined as the cognitive, normative, and emotional connection experienced by members of a social group because of their perceived common stature with other members of the social group. Individuals belong to social groups with a collective identity. As collective identities become institutionalized, they develop their own distinct institutional logic that prevails within the social group, thus streamlining institutional complexity.

4.4.1.2 Hiring Strategies

Our research makes an important contribution by encouraging practitioners to reconsider their hiring strategies to improve organizational effectiveness. In a hybrid organizational environment, hiring bicultural or multicultural individuals or even acultural members "without any previous institutional attachment" (Pache & Santos, 2013b, p. 995), may bring valuable perspectives compared to monocultural individuals. Monocultural individuals, who adhere to a single logic, may resist change and display defensive behaviors when confronted with conflicting logics (Pache & Santos, 2013a). Conversely, individuals with multicultural backgrounds are more adaptable to change and contribute positively to organizational evolution (Pache & Santos, 2013a, 2013b).

Multinational companies can promote adaptation and progress by hiring individuals with diverse cultural backgrounds, especially when working internationally. Leaders need to understand how their subsidiaries establish organizational practices for firm–government–employment relations within various cross-country institutions. Interestingly, acultural members who join an organization without any previous attachment may bring a fresh perspective inside the organization and encourage innovation and introspection, contributing to a dynamic workplace environment (Pache & Santos, 2013a).

Organizations like SPVs, which have integrated hybrid structures, need members with diverse backgrounds to function effectively (Santos et al., 2015). To thrive in such environments, individuals must adopt an intercultural identity which is not a simple assimilation of new traits but a continuous adaptation to a multi-referenced foundation of personality. In this regard, successful management of multicultural and global teams requires understanding and supporting employees as they navigate cultural integration in the workplace.

Multicultural individuals are considered ideal managers in today's globalized world because they can transcend their own nationality and culture to embrace a "hybrid" cultural identity. These managers are expected to promote "hybrid leadership" (Pache & Santos, 2021), which helps bridge cultural differences, encourages dialogue, and strengthens legitimacy and resilience in diverse organizational settings. Leadership behaviors are pivotal in shaping organizational culture, promoting meaningful activities, and fostering purposeful engagement among team members (Battilana & Lee, 2014).

4.4.1.3 Transparent Governance Structures

The Chinese SOE operates under a dual governance structure that combines political governance and legal oversight (Wang, 2014). Our study highlights the need for clearer understanding of the motives behind this hybrid approach. The political influence of the CCP within the SOE often supersedes the authority of the board directors. Specifically, the SOE uses its control system to oversee the operations of the SPV, including financial resources and personnel appointments, which may overlook the interests of minority shareholders. In the SPV context, the exclusion of the French partner from the online financial monthly budget validation process has raised questions

about transparency and trust. Ethical issues arise when the SOE has sought to appoint the SPV's General Director as a board director. The accumulation of personal power in this position could potentially lead to conflicting interests within their collaboration.

The SOE as the major shareholder may prioritize its interests over those of minority shareholders, potentially leading to corporate governance structures that overlook diverse perspectives crucial in effective decision-making. In cases like the SPV, a Chinese SOE might neglect the interests of minority shareholders, such as that of the French company and the local government (Wang, 2014). Additionally, the local government, which also acts as a regulator, faces challenges due to limited information and lack of transparency, especially in long-term concession contracts (Marty, 2017). Regular monitoring by the regulator during implementation is necessary, requiring open data, transparency, and management reporting to effective control. To ensure fair and transparent operations, SOE leaders should thoroughly investigate these complexities and prioritize integrity in long-term partnerships.

4.4.2 Limitations and Future Research

4.4.2.1 Partially Covert Research Approach

Our research approach, which is partially converted, may face criticism, particularly regarding ethical considerations. Academic associations' ethical guidelines emphasize the importance of acquiring fully informed consent from research participants (Roulet et al., 2017). To address potential criticism, we provide our approach from two ethical perspectives.

First, we prioritize the impact of our research action. Our partially covert observation is considered ethical when the social benefits for participants outweigh the costs. Our research holds the potential to yield positive outcomes for the SPV, positioning it as a hybrid organization within PPPs, promoting private involvement in public services for societal benefits. To minimize harm to participants, we ensured their anonymity during the research.

Second, we advocate for ethical principles that are tailored to our empirical context rather than by universal code (Roulet et al., 2017). Due to the intricate relationships in our context, gaining

access to the organization proved challenging. Situated ethics also require researchers to reflect on their actions and understand their implications within each unique context, considering the unpredictable nature of the field. To address this, we conducted preliminary unstructured interviews with a Deputy Director to familiarize ourselves with the research site. This method promotes situated ethics by encouraging continuous evaluation of the ethicality of decisions throughout the observation process.

The second critique of covert research involves the risk of the researcher getting confused with the research subject when a covert observer is actively involved in the observation process (Roulet et al., 2017). To address this issue, reflexivity is considered beneficial for qualitative researchers to apprehend their relations with the subjects of the study (Roulet et al., 2017). Moreover, we constructed a suitable identity drawing from our relevant prior experiences in SOEs and employed the shadowing observation methods to maintain clear distinctions between the roles of research subject and researcher.

In contrast to participant observation, shadowing requires a deep understanding of the field and the creation of a vivid sense of "being there" (Bardon et al., 2020). We initiated our research by trying to learn as much as possible about the organization prior to conducting our study, progressively deepening our comprehension as we shadowed (Raulet-Croset et al., 2020). Building connections and seeking clarifications during the shadowing can help streamline the fieldwork process. Therefore, the research connections and relationships formed by researchers and relationships formed by researchers during their fieldwork are crucial (Roussey, 2020).

However, ethnographers often form close bonds with the people and groups they study, which can be influenced by their personal biases like social backgrounds, personal histories, and preferences, while adhering to predefined research strategies. During the analysis process, they transform observational data into factual accounts. To address this potential bias, we reviewed relevant articles and books to acquire the necessary skills for covert observation. This included honing my ability to maintain focus during observations and improving my writing skills.

Observation as a research method requires intensive focus due to the vast amount of material to be recorded, which can sometimes be overwhelming. To overcome this challenge, we followed the four-step observation process proposed by Sabine and Robert (2014). The first step involves capturing actions and the material context with "free floating attention." The second step focuses on the physical environment. The third step involves concentrating on individual elements and details to enrich perceptions, actively engaging all senses, with particular emphasis on discerning emotions on participants' faces and the interpretations they express during their actions. The fourth step is the transition back to the conventional posture of observing activities while concurrently reflecting on one's own lived experience.

This involves recognizing patterns in the data, acknowledging the tendency to stereotype and overgeneralize which calls for careful interpretation. The connection with personal experience in research has evolved over time. Initially, personal reflection was reluctantly accepted but eventually evolved into not just an accepted practice but an anticipated one (Wolcott, 1994). Two distinct options have emerged. The first focuses on personalizing the interpretation, emphasizing what we make of it. The second takes it further by making the interpretation deeply personal, expressing how the research experience impacted us. The main difference between the two lies in the level of introspection. Ethnographic writing, which includes transcribing handwritten notes onto computers and maintaining reflective diaries, aids in establishing a boundary between the ethnographer and the field. This practice not only enhances the quality of the observation but also facilitates introspection on the emotions experienced by the researchers (Courpasson, 2020), without passing judgement on the subjects' behaviors.

4.4.2.2 Institutional Logics Changing over Time

The prevalence of institutional logics and their operational tensions is specific to historical times and institutional environments (Thornton & Ocasio, 2008). These logics are historically contingent, evolving and changing over time and influencing the organizational field (Ocasio et al., 2017; Thornton & Ocasio, 2008). Analyzing the mechanisms of these changes and different forms of institutional evolution requires longer historical time frames than our research has used so far (Thornton et al., 2012). Our study focuses on a specific PPP institutional field during a particular

timeframe, which may evolve over time from a fragmented to a mature organizational field due to regulatory or strategic pressures.

Alternatively, an organizational field may transition from a moderately centralized to a centralized structure through strategies implemented by field members (Pache & Santos, 2010). Particularly, PPPs require continuous adjustments to evolving user needs, and the strategies of contractors, whose agendas and constraints are not fixed (Kirat & Marty, 2017). External factors like economic changes or requests from contractors to modify contract terms may result in renegotiations and disputes if interests are not aligned (Kirat & Marty, 2017). Therefore, longitudinal case studies are essential for tracking these logical transitions.

Institutional logics are considered as a set of cultural toolkits that can facilitate change in existing structures and practices or as rule-like structures that influence organizations (Thornton et al., 2012). They are not fixed but provide ways for institutions and individuals to process information and make decisions. Logics are dynamic and offer opportunities for agency and institutional change. Symbols and practices linked to high-order institutional logics can be leveraged by motivated individuals to initiate change within organizations and institutions (Thornton et al., 2012).

4.4.2.3 Organizational and Individual Changes

Our study emphasizes the significance of organizational and individual factors at a specific point in time. It is essential to understand that SPV managers do not exist in a vacuum; they are influenced by macro-contextual and organizational elements, shaping their micro-level strategies. Their interaction with institutional logics can evolve over time as they engage with various groups and experiences within the organization.

Individuals can influence and transform organizational and institutional structures by engaging in interactions, negotiations, exchanges, and communication with others. These interactions encompass both material and symbolic aspects (Thornton et al., 2012). As individuals, especially newcomers, become immersed in a specific logic, they become more familiar with it. Subsequently,

as familiarity with this logic grows over time, the individual might establish strong affiliations with it, leading to adherence to that particular logic (Pache & Santos, 2013a).

Individual responses can be driven by micro-level factors such as individuals' ability to manage changes in identity and their need for group belonging (Pache & Santos, 2013a). The presence of diverse institutional logics can stem from variations at the individual level in functional backgrounds, prior knowledge, and experience, subsequently impacting organizations (Thornton et al., 2012). Further exploration of these factors is crucial for comprehending their influence and role in micro-level strategies.

4.4.2.4 CCP Control and Governance

Governance systems are crucial in hybrid organizing (Besharov & Smith, 2014). Our research suggests that the ownership shares of the shareholder company affect the dominant control system of the SPV. Future studies could investigate case studies that compare different structures of the SPV or the indirect impact of CCP's control over the SPV to further clarify the situations in which the SPV as hybrid organization may become a superior organization that might outperform peer organizations due to its integrated hybrid nature.

In PPPs, the public seeks private expertise to benefit from economies of scale, accumulated employee experience, and organizational routines (Beuve, Saussier, & de Brux, 2018). Private partners bring complementary competencies and skills to the partnerships. Managing the integration of both sectors may require varied engagement from the board to maintain hybridity. Future research should investigate the characteristics and functions of the board of directors in an SPV controlled by an SOE under CCP influence, examining the board composition and processes. Should SPV boards aim to include members with experience in both business and the public service sector in a PPP setting? Future research should assess the role of board members in identifying and managing risks specific to the host country's context.

4.4.2.5 Identity and Logics

Organizations, groups, and individuals have unique identities that are essential in institutional logics (Thornton et al., 2012). While research has typically viewed organizational identity and

institutional logics separately (Battilana & Lee, 2014), these concepts are actually interconnected. Institutional logics shape the cultural materials within organizations operating in a specific field of activity, ultimately leading to the institutionalization of organizing patterns. As these patterns are institutionalized, fundamental identity components are formed, creating distinct organizational identities that combine these cultural elements in various ways.

Studies have concentrated on organizational identity (Besharov & Smith, 2014; Thornton et al., 2012). Thornton et al. (2012) have delved into how organizational identity originates from individuals' identities. Future studies could examine the connection between individual and organizational identities. Aligning individual and organizational identities could boost organizational commitment, thereby promoting compatibility among various logics.

To conclude, our single-case study further explored the intra-institutional complexity inside the same institutional sphere, the corporate. We identified the number of competing intra-institutional logics as well as the incompatibility of these logics inside the SPV. Our research investigated the factors influencing how organizations experience and respond to institutional complexity. Organizational attributes include goals, structure, ownerships and governance, and identity (Greenwood et al., 2011). Our study responds to the suggestion of Thornton et al. (2012) to get inside organizations and understand how social interactions within firms shape understandings of institutional complexity as well as how strategic responses to such complexity are conceptualized and implemented. The focus of this stream of research is encouraging because it underscores the importance of examining organizations and highlights the value of the logics perspective (Greenwood et al., 2014). Through a study spanning field, intra-organizational, and individual levels of analysis based on empirical evidence, we extend beyond the general prediction on organizational resistance to conflicting institutional demands (Oliver, 1991; Pache & Santos, 2010, 2013a), providing a nuanced understanding of how organizations are likely to respond to conflicting institutional demands.

Chapter V Summary of Methodology, Findings, and Contributions

In this dissertation, our aim has been to explore how to create a common logic in public–private partnerships (PPPs) as hybrids at the field, organizational, and individual levels. In attempting to bridge the institutional logics perspective with hybridity and PPP literature, we have proposed that the creation of a common logic among partnerships involves various actors' responses within the public sectors and private firms from both Western and non-Western backgrounds. PPPs, combining public service goals with business practices, are increasingly employed to deliver infrastructure and services. However, their adoption in African infrastructure remains limited, and existing research often overlooks institutional logics perspective on PPPs as hybrid organizing and how a common logic can be established through the strategic responses of both public and private sectors. Moreover, past studies on PPPs have largely ignored African economies (Biygautane, 2022).

As a central hybrid organization, the special purpose vehicle (SPV) is subjected to simultaneous local institutional pressures (Pache & Santos, 2010). As the number of institutional influences on organizations increases, there is a higher probability of multiple pressures and conflict (Friedland & Alford, 1991), leading to institutional complexity. However, intra-institutional complexity focusing on incompatible prescriptions coming from the same logic domain has received less attention in the literature. Scholars of institutional logics have predominantly focused on field-level competing logics. Furthermore, there has been limited focus on how organizations and organizational members experience and respond to these logics.

To bridge these gaps, we have incorporated frameworks from social enterprise research, particularly institutional logics and hybridity, which have seldom been applied to examine PPPs and SPVs. Specifically, we propose viewing PPPs as an ideal type of hybrid organizing and SPVs as hybrid organization, bringing together African public authorities and Western and non-Western multinational companies, thereby introducing multiple institutional logics. To explore this, we employed the case study approach, involving a multiple-case study and a single-case study. This

approach allowed us to delve deeply into the complexities of hybrid organizations, their interactions with diverse institutional logics, and the creation of the common logic.

In the next sections, we summarize the methodology, main findings, and implications drawn from our case studies. Our goal is to provide an overview of the main contributions and highlight valuable managerial implications and the potential future directions suggested by our findings. Our research has illuminated how to create a common logic in PPPs as hybrids and the SPV as a hybrid organization. We have delved into the institutional complexity of multiple institutional logics at play and their impact on hybrid organizations. Through our findings, we provide insights into how these multiple logics can be managed to create a unified, common logic. These insights have significant implications for policy makers, practitioners in the field, especially those involved in managing or working within PPPs and such hybrid structures.

5.1 Summary of Methodology

This study's research philosophy is grounded in ontological and epistemological assumptions. For the ontological assumptions, this research employs a constructivist perspective, which posits that social phenomena are created through continuous social interactions where individuals collectively shape and redefine shared meanings and realities. For the epistemological assumptions, this study integrates both positivism and interpretivism, viewing logics as social interactions and tangible signs of hybrids (Battilana et al., 2017).

Our research design includes two case studies: a multiple-case study and a single-case study. The multiple-case study examines 11 ongoing concession PPPs in the transport sector in West and Central Africa. It involves various Western and non-Western private enterprises in nine countries that were formerly colonized by France and Britain. Our research focuses on analyzing the field level and inter-institutional complexity. Our research aims to understand the different logics within organizational fields in PPPs and how they interact. We aim to identify factors at the field level that present challenges to establishing a "common logic" and to determine the success or failure of PPPs in achieving this common understanding in their collaborations.

The single-case study focuses on an SPV formed by a French enterprise and a Chinese state-owned enterprise (SOE) in a country in West and Central Africa. We investigate interactions between Western and non-Western private companies within the SPV. Our study analyzes organizational and individual levels, exploring how the hybrid SPV and its managers navigate conflicting institutional demands and complexity. We examine how organizational attributes reflect competing institutional logics and how the SPV strategically responds to external institutional demands. Additionally, we explore how SPV managers experience and respond to intra-institutional logics.

We used abductive reasoning approach for data collection and analysis in our case studies. For the multiple-case study, we conducted a total of 59 semi-structured interviews, including nine exploratory interviews and 50 case-related interviews. The data collection process involved three steps: an initial literature review, exploratory interviews, identification of PPP projects, and 50 semi-structured interviews. In the single case study, we conducted on-site ethnographic observations and non-structured interviews over a six-month period inside the SPV. Observation was a key method for studying micro-institutional research, focusing on organizational and individual behaviors, subjective experiences, and social interactions. Our observation approach was partially covert, with participants aware of my identity as a researcher. Data collection included ethnographic observations, non-structured interviews, and experimental data-diaries.

In our data analysis, we used NVivo 14 to analyze the transcripts. For our multiple-case study, we employed a cross-case analysis approach. Our data coding started with initial exploratory coding and axial coding methods (Strauss & Corbin, 1998). We continued this process until no new categories or elaboration on the relationships between existing categories emerged, indicating data saturation. Our research offers a comprehensive understanding of the dynamics in PPPs as well as insights into the challenges and successes of creating a common logic in such partnerships. For our single-case study, we adopted an iterative and abductive analytic approach (Eisenhardt, 1989). This method combines deductive reasoning (based on initial statements or propositions) with inductive reasoning (based on case study data) (Yin, 2018). We conducted open coding, theming, and theorizing stages by alternating between data and literature. This approach allowed us to

present empirical evidence on strategic responses for creating a common logic inside the SPV as a hybrid organization.

In conclusion, our research consisted of a multiple-case study and a single-case study conducted in a sequential manner. The data collection for the multiple-case study took place from 2021 to 2023, followed by the single-case study in 2024. We used NVivo 14 for data analysis to aid in data coding. Visual networks of codes were created to clarify relationships and patterns. The final data structure included first-order codes, second-order themes, and aggregated theoretical dimensions. The multiple-case study focused on the institutional context of West and Central African PPPs, while the single-case study examined the fragmented organizational field in one host country in the region. The roles and capabilities of public and private sectors in PPPs contributed to institutional complexity. The multiple-case study analyzed inter-institutional logics, while the single-case study explored intra-institutional logics and the organizational and individual experiences to these logics. Strategic responses were examined at different levels, with the multiple-case study focusing on organizational field level actors' strategies, and the single-case study looking at the SPV's strategic responses and individual strategies. The next section will provide a summary of the findings.

Table 16. Summary of Research Design, Data Collection, and Data Analysis

Methodology	Multiple-case Study	Single-case Study
No. of cases involved	11 cases Multiple Western and non-Western private enterprises in nine formerly French and British colonized countries in West and Central Africa	One case One French enterprise and one Chinese SOE in one country in the West and Central African region
Research design	• 11 cases • African public sector and multinational Western and non-Western private companies' involvement in PPPs • Analysis of PPPs at the organizational field level and inter-institutional complexity • Focused on inter-institutional level of analysis	• One case • Multinational Western and non-Western private companies' interactions under a single organizational roof: the SPV • Analysis of the organizational and individual levels in the SPV and its managers • Focused on intra-institutional level of analysis
Data collection	59 online semi-structured interviews • Initial literature reviews and nine exploratory interviews in 2021 • Identification of 11 cases in 2021 • 50 cases related semi-structured interviews from 2022 to 2024	Six months onsite ethnographic observations and non-structured interviews • Partially covert approach in 2024 • Ethnographic observations, non-structured interviews, and diaries
Data analysis	Analytical tool: NVivo 14	Analytical tool: NVivo 14

	Cross-case synthesis (Yin, 2018)	Explanation building approach (Yin, 2018); iterative and abductive (Eisenhardt, 1989)
	Open coding, axial coding (Strauss & Corbin, 1998)	Open coding, theming, and theorizing
	Data structure: First-order and second-order themes Aggregate dimensions: • Complex and uncertain institutional environment • Multiple dominant inter-organizational logics • Core roles and capabilities • Strategic responses	Data structure: First-order and second-order themes Aggregate dimensions: • Fragmented organizational field • Intra-institutional complexity • Strategic responses

5.2 Summary of the Main Findings

Our research, based on two case studies, generated key findings in five primary areas: 1) the role of institutional environment, 2) the institutional complexities stemming from the coexistence of multiple institutional logics, 3) the distinct roles of public and private sectors in PPPs, 4) the experiences and strategies of organizations, 4) and managers' experiences in response to these complexities. We highlighted how the institutional environment, including informal and formal institutional contexts, influences the dynamics within PPPs and SPVs. We also explored the challenges stemming from the unbalanced roles of public and private partners, the co-existence and interplay of multiple institutional logics, the experience and strategies employed at the field, organizational, and individual levels to navigate these complexities to create a common logic.

5.2.1 Institutional Environment

Both the multiple-case study and the single-case study highlight the importance of the institutional environment in which the PPPs and SPVs operate. Focusing on West and Central Africa, our multiple-case study underscores the complexities and uncertainty of institutional environment of PPPs at the West and Central African regional level. The informal institutional system is linked to the colonial history between the host African countries and Western countries France and Britain, as shown in particular in the cases between former French colonial countries and French private enterprises. The cultural similarities arise from historical ties, common languages, and managers' educational backgrounds, influencing private investors' strategies. These cultural similarities are not evident in non-Western companies as they do not share colonial ties.

However, it is surprising that cultural sensitivity is particularly rooted in colonial ties between France, the UK, and the former colonial countries. The emergence of anti-French sentiment, notably in West African countries such as Ivory Coast and Senegal, highlighted a deeper cultural sensitivity between the French and former colonies. The lingering linguistic effects from British colonial history pose significant challenges in comprehending cultural nuances. Meanwhile non-Western enterprises, in particular the Chinese SOEs, face language challenges.

The cultural differences are evident between the Western and non-Western private entities within the realm of PPPs in the host African countries, highlighting the impact on the interactions and collaborations

between public and private partners. The diverse nationalities introducing varied cultures and different cultural norms show the contrast between individualistic Western practices and the more consensus-driven approaches rooted in Chinese culture. Our findings highlight the importance of mutual learning and multilingual capabilities for effective communication to bridge these cultural gaps between local public authorities and Western and non-Western companies.

The formal institutional context face challenges due to the regulatory immaturity, notable differences in the legal institutional frameworks between the common law framework of former British colonies and the civil law of French colonies, and constrained decision power and implementation complexities within PPP units. Former British colonies like Nigeria and Ghana allow for flexible, tailor-made contracts than former French colonies with a shared French Civil Code legal reference system. This shared system leads to a less mature legal institutional framework among former French colonial countries. Furthermore, the execution of PPP regulations or laws in this region encounters hurdles that impede their effectiveness, posing challenges. PPP units in this area operate with restricted decision-making authority, typically assuming administrative roles rather than being pivotal decision-makers often residing within technical ministries like Finance or Public Works, leaving PPP units with constrained influence over PPPs.

The uncertain environment, notably the political crises, the political instability, and governmental interventions in the West and Central Africa region, is evident. Our findings highlight the risks linked to political crisis like coups or civil unrest, the political instability in unpredictable and frequent government changes, and the government interventions in PPPs. Consequently, political will play a crucial role throughout the life cycle of PPPs. Strong political will can facilitate the initiation and implementation of PPPs. The complexities and uncertainties from institutional environment further encourage the co-existence of field-level logics and complicate their interactions, posing challenges to the creation of a common logic.

Our single-case study focuses on a country-level analysis in a francophone country and confirms the findings of the multiple-case study regarding challenges stemming from an immature legal system and administrative issues with PPP units. This case illustrates the Ministry of International Cooperation and Promotion of Public–Private Partnerships playing a less significant role in the PPP life cycle compared to technical ministries, such as the Ministry of Infrastructure. The project was initiated before the creation

of the PPP ministry, leading to power conflicts with the Ministry of Infrastructure. The conflicts pose pressures on the SPV for the concession.

The SPV also faces fiscal challenges due to diverging directives between the Ministry of Finance and Ministry of Infrastructure as well as the fiscal discrepancies between the terms of the public service delegation contract and the host country's fiscal laws and regulations. Consequently, the government, represented by the General Delegation of Works Committee of the Ministry of Infrastructure, dons multiple roles. These include acting as a regulator for tariffs, a controller establishing a public service delegation coordination office for supervision, a shareholder with 15% shares in the SPV, and a president of the board of the concession company.

The SPV, therefore, experiences organizational pressures, primarily from the opportunism of various public ministries as well as diverse opportunistic demands of private stakeholders. The private sectors, through political ties with the public sector, coupled with the public sector's influence on the private sectors, pressure the SPV to fulfill their opportunistic interests. Discontent from road users, including politicians, may lead to opportunistic requests from the government authorities. Consequently, the SPV's organizational fields are fragmented and uncoordinated.

5.2.2 Institutional Complexity

Our case studies foreground the coexistence of conflicting institutional logics in PPPs, creating institutional complexity. The multiple-case study explores these varying inter-institutional logics in PPPs at organizational field level. Our findings reveal a diverse and uncertain landscape of PPPs involving multiple logics and potential conflicts that extend beyond the traditional state–market divide. Instead, we identified the state, bureaucratic, professional, and community logics at the intersection between the public and private sectors as well as the civil society in this African region, making it difficult for a common logic to evolve among partners. The public sector involves multiple dominant logics, including the state, market, and bureaucratic logics, while Western and non-Western enterprises from the private sector incorporate market logic, notably profit and shareholder value logics. The professional logics shape the dynamics of private actors in the investment, construction, and operation aspects in the infrastructure industry. Civil society faces acceptance challenges for the first PPPs, particularly in toll road projects.

These multiple logics interact and compete, creating inter-institutional complexity. Challenges arise when private enterprises' market logic does not align with state entities' goals. The distinct professional logics of private sectors can impact their financial goal and corporate strategies in the short and long terms. The influence of community logic on market dynamics demonstrates the role community sentiments play in shaping the operation and outcomes of these partnerships.

Additionally, our multiple-case study highlights the unbalanced core roles and capabilities between public and private sectors, contributing to the complexity within these partnerships. Public entities serve as owner, regulator, supervisor, and shareholder, while the private sector functions as financer and operator. Surprisingly, our findings indicate that the complementarity in the core capabilities of different partners is not obvious in all PPPs, particularly when the government's capabilities and local agent skills are underdeveloped, leading to substitution effects. Private entities blend cooperation and competition, resulting in coopetitive dynamics. Our results underscore that the coopetition between Chinese and French entities, resulting in cooperation for existing market that leveraged the combined competencies of both parties and compete for new markets.

Our single-case study delves into intra-institutional logics within the same institutional domain, that is, corporate level of the organization. Our findings indicate that the intra-institutional competing logics include the SPV corporate market and public service logic, influenced by shareholder companies such as the SOE and French private company. SOE corporate logics encompass shareholder value logics as well as profit-oriented and politically oriented logics through dual governance structures over the SPV. Meanwhile, the French private corporate logic is mainly shareholder-value oriented. This leads to intra-institutional complexity within the SPV, as various logics brought by private shareholder companies such as the SOE and the French company compete and interact within the SPV. This complexity can pose significant challenges for the organization and its managers in establishing a common logic.

These competing logics manifest in the organizational goals, identity, structures, and ownership and governance mechanism within the SPV. As a hybrid entity, the SPV merges public service objectives aimed at benefiting users with a profit-driven approach designed to generate revenue for the organization. To fulfill its concessional missions, the SPV is tasked with collecting toll fees and maintaining roads. Ownership of the SPV is divided among three shareholders: Chinese shareholders hold a dominant 70% of the shares, while the French entity and the local government each hold 15%. The prevailing

shareholder value logic, centered on generating profits, is driven by the need to ensure value for these shareholders. The corporate governance structure consists of two levels of control: the shareholders' general meeting, a board system which includes a board of directors and a General Director. This structure advocates hierarchical control as an appropriate mechanism to monitor strategy and operations within the SPV. This setup underscores the experience of the organization to the interplay of different logics and the complexities this can create.

Individuals within the SPV act as carriers of institutional logics, and their exposure to a multicultural setting and hybrid professional identities further compound institutional complexity. Operating in a cultural environment dominated by Chinese corporate culture, the SPV experiences significant impacts on its internal dynamics and individuals' relations to logics. Key positions, held mainly by representatives from the SOE, such as the General Director, Deputy Directors, and department managers, are appointed through its subsidiary in the host country. Conversely, the French shareholder appoints a Deputy Manager, a Compliance Manager, and an Asset Manager through its local subsidiary. Therefore, the management team is a mix of Chinese and French representatives, with the Chinese leadership aligning with the SPV and SOE corporate logics, while the new French Deputy Director is less accustomed to these logics in place. These relationships and varying degrees of relationships with intra-institutional logics contribute to the complexity within the SPV, demonstrating the challenges of coexisting logics within the same organization.

5.2.3 Strategic Responses

Our studies examine organizational actors' strategies from the organizational field level, the organizational level, and individual level. The multiple-case study highlights that the actors within PPPs employ various strategies, including compromise, coopetition, defiance, and manipulation, to respond to institutional complexity. Defiance introduces an element of resistance or opposition within the partnership, which may impact the effectiveness of PPPs in the long term. Manipulation, employed for the pursuit of opportunism, introduces a dimension of strategic maneuvering within PPPs. However, compromise highlights the necessity of adaptability and strategic decision-making as key elements in achieving a common logic within their collaborative frameworks. Furthermore, coopetition within private partners could also lead to a common logic, underscoring the importance of both collaboration and competition in navigating the complexities of PPPs.

Our single-case study further substantiates the manipulation strategies by PPPs' organizational field actors. The SPV faces organizational pressures from both the public sector's opportunism and various internal and external demands. For instance, external actors, including the government coordination office, control the SPV, while two subcontractors also exert influence. Our study focuses on the strategic responses employed by the SPV to meet the demands from the external field level actors. Given the nature of the conflicting demands from the PPPs' organizational field, the SPV employs a mix of organizational strategies. For instance, when managing the coordination office of public service delegation, the SPV employs a variety of strategies tailored to the nature of the demand and overall context. This approach allows the SPV to effectively handle external pressures while protecting SPV's interests. To address the manipulating influences from the subcontractors, the SPV employs compromising strategies, establishing a common communication mechanism with the two subcontractors. The SPV defies external demands for price reduction or exemptions and avoids involving the French partner in certain decision-making process. In sum, the nature of the external demands and the intra-institutional complexity dictate the SPV's organizational strategies.

Our single-case study further delves into individual-level strategies. Based on their varying relationships to the intra-institutional logics, SPV managers employ distinct strategies. For instance, the Chinese General Director utilizes a demarcating strategy, demonstrating alignment with SPV corporate logics and partially adhering to the corporate guidelines of the SOE. The Chinese Deputy Director applies a combining strategy to SPV corporate logics and segmenting strategy to SOE's corporate logics. In contrast, French Deputy Manager 1 shows a strong compliance with SPV corporate logics and French corporate logic through a compromising strategy. Meanwhile, French Deputy Director 2 initially refuses to follow existing logics, but then employs a combining strategy to create a new hybrid and common logic. These individual strategies showcase the diverse approaches within the organization but also highlight how individuals navigate to create a common logic within the SPV.

Our single-case study indicates that organizational responses are based on the nature of the conflicting demands from the organizational field as well as organizational attributes including ownership, governance, structure, and identity. Organizational responses shape the organization's structure, which in turn influences strategic responses—a crucial step to uncover the inter-organizational complexity (Jay, 2013; Pache & Santos, 2010). Furthermore, individual actors, particularly SPV managers, and their

experiences of competing intra-institutional logics and micro-level strategies can impact organizational strategic responses.

Our study contributes to institutional logics perspective, PPPs, and organizational hybridity literature. We consider the institutional logics perspective as a meta-theory on PPPs as hybrid organizing. In particular, the PPPs involve the private participation of both Western and non-Western private companies, notably the Chinese SOE. The SOE's participation in PPPs enriches our understandings of PPPs in specific context. Therefore, PPPs by nature are considered as ideal hybrids and SPVs an ideal hybrid organization, which have attracted less attention in the literature. The institutional logics perspective has been used as a meta-theory to study hybridity in organizations to identify and frame the analysis of the institutional contexts in which hybridity occurs, as well as the causes, processes, and consequences of hybridity, helping specify the concepts (Pache & Thornton, 2021).

Our study highlights the fact that institutional contexts shape the logics in PPPs. Our work extends beyond the simple presentation of the inherent tension between state and market logics in PPP concession contracts for infrastructure provision (Matinheikki et al., 2021) and the available responses to institutional complexity by generic hybrids. Instead, we analyze PPPs as very special types of hybrids that are distinct from social enterprises. This contributes to a richer understanding of the institutional complexity within PPPs. Our work offers an initial step toward understanding institutional complexity and the strategies that foster a common logic at the organizational field level and organizational level. Future research could extend this approach by examining SPVs as hybrid organizations and exploring their strategic responses at the organizational and individual levels using an institutional logics lens.

5.2.4 Limitations

This dissertation has several limitations. First, our research is primarily centered on a cross-case study and an in-depth case study, offering a "snapshot" of the situation at a specific point in time. This approach is based on a qualitative research strategy. However, it is important to note that institutional logics evolve over time (Ocasio et al., 2017; Thornton & Ocasio, 2008). Thus, the specific characteristics of the PPP institutional field captured during our research timeframe may transition from a fragmented to a mature organizational field due to regulatory or strategic pressures over time. Thus, the evolving institutional logics offer avenues for institutions and individuals to process information and guide decisions. Second, it is crucial to remember that SPV managers do not operate in isolation; their micro-level strategies are

likely influenced by individual factors that were out of our research scope. The presence of multiple institutional logics may arise from the individual differences in functional backgrounds, previous knowledge, and experiences, which can subsequently affect organizations (Thornton et al., 2012). Third, our partially covert research approach in the single-case study may draw criticism, particularly concerning ethical considerations. This is in contrast to the multiple-case study, where participants were provided with full informed consent. In response to such potential criticism, we emphasize the social benefits from our research in the specific research context. Lastly, there may be potential confusion between the research object and the researcher in covert research. To address this, we have found reflexivity, appropriate identity building, and the use of mixed observation methods to be valuable tools. These considerations help to maintain the integrity of the research while navigating the complexities inherent in this type of study.

Table 17. Summary of Main Findings

	Multiple-Case Study	Single-Case Study
Research questions	1) What is the organizational field level context of PPPs that poses complexity in creating a common logic? 2) What are the multiple logics in the organizational field of PPPs. And how do they interact? 3) How do PPPs succeed (or fail) in establishing a common logic in their collaborations?	1) What is the organizational field that the SPV engages in? 2) How do organizations experience the competing institutional logics reflected in organizational attributes? And how does the SPV strategically respond to the institutional demands of external actors? 3) How do SPV managers experience the intra-institutional logics? And how do they respond to these multiple logics?
Institutional environment	• PPPs' informal institutional context: Cultural similarities and sensitivities; cultural differences • PPPs' formal institutional context: Complexities and uncertainties in institutional environment	○ Organizational field context ○ SPV faces a fragmented and moderately concentrated organizational field

Institutional complexity	• Inter-institutional complexity
	• Multiple inter-institutional logics
	  ○ Field level logics: State logic, market logic, bureaucratic logic, professional logic, community logic
		○ Intra-institutional complexity
		○ Multiple intra-institutional logics
		  ○ Organizational-level logics: Corporate logics (corporate public service and market logic, corporate shareholder value logics, corporate political logic)

	○ Focus on the conflicting interactions of multiple inter-institutional logics: market with state, bureaucratic, professional, and community logics • Core roles and capabilities ○ Between public and private sectors: weak public capabilities for contract initiation as well as control and monitoring skills	○ Focus on organizational and individual experiences related to multiple intra-institutional logics ○ Organizational and individual experience to multiple intra-institutional logics ○ Focus on organizational experiences to multiple intra-institutional logics: reflected on organizational structure (form, goal, ownership and governance, identity) ○ Individual experiences to intra-institutional logics: cultural context; SPV managers' hybrid professional identities; SPV managers' relationship to logics (novice, familiar, identified)
Strategic responses	• Organizational responses ○ Focus on field level public and private actors' strategies ○ Public–private sectors' compromising strategy ○ Private–private coopetition strategy	○ Organizational and individual responses ○ Focus on the SPV's strategic responses to external field level actors (public and third parties' manipulating strategies, i.e., public sector increasing its control and monitoring skills) ○ SPV hybrid responses are based on the nature of the conflicting demands from the PPP field

	○ Focus on individual level strategies ▪ Demarcating strategies by the Chinese General Director ▪ Combining strategy to SPV corporate logics and segmenting strategy to SOE's corporate logics by the Chinese Deputy Director ▪ Compromising strategy by French Deputy Manager 1 ▪ Refusing followed by combining strategy by French Deputy Director 2

5.3 Implications for Management Research

5.3.1 Implications for PPP Management

Our research, based on the institutional logics perspective, enriches the literature on PPPs in non-Western African economies by emphasizing the role of the institutional context. We underscore the multiple institutional logics shaped by the institutional context (Lounsbury et al., 2021) as well as the role of cultural hybridity and the diversity of cultural interpretations in PPPs, particularly with the participation of Western and non-Western enterprises. PPPs within Africa's broader institutional environment currently lack maturity. Compared to mature fields, institutional demands in emerging fields, like African PPPs, tend to be less predictable and uncoordinated. Furthermore, the conflicting, competing influences and misaligned external demands lack dominance (Pache & Santos, 2010), resulting in moderately centralized fields.

The SPV, as a hybrid entity, operates in these immature and moderately centralized fields. It is subject to competing influences by various stakeholders including partners, shareholders, professionals, and regulators, leading to conflicting institutional demands. These institutions are interdependent and often contradictory (Thornton et al., 2012). A weak, unstable political and institutional framework increases the risk of opportunistic behavior from the public authorities (Beuve, Saussier, & de Brux, 2018), and multiple independent private groups and organizations, such as transport companies, make opportunistic demands through political ties.

Previous studies have predominantly explored private participation in PPPs through the lens of transaction cost economics (Brousseau & Saussier, 2009), a theoretical framework that seeks to explain organizational decision-making by analyzing the costs associated with economic exchanges. Transaction cost theory (TCT), which builds on the works of Coase (1937) and Williamson (1971, 1985), has been used on a range of organizational phenomena, including PPPs, due to its utility in understanding the uncertainty and complexities inherent in such arrangements (Quélin et al., 2017). One critical insight from TCT is its ability to explain how different governance structures, such as markets and hierarchies, manage transaction costs in uncertain environments. This focus on governance structures aligns with the institutional logics perspective (Battilana et al., 2017), which connects economic institutions to broader societal-level logics: market logic that governs transactions in markets and corporate logic that

shapes hierarchical organizational forms. They acknowledge that institutional logics differentially influence transaction costs and corporate organizational forms, with institutional complexity arising from the interplay of these logics within hybrids like PPPs (Battilana et al., 2017). Our work contributes to this discourse by employing the institutional logics perspective to examine how the institutional environments increase institutional complexity, using empirical cases as illustrative examples. Future research may be well-suited to combine TCT with institutional logics perspective to provide a more comprehensive analysis of hybrid organizational forms, particularly in the context of PPPs (Kivleniece & Quélin, 2012).

5.3.2 Implications for Multiple Logics Management

Our study contributes to institutional logics perspective by identifying multiple inter-institutional logics at organizational field level in PPPs as hybrids as well as intra-institutional logics in the SPV as a hybrid organization. While most hybrid organization studies often focus on state and market logics (Greenwood et al., 2011), our multiple-case study responds to the call for a more comprehensive examination of settings in which more than two competing logics can be found, drawing attention to the critical roles of bureaucratic, professional, and community logics in PPPs as an ideal hybrid organizing. In our single-case study, the SPV has chosen an integrated structure where the same members perform both the commercial activities as well as the social interventions with separate metrics for each. However, inside the same institutional order, the SPV bears multiple corporate logics. The significant influence of the Chinese SOE as the major shareholder and the participation of the French private company introduces dynamics to the SPV's logics. The corporate logics of the Chinese SOE not only align with the corporate market logic but also with a unique political logic characteristic of Chinese SOEs (Wang, 2014). Additionally, our analysis focuses on the incompatibility among these logics within the SPV, which is reflected in its organizational goals, structure, ownership and governance, and identity (Greenwood et al., 2011).

Our multiple-case and single-case studies contribute to the understanding of institutional complexities by focusing on inter-institutional and intra-institutional complexities, respectively. In PPPs, the imbalanced roles and capabilities between the public and private sector can amplify institutional complexity. While public actors delegate the management of public service to the private sector, the public entities still maintain their expertise to monitor and control over PPPs (Beuve, Saussier, & de

Brux, 2018). Furthermore, our study expands on previous PPP literature by highlighting the coopetitive effect among private entities, a factor not thoroughly explored in the field.

Institutional complexity encompasses the number of intra-institutional logics and the degree of incompatibility among them (Greenwood et al., 2011). In our studies, more than two institutional logics are found, and the inconsistency in logic indicates that complexity increases due to the divergence between goals and means (Pache & Santos, 2010). Notably, the SPV pursues both public service objectives and profit-oriented goals. Moreover, the divergence of individual actors' experiences and relationships with the multiples logics further complicates intra-institutional complexity. This institutional complexity hinders the development of a unified approach among partners and managers. Given these findings, understanding how to manage these multifaceted elements to optimize the function of PPPs and to facilitate the creation of a common logic becomes a crucial area of focus.

5.3.3 Implications for Hybrid Organization Management

Our analysis of organizational strategic responses aligns broadly with previous institutional logics literature, except that compromising and coopetitive approaches manifest in distinctive ways have not been previously described. Additionally, whereas previous work has often assumed a single collective hybrid response, our evidence points to combining both compromise and coopetition simultaneously as strategies to manage multiple logics in organizational fields. This study emphasizes the importance of adaptability and strategic decision-making in achieving a common logic.

In practice, establishing a common logic may require tactics such as compromise between public and private actors and coopetition among private sector partners to address the multiple logics that characterize organizational fields in PPPs. Implementing these approaches entails openly discussing the presence and implications of multiple logics, along with the deliberate selection of suitable hybrid tactics. SPV managers' ability to combine competing logics while considering the interests of different sectors and balancing logics is essential for effective management of hybrids such as PPPs (Smets et al., 2015). They play the role of "hybridizers" who can change the current institutional order to create new hybrid institutional arrangements (Pache & Santos, 2013a).

5.3.4 Implications for Managers

Our research carries several implications for political authorities and for private managers. The debate about the private sector's participation in the provision of public services frequently arises. Various types of PPPs provide the advantages of traditional procurements by entrusting necessary constructions or services to a private entity without the disadvantages of these contracts through the transfer of a global mission, including financing of the investment, the eventual construction of the project, and its operation and maintenance. Understanding and implementing PPPs can be challenging due to the unconventional nature of their approaches. For instance, concession PPPs are long-term contracts compared to traditional public contracts, which are usually short-term. In concession PPPs, the flexible contract design plays an important role in managing the opportunistic behaviors of private partners, public authorities, and third parties as well as the potential conflicts between a public and private party, providing a framework that can adapt to changing circumstances and demands (Beuve, Le Lannier, & Le Squeren, 2018).

Engaging the private sector in the public infrastructure remains challenging in West and Central Africa. Our case studies found that PPPs lack an enabling environment in this area. The informal environment involves diversity and complexity with the Western and non-Western private enterprises, notably Chinese SOEs. The formal institutional environment indicates a low level of institutionalization of PPPs as a legitimate model in this region particularly in former French colonial countries. Formal legislation lack maturity, and the PPP units play a marginal role in the initiative and implementation of PPPs in this region. Therefore, political authorities should enforce the role of PPP units and legal authority execution capabilities in order to transform the immature and moderately centralized fields into mature and highly centralized organizational fields in PPPs. By doing so, a high-quality institutional environment can be complemented with several other factors to increase the private scope and foster stronger collaboration and establish a common logic between public and private sector actors (Quélin et al., 2019).

Furthermore, while public authorities delegate the management of the public service, they do not relinquish monitoring and control power (Beuve, Saussier, & de Brux, 2018). Our multiple-case study indicates that there is an imbalance between the capabilities of the public and private sectors, causing an unexpected, substituted effect in their respective roles instead of an anticipated complementary effect. Therefore, political authorities must focus on enhancing the capabilities building of their agencies to manage the whole PPP life cycle. Doing so can ensure a balanced relationship that leverages the strengths of both the public and private sectors.

For the private PPP managers in Western and non-Western companies, they should enhance their long-term commitment and focus on achieving a win–win situation for all stakeholders, instead of merely pursuing short-term, profit-oriented goals. Indeed, PPPs involving both public local authorities, Western and non-Western enterprises, divergent goals, and differing organizational cultures in the private and public sectors may challenge cross-sector relationships (Quélin et al., 2017). Multinational enterprises should prioritize the transfer of skills to local companies and the training for local employees. This approach not only fosters infrastructure development but also addresses social needs alongside their economic objectives. They can build common goals and contribute to local capacity building as well as drive sustainable development in the long-term.

In case of divergent goals and conflicting objectives, the quality of inter-organizational and interpersonal relationships plays a crucial role in managing such conflicts. The quality of these relationships allows for contractual adaptations to environmental changes, enhancing mutual trust, commitment, openness, and reciprocity at both inter-organizational and interpersonal levels (Warsen, 2023). This implies that PPP managers should focus not only on the technical and economic aspects of PPPs but also on the relational dynamics involved. Building high-quality relationships can provide a solid foundation for cooperation, mutual understanding, and the successful achievement of common logic between public and private sectors in the context of PPPs.

Our findings have also managerial implications for the SPV managers in terms of building their organizational collective identity. The nature of the hybrid organization implies cultural hybridity requiring continuous adaptation and learning from each member. Encouraging a homogenous culture within the hybrid organization, where organizational members share similar logics and behavioral norms, can mitigate internal tensions and potential conflicts (Santos et al., 2015). That is, creating a shared understanding of the organization's values, goals, and practices can help align the different perspectives within the organization and foster a sense of shared identity. Building common organizational and individual identities can foster cohesion in the SPV, thereby lowering the tensions of institutional complexity. This implies that managers should actively work on identity-building activities to foster a shared sense of purpose and identity among organizational members. Doing so can create a more cohesive and effective organization, better equipped to navigate the complexities and challenges associated with SPVs.

Another significant contribution of our research is to provide insight for SPV managers regarding their hiring strategies in the context of a hybrid organizational structure. Integrated hybrid organizations require multicultural members with diverse backgrounds to operate effectively (Santos et al., 2015) or a cultural member (Pache & Santos, 2013a). Compared to monocultural members, multicultural members adapt more readily to change and contribute positively to organizational evolution and work as a "hybrid" cultural identity (Pache & Santos, 2013a, 2013b). Acultural members who join an organization without any previous attachment may bring a fresh perspective inside the organization and encourage innovation and introspection, contributing to a dynamic workplace environment (Pache & Santos, 2013a). The hybrid leadership of the managers can bridge cultural divides, shape organizational culture, driving meaningful activities, and encourage purposeful engagement among team members in a diverse institutional environment (Battilana & Lee, 2014; Pache & Santos, 2021). Therefore, SPV managers should consider these insights when hiring, recognizing that multicultural backgrounds can bring significant benefits to their hybrid organizations. This includes fostering cultural diversity, encouraging innovation, and shaping an adaptive organizational culture.

For SPV managers, transparency in the governance structure plays a crucial role in SPV management, particularly for the Chinese SOE as main shareholder with dual political and legal governance structures. The powers of board members, the interests of minority shareholders, and diverse ethical concerns should all be taken into considerations in the SPV's long-term operations. Clear and transparent governance structures can help ensure that decision-making processes are understood and respected by all stakeholders. Transparency can also enhance trust among stakeholders, reduce potential conflicts, and facilitate collaboration and mutual understanding, thus creating a common logic. This can be particularly important in the context of SPVs, where diverse stakeholders may have different expectations and interests. It is, therefore, crucial for SPV managers to prioritize transparency in their governance practices.

In sum, our research makes a significant contribution to discussions on management of PPPs, multiple institutional logics, and hybrid organizations and practitioners. Through in-depth empirical case studies, we deepen the understanding of PPP management, presenting them as an optimal form of hybridity. This perspective fuses multiple logics at the organizational field level of PPPs and within an SPV's organizational level. Additionally, our study enriches the comprehension of how organizations strategically respond to institutional complexity. Our research caters to the need for a more profound

comprehension of how institutional complexity is experienced both at the organizational and individual levels. It highlights the importance of research that bridges analyses of the field, organizational, and individual levels within the context of PPPs. Through this approach, we develop a holistic understanding of the dynamics and complexities inherent in hybrid PPPs, the creation of a common logic within them, and the development of effective management strategies for managers.

Table 18. Implications for Management Research

Contributions	Multiple-Case Study	Single-Case Study
PPP and multiple logics management	• Institutional environment shapes the institutional logics in PPPs. • Informal institutional context: role of culture • Formal context: fragmented PPP fields and moderately centralized fields • Coexistence of inter-multiple institutional logics in PPPs • Field level logics: focus on more than state and market logic, but also bureaucratic, professional, and community logics	• Organizational field context shapes the institutional context that SPVs face (fragmented organizational fields and moderately centralized fields in PPPs). • Coexistence of multiple intra-institutional logics and intra-institutional complexity in PPPs. • Multiple intra-institutional logics creating institutional complexity

Hybrid organizations management	• Role of core capabilities in PPPs increase institutional complexity.
	• Contribution to organizational responses
	  ○ Combining public–private compromising and private actor's coopetitive strategies to create a common logic
		• Contribution to hybridity theory by focusing on organizational and individual experience to intra-institutional logics
		• Organizational-level experience
		  ○ Multiple intra-institutional logics and incompatibility
		  ○ SPV's integrated structure, ownership and hierarchical governance, organizational identity
		  ○ Individual level experience

		○ Different cultures bring value, beliefs, thus multiple logics in an SPV ○ Hybrid professional identities shape individual experiences to logics • Contribution to organizational responses ○ External organizational field actors' manipulating strategies: Defiance and avoidance for survival; compromise when goals aligned ○ Individual level response: Bridging to create a new logic
Managers	• Building an enabling PPP environment/high-quality institutional unit • Enhancing relevant public capabilities in PPPs • Importance of contract design in PPPs • Western and non-Western companies collaborate by leveraging their complementary resources and capabilities, while also competing to drive market dynamics; long-term commitment to address African infrastructure development and social needs • Improving communications and inter-organizational and inter-personal relational quality in mutual trust	• Cultural hybridity and collective identity building • Transparent governance structures of the SOE and the SPV • Hiring strategies: hiring bicultural or multicultural individuals or acultural members; "hybrid leadership"

5.4 Avenues for Future Research

This research has raised several institutional and organizational questions. Given the long life cycle of PPPs, their inherent logics may evolve over time, suggesting that future research could benefit from longitudinal studies to gain valuable insights into the development of PPPs as hybrid organizational entities. Apart from the internal transformations within specific PPPs, the broader PPP landscape which includes the entire national context, remains complex and uncertain. The institutional environment might transition from a fragmented to a mature organizational field as well as from a moderately centralized to a centralized structure. Specific logics may gain prominence at the field level, potentially providing solution to institutional complexity. Consequently, it is vital for future research to investigate these long-term temporal effects on both the organizational and field levels. Moreover, future research could also place a greater emphasis on understanding the timing of various strategic responses in the face of these changes (Matinheikki et al., 2021). These evolving circumstances present both individuals and organizations with opportunities for institutional change. As individuals' relationships with the logics evolve over time so too do their micro-level strategies to respond to multiple logics. The dynamic relationship between individuals and logics is another crucial area for future exploration.

Moreover, future studies could delve into comparative case studies exploring different structures of the SPV or the indirect impact of control exerted by the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) over the SPV. This could further illuminate scenarios where the SPV, as a hybrid organization, outperform its peer organizations due to its integrated hybrid nature (Pache & Santos, 2013b). One way to approach this could be by investigating the characteristics and functions of the board of directors (Besharov & Smith, 2014) of an SPV controlled by an SOE under influence of the CCP, with a focus on board composition and processes. A key question that future research could address is whether SPV boards should strive to include members with experience in both the business sector and the public service sector within a PPP setting. Moreover, future research should evaluate the role of board members in identifying and managing risks specific to the context of the host country. This would provide further understanding of the strategic management within these complex organizational structures to create a common logic.

Finally, future research could indeed gain valuable insights by integrating identity literature to explore the interplay between individual and organizational identities. Achieving alignment between these identities could foster enhanced organizational commitment, thereby promoting compatibility among

varied institutional logics. This alignment might in turn lead to the development of a common logic that bridges the diverse institutional logics within the organization, thereby reducing institutional complexity. Such an approach could pave the way for new avenues for understanding and establishing a common logic in PPPs as hybrid entities and SPVs as a hybrid organization.

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Résumé Détaillé en Français

Chapitre 1 Introduction

La présente thèse de doctorat étudie les Partenariats Public-Privé (PPP) comme une forme d'hybridité dans le secteur des transports en Afrique de l'Ouest et du centre. Elle s'insère dans la littérature théorique qui s'intéresse aux logiques institutionnelles, aux organisations hybrides et aux PPP. La recherche sur les logiques institutionnelles a été largement axée sur les entreprises sociales plutôt que sur les PPP en tant qu'entité hybride. Par ailleurs, la littérature existante sur les PPP a négligé les économies non occidentales, en particulier celles de l'Afrique subsaharienne. De plus, on observe dans ce domaine des PPP une lacune significative dans la compréhension des logiques au niveau organisationnel hybride et dans la façon dont ses membres au sein de l'organisation expérimentent et réagissent stratégiquement aux multiples logiques institutionnelles. Cette thèse vise à combler ces limites, afin d'explorer la création d'une logique commune au sein des PPP, à travers des réponses stratégiques à l'échelle champ organisationnel,[2] organisationnelle et individuelle.

Cette thèse, structurée en monographie comprend deux études de cas sous un cadre théorique commun, explore la création d'une logique commune dans les PPP. La première étude examine les multiples logiques institutionnelles, les facteurs et les stratégies influençant la création de cette logique commune dans les PPP. Trois questions clés sont abordées : 1) Quel est le contexte au niveau du champ organisationnel des PPP qui pose de la complexité dans la création d'une logique commune ? 2) Quelles sont les multiples logiques dans le champ organisationnel des PPP, et comment interagissent-elles ? 3) Dans quelle mesure les PPP réussissent-ils (ou échouent-ils) à établir une logique commune dans leurs collaborations ? La deuxième étude se focalise sur un SPV comme organisation hybride, afin de répondre aux questions suivantes : 1) Quel est le champ organisationnel dans lequel le SPV s'engage ? ; 2) Comment les organisations font l'expérience des logiques institutionnelles concurrentes qui se reflètent dans les attributs organisationnels, et comment le SPV répond stratégiquement aux demandes des

[2] Il existe une nuance entre le terme « champ » et celui de « champ organisationnel ». Un champ est défini comme un groupe d'organisations partageant un système de significations commun, où les acteurs interagissent plus étroitement entre eux qu'avec ceux situés en dehors du champ (Scott, 1995). Le concept de champ organisationnel va au-delà d'une simple liste d'acteurs, en intégrant les interrelations entre eux ainsi que les logiques propres au champ, façonnées par les pratiques matérielles, les normes culturelles et les processus cognitifs qui influencent leur comportement et leurs actions (Wooten & Hoffman, 2017). Ce sont des concepts en sciences sociales et organisationnelles qui mettent l'accent sur les interrelations et les logiques. Pour éviter toute confusion conceptuelle, cette étude privilégiera l'utilisation du terme « champ organisationnel », car elle se concentre sur les interrelations et les logiques entre les acteurs au sein des partenariats public-privé (PPP).

institutionnelles des acteurs externes ? ; 3) Comment les gestionnaires de SPV vivent-ils les logiques intra-institutionnelles et comment réagissent-ils à ces multiples logiques ? Les deux parties sont organisées en deux chapitres distincts présentant respectivement des résultats et des discussions, dans l'objectif d'enrichir notre compréhension de la logique commune dans les PPP en tant qu'organisation hybride dans le secteur transport de la région africaine.

Nos recherches portent sur le secteur des transports en Afrique de l'Ouest et du centre où l'implication du secteur privé dans la fourniture de services publics, notamment via des contrats de concession, est encouragée. Face à l'augmentation de la dette publique et du déficit d'infrastructure, Depuis les années 1990, les pays africains post-coloniaux ont externalisé ces services au secteur privé. Cependant, le partenariat entre les autorités publiques locales africaines et les multinationales occidentales et non occidentales, notamment françaises et chinoises, est complexe. Les différents partenaires fonctionnent selon de multiples logiques et cultures, créant une complexité institutionnelle. L'environnement institutionnel des pays africains hôtes pose des défis aux PPP. Si la participation privée est nécessaire pour assurer l'accès et la continuité des services publics, elle soulève des questions sur l'incompatibilité potentielle des logiques d'entreprise avec d'autres logiques et cultures, nécessitant l'établissement d'une logique commune entre les acteurs.

L'originalité de cette étude empirique de terrain consiste en premier lieu, à prendre en compte le rôle central du secteur des transports dans le développement économique africain. En effet, Züfle et al. (2024) soulignent que les infrastructures sous-développées sont un obstacle majeur à la croissance, impactant négativement le climat des affaires. Deuxièmement, le développement des infrastructures de transport implique la participation de multinationales étrangères, notamment des entreprises françaises et chinoises, tandis que les entreprises africaines locales manquent souvent de capacités financières et techniques pour de tels projets. Enfin, le SPV, créé d'une part avec une entreprise d'État chinoise, et d'autre part avec une société privée française et le gouvernement hôte, fait face à des défis institutionnels complexes. Enfin, grâce à l'accent récemment mis sur ces types de partenariats par les autorités locales, cette étude permet une approche qualitative au sein de PPP en activité.

Notre recherche se concentre sur les contrats de concession, qui sont généralement caractérisés par une implication à long terme, globale et administrative dans l'infrastructure économique (Bensaïd & Marty, 2014). L'approvisionnement public traditionnel, le contrat de disponibilité et la privatisation sont hors

de notre champ de recherche. Dans le cadre des PPP concessionnaire, le secteur public conserve la propriété ou bien reste propriétaire des infrastructures tout en déléguant leur gestion au secteur privé. Cette délégation, cependant, ne compromet pas le rôle du secteur public en tant que superviseur et régulateur. Cette configuration hybride, mêlant autonomie de marché et supervision gouvernementale, soulève des questions quant à la création d'une logique commune entre les différents acteurs face à plusieurs logiques institutionnelles.

Dans les arrangements de concession, l'entité publique délègue la conception, la construction, le financement, l'exploitation et la maintenance de l'infrastructure ou la fourniture d'un service public au concessionnaire (Bensaïd & Marty, 2014). Le concessionnaire assume le risque de demande, spécifiquement le risque de trafic, car l'équilibre économique et financier du projet repose fortement sur la prévision des taux d'utilisation de l'infrastructure (Bensaïd & Marty, 2014). Les paiements des utilisateurs financent le projet, mais le risque de trafic affectant les revenus le rend plus risqué pour les bailleurs de fonds, les prêteurs et les actionnaires. L'étude de comment le SPV en tant qu'organisation hybride, répond à cette complexité institutionnelle peut aider à identifier les meilleures pratiques et stratégies pour favoriser la coopération et créer une logique commune, fournissant ainsi un cadre pour équilibrer efficacement les demandes souvent concurrentes du champ organisationnel.

Les études de cas de cette recherche s'appuient sur des méthodologies qualitatives, à partir des entretiens et des observations ethnographiques. La première étude est une analyse de onze cas de PPP impliquant des entreprises privées occidentales et non occidentales, basée sur une enquête conduite à partir de 59 entretiens, dont 9 exploratoires et 50 semi-structurés. La deuxième se concentre sur un SPV représentatif des organisations hybrides dans le domaine des PPP. Une étude approfondie de ce SPV, composé d'une entreprise d'État chinoise, d'une entreprise privée française et du gouvernement d'un pays africain, permet de mieux appréhender les complexités institutionnelles, qu'elles soient organisationnelles ou individuelles. Cette étude s'appuie sur six mois d'observations ethnographiques sur le terrain. L'analyse des données collectées est effectuée à l'aide du logiciel qualitatif NVivo 14.

Les premiers résultats de cette recherche révèlent l'existence de multiples logiques interinstitutionnelles dans les PPP, comme la logique de l'État, du marché, bureaucratique, professionnelle et communautaire. Ces logiques engendrent une complexité institutionnelle due à leurs interactions parfois contradictoires, exacerbée par l'environnement institutionnel incertain des PPP et

les déséquilibres de rôles et compétences entre les partenaires. Ces facteurs entravent l'établissement d'approches unifiées, soulignant le besoin de stratégies comme le compromis ou la coopétition pour établir une logique commune. Par ailleurs, la deuxième étude met en évidence le contexte fragmenté et modérément centralisé des PPP confronté au SPV et ses gestionnaires. La structure est marquée par une complexité intra-institutionnelle accrue due aux logiques contradictoires et les expériences à la fois organisationnelles et individuelles variées qui en découlent. Face aux demandes désorganisées et imprévisibles des acteurs externes et en cas de divergence d'objectifs, le SPV peut choisir de résister, d'éviter ou bien opter pour le compromis et la coopération. En réconciliant ces logiques divergentes, les gestionnaires du SPV peuvent établir une nouvelle logique commune, optimisant ainsi les réponses stratégiques au niveau individuel et organisationnel.

Cette thèse examine des questions étroitement liées à la gestion du service public de l'infrastructure de transport en Afrique de l'Ouest et du centre. Les méthodes, les résultats et les conclusions principales utilisés dans cette thèse de doctorat peuvent être appliqués à la gestion des PPP, des logiques multiples, des organisations hybrides et peuvent être utiles aux décideurs politiques et acteurs de terrain. Les implications, contributions et extensions possibles sont discutées en détail dans chaque étude de cas et la conclusion générale de la thèse.

Chapitre 2 Revue de la littérature du domaine

Les définitions des PPP ont tendance à varier et à manquer de cohérence selon les institutions publiques, les organisations internationales et la littérature économique (Beuve, Saussier, & de Brux, 2018). Dans notre recherche, nous utilisons le terme "hybrides" pour redéfinir les PPP. Ce terme a été mis en avant par Battilana et Dorado (2010) et Pache et Santos (2010) pour décrire les entreprises sociales qui combinent des logiques commerciales et non commerciales. Les hybrides sont des arrangements (inter)organisationnels qui poursuivent des objectifs sociaux et économiques à travers des relations formelles et informelles entre les entités publiques, à but lucratif et à but non lucratif du secteur privé (Quélin et al., 2017). Ce concept implique l'équilibrage des compromis entre les objectifs économiques et sociaux, combinant la logique de l'État et la logique du marché à un niveau macro (Friedland & Alford, 1991). La définition des hybrides suggère que les entités amalgament des aspects de multiples formes organisationnelles (Battilana & Lee, 2014 ; Besharov & Smith, 2014 ; Pache & Thornton, 2021), comme les PPP. Les PPP apportent une combinaison de haute hybridité tant dans les logiques que dans la gouvernance.

Diverses théories ont été utilisées pour étudier l'hybridité (Battilana et al., 2017 ; Pache & Thornton, 2021). Battilana et al. (2017) identifie trois grandes approches : les identités organisationnelles hybrides, les hybrides comme formes distinctes, et les hybrides comme combinaisons de plusieurs logiques au niveau sociétal. Ces différentes approches enrichissent la recherche sur l'organisation hybride (Pache & Thornton, 2021). En particulier, les perspectives sur les formes organisationnelles contribuent aux considérations sur les structures hybrides, comme la Théorie des Coûts de Transaction (TCT) (Coase, 1937 ; Williamson, 1985). Un second ensemble de perspectives théoriques, telles que la théorie de la dépendance aux ressources (Pfeffer & Salancik, 1978), les perspectives de réseau social (Powell, 1990) et la théorie institutionnelle (Thornton & Ocasio, 2008), concerne les structures de gouvernance hybrides dépendant des organisations et à l'interaction avec une structure sociale plus large.

La TCT se calque sur les perspectives institutionnelles en soulignant le rôle de l'environnement institutionnel dans l'analyse des arrangements hybrides, où des facteurs tels que la stabilité politique influence les PPP (Quélin et al., 2017). Notre recherche met en évidence l'impact de l'incertitude dans l'environnement institutionnel sur la gouvernance des logiques. Comprendre le contexte environnemental est vital car il indique où les pressions organisationnelles se produisent et peut influencer la façon dont les organisations répondent aux influences institutionnelles (Oliver, 1991).

Toutefois, la TCT est confrontée à un défi en ne prenant pas en compte l'impact des relations sociales au sein de la structure sociale plus large, y compris l'interconnexion. Face à l'incertitude environnementale, l'interconnexion est considérée comme un facteur contextuel influençant la conformité ou la résistance des organisations aux demandes et attentes institutionnelles (Oliver, 1991). Il est crucial de se concentrer sur la manière dont les arrangements de gouvernance sont intégrés dans des relations sociales spécifiques et dans le contexte institutionnel général pour comprendre pleinement la gouvernance de la relation de transaction.

La théorie de la dépendance aux ressources offre un éclairage sur la manière dont les organisations gèrent les relations avec d'autres entités et analysent les dynamiques de pouvoir dans les relations inter-organisationnelles (Pfeffer & Salancik, 1978). Nos recherches se concentrent sur les réactions stratégiques aux pressions institutionnelles, allant de la conformité à la résistance, de l'impuissance à l'influence, et de l'habituel à l'opportunisme (Oliver, 1991). Il y a peu de recherches sur les stratégies

intermédiaires telles que le compromis, l'évitement et le défi (Lawrence & Buchanan, 2017). Nous approfondissons la résistance des individus et des organisations aux règles, normes et croyances au niveau du terrain, dans le but d'étudier l'établissement d'une logique commune au sein des partenaires publics et privés.

Expliquer l'impact des relations sociales sur le comportement des organisations et des individus est difficile sans tenir compte des logiques institutionnelles (Friedland & Alford, 1991). Les logiques défendent les règles et les conventions au sein d'un domaine organisationnel spécifique, ce qui rend les réseaux significatifs. La perspective de la logique institutionnelle a été utilisée comme métathéorie dans la recherche sur l'organisation hybride et l'hybridité pour analyser les contextes institutionnels dans lesquels l'hybridité a lieu, ainsi que pour comprendre les causes, les processus et les conséquences de l'hybridité, aidant ainsi à spécifier les concepts (Pache & Thornton, 2021).

Notre recherche est ancrée dans le cadre de deux corpus théoriques fondamentaux : (1) la coexistence de diverses logiques institutionnelles parfois contradictoires et l'absence potentielle d'une logique commune, conduisant à une complexité institutionnelle. Ceci est particulièrement prononcé lorsque les partenaires divergent non seulement par leur nature privée ou publique, mais également par leur origine géographique, engendrant des défis pour créer une « logique commune » ; et (2) des réponses organisationnelles face à ces diverses logiques, qui peuvent ne pas être parfaitement alignées parfaitement dès le départ. Ces deux corpus sont profondément enracinés dans la perspective des logiques institutionnelles et les questions entourant la dynamique institutionnelle et son impact sur le fonctionnement organisationnel.

Pour mieux comprendre le concept de logique institutionnelle, Thornton et Ocasio (2008) suggèrent de la resituer dans le contexte de la théorie institutionnelle et de l'analyse institutionnelle. Greenwood et al. (2017) indiquent que le terme « théorie institutionnelle » englobe une vaste littérature qui a acquis de l'importance dans les études organisationnelles, car elle intègre des approches et des théories issues d'autres disciplines comme la gestion, l'économie, la sociologie et la psychologie sociale (Wang, 2019). Les thèmes clés de la théorie institutionnelle, tels que la légitimité, l'isomorphisme et le découplage, les terrains organisationnels, les logiques institutionnelles et l'organisation hybride sont examinés par Greenwood et al. (2017). Ils explorent également la dynamique de la théorie institutionnelle, en se concentrant sur le rôle du pouvoir, l'entrepreneuriat institutionnel et les microprocessus de construction

institutionnelle. Les sections suivantes présentent une revue succincte des principaux thèmes de la théorie institutionnelle.

Le concept de logique institutionnelle a émergé dans le contexte du développement de la théorie institutionnelle depuis les années 1970 (Greenwood et al., 2017). En mettant l'accent sur les effets des logiques institutionnelles différenciées sur les individus et les organisations, plutôt que sur l'isomorphisme, Friedland et Alford (1991), ainsi que Thornton et Ocasio (2008), ont établi une nouvelle approche de l'analyse institutionnelle qui diffère celle des chercheurs précédents. Thornton et Ocasio (2008) ont situé des logiques institutionnelles dans le cadre de la théorie institutionnelle et de l'analyse institutionnelle, tandis que les premiers chercheurs sur l'étude institutionnelle se sont concentrés sur l'isomorphisme au niveau sociétal et des terrains organisationnels.

La perspective de la logique institutionnelle, telle que développée par des chercheurs comme Thornton et Ocasio (2008) et Pache et Thornton (2021), soutient que ces logiques institutionnelles peuvent évoluer à divers niveaux, comme les organisations, les industries, les réseaux inter organisationnels, les communautés géographiques et les terrains organisationnels. Ces logiques se manifestent aussi à plusieurs échelles, allant de la société à l'individu (Besharov & Smith, 2014 ; Friedland & Alford, 1991 ; Thornton & Ocasio, 2008). Les logiques sociétales influencent de manière significative les individus et les organisations, qui à leur tour, se basant sur ces logiques (Besharov & Smith, 2014 ; Friedland & Alford, 1991). Ces logiques sont interdépendantes et exercent une influence à différent niveaux, impactant les individus, les organisations et les terrains organisationnels (Besharov & Mitzinneck, 2020), soulignant l'interaction complexe des logiques institutionnelles au sein de leur environnement institutionnel.

La perspective des logiques institutionnelles convient particulièrement à notre étude car nous visons à identifier les multiples logiques au sein des PPP à la fois aux niveaux du domaine et de l'organisation, à comprendre leurs interactions, à identifier les facteurs qui présentent des défis dans la création d'une logique commune et les réponses stratégiques à mettre en œuvre entre les secteurs public et privé.

Complexité institutionnelle des PPP

Le terme de « complexité institutionnelle », élaboré par Greenwood et al. (2010), décrit les situations où les organisations sont confrontées à diverses tensions issues de multiples logiques institutionnelles.

Cette définition rejoint celle du pluralisme institutionnel qui en scène des acteurs face à diverses logiques institutionnelles, pouvant être complémentaires ou conflictuelles, favorisant la coopération ou la compétition (Ocasio et al., 2017). Toutefois, la complexité institutionnelle se concentre précisément sur la manière dont les organisations gèrent et répondent aux exigences contradictoires provenant de différentes logiques (Greenwood et al., 2011). Elle se manifeste sur deux axes : le nombre de logiques et le degré d'incompatibilité entre elles (Greenwood et al, 2011). Plus le nombre de logiques est élevé, et leur divergence entre les objectifs et les moyens prescrits grande, plus la complexité à laquelle l'organisation doit faire face est importante.

Le système interinstitutionnel, comprenant des entités telles que le marché capitaliste, la bureaucratie d'Etat, la démocratie, la famille et la religion (Friedland & Alford, 1991), est lié à une logique institutionnelle spécifique. Ces multiples logiques, par leur coexistence et interactions, influencent tous les domaines sociétaux et peuvent entrer en conflit et en concurrence en raison de leurs exigences incohérentes et contradictoires (Greenwood et al., 2011). Comprendre ces dynamiques est crucial pour les PPP, car cela leur permet de répondre stratégiquement à la complexité et de créer une "logique commune" pour guider efficacement leur collaboration.

Les organisations sont parfois confrontées à différentes sphères institutionnelles qui, bien qu'incompatibles, se manifestent dans le même domaine logique, créant une complexité intra-institutionnelle (Greenwood et al., 2010). Cela diffère de la complexité interinstitutionnelle où des prescriptions conflictuelles proviennent de logiques différentes. Notre étude de cas unique se concentre sur cette complexité intra-institutionnelle, cherchant à identifier les diverses logiques institutionnelles et leur impact sur les attributs organisationnels tels que les objectifs organisationnels, la structure, la propriété et la gouvernance, ainsi que l'identité (Greenwood et al., 2011). De plus, nous explorons les relations individuelles avec ces logiques multiples en tenant compte de leur identité sociale professionnelle et de la culture organisationnelle. Les identités individuelles, intégrées aux logiques institutionnelles et influencées par les changements organisationnels externes et internes, rendent leurs réactions imprévisibles face à des demandes contradictoires (Pache & Santos, 2013a ; Thornton et al., 2012).

Réponses stratégiques organisationnelles

Face à des exigences concurrentes, les acteurs organisationnels adoptent différentes stratégies pour se conformer à différentes logiques institutionnelles. Les premières recherches ont identifié cinq stratégies que les organisations adoptent généralement face aux pressions institutionnelles : acquiescer, compromettre, éviter, défier et manipuler les organisations lorsqu'elles sont confrontées à des pressions institutionnelles (Oliver, 1991). L'acquiescement, qui peut prendre trois formes - habituelle, imitative et conforme - est la réponse la plus passive (Pache & Santos, 2010). Cependant, lorsque les organisations sont soumises à de multiples pressions, elles sont moins enclines à acquiescer, plus susceptibles de choisir le compromis, l'évitement, le défi ou la manipulation (Oliver, 1991).

Le modèle d'Oliver a été critiqué pour sa réponse insuffisante aux exigences institutionnelles contradictoires dans un contexte d'hybridité élevée (Pache & Santos, 2010). Pache et Santos (2010) ont développé ce modèle en différenciant les conflits institutionnels selon les demandes organisationnelles : moyens et objectifs. Ils soutiennent que la nature des conflits institutionnels (moyens contre objectifs) interagit avec le niveau de représentation interne (absence, unique ou multiple) pour modeler l'expérience des demandes contradictoires et influencer les stratégies employées par les organisations en réponse. Dans notre étude de cas multiple, nous examinons les réponses des acteurs organisationnels et des organisations des PPP.

La littérature a largement étudié les réponses organisationnelles à la complexité institutionnelle (Greenwood, Diaz, et al., 2010 ; Greenwood, Raynard, et al., 2011 ; Pache & Santos, 2010, 2013b). Cependant, pour appréhender la dynamique des organisations hybrides, il est crucial d'étudier les modèles complexes plus en détail (Greenwood et al., 2011). Les individus, en tant que membres de groupes sociaux et professionnels, jouent un rôle clé dans les organisations et sont influencés par des logiques intra-institutionnelles multiples (Pache & Santos, 2010). Il est donc important d'explorer comment les individus gèrent au quotidien cette complexité. L'étude de leur relation avec ces logiques révèle des stratégies spécifiques de gestion de cette complexité au niveau micro (Battilana & Dorado, 2010 ; Ocasio et al., 2017). À travers d'une étude de cas unique, notre recherche explore les exigences institutionnelles dans le domaine organisationnel des PPP, la complexité au niveau intra-institutionnel et les expériences individuelles face à cette complexité pour créer une logique commune.

Chapitre 3 Étude de cas multiple

Ce chapitre discute de la méthodologie et des résultats d'une étude exploratoire de 11 cas de PPP de concession en Afrique de l'Ouest et du centre, axée sur le niveau du terrain organisationnel. Les résultats sont divisés en quatre sous-sections : logiques multiples dominantes et leurs interactions ; complexité et incertitude de l'environnement institutionnel ; rôles et capacités essentiels des secteurs public et privé ; et réponses organisationnelles. Le chapitre se termine par un modèle conceptuel de création d'une logique commune, des limites, des implications managériales et des suggestions pour la recherche future.

Notre conception de recherche, basée sur le cadre de Yin (2018), comprend quatre étapes. La première est la recherche initiale pour comprendre le contexte de l'étude et les défis de recherche associés. Cela a été réalisé par une revue de la littérature et des entretiens avec des experts des PPP en Afrique. Ces entretiens exploratoires qualitatifs ont servi de première source de données, offrant des informations contextuelles précieuses. Nous avons également commencé à collecter des informations sur les projets de PPP en Afrique de l'Ouest et du centre pour comprendre clairement le phénomène avant la collecte de données approfondies.

Dans la deuxième phase de notre recherche, nous nous sommes concentrés sur la formulation des questions de recherche, de choisir la méthodologie, et de sélectionner les cas et les participants à interviewer. Nous avons opté pour une étude de cas multiple sur les PPP dans le secteur des transports en Afrique de l'Ouest et du centre, en utilisant la base de données de Participation Privée à l'Infrastructure (PPI) de la Banque mondiale. Nous avons défini les limites de nos cas en choisissant un nombre diversifié de projets à couvrir dans chaque sous-secteur de transportation. Au total, onze cas ont été sélectionnés, représentant différents types de projets de transport.

La période suivante de notre démarche consiste à recueillir des données, répondre aux questions de recherche et mener des entretiens semi-structurés. Nous avons réalisé 50 entretiens avec des experts impliqués dans les projets étudiés, représentant les secteurs public et privé et venant de 14 nationalités différentes. Ces entretiens, d'une durée de 30 minutes à 2 heures, ont été menés via des plateformes virtuelles en trois langues—français, anglais et chinois. Nous avons sollicité les interviewés principalement par e-mail ou LinkedIn et avons utilisé une combinaison de la méthode de la boule de neige et de la sensibilisation directe pour élargir notre réseau de contacts.

Enfin, la phase d'analyse des données a mobilisé le logiciel NVivo 14. Nous avons structuré et catégorisé les données d'entretien via le codage ouvert et axial, puis utilisé l'analyse thématique pour identifier les modèles et thèmes récurrents. Une synthèse de cas croisés a été utilisée pour comparer différents PPP. Le processus d'analyse a comporté trois phases : description, analyse et interprétation (Wolcott, 1994). Nous avons continué l'analyse jusqu'à atteindre la saturation des données, où aucune nouvelle information ou connexion n'était découverte. La structure finale des données résume les codes du premier ordre, les thèmes du second ordre et les dimensions théoriques agrégées.

Résultats

Nos résultats soulignent la complexité et l'incertitude de l'environnement institutionnel des PPP en Afrique de l'Ouest et du centre, façonnés par des aspects formels comme les règlements et des aspects informels d'ordre culturels. Nous avons relevé une dynamique complexe dans les PPP illustrée par une culture hybride avec des traits communs et distinctifs. Les défis culturels peuvent être surmontés grâce à l'apprentissage mutuel et aux capacités multilingues. Le système institutionnel formel des PPP est confronté à des défis liés à la maturité réglementaire et à la mise en œuvre. De plus, la volonté politique joue un rôle fondamental dans les projets de PPP, avec des risques liés à l'instabilité politique et aux changements de gouvernement. Ces complexités institutionnelles encouragent une variété de logiques et posent des défis à la création d'une logique commune.

Nos résultats montrent aussi que la multiplicité des logiques dans le domaine organisationnel des PPP, notamment la logique de l'État, bureaucratique, professionnelle et communautaire, complique l'établissement d'une "logique commune" entre les partenaires. Ces logiques peuvent interagir et parfois entrer en conflit. Par exemple, la logique du marché peut entrer en conflit avec la logique de l'État, causant des retards dans les projets. Les inefficacités gouvernementales et bureaucratiques peuvent entraver la logique du marché, augmentant les coûts pour les participants privés. Les divergences dans les logiques professionnelles peuvent influencer la stratégie des entreprises. Enfin, l'engagement communautaire peut être en concurrence avec les logiques du marché et de l'État, risquant des échecs de projets et une augmentation des coûts si cet aspect est négligé. Cependant, une responsabilité partagée public-privé dans la communauté peut contribuer au succès du projet.

Notre analyse dévoile un thème clé : les rôles et les capacités. Bien que divers partenaires soient censés remplir leurs rôles conformément aux conventions de partenariat et apporter des compétences de base distinctes, nos données suggèrent que cela n'est pas systématiquement évident dans tous les PPP, ce qui contribue à la complexité de ces partenariats. Pour combler ces écarts entre les multiples logiques au sein des entreprises privées occidentales et non occidentales, rôles et capacités dans un environnement institutionnel complexe et incertain, diverses stratégies organisationnelles sont nécessaires pour surmonter les divisions et créer une logique commune entre les partenaires.

Nos résultats indiquent que les acteurs des PPP utilisent diverses stratégies, comme la compromission, la coopération, le défi et la manipulation, pour naviguer dans les dynamiques complexes du partenariat. Les stratégies de compromis et de coopération mettent en évidence l'importance de l'adaptabilité et de la prise de décision stratégique pour parvenir à une logique commune. La stratégie de défi, bien qu'elle puisse conduire à des compromis, peut impacter l'efficacité des PPP. La stratégie de manipulation, utilisée pour l'opportunisme, soulève des préoccupations sur la transparence et la crédibilité. Le succès des PPP dépend d'une orchestration complexe de ces stratégies, permettant l'évolution d'une logique commune. Sinon, les PPP risquent d'échouer, surtout s'ils ne répondent pas aux besoins des partenaires publics africains et de la population.

Discussions et conclusions

Notre recherche apporte trois contributions principales. Premièrement, elle contribue à la littérature sur les PPP en examinant empiriquement la complexité et l'incertitude de l'environnement politique institutionnel dans les PPP (Quélin et al., 2019), en examinant la complexité et l'incertitude de l'environnement institutionnel africain dans les partenariats entre le secteur public local et les entreprises privées occidentales et non occidentales. Deuxièmement, nous identifions plusieurs logiques institutionnelles au sein des PPP : la logique de l'État, bureaucratique, du marché, professionnelle et communautaire. Cela enrichit la littérature sur les logiques institutionnelles en mettant en évidence la complexité institutionnelle des PPP en tant qu'hybrides. Troisièmement, notre analyse contribue aux réponses stratégiques organisationnelles en révélant que les acteurs des PPP optent pour des stratégies de compromis, d'évitement, de défi ou de manipulation (Oliver, 1991) lorsqu'ils sont confrontés à de multiples pressions institutionnelles, montrant que le compromis et la coopétition sont simultanément utilisés pour établir une logique commune au sein des partenariats.

Nos résultats ont des implications importantes pour les décideurs politiques et les gestionnaires de PPP. Ils soulignent la nécessité d'une clarté et d'un accord mutuel sur les rôles et responsabilités au sein de ces partenariats. Ils suggèrent également que la mise en œuvre réussie des PPP nécessite le développement à long terme des PPP, y compris des règlements appropriés et des organismes de soutien compétents. Un besoin critique de renforcement des capacités dans le secteur public est également souligné. Des contrats flexibles pour permettre des renégociations face aux changements de circonstances. Enfin, une attention particulière doit être accordée à la qualité des relations entre les parties prenantes, y compris la confiance, la communication, l'engagement, l'ouverture et la réciprocité.

Notre recherche présente certaines limites. Les logiques au sein des PPP sont susceptibles de changer fréquemment en raison de leur long cycle de vie et notre approche transversale ne capte qu'un "instantané" à un moment donné. Il sera donc important pour les futures recherches d'examiner les effets à long terme au niveau organisationnel et sur le terrain. De plus, une étude de cas approfondie dans un pays spécifique pourrait aider à comprendre comment une logique commune émerge à travers l'hybridation organisationnelle. Par exemple, une structure SPV mixte pourrait être une approche potentielle pour gérer plusieurs logiques et aborder la complexité institutionnelle.

Chapitre 4 Étude de cas unique

Ce chapitre présente la méthodologie et les résultats d'une étude de cas unique réalisée dans un pays d'Afrique de l'Ouest et du centre. L'étude de cas unique, souvent utilisée pour répondre aux questions commençant par "comment", est précieuse pour examiner des phénomènes peu étudiés, comme dans notre cas, le SPV en tant qu'organisation hybride. Cette méthode nous a permis d'observer et d'analyser les stratégies adoptées par les acteurs organisationnels et individuels pour répondre aux exigences institutionnelles contradictoires et à la complexité intra-institutionnelle.

Nous avons choisi un SPV impliquant des partenaires privés internationaux français et chinois collaborant avec un gouvernement local africain. Pour comprendre comment les acteurs réagissent à la complexité institutionnelle pour créer une logique commune, nous avons mené une étude ethnographique de six mois au sein de ce SPV. Cette approche, axée sur l'observation des comportements individuels, des expériences subjectives et des interactions sociales, est précieuse pour notre recherche micro-institutionnelle (Smets et al., 2012). Dans mon observation, j'ai adopté une approche partiellement clandestine secrète. Le directeur général du SPV étaient au courant de mon rôle de chercheuse et a été

informé de manière simplifiée, et j'ai obtenu un consentement complet et formel de la part des directeurs adjoints. Les employés n'ont pas donné de consentement éclairé individuel, mais le consentement a été accordé au niveau organisationnel.

Les données collectées incluent des observations ethnographiques, des entretiens non structurés et des journaux de données expérientiels. L'analyse a été itérative et abductive, alternant entre les données, la littérature et la théorie dans un processus continu qui comprenait trois étapes principales : le codage ouvert, le thème et la théorisation. Les résultats sont organisés en cinq sous-sections : le domaine organisationnel non coordonné, les multiples logiques intra-organisationnelles, les expériences des acteurs individuels face à ces logiques, et les réponses stratégiques des acteurs individuels et organisationnels face à la complexité institutionnelle. Le chapitre se termine par une discussion sur les résultats, proposant des implications managériales, évoquant les limites de l'étude et suggérant des axes pour de futures recherches.

Résultats

L'analyse de nos données montre que l'environnement institutionnel complexe est exacerbé par des demandes externes non coordonnées, incluant l'interaction entre différents ministères, des lois fiscales contradictoires, les multiples rôles du gouvernement en tant que contrôleur, régulateur et actionnaire, l'opportunisme du secteur public et les diverses exigences des parties prenantes privées. Les interactions avec le ministère des finances et la navigation à travers des paysages fiscaux et politiques complexes posent des défis significatifs. Les parties prenantes privées ont souvent des liens politiques avec le secteur public, qui exerce une influence et une pression politiques sur le secteur privé et le SPV. Ces éléments externes se conjuguent et interagissent au sein du SPV, ajoutant à sa complexité.

Par ailleurs, nos observations mettent en évidence les logiques concurrentes intra-institutionnelles, incluant la logique du marché des entreprises, du service public, ainsi que l'influence des sociétés actionnaires comme l'entreprise d'État chinoise et les logiques d'entreprise privée française, se manifestent au sein du SPV. Ces logiques se reflètent dans les objectifs, les structures, l'identité, la propriété et le mécanisme de gouvernance de l'organisation. Ces logiques concurrentes, introduites par les sociétés actionnaires divergentes, créent une complexité intra-institutionnelle. Cette complexité est accentuée par les objectifs de service public, les motifs de profit et les réalités opérationnelles, ainsi que par les divers intérêts des actionnaires. Les identités sociales internes et les expériences

individuelles contribuent également à ces logiques concurrentes, ajoutant à la dynamique complexe au sein des organisations hybrides.

Les individus au sein du SPV agissent en tant que porteurs de logiques institutionnelles dans un environnement multiculturel dominé par la culture d'entreprise chinoise, tout en étant influencés par la culture locale du pays hôte. Tous les participants à notre étude témoignent d'une identité professionnelle hybride, et leurs réponses individuelles sont façonnées par une diversité de liens avec les logiques institutionnelles. Les postes clés sont principalement occupés par l'entreprise d'État chinois, tandis que l'actionnaire français nomme certains rôles de direction. Nous avons identifié plusieurs logiques internes, y compris la logique du service public, du marché des entreprises SPV, et celles des entreprises chinoises et françaises. L'équipe de direction chinoise est liée aux logiques d'entreprise SPV et de l'entreprise d'État chinois, et le nouveau directeur adjoint français est un novice dans les logiques d'entreprise en place. Ainsi les individus avec les identités professionnelles hybrides, façonnées par un mélange d'influences culturelles et de logiques intra-institutionnelles, jouent un rôle déterminant dans la manière dont les individus naviguent dans le domaine organisationnel des PPP.

Les gestionnaires de SPV ont des relations variées avec les logiques institutionnelles, entraînant une gamme de réponses individuelles à la complexité. Le directeur général chinois et le directeur adjoint chinois, bien qu'alignés sur les logiques de l'entreprise SPV et de l'entreprise d'État chinois, ont des réponses différentes à la complexité. Le directeur général s'aligne sur les intérêts du principal actionnaire et respecte la logique de l'entreprise SPV, tout en adhérant partiellement aux logiques de l'entreprise d'État chinois. Le directeur adjoint chinois adhère pleinement à la logique de l'entreprise SPV, mettant l'accent sur l'internationalisation, la diversité, la conformité aux normes de gestion internationales et le développement à long terme. Le directeur adjoint français 1, malgré une familiarité limitée avec les logiques d'entreprise d'État chinois, démontre forte adhérence avec les logiques de l'entreprise SPV et de l'entreprise française. Le directeur adjoint français 2, en tant que nouveau membre, n'est pas familier avec les logiques existantes et tend à se concentrer sur la création de nouvelles logiques et pratiques, la fixation d'objectifs à long terme et la promotion de la confiance entre les parties prenantes.

Le SPV, confronté à des pressions organisationnelles opportunistes du secteur public et de diverses demandes internes et externes, utilise une combinaison de stratégies pour y répondre. Les acteurs externes, comme le bureau de coordination gouvernemental et les sous-traitants, exercent un contrôle et

une influence sur le SPV pour promouvoir leurs propres intérêts. Pour contrer ces stratégies de manipulation, le SPV utilise une combinaison de stratégies de compromis, d'évitement et de défi. Le choix de la stratégie dépend de la fréquence et de la nature des demandes. Par exemple, face à des demandes constantes, l'entreprise maintient une coopération avec le bureau de coordination et fait des compromis avec les sous-traitants. Pour les demandes occasionnelles, elle adopte une position de défi. En conclusion, le SPV utilise une combinaison de différentes stratégies pour naviguer dans son environnement institutionnel complexe, permettant ainsi de gérer ses opérations et de remplir ses obligations envers toutes les parties prenantes afin de créer une logique commune.

Discussions et conclusions

Cette étude étudie la complexité intra-institutionnelle à travers une étude de cas, celle d'un SPV, une entité qui gère diverses logiques institutionnelles en raison des objectifs divers de ses multiples composants (Battilana & Dorado, 2010 ; Pache & Santos, 2010). L'entreprise d'État chinois détient le pouvoir primaire contrôlé par le Parti Communiste Chinois (Wang, 2014). Le contrôle de la contrepartie centrale sur l'entreprise et ses filiales ont un impact direct sur le SPV par le biais de la structure de gouvernance d'entreprise et de la répartition du pouvoir entre les différents postes. En naviguant dans cette complexité, le SPV promeut une identité hybride, liant les logiques de service public à ses pratiques opérationnelles tout en mettant en avant le professionnalisme et l'expertise.

Dans un environnement de PPP fragmenté, le SPV fait face à des demandes institutionnelles multiples et non coordonnées de la part d'acteurs externes. Ces acteurs, détenant des niveaux de pouvoir similaires (Greenwood et al., 2011), créent un terrain organisationnel modérément centralisé qui influence grandement le SPV (Pache & Santos, 2010). Face à ces exigences contradictoires, le SPV élabore des stratégies pour assurer sa survie, combinant différents compromis pour s'aligner sur des objectifs communs (Pache & Santos, 2010). En cas de non-conformité ou de déséquilibre d'information, il utilise des stratégies d'évitement pour atténuer les tensions tout en préservant sa nature hybride, à la fois axée sur le profit et le service public. Cette étude aide à comprendre comment les organisations répondent à des attentes institutionnelles parfois incompatibles et à créer une logique commune, contribuant ainsi à la théorie des logiques institutionnelles.

Dans un environnement organisationnel, les individus contribuent à la culture interne par leurs interactions et partagent des valeurs et des normes de comportement (Battilana & Lee, 2014). La culture

du SPV est un mélange de différentes influences, principalement chinoises, mais aussi du pays d'accueil. L'établissement d'une identité hybride commune est un défi dû à la variété des identités culturelles et professionnelles présentes (Battilana & Dorado, 2010). Les conflits d'identité peuvent entraver la coopération et engendrer des luttes de pouvoir (Thornton et al., 2012). De plus, l'adhésion aux logiques institutionnelles varie entre les individus (Besharov & Smith, 2014), créant des tensions, spécialement pour les nouveaux arrivants. Enfin, les individus naviguent à travers ces complexités, adhérant à, résistant ou étant indifférents aux logiques institutionnelles, tandis que les gestionnaires de SPV élaborent des stratégies pour gérer cette complexité intra-institutionnelle (Pache & Santos, 2013a).

Face aux logiques institutionnelles, les individus choisissent quelle logique suivre, modifier, ignorer ou rejeter pour préserver leur identité et poursuivre les objectifs organisationnels (Pache & Santos, 2013a). Ces choix influencent la réponse de l'organisation à la complexité institutionnelle (Greenwood et al., 2011). L'hybridité culturelle au sein du SPV peut favoriser la cohésion et atténuer les tensions, suggérant un recrutement axé sur des individus biculturels ou multiculturels. Cependant, la structure de gouvernance bicéphale de l'entreprise d'État nécessite des clarifications supplémentaires en raison de son potentiel pour soulever des préoccupations éthiques et affaiblir les pouvoirs du conseil d'administration.

Cette recherche, malgré les potentielles critiques éthiques, justifie son approche en mettant en avant les bénéfices sociaux pour le SPV en tant qu'organisation hybride (Roulet et al., 2017). Les logiques institutionnelles, qui évoluent historiquement et influencent le domaine organisationnel, peuvent changer avec le temps (Ocasio et al., 2017 ; Pache & Santos, 2010 ; Thornton & Ocasio, 2008). L'étude met l'accent sur les facteurs organisationnels et individuels à un moment donné, soulignant que les stratégies des gestionnaires du SPV sont façonnées par des éléments macro-contextuels. Les actions détenues par la société actionnaire influencent le système de contrôle dominant sur le SPV (Besharov & Smith, 2014). De futures recherches pourraient explorer les différentes structures du SPV et la relation entre les identités individuelles et organisationnelles (Thornton et al., 2012), ce qui pourrait améliorer l'engagement organisationnel et la compatibilité entre diverses logiques.

Chapitre 5 : Résumés de la méthodologie, des résultats et discussions

Nous avons utilisé une approche de raisonnement abductif pour la collecte et l'analyse des données dans notre étude. Pour l'étude de cas multiples, nous avons mené un total de 59 entretiens semi-

structurés, dont 9 entretiens exploratoires et 50 entretiens liés aux cas. Le processus de collecte de données comprenait trois étapes : une revue de la littérature initiale, des entretiens exploratoires, l'identification des projets de PPP et 50 entretiens semi-structurés. Dans l'étude de cas unique, nous avons effectué des observations ethnographiques sur site et des entretiens non structurés sur une période de six mois à l'intérieur de la SPV. L'observation était une méthode clé pour étudier la recherche micro-institutionnelle, en se concentrant sur les comportements organisationnels et individuels, les expériences subjectives et les interactions sociales. Notre approche d'observation était partiellement dissimulée, les participants étant conscients de mon identité en tant que chercheur. La collecte de données comprenait des observations ethnographiques, des entretiens non structurés et des données expérimentales-journaux. Dans notre analyse des données, nous avons utilisé NVivo 14 pour analyser les transcriptions.

Notre recherche, basée sur deux études de cas, a généré des résultats clés dans cinq domaines principaux : le rôle de l'environnement institutionnel, les complexités institutionnelles découlant de la coexistence de plusieurs logiques institutionnelles, les rôles distincts des secteurs public et privé dans les PPP, les expériences et stratégies des organisations et de leurs gestionnaires en réponse à ces complexités. Nous avons souligné comment l'environnement institutionnel, y compris le contexte institutionnel formel et informel, influence la dynamique au sein des PPP et des SPV. Nous avons également exploré les défis découlant des rôles déséquilibrés des partenaires publics et privés, de la coexistence et de l'interaction de multiples logiques institutionnelles, de l'expérience et des stratégies employées aux niveaux du terrain, de l'organisation et de l'individu pour naviguer dans ces complexités et créer une logique commune.

Nos travaux apportent des contributions aux discussions sur la gestion des PPP, la gestion des logiques institutionnelles multiples, la gestion des organisations hybrides et les praticiens (Ocasio et al., 2017 ; Thornton & Ocasio, 2008). En s'appuyant sur des cas empiriques approfondies, nous élargissons la vision de la gestion des PPP, en les présentant comme une forme idéale d'hybridité. Cette perspective intègre plusieurs logiques au niveau organisationnel des PPP ainsi qu'au sein du SPV. En outre, notre étude enrichit notre connaissance de la manière dont les organisations répondent stratégiquement à la complexité institutionnelle (Pache & Santos, 2010). Elle répond également à l'appel pour des recherches plus détaillées de la façon dont la complexité institutionnelle est gérée à la fois aux niveaux organisationnels qu'individuel (Thornton et al., 2012). Enfin, elle met en lumière l'importance d'établir

des liens entre le niveau organisationnel et individuel dans le contexte des PPP. Grâce à cette approche, nous développons une compréhension holistique de la dynamique et des complexités inhérentes aux PPP en tant qu'hybridité, la création d'une logique commune en leur sein, et l'élaboration de stratégies de gestion efficaces pour les gestionnaires (Besharov & Smith, 2014).

Cette thèse présente plusieurs limites. Premièrement, elle se base principalement sur une étude de cas croisée et approfondie, capturant un "instantané" à un moment donné, alors que les logiques institutionnelles évoluent avec le temps (Ocasio et al, 2017 ; Thornton & Ocasio, 2008). Deuxièmement, il est important de noter que les stratégies micro des gestionnaires de SPV sont probablement influencées par des facteurs individuels hors de notre champ de recherche (Thornton et al., 2012). Troisièmement, notre approche de recherche partiellement convertie peut attirer des critiques, notamment sur les questions éthiques. En réponse, nous soulignons les bénéfices sociaux de notre recherche. Enfin, la confusion potentielle entre l'objet de recherche et le chercheur dans la recherche convertie est modéré par l'usage de la réflexivité, le renforcement de l'identité et l'utilisation de méthodes d'observation mixtes.

La recherche développée dans cette thèse a soulevé plusieurs questions institutionnelles et organisationnelles. Étant donné la longue durée de vie des PPP, leurs logiques inhérentes pourraient évoluer avec le temps, suggérant que les futures recherches pourraient profiter de l'utilisation d'études longitudinales pour acquérir des connaissances approfondies sur le développement des PPP en tant qu'hybridité. De plus, les travaux futurs pourraient envisager des études de cas comparatives qui examinent différentes structures de SPV, ou l'impact indirect du contrôle du Parti communiste chinois sur le SPV. Enfin, les recherches futures pourraient gagner en profondeur en intégrant la littérature sur l'identité et d'autres modalités d'hybridité organisationnelle pour étudier l'interaction entre les identités individuelles et organisationnelles.

Mots-clés : Partenariats Public–Privé (PPP), logiques institutionnelles multiples, hybride, complexité institutionnelle, réponses stratégiques, étude de cas, Afrique de l'Ouest et Afrique Central

Appendix 1 Interview Protocol

Interview objectives	The objective of this interview is to study the different institutional logics and the partnership relations through a multiple-case study within the framework of a doctoral research project the multinational public–private partnerships in infrastructure in Sub-Saharan Africa at the Economics of Public–Private Partnerships (EPPP) Chair of Paris 1 Panthéon Sorbonne, scientifically recognized as one of the best research centers in the world on PPPs with more than 10 years of experience.	
Interviewer's information	Full name	DONG Baoqin
	Position	PhD student in Science of Management at the Management Panthéon Sorbonne Doctoral School (ED559) of the University of Paris 1 Panthéon Sorbonne
	Contact	WhatsApp: +33(0)749361289 LinkedIn: Baoqin DONG ROBIN Email: Baoqin.Dong@etu.univ-paris1.fr
	Interviewer's thesis supervisor	Simon Porcher Professor, University Paris Dauphine PSL Simon.porcher@dauphine.psl.eu
Interview language	In French, English, or Chinese	
Interview mode	Online interview Use mainly Zoom/Microsoft Teams. Once the date and time of the interview are fixed, the interviewer will send the link to the interviewee in advance. Inform the interviewer if the interviewee prefers another platform for the interview.	
Interview duration	Estimated at 30–60 mins. depending on the interviewee's answers	
Recording	Yes (Respect the willingness and confidentiality of the interviewee)	
Interview appointment	Persons making the appointment	The interviewer or her thesis supervisor Persons appointed by the interviewer or her thesis supervisor Persons recommended by the interviewees
	Date and time of appointment	Date: Monday to Friday It is ideal that the interviewee confirms the exact date and time with the interviewer by WeChat or WhatsApp in real time.

		If not possible, it is desirable that the interviewee suggests two suitable times to avoid conflicting with the unavailability of the interviewer.
Number of interviews	Number of projects	11 projects
	Sectors	Transport (airport, port, road, railway)
	Countries	Mainly in West and Central Africa: Burkina Faso, Benin, Cameroon, Côte d'Ivoire, Republic of Congo, Gabon, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, Togo
	Number of interviews	More than two people from the public and private sectors of each project
Interview questions	Number of questions	Around 15 questions depending on the interviewee's answers
	Questions	Mainly on the design of the contract (role, risk, performance indicators, etc.), negotiations and renegotiations, financing, main partners (strategies, cooperation), value of the project, etc.
Interviewee's information	Persons who have participated or are participating directly or indirectly in the project in the public, private, and financial institutions. Persons who have a lot of knowledge about the projects (e.g., researcher)	
Statement	This interview respects the will and confidentiality of the interviewee regarding the recording. This interview does not involve any confidential information. This interview complies with research ethics and does not publicly release any information including audio/video recording related to the interview on the internet including all social media.	

Many thanks to those who contribute to the interviews for the doctoral research project!

Signature

Baoqin DONG

Appendix 2 Sample Interview Questions

- Could you please give a brief self-introduction?
- Could you please present this project (the context and the history of the project)? What are the reasons for implementing this project (public) / investing in this project (private)?
- Could you please describe the sector (transport) in a general way in your country?
- What are the risks of the project? How are they distributed?
- Who are the main partners involved in the projects (e.g., are there any NGOs, SMEs)?
- Do you think the partners share the same short-term and long-term visions?
- What are the performance indicators? How are they measured?
- How are the roles distributed between the public and the private? between the private parties in the consortium (financing, design, construction, operation)?
- What are the modes of communications/information exchange (formal and informal) between public and private?
- What is the selection procedure for the project? By what means (direct negotiation, call for tenders, or mixed)?
- What are the important negotiations involved (number of negotiations, parties involved, duration, initiator, agreements reached)?
- Are the negotiations foreseen in the contract? In terms of what subject (regulation, finance)? How are the unscheduled renegotiations going, for example, during COVID-19?
- Are there conflicts between the private companies? What are these conflicts? How are they resolved?
- What are your past experiences with PPP management and your partners?
- In your opinion, which skills have been exploited the most for this project?
- How do you invest to improve the management of the project over the long term?
- Does the public body have recourse to external experts for the setting up of this project? What are their roles? Do the private partners have consulting companies?
- How was the funding formed (sources, funding structure, financial package, etc.)? Does this project have financial viability? What are the commercial values (e.g., value for money)?

- What are the values created by stakeholder cooperation?
- What are the main difficulties of the contract/project and how can the contract/project improve?
- What are the lessons that we can draw from this project?

Appendix 3 Country and Project Information

Appendix 3.1 Country Information

Countries in West and Central Africa, including former British and French colonies—such as Ghana, Nigeria, Senegal, Republic of the Congo, Cameroon, Gabon, Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), Burkina Faso, and Ivory Coast—are grappling with significant public debt and urgent infrastructure requirements. For instance, Ghana's public debt escalated to more than 90% of its GDP in 2022 (World Bank, n.d.-a), underlining a pressing need for debt restructuring. This situation is further complicated by large financing requirements and tightening financing conditions, which have heightened concerns about debt sustainability. Elevated public deficits, a consequence of diminished revenues and inadequate control over expenditure, alongside corruption, skill shortages, inefficient public spending, and poor infrastructure, have hindered progress in the development of the manufacturing sector. Fiscal imbalances, characterized by large public deficits and excessive debt, were already deep-seated issues but have been exacerbated by external crises from 2020 to 2023. The ensuing loss of investor confidence and capital outflows severely affected the local currency, causing the Ghanaian cedi to lose half its value in 2022 and leading to the country's loss of access to international markets in November 2021.

As a multi-ethnic country, Nigeria has multiple culturally diverse federations of 36 autonomous states and the Federal Capital Territory (World Bank, n.d.-b). With President Bola Ahmed Tinubu on stage in 2023, Nigeria continues to face many social and economic challenges. The country's inflation reached a 17-year high of 25.8% in August 2023 (World Bank, n.d.-b), in combination with high debt service exceeding meager tax revenue (8% of GDP), high dependence on oil (90% of exports, 50% of tax revenue), making the country's economy challenging (Coface, n.d.-a). As one of the largest economies in Sub-Saharan Africa, Nigeria faces infrastructure constraints, such as the annual financing gap of USD 8 billion, including USD 2.9 billion in infrastructure investment needed over the next 30 years (Economist Intelligence Unit, 2015). Infrastructure has suffered from neglect by successive governments since independence in 1960 (KPMG, 2021). The transport sector was one of the priorities of former President Yar'Adua's program ("Umaru Yar'Adua." 2025). The government was building on the successes of recent years to implement a

major program for the development of the transport sector, seeking to attract private sector investment through privatization and PPPs (Halai, 2008).

Senegal's public debt is 75.1% of GDP, amid high inflation and a large current account deficit, with poor road network infrastructure due to rapid city expansion. For instance, its capital Dakar has a quarter of its population living in the Dakar region (0.3% of the territory). The rapid expansion of the city of Dakar to the east has created congestion on the existing poor quality road network. Ivory Coast faces an infrastructure deficit and weak public revenues, highlighting the need for infrastructure development and fiscal sustainability.

In Central Africa, the public debt of the Republic of Congo stands at more than 90% of GDP, with low attractiveness for foreign investment outside the extractive sector due to poor governance and poor transport, health and education infrastructure and services. Cameroon's business environment is marked by poor governance, endemic corruption, and an infrastructure deficit. Insufficient efforts were made to mobilize public revenue (14.5% of GDP in 2023). Gabon is at high risk of a deteriorating budgetary situation and over-indebtedness. The Democratic Republic of Congo and Burkina Faso both struggle with weak infrastructure in sectors such as transport, energy, telecommunications, health, water, and more.

Political and Security Challenges in the Region

The countries face unique political and security challenges. President Akufo-Addo of Ghana, in his second term of office, grapples with security threats including jihadist infiltration in the north (GhanaWeb, 2021). Senegal, despite its strong record of political stability, faces a jihadist threat on its southeast border (Coface, n.d.-b). The political context of the Republic of Congo, which since 1972 has been under President Denis Sassou Nguesso (who is eligible for a fifth term in 2026), is marred by an authoritarian regime, laborious public policies, and corruption. Cameroon faces insecurity in the west and north, with secessionist movements and terrorism as well as the succession of President Biya posing political uncertainty. Gabon's political instability, corruption, appropriation of oil revenues, and popular discontent create an uncertain business environment, even marking the end of the Gabonese Democratic Party's era in a 2023 coup. The DRC deals with a precarious humanitarian and security situation, with numerous armed

militaries operating in the east of the country and tensions with Rwanda. Burkina Faso has an extremely precarious security context with the presence of armed Islamist groups controlling almost half the territory, political instability, and poor governance. Lastly, Ivory Coast faces a jihadist terrorist threat in the north of the country.

Regional Relation with France and China

The countries within this region maintain distinct strategic international partnerships, particularly with France and China. The Republic of Congo has a strong economic partnership with France and a robust relationship with China, its main partner for oil exports (24% in 2023) and a major source of imports, as it seeks to stimulate foreign investment in hydrocarbons and its nascent mining sector. Cameroon enjoys a long-standing relationship with France and is diversifying with China, which is investing heavily in local mining and port infrastructures as part of its African policy. Gabon, despite political turmoil, maintains an open dialogue with France due to its strategic extractive interests in the country. Senegal, while maintaining close ties with France, is also diversifying its alliances with China. Burkina Faso saw France suspend its development aid and budgetary support with the withdrawal of French forces, while its relationships with China are not explicitly apparent. Ghana enjoys strong ties with China, a major destination for its crude oil and manganese exports, and Ivory Coast maintains a significant French military presence and has strong economic ties with China. Nigeria is pursuing PPPs at both the federal and state levels, with projects existing mainly in the transport (especially ports), energy (electricity), and telecommunications sectors. Foreign-funded projects, especially Chinese ones, play an important role in the development of large-scale infrastructure in Nigeria (World Bank, 2020).

Appendix 3.2 Project Information

Project No. 1: Dakar–Diamniadio–AIBD Toll Highway

Project overview	The Dakar–Diamniadio–AIDB toll highway of 42.5 km connecting the four main poles: Dakar, Pikine, Diamniadio, and the Blaise Diagne International Airport	
Concessionaire	Société du projet Eiffage de la Concession de l'Autoroute de l'Avenir (SECAA)	
Principal stakeholders	Eiffage Concession, government represented by APIX	
Phase I: Dakar–Diamniadio toll highway		
Length	32 km in total, of which 20.5 km is a PPP concession	
Type of concession	First PPP greenfield procurement, DBFOM model	
Cost	A. Road infrastructure	USD 264.6
	B. Clearing of the right-of-way and management of the Mbao forest	USD 58.3
	C. Urban restructuring of Pikine–Irregulier Sud	USD 55.0
	D. Program Implementation	USD 14.1
	Total cost (million)	USD 493.5
Construction work and period	Construction of 3 lanes in each direction Phase 1: Malick Sy–Patte d'Oie–Pikine – 12 km (public contracts) Construction work: July 2005–September 2009 Phase 2: Keur Massar–Pikine – 7 km (PPP concession) Construction work: February 2010–August 1, 2013 Phase 3: Keur Massar–Diamniadio – 13 km (PPP Concession) Construction work: December 2006 to August 2013	
Signature of concession agreement	2009	
Financial close	2010	
Duration of the concession	30 years (The extension of the duration of the concession was renegotiated for five years in 2021 [Le Point Afrique, 2021].)	
Revenues	Tolls Hybrid toll system, open in the urban area (Patte d'Oie Thiaroye) with a fixed price at the exit of the section and six tolls closed in the suburban and rural area (Keur Massar–Diamniadio).	
SPV	Société Eiffage de la Nouvelle Autoroute Concédée (SENAC), which was formerly Senac SA and changed to SECAA.	
Phase II: Extension project: Diamniadio–AIBD toll highway		
Extension of concession	2014	
Financial closing	2015	
Construction period	2015–2016	
Extension cost	Total cost is EUR 121 million and financed as follows: (i) EUR 35.5 million in equity from the sponsor and loans provided by the same lenders as for the Dakar–Diamniadio project (ii) EUR 85.5 million grant from the Government of Senegal (financed by a sovereign loan from AFD)	
Renegotiation	In 2022, the two parties signed the single concessional contract with the entry of the state into the capital. The State-investor benefits from the sharing of fruit and collection of land royalties with immediate effect and the State-regulator monitors the performance contract.	
Phase	Contract management	

Project No. 2: Accra–Kumasi Toll Road

Project overview	The Accra–Kumasi toll road links the city of Accra, which is the political, economic and transportation center, and Kumasi, Ghana's second largest city, 230 km north of Accra, providing a main access to the north of the country (BrockleBank, 2014). The road is a single carriageway with poor safety. Travel times between these two cities are estimated to be over five hours. With traffic growth, congestion is severe in the urban centers, resulting in significantly longer travel times and high accident rates.	
Length	240 km (141 km to be improved)	
Construction work	Dualization of 141 km of existing single carriageway highway	
Type of procurement	Brownfield, new roadway generally in line with the existing highway	
Project timeline	Year	Evolution
	Early 2000s	This project was originally one of the projects evaluated by PPIAF for possible PPP procurement.
	2004	The Ministry of Roads and Highways issued a tender for the Build-Operate-Transfer (BOT) model. However, the preferred bidder was rejected by the World Bank (BrockleBank, 2014). An unsolicited proposal was then submitted by Arterial Toll Roads (ARTCL) in a Design-Finance-Build-Operate (DBFO) PPP concession, including construction of two 141-km lanes, associated grade-separated intersections, rest areas, five toll plazas, and intercity bus integration. Thus, together with the previous construction works, the concession allows for the complete dualization of the 240-km highway.
	2005	ARTCL was awarded the concession. ARTCL is a joint venture between Wellington Trust Investment Company (Canada), Savarino Construction and Project Development Company (USA), and DSC International Design and Project Management Company (Egypt).
	2005–	Preparation phase
Phase	Project identification	

Project No. 3: Lekki–Epe toll road

Project overview	Privatization in the telecommunications sector has had some success, which has encouraged the government to develop the Lekki–Epe highway using the private sector. Indeed, it is the first privately financed toll highway project in Nigeria. Thus, as the first PPP in the transport sector in Nigeria, this project is intended not only to alleviate traffic congestion and strengthen local infrastructure in response to the needs of the state's growing population, but also to increase efficiency in the transport sector through private sector participation. The Lekki–Epe toll highway was built in 1980 originally in a rural settlement by the State governments. However, it became challenging as the population grows. Lagos, the economic capital of Nigeria, has presented traffic and security problems due to an increasing rural population.	
Project timeline	Year	Evolution
	2003	Pre-feasibility and feasibility studies to identify and determine a priority list PPP road project, including the Lekki–Epe highway, carried out by Aurecon
	2005	The feasibility study is detailed by BKS of South Africa.
	2006	Restricted tender and negotiation in August; signature of the concession
	2008	Financial closing
Type of contract	BOT, Design-Build-Operate-Transfer (DBOT), and Renovation-Operation-Transfer (ROT)	
Dealer	Lekki Concession Company (LCC)	
Shareholders (initial)	ARM & Larue projects - 51% AIIF - 44% Hi-tech Construction - 5%	
Duration of the concession	30 years	
Duration of the construction	3 years	
Construction work	Phase I: Civil works and development of a 6-km section Phase II: Construction of 14-km of coastal road on the Lekki peninsula with a 30-year BOT	
Total project value	USD 426.4 million (NGN 50.1 billion)	
Returned by the government	December 2014, 100% by Lagos State	

Project No. 4: Concession of National Road No. 1 (Brazzaville–Point-Noire)

Project overview	With more than half of its population residing in its two main cities, Brazzaville and Pointe-Noire, National Road No. 1 (RN1) is mostly a two-lane road, 535 km long, connecting Brazzaville to Pointe-Noire. With a construction cost of more than USD 2 billion, RN1 was built under a strategic partnership: the framework agreement of cooperation between the Congolese and Chinese republics concluded in 2007 (Caslin, 2016). It is a key project of cooperation between the two countries in the 50 years since the establishment of diplomatic relations between China and Congo (CSCEC, 2019).	
Phase I	2008–2016: Design, Build, and Finance	
Construction work	The work was carried out mainly by the Chinese company China State Construction Engineering Corporation (CSCEC) under an EPC contract with finance from China Exim bank at a cost of more than USD 2.144 billion. Phase 1: Pointe Noire–Dolisie (164 km) was started in May 2005 and was completed in December 2011. Phase 2: Dolisie–Brazaville (371 km) was completed in March 2016. The work is controlled and supervised by Egis International.	
Phase II	Concession: Transfer-Operate-Transfer (TOT)	
Project timeline	Year	Evolution
	2016–2018	Launch of the call for tender by the State with prequalification and four rounds of negotiations between the concessionaire and the State.
	2019	Signature and approval by the president; creation of the project company
	2019–present	Concession
Concession period	30 years	
Shareholders	China Construction Zhiyuan Investment Limited (majority shareholder, a subsidiary of CSCEC) - 70% Egis projects SA - 15% Congolese government - 15%	
Type of procurement	First brownfield concessional project	
Phase	Contract management	

Project No. 5: Henri Konan Bédié (HKB) Toll Highway Bridge

Project context	Abidjan's traffic problems stem from a lack of attention on infrastructure, but these issues are compounded by its physical geography: the city stands in the Ébrié Lagoon, on several converging peninsulas and islands. The two bridges connecting these land masses are insufficient and in desperate need of repair.	
Project timeline	Year	Evolution
	1996	A competitive bidding process was held to build a third bridge.
	1997	The project company Société Concessionaire du Pont Riviera-Marcory (SOCOPRIM) was formed.
	1998	The project was awarded in 1998 to the company SOCOPRIM (World Bank, 2015), but the project's PPP contract was put on hold for more than 15 years as a result of political crises and a 10-year civil conflict.
	2011–2014	The project resumed and was carried out by Bouygues Travaux Publics in 2011, and the work was received in December 2014 with a duration of 38 months.
Type of PPP	BOT-DBOM type concession	
Main shareholders	Bouygues Travaux Publics, Total CI, PAIDF, Ivoirian State, and the Bank National Investment Bank (BNI)	
Concession period	30-year PPP starting in 2015	
Manufacturer	Bouygues Travaux Publics	
Project cost	EUR 270 million	
Donors	BAD, BOAD, BIDC, AFC, FMO, BMCE, PAIDF, MIGA	
Phase	Contract management	

Project No. 6: Road-rail Bridge between Democratic Republic of Congo and Republic of Congo

Project overview	The project, linking Kinshasa and Brazzaville, consists of a 1.575-km long toll bridge over the Congo River, including a railroad, a dual carriageway, crosswalks, and a border control post on each side. This bridge will be built in PPP.	
Project timeline	Year	Evolution
	2018	On November 7, 2018, a Framework Agreement relating to the structuring of the project had been signed in Johannesburg, South Africa, in the presence of officials from Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS). Africa50 and the African Development Bank (ADB) are in charge of the project.
	2019	To accelerate the implementation of the project, during the Africa Investment Forum on November 11, 2019, a bilateral agreement was signed between the two governments to organize the financing, construction, and operation of the road-rail bridge over the Congo River.
	2021	In January 2021, Law No. 5-2021 of January 21, 2021, authorized the ratification of the agreement between the two governments on the financing, construction, and operation of the road-rail bridge over the Congo River, between the two cities of Brazzaville and Kinshasa.
	2022	Prequalification bidding finished, selected
	2025	Preparation of second phase of bidding process
Type of contract	PPP – the financing of the design, construction, maintenance, and operation and maintenance of the facility (DBFOM)	
Financing	African Development Bank, Africa50, and others (Law No. 5-2021 of January 21, 2021) [3]	
Duration of the concession	Approximately 35 years after the date of entry into force (Law No. 5-2021 of January 21, 2021)	
Development and structuring of the project	Africa50	
Follow-up of the project implementation	ECCAS Intergovernmental Commission, assisted by a mixed technical committee	
Phase	Tender phase	

[3] The DRC government expects Chinese financial participation in the amount of EUR 60 billion (Le Moniteur, 2018).

Project No. 7: Port of Kribi

Project	The port of Kribi is the first deep water port in Cameroon.	
Phase I	Construction work	
Financing	The Kribi Autonomous Port is being built in two phases by the Chinese company China Harbour Engineering Company (CHEC) under an Engineering Procurement Construction (EPC) contract at a total cost of USD 497 million for Phase I and USD 793 million for Phase II. The 85% of the cost of the works of the two phases is financed by the Export-Import Bank of China (Eximbank) and the remaining 15% constitutes the counterpart to be provided by the Cameroonian government.	
Repayment	According to the Autonomous Port of Kribi, the agreement on the repayment mechanism is a tripartite Escrow Agent Agreement signed by the different parties: the Cameroonian borrower represented by MINEPAT, the lender Eximbank, and the Autonomous Port of Kribi and Escrow Agent. This management allows the repayment of the loan. More specifically, the revenues of the Kribi Port Authority are kept in an escrow account in CFA francs called "Control Account," from which the priority expenses will be covered: the port's operating expenses as well as the debt service through a second dedicated account called "Escrow Account." The latter account allows for the repayment of loans from China Eximbank.	
Phase II	Concession for the container terminal	
Period	25 years starting in 2017	
Concessionaire	Kribi Container Terminal (KCT)	
Shareholders	Name of shareholders	Shares
	Kribi Holding Terminal (Bolloré Africa Logistics, CMA/CGM, CHEC)	60.45%
	Wide Resources Ltd.	20%
	Belmont Investments, SAPEM, Alliance Trading, TRANSIMEX, SCI Ambankoans	19.55%
Roles of the stakeholders	Stakeholders	Roles
	Bolloré Africa Logics and CMA-CGM	Bolloré Africa Logics organizes national logistics from the port of Kribi, while CMA-CGM ensures traffic/customers. Bolloré is the world's largest logistics company with a presence in over 17 countries in Africa, while CMA-CMG is the third largest container carrier. They have a wealth of experience in managing ports and dealing with the local population.
	CHEC	CHEC has provided not only the construction of the port with the bank financing the project, but also its participation in the management of the container terminal (Pairault, 2019). According to Pairault (2019), the company was preparing to become the terminal operator, which aligned with the group's strategy-"a CCCC group with five hats" (五商中交). The partnership with the two French giants allows CHEC to act as an operator, learn terminal management, and internationalize its operations (Pairault, 2019).
	Kribi Polyvalent Multiple Operators (KPMO)	Commercial operations only began in March 2018. In July 2018, a subcontract for the operation of certain activities of the multipurpose terminal was awarded to the Cameroonian consortium Kribi Polyvalent Multiple Operators (KPMO), a consortium of federated

		Cameroonian companies, for the towing/launching and handling on the platform of the polyvalent terminal.
Phase	Contract management	

Project No. 8: Lekki Deep Sea Port

<table>
<tr><td>Project Overview</td><td colspan="3">Lekki Deep Sea Port is a multipurpose port with terminals for containerized, dry, and liquid bulk cargo. It is located in the center of the Lagos Free Trade Zone, about 65 km east of Lagos. It is the first deepwater port in Nigeria. As a first deepwater port in West Africa, Lekki Port is also considered one of the flagship cooperation projects of the “One Road One Belt” initiative. Therefore, the concessionaire has pressure coming both from private investors and the Nigerian government. The concession structure remains complex with multiple shareholders including CHEC, Toloram, subcontractors, and international financial institutions such as China Development Bank.</td></tr>
<tr><td>Concessional model</td><td colspan="3">Build, Finance, Operate, and Transfer (BFOT)</td></tr>
<tr><td>Concession period</td><td colspan="3">Signed in 2011 for 45 years</td></tr>
<tr><td rowspan="6">Shareholders</td><td colspan="3">The concessionaire is Lekki Port LFTZ Enterprise Limited (LPLEL), consisting of Lekki Port Investment Holdings Inc. (led by CHEC and Tolaram Group), the Government of Nigeria through the Nigerian Ports Authority, and the Lagos State Government.</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">Shareholders</td><td>Shares</td></tr>
<tr><td rowspan="2">Lekki Port Investment Holdings Inc</td><td>Tolaram-TPII - 30%</td><td rowspan="2">75%</td></tr>
<tr><td>CHEC-Zhenwei Enterprise Limited - 70%</td></tr>
<tr><td rowspan="2">the Government of Nigeria</td><td>Nigerian Ports Authority</td><td>5%</td></tr>
<tr><td>Lagos State Government</td><td>20%</td></tr>
<tr><td rowspan="4">Construction and operation contractors</td><td>Partners</td><td colspan="2">Roles</td></tr>
<tr><td>Constructors</td><td colspan="2">The construction of the project began in December 2017 and completed in 2022 by China Harbour Engineering LFTZ Enterprise (CHELE), a subsidiary of China Harbour Engineering Company (CHEC), which is responsible for the design and construction of the container terminal’s marine and land infrastructure and utilities</td></tr>
<tr><td>Project management consultant</td><td colspan="2">The American company Louis Berger has been contracted by Tolaram Group to act as a project management consultant (e.g., preparation of the port infrastructure plan).</td></tr>
<tr><td>Operator</td><td colspan="2">CMA-CGM Group signed a memorandum of understanding with LPLEL in April 2018 to operate the container terminal at the Port of Lekki.</td></tr>
<tr><td>Phase</td><td colspan="3">From construction to Contract Management</td></tr>
</table>

Project No. 9: Libreville International Airport

Project timeline	Year	Evolution
	1950–1988	Libreville Airport is named after the first president of the Gabonese Republic Leon Mba (1961–1967). Built in 1950, the airport is today the main airport of Gabon and the only one serving international destinations with the capacity to accommodate all types of aircraft (Libreville Aeroport, n.d.). Until 1988, the airport was managed by ASECNA (Agence pour la sécurité de la navigation aérienne en Afrique et à Madagascar). At that time, the Gabonese government wanted to expand its airport. However, ASECNA, which was the manager, did not have the means to finance. As a result, ASECNA needed at that time to find a financial partner to operate the airport. With Sofrès Avia, which was only an engineering company and had a technical assistance contract that it kept until 2018 with ASECNA and the airport of Marseille, they founded SEGAP.
	1988–2008	In 1988, with the SEGAP, 50% of Chambre de Commerce in Marseille, 50% of Sofrès Avia, they created and negotiated the concession of the Libreville Airport for thirty years between 1988 and 2018. Thus, SEGAP was the technical and operating partner of the Gabonese state to manage the Leon MBA Airport, the current airport and make investments. This was the first historical PPP airport in Africa. In 2008, Egis bought Sofrès Avia, which became Egis Avia. In buying Egis Avia, Egis bought the Egis shareholding in SEGAP in Libreville Airport. Egis was involved in airport management.
First concession	The concession of the Libreville Airport by Egis started in 1988 for 30 years, in accordance with Decree No. 1071/PR/MACC of October 5, 1988.	
Concessionaire	Aéroport de Libreville (ADL)	
Shareholders	Gabonese state, Aéroport Marseille Provence, and Egis Airport Operation	
Second concession	Started from 2018 for a 50-year concession (with a 40-year extension option) with the Gabonese Republic (ARISE, 2018). The concession was signed in 2015, and commissioning was expected by 2022, after a three-year construction and pre-commissioning period. This project involves the development of a new international airport, located 30 km from the city center of Libreville, close to Nkok SEZ, to replace the existing one (Leon Mba). GSEZ Airports was set to design, finance, build, and operate the new airport with a capacity of 2.5 million passengers per year, along with 23,000 MT of cargo and take over the operations of the existing airport until the new one is commissioned. However, the project was delayed due to the COVID-19 pandemic.	
Concessionaire	Gabon Special Economic Zone (GSEZ) Airports	
Shares (GlobalData, n.d.)	Shareholders	% of shares
	Republic of Gabon	38.5%
	Olam International	40.5%
	Africa Finance Corporation	21%
Phase	Contract management	

Project No. 10: FHB Abidjan International Airport

Project overview	Abidjan's Félix Houphouët-Boigny (FHB) International Airport is one of the first African airports to be managed by a private operator.		
Project timeline	Year	Evolution	
	1990s	The Ivorian State has called on a private operator to invest and modernize the airport facilities in 1990s. The work began in 1996. The duration of the concession is 33 years.	
	1990–2010	The Ivorian political crisis, which began in 1999 and lasted 12 years, and the disappearance of airlines such as Sabena, Swissair, and Air Afrique have harmed the airport. Traffic remained problematic at that time (below one million passengers). The Marseille-Provence Chamber of Commerce and Industry (CCIMP), which manages the Marseille Airport, joined forces with the airport engineering firm Sofrés Avia, which was acquired in 2006 by the Egis group.	
	2010	The airport concession granted to AERIA[4] was renewed in 2010 for 20 years.	
	2010s	In 2014, the number of passengers reached the peak of the traffic boom in the late 1990s. Between 2015 and 2019, to meet the new challenges and accompany the strong growth to come, the airport has made 42 billion CFA francs (EUR 64 million) of investments. More than 20 billion CFA francs are planned to be invested by 2029 to ensure Abidjan Airport meets the highest international standards.	
Concessionaire	Abidjan International Airport concession company (AERIA)		
Shareholders	Shareholders		Shareholding
	Egis		21.5%
	SEGAP	Egis	SEGAP
		African Infrastructure Investment Managers (AIIM)	
	Afripar		12.2%
	State of Ivory Coast		10%
	Private investors		29.2%
Phase	Contract management		

[4] AERIA is the manager of Abidjan Airport with Egis as its technical partner. In addition, it has various partners, including administrative and commercial partners.

Project No. 11: Abidjan–Ouagadougou Railway

Project overview	The Abidjan–Ouagadougou Railway is a transnational line that links Ivory Coast and Burkina Faso. Linking the port of Abidjan and the capital of Burkina, this line is the main transporter of passengers and goods, playing a crucial role in the economies of both countries (Mitchell & Budin, 1998).	
Project timeline	Year	Evolution
	1894–1954	This railroad construction project dates back to 1894 with the objective of linking the coast and the interior of Ivory Coast (Ligne d'Abidjan à Ouagadougou, 2025). After feasibility studies by the public works administration, work began in Abidjan in 1904. Construction was suspended and slowed down due to difficulties such as the hostility of some local populations, the First World War, and the Second World War. The line was finally completed in 1954, after 50 years of work.
	1960–1989	The line was managed and operated by a bi-national company, Régie des chemins de fer Abidjan-Niger (RAN), owned by Ivory Coast and Burkina Faso from 1960 to 1989 (Mitchell & Budin, 1998).
	1989	In 1989, for political reasons, the two states decided to split RAN into two national entities: the Société ivoirienne des chemins de fer (SICF) and the Société des chemins de fer du Burkina (SCFB). However, problems have arisen in the two national companies such as absenteeism, embezzlement of funds, fancy accounting, and overstaffing, causing financial losses and a decline in traffic due to lack of maintenance, facilities, and poor condition of equipment (Les Echos, 1997).
	1992	In July 1992, Ivory Coast and Burkina Faso decided to reunify the operation of the network and to entrust its operation to the private sector under a concession system. Following an international invitation to tender, the SITARAIL group was declared the successful bidder in March 1993.
	1994	After lengthy negotiations, the concession contract was signed in December 1994 (World Bank, 2003).
Initial concessional agreement	Signed in 1995 for a 15-year term,[5] this project is the first transnational railroad awarded under concession to the private sector.	
Concessionaire	Société Internationale de Transport Africain par Rail (SITARAIL)	
Shares	Shareholders	Shares
	Government of Ivory Coast	15%
	Government of Burkina Faso	15%
	Railwaymen's Fund	3%
	Franco–Danish grouping: SOFIB-controlled by SDV (Bolloré Group); SAGA; MAERSK; SYSTRA design office; TRANSURB-CONSULT	67%
New concessional agreement	Signed in 2016	
	Main shareholders	Shares

[5] The concession term was renegotiated and extended from 15 to 30 years, creating an Investment Fund and adjusting the level and distribution of concessionaire fees (World Bank, 2003).

Shares[6]	Government of Ivory Coast	15%
	Government of Burkina Faso	15%
	Staff	3%
	Bolloré Transport & Logistics	67%
Phase	Contract management	

[6] The work, which has been delayed as the new agreement, has not yet been in effect according to some experts interviewed in 2021.

Appendix 4 Multiple-Case Study Data Structure with Representative Quotes

First-Order Themes with Representative Quotations	Second-Order Themes	Aggregate Dimension
• Historical connections *And also, history carries a strong link between the two countries, political links, military links [...] facilitating a lot of things and exchanges.* (*Case 3, Interview 45)* • Common languages *It is a facilitator because it does not need to translate because things can be lost in translation. So, whether it's talking about the negotiations. People can talk to each other directly, there was no translation bias and things like that, I think it was a simplifying element. (Case 1, Interview 11)* • Similar educational backgrounds of managers *We have many senior officials who were trained in good schools, but also who came to France for training. So, culturally, we are much close in French-speaking West Africa. (Case 2, Interview 31)* • Languages nuances	Informal cultural system	Complexity and uncertainty in the institutional context of PPPs

They have their terms. They are much politer than we are. There are expressions, words that are easily said in France, it's crazy, what's wrong? If you say that to an Ivorian, it's serious [...] it is something very violent. (Case 2, Interview 19)		
• Immature legal system *If certain PPP project were either the first of their kind or very complex or required a lot of legislative form [...] And you had to change something about subsidies, or you had to change the regulatory agency to make report to the ministry or some sort of structural change that required legislation to be passed [...] here you have a mix of a lot of legacy issues in the regulatory space. (Exploratory Interview 6)* • Administrative roles in PPP units *So, we often work in these cases with several countries that have set up PPP agencies, but which, we can see very clearly, often play a very transversal role and are not really decision-makers. In fact, often the decision remains in the technical ministries such as the Ministry of Finance or the Ministry of Public Works. (Exploratory Interview 1)* • Political uncertainty *For example, the coup d'état of 1999, with the situation of the country. Let's say that the traffic has dropped sharply [...] If I take the airports of the domestic interior, there are many airports where they have been practically vandalized, demolished with the crisis. This is a big risk for those who invest. (Case 3, Interview 44)*	Formal institutional system	

Government aiming to provide public services *The state has specific objectives, they are public service objectives, public service with economic, social and other benefits. It is in the case of public service that it invests in infrastructure thinking that people will move faster, easier, it will make the country more attractive, it will strengthen the investments, and it will reduce the production costs. It improves environmental health, etc. (Case 1, Interview 11)* Government looking for financial profits *Already financial benefits. A project that is profitable, so the state benefits both as a shareholder and also benefits through the country's taxes, the economic operator and what we must pay on the profits. (Case 7, Interview 41)* Hierarchy, process, inefficiency *The civil aviation there, it could be long to reply. But so you should be you should be on site and sit with them. In Africa is hard [...] you have to push to get the approval on time, if you're not pushing that. They just forget you and the forget the final on the desk. (Case 7, Interview 7)* Creating financial profits for shareholders *It's a for-profit company. The most important reason for its existence is to make money for its shareholders. So, now, it's really making money for shareholders, right? This is also very*	Co-existence of multiple conflicting logics	Multiple dominant logics

important, the most important one. Because it's not a socially beneficial company, it's a pure for-profit company. (Case 5, Interview 1) Expertise, standards, ethics *International airports must be certified by the Civil Aviation Agency, that is to say that their infrastructures and, how to say, their consistency and their organization must be in accordance with an international reference of the Civil Aviation Organization and transpose in the Gabonese law in the law of the country. (Case 7, Interview 15)* *There is a company which is a construction company, and which does not have the same objectives and the same ways of working, since they work on projects and a project has a start date and an end date which generally lasts between 1 and 5 years. But there, we are talking about 30 years, so they have not at all. They did not have the same conception of a project and a long-term project. (Case 5, Interviews 3, 4)* Social acceptance, willingness to pay *This people's acceptance of this new thing also needs a process, during this process it will also have a period of this voice of opposition. (Case 5, Interview 24)* *In 2019, at the beginning of operation, definitely a project was implemented in Congo-Brazzaville, it involved the interests of many parties. First of all, the transporters, the enterprises, their cost has increased, so they will certainly put pressure on the government.*		

we were indeed very difficult. You also knew that we had the pressure from the government and from all sides. No one is willing to take money out of their pockets. After three years of operation, people are slowly going to accept this. (Case 5, Interview 9)		
Bureaucratic inefficiencies hinder the market logic *Sometimes the most difficult thing is not to have a single point of entry on the administration side, because there are many people who are concerned by this. That sometimes have interests that are not the same, it is necessary to manage to make all this small world converge on the realization of the common goal. It is not always, because the direction of the Treasury that will finance, that will finance the subsidies. It does not necessarily agree to finance a lot; the tax department will be asked for tax breaks to avoid charging the cost of capex. And to say that it is not in these rules that it does not work. So there you have it, we have to overcome all these obstacles in order to find a balance between the demands of some and those of others. (Case 2, Interview 31)* Misalignment between market and state logics *They have different interests and that it is not necessarily aligned, for example, you know that we asked AERIA. Even, it was not interesting to build a new airport on a new site of course, also a larger airport like Dakar, Mauritania, Here is a second airport, because we have in Côte d'Ivoire, We have only one international airport, that of Abidjan. The state, in its concern for efficiency and safety, said why not build a second airport more modern, larger to deal with this problem, but AERIA seemed not to be interested, they prefer to develop the one that is there, try to bring it to standards. (Case 3, Interview 44)*	Interactions of market logic with other dominant logics	

Private with professional logics to enhance their negotiations *We cooperate with private financial advisors [...] private law lawyers of project finance. But there are also lawyers of public law, as you negotiate with a State, with a concession, a big project. It is still necessary that things match with public law, especially in Senegal. It's good to look at what's going on in this area (Case 1, Interview 10)* Community hindering the financial profits of PPPs *People will certainly be unhappy, for these companies. Their profits were high, now all of a sudden, it's shrunk. They will certainly be unhappy; they are going to spill it on whom? Us. (Case 5, Interview 1)*		
The public sector operates as the owner and overseer, while the private sector functions as the investor and operator. *State has a role of control which will remain throughout the concession [...] they keep the control and the performance (Case 1, Interview 10)* *In 1996, the terminal had to be modernized, and financial resources had to be found to modernize Abidjan's terminal. And the Ivorian government doesn't necessarily have the financial means to do this. (Case 3, Interview 45)*	Public and private complementary and substitutive effects	Core roles and capabilities

The private party is very experienced because it comes with legal, financial and technical experts. (Case 1, Interview 20) *We have had operating obligations, fairly technical criteria to ensure that we operate within the, we make the best efforts [...] So, we have criteria for the operation. (Case 2, Interview 23)* • Substitution effects *The public sector fell short in meeting its obligations due to its limited expertise, whereas the private sector showcased stronger capabilities. (Case 5, Interview 1)*		
CSCEC did not have the competence to operate tolls, and Egis did not necessarily have the competence to have staff to carry out maintenance work. In this case, each partner has its advantages. CSCEC, which knows how to do maintenance work, and Egis, which has operated on the road, and the Congolese State, which can rely on its two partners to carry out these tasks. (Case 5, Interview 3) *So, we know about airport management. So, this is one of our biggest hit when you are designing and you do the construction within the airport premises, you know exactly what to do. (Case 7, Interview 7)*	Coopetitive effects between Western and non-Western private companies	
Compromising strategy Public and private negotiate and renegotiate to adapt to changes.	Strategies by public and private sector	Strategic responses

There is a revision of the contract, to revise the rates, [...] because there was a higher traffic, according to the financial model. (Case 1, Interview 18)		
Manipulating strategy Public had an alternative partner, private has relationships with the state. *In the movement of this project, emerged the idea of creating a new airport in the south of Libreville, near the special economic zone, and Olam took hold of this project and proposed to the state to finance this project [...] I think that [the negotiation between Egis and the government] did not succeed because the state had an alternative with GSEZ. (Case 7, Interview 15)* *It is direct negotiation. Olam had a preexisting relationship with the state. it worked very well. It was made of audacity, of proximity with the political powers, of political authorities that the French do not do enough. (Case 7, Interview 15)*		
Private and private cooperate and compete. *On the airport site, they have obtained the management, and Egis is still in discussion with Olam. GSEZ airport is still one of our clients. We continue to provide them with technical assistance services. We have just won an important engineering contract for the design review of the works and the follow-up of the project management of the works of the new runway terminal, that is still a partner. (Case 7, Interview 15)*	Coopeting strategy by the private sector	
People protest or resist, private enterprise adapt.	Defying strategy by the third party	

With under pressure from the street, the bridge was built in a balance discussed with the government, accepted 1000 francs this time the passage of the bridge [...]. A month before the inauguration of the bridge, as the press began to say that the price was outrageously expensive, the people began to demonstrate. In addition, the day before, the President of the Republic said that it would be 500 francs and not 1000. (Exploratory interview 2) *So in this case, they (Egis) are very decisive and sensible that we first cut to half, first let them pay, from the payment of money, even though they are unhappy but they also pay, without excessive behavior. Then, we slowly bring up after they have adapted to this payment situation and environment. Therefore, that is a strategy that was one of ours. (Case 5, Interview 1)*		

Appendix 5 Single-Case Study Data Structure with Representative Quotes

First-Order Concepts with Representative Quotations	Second-Order Codes	Aggregate Dimensions
Conflicting institutions and fiscal laws *The Minister of International Cooperation and PPP is the son of the president. A new ministry was created to accommodate his political ambitions. He intends to assume the presidency. We are here representing the Chinese headquarters company, are not SPV. His strategy has been to try and reduce our prices, essentially by half, as he seeks to curry favor with voters for election purposes. This PPP department has been attempting to draw us into their jurisdiction, an action we view as detrimental. We cannot fall under the control of their ministry. Consequently, our operating company has consistently avoided dealings with them. We have always been under the aegis of the Ministry of Infrastructure, which has been our sole support. (Chinese Deputy Director, Formal meeting 10)* *The country is under considerable pressure from the International Monetary Fund (IMF), which has not yet granted approval or provided tax exemption. This creates a contradiction for us. On the one hand, foreign-funded enterprises, including ours, require tax exemption, with the belief that such an exemption is not only justified but necessary for improving the business environment. On the other hand, the host country has been grappling with debt issues in recent years. The IMF has extended loans to the country but with stringent conditions—enhanced financial management and a stronger tax system. This tightening of*	Uncoordinated external organizational field level demands	Fragmented organizational field

fiscal controls, coupled with the need to maintain a balanced budget, has placed the country under significant financial strain. Complicating matters further is the prevalence of corruption. Despite these challenges, we must continue to advocate for our position. We cannot afford to abandon this cause as it is a critical condition of a 30-year contract. If not addressed, the fiscal control issues we are currently experiencing could become even more complex. (Chinese Deputy Director, Non-structured interview 5) Government as controller, regulator, and shareholder *Concerning the concessional fee, it does pose a challenge. As per the current model, the government doesn't see any financial benefits. The treasury is yet to receive any penny. We await the signing of the tax exemption agreement to understand the outcome. (Coordinator of public service delegation, Formal meeting 11)* *There is a current emphasis on strengthening supervision, which may appear superficial, but it's indeed a tangible issue. It ties back to the problem of unbalanced profit distribution. There is a desire to control the financial aspects and quantities through supervision to identify the profit points and secure a share of the benefits. Furthermore, there's an underlying concern or risk that the government's motivation might lead to an expulsion of external players to take over operations. This political risk, which can stem from either the current or future government, is a significant factor that cannot be overlooked. Even though we have a contract that provides a foundation and protection, in this region, governmental*		

intervention and non-performance are common. (Regional Deputy Director of SOE, Non-structured interview 16) External public and private sector's opportunistic demands *A reduction in price, which directly translates to a reduction in toll rate, would directly hurt the interests of shareholders and should not be permitted. According to the agreement of the contract, we can adjust and raise prices annually in accordance with inflation. However, we are now being asked to lower them. While the General Director has previously suggested that the price could be reduced with compensation from the government, this is not realistic given the government's financial constraints. (Chinese Deputy Director, Non-structured interview 3)* *General Director of transporter C: So what should we do in the current situation? Do we need to stop this part of the export business or what?* *Chinese Deputy Director: We have communicated with the Ministry of Finance last year. At that time, we were promised to communicate with the Budget Department to compensate us, but so far, we have not received any further news. (Notes from formal meeting 32)*		
SPV corporate logics Corporate market and public service logics Public service-oriented *We aim to provide personalized analysis and services for our key customers. However, these services will only be available after the new system has been launched and a trial operation*	Organizational experience to intra-institutional logics	Intra-institutional complexity

has been conducted for a certain period. (Chinese Deputy Director, Formal meeting 32 [external meeting]) *We have also increased patrols and inspections for road safety. For instance, in 2023, we conducted over 9,000 patrols and interventions, and we have a 24-hour hotline for reporting any issues. In 2024, we continue our efforts to remove abandoned vehicles from the roads. (French Deputy Director 2, Formal meeting 69).* Profit-oriented *The principle of the company has always been to make money. We are a commercial company, and we are not engaged in charity. I know that his idea is useful and meaningful to us in the long run, because in the short run, you lose money every day, especially if a big car is 30,000 FCFA, and then there is sixty or seventy cars, 70 or 80 million a month, almost hundreds of millions, right? This is huge. (Chinese Deputy Director, Non-structured interview 5)* *We are required to work in the service area, but we haven't done this for several years, because there is no profit and the price is relatively low, so we can't do it. Therefore, some commercial models can be promoted to remove some safety and health hazards. The first task of our operating company is to provide 24-hour road maintenance, provide road user services, and carry out engineering overhaul. There are still gaps in our overhaul. We must ensure the lifeline, the most important business, and then talk about other services. It is*		

more reasonable to wait around 2037. Before 2030, it is relatively difficult and must focus on economic feasibility. (Chinese Deputy Director, Non-structured interview 3) Identity *Our principle has always been to handle every cent of the fees with utmost seriousness and caution. We have strict anti-corruption policies in place and make it clear that we cannot offer any favors. We are collecting the money of the common people. Every expenditure must be very clean and transparent. (Chinese Deputy Director, Non-structured interview 6)* Ownership and governance mechanism *As the chairman started speaking, the Chinese board members chimed in, echoing the suggestions of the French board members. They stressed the importance of carefully reviewing the proposal's content and details, proposing to postpone the meeting.* *The Chinese board member continued in Chinese, using harsh words and an unsatisfied tone. The General Director wiped his brow as they criticized him sternly. Subsequently, the Chinese board member requested that this part not be translated and be discussed further in private.* *The General Director acknowledged the board members' concerns about the proposal's details and committed to revising it before presenting it for offline voting.*		

All board members approved the proposal with reservations. (Notes from formal meeting 44 [internal meeting]) *Engineering Director: Hello, Deputy Director. We've just wrapped up our regular project meeting. I'll update you on the progress, but it's just for your information, as usual.* *Chinese Deputy Director: Okay.* *Engineering Director: We're currently optimizing our engineering process, with ongoing improvements, including the reception form. Document approvals mainly focus on daily maintenance and overhaul plans. However, unexpected situations like a rainstorm blocking a ditch may arise, requiring urgent attention. Nevertheless, we aim to address these in our weekly and monthly reports. Additionally, there are issues concerning the road section near the toll station, particularly our unclear interface with the garbage disposal company.* *I'm unsure which department is responsible for this.* *Chinese Deputy Director: Should the operations department coordinate this?* *Engineering Director: Yes, we need to establish a clear interface with them.* *Chinese Deputy Director: I see. Let the road assets director handle this. You can liaise with him. If he can't resolve it, I'll step in.* *(Conversation excerpt between the Engineering Director and the Chinese Deputy Director)* French shareholder's interests *They seem to primarily consider their own interests without taking into account our concession. They frequently discuss fixed costs, yet, from our perspective, their profits*		

appear to be substantial. During the previous contract, their costs were assessed, and they were found to be considerably high. (General Director of the SPV, Informal meeting 12) SOE corporate logics Chinese shareholder's logic *The budget for the overhaul is estimated to not exceed 6.7 billion FCFA at most. However, why has it escalated to more than 11 billion? Moreover, according to our experts' assessment this year, the overhaul project sits at around 1.3 billion. How can this discrepancy be explained? As SPV, we also hope that you can profit for our shareholder, but it cannot be excessive. Every expenditure must be justifiable. We cannot undertake unnecessary works simply to generate revenues for the year. (Chinese Deputy Director, Formal meeting 17)* Corporate market logic *Let's address the issue of our high prices, which arose during the construction of No. 1 Road. These prices reflect the market rates across our entire group, region, and country. It is crucial to uphold these prices to avoid any negative impact on the market as a whole. While I may wish to lower prices, it is essential for the company's overall well-being that we maintain them. When dealing with new items, we can negotiate as they lack a previous price reference, which could affect the company's interests.* *(Project Director of maintenance subcontractor, Non-structured interview 17)*		

Corporate politic logic *The rectification of the approval authority issue, raised by the headquarters during the last audit and inspection, necessitated this form. The headquarters believed that the regional company had relinquished control, leading to improper business operations. Thus, the requirement was to itemize decision-making matters and submit them to the regional General Director and the regional general direction department meeting for resolution. This rectification process began in October of the previous year. At present, we don't have many choices; we need to complete this form. Otherwise, we will cross the deadline. We are left with no choice but to fulfill this requirement. (Manager of Finance Department of the regional company, Non-structured interview 26).*		
Multiple cultural context Chinese dominant corporate culture *Upon the leader's arrival, it is customary to firstly invite the leader to speak and open the discourse, after which everyone starts to eat. The ritual of raising the cup is also specific, requiring individuals to lift their cups according to their position and invite everyone to share a drink. Typically, the leader commences the speeches, initially extending a festive greeting to the ladies, followed by welcoming and acknowledging the leader. Subsequent speeches from others generally follow a pattern—starting with a welcome, then expressions of gratitude, and finally expectations for the future. This pattern has become routine, and there is rarely anything exceptionally new. The leader's opening remarks usually set the tone for the evening, defining the theme that everyone else's comments and toasts should*	Internal individuals' relations to competing intra-institutional logics	

revolve around. After the speeches, everyone raises a glass together before commencing their meal. (Notes from informal meeting 37 [internal team dinner]) Local cultural context *The rate of loss is alarmingly rapid because, from the perspective of residents, the signboards represent a source of income. A local resident with no income might take a signboard, convert it into one or two thousand FCFA to fulfill their most basic needs, such as buying a beer or some other necessity. This issue extends beyond signboards to include other installations such as solar panels. Without constant monitoring, a solar panel could be stolen within five minutes of being installed, as has been the case with previous installations. (Project Manager of the maintenance subcontractor, Informal meeting 28)* Individuals' hybrid professional identities *Regarding the appointment of the current General Director as board member, we still have a lot of concerns, especially in his responsibilities, there are many conflicts of interest. For example, he is both the General Director of the concessional company and the manager of the maintenance subcontractor. Even if he can distinguish his role, from the perspective of our small shareholders, we will still suspect that he favors the interests of major shareholders, or the interests of the maintenance company, even if it is not intentional, which is something we are more worried about. (Managing Director of operating subcontractor, Formal meeting 33 [internal meeting])*		

Individuals' relations to the institutional logics inside the SPV Novice *I helped to deal with this this time, but this time I also let him understand that I can't handle such expenses again next time because it will lead to a relatively high cost of business trips... Though I also agree with him to pay attention to employees' satisfaction, but it is not in line with the company's procedures. This is his first business trip. I can understand that he will do this, but he will not do it next time. (Engineering Director, Non-structured interview 14)* Familiar *One concern pertains to the adjustment of the asphalt price. As expressed in the car by the Director-General (DG), this issue continues to cause worry as it seems to favor the maintenance subcontractor but offers no benefit to the operating company. Initially, during the overhaul last year, there was a proposal to increase the cost by 1% to adjust the asphalt price. However, this adjustment was not implemented and the reasons behind this non-implementation remain unclear. (French Deputy Director 1, Formal meeting 12)* Identified *Regarding the assessment, there is a letter of engagement for SPV. This year's revenue is 54 million dollars, with management fees, no major personnel changes, no compliance events, and an annual revenue growth rate of 5-8%. The performance appraisal of relevant personnel follows a dual assessment system, aligning with one set for the international*		

department and a systematic assessment for local employees, conducted every six months. (Chinese Deputy Director, Non-structured interview 2)		
Refusing followed by combining strategy by French Deputy Director 2 *Now we also assess the risk level of this aspect and consider how to legalize it. For instance, we use subsidiaries to collect and make payments on behalf of others, which increases the subsidiary's cash flow, or for other purposes, I'm unsure, as we can't prove the motives and connections between them. The legalization of this aspect remains a problem. (French Deputy Director 2, Formal meeting 90)* *Concerning dividends, given this year's negative cash flow, the dividend amount should be the same or relatively less than last year. Our current financial statements do not accurately reflect our situation, but we may revisit some previous issues by year-end. Last year, a substantial sum was also transferred to Chinese shareholders in the internal current account. We do not recommend a dividend. (French Deputy Director 2, Non-structured interview 25)* *We need to clarify some issues for you, such as communication problems, underlying issues, etc. But I can assure you that there is no ill intent. We are all pulling together, working towards a common goal. However, issues like reporting methods can sometimes result in low-quality documents. These are our internal problems. I probably shouldn't mention them here, but I hope you understand, and we will do our utmost to improve the quality to meet*	SPV managers' responses to institutional complexity	Individual responses

your expectations. (French Deputy Director 2, Formal meeting 64, meeting with the coordination bureau of public service delegation) Complying strategy by French Deputy Manager 1 *I held a meeting with local armed forces near this toll station while inspecting the area. To maintain regional security and avoid conflicts with them, I communicated its stance. The objective isn't to crack down on these unauthorized organizations, nor is it to close these intersections and obstruct their passage, as this is a matter that can be tackled at the national level. My experience from the meeting was that I wasn't threatened, unlike previous encounters with their subordinates, which were quite intimidating. (French Deputy Manager 1, Formal meeting 1 [internal meeting])* Segmenting strategy by Chinese General Director *The focus ought not to be solely on the interests of SPV, but also on the profits generated by the maintenance subcontracting for the Chinese shareholder, such as the income derived from additional project maintenance and the overhaul of Road No. 2. (Chinese General Director, Informal meeting 23 [internal meeting])* Combining strategy for SPV corporate logics and segmenting strategy for SOE's corporate logics by Chinese Deputy Director *Opening toll station M would likely result in a loss for SPV. While this decision may be beneficial for operating subcontractors due to amortization and lower costs, it would result*		

in a loss for SPV. Furthermore, for Chinese shareholders, the implementation does not offer significant benefits and would reduce the amount of maintenance. Hence, the probability of opening the station is not high for all the stakeholders. (Chinese Deputy Director, Informal meeting 27 between French and Chinese Deputy Directors)		
Manipulating strategies from external actors to SPV Control from the coordination bureau of public service delegation *Do you know that the maintenance cost alone is 10 billion francs? Are you aware that the Congolese government is very poor? These 10 billion francs might be a one-year budget for one department, some can't even reach it. And you have 10 billion available for immediate maintenance. (Coordinator, Formal meeting 64)* *We also need to organize some relatively informal meetings with you, that is, we have not sent some formal letters to invite you to attend the meeting. These are mainly some discussions. This meeting was initiated by the head of my department, involving for example the monthly data report of toll stations and weighing stations. (Coordinator of the coordination office, Formal meeting 58)* Influence from both the maintenance and operation subcontractors *Given the strong position of your concessional company, we also quantified the maintenance works. However, doing so completely exposes our profit to the General Delegation of Works Committee. I think this is an issue for your concessional company. Therefore, I need to*	Organizational actors' strategies	Organizational responsive strategies

report this to the General Director. (Project Director of the maintenance subcontractor, Non-structured interview 17) *The opening of the M station is also a crucial component of our strategy to reduce fixed costs. This is a matter that we need to have heard. I am confident that our French board member will also discuss this with the Chinese board members. (General Director of the operational company, Informal meeting 11 between operational and concession company)* Bridging strategic responses from the SPV to external actors Combining strategies to the coordination office control *The principle is that the price for the two subcontracts, maintenance and operation, is non-negotiable, while any services outside the contract can be outsourced…The French partner oversees the project, making trust a crucial factor in this relationship. Price is a sensitive issue within this context. For example, a situation arose where a quoted price for a side slope was incorrect and couldn't be implemented. Both the regulator and the French partner disagreed with changing the quoted price, emphasizing that the initial price stands. The General Delegation of Works Committee views unrestricted price setting as a potential cause of credit issues and artificial problems…The coordinator must advocate based on reason, but he cannot touch its price, which is the bottom line. (Chinese Deputy Director, Non-structured interview 3)*		

Compromising strategies by establishing common communication mechanism with the two subcontractors *French Deputy Manager: I hope we can establish a working mechanism and meet regularly to communicate. Building trust is only possible through effective communication.* *Project Manager: It's normal not to have trust initially. It requires continuous effort to build it.* *French Deputy Manager: Maintaining communication is crucial. Your issues are our concerns, and ultimately, the problems of our shipping company are interconnected with yours. Therefore, we aim to uphold communication. If any issues arise, we are ready to offer support from SPV's perspective.* *Project Manager: Okay.* *(Informal meeting 28, external meeting)* Defying strategies to external demands for price reduction or exemptions *Our position is very clear. If the government doesn't pay us, it's useless for anyone to come, and we won't pay them again. (General Director, Formal meeting 33 [internal meeting])* Avoiding strategy involving French partner in certain decision-making process by Chinese General Director *Our company is compliant, right? We don't indulge in bribery or corruption. We have been adhering to this principle for several years. So, I want to clarify that we have indeed 'compromised' on certain issues, but not at the level of SPV. These compromises were made*		

in the name of the Chinese shareholder company. We believe that there are certain things that are difficult to bear. We won't tolerate any actions that involve our company's life and death situations. In such cases, we will handle it privately in the name of Chinese company, and the French shareholder doesn't need to know about it. (Chinese Deputy Director, Non-structured interview 6)		